



MOUNT SOLEDAD
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mission Study Report

June 2024 - April 2025

Mount Soledad
Presbyterian Church

6551 Soledad Mountain Rd
La Jolla, CA 92037

Office: (858) 459-3865
Web: mountsoledad.org



Preface

In June 2024, the Session of Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church (MSPC) commissioned a five-member Mission Study Team (MST) to lead the congregation through a period of reflection and discernment. Our goal was to gain a deeper understanding of who we are as a church, identify our strengths and opportunities, and prayerfully seek God's direction for our future.

The Mission Study Team met bi-weekly over the course of six months, engaging in thoughtful discussions, reviewing church history and ministries, and facilitating conversations with the congregation. Through surveys, discussion groups, and prayerful reflection, we have sought to capture the heart and spirit of MSPC in this report.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the many congregants who contributed their time and insights—whether by participating in surveys, sharing their experiences, or offering feedback. Your thoughtful engagement has been invaluable in shaping this study and preparing our church for the next chapter of ministry.

This report serves as a guiding document for our church leadership as we look to the future with hope and confidence. We encourage you to explore its findings and prayerfully consider how you can be part of God's unfolding plan for MSPC. The full Mission Study Report is available at mountsoledad.org.

With our joy and blessings,
Your Mission Study Team

Mission Study Team

Chairperson:
Deborah Dang

Members In alphabetical order:
Colleen Kelly
Jay Williams
Brittney Wolff Zatezalo

Contents

Who We Are

Mission and Values	3
Historical Overview	5
Congregational Profile	7
Congregational Health	9

How We Serve

Management Practices	11
Ministry & Program Descriptions	16

What We Seek

Our Next Pastor	20
Our 3 Year Goals	20

List of Appendices

- I Demographic Comparison - La Jolla & MSPC | 22
- II Congregational Survey Results & Analysis | 23
- III Flyer for Advertising Congregational Survey | 33
- IV Church Blueprint | 34
- V Church Growth Framework | 36

Our Mission

Rooted in grace, Moved to mission, Open hearted to all

We are a welcoming and inclusive community, centered in God's grace. We extend Jesus's love, acceptance, and compassion to everyone. No matter who you are, where you've been, or what you've done, you are God's beloved.

Our Values

A Welcoming Community

We gather in worship and serve together as an encouraging, generous, multigenerational community. We welcome all who are curious and open to Christ's love, whatever your life circumstances or spiritual background.

Spiritual Growth

We are called by God to grow in faith as disciples of Jesus through worship, fellowship, study, and prayer. We emphasize humility, reflection, and contemplation to nurture empathy and a profound sense of connection with God and all of humanity.

Christ-Centered Mentorship

We invest in meaningful relationships with young people, providing guidance and encouragement to live authentically and faithfully through an enduring personal relationship with Jesus.

Our Statement of Faith

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church is a Christ-centered community, grounded in the love and grace of God. We believe in one God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—who created, redeems, and sustains the world. The Bible is God's inspired Word, guiding us in faith and life. Rooted in the Reformed tradition, we affirm the historic confessions of the church, including the Apostles' Creed and the Westminster Confession. As part of the Presbyterian Church (USA), we seek to follow Jesus in worship, discipleship, and mission, sharing God's love with all people and working for justice, peace, and the healing of the world.



A Brief History of MSPC

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church was planted on land purchased in 1958 by Hollywood Presbyterian church. It was chartered in 1962, and dedicated in 1964, with 190 original members. Throughout its early years it struggled to find its footing, and several times in the 1970s mergers were proposed with La Jolla Presbyterian Church. Throughout this time there were people who were regularly dedicated to praying for the church.

In the early 1980s Don Williams became the senior pastor and brought with him a growing interest in a charismatic revival and missions outreach. The combination of charismatic teaching and an emphasis on the charismatic gifts of the spirit led Sunday worship to grow dramatically, reaching as many as 1200 on a Sunday.

The church had at least 20 home fellowships. This was also a fertile time for the launch of new ministries. In 1984 Plant With Purpose was founded, and shortly thereafter, in 1986, Care House was launched. Several other ministries were launched around the same time. The church expressed a goal of dedicating 50% of its budget to external ministries.

By 1987, however, attendance was declining, as Don Williams began to focus more on his radio ministry and on national speaking opportunities. Session asked him to choose between the radio ministry and the church, at which point Don resigned. He later went on to plant a Vineyard church in La Jolla, which is still meeting today, and became nationally known within the Vineyard movement.

After a period of flux, during which several interim pastors served, Mark Slomka, who had been the Associate Pastor under Don Williams, was named as stated supply. By this time attendance had dwindled to perhaps 150.

However, Mark grew into the role, continuing the emphasis on international missions, and a more charismatic expression of worship. Under Mark's leadership and with the stability of a consistent leader, the church began to grow once again.

In 1995 Little Steps Preschool was founded as a way of ministering to the community, and for many years was seen as a significant outreach of the church. The downstairs facility was purpose-built for Little Steps.

Around the same time, the missions team conceived of a plan to focus on outreach to the Kurds, with the intent of sending a Mount Soledad team to live and minister in Northern Iraq. Diane King was to have been the first of these and changed her graduate studies to prepare for this. At least one short-term team visited missionaries in Iraq.

By 1997 Sunday attendance was once again over 400. Racial reconciliation became a strong theme and MSPC formed a close partnership with a predominantly African American church, co-hosting various social events and church Retreats.

In 1999, after having served as Stated Supply for at least 10 years, Mark Slomka was named Senior Pastor by the San Diego Presbytery. In 2000, the church completed a new sanctuary, above the Little Steps facility and moved in with a dedication service led by Jack Hayford. In 2001 the church began to host Alpha on a regular basis.

By early 2004, however, Mark was increasingly frustrated with the San Diego Presbytery and announced his intent to leave the denomination. After several months of personal discernment, he announced that he would resign and join the Foursquare denomination.

Several session members suggested that the church as a whole be given the opportunity to follow him into Foursquare. This led to many months of prayer, discernment and debate. In May of 2005, session voted to begin a process to leave the Presbyterian Church and then met with representatives of the San Diego Presbytery and ultimately the congregation. At the congregational meeting it was clear that the church was anything but united, and an Administrative Commission was named, and the session was disbanded by Presbytery, who took over administration of the church.

Those leaving for the Foursquare Church were given a new facility by the Four Squares Church. In June of 2005 much of the congregation, all deacons, all but one of the elders, and 13 of 14 staff left with Mark.

Over the next couple of years of uncertainty, the congregation dwindled to less than 100. Rev. Paul Pulliam and Rev. Dave Ricketts served in informal pastoral roles until Rev. Pamela Powell was called to serve as interim pastor.

In April 2007, at the completion of a mission study and an extensive search, John Moser was called as senior pastor. Over the next twelve years, church attendance stayed relatively stable, and the church was able to make ends meet by renting out various parts of the property. Alcoholics Anonymous met in the sanctuary on Saturday morning, and tenants included Day Prep tutoring, and Villa Musica, a performing arts organization. Despite repeated efforts, though, the youth ministry failed to thrive. The Young Families fellowship, hosted by Jennifer Moser, was the center of much of the energy of the church at this time.

In March of 2020, with the pandemic, the church moved online for a time with a sermon promulgated via YouTube and an online fellowship hosted via Zoom.

In November 2020 the church experimented with outdoor in-person worship. In 2021 in-person services resumed, with the pulpit located in the youth room and the sliding doors opened to allow people to sit on the lawn.

Outdoor worship continued through much of 2021. The church struggled to bring back many of the members who had left during the pandemic, and Sunday attendance often dropped to 40 or fewer.

On October 24, 2021, John Moser preached his last sermon at Mount Soledad, retiring from pastoral ministry before taking on the role of Interim Executive Presbyter at San Diego Presbytery.

Derek Rice, the director of music, filled in for the next several months, until Markus Watson was named as Interim Pastor in February of 2022. In 2023, the preschool flooded, forcing a closure of several months. While this strained the church budget, it also brought the church community closer together. Today the church remains small, but there are signs of life and growth everywhere, making this an exciting time in the life of Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church.

In summary, below are the major themes of the history of MSPC:

- Prayer
- International Missions
- Charismatic Worship
- Racial reconciliation
- Seen as an outlier within the Presbyterian Church (more evangelical, more informal and more charismatic than the norm.)

Congregational Profile

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church has experienced notable changes in recent years, influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and the retirement of long-time pastor John Moser in 2021. As of January 2025, the congregation had 30 active members, compared to 150 members (88 families) in 2019.

Demographics

Understanding the demographics of both our congregation and the surrounding La Jolla community provides valuable insight into who we are as a church.

The City of La Jolla, California

La Jolla encompasses 12 square miles, and its boundary starts at Pacific Beach to the south and extends north along the Pacific Ocean shoreline to include Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve, ending at Del Mar. La Jolla consists of 16 neighborhoods with a current population of 49,781. La Jolla is home to many educational institutions and a variety of businesses in the areas of lodging, dining, shopping, software, finance, real estate, bioengineering, medical practice and scientific research. It is recognized as a historically and geographically distinct area with its own zip code. La Jolla's 92037 ZIP code is among the most expensive in the nation.

According to United States 2023 Census Bureau figures, the ethnic/racial makeup of La Jolla is 72% White and 12% Asian. Latinos, who may be of any race, form 6% of La Jolla's population. There is also a sizable Persian population in La Jolla. (See Appendix I)

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church is south of Interstate 5 and the Mount Soledad Memorial Park. It sits at the top of Mount Soledad Road at the intersection of La Jolla Scenic Drive. Although MSPC is in La Jolla, our church is only accessible by a few roads. Congregants travel from 10 different zip codes that include La Jolla, Pacific Beach, Clairemont, University City, Bay Park, Golden Hill, Hillcrest, Encinitas, Carmel Valley, Solana Beach and surrounding areas on both sides of I-5. Directly across the street from MSPC is All Hallows Catholic Church and two blocks north of a Jehovah's Witnesses Kingdom Hall.

Membership

Our congregation is diverse in gender, age, and geography (Appendix I). Fifty-one point seven percent of members are female and 48.3% are men. Our members are predominantly White (82.8%), followed by Asian/Pacific (13.8%) and Hispanic/Latino (3.4%). Geographically, 31.0% of our members live within five miles of the church. 41.8% travel within a six to ten mile radius, while the remaining 20.7% travel more than 10 miles to participate in services and events. Demographically, MSPC members reflect the community of La Jolla with a few exceptions. The majority of our members are married (72%) while slightly more than a quarter of La Jolla residents are married. MSPC has more Hispanic members (13.8%) and a higher percent of middle-aged members (48.3%) than La Jolla. (See Appendix I)

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church is a close-knit and faithful community that has experienced shifts in membership over the years. While our congregation has seen a decline from its pre-pandemic size, we continue to be a place of deep connection, worship, and spiritual growth. As of March 2025, our active membership stands at 29, with Sunday attendance averaging 44 individuals. With a March 2025 New Members class of 12 participants we are encouraged by this sign of renewal and growth as we move forward in faith.

Engagement & Community

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church is a community where faith is lived out through meaningful relationships and active participation. Our members are deeply engaged in worship, service, and fellowship, fostering a strong sense of belonging. We believe these attributes, in addition to our unique informal evangelical nature, distinguishes us from other local Presbyterian churches in La Jolla and Pacific Beach. Whether through Sunday services, group studies or fellowship and service activities, our congregation remains committed to growing together in faith. As we continue to cultivate opportunities for deeper connection, we celebrate the dedication and heart of those who make MSPC a welcoming and vibrant church family.

Congregational Health

To assess the health and priorities of our congregation, Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church conducted a congregational survey in November 2024. The survey was made available both online and in paper format, ensuring accessibility for all members. Announcements were made during worship services, and time was provided after the service for completion, with volunteers available to assist. A total of 29 members participated, a 90.6% response rate. (See Appendix II & III) Additionally, 23 people participated in two focus groups designed to share preliminary survey results and to obtain member input to update the Church's Mission and Values.

Summary of Findings

The survey results revealed a church that is deeply committed to faith, community, and worship. Respondents felt a strong sense of belonging and appreciation for the church community, two of the most cherished and deeply valued aspects of MSPC. They consistently pointed to the church's friendly and accepting environment as a key reason for their continued connection. These connections have fostered a close-knit, caring community where people feel valued and supported.

Most respondents expressed high satisfaction with the church's welcoming atmosphere and the quality of worship services. Among respondents, 89% rated their satisfaction with the church's support and spiritual growth as high or very high. Similarly, over 95% of members rated their worship experience positively, frequently citing the quality of preaching, the welcoming nature of the congregation, and the uplifting worship. Members shared their appreciation for the inspiring leadership of Interim Pastor Markus Watson and Worship Director Derek Rice, highlighting the thoughtful and heartfelt worship services enriched by engaging, contemporary music.

While the church's strengths are noted, members also identify areas for improvement such as the need for stronger and expanding ministries for families and youth, broader outreach efforts to attract new members, and a desire for more engagement opportunities outside of Sunday services. Despite these challenges, there is a general sentiment of optimism and a shared commitment to continuing MSPC's legacy of faith, connection, and service.

Select Quotes from Congregational Survey

- *"This is an amazing, loving, and accepting group of people. We are small, but mighty!"*
- *"I really appreciate Markus, his preaching, his authenticity."*
- *"The contemporary music at Mt. Soledad is excellent."*
- *"Pastor Markus engages the congregation by not merely preaching to it but by soliciting answers to questions. I have not seen this level of engagement at any other Presbyterian Church I have attended."*
- *"More engaging youth Sunday programs for middle schoolers would be great."*
- *"We need to be better known. There is something special here, but the church community lacks critical mass to be sustainable."*

See Appendix II for Comprehensive List of Quotes

Key Strengths

The survey reaffirmed that MSPCs greatest strengths lie in its close-knit community, strong worship experience, and Christ-centered leadership. Members deeply value the church's warm and inclusive environment, where individuals feel known and cared for. The music ministry, led by Worship Director Derek Rice, was frequently mentioned as a highlight, bringing vibrancy and depth to worship services. Additionally, the relational approach of Pastor Markus has strengthened connections within the congregation, creating a welcoming and spiritually enriching experience for all who attend.

Areas for Growth

Despite these strengths, the survey also pointed to several areas where MSPC can improve. The most commonly mentioned concern was the need for expanded ministries for children, youth, and families. Respondents also emphasized the importance of increasing visibility within the La Jolla community, as many believe the church remains relatively unknown to potential new members. Additionally, while the congregation values its intimate and personal nature, some worry that without intentional outreach and engagement efforts, the church may struggle to grow in both membership and financial sustainability.

Implications & Next Steps

The survey results highlight both the blessings and challenges facing MSPC as it moves forward. The church's welcoming spirit, strong worship, and dedicated leadership provide a solid foundation upon which to build. However, to ensure a thriving future, intentional steps must be taken to expand ministries, strengthen outreach efforts, and cultivate new opportunities for engagement. This Mission Study Report incorporates these priorities into its vision for the next three years, focusing on deepening congregational health, growing membership, and fostering a dynamic and sustainable church community.



Management Practices

At Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church, we are continually exploring ways to enhance our management practices through the thoughtful integration of technology and the dedicated efforts of our congregation. Blessed with members who bring expertise in various fields, we are working to strengthen both internal and external communication, improve our website and IT infrastructure, and simplify access to Sunday services online. Efforts are also underway to develop a centralized member database, implement a strategic marketing and communication plan, and streamline administrative processes across all ministries. These ongoing improvements reflect our commitment to efficiency and our desire to equip MSPC for a thriving future.

Staff and Leadership

Our congregation is led by our 7-member Session:

- Deborah Dang
- Colleen Kelly
- Ingrid Hoch
- Scott Sabin
- Whitson Gordon
- Carol Sullivan
- Brittney Wolff Zatezalo

Day-to-day operations of MSPC is run by:

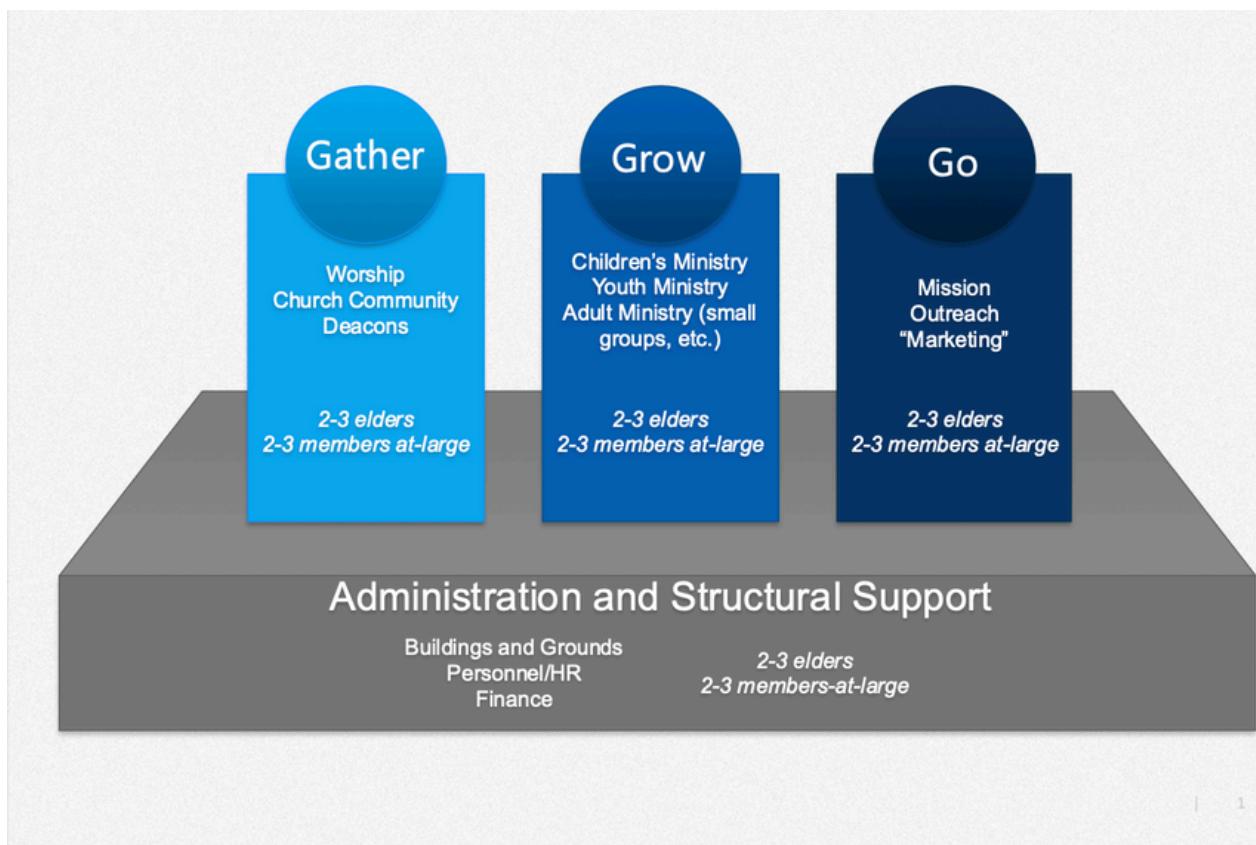
- Markus Watson, Interim Pastor
- Krista Allam, Church Administrator
- Derek Rice, Worship Director
- Carl Ogden, Family Ministry and Education Director
- Hugo Rocha, Facilities and Maintenance Associate

In addition to the Session, we have the following standing committees at MSPC:

Committee	Purpose
Property	Has general charge of administration and upkeep of buildings and grounds
Personnel	Works with Session, pastor, and church administrator in the hiring and supervising of non-ordained staff.
Technology	Helps procure, operate and maintain all church-related technology
Finance	Develop and facilitate the adoption of the annual operating budget
Nominations	Places before the congregation the names of members of the church to serve as elders, deacons, at large members of the Nominating Committee; fill vacancies in staff positions that occur throughout the year

Church Growth Framework

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church uses a growth model, Gather, Grow, Go, to guide and structure our management practices. (See Appendix IV for full description of model)

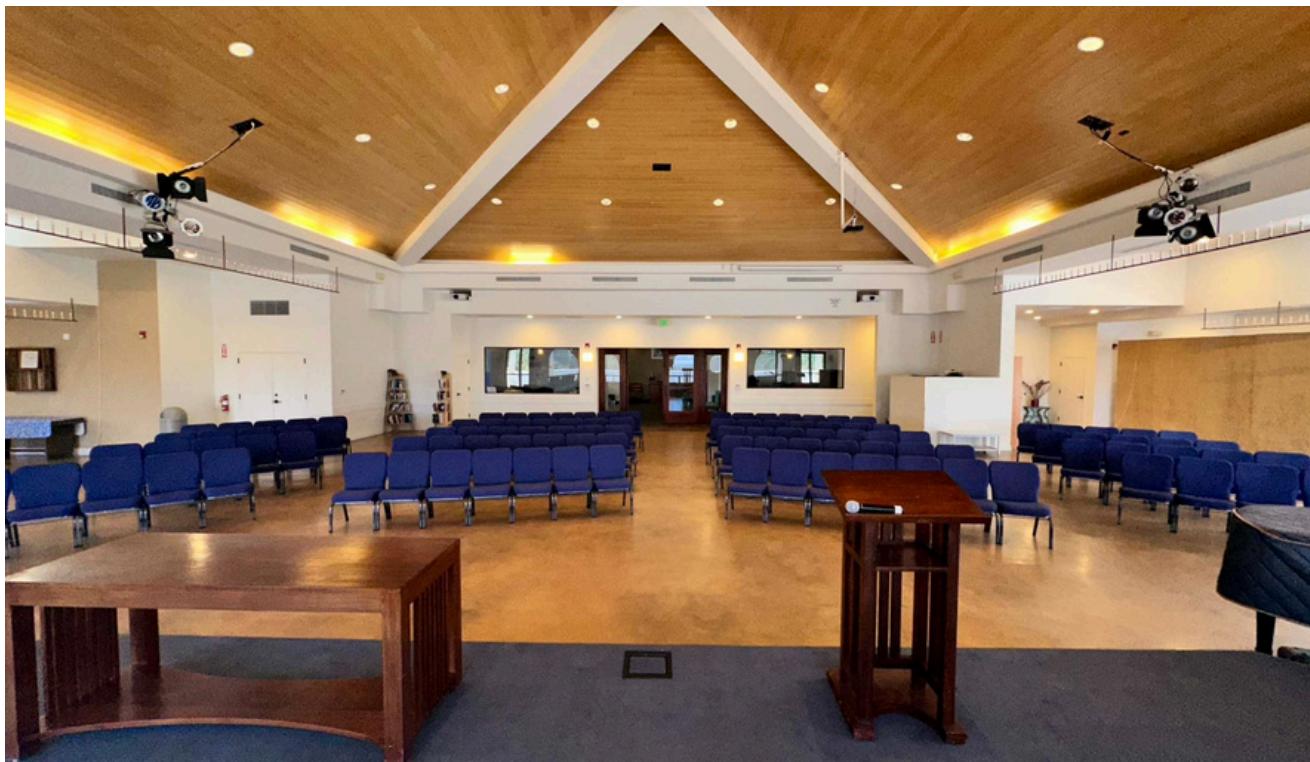


Administration and Structural Support Team

The Administration and Structural Support Team ensures the smooth operation of MSPC by managing budgeting, facilities, and staff-related matters. Their support empowers the 'Gather, Grow, and Go' ministry teams to focus on their missions, fostering worship, spiritual growth, and outreach. Through their efforts, MSPC remains well-organized and equipped to serve its congregation and community effectively.

Facilities

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church is blessed with a spacious campus that supports worship, fellowship, and community outreach. The church sits on approximately 0.43 acres (18,898 sf) and features a 12,101sf building with a versatile sanctuary, added in the year 2000, designed for various gatherings. The ground floor houses Little Steps Christian Preschool, while the main level includes the sanctuary, kitchen, youth room, and a flexible meeting space. The church offices are located in a separate building, ensuring smooth day-to-day operations. Our facilities provide a welcoming and functional environment that serves both our congregation and the broader community.



Note: See Appendix IV for Blueprints

Financial Stewardship

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church has faced financial challenges in recent years, largely due to the decline in membership since 2021. With fewer members contributing, a corresponding decrease in income was anticipated. For many years, Little Steps Christian Preschool played a crucial role in supporting the church's operating expenses, providing a steady source of revenue. However, in 2023, an unexpected flood forced the preschool to close for five months, leading to significant financial strain. Several families chose not to return, and the departure of a large graduating class further contributed to enrollment declines, leaving many spots unfilled.

Recognizing the need for a sustainable solution, the Session carefully considered options and, in November 2024, made the decision to lease the preschool space to Montessori by the Sea (MBS). Effective January 2025, MBS assumed management of the preschool under its current name, Little Steps Christian Preschool Children's Center, until they obtain licensing from the state of California. This transition ensures continuity for families while providing the church with a reliable source of rental income.

The 2025 Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church budget is just under \$500,000 and predicts a surplus of \$16,000. Of that, \$70,000 or 17% comes from tithes and offerings. This is a major change from recent years, during which the preschool was operated as a subsidiary of the church, and contributed nearly \$900,000 to the overall budget, along with attendant expenses.

Starting in 2025, the preschool has been outsourced to Montessori by the Sea (MBS) and has become a completely independent rent-paying entity. Montessori pays \$30,000 a month, plus utilities. That is expected to increase to \$40,000 a month in 2026. This removes the single biggest source of variability from the church's budget and should make the financial outlook much more stable in the future.

The church has been debt free for at least ten years. In the early 2010s, the mortgage was retired, in exchange for a deal that assigned profits from the cell towers in the parking lot to a third party.

In the late 2010s and through the pandemic, the church was able to meet budget by creatively renting out the property to a music school, a tutoring company, and another church, among others. Additionally, pandemic-related PPP loans helped to balance the budget in 2020 and 2021.

In late 2021, a tutoring program, Day Prep, abruptly left, leaving a large hole in expected income, which was not remedied in 2022, leading to a large deficit. This was exacerbated in 2023, when in September, a broken pipe led to flooding in the preschool and forced it to temporarily close.

The preschool flood resulted in several hundred thousand dollars of damage and significant loss of revenue as the school was closed for five months. Although insurance covered a large portion of the loss, there were still substantial out-of-pocket expenses and it was not until March of 2024 that the preschool returned to full enrollment.

The church began 2024 with a balanced budget, but loss of preschool revenues, increased insurance premiums and vacation payouts led to a third year of deficit.

Although the offering has declined in recent years, attendance is growing, and income is expected to rise as the church continues to grow.

The MSPC fiscal year runs from January to December. The budget is approved by the Session and presented to the congregation at the annual meeting in January or early February.

2018 - 2025 Financial Summary

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (Budget)
Total Income			\$1,091,724	\$1,219,700	\$1,145,415	\$938,575	\$997,153	\$497,500
Tithing	\$151,121	\$152,257	\$151,728	\$115,722	\$85,157	\$96,739	\$78,816	\$70,000
Net Income			-\$1,337	\$52,438	-\$120,841	-\$170,750	-\$30,992	\$16,246
Cash			\$315,008	\$366,329	\$226,417	\$102,270	\$73,682	\$90,000

Unusual Events: Pandemic (2020-2021), Preschool closed (2020-2021), Loss of Day Prep School (major tenant) (2021), Pre-School Flood (2023), Outsourcing of Pre-School (2024)

Unusual Income: PPP Loan Forgiven, \$182,400 (2020), PPP Loan Forgiven, \$167,800 (2021)

Despite the challenges of recent years, MSPC remains committed to responsible financial management, balancing our income and expenses to support our ministries and operational needs. Through prudent planning and the dedication of our congregation, we are confident in our ability to navigate this season and continue serving our community with faith and resilience.

Ministries & Program

At Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church, our ministries and programs are designed to nurture spiritual growth, foster meaningful connections, and serve our community with love and compassion. From children to adults, each ministry plays a vital role in fulfilling our mission.

Kingdom Kids

Kingdom Kids is a vibrant ministry dedicated to helping children grow in their faith through engaging lessons and meaningful relationships. Led by our new Christian Education Director, Carl Ogden, the program serves 12 children using the Orange curriculum. Each Sunday, children participate in interactive lessons and activities that encourage spiritual growth. On communion Sundays, they join their families in the sanctuary, fostering a deeper connection to worship.

Pre-School Children

Our preschool ministry provides a nurturing environment where young children, ages 3 to 6, can begin their journey of faith in a fun and engaging way. Led by a dedicated young adult and a volunteer parent, the program introduces biblical themes through interactive videos and hands-on activities designed to encourage curiosity and connection. Children have the opportunity to explore their faith through guided lessons and creative play, helping them build a strong spiritual foundation. This thoughtful approach ensures that each child feels loved, valued, and supported in their early spiritual development.

Youth Group

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church's youth group offers middle school students a welcoming space to grow in their faith, build friendships, and serve their community. Under the leadership of our Youth Director, Carl Ogden, the group meets regularly to enjoy snacks, engage in meaningful discussions, and explore weekly topics through videos and interactive conversations. The dedicated youth room, equipped with games and space for free play, provides a comfortable and inviting environment for connection and fellowship. Beyond weekly gatherings, the youth actively participate in service projects, partnering with local ministries such as New Day Urban Ministries in downtown San Diego to distribute food and assist with holiday toy drives. This summer, they are looking forward to an exciting sleepaway trip to Big Bear in collaboration with Solana Beach Presbyterian Church, offering a valuable opportunity for spiritual growth and community bonding.

Kitchen Angels

For over 30 years, the Kitchen Angels ministry has provided compassionate support to MSPC members during life's challenging moments. Whether facing illness, bereavement, or the arrival of a new baby, volunteers step in with heartfelt prayers and the delivery of home-cooked meals. Each recipient receives six meals over a two-week period, offering not just nourishment, but a tangible expression of God's love and the church's care. Through this ministry, Kitchen Angels embodies the spirit of community, ensuring that no one in our congregation faces difficult times alone.

Little Steps Christian Preschool Children's Center

For 30 years, the MSPC Little Steps Christian Preschool Children's Center, a church ministry, has prepared children in our community for kindergarten. It has also provided a significant financial contribution to the operations and ministries of MSPC. However, the membership of the church and number of students declined post-pandemic and in 2023 there was a large flood that closed the preschool for 5 months. During this time some of the preschool classrooms were moved up to the sanctuary level while repairs were being made in the preschool. In 2024, Eric Rocha was hired as the new preschool director. Currently, the school consists of about 50 students ranging from infants to 4 years old. Nevertheless, student capacity further declined after the flood and substantially impacted the financial viability of MSPC. After 4 months of research and deliberation, the Session team secured a Montessori preschool interested in leasing the current space. With this change, the Montessori preschool assumed management of the current director, staff and students in January of 2025. The monthly rent now provides a steady monthly income for the church so that it can focus on its other ministries. The lease agreement included a clause to maintain employment for all staff for a minimum of one year. The hope is that the church will continue to maintain and foster a connection with the teachers and families in a faith-based environment.



Music Ministry

Worship through music is an important part of our worship service at MSPC. We are fortunate to have an outstanding leader for our music ministry, Derek Rice, who has led this ministry for the past 9 years. The mission is to deepen and expand the worship experience and sense of spirituality of the congregation.

Santa Breakfast

The annual Santa Breakfast is a beloved MSPC tradition that brings families together for a festive celebration. In partnership with Kingdom Kids, the youth group, and church members, this event offers a warm, joyful atmosphere. Guests enjoy a pancake breakfast, free photos with Mr. and Mrs. Claus, and fun activities for kids. Over the years, it has also supported charities like Toys for Tots and Samaritan's Purse. With a small suggested donation, the Santa Breakfast spreads holiday cheer and the love of Christ during the Christmas season.



Saturdays of Service

Saturdays of Service is a hands-on initiative that brings the MSPC community together to care for our church grounds with dedication and teamwork. Launched by the Buildings and Grounds Committee in October 2024, this monthly effort helps maintain our beautiful property in the heart of La Jolla despite financial constraints. On the first Saturday of each month, volunteers gather to trim bushes, clear debris, weed garden areas, and refresh outdoor spaces. This initiative not only preserves our campus but also strengthens fellowship and fosters a shared sense of stewardship among our congregation.



Thursday Night Study Group

The Thursday Night Study Group offers a welcoming space for members of all ages and life stages to deepen their faith and build meaningful connections. Relaunched after the pandemic, the group has grown beyond its original Young Families focus to include the entire church community. Each week, participants gather for a shared potluck meal, fostering fellowship before diving into engaging discussions. Children enjoy their own activities led by the youth director while adults explore topics ranging from Christian books to in-depth reflections on Pastor Markus' sermons. This study group provides a space for spiritual growth, thoughtful conversation, and a deeper connection with God and one another.

Saturday Morning Men's Fellowship

Saturday Morning Men's Fellowship is the longest continuously running ministry at MSPC (over 40 years). It is an interactive group of more than 15 men of a range of ages. They worship and pray and engage in in-depth study and discussions of Christian books. Refreshments and coffee are available during a break. Men have an opportunity to both learn from and encourage each other in their Christian walk. The Fellowship is also available by Zoom.

Wednesday Night Prayer Group

The Wednesday Night Prayer Group is a powerful gathering of believers committed to lifting up the needs of our church, community, and beyond. Launched in August 2024, this weekly meeting provides a sacred space for worship, intercession, and mutual encouragement. Participants come together to seek God's guidance, pray for one another, and offer support through heartfelt petitions and praise. Each session incorporates worship music and specific prayer requests submitted by the congregation and youth, creating a deeply connected and spiritually enriching experience. Through this ministry, MSPC continues to cultivate a culture of prayer and trust in God's faithfulness.

Worship Services on Sunday

At the heart of MSPC is our worship ministry, where Christ-centered worship draws us closer to God and strengthens our faith community. Our services begin with uplifting music that prepares our hearts to encounter the Holy Spirit, followed by the Lord's Prayer and a warm time of fellowship. Each sermon offers thoughtful reflections on Scripture, providing practical insights to apply Jesus' teachings in our daily lives. On the first Sunday of each month, we celebrate the Lord's Supper together, creating a meaningful moment of unity and remembrance. After the service, our Deacons extend hospitality by offering refreshments and opportunities for deeper connection. Whether through music, prayer, or the preached Word, our worship ministry fosters a spirit of inclusion, reverence, and growth in faith. Worship through music is an important part of our worship service at MSPC. We are fortunate to have an outstanding leader for our music ministry, Derek Rice.

Qualities of Our Next Pastor

As Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church looks to the future, we seek a pastor who will lead with a deep relationship with God and a commitment to guiding our congregation in faith and service. Our next pastor should embody the following qualities that align with our values and mission:

- Strong relationship with God and solid biblical teaching
- Humble and empowering leadership
- Spiritual growth and guidance
- Relational, approachable, and family-focused
- Visionary and open to innovation

Our Goals for 2025-2028

As Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church looks ahead to the next three years, we are committed to strengthening our church community and advancing our mission with renewed focus. Based on congregational input, our priorities center on fostering a sense of belonging and support, expanding our children and youth ministries, and deepening discipleship and spiritual growth. In addition to these missional goals, we aim to stabilize our financial position, grow our membership, and enhance communication through updated technology and outreach efforts. With a shared vision and dedication, we are excited to build on MSPC's rich legacy and step confidently into the future.

Missional Focus

Deepen congregational health

***Expand and develop preschool
and youth ministries***

***Expand Discipleship and
spiritual growth***

Operational Focus

Stabilize our financial position

Grow our membership

***Update and enhance communication
technology and methods***

In Closing

As we conclude this Mission Study Report, we are filled with gratitude for the journey that has brought us to this pivotal moment in the life of Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church. This report represents months of thoughtful reflection, prayerful discernment, and the collective voices of our congregation, each contributing to a deeper understanding of who we are and where God is leading us.

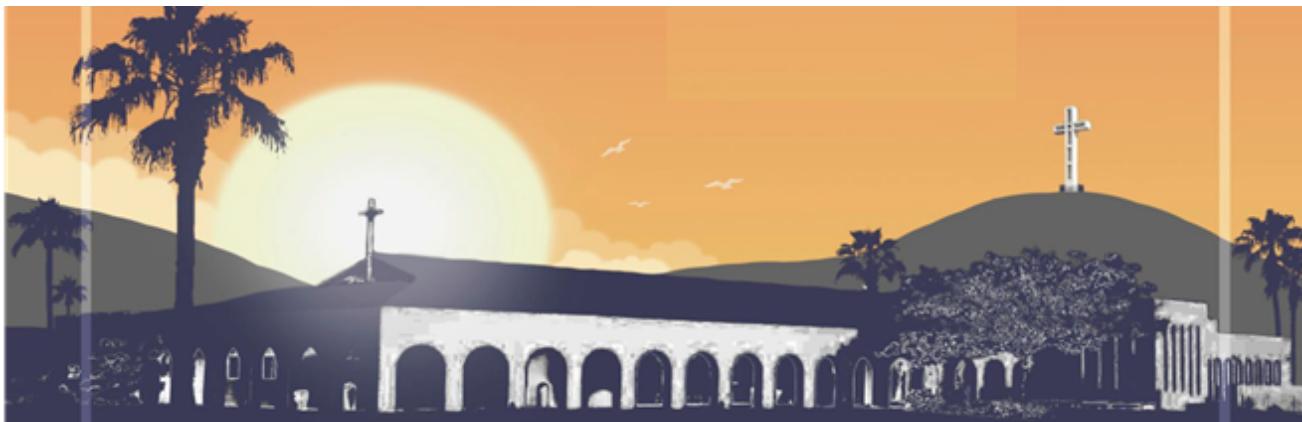
Through seasons of change and challenge, MSPC has remained steadfast in its commitment to being a welcoming, Christ-centered community. Our church has been shaped by a legacy of faithful service, passionate worship, and a heart for outreach—qualities that continue to define us today. While we acknowledge the hurdles we face, we are encouraged by the resilience of our congregation and the opportunities that lie ahead.

Looking forward, we are committed to strengthening our ministries, expanding our outreach, and fostering deeper relationships within our church family and the broader community. We believe that with God's guidance and the dedication of our members, MSPC will continue to be a place of hope, transformation, and spiritual growth.

We invite each member of our congregation to prayerfully consider how they can actively participate in the next chapter of MSPC's story. Whether through service, giving, or simply being present, every contribution helps us fulfill our mission of extending Christ's love to all.

The Mission Study Team extends our sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed their time, insights, and prayers throughout this process. We are confident that, together, we will continue to follow God's calling with faith, hope, and joy as we step into the future He has prepared for us.

The Mission Study Team extends their sincere appreciation and gratitude to the entire MSPC congregation and, specifically, to the contributions of Scott Sabin, Jim Whalen and Amanda Dahlgren.



Appendix I

Demographic Comparison - La Jolla & MSPC

Demographic	Congregation		La Jolla (zip code 92037)	
	Percent (%)	Count (#)	Percent (%)	Count (#)
Total Population	100%	29	100%	39,842
Female	51.7%	15	50.7%	20,200
Male	48.3%	14	49.3%	19,642
Marital Status				
Single	20.7%	6	20.8%	7,570
Married	72.4%	21	28.8%	10,478
Widowed	3.4%	1	12.0%	4,383
Divorced	3.4%	1	38.3%	13,944
Age				
18-25	0.0%	0	14.0%	2,242
26-40	10.3%	3	23.5%	3,754
41-55	48.3%	14	21.0%	3,344
56-70	13.8%	4	18.7%	2,982
>=71	27.6%	8	22.8%	3,631
Education				
Some College	6.9%	2	16.3%	4,632
Associates	3.4%	1	N/A	N/A
Bachelors	44.8%	13	35.2%	100,001
Masters	34.5%	10	N/A	N/A
Doctorate	10.3%	3	N/A	N/A
Post-Grad	44.8%	13	40.3%	11,447
Race				
White	82.8%	24	71.5%	28,477
Hispanic/Latino	3.4%	1	6.4%	2,530
Black/African American	0.0%	0	1.2%	478
Asian/Pacific	13.8%	4	11.9%	4,680

NOTE: Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding.

Data for Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church congregation is from a March 2025 survey.

Data for The City of La Jolla, CA is from the U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for 92037 <<http://censusreporter.org/profiles/86000US92037-92037/>>

Appendix II

Congregational Survey Results

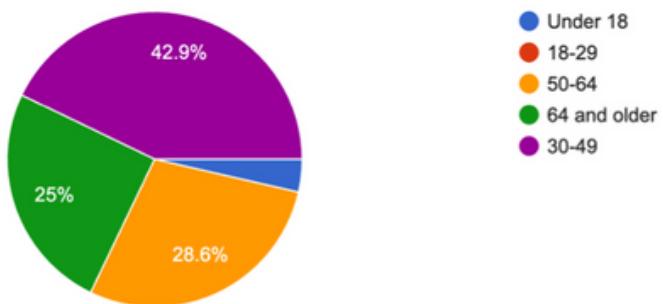
Mt Soledad Congregational Survey

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church is committed to understanding how to better serve its congregation and community. As a part of the MSPC Community, your feedback is vital in helping us assess our current programs and prioritize future initiatives. Please take a few moments to complete this survey and share your thoughts on how our church can continue making a positive impact.

Responses collected October to November 2024

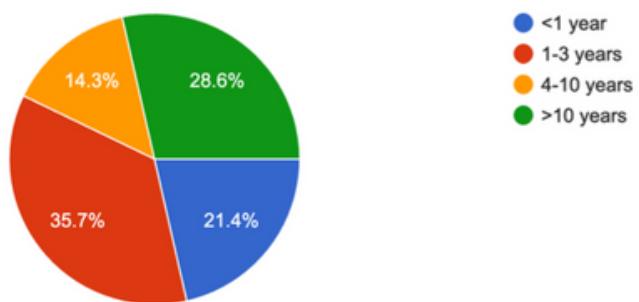
What is your age?

28 responses



How long have you been attending this church?

28 responses

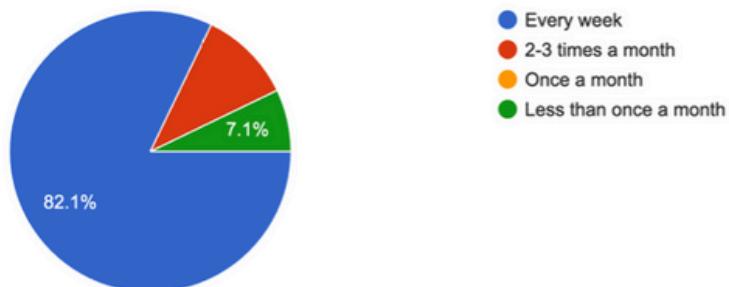


Congregational Survey Results (Cont'd)

Question 1

How frequently do you attend church services?

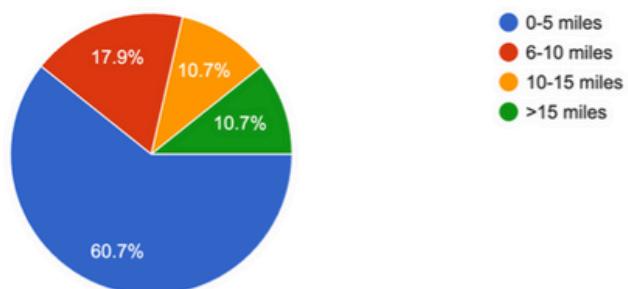
28 responses



Question 2

How far do you live from the church?

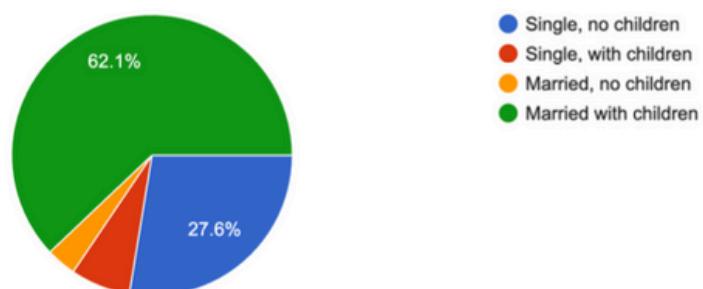
28 responses



Question 3

What is your family status?

29 responses

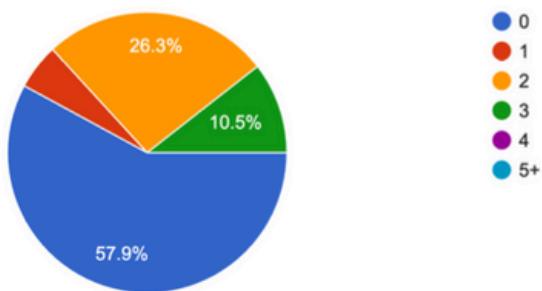


Congregational Survey Results (Cont'd)

Question 4

How many children under 18 years old are in your household?

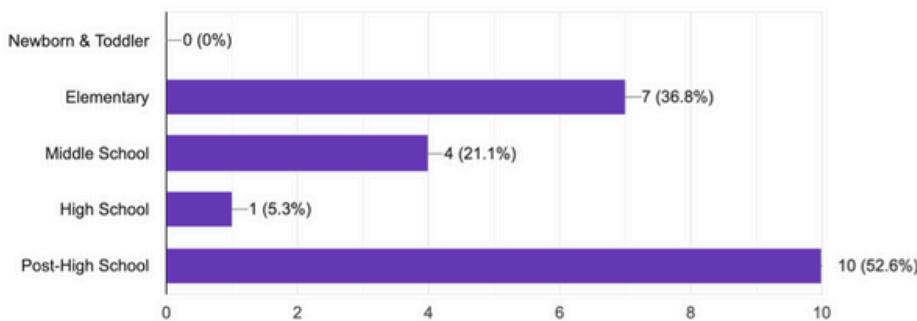
19 responses



Question 5

What age range below best describe your children? (Select all that apply)

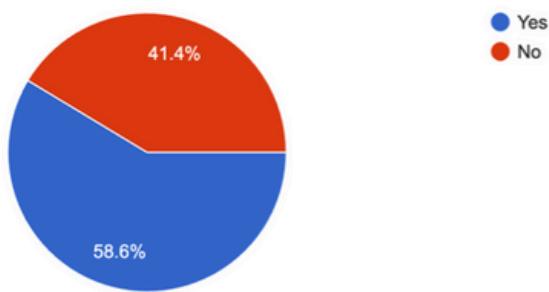
19 responses



Question 6

Are you a member of Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church?

29 responses

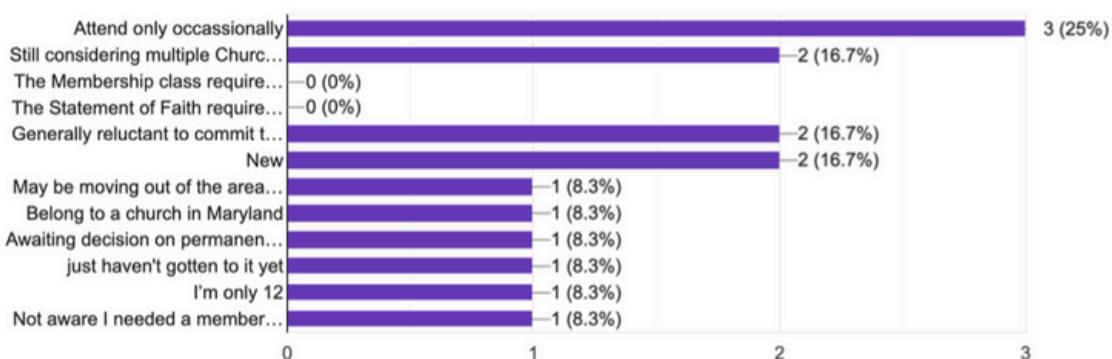


Congregational Survey Results (Cont'd)

Question 7

What best describes why you are not a member of MSPC? (select all that apply)

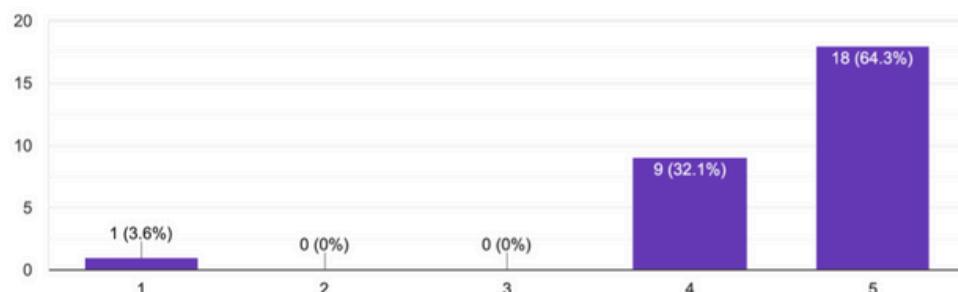
12 responses



Question 8

How satisfied are you with the current worship services?

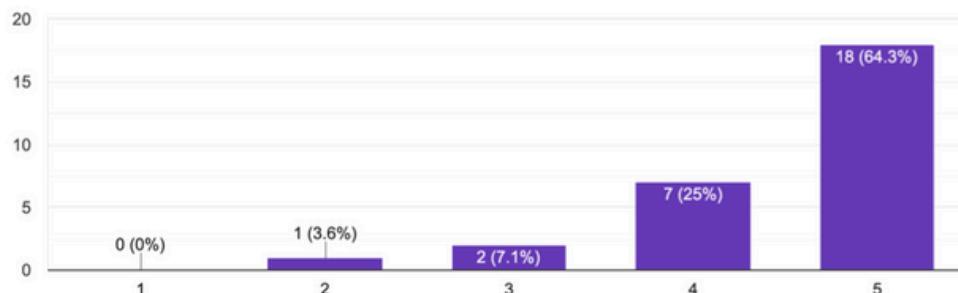
28 responses



Question 8

How satisfied are you that the church is supporting your spiritual growth and development?

28 responses



Congregational Survey Results (Cont'd)

Question 9

Do you have any comments you'd like to share related to Spiritual Life and Worship at

Mt Soledad? 16 responses

No

Very friendly congregation who make me feel welcome. It has grown from about 15 to over 50 pretty regular attendees in the last year. Pastor Mark engages the congregation by not merely preaching to it but by soliciting answers to questions. Congregation is not shy about contributing. I have not seen this level of engagement at any other Presbyterian Church I have attended including La Jolla Pres, Solana Beach Presbyterian Church. Hopefully the next pastor will be able to engage the congregation in this way. Also Pastor Mark sticks around after the service and is very relational unlike some pastors who scoot out as soon as the service is over.

Not a fan of contemporary church music. However the contemporary music at Mt. Solidad is excellent. Prefer traditional hymns.

We need to be better known. There is something special here, but the church community lacks critical mass to be sustainable.

None at this time

I'm thankful that it is an open and welcoming place

My parents and sister have attended for many years. I have attended on occasion in the past and am attending more regularly as of a few months ago.

I love MSPC

I really appreciate Markus, his preaching, his authenticity.

Think Pastor Marcus is a wonderful

This is an amazing, loving, and accepting group of people. We are small, but mighty! Derek and Markus are both incredibly gifted at what they do and we are very blessed to have them.

My dad is the best pastor in the entire world

Great place

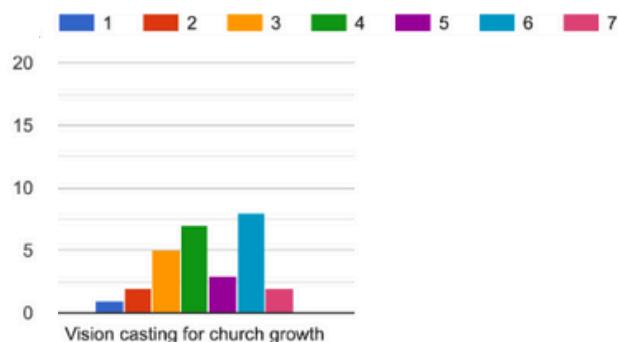
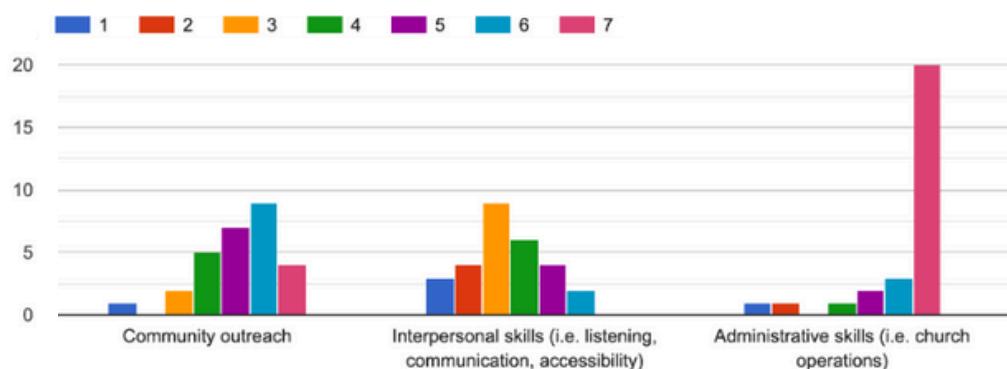
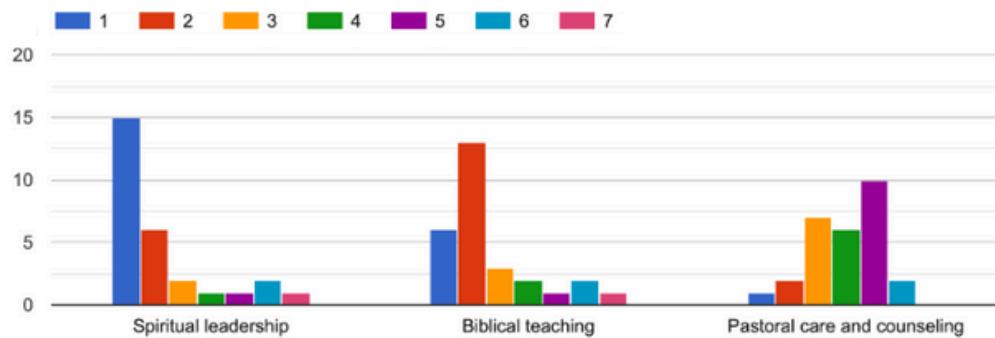
I appreciate the thoughtful and whole hearted worship. At times I would welcome more variety of an softer instrumentation and perhaps less words and more space for quiet and reflection through music... drawn into the still small voice and space to listen.

I love our current Worship Leader Derek Rice!

Congregational Survey Results (Cont'd)

Question 10

What qualities do you value most in a pastor? (Rank in order of importance)

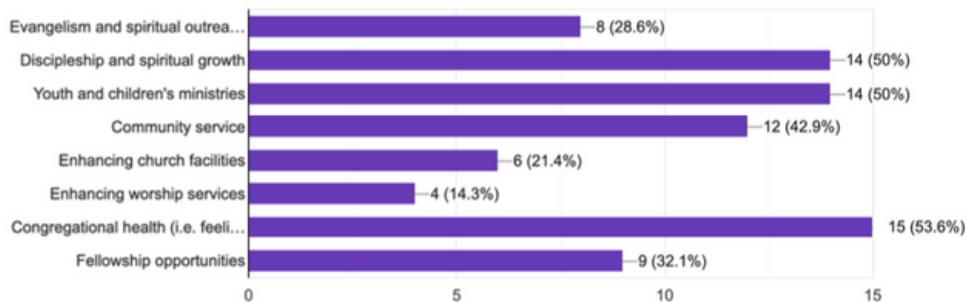


Congregational Survey Results (Cont'd)

Question 11

What do you believe should be the church's top priorities in the next 5 years? (Select up to 3)

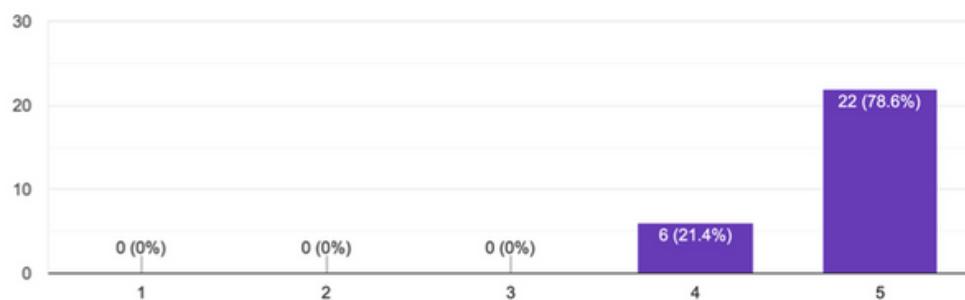
28 responses



Question 12

How important is it that the pastor engages directly with members of the congregation?

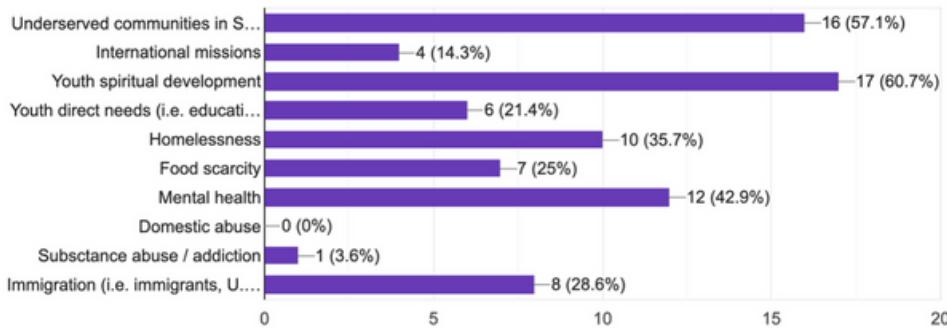
28 responses



Question 13

Which areas of mission work do you feel should be prioritized by the church? (Rank your Top 3)

28 responses



Congregational Survey Results (*Cont'd*)

Question 13

What kind of changes would you like to see in our church's mission and outreach programs? 17 responses

Have more activities which are intergenerational. Maybe building a home or two for the homeless where kids and adults are involved

Hands on community service

Return to our past emphasis. Blessed to be a blessing. Requires fundamental congregational health first

To select one area of service until we grow

Recruit more new members by going out to the community

I'd like us to focus on programming and initiatives that are needed by the residents of La Jolla Community outreach

I'd love to see opportunities to involve people from the local community in outreach programs in secular ways in addition to spiritual ones.

We need to do more

I believe we need to find a way to minister to the local La Jolla community. Just because people have their basic needs covered (and much more) doesn't mean they don't have spiritual and community needs.

Going back to serve with Homes of Hope in Ensenada, Mexico and additional Missions Trip opportunities.

Not sure

more opportunities for not only youth, but also adults within the congregation

BENNY

None

Not sure yet

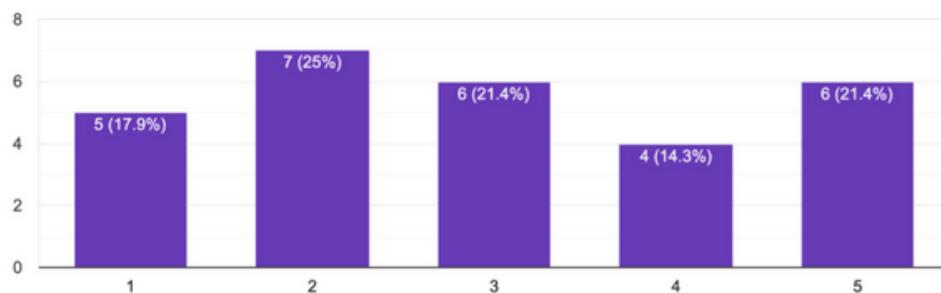
Continue to get our community involved with our church and make it known to them.

Congregational Survey Results (Cont'd)

Question 14

How engaged are you with the church outside of attendance of Sunday services?

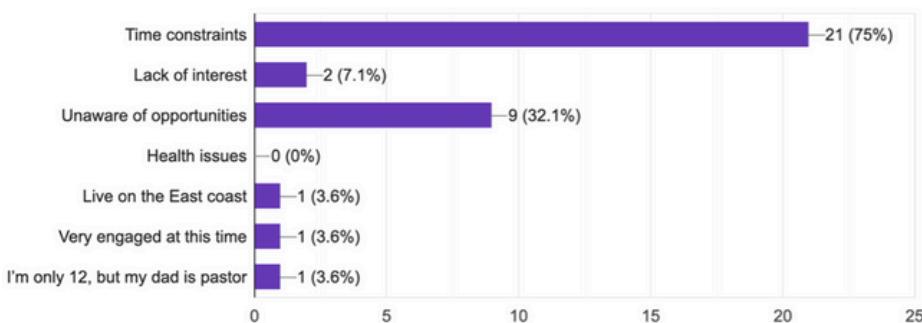
28 responses



Question 15

What prevents you from being more engaged in church activities? (Select all that apply)

28 responses



Question 16

What additional service opportunities (i.e. announcements, youth group support, greeters, Steven's Ministry, Kitchen Angels, holiday events etc) would you like to see in our church? 17 responses

Kitchen Angels, Steven's Ministry	possibility a Community Service Sunday
Outreach to community	Youth group support
Choir for kids	Family events
Steven's ministry	Christmas Tea early December
Not sure	kitchen angels, more youth support
DivorceCare, Family programs, Wednesday night church	YOUTH GROUP
Holiday events	Kids choir
Thanksgiving feast	Mission trips abroad
Community events- concert in the park, movie night, parents night out	

Congregational Survey Results (Cont'd)

Question 17

In what ways can the church better support your spiritual growth? 16 responses
For where I am at, the church is supplying my needs adequately

Building community within the congregation

Bible studies

I am satisfied with how things are at this time

Continue to be an open and welcoming place. And continue encouraging everyone in the congregation to get involved.

More church participation

More Engaging youth Sunday program for middle schoolers.

Discipleship groups?

just continued Biblical teaching

More opportunities to connect outside of church services

I enjoyed the Bible studies as Home Fellowship

Sunday prior to service pastor study group- this was done in the past

I don't know but youth group is fun

Mentors and friendship

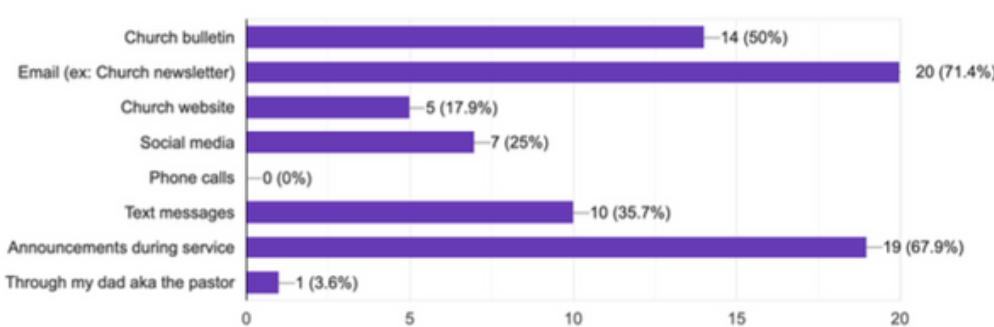
They are doing great already

Having an online Bible Study that goes into depth that can be watched when I have some extra time.

Question 18

How do you prefer to receive updates about the church? (Select all that apply)

28 responses



Appendix III

Flyer Advertising Congregational Survey

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church
Mission Study Report
Congregational Survey

We are inviting all those who attend Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church to complete a 10 minute survey.

Why am I being invited to take this survey?

Your anonymous and summarized responses will be used to:

- Chart a new course for our church over the next 5 years
- Identify the qualities for selection of a new pastor

Where can I obtain a copy of the survey?

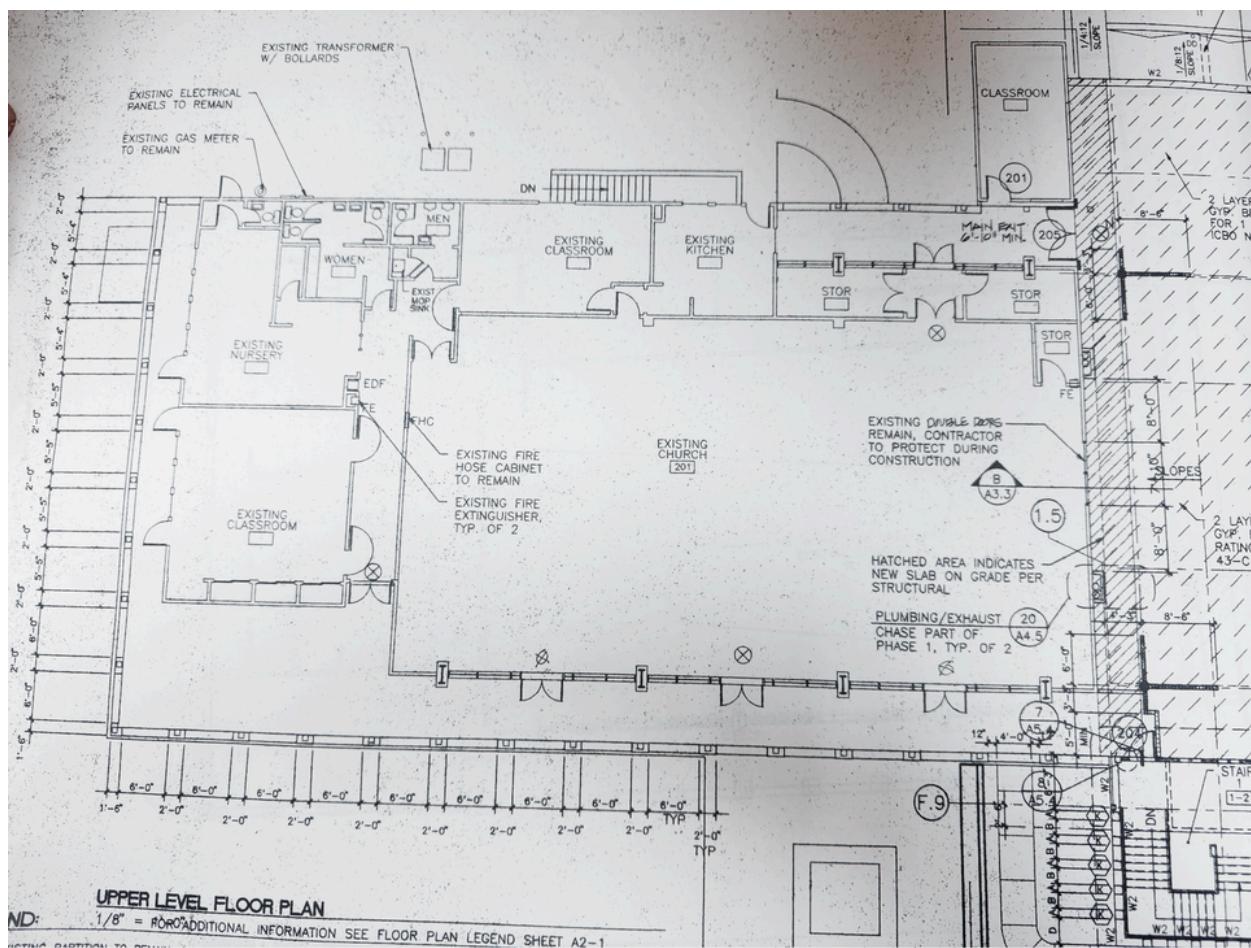
Scan the QR Code with Your Phone:



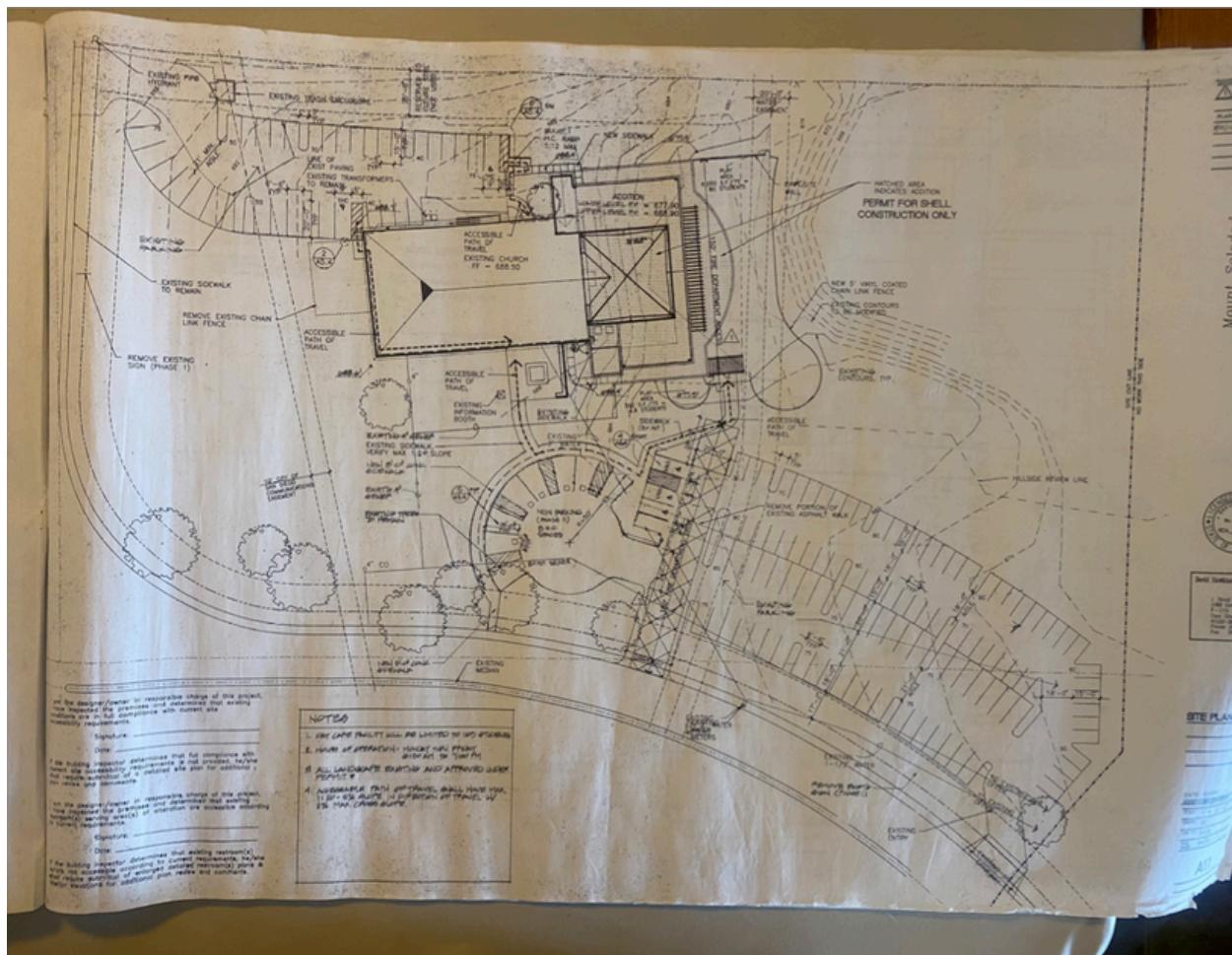
Email Church Office at:
officemanager@mountsoledad.org to request a link to Survey.

Appendix IV

Church Blueprint

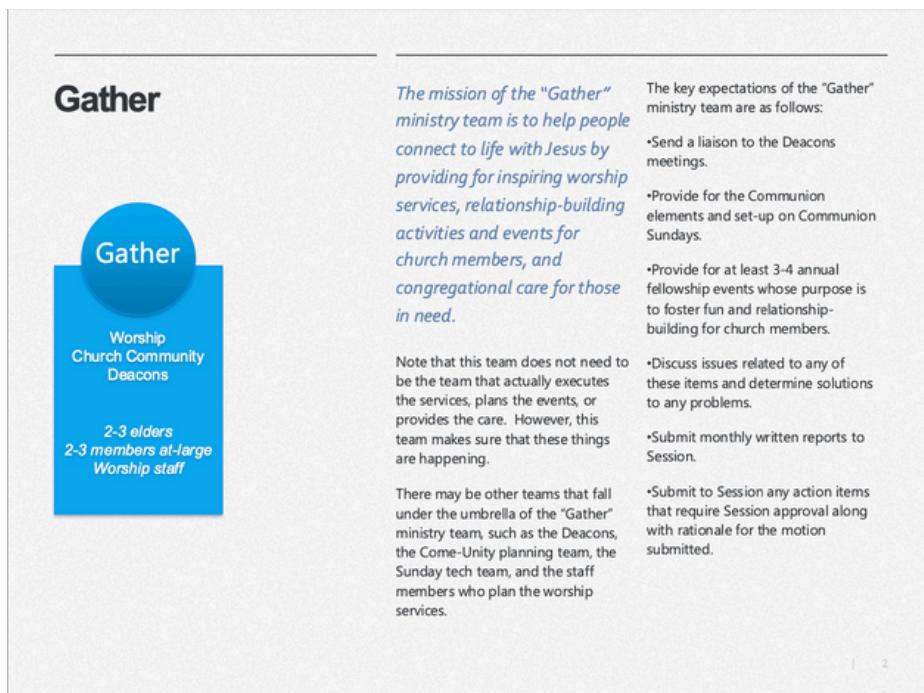
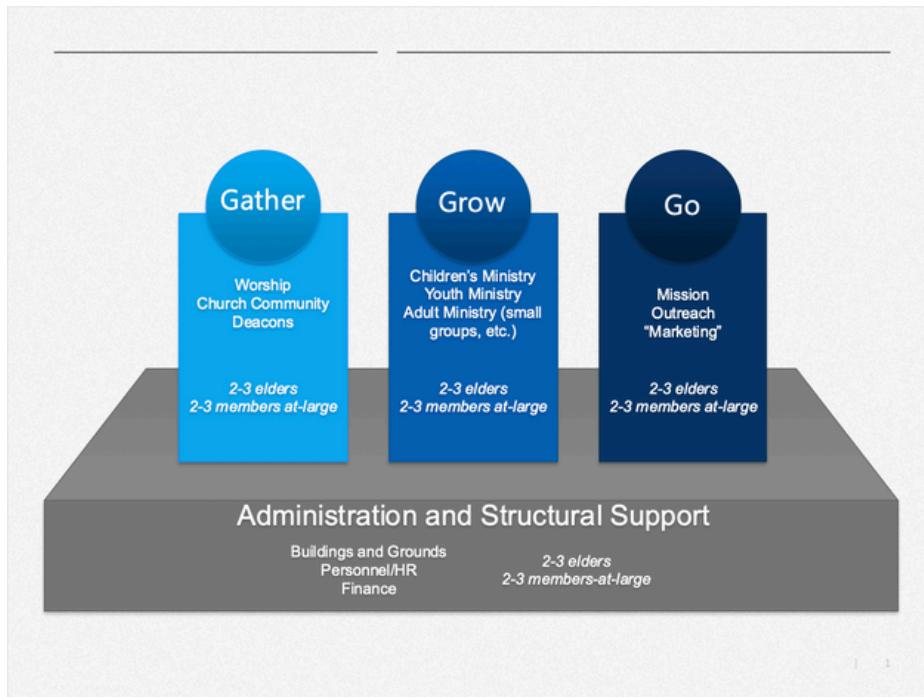


Property Blueprint



Appendix V

Church Growth Framework



Church Growth Framework (Cont'd)

Grow

Grow

Children's Ministry
Youth Ministry
Adult Ministry (small groups, etc.)
2-3 elders
2-3 members at-large
Children's Min. Staff
Youth Min. Staff

The mission of the "Grow" ministry team is to help people connect to life with Jesus by providing for a strong program of spiritual growth for children, youth, and adults.

This team will provide for three key programs:

1. Children's ministry
2. Youth ministry
3. Adult Ministry

Note that this team does not need to be the team that actually teaches the Sunday School classes or youth group meetings, or plans the small groups. However, this team makes sure that these ministries are happening.

Because the children's and youth ministries are run by staff members, those staff members will be a part of this team.

The key expectations of the "Grow" ministry team are as follows:

- Make sure MSPC has a strong, fun, and faith-building children's ministry.
- Make sure MSPC has a strong, fun, and faith-building youth ministry.
- Provide support to the children's and youth ministry staff.
- Be a resource and problem-solving team for the children's and youth ministries.
- Make sure we have an effective and growing adult ministry program (e.g., small groups).

| 3

Go

Go

Mission Outreach
"Marketing"
2-3 elders
2-3 members at-large

The mission of the "Go" ministry team is to help people connect to life with Jesus by providing for opportunities for the people of MSPC to engage in local and global mission and outreach.

Note that this team does not need to be the team that plans the mission and outreach events/ministries. However, this team makes sure we have a strong ministry of mission and outreach.

The key expectations of the "Go" ministry team are as follows:

- Dream about mission and outreach opportunities for MSPC.
- Listen to ministry ideas from members of the congregation and make recommendations to Session.
- Say "yes" to ideas for ministries that help MSPC accomplish its mission.
- Say "no" to ideas for ministries that don't help MSPC accomplish its mission.

| 4

Church Growth Framework (Cont'd)

