

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Visioning Team Report, January, 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Without good direction, the people lose their way.” *Proverbs 11:14, The Message*

In 2009, the Session of Moorpark Presbyterian Church (MPC) initiated a visioning process. The motivation for this was a desire to discern God’s will for MPC as a church. A Visioning Team, consisting of a leader, facilitator, church elders, ministry team members and staff was recruited.

The Visioning Process

The Visioning Team met monthly for four months, beginning July 21, 2009. Throughout the process, the team prayerfully relied on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The following questions were addressed:

1. Where is MPC now? Are we the church God desires us to be? (current reality)
2. What do we value above everything else? (core values)
3. Where are we going? Are we aligned with God’s will? What will we look like when we get there? (vision)
4. Does our mission statement reflect who God is calling us to be? (mission)
5. Based on our vision, how are we going to get there? (strategic priorities)
6. What must we do to accomplish these priorities? (implementation plan)
7. How will we know how we’re doing? (evaluation)
8. So who will know? How will everyone take ownership? (communication plan)

Traditional decision-making tools were employed. Smaller groups met between meetings to draft documents to be addressed by the larger team.

A **Vision Statement**, designed to align us with God’s will for MPC and that describes what we will look like at the end of three years, was written.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.

The Team considers the following **Core Values**, the principles that form the foundation of all we do, to be non-negotiable:

- *Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior and we worship him in spirit and truth*
- *The Bible is the true Word of God*
- *Prayer is an essential part of our lives*

Visioning Team Report
Executive Summary

- *All are welcome*
- *We love one another, providing compassion and support for our church family and beyond*
- *We love and minister to our youth, involving them in the life of the church*
- *All are encouraged to discover and use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God*
- *We are disciples of God and are called to make disciples of others*
- *We are called to share our faith with all people*
- *We minister to the spiritual and physical needs of humankind in our local community and throughout the world*

These core values are biblically based. The scripture references identified by the team are included in the full report of the Visioning Process and in all publications.

The Mission, or purpose, of MPC was revised with minor changes.

The purpose of Moorpark Presbyterian Church is to glorify God and to help people become fully committed, joyful disciples of Jesus Christ.

A fully committed disciple demonstrates

- *A commitment to Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.*
- *A commitment to the church as the body of Christ.*
- *A commitment to the work of Christ in the world.*

Six **Strategic Priorities**, issues that must be top priority for action in order to accomplish the new Vision, were identified.

Establish a strong emphasis on evangelism

Make MPC more a part of the community and the community a part of us (“hands-on” local mission)

Increase our involvement in “hands on” global mission

Identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts

Cultivate a worship environment where people are drawn closer to God

Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church

At this point, the work of the Visioning Team was reported to the Session and approved. We were poised to roll out the mission, vision and core values, and to begin work on the strategic priorities.

Implementation

“See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.” Rev. 3:8

On November 22, 2009, Pastor Dave Wilkinson’s sermon, “Can You See It?,” issued a call to the congregation to get involved as the results of the Visioning process and ensuing tasks were rolled out.

A brochure featuring results of the work of the Visioning Team, along with information about the meetings of the ministry teams involved in addressing the strategic priorities, was distributed to all in attendance.

Throughout December and January, groups composed of the ministry team “owners” and others involved in the strategic priorities met to develop action plans. These action plans include objectives and tasks that will address the strategic priorities. They’re specific and task-oriented, identifying what is going to be done, who will do it and when it will be completed.

On January 10, 2010, Pastor Dave Wilkinson’s sermon, “Reputation” urged everyone to get involved in the work of the church to address the strategic priorities and help us become our vision:

“Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.”

Before, between and after services on January 10, visioning tables representing each strategic priority and staffed by representatives of the ministry team owners, provided an opportunity for people to ask questions, get answers and sign up to get involved according to their gifts.

Evaluation

The **Oversight Team**, consisting of elders and others representing the ministry team owners of the six strategic priorities, will meet quarterly with the visioning process leader and facilitator to give progress reports, and provide feedback and suggestions to one another. This provides an opportunity to address two challenges identified by the Visioning Team -- communication and collaboration among the ministry teams.

A quarterly report, incorporating progress reports and recommendations, will be prepared. This report will be sent to Session, who has ownership of, and authority over, the entire process.

Conclusion

As of the date of this report, work on the action plans is underway. We are “a family with a vision on a mission,” one that is seeking to become that joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Visioning Team Report, January, 2010

“Without good direction, the people lose their way.” Proverbs 11:14, The Message

In 2009, the Session of Moorpark Presbyterian Church (MPC) initiated a visioning process. The motivation for this was a desire to discern God’s will for MPC as a church. A Visioning Team, consisting of a leader (a church elder), facilitator, elders, ministry team members and staff was recruited.

The Visioning Process

The Visioning Team met monthly at the church for four months, beginning July 21, 2009. Throughout the process, the team prayerfully relied on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The following questions were addressed:

1. Where is MPC now? Are we the church God desires us to be? (current reality)
2. What do we value above everything else? (core values)
3. Where are we going? Are we aligned with God’s will? What will we look like when we get there? (vision)
4. Does our mission statement reflect who God is calling us to be? (mission)
5. Based on our vision, how are we going to get there? (strategic priorities)
6. What must we do to accomplish these priorities? (implementation plan)
7. How will we know how we’re doing? (evaluation)
8. So who will know? How will everyone take ownership? (communication plan)

As the team began its deliberations, ground rules were established. Meetings lasted two hours. It was estimated that the process could be completed in 3-4 meetings.

Traditional decision-making tools, such as brainstorming and multivoting, were employed. Smaller groups met between meetings to draft documents to be addressed by the larger team. E-mail input was welcomed throughout the process.

During the meetings, the team often divided into small groups of 8-10 people, then reconvened to report and consolidate their results into like ideas. As needed, volunteers from the Visioning Team met with the leader and the facilitator between meetings to create statements from ideas that had been generated at team meetings.

30 people attended the first meeting. Throughout the course of the process, approximately 25 people were in attendance at each meeting.

Where is MPC now? Are we the church God desires us to be? (Current reality)

Pastor Dave Wilkinson presented membership involvement and attendance trends, 1988 to present (attachment 1). We learned that:

- Attendance on Sunday morning is approaching 400 people a week. It was flat (about 350) from 1999 until 2008, probably due to facilities limitations, and increased in 2008, when the new sanctuary was completed. Dave will be collaborating with other pastors on how to break the “400 barrier.”
- MPC currently has just under 500 members. There has been an upward trend in membership since the church was established in 1988.
- Active involvement has approximated membership since 1988. This includes non-members, as well.
- From 1988 to 1998, the population of the city of Moorpark increased 18%. The congregation of MPC increased 205%. From 1998 to 2008, the population of the city of Moorpark increased 24%. During this time, the congregation of MPC increased 24%.
- Over the past 20 years, the population of the city of Moorpark has increased 24% and the congregation of MPC has grown by 274%.
- The church population of Moorpark is 13%. MPC represents 12% of the total church population.
- 47% of the church population of Moorpark is Catholic and 53% is Protestant. MPC represents 22% of the Protestants.
- The MPC church to community ratio was .05% in 1988, 1.3% in 1998 and 1.3% in 2008. This is greater than the Presbyterian Church to community ratios in all surrounding communities except Ojai, which is 4.4%.
- Worship attendance at MPC is 85%, higher than worship attendance at Presbyterian churches in the surrounding communities.

Prior to the meeting, team members solicited input from friends and neighbors about their perceptions of MPC (attachment 2). These were presented and discussed.

Trends and changes were presented by team members (attachment 3).

At the conclusion of the presentations and discussion, the team created a list of strengths and weaknesses (attachment 4).

Working with such a large volume of information and options tends to create anxiety. Between meetings, time was spent consolidating the information and making some decisions. A list of

20 key issues was generated (attachment 5). Then, the team members voted via e-mail, using multi-voting, discerning what they believe God considers the top six key issues for MPC (attachment 6).

TOP SIX MPC KEY ISSUES

- Lack of evangelism
- How do we (MPC) become more a part of the community and the community become more a part of us?
- Does the way we worship draw people closer to God?
- Lack of involvement in hands on mission in our community and surrounding area
- Need to encourage the use of spiritual gifts and talents by everyone
- Lack of signage/clear instructions.

What do we value above everything else? (Core values)

Core values are the principles that form the foundation of all we do. They're considered to be non-negotiable, things we won't change even if everything else changes around us. They should have a biblical basis.

At the second meeting, the team created a list of draft core values. Volunteers from the team met with the team leader and facilitator between meetings to "polish" the core values identified at this meeting for approval at the next meeting.

CORE VALUES OF MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

These principles form the foundation of all we do:

- **Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior and we worship him in spirit and truth** (John 3:16; John 1:4; Jude 1:25; Isaiah 43:11)
- **The Bible is the true Word of God** (John 1:1; Hebrews 4:12; Col. 3:16; Eph. 6:17; Psalm 119; 1 Peter 1:24)
- **Prayer is an essential part of our lives** (Phil. 4:6; Proverbs 15:29; Psalm 6:9; Mark 11:24; Matthew 21:22)
- **All are welcome** (Matthew 11:28; 1 John 4:11-12; 1 John 4:19)
- **We love one another, providing compassion and support for our church family and beyond** (1 John 3:11; 1 John 4:19; 1 John 4:16; John 13:34; Matthew 22:39; John 15:17; Zec. 7:9; Matthew 11:28; Ephesians 4:32)

- **We love and minister to our youth, involving them in the life of the church** (Matthew 19:14; Proverbs 22:6; Psalm 78:5; Mark 9:37)
- **All are encouraged to discover and use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God** (Romans 1:11-12; 1 Peter 4:10; Hebrews 2:4; 1st Corinthians 12:1, 4-11)
- **We are disciples of God and are called to make disciples of others** (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:20)
- **We are called to share our faith with all people** (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15, 20; Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 10:6-8; 2 Timothy 4:2)
- **We minister to the spiritual and physical needs of humankind in our local community and throughout the world** (Matthew 28:19; Matthew 10:6-8; Matthew 25:34-40; Mark 12: 30-34a; James 1:27a; Isaiah 61:1; 1 Peter 5:2)

Where are we going? Are we aligned with God’s will? What will we look like when we get there? (Vision)

“Vision” and “mission” are often confused. *Vision* looks forward to what God would have MPC become, or where He is calling us to go, at this point in our life together. *Mission* is the reason that MPC exists—its purpose.

A vision statement answers the questions “Where are we going?” “What will we look like when we get there?” and, in our case, “What would God have us look like?” The vision statement should reflect the core values of the church. It should drive everything that is done from the point of its approval forward.

Vision statements are time-limited. It was decided that the MPC vision statement would be a description of the church in three years.

The team began by creating headlines that would describe MPC and our accomplishments three years from now. Copies of the strengths, key issues and core values were provided to assist with this process. Using the work of the full team, the first draft of the MPC Vision Statement was prepared by a small group that met between meetings. The strengths, key issues and core values were used by this group, as well. Sample vision statements from various organizations, including several churches, were reviewed. As a result of this group’s deliberations, one statement emerged as so appropriate and strong that this statement alone was sent to the full team via e-mail for comment. Based on the team’s responses, three versions of this statement were prepared for discussion. At the next meeting of the Visioning Team, this statement was approved.

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH VISION STATEMENT

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.

Does our mission statement reflect who God is calling us to be? (mission)

“...then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.” Philippians 2:1-2

Mission is the reason that MPC exists—our purpose for existing and our primary objectives. A mission statement is realistic vs. aspirational.

The Mission, or purpose, of MPC was revised with minor changes in the definition of “fully committed disciple.”

The purpose of Moorpark Presbyterian Church is to glorify God and to help people become fully committed, joyful disciples of Jesus Christ.

A fully committed disciple demonstrates

- *A commitment to Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.*
- *A commitment to the church as the body of Christ.*
- *A commitment to the work of Christ in the world.*

Based on our vision, how are we going to get there? (Strategic priorities)

Strategic Priorities are issues that must be top priorities for action in order to accomplish our vision. They address the obstacles that we’ll encounter as we move forward toward our envisioned future. They will guide our planning, including budgeting.

Taking into consideration all that had been accomplished and especially the key issues identified by the Visioning Team, a small group met between meetings to draft a list of strategic priorities. The full Visioning Team identified logical “owners” of each strategic priority. Other ministry teams and staff that need to be involved in addressing the strategic priority, as well as objectives to be accomplished and ideas for action, were identified (attachment 7)

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Establish a strong emphasis on evangelism

Owner: Evangelism

Others Involved: Youth, Children's Ministries, I&D, Communications, Small Groups, Janet, Dave

- Identify people in the congregation with the spiritual gift of evangelism to become missionaries in the community
- Train, equip and mobilize church members in personal evangelism
- Develop methods for extending personal invitations for involvement in the life of the church
- Visibility and branding (e.g. the Catholic church has fish fries during Lent; MPC has Marketplace VBS)
 - Improve signage; we need a cross on the outside
- Offer outreach events

Make MPC more a part of the community and the community a part of us

Owner: Missions

Others Involved: DORKS, Youth, Small Groups, Daryl

- Establish lines of communication with the communities we reach for outreach and service
- Partner with city to identify needs
- Educate congregation as to what "hands on mission" is
- Become involved with "hands on" mission in our community, e.g. tutoring, graffiti coalition, arroyo cleanup, English classes (TESOL), etc.
- Reach out to different demographic groups
- Identify and adopt one or two favorite local missions and regularly involve ourselves with them

Increase our involvement in “hands on” global mission

Owner: Missions

Others Involved: Small groups, Youth, Daryl

Identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts

Owner: I&D

Others Involved: Small groups, CE, train all ministry teams

- Lay ministry concept
- Note: It is important to identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts to accomplish each of the strategic priorities, e.g. the gift of evangelism

Cultivate a worship environment where people are drawn closer to God

Owner: Worship

Others Involved: Youth, Facilities, CE

- Seek to keep the unity of the body of Christ in worship services
- Educate congregation regarding MPC’s worship philosophy
- Provide opportunities for different types of worship experiences, e.g. quarterly prayer & worship service, concerts, etc.

Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church

Owner: I&D

Others Involved: KFG, greeters, small groups, Worship, Facilities, Communications, Fellowship

- Explain our processes (worship, child care, etc.)
- Establish a Welcome Center
- Visibility and branding
 - Improve signage; we need a cross on the outside

What must we do to accomplish these priorities? (Implementation plan) How will we know how we're doing? (Evaluation)

At the fourth and final meeting of the Visioning Team, implementation, evaluation, and communication plans were proposed and approved.

The first question addressed was "Are we organized to do this?" Logical owners (ministry teams) were identified for each strategic priority. However, the team recognized that one team cannot do all the work. And, there was concern that without a coordinated effort, our approach could become fragmented and we could lose focus. Early in its deliberations, the team had identified that there had historically been lack of coordination and communication between ministry teams.

The team had also identified that we need a plan for rolling out the work on the strategic priorities.

A coordinated approach to implementation and evaluation (attachment 8) was proposed by the team leader and the facilitator.

Implementation:

1. Identify group that is the logical owner of each strategic priority.
2. Identify who needs to be present to develop an action plan and be involved in its implementation. Implementation will be built into the action plan.
3. The team leader and the facilitator will work with each of these groups to develop its plan. They will assist with implementation issues, as needed.

Evaluation:

1. Quarterly, representatives of each of the groups working on the strategic priorities will meet together, to report progress and to facilitate communication among those working on all the strategic priorities. These representatives will make up the Oversight Team, along with the team leader and the facilitator.
2. The team leader and the facilitator will prepare a quarterly progress report, with recommendations and requests, to go to Session.

Ownership and Authority:

The Session has ownership and authority, including budget authority, over the entire process. Session approves reports and recommendations. Session will also establish the expectation of a church-wide focus.

The implementation and evaluation plan described above was approved as proposed.

Owners of each strategic priority, as well as other groups who should participate in the action plan to address the strategic priority, were confirmed.

So, who will know? (Communication plan)

Communication with the congregation occurred throughout the visioning process. Four "Visioning Update" reports in question and answer format were attached to the MPC newsletter, inserted in the Sunday morning bulletin, announced during worship services and made available on the church website. People were invited to talk with any Visioning Team member or email the team at visioningteam@mppres.org. Monthly progress reports were presented to Session by the Visioning Team leader.

A Communications Plan (attachment 9), identifying what would be communicated, when and to whom, was presented and approved.

As we implement the work of the Visioning Team, the Communications Ministry Team continues to update the MPC website in order to inform the site's visitors of our progress and provide them with information needed to become involved.

At this point, the work of the Visioning Team was reported to the Session and approved (attachment 10). This concluded the work of Visioning Team. However, it was just the beginning for Moorpark Presbyterian Church. Involvement of the whole church family would be critical to pursuing our vision. We were poised to roll out the mission, vision and core values, and to begin work on the strategic priorities. These will serve as a filter through which everything passes on its way to approval and implementation.

Implementation

"See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut." Rev. 3:8

"Can You See It?"

On November 22, 2009, Pastor Dave Wilkinson's sermon, "Can You See It?," issued a call to the congregation to get involved as the results of the Visioning process and ensuing tasks were rolled out (attachment 11).

A brochure featuring results of the work of the Visioning Team, along with information about the meetings of the ministry teams involved in addressing the strategic priorities, was

distributed to all in attendance (attachment 12). Both the sermon and the brochure were also made available on the church website.

Action Plans

Throughout December and January, groups composed of the ministry team “owners” and others involved in the strategic priorities met to develop action plans (attachments 13-18). These action plans include objectives and tasks that will address the strategic priorities. They’re specific and task-oriented, identifying what is going to be done, who will do it and when it will be completed. Their creation was, indeed, a collaborative effort. Their execution will be collaborative as well, involving those ministry teams and staff members who are assigned tasks in the action plan.

Sermon and Visioning “Fair”

On January 10, 2010, Pastor Dave Wilkinson’s sermon, “Reputation” (attachment 19) urged everyone to get involved in the work of the church to address the strategic priorities and help us become our vision:

“Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.”

Before, between and after services on January 10, Visioning Tables (attachment 20) representing each strategic priority and staffed by representatives of the ministry team owners, provided an opportunity for people to ask questions, get answers and sign up to get involved according to their gifts. Between services, as people enjoyed their coffee, they were able to visit the Visioning Tables. Information sheet handouts (attachments 21) served as additional recruiting tools.

The mood of the Visioning “Fair” was festive, with balloons and banners attracting attention. Participation was lively and feedback was positive.

There were forty sign-ups for the strategic priorities work. The strategic priority Elders/owners were asked to follow-up, during the week immediately following this event, with those individuals who had signed up to get involved. This provided an opportunity to invite them to attend their next Ministry Team meeting as well.

Conclusion

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” Heb.10:24

Visioning Team Report
January, 2010

As of the date of this report, work on the action plans is underway. We're a family with a vision on a mission," one that is seeking to become that joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.

WHERE ARE WE NOW: Membership, Involvement and Attendance Trends, 1988 to present

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is approaching 400 a week.

Was flat (about 350) from about 1999 until 2008. This was probably due to facilities limitations.

Increased when new sanctuary opened.

Dave will be collaborating with other pastors on how to break the 400 barrier.

MEMBERSHIP

Upward trend since the church was established in 1988. Currently just under 500 members.

ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT

Active involvement has approximated membership since 1988. This includes non-members.

DECADAL RATE OF GROWTH

1988 – 1998:

City of Moorpark – 18%

Moorpark Pres. – 205%

1999 – 2008:

City of Moorpark – 24%

Moorpark Pres. – 24%

Total:

City of Moorpark – 52%

Moorpark Pres. – 274%

Membership, attendance

CHURCHED POPULATION OF MOORPARK

Overall – 13% (MPC is 12% of total)

Catholic – 47%

Protestant – 53% (MPC is 22% of Protestants)

MPC Church to Community Ratio

1988 - .05%; 1998 – 1.3%; 2008 – 1.3%

Comparative Presbyterian Church to Community Ratio

Moorpark – 1.3%

Camarillo - 0.5%

Ojai – 4.4%

Oxnard – 0.1%

Simi Valley – 0.4%

Thousand Oaks – 0.5%

Ventura – 0.8%

Comparative Worship Attendance

Moorpark – 85%

Camarillo - 67%

Ojai – 66%

Oxnard – 59%

Simi Valley – 61%

Thousand Oaks – 45%

Ventura – 78%

COMMUNITY PERCEPTION: What do people think of MPC?

Why don't you have a cross on the new sanctuary building?

We feel this church is very friendly. We like the way people are involved each week. The music is great. We especially enjoy the pastor and associate pastor, their dedication and love for the people.

If I was going to attend a church in Moorpark, it would be MPC. They are the "normal" church.

Love the new building.

I go on Easter and Christmas. Love the services. Beautiful and thoughtful.

MPC has the best VBS in town...but, we like our charismatic church. MPC is too traditional for us.

It just doesn't meet up with our childhood church (Hollywood Pres.).

I love MOPS and VBS.

I loved how much I could "feel" God at MPC.

Love how learned the pastor is...makes the Bible come alive.

I have gay family members...got turned off to MPC during the whole Prop. 8 thing.

My kids find it really hard to sit in church. Don't understand the kids' schedule.

Middle school youth group – son told her it's great!

Music – not traditional enough.

Loved preaching but went to another denomination.

Why don't you have Saturday night church?

TRENDS AND CHANGES

15% of population of “churched,” percentage of unchurched population is growing

Current economy: frugality is valued

Post-modern culture:

- Prolonged adolescence in culture

- 60% of church goers will be singles and “empty-nesters”

- Different communication styles (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)

- Busyness of culture - busyness as a mark of status

- Higher entertainment expectation

- Immediate gratification culture

- Entitlement culture

- Information overload/more detachment aka ‘compassion fatigue’; less a sense of responsibility

- Need to receive information multiple ways

- More moving around/shallow roots - even in relationships

- Spiritual, not religious

- Image is everything - has to be cool

Parents’ responsibility for spiritual growth of their children:

- Parents not as involved in spiritual development; falls to the church

- Sports

- Moms Club moms “not involved in church/don’t need to be”

Demographic & ethnic breakdown of Moorpark needed

- Hispanic population = 23% (remaining steady at 23% as population increases)

How church is done now:

- Church services not just on Sundays

- More forms of worship services available (bluegrass, rock & roll, charismatic, etc.)

- Secular programs as church activities

STRENGTHS

Biblical teaching

Leadership

- Strong & committed pastoral staff

- Involved elders – in actual ministry

Organization structure based on Book of Order; well run

Celebration of giftedness – the priesthood of believers, encourage use of gifts

- High % of active, enthusiastic members

Care and compassion for church family, sense of family/community

- No cliques with power, factions

- Church includes all ages – not fractured or divided by age groups

- Vital deacons' ministry

- Small church feeling, even though it is a large church

Attitude – friendly, joy of our congregation, humor

Strong prayer support

Room to grow, blessed with facilities

Younger than average Presbyterians

Programs:

- Music

 - Strong music ministry

 - Variety of music styles

 - No praise music/traditional music fault lines

 - Volume at worship service isn't too loud.

- Strong adult education

- Youth program/Sunday School – Staff, strong youth ministry/program

- Strong missions program

- MOPS

Website, newsletter

WEAKNESSES

Our weaknesses prohibit people who are new at MPC from experiencing our strengths

Inward focused vs. outreach oriented

- *Lack of evangelism, lack of belief in the lostness of the lost

- Lack of local "hands on" community service

Encourage use of gifts

Focus on numbers involved in a program vs. the spiritual growth that occurs; Focus on numbers as opposed to appreciation for milestones

Lack of signage (where do people go?)

Insider information, 'We've always done it that way', cliques

People thinking we're a new church since we have a new building

Lack of socio-economic diversity

Programs:

- Newlyweds, young families -

- College/career age & singles programs growing but still weak

- Nursery

- Lack of continuity with Sunday school teachers

Worship service:

- Worship only on Sundays

- No worship service for youth 6th-12th grade

- No age diversity in leading worship

- Diversity in worship styles

- Announcements distract from worship

- Poor acoustics

Communication:

- *Lack of communication between ministry teams

- Newsletter and website need improvement

Too many offering requests

MPC KEY ISSUES (Long List)

1. **Lack of evangelism** - The lost need to hear the good news; need plan to reach the unchurched; lack of visibility in the community (to reach the unchurched)
2. **Lack of socioeconomic diversity**
3. **How do we (MPC) become more a part of the community and the community become more a part of us?** Includes inward focus vs. community outreach; MPC is not identified with anything in particular (something specific on a regular basis) in the community.
4. **Lack of involvement in hands on mission in our community and surrounding area.**
5. **While we pursue our commitment to serve more of the community, we must not lose sight of continuing to serve our current congregation. Also, is there a risk of alienating current members if we change our worship service to bring in new members?**
6. **How do we cross the divide between our theology and the post-modern culture without compromising the basic tenets of our belief system?**
7. **Need to develop effective programs for currently underserved groups.**
8. **Need to evaluate the effectiveness of all our current programs** - including, but not limited to, lack of participation in Women's Ministry activities, except the retreat; lack of continuity with Sunday School teachers; nursery program issues
9. **Focus on numbers vs. spiritual growth.**
10. **Does the way we worship draw people closer to God?** We have worship services only on Sundays; no worship service for 6th – 12th grade; no age diversity in leading worship; lack of diversity in worship styles; announcements distract from worship; poor acoustics
11. **Need to encourage the use of (spiritual) gifts and talents by everyone** – members and regular attenders of all ages.
12. **Lack of commitment to, responsibility for, volunteer positions** - e.g. ushers; pray-ers; communion servers
13. **Lack of communication between ministry teams**
14. **Cliques; "we've always done it that way" attitude**
15. **Too many offering requests**
16. **Budgetary concerns**
17. **Lack of signage/clear instructions**
18. **Addressing needs of, and reaching out to, various demographic groups** – singles; newlyweds; young families; college/career; we have no worship service for 6th – 12th graders.

- 19. How do we best utilize our facilities to serve God? Are the community activities that take place at MPC consistent with our mission?**
- 20. Newsletter and website need improvement**

TOP 6 MPC KEY ISSUES

Lack of evangelism - The lost need to hear the good news; need plan to reach the unchurched; lack of visibility in the community (to reach the unchurched)

How do we (MPC) become more a part of the community and the community become more a part of us? Includes inward focus vs. community outreach; MPC is not identified with anything in particular (something specific on a regular basis) in the community.

Lack of involvement in hands on mission in our community and surrounding area.

Does the way we worship draw people closer to God? We have worship services only on Sundays; no worship service for 6th – 12th grade; no age diversity in leading worship; lack of diversity in worship styles; announcements distract from worship; poor acoustics

Need to encourage the use of (spiritual) gifts and talents by everyone – members and regular attenders of all ages.

Lack of signage/clear instructions

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Establish a strong emphasis on evangelism – Evangelism Ministry Team

Youth, Children’s Ministries, I&D, Communications, Small Groups, Janet, Dave

- Identify people in the congregation with the spiritual gift of evangelism to become missionaries in the community
- Train, equip and mobilize church members in personal evangelism
- Develop methods for extending personal invitations for involvement in the life of the church
- Visibility and branding (e.g. the Catholic church has fish fries during Lent; MPC has Marketplace VBS)
 - Improve signage; we need a cross on the outside
- Offer outreach events

Ideas/Suggestions:

- Establish a presence at local colleges
- Open a community coffee house

Make MPC more a part of the community and the community a part of us – Missions

DORKS, Youth, Small Groups, Daryl

- Establish lines of communication with the communities we reach for outreach and service
- Partner with city to identify needs
- Educate congregation as to what “hands on mission” is
- Become involved with “hands on” mission in our community, e.g. tutoring, graffiti coalition, arroyo cleanup, English classes (TESOL), etc.
- Reach out to different demographic groups
- Identify and adopt one or two favorite local missions and regularly involve ourselves with them

Idea/suggestion - Open a community lay counseling center

Increase our involvement in “hands on” global mission - Missions

Small groups, Youth, Daryl

Identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts – I&D

Small groups, CE, train all ministry teams

- Lay ministry concept (more info to be presented by Kristin)
- Note: It is important to identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts to accomplish each of the strategic priorities, e.g. the gift of evangelism

Cultivate a worship environment where people are drawn closer to God – Worship

Youth, Facilities, CE

- Seek to keep the unity of the body of Christ in worship services
- Educate congregation regarding MPC’s worship philosophy
- Provide opportunities for different types of worship experiences, e.g. quarterly prayer & worship service, concerts, etc.

Idea/Suggestion

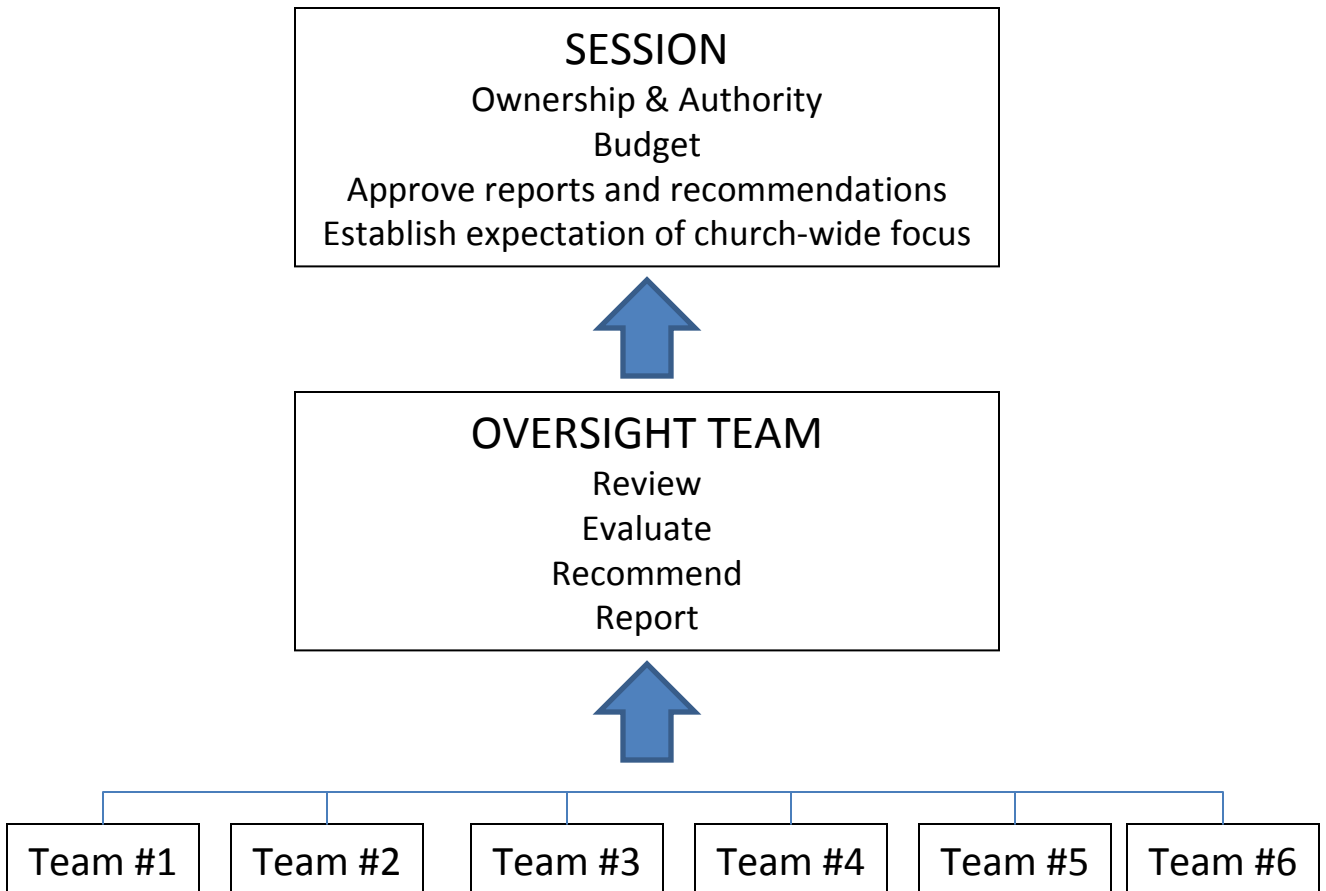
- Develop acronym “Pause” for quarterly prayer & worship service

Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church – I&D

KFG, greeters, small groups, Worship, Facilities, Communications, Fellowship

- Explain our processes (worship, child care, etc.)
- Establish a Welcome Center
- Visibility and branding
 - Improve signage; we need a cross on the outside

2010-2012 Strategic Priorities Implementation and Evaluation



Individual teams each address a specific strategic priority. They plan, implement, evaluate and report progress on their assigned strategic priority to the Oversight Team.

Participation on the Oversight Team allows for communication and collaboration among the individual teams.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of Moorpark Presbyterian Church is to glorify God and to help people become fully committed, joyful disciples of Jesus Christ.

A fully committed disciple demonstrates

- A commitment to Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
- A commitment to the church as the body of Christ.
- A commitment to the work of Christ in the world.

CORE VALUES

These principles form the foundation of all we do:

- **Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior and we worship him in spirit and truth** (John 3:16; John 1:4; Jude 1:25; Isaiah 43:11)
- **The Bible is the true Word of God** (John 1:1; Hebrews 4:12; Col. 3:16; Eph. 6:17; Psalm 119; 1 Peter 1:24)
- **Prayer is an essential part of our lives** (Phil. 4:6; Proverbs 15:29; Psalm 6:9; Mark 11:24; Matthew 21:22)
- **All are welcome** (Matthew 11:28; 1 John 4:11-12; 1 John 4:19)
- **We love one another, providing compassion and support for our church family and beyond** (1 John 3:11; 1 John 4:19; 1 John 4:16; John 13:34; Matthew 22:39; John 15:17; Zec. 7:9; Matthew 11:28; Ephesians 4:32)
- **We love and minister to our youth, involving them in the life of the church** (Matthew 19:14; Proverbs 22:6; Psalm 78:5; Mark 9:37)
- **All are encouraged to discover and use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God** (Romans 1:11-12; 1 Peter 4:10; Hebrews 2:4; 1st Corinthians 12:1, 4-11)
- **We are disciples of God and are called to make disciples of others** (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:20)
- **We are called to share our faith with all people** (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15, 20; Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 10:6-8; 2 Timothy 4:2)
- **We minister to the spiritual and physical needs of humankind in our local community and throughout the world** (Matthew 28:19; Matthew 10:6-8; Matthew 25:34-40; Mark 12: 30-34a; James 1:27a; Isaiah 61:1; 1 Peter 5:2)

VISION STATEMENT

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Establish a strong emphasis on evangelism

Owner: Evangelism

Others Involved: Youth, Children's Ministries, I&D, Communications, Small Groups, Janet, Dave

- Identify people in the congregation with the spiritual gift of evangelism to become missionaries in the community
- Train, equip and mobilize church members in personal evangelism
- Develop methods for extending personal invitations for involvement in the life of the church
- Visibility and branding (e.g. the Catholic church has fish fries during Lent; MPC has Marketplace VBS)
 - Improve signage; we need a cross on the outside
- Offer outreach events

Ideas/Suggestions:

- Establish a presence at local colleges
- Open a community coffee house

Make MPC more a part of the community and the community a part of us

Owner: Missions

Others Involved: DORKS, Youth, Small Groups, Daryl

- Establish lines of communication with the communities we reach for outreach and service
- Partner with city to identify needs
- Educate congregation as to what "hands on mission" is
- Become involved with "hands on" mission in our community, e.g. tutoring, graffiti coalition, arroyo cleanup, English classes (TESOL), etc.
- Reach out to different demographic groups
- Identify and adopt one or two favorite local missions and regularly involve ourselves with them

Idea/suggestion

- Open a community lay counseling center

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Increase our involvement in “hands on” global mission

Owner: Missions

Others Involved: Small groups, Youth, Daryl

Identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts

Owner: I&D

Others Involved: Small groups, CE, train all ministry teams

- Lay ministry concept (more info to be presented by Kristin)
- Note: It is important to identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts to accomplish each of the strategic priorities, e.g. the gift of evangelism

Cultivate a worship environment where people are drawn closer to God

Owner: Worship

Others Involved: Youth, Facilities, CE

- Seek to keep the unity of the body of Christ in worship services
- Educate congregation regarding MPC's worship philosophy
- Provide opportunities for different types of worship experiences, e.g. quarterly prayer & worship service, concerts, etc.

Idea/Suggestion

- Develop acronym “Pause” for quarterly prayer & worship service

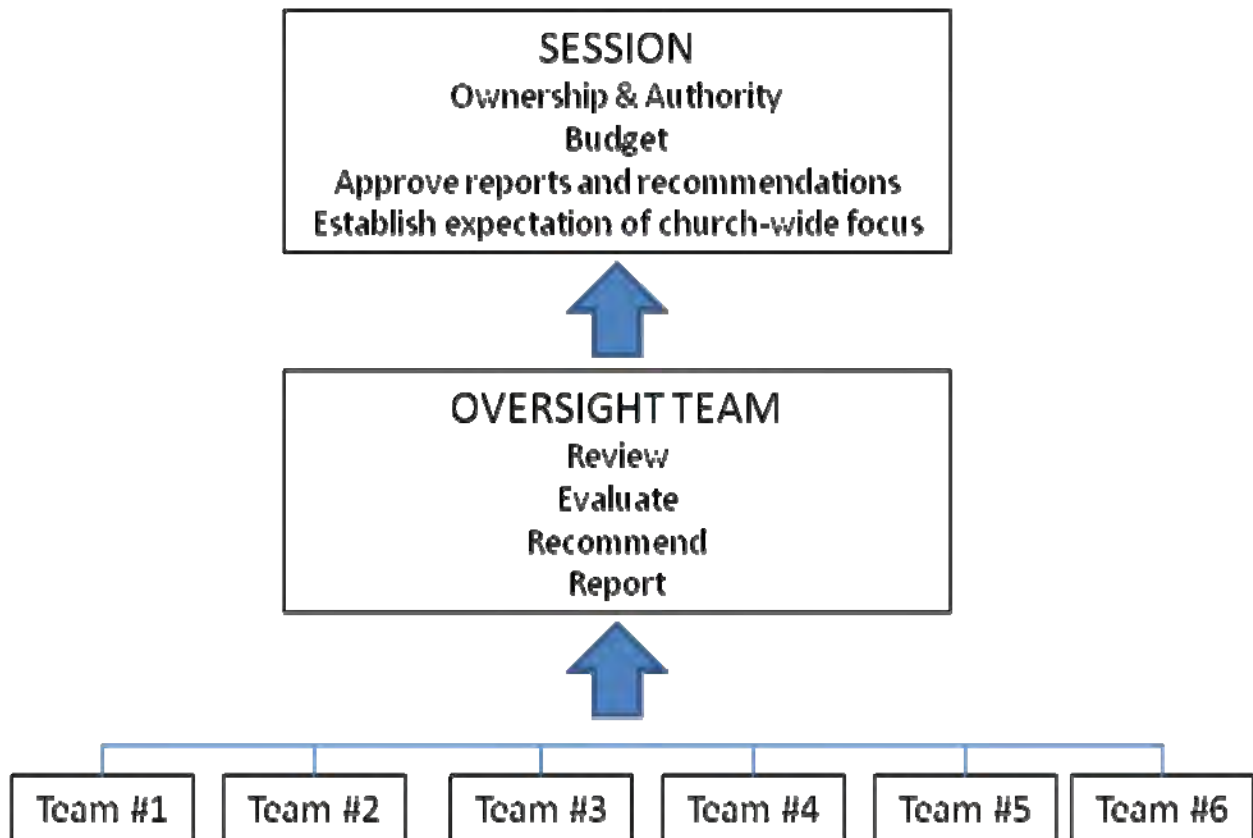
Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church

Owner: I&D

Others Involved: KFG, greeters, small groups, Worship, Facilities, Communications, Fellowship

- Explain our processes (worship, child care, etc.)
- Establish a Welcome Center
- Visibility and branding
 - Improve signage; we need a cross on the outside

2010-2012 Strategic Priorities Implementation and Evaluation



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“Can You See It?”

by Pastor Dave Wilkinson
November 22, 2009

Revelation 3:7-8a, Ephesians 6:10-17

On the wall of my office I have this picture of the Golden Gate Bridge when it was still under construction in 1936. The two towers are in place and the roadbed is arching toward completion high above the waves.

I like this picture because it reminds me that everything, no matter how permanent it looks or how famous it is, starts as an idea. Somebody looks at a barrier and says, "We could throw a bridge across that."

It all starts as a vision. But vision without execution is really only hallucination. Even the best idea is pointless until it is accompanied by risk, team work, expense, expertise and hard work.

Moorpark Presbyterian started as an idea about twenty five years ago. Now the dream is a beautiful, functional reality – just like the bridge. In some circles this would be time for us to congratulate ourselves on a job well done and enjoy the easy life. But that doesn't do it for the church because the church isn't a building. The church is a family. But we are not just a family. We are also a family with a mission. That mission has been given us by our Lord. The question is, "Can you see it?"

How we start is important. When NASA launches a rocket the most important issue besides not blowing up is the angle of launch. The very first Mercury mission in 1961 was launched at a slightly wrong angle. As a result, the Mercury capsule splashed down with its occupant, a monkey named Ham, 132 miles away from the intended target. It wasn't much of a wrong angle but that's all it took.

Twenty three years ago when Moorpark Presbyterian was launched, we tried to do it right. By and large I think we did. We do some things very well. There are certainly some things we can do better. But we have a great foundation to improve on. And unlike the monkey in the Mercury capsule we have control over the ship. We have the opportunity to do mid course corrections while heading where God calls us to go.

This is why we have just completed a four month process of exploring and refining our vision. I appreciate the leadership of Linda Dahl and Joan Johnson and the strong participation of about fifty people from the congregation, elders, staff and members of the Worship, Mission Outreach, Integration & Discipleship, Evangelism and Christian Ed Ministry Teams.

Everyone's worked hard. It's been an exciting process. I personally agree with and support every last thing the team developed.

As a side note let me say that I really like this church. In fact, if I were not a pastor and moved to this area, I would go church shopping, as some of you have done, and I would join this church. Not every pastor can say that about the place they serve. I can and I'm glad.

If you are a visitor here this morning, you can easily recognize that I am talking today to the family. But listen in. You may like what you hear and decide that you want to be part of the family too.

Where are we and where is the Lord calling us to go next? That was the question that faced the Visioning Team.

We started at the very beginning with our Mission Statement as a congregation.

Like the great UCLA basketball coach John Wooden we started with the fundamentals. You've probably heard how Wooden started out. The first time he met with all of the high powered players who flocked to UCLA after dazzling high school careers he would say, "Gentlemen, this is a basketball!" Then he would spend two days teaching them how to put on their socks. Wooden knows that sound fundamentals are the key to everything else.

The fundamental for us, besides the word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit, is our Mission.

You've probably seen our Mission statement. It's printed in the newsletter, the web site and in every Sunday's order of service. Here is our mission: "The purpose of Moorpark Presbyterian Church is to glorify God and to help people become fully committed, joyful disciples of Jesus Christ."

I like the emphasis there on the word "disciple." Jesus never told us to make church attenders. He told us to make disciples. But what does it mean to be a fully committed disciple of Jesus Christ?

We know that God calls us to three great commitments as individuals and as a church. I want you to think about each of these and take your own temperature on each of these. All three are essential. They must come in this order. You can't skip any of them. They are on the screen.

First, God calls each of us to a commitment to Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior. Most of us are there. If you aren't there, if you have questions about what that means, if your children have come home from VBS or TNT singing songs you don't really understand or relate to, please talk to me.

Second, God calls each of us to a commitment to the church as the body of Christ. This shows up in mutual care, financial support, being regular in worship and in the use of the spiritual gifts God has given us.

Third, God calls each of us to a commitment to the work of Christ in the world. There are many needs out there. Not every need is a call for us to get personally involved. But we each need to get involved somewhere.

Three commitments -- to Jesus Christ, to the people of Christ and to the work of Christ. That's the road to maturity. Growing in those commitments is also the road to the joy that we want to be the hallmark of this congregation. "The purpose of Moorpark Presbyterian Church is to glorify God and to help people become fully committed, joyful disciples of Jesus Christ."

Can you see it?

Once we know who we are, the next step is to decide what we won't ever change. What are the hills we will die on? What won't we change even if holding to them causes the decline or even death of this congregation?

Here are the 'non-negotiables' of Moorpark Presbyterian Church. These are the things we have no intention of ever changing even if everything else changes. They are up on the screen screen.

First, Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior and we worship Him in spirit and truth.

Second, the Bible is the true Word of God.

Third, prayer is an essential part of our lives.

Fourth, all are welcome.

Fifth, we love one another, providing compassion and support for our church family and beyond.

Sixth, we love and minister to our youth, involving them in the life of the church.

Seventh, all are encouraged to discover and use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God

Eighth, we are disciples of God and are called to make disciples of others.

Ninth, we are called to share our faith with all people.

Tenth, we minister to the spiritual and physical needs of humankind in our local community and throughout the world.

Okay. Those are our basics – our mission statement and our core values that drive what we do and are.

Can you see it?

But what we need for our mid-course correction is also a Vision Statement that looks ahead and gives us a vivid picture of where we believe God is calling us to go at this point in our life together. Unlike our God-given mission and our core values, this vision is something that can and will change. The Vision Statement adopted by your team is seen as good for the next three years.

We aren't talking about more work. But we are talking about focused work. We are talking about things that require us to stretch and require real faith – not just our good technique.

So here is the statement from our team: "Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers."

You will note right away that this is an outward vision. That's very appropriate at this point in the life of our congregation. For many years our vision has been somewhat inner focused – not completely but at least somewhat. This is a natural result of growing our programs, our staff and three

large-scale building projects. It's also natural as a church grows older for the focus to become more internal – our comfort zone, our friends.

But we don't see ourselves as a closed club for the benefit of the people who are already here -- as wonderful and deserving as we all are. We see ourselves as actively involved in reaching out and including in.

Last September we had people ask questions that we are going to address in our Lenten sermon and small group series before Easter. Let me share four questions with you today. "How do we share our faith with non believers?" "How can I help this church grow? How can I show an unbeliever God's grace?" "How can MPC insure we are fulfilling our opportunity to support global missions?" I'm not going to try to answer those questions in one sermon next Lent. They are much too big. I believe that those are the very questions God is calling us to answer with our lives over the next three years.

We are well past the point where we need to bring in more people to build programs and pay bills. We don't have any sociological reasons to grow. The only reason we have to grow is that there are thousands of men, women, youth and children around here who need a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Can you see it?

That's the only reason we have to grow. But it's the only valid, God-honored motive anyway.

"Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers." What we are saying is that we want to make an increasing difference in our community – both in sharing the good news and meeting human needs in a hands-on way.

But if we do this, we can expect resistance. You can bank on it. The Devil won't fight anything as hard a church trying to reach out with the good news. If we do what we say we want to do we are going to invade his turf. So expect a fight. Put on the armor of God Paul describes in Ephesians 6 – there's a reason it was read. Go back and check it out.

The team then developed Strategic Priorities that look at the Vision Statement and answer the question 'How are we going to get there?' These Strategic Priorities are the things that will guide our planning, including budgeting.

The first Strategic Priority is to establish a stronger emphasis on evangelism. This might include identifying people with the spiritual gift of evangelism and freeing them up from roles in the internal life of the church to become missionaries in the community. You might find that your primary area of ministry is on the soccer fields on Saturday morning.

It means training, equipping and mobilizing church members in personal evangelism. It might involve establishing a presence at local colleges or developing a center for outreach and conversation. It might be something physical like better directional signs on the property or a cross on the outside of the sanctuary.

Another strategic priority is to “cultivate a worship environment where people are drawn closer to God.”

Now I’ll be honest. I was a little put off by that one at first – because that’s exactly what we’ve been seeking to do for the last twenty three years.

I was reminded of a friend who was having a planning meeting for youth ministry some years ago. One of the newest people on the team said, “I have an idea. Let’s plan programs that the kids enjoy!” All of the people who had been working hard in the program for years felt like saying, “Things the kids enjoy! What a novel idea! We never thought of that.” Because obviously they had thought of nothing else for years.

I think that’s also true of our worship team. But the truth is we can always do it better. We can do it differently.

We can’t perfectly meet each person’s ideal definition of worship because one person’s idea of worship heaven is another person’s idea of worship heck. But there are ways to do it better and with greater flexibility. The priority has some specific bullet points that are well worth considering.

A third Strategic Priority is to increase our involvement in hands-on local mission in the communities where we live. This might include after school tutoring, helping clean up the arroyo, or opening a community counseling center with lay counselors under the direction of a professional. We also want to increase our involvement on hands-on foreign mission. Hand-on is the operative word here.

A fourth priority is to identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts. Now we aren’t one of those churches where 20% of the people do 80% of the work. At our church about 60% of the people do 80% of the work. That’s not perfect but it’s way better than the norm. If you start feeling that you’re the only one doing anything around here, it’s because you have no idea how many things are being done and who is doing what. Not all the tasks are up-front or glamorous. But we can always do it better and we need to. God has given each of us spiritual gifts and God expects that we use them for the good of His people. We need to help that happen.

Now I am a control freak — but a recovering one. I have come to realize that I cannot guarantee the future of Moorpark Presbyterian Church. Only you can under the guidance of God. This is your church. This is not a small or weak church unless you make it that way. You have the power and the resources to accomplish whatever you choose to accomplish. What you decide is up to you. One great way to get involved right now is to join a Ministry Team if you aren’t already part of one. That’s where the action is going to be in the next few months.

It doesn’t matter what I see or what the Visioning Team sees. What matters is what you see. So I ask again, “Can you see it?”

The opening chapters of the Book of Revelation is a very powerful section where Christ speaks words of comfort, guidance and commendation to seven local congregations in the Roman province of Asia -- the west coast of modern-day Turkey.

There is one characteristic of each of Jesus' words to the church that is intriguing. Jesus doesn't speak to the church as a whole but to the "angel of the church" — "to the angel of such and such a church write." To the angel of the church of Philadelphia write...."See I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut." I talked about this back in 2005,

There is a lot of discussion about what this angel of the church is. Some people think it's a title for the pastor which, I think, sounds pretty cool. I'd like to be known as "Angel Dave."

But I don't believe the angel is the pastor. I believe that the "angel" is the essential, characteristic spirit of a congregation as a part of the body of Christ. And this suggests that we, collectively, have an identity that is greater than just the sum of all of us here added together -- synergy. We are not just a church made up of individuals who happen to be together. We have a collective identity before God for which we are individually responsible. And we have been handed a stewardship for the people who will be a part of this church long after we are all gone.

Like the church of Philadelphia God has set an open door before us.

Can you see it?

The question for us is, "If we see the door will we walk through it."

So let me ask you about where you are? Do you have a commitment to Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior? Do you have a commitment to the church as the body of Christ? Do you have a commitment to the work of Christ in the world?

How does that show up?

Are you inner focused as a believer or are you outer focused? Are you willing to stretch? Are you willing to give? Are you willing to serve? Are you willing to come get your hands dirty?

Do you see it?

Mission Statement

The purpose of Moorpark Presbyterian Church is to glorify God and to help people become fully committed, joyful disciples of Jesus Christ

A fully committed disciple demonstrates

- A commitment to Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior
- A commitment to the church as the body of Christ
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Core Values

These principles form the foundation of all we do:

- Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior and we worship Him in spirit and truth (*John 3:16; John 1:4; Jude 1:25; Isaiah 43:11*)
- The Bible is the true Word of God (*John 1:1; Hebrews 4:12; Col. 3:16; Eph. 6:17; Psalm 119; 1 Peter 1:24*)
- Prayer is an essential part of our lives (*Phil. 4:6; Proverbs 15:29; Psalm 6:9; Mark 11:24; Matthew 21:22*)
- All are welcome (*Matthew 11:28; 1 John 4:11-12; 1 John 4:19*)
- We love one another, providing compassion and support for our church family and beyond (*1 John 3:11; 1 John 4:19; 1 John 4:16; John 13:34; Matthew 22:39; John 15:17; Zec. 7:9; Matthew 11:28; Ephesians 4:32*)
- We love and minister to our youth, involving them in the life of the church (*Matthew 19:14; Proverbs 22:6; Psalm 78:5; Mark 9:37*)
- All are encouraged to discover and use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God (*Romans 1:11-12; 1 Peter 4:10; Hebrews 2:4; 1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-11*)
- We are disciples of God and are called to make disciples of others (*Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:20*)
- We are called to share our faith with all people (*Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15, 20; Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 10:6-8; 2 Timothy 4:2*)
- We minister to the spiritual and physical needs of humankind in our local community and throughout the world (*Matthew 28:19; Matthew 10:6-8; Matthew 25:34-40; Mark 12: 30-34a; James 1:27a; Isaiah 61:1; 1 Peter 5:2*)

Vision Statement

A Vision Statement looks ahead, providing a vivid picture of where we are going and to what we aspire; for MPC's Vision Statement, we are looking at three years down the road.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.

Strategic Priorities

These look at the Vision Statement and answer the question 'How are we going to get there?' They will provide focus and guide planning.

- Establish a strong emphasis on evangelism
- Make MPC more a part of the community and make the community a part of us ("hands on" local mission)
- Increase our involvement in "hands on" global mission
- Identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts
- Cultivate a worship environment where people are drawn closer to God
- Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church

My Part

What are my gifts? _____

How is God calling me to be involved? _____

I commit to: _____

MINISTRY TEAMS

Christian Education

3rd Sunday – 12noon – Em's Office, basement of Sanctuary
Ralph DeVane – rdevane@mppres.org
Dan Luebbert – dluebbert@mppres.org
Dean May – dmay@mppres.org

Communications

3rd Tuesday – 7:00pm – Photocopy room, Christian Ed. Bldg.
Joan Johnson – jjohnson@mppres.org

Evangelism

Meeting date/time varies – contact elders
Tom Flitsch – tflitsch@mppres.org
Steve Batstone – sbatstone@mppres.org
Mark Bailey – mbailey@mppres.org

Facilities

3rd Tuesday – 7:00pm – Facilities Office, basement of Sanctuary
Scott Campbell – scampbell@mppres.org
Mark VanDam – mvandam@mppres.org

Fellowship

3rd Tuesday – 7:00pm – Fireside Room, Fellowship Hall
Kathy Paul – kpaul@mppres.org
Maureen Rankin – mrankin@mppres.org

Integration & Discipleship

3rd Tuesday – 7:15pm – Room 11, Christian Ed. Bldg.
Wayne Tingley – wtingley@mppres.org
Janet Fredrickson – jfredrickson@mppres.org

Mission Outreach

3rd Tuesday – 7:00pm – Kitchen, Fellowship Hall
Pam Lopez – plopez@mppres.org
Richard Harris – rharris@mppres.org

Worship

3rd Tuesday – 7:30pm – Kristin's Office, basement of Sanctuary
John Colvin – jcolvin@mppres.org
Michael Hughes – mhughes@mppres.org

www.mppres.org



“Without good direction,
the people lose their way.”

Proverbs 11:14, The Message

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Establish a strong emphasis on evangelism.

Task	Responsibility	Timeline	Status	Comments
Objective 1: Strengthen the Evangelism Team to facilitate involvement of the congregation in evangelism.				
Spreading the Good News to te unchurched "Living it" Witnessing Invitation				
Develop and maintain regular Evangelism Ministry Team meetings with specific purpose.	Steve Batstone	January, 2010		
Build Evangelism Ministry Team to 18 active attendees.	Evangelism Team	Begin Jan 10,2010 Complete 12/31/10		
Initiate and maintain "Invitation to Evangelism" monthly announcement.	Steve, Tom Kristin Dave	Begin Dec 13, 2009; continue monthly		
Liaison with Missions Ministry Team	Missions and Evangelism Ministry Teams	Began Dec. 2009		
Create Session Manual insert for Evangelism Ministry Team	Evangelism Team			
Appoint Evangelism public relations persosn for external communications; 2 people (writer + publicist)	Evangelism Team	January, 2010		

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Strategic Priority Action Plan

Task	Responsibility	Timeline	Status	Comments
Objective 2: Identify people in the congregation with the spiritual gift of evangelism to become missionaries in the community.				
Collaborate with the Integration & Discipleship Team for results of spiritual gifts inventory and interest and activity sheets.	Steve Batstone Janet Fredrickson	Begin Jan., 2010		
Identify who brings people to church. Share this information with the Evangelism Team.	Evangelism Dave Janet L. Sml. Grps. Coordinator	Begin Jan., 2010		
Follow-up with, and thank, individuals who bring people to church.	Evangelism Team	Begin Jan., 2010		
Don't necessarily put people with gift of evangelism on a team or committee. Make their focus <u>external</u> -- yet consider them <u>part of</u> the Evangelism Team.	Evangelism Team	Feb., 2010		
Provide them with the information to share.		Began Dec. 2009		
Involve them in training.		Feb. 6, 2010		
Identify the qualities of a person who is gifted in evangelism	Evangelism Team Janet L.			
Integrate college age into evangelism	Evangelism Team Em			

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Strategic Priority Action Plan

Task	Responsibility	Timeline	Status	Comments
Objective 3: Train, equip and mobilize church members in personal evangelism.				
Provide support in training, especially those with the spiritual gift of evangelism.	Evangelism Team Pastors	Feb. 6, 2010		
Initiate and maintain "Invitation to Evangelism" monthly announcement.	Steve Kristin Dave	Began Dec. 13, 2009		
Attend "How to Reach Unchurched People in Your Community" seminar on relational evangelism, co-hosted by Emmanuel Pres. and Monte Vista.	Action Planning Team - Dan, Steve, Richard, Laurie, Dave intending to attend so far. Evangelism Team	Feb. 6, 2010		
Increase awareness, so opportunities for evangelism aren't lost.	Dave Janet Evangelism Team	Begin Dec. 13, 2009		
Clarify what we mean by personal evangelism. -- remove fear; culture change	Dave Janet Evangelism Team	Begin Dec. 13, 2009		
Tell stories of evangelism, so we teach others a. Teach how to do this! b. Celebrate them.				
Class on "Friendship Evangelism"	Dave	Fall, 2010		
Speaker (Evangelism topic)				
Increase attendance by ____% through congregational invitation and referrals.	Everyone			

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Strategic Priority Action Plan

Task	Responsibility	Timeline	Status	Comments
Objective 4: Develop methods for extending <u>personal</u> invitations for involvement in the life of the church.				
Make disciples -- follow-up/make connections -- belong/part of MPC				
Work closely with Integration and Discipleship - define interface		Jan., 2010		
Continue to strengthen the Greeters' Ministry	Integration & Discipleship Team	Jan., 2010		
Make it easier for others to invite people to go to worship or return to worship at our church or others. - Invitation cards for Easter and Christmas events - TBD - TBD	Evangelism Team			
Bring in "believers on the outside."				
Cross project	Brenda Cusick Dave Evangelism Team	Lent, 2010		
Coffee house corner - for discussion groups in local coffee house	Dave Evangelism Team Youth leaders Coffee house owner	Lent, 2010		
Testimonial ads in Acorn Feature Lenten theme in Acorn	Dave Evangelism Team	February - March, 2010		
Develop materials and tools to help announce what's happening at MPC.	Evangelism Team			
Walk Country Days Parade	Evangelism Team Worship Team Dave	October, 2010		

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Task	Responsibility	Timeline	Status	Comments
Objective 5: Offer outreach events.				
Offer outreach events each year	Event coordinator(s) Evangelism Team Tech Facilities	4 events/year by 2012		
Target a specific audience, e.g. soccer parents, parents concerned about internet use safety, people who want to know about "Twitter," etc.	Evangelism Team			
DORKS & CPC baby shower	DORKS	January, 2010		
MOPS quilt project	MOPS CPC Sarah Judd	January, 2010		

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Task	Responsibility	Timeline	Status	Comments
Objective 6: Visibility and branding.				
Identify specific community events where MPC might be present.				
Determine which events would provide the greatest opportunities for evangelism.				
Set goals for involvement in community events.				
Improve signage to make it easier for visitors to find their way around the MPC campus.				
We need a cross on the church.				
Print business cards to use externally.	Evangelism Team	Complete!		
Print invitation cards for holiday events.		December, 2009 and ongoing		
Advertise in the Acorn.		Ongoing		
Coordinate church community signs at entry points to City of Moorpark (like Rotary, Kiwanis signs in other towns)				
Is the church name a barrier?				

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Make MPC more a part of the community and the community a part of us ("hands on" local mission)

Task	Responsibility	Timeline	Status	Comments
Objective 1: Provide oversight and coordination for missions involvement.				
Establish improved coordination and communication with Evangelism Ministry Team Share minutes. Chairs meet. Liaison to report at Evangelism meeting and vice versa to discuss specific topics.	Missions and Evangelism Ministry Teams	January, 2010		
Ensure that MPC's name is "attached" when individuals and groups represent MPC in missions activity. Remind everyone in a message from Missions Team. Work with Evangelism Team on this.	Missions liaison to Evangelism Team All groups and indiv. Involved in local missions.	January, 2010		

Objective 2: Establish lines of communication with the communities we reach for outreach and service.

See list of current involvement, attached.	Action planning group	NA		
Invite representatives from community organizations to present at Missions Ministry Team meetings	Missions Ministry Team	Nov., 2009 through 1st qtr. 2010		
Using selection criteria, assign individuals to reach out to specific groups	Missions Ministry Team			

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Task	Responsibility	Timeline	Status	Comments
Objective 3: Educate the congregation as to what "hands on" mission is.				
Send reps to "Missional Church" seminar on Jan. 16, to report back to Missions Team. Use information gleaned from this seminar to formulate plan to educate congregation. Request funds from Session Identify representatives Assign representatives to attend specific sessions and bring back information. Share knowledge gained at next meeting of Missions Team.	Pam Lopez Missions Team Pam Lopez Breakout session attendees	Complete Jan. 10 Before Jan. 16		
Using knowledge gained at "Missional Church" seminar, further develop this action plan.	Action Planning Team	March, 2010		
Define hands on local mission.	Missions Team	Jan. 10,2010		
Communicate to congregation: Bulletin Moment for Missions Newsletter Website; monitor "hits" Youth groups Small groups	Missions Team Communications Christian Education Youth leaders Small Grps. Ldrs.	Begin Feb., 2010		
Objective 4: Become involved with "hands on" mission in our community.				
See list of current involvement.	Action planning group	NA		
Establish process for people and groups to inform Missions Ministry Team of missions activity. Newsletter Moment for Missions Web page	Missions Ministry Team	January, 2010		
Establish missional purpose for involvement in specific local mission. <u>Develop and use selection criteria.</u>	Action planning group to develop further	March, 2010		
Assess current involvement. Include assessment of how well we're doing with each.	Missions and others	June, 2010		
Further tasks to be determined	Action planning group	March, 2010		

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Task	Responsibility	Timeline	Status	Comments
Objective 5: Reach out to different demographic groups.				
Assess current involvement. Include assessment of how well we're doing with each.		TBD		
See list of current involvement.		TBD		
Determine MPC demographics, community demographics		TBD		
Identify gaps in outreach		TBD		

Objective 6: Partner with the city to identify need.

Identify city liaison and process for partnership	Action planning group	TBD		
Determine greatest need and what we can do to meet it.	Action planning group	TBD		

Objective 7: Identify and adopt one or two favorite local missions and regularly involve ourselves with them.

Use assessment of current involvement, assessment of demographic groups, and information from partnership with city and selection criteria. See objective #3.		TBD		
Determine greatest need and what we can do to meet it.		TBD		

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Increase our involvement in "hands on" global mission

Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
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Objective 1: Provide oversight and coordination for global missions support.

Ensure that MPC's name is "attached" when individuals and groups represent MPC in missions activity. Remind everyone in a message from Missions Team. Work with Evangelism Team on this.	Missions Ministry Team. Liaison to Evangelism Team	January, 2010		
Establish criteria for selection of global missions for support by MPC.		March, 2010		
Use selection criteria to assess current support and future requests for support of global missions.		March, 2010		

Objective 2: Establish lines of communication with those we support in global missions.

Annual reports from those we support in global missions: Determine content Inform missionaries that we support.				

Objective 3: Educate the congregation as to what "hands on" mission is.

Send reps to "Missional Church" seminar on Jan. 16, to report back to Missions Team. Use information gleaned from this seminar to formulate plan to educate congregation. Request funds from Session Identify representatives Assign representatives to attend specific sessions and bring back information. Share knowledge gained at next meeting of Missions Team.	Pam Lopez Missions Team Pam Lopez Breakout session attenders	Complete Jan. 10 Before Jan. 16		
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MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Using knowledge gained at "Missional Church" seminar, further develop this action plan.	Action Planning Team	March, 2010		
Define global mission.	Missions Team	Jan. 10,2010		
Communicate to congregation: Bulletin Moment for Missions Newsletter Website; monitor "hits" Youth groups Small groups	Missions Team Communications Christian Education Youth leaders Small Grps. Ldrs.	Begin Feb., 2010		

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts

Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Objective 1: Identify individual spiritual gifts				
Communicate a clear definition of spiritual gifts.				
Educate the entire congregation on the importance of identifying and using spiritual gifts. Repeat (renewal) every other year	Pastors Small Groups Coordinator Christiam Ed. Adult Sunday School leaders Youth group leaders	Fall, 2010 Repeat, 2012		
<i>Spiritual Gifts Inventory</i>				
Encourage individuals in new member classes to complete the spiritual gifts inventory	Janet Loughry	Ongoing		
Post spiritual gifts inventory online - obtain permission from publisher	Janet Fredrickson, I&D Elder	June, 2010?		
Expand the use of the spiritual gifts inventory to the entire congregation. Small groups and youth groups assist members in identifying gifts	I&D Team Small Groups Coordinator Youth group leaders			
<i>Interest & Activity Sheets</i>				
Encourage individuals in new member classes to complete the interest and activity sheets.	I&D Team	Report Feb., 2010		

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Expand use of the interest and activity sheets to the entire congregation???????	I&D Team Small Groups Coordinator Youth group leaders			
Create a "Tapestry of Gifts" (a database of individuals' spiritual gifts)	I&D Team Deacons Pastors Ministry team leaders, staff	Dec. 2013		

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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ATTACHMENT 16

Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Objective 2: Encourage use of individual spiritual gifts				
<i>Clearly communicate the purpose of each ministry team</i> Feature a ministry team each month Newsletter Worship service: Expand "Moment for Missions" concept to feature a ministry team; sermons Information table between services Bulletin Website: Feature team and update web page Ensure that ministry team names reflect purpose.	Communications Dave, Worship Team Ministry teams Communications Communications I&D Team to discuss	Begin Jan., 2010		
<i>Match individuals' spiritual gifts with need.</i> Job/task inventory (specific tasks, not just broad groups)	I&D Team Pastors Ministry team leaders, staff	TBD		
<i>Get new members connected:</i> Ensure follow through by responsible persons in areas on interest and activity sheet areas. Follow-up to ensure that new members are "connected."	I&D Team Elders Staff Deacons			
Small groups and youth encourage group members to use their spiritual gifts.	Youth leaders Small groups coordinator	Fall, 2010		
Consider changing ministry team names to be more descriptive, if needed	I&D Team to discuss Session			

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Objective 3: Value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts				
"Ministry" vs. "task:" Change perception of volunteer tasks to that of ministry. Start FAQ to address such questions.	Christian Ed. Small groups Communications			
<i>Provide support for individuals to use spiritual gifts</i>				
When someone acts on identification of and encouragement to use spiritual gifts, recognize this.	Small Groups coordinator Youth group leaders			
Deacons thank flock members for involvement. Be specific.	Deacons			
Stand up recognition, with theme Recognize members of ministry team when team is featured for the month. Recognize those involved in a particular activity, e.g. Saturday clean-up	Worship team Ministry Team leaders Others, as appropriate			

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Cultivate a worship environment where people are drawn closer to God.

Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Objective 1: Seek to keep the unity of the body of Christ in worship services (as we go forward).				
Honor MPC traditions; understand which to honor.	Worship Team			
Be deliberate, intentional. (tied to the theme, tone of the sermon)	Worship Team	2012		
Understand trends in attendance, e.g. by demographics. Where are the holes? Then, determine if there's a problem.	Worship Team	2012		
Use announcements as an opportunity to explain programs and traditions. Consider "impromptu interaction/spontaneous testimony.	Worship Team	2010		
Decrease "dead air" in service, i.e. tighten transitions from one part of service to another; consider rehearsals.				
Consider more sacrificial worship; outside of what makes us comfortable.	Worship Team			
Consider one service in summer, with fellowship time after. May be problem due to high attendance #'s.	Worship Team			
Notes on MPC worship philosophy: What we do here is what we've chosen to do. Book of Order only says must have confession before communion. Intergenerational worship Expository teaching (increases spiritual maturity) Seeker sensitive, visitor friendly Includes traditional and contemporary Respects generational preferences (musical preferences) People know they will be heard We involve youth in worship service We do what we need to do with the people God has brought here; we don't hire out. Emphasis on quality, doing our utmost (vs. perfection)				

MOORPARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Strategic Priority Action Plan

ATTACHMENT 17

Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
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Objective 2: Educate the congregation about MPC's worship philosophy

Explain why we do what we do Use website, newsletter, sermons, adult Sunday School, welcoming remarks Includes teaching parents what their role is. See Laurie Loring's newsletter page.	Worship Team Communications Team Pastors Christian Ed. Team	Begin _____, 2010		
Give scriptural context	Pastors and others	Begin _____, 2010		
Explain that we won't compromise our Core Values.	See above	Begin _____, 2011		
When we try changes, explain why and what we're doing	Worship Team	Begin January, 2010		

Objective 3: Provide opportunities for different types of worship experiences.

As we consider what we'll try, protect our Core Values.	Worship Team			
Consider a quarterly event that doesn't happen on Sunday morning. Example: Quarterly prayer and worship service; all music service.	Worship Team			
Consider a "four week Sunday morning series" approach.	Worship Team			
Use these as an opportunity to identify new approaches to Sunday morning.	Worship Team			

Objective 4: Strengthen the Worship Ministry Team

Hold an "audition day"	Worship Team			

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church.

Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Objective 1: Welcome people to our church				
Have greeter standing on the sidewalk near the parking lot and facing the church at end of worship service, thanking everyone for coming.	Greeters' coordinators	1/31/10		
Provide "Greeter" nametag for all greeters.	Greeters' coordinators Kristin	2/28/10		
Ask greeters, for visitors who are attending alone, to try to match them with a member of the congregation to sit with him/her.	Greeters' coordinators	2/28/10		
Change registration pads to include check-box for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd time visitor	Kristin	3/30/10		
Have "welcome desserts" for 3rd time attenders. Identify "welcoming" people to do this.	I&D Team Fellowship Team Pastors	3/1/2010		

Objective 2: Provide directions and explain our processes (worship, child care, etc.)

Update website page that provides information for visitors. <i>Action plan team please check this information on the website and provide feedback to Joan Johnson at yeahx3@aol.com.</i>	Action plan team Communications Team	Review 1/25/10 Update 2/15/10		
Provide "seeker friendly" information	Communications Team assist	Begin Jan., 2010		

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church.

Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Don't assume that everyone has "core knowledge" about MPC. Teach it!	Worship Greeters Ushers Children's' Ministries	Begin Jan., 2010		
Conduct greeter training and communication periodically throughout the year	Greeters' coordinators	Next training 2/28/10		
Conduct usher training and communication periodically throughout the year	Kristin, ushers' coordinator			
Have greeters provide directions and explain key processes as visitors arrive, e.g. what happens after the children's' sermon, coffee on fellowship "patio" after the service, etc.	Greeters' coordinators	2/28/10		
Have greeters and ushers escort visitors to nursery, cry room, etc. <u>Offer</u> as they arrive.	Greeters' coordinators Worship Team	2/28/10		
Consider ushers or greeters to direct parents and children to Celebrate, Wee Celebrate and Celebration, after the children's sermon	Laurie Loring, Kristin, Ted Dahl	2/28/10		
Station two ushers <u>inside</u> the main sanctuary to provide directions and assistance. Will also relieve congestion in narthex.	Worship Team	1/31/10		
Slide on screen re: children's ministry that will occur during worship service. (e.g. "Wee Celebrate today and is in room ____, Celebration today in room _____. Ask ushers just outside the doors for directions."	Worship Team Laurie Loring	2/28/10		
Improve signage to provide directions	Facilities	12/31/10		

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church.

Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Objective 3: Establish Information Center for sign-ups, information				
Tables in one location; determine location	Facilities Team			
Tables with consistent look (e.g. MPC colors, consistent design for posters, banners); use balloons in MPC colors				
Staff with committed volunteers				
First table to be an MPC information table				
Have back-up plan for heat, wind, rain. Use Fellowship Hall.	Facilities Team	12/31/10		

Objective 4: Improve facility image, visibility and "branding"

New monument sign	Facilities Team	12/31/10		
Add crosses - 3 - 4 - Inside sanctuary window - Outside on front, above doorway - Outside on back of building - Brenda Cusick's cross project	Facilities Team Worship Team	12/31/10		
Create a landscaping plan - Consider working with a landscape architect - Check with Dan Varnum and Tom Flitsch re: building codes, drainage issues, etc.	Facilities Team			
Landscape entrance to grounds from street				
Create reception patio area between Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.				
Redesign Fellowship Patio. Add shade.				

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church.

Task	Responsibility	Completion	Status	Comments
Landscape bell tower area.				

Objective 5: Include people in the life, fellowship and mission of our church

Staff/elders let deacons know when/where new and old members get involved. Recognize them! Ex., thank them in deacon follow-up with flock members.	I&D Team Staff, elders, deacons	6/1/10		
Strengthen deacon follow-up with new members to determine if they've been included in areas of interest.	Deacons I&D Team	2/28/10		
Encourage & follow involvement in the life of MPC	Deacons Small Groups Leaders			
The majority of people will belong to small groups	Small Groups Coordinator	12/31/12		
Plan fellowship events to include something for everyone (not necessarily every event). Dancing Under the Stars to include kids, youth, adults Hollywood Bowl - Sound of Music sing-along	Fellowship Team	2/2010 9/25/10		
Review and track involvement - Sign in sheets at all activities - Enter attendance/involvement into database - Create monthly report	I&D Team	12/31/12		

Reputation

by Pastor Dave Wilkinson

January 10, 2009

Revelation 3:1-2, Proverbs 22:1, Romans 1:8-12

Proverbs 22:1 says: "A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold."

In Romans 1:8 Paul speaks of the reputation of the Christians at Rome. Their reputation is for faith. Paul says that their faith is being spoken of all over the world.

Now this does not mean that every individual in every remote village has heard of the faith of the Roman Christians. But it does mean that their faith is becoming widely known. Other Christians are talking about it. "Do you know that there is a group of believers in Rome? Have you heard how strong their faith is, how faithfully they try to serve Jesus in that wicked city?"

You see, Rome was a place where faith had to be put on the line.

I encourage you to rent the movie "Shadowlands" if you haven't seen it. It tells about the love story between C.S. Lewis and Joy Gresham, an American woman. The story ends with her death from cancer.

Lewis wrote a book called A Grief Observed about Joy's death. And he wrote these words as he thought about the promise of eternal life in relation to his own loss. He wrote: "You never know how much you really believe anything until its truth or falsehood becomes a matter of life and death to you. It is easy to say you believe a rope to be strong and sound as long as you are merely using it to tie a box. But suppose you had to hand by that rope over a precipice. Wouldn't you then first discover how much you really trusted it? Only a real risk tests the reality of a belief."

That is the situation at Rome. The church there hangs on the precipice. Rome is the center; the cockpit. It is the place to make a reputation or to lose one. It is a place where faith has to be real.

The Roman Christians have a reputation for faith. And Paul says that this is a reputation worth having.

Of course John Wooden reminds us that character is more important than reputation because character is what you are while reputation is only what other people think you are. That's very true. But the reputation and character of the Roman Christians match. Their faith is genuine. This is important because there is much so-called faith that is non-biblical and built on quicksand.

In some people's minds, faith is mainly thought of as a subjective feeling – totally divorced from God's written revelation in the Bible. God, faith in God, and the will of God become whatever people want it to be.

I once talked with a young man who thought of faith in this way. He said he was a Christian. But as we talked, I discovered that he did not believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, His bodily resurrection or His sacrificial death for our sin. I asked him how he could be a Christian while rejecting everything Christians believe. He replied that he did not know how to answer that question but that nevertheless, deep in his heart, he believed he was a Christian. For him, being a nice guy with occasional religious feelings and being a Christian are the same thing.

C.S. Lewis writes in Mere Christianity: “I remember once when I had been giving a talk to the Royal Air Force, an old, hard bitten officer got up and said, “I’ve no use for all that stuff. But mind you, I’m a religious man. I know there’s a God. I’ve felt Him; out alone in the desert at night: the tremendous mystery. And that’s just why I don’t believe all your neat little dogmas and formulas about Him. To anyone who’s met the real thing they all seem so petty and pedantic and unreal.”

“Now in a sense,” Lewis wrote, “I quite agreed with that man. I think he had probably a real experience of God in the desert. And when he turned from that experience to the Christian creeds, I think he really was turning from something real to something less real.

“In the same way, if a man has once looked at the ocean from the beach, and then goes and looks at a map of the ocean, he also will be turning from real waves to a piece of colored paper. But here comes the point. The map is admittedly only colored paper. But there are two things you have to remember about it. In the first place, it is based on what hundreds and thousand of people have found out by sailing the real ocean. It was behind it masses of experience just as real as the one you could have from the beach; only, while your’s would be a single, isolated glimpse, the map fits all those different experiences together. Doctrines are not God: they are only a kind of map. But the map is based on the experience of hundreds of people who really were in touch with God – experiences compared with which any thrills or pious feelings you or I are likely to get on our own are very elementary and very confused.

“In the second place,” Lewis continues, “if you want to go anywhere, the map is absolutely necessary. As long as you are content with walks on the beach, your own glimpses are far more fun than looking at a map. But the map is going to be more use than walks on the beach if you want to get to America. You see, what happened to that man in the desert may have been real, and was certainly exciting, but nothing comes of it. It leads nowhere. There is nothing to do about it. In fact, that is just why a vague religion – all about feeling God in nature and so on – is so attractive. It is all trills and no work; like watching the waves from the beach. But you will not get to Newfoundland by studying the Atlantic that way; and you will not get eternal life by simply feeling the present of God in flowers and music.” Lewis concludes: “You will not get anywhere by looking at maps without going to sea. But you will not be very safe if you go to sea without a map.”

I am all in favor of subjective experiences with God. But a true experience with God will fit the things that God has already revealed of Himself and His will through His word and His supreme self—revelation in Jesus Christ. If it doesn’t, it is not an experience with the true God. It may be an encounter with a spiritual power, but it is not God.

A second false faith is optimism. The late Norman Vincent Peal popularized this substitute faith through his best-selling book The Power of Positive Thinking. Joel Osteen is a modern purveyor of the same gospel of “salvation by thinking happy thoughts.”

Peal says, “According to your faith in yourself, according to your faith in your job, according to your faith in God, this far will you get and no further.”

In this statement, faith in yourself, faith in your job, and faith in God are all apparently the same thing, and what this means is that the object of faith is irrelevant. The key thing is simply to have faith in faith.

There is value in a positive outlook on life, of course, just as there is great value in a positive self-image. But this is not the same thing as biblical faith. It is not the faith for which the apostle Paul thanks God on behalf of the Roman Christians.

Why do I say that the faith of the believers at Rome is biblical?

Their faith is in Jesus Christ – not a vague “spirit of Christ” but the Jesus Christ of history – the one Paul writes that God promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy scriptures – the one declared with power to be the Son of God by the resurrection. Their faith is a faith that God himself brought into being. It’s not their creation – it’s God’s gift.

There is a second reason why the reputation for faith is worth having: it is an encouragement to other believers. In verse 12 Paul speaks of this as an anticipated outcome of his proposed trip to Rome: “That you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith.”

We can encourage each other to respond to God’s call and head in the right direction. For example, when I was the pastor up in Oroville the church began to reach out and grow as we are doing here. There came a time when the church grew beyond the comfort level of some of the long-time members: “Who are all these new people? I don’t like having to come on time just to get a place to sit. I miss the old days.”

I was somewhat limited in my ability to respond. Anything I said could have been seen as self-serving since I was the catalyst for a lot of the unwelcome change. But the encouragement came from an unlikely source. A woman named Evelyn, the oldest of the old timers, a 95 year old charter member of the church, stood up and asked: “Why is there all this complaining about the changes and growth? This is exactly what we prayed would happen when this church began. I think we need to remember that this church doesn’t belong to us. It belongs to Jesus and these people who are coming are His people. We aren’t a club: we’re a church, and it’s time to act like one.”

I have never felt more encouraged by someone else’s faith in my life.

What about Moorpark Presbyterian Church? As a congregation, we also have a reputation. We have a reputation in the community and in the presbytery.

We have a reputation as a growing church. We have a reputation as a church filled with health and good relationships. You may not believe this, but that only means that you don’t know what an unhealthy church looks like. Pray that you don’t ever find out. We have a reputation as a group that is willing to take risks and stretch. That grows out of faith and good relationships. We have some problems

to address like a flat line on giving, Giving has actually gone down while membership and attendance have increased. We need to address that. But we've made a good beginning.

Every Monday morning I get together with a friend, Tony Amatangelo who is pastor of Lifespring Community Church to work on sermons. I help him with the "what is it saying" and he helps me with the "so what." Between the two of us we make one pretty good preacher.

Tony heard what I was talking about today and volunteered to make this video.

Video Tony

I didn't show this to pat myself on the back or because I am smug or as an encouragement to you to become smug. If we have made a good beginning, if we are on the right track, we didn't make it happen. As Paul reminds us, it is to the praise of God's glory.

A second reason not to be smug or to get smug is because a reputation can be lost as well as gained. We can't rest on our history. We need to keep putting it on the line before people – and above all – before our Lord. This is a great question for the start of a New Year as we ask what we going to count for in 2010. That's the message of the drama this morning – how do we continue to grow in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ?

The first part of the book of Revelation contains the word of Jesus Christ to seven churches of Asia Minor. In Revelation 3:1-2, Jesus says to the church in Sardis: "I know your works; you have the name of being alive and you are dead. Awake, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my God."

Jesus talks about reputation. He acknowledges that the church of Sardis has a name. It is well regarded. It is known for its vitality. It is a well-oiled machine. It has a good program. Yet Jesus comes right to the core of the problem. He warns us that things are not always the way they appear to be.

I recently read the true story of a lady who was touring England. She was not a typical tourist. She didn't carry a camera. She was a mid-western grandmother whose children had paid for her trip. She tried to do too much in too few days, but she was determined to see Westminster Abbey.

The guide had run into all kinds of tourists, from the gushing romantics to the Texas belittlers. But somehow, he never quite captured the wavelength of this little grandmother. She listened to every word of his commentary, observed every stone, read every inscription. But her eyes told you she wasn't about to let any of it impress her. Finally she spoke. She broke into the guide's talk with a question that stopped his flow and left him groping for words. With a sweeping gesture that took in the whole church – that great monument of our Christian heritage, that rich storehouse commemorating the mighty acts of God displayed in Christ – "Young man," she said. "Tell me, has anybody been saved here lately?"

This lady had a way of getting right down to the basic question. After all, they stood in a church, didn't they? Wasn't it dedicated to the Savior? God forbid that we sit here this morning celebrating a tradition instead of worshipping the risen savior whose death and resurrection enables us to be born again, and whose Holy Spirit is in the constant process of transforming you and me.

Jesus says to the church in Sardis, “I know your works. You have the name of being alive, and you are dead.” What a potent observation! What a potent warning not to rest on past accomplishments. We need to be sure that Moorpark Presbyterian is not known the community as “The place to go to church” instead of as “a community of men and women who genuinely love Jesus Christ, who love people in His name, and who can welcome others into God’s family.” Because “the purpose of Moorpark Presbyterian Church is to glorify God and to help people become fully committed, joyful disciples of Jesus Christ.”

That’s why you are going to hear again and again about our priorities and our vision – as we look to reach out in Jesus name and as we get involved in hands-on mission. Hopefully you won’t just hear about it but you’ll be part of it. That’s why there are tables set up outside this morning – to give you the opportunity to sign on and get involved.

For “Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.” That’s our vision.

MPC'S VISION

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Moorpark Presbyterian Church is a joyful light, beckoning and integrating people into the fellowship of believers.

January 10th

Before, Between and After Services
Ask Questions – Get Answers – Sign up!



“Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” – Hebrews 10:24

At MPC, we are a family with a Vision on a Mission!
What are your gifts? How is God calling you to be involved?

Next Sunday – come to the Visioning Tables and find out how you can help MPC achieve the strategic priorities discerned through the Visioning process.

Strategic Priorities *These look at the Vision Statement and answer the question ‘How are we going to get there?’*

- Establish a strong emphasis on evangelism
- Make MPC more a part of the community and make the community a part of us (“hands on” local mission)
- Increase our involvement in “hands on” global mission
- Identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts
- Cultivate a worship environment where people are drawn closer to God
- Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church

For more information, contact Linda Dahl (LindaDahlMPC@aol.com)
or Joan Johnson (jjohnson@mppres.org)

And for more on Visioning and to hear or read Dave’s sermon - “**Can You See It?**” -
go to <http://www.mppres.org/pages/visioning.html>

“Establish a strong emphasis on evangelism”

We need:

- People of all ages
- Anyone interested in spreading God’s word
- People who want to be trained in personal evangelism
- Someone with public relations skills
- People to walk in the Moorpark Country Days Parade

Are you interested in attending a seminar on personal evangelism on February 6? If you are, talk with one of the Evangelism elders, Steve Batstone, Tom Flitsch, or Dennis Cope about this.

Steve@mppres.org

tflitsch@mppres.org

dcope@mppres.org

Registration will be paid by the Evangelism Team for a limited number of people.

“Make MPC more a part of the community and the community part of us (local mission)”

We need:

- Anyone interested in getting involved in serving the community
 - In a specific role within a specific group
 - As a representative of MPC
- Someone who wants to use their gifts to serve (e.g. tutoring, painting, feeding)

MPC currently has people involved in:

- ✓ Community Pregnancy Center (DORKS),
 - ✓ MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers),
 - ✓ Senior Concerns of the Conejo Valley,
 - ✓ Red Cross,
 - ✓ Catholic Charities Food Pantry,
- and many more local organizations

Are you interested in attending “The Missional Church” conference on January 16. If so, the Missions Ministry Team will cover your registration. Contact Pam Lopez (plopez@mppres.org).

“Increase our involvement in ‘hands on’ global mission”

We need:

- Someone interested in maintaining lines of communication with missionaries that we support
- Anyone interested in short-term mission trips.
- People interested in communicating with the congregation about global missions activity
 - “Moment for Missions,”
 - Newsletter articles,
 - Etc.

Are you interested in attending “The Missional Church” conference on January 16. If so, the Missions Ministry Team will cover your registration. Contact Pam Lopez (plopez@mppres.org).

“Identify, encourage, value and honor the use of individual spiritual gifts”

We need:

- Everyone to identify their spiritual gifts
- Someone to help establish a web-based spiritual gifts inventory
- People who will use their gifts for the glory of God’s kingdom
- People interested in encouraging others to use their spiritual gifts
- People to value and honor others’ use of their spiritual gifts (how many ways can we say “thank you?”)

For further information, contact Janet Fredrickson (jfredrickson@mppres.org) or Wayne Tingley (wtingley@mppres.org)

“Cultivate a worship environment where people are drawn closer to God”

We need:

- Actors
- Musicians (Instrumentals and vocals)
- Dancers
- Choir members
- Bell Choir Ringers
- Visual Artists (including textiles, computer graphics, painting, etc.)
- Video (design, direction, production)
- Tech support (sound, lighting, Power Point, etc.)
- Ushers
- People to work on different types of worship experiences

For further information contact Kristin Giffin (Kristin@mppres.org), John Colvin (colvin@mppres.org) or Michael Hughes (mhughes@mppres.org).

“Welcome and include people into the life, fellowship and mission of our church”

We need:

- “Gardeners” to keep our gardens attractive and welcoming
- Volunteers for work days to keep our facilities clean and attractive
- Greeters to welcome our visitors and others
- People interested in ensuring that new members and others are integrated into the life, fellowship and mission of MPC

For further information, contact Janet Fredrickson (jfredrickson@mppres.org) or Wayne Tingley (wtingley@mppres.org)