

Task Force Recommendations

August 25, 2023

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Engagement/Discipleship Task Force Recommendations August 25, 2023

Members: Dana Hook, Amy Moberly, Phyllis Sarkaria, Laurie St. Gean, Richard Stager, Barbara Weicksel, and Rev. Dr. Hannak Ka (facilitator)

Whereas the digital world provides an abundance of resources for people of different life stages and interests to explore belief systems at the click of a mouse in the comfort of home;

Whereas people in the digital culture engage in practices to work out their beliefs for their ongoing formation of religious identity, thus creating the need for flexible hours, a variety of topics, breadths and depths as well as formats of engagement/discipleship opportunities;

Whereas the digital culture makes the many networks others are part of available to the church, providing opportunities for people to integrate belief with practice, identity with action in their own life context, while witnessing to the values of Christ and the tenets of discipleship;

Whereas the world around us is continually changing, presenting different needs for community engagement, organic to each local community and shifting the learning pattern to a more conversational, learner-centered education for people to inquire about what matters most to the community as well as to the individual;

We recommend the following engagement/discipleship programing for our church families and other SBNRs (spiritual but not religious):

Programming

- Expand the network of First Church connections in local communities to enhance engagement with people outside the church walls.
 - Create a designated webpage for First Church Engagement/Discipleship to feature individual volunteer activities of local engagements.
 - Encourage in-person and online members to represent the body of Christ and to join neighborhood-centered nonprofit volunteer opportunities.
 - Create a form of identification First Church members wear to local volunteer activities.
 - Add community service, fellowship opportunities, family events and on-going learning opportunities to the activities of existing neighborhood groups.
 - Shift the existing mission/outreach efforts into a monthly church-wide engagement opportunity.
 - The list is just an example, which is subject to change: MLK Day of Service (January), Interfaith Shelter Network (February), Samaritan Store (March), Earth Day (April), Dream School of Art (May), Cherokee Point Backpack Drive (July), Shoes That Fit Change Drive (August), Cherokee Point Back-to-School Night BBQ (September), Global Missions (October), Thanksgiving Food Drive (November), Angel Tree (December)
- Provide a variety of discipleship opportunities that engage the questions, insights, and spiritual inquiries of both seasoned Christians and SBNRs (spiritual but not religious).
 - Create digital contents of thematic Bible study, i.e. YouTube or podcast series, short clips (less than 3 min) and mid-length podcasts (10-20 min).
 - Short clips, targeted toward external audience, will be posted on our social media.
 - Build a digital library to post both short clips and mid-length content on our website.
 - Utilize both comment threads, in-person, or online discussion groups for mutual learning.
 - Offer a variety of discussions around worship series, digital content, and books both in-person and via Zoom, providing opportunities for people to engage in conversations about ancient stories and their journey in everyday life.

- Further inclusion of church families and friends beyond the church walls:
 - Quarterly special events intended to welcome new friends, strengthen relationships, and provide lasting experiences of a church that welcomes all.
 - Invite community members and friends to join our monthly church-wide engagement opportunities.

Schedule:

By December 2023

- Organize Engagement/Discipleship leadership team of six lay leaders. Re-organize the existing mission and outreach groups into a monthly church-wide engagement efforts.
- Compile stories of witnesses for our website and post them on social media to invite others to participate.
- Launch 3-4 book studies and/or discussion groups online and in-person, and nurture lay leaders to facilitate.

By Easter of 2024

- Complete production of First Church identification. Coordinate the initial distribution with a larger church-wide campaign on Easter Sunday.

By June 2024

- Create an online library with learning opportunities for discipleship, including resources beyond what First Church produce and what have been already produced.

By December 2024

- Create a map for local engagement/discipleship opportunities and make it available on all our online platforms. This will identify where our church families volunteer.
- Launch an app for smartphones to make engagement/discipleship easily accessible for First Church families and friends.

Financial Impact:

- No cost for expanding networks of engagements, except the production of First Church identification, which will be made available for purchase and possibly used for fundraising/stewardship.
- No cost for creating online resources. The current Pastor's Bible Study will be re-formatted to a digital content. New content could be developed without additional cost. It is already covered by current job descriptions of pastors. Lay-led, conversational discussion on what is released in digital format to further enhance our discipleship.
- Director of Communication will recruit and update engagement stories and engagement/discipleship opportunities on our website and social media platforms.
- Cost may vary for launching a church app.

Responsible Agents:

Volunteer group of Engagement/Discipleship co-chaired by two members of the Engagement/Discipleship Task Force will be assigned

- to prepare the first round of stories of faithful witnesses, starting with Engagement/Discipleship Task Force members, to share their experiences of volunteering and local engagements.
- to recruit and train others to multiply leadership of neighborhood groups, book study and discussions.
- to communicate with Director of Communications for an update of ongoing engagement/discipleship opportunities.

The design and creation of both the First Church identification piece and the volunteer app will be outsourced.

Children, Youth and Family Task Force Recommendations August 25, 2023

Members: Kenton Hundley, Cheryl Johnson, Kalen Michel, Jason Tucker, Erik Wilde, Dana Zimbric, Mike Zimbric, Rev. Trudy Robinson.

Whereas the digital world offers many different opportunities for the use of families' time creating the need for less rigid, more flexible avenues of participation in church worship and programming;

Whereas the digital world makes available an abundance of information and encourages individual expression;

Whereas the art and music curriculum is limited in our public education system, the excellent music program at First Church and our curriculum at the Dream School of the Arts provide opportunities

Whereas children have an inherent spirituality that we can honor and affirm, and one's youth is a time for self-identification through belonging, while growing into their own thinking through questioning;

Whereas the involvement of youth and families is vital to the long-term health and stability of our congregation and overall mission;

Whereas in the digital world, paying for services and content is expected;

We recommend the following Sunday morning schedule and programming for children, youth and families focus on music, the arts and spirituality:

Music Groups:

Joyful Noise (ages 4- PreK) - Directed by Children's Music Director (Dana Zimbric)

Primary Choir (Grades K – 4/5) - Directed by Children's Music Director (Dana Zimbric)

Secondary Voices (Grades 5/6 and up) - Directed by Senior Music Director (Brian Lustig)

Youth Chimes (Grades 4 and up) - Directed by Children's Music Director (Dana Zimbric)

Primary Chimes (Grades K-3) Directed by Jill Herbold

Location: All Children and Youth programming takes place in the Cove and nearby Classrooms.

Sunday Morning Schedule:

9:00 – 9:15AM	Joyful Noise
9:15 – 10AM	Kids First and Students 1 st , after a time with Children,
10 – 11AM	Recommend the creation of a Parents Forum and Fellowship time Location TBD, likely in Cove Building
10 – 10:30 AM	Music Programming: Secondary Voices /Primary Choir
10:30 – 11AM	Youth Chimes/Primary Chimes
11AM	New Family-Friendly Worship Experience
11:45 – 12:15PM	Occasional Celebration Opportunity

Programming:

- Sunday morning Kids First and Students 1st curriculum mimics some of the artistic experiences of the Dream School of the Arts, therefore maximizing our staff's time.
- 11AM worship experience that recognizes the spirituality of children and youth and engages the insights, questions and worries they may have.
- 11AM worship experience that makes the Christian faith accessible and applicable in today's language, speaking to today's needs.
- Regularly scheduled special events intended to welcome new friends, strengthen relationships, and provide lasting experiences of a church that welcomes all.
- Consider charging tuition for the music programming with scholarships available and a discounted rate for the entire year's musical classes and events.

Financial Impact:

- Special Events would require registration and fees
- Assistant Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries position will not be filled.
- As the Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries shifts focus to become full-time Director of the Dream School of the Arts, his compensation will be increasingly covered by the grant and designated endowment fundings.

Responsible Parties:

Volunteer group of Children and Youth Enthusiasts chaired by Tara Wilde

- to calendar events i.e. movie nights, retreats, fifth Sunday service projects, parenting seminars, summer events, camps, etc.
- to manage communication i.e. google calendar invites, eNews, Constant Contact
- to arrange for volunteer leaders and chaperones as needed
- to maintain attendance and update database

Volunteers to help with Music curriculum, managed by the Director of Children's Music

The Director of the Dream School of the Arts hours will transition to be primarily at the Dream School location, with the exception of Sunday mornings, where he will serve as coordinator and supervisor of the Sunday School.

Worship and Music Task Force Recommendations
August 25, 2023

Members: Noel Haskins-Hafer, Christine Hoffman, Dr. Jaebon Hwang, Bruce Johnson, Dan Lai, Brian Lustig, Steve Mason, Katherine Stone, Rev. Trudy Robinson

~~~~~ **Recommendation #1** ~~~~~

**Whereas** the digital world makes information readily available creating a leveling of authority and the desire to dialogue around ideas, concepts and information;

**Whereas** the church's theological understanding of the love of God through Christ, the human condition, the power of community, the blessings of compassionate service and the call to justice-seeking can contribute to these conversations in important ways;

**Whereas** First UMC of San Diego has a long history of excellent music and quality worship set in a beautiful sanctuary and chapel;

**We recommend developing an Intimate and Conversational Worship Experience at 11AM**

1. The 9AM service remain as it is, traditional in format with monthly communion.
2. The 11AM service be Child/Youth and Family-friendly with encouraged participation and kids' activity sheets available.
3. 45-minutes be the maximum length of the service.
4. Themes not necessarily aligning with the 9AM service
5. Themes chosen based on current events, broader questions of the "soul", and narrative stories from the scriptures.
6. There be a set order each week instead of printed bulletins.
7. Worship leaders and musicians not be robed.
8. The music consist of a variety of styles, genres and performed by a variety of musicians: to include global, interfaith, sacred/secular music by Youth Choir and Chimes /Handbell Choir/Section Leader Quartet/Chamber Choir/Jubilee Singers, guest artists, and other possible creative presentations.
9. There be no formal collection of offering plates.
10. Informal and intimate seating in Trotter Chapel
11. The 11AM Order of Service be as follows:
  - Opening congregational song
  - Community Building Question
    - with the use of Poll Everywhere
    - oriented to include participation from children and youth
  - Inspiration through Art: visual element/poetry/scripture
  - Special Music
  - Question based on theme and conversation facilitated by Pastors
  - Special Music
  - Invitation to listen to the world around us
  - Closing congregational song
  - Blessing

**Timing**

Current 11AM service will continue until November 19.

November 26 – December 17 run-through the service with selected targeted participants to work out technicalities and flow.

Publicize new service during Advent through all means available.

First open service on December 31, 2023.

Provide a plan for hospitality to shepherd visitors through this new experiment in worship.

**Financial Impact:**

Technical updating may be necessary for Trotter Chapel. Any additional needs will be presented to the Trustees for their consideration. We will begin with the equipment we currently have.

**Responsible Parties:**

Pastors and Music Department Staff will develop the service.

People will be asked to commit to the service as it starts.

Volunteers will be needed to provide hospitality.

~~~~~ **Recommendation #2** ~~~~~

Whereas the digital world means that space is no longer bound to a geographic location;

Whereas the spirit of Christ is wherever two or three are gathered;

Whereas there is a need for spiritual conversations around events that impact all;

Whereas worship in the digital world is taking on new forms in many different places, and interactive experiences are sought after and transformative.

We recommend developing 3-4 special community services outside Sunday morning for this first year with more to come in the future

1. A Stations of the Cross Pilgrimage throughout San Diego to consider the suffering of Christ as seen in places of need, to include devotional readings on the bus ride to stations, culminating in a service opportunity.
2. Stations of the Cross Organ pieces, poems, and artwork offered during Lenten/Holy Week on social media.
3. An onsite sanctuary service “In Remembrance of George Floyd” (October 14, 1973 – May 25, 2020) to celebrate the work of racial justice through the organizations received or receiving grants from FUMCSD’s Racial Justice Endowment.
4. Explore offering a Christmas Service in Senior Living Communities.

Financial Impact:

The pilgrimage would request registration and fees to cover expenses.

Lenten devotional, Remembrance service and Blue Christmas would be free with costs absorbed in current operating budget.

Responsible Parties:

Pastors, Music Department Staff, and volunteers as needed.

~~~~~ Recommendation #3 ~~~~~

Whereas the impact of the digital world's convenient access to all kinds of music has negatively impacted our concert attendance;

Whereas we compete with other venues for free musical experiences and programs;

Whereas a new vision for our mission and more creative programming is needed;

Whereas interactive experiences are sought after;

Whereas an understanding and appreciation of other cultures is beneficial for our diverse city.

We recommend the FUMCSD leadership engage in conversation in 2023-2024 regarding the mission and ministry of all our music programs including the annual music series sponsored by the Cultural Events Committee.

Financial Impact: to be determined.

Responsible Parties: Conversation partners are the Music Department staff, Pastoral staff, and Business Manager and others.

~~~~~ Recommendation #4 ~~~~~

Whereas the church no longer maintains an authoritative cultural position that it once did, but nevertheless has a lot to offer.

Whereas the Holy Spirit is not contained in the confines of any church, nor could be grasped by any individual.

We recommend adopting the following postures:

First Church

Let us always strive to be and do our best AS WE ARE by acting with integrity, honesty, and compassion while encouraging others to do the same. Let all that we do, be done thoughtfully and in good faith, bringing forth our best efforts. Let us be confident in who we are, not feeling bad about who we are not, or envious about what we can't pull off. Let us be open and curious about what the current world needs spiritually. Let us be open and welcoming to those who spend time with us.

Worship Leadership including ushers, greeters, acolytes, liturgists, clergy, choirs, musicians, AV/tech personnel.

May our leadership be fluid, recruiting for short-term leaders, and developing leaders who can share responsibilities with others. May our leaders be trustworthy, relational, knowledgeable, wise, authentic and credible. May our leaders be those who have been trained for this work as a vocation, and those who have a heart for this work as volunteers. Let us develop defined expectations and accountability standards to assure success among all leaders.

First Church's Relationship to Newcomers

May we hold the differences among and between us as a blessing, like a mosaic with each piece holding an important place in the whole. May we be gracious and flexible in all our relationships, offering love, compassion, joy without expectations, and compliments given freely and honestly. In cultivating individual personal relationships, may we build trust, communicate intentionally, practice humility and kindness, listen actively and deeply, ask engaging questions, lead gently, and share authentically. May our efforts make space for all to celebrate every day with whomever is nearby.

To aid in adopting these postures, we recommend a yearly hospitality training.

Financial Impact: none.

Responsible Parties: Worship Leaders and Pastoral staff.

Digital Presence Task Force Recommendations
August 25, 2023

Members: Rebecca Luers, Kevin Miller, Nan Myers, Kent Schrock, Bonnie Schwartz, Rev. Trudy Robinson

Whereas the world in which the church seeks to engage is no longer geographically bound;

Whereas community can be found in virtual spaces;

Whereas information is shared and received through digital means;

Whereas First Church's communications has been increasingly ineffective as we have neglected these changes in our culture;

Whereas First Church's successful increase in engagement and reach this past year is encouraging;

Whereas First Church recognizes the challenges in bridging the generational divide to maintain relevance in an increasingly digital world;

~~~~~ **Recommendation #1** ~~~~~

**We recommend the staffing for digital communication be a priority.**

To continue shifting toward intentional activity in the digital world as a means of evangelism, hire a Director of Communications to oversee, strategize, and manage the church's presence in the digital world; to ensure coordination and consistent messaging between outbound and inbound communications; to contract with an outside agency for proper analysis and to optimize reach to new audiences, consult and partner with other individuals and organizations to explore new ideas when possible.

~~~~~ **Recommendation #2** ~~~~~

We recommend expanding our digital presence.

To nuance First Church's presence, image, and messaging to stand out from among other Christian organizations, expand beyond our current social media forums i.e. Facebook, Instagram, into others such as TikTok and Threads, edit existing and develop new content for podcasts, invest in equipment for content creation i.e. livestreaming capabilities in the Chapel and Linder Hall, improved and additional cameras in the sanctuary,

~~~~~ **Recommendation #3** ~~~~~

**Whereas** the fluidity of the digital world discourages long-term commitment, and current practices to pay for services and content is prevalent;

**We recommend exploring and encouraging the monetization of our services.**

While never asking people to pay for worship, there could be podcasts and YouTube content that would require subscriptions.

~~~~~ **Recommendation #4** ~~~~~

Whereas the digital world allows for an exchange of information between givers and receivers;
Whereas our presence of the digital world is enhanced when more than one perspective is heard on social media;

Whereas the financial gain from monetization on certain platforms is increased with simple practices;

We recommend developing a training curriculum for the congregation.

To create simple 30-minute training session to cover topics from how to navigate computers, to how to engage on social media, to what practices can be done to increase the benefit to the church.

~~~~~ **Recommendation #5** ~~~~~

**Whereas** the digital technology will continue to expand;

**Whereas** our wise investments put First Church in a position to lead in the development of new ministries, connections, and engagement;

**We recommend investing in technology.**

To expand our equipment for content creation i.e. livestreaming capabilities in the Chapel and Linder Hall, improve our current content production i.e. additional and improved cameras in the sanctuary, facilitate timely engagement with digital audience i.e. ChatBots for immediate and relevant Q&A on website, develop a First Church app which allows for easy accessibility through smart phones, the most prevalent and basic conduit of digital content. Two wireless digital signs that reside in visible areas of the campus to advertise church activities to frequent campus visitors.

**Financial Impact:**

The staff position of the Director of Communications could be funded by a bequest designated for evangelism and therefore provide an influx of funds from the Foundation to the Operating Budget.

Monetizing content produces funds to go directly to the Operating Budget. The amount varies from reciprocal advertising campaigns to podcast subscription rates, as has yet to be explored. Improvements and additional technologies could be funded from monies within the purview of the Board of Trustees and the Foundation.

**Responsible Parties:**

Lead Pastor and Business Manager are responsible for the hiring of staff and signing contracts for outside agencies. The Director of Communications would prioritize and strategize the addition of platforms. The Finance Committee's special committee on revenue generation would explore and recommend monetization available on platforms. The Board of Trustees and the Foundation Board would consider investments prioritized and presented by the Communications Department. Volunteers will develop, schedule and offer the Congregational Trainings.

## Caring For One Another Task Force Recommendations

August 25, 2023

**Members:** Sheilah Cameron, Scott Caprio, Rick Cook, Bob Hemstead, Carol Holmgren, John Mathison, Shelby Secoy, Rev. Tamara Walker

**Whereas** the world in which the church is called to serve is not geographically bound;

**Whereas** community can be found in virtual spaces;

**Whereas** our online community and digital visitors might be in need of the prayers and care of First Church;

**Whereas** the pandemic demanded that our caring ministries be performed in ways beyond being physically present with one another;

**Whereas** First Church learned how to care for one another in creative ways during the pandemic and can continue to create new ways to care;

**Whereas** First Church's congregational care ministries can be extended to people who live in faraway places;

**Whereas** the local church is no longer the only organization providing care and resources for people in need of support;

### ~~~~~ Recommendation #1 ~~~~~

**We recommend the Congregational Care Ministries of First Church be extended to include those who are part of our online community.**

To develop and distribute multimedia material highlighting the services of the New Life Counseling Center (NLCC), Stephen Ministry connections, Support Groups for Grief and Alzheimer's Disease; To promote congregational awareness of these ministries and the activities of the Caring Hearts participants; To invite and recruit online and in person people to be a part of these ministries; To provide hospitality during our live-streamed services with a keen focus on the need for prayer and care in those watching from afar.

### ~~~~~ Recommendation #2 ~~~~~

**We recommend the Congregational Care Ministries of First Church accommodate care for our online community, as well as our local community.**

To connect with counselors at NLCC who offer online sessions; to provide Stephen Ministers who can meet via zoom; to host both in person and online support groups; to continue to provide Caring Hearts bags at Christmas and Easter to our shut-ins and online community; to keep track of those in our online community who are in need of care, as part of our ongoing tracking of those local people in need of care.

### ~~~~~ Recommendation #3 ~~~~~

**We recommend establishing a team to connect with organizations in the San Diego area doing good, caring work in the community.**

To form an "Exploration and Reconnaissance Team" that interacts, virtually or otherwise, with other organizations and groups similarly engaged in caring-related ministries, for the purpose of both contributing FUMC perspectives and also learning about how these other parties are going about performing their services, then bringing back fresh perspectives to FUMC.

~~~~~ **Recommendation #4** ~~~~~

We recommend developing networked relationships and strategic partnerships with service organizations in the San Diego Region to more efficiently provide services to our members and friends.

To research resources and support from organizations doing this good work in the community and to relay these resources to our congregation. Organizations such as:

- Elder Care
 - Partner with Oasis for FUMC-sponsored Tech Support classes and distribution of digital resource books.
- Alzheimer's and Caregiver Support
 - Partner with Southern Caregiver Resource Center to promote and host their workshops and events.
- LGBTQA+ Resources
 - Partner with The San Diego LGBT Community Center in Hillcrest

Financial Impact:

The operating budget is being increasingly stretched, while the need for care among our older congregation members is increasing. New solutions among our community relationships could fill the gap, as First Church serves as a hub of connections, rather than simply another organization providing those services.

Responsible Agents:

Pastors, Director of Communications, and volunteers will develop marketing strategies to promote our services and opportunities to online friends; Volunteers will seek out potential relationships with organizations in the area.

Building Usage Task Force Recommendations August 25, 2023

Members: Rick Cook, Linda Hawk (staff), Bob Hemstead, Nick Hubsmith, Dawn Martin, Belen Poltorak, Janice Roudebush, and Jason Tucker (staff).

Whereas the post-pandemic world is different from the world we knew before COVID-19;

Whereas the digital culture, with all its gifts and limits, continues to shape our lives;

Whereas declining church membership and attendance have decreased the need for expansive facilities over the decades;

Whereas the Church's aging facilities face increasing maintenance costs each year at all sites, reducing funds available for our ministries;

Whereas the Church is losing a significant tenant in Mission Valley in July 2024 and the commercial lease market has dwindled;

Whereas the Ocean Beach sanctuary complex and cottages have significant repair needs and inherited deferred maintenance liabilities;

Whereas our region is suffering from a critical shortage of affordable housing;

Whereas the time is now for the Church to strategize the highest and best use of its facilities

~~~~~ Recommendation #1 ~~~~~

We recommend the sale of Ocean Beach parsonage home and parcel

We recommend the sale of Ocean Beach parsonage home and parcel at 4483 Saratoga Avenue as soon as practically possible. The increasing value of real estate in San Diego provides the church with an option to leverage and redeploy the financial value of this church asset. This is the oldest of the church-owned properties. As with our other aging properties, the maintenance, insurance, and inflationary costs will continue to increase.

If approved, we recommend the Board of Trustees, in collaboration with the Pastor Parish Relations Committee, develop a transition plan that will allow for listing of the property for sale and consideration for a housing allowance for the associate pastor. Additionally, the housing allowance allows pastors more flexibility in determining housing type, location, etc.

Real estate market conditions should provide a quick sale and an infusion of cash proceeds. We recommend the proceeds be used to restore operating fund cash that has been depleted due to operating losses and provide a reserve that can be used for unforeseen expenditures. These immediate funds will also serve as a bridge until larger property transitions can be realized and revenue can be generated from those transitions.

~~~~~ Recommendation #2 ~~~~~

We recommend selling the Ocean Beach sanctuary complex and cottage parcels to an affordable housing developer

We recommend the sale of the two parcels in Ocean Beach, which are the Sanctuary complex at 1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd. and the cottages and parking lot complex at 4823-25 Saratoga Avenue to an affordable housing developer.

It is important to the Water's Edge Task Force that the Ocean Beach site serve the community as much as possible, even without a worshiping presence there. This will leave a legacy of care and missional service for those who live in Ocean Beach. Because of this, selling the parcels to a nonprofit affordable housing developer is highly preferable to selling to a for-profit developer.

We recommend that, prior to the initiation of the overall sales process, a team of staff, congregation members and consultants be appointed by church leadership to manage and advise on the sales process from inception to completion. The final decision on which proposal to accept lies with the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the lead pastor, as the legal entity with supervision, oversight and care of all real property owned by the church (Book of Discipline 2533).

Throughout the process, it should be a high priority for this team to maintain close communication and coordination with those teams directed to oversee the effective transition of Water's Edge/Ocean Beach functions impacted by the sale. This includes providing adequate notice to Ocean Beach tenants, as well as finding the most suitable space available on the Mission Valley campus for those ministries continuing and/or integrating from the Water's Edge.

Also, recognizing that the sale has potential to generate income for the church in addition to fulfilling the fundamental affordable housing objective, we recommend that the team provide the developer with a reasonable due diligence period during the sales process if doing so has the potential to significantly enhance the ultimate sale price. This could mean a timeframe of 12-18 months to complete the transaction.

~~~~~ Recommendation #3 ~~~~~

We recommend exploration of the possibility of a ground lease for the Mission Valley East parcel, with a preference for affordable housing

We understand we are losing a major tenant in Warren Walker Schools in July of 2024. While this will put further strain on church finances, it also creates a sense of urgency to explore new opportunities for this parcel. Knowing that we will need consultants and other industry experts to confirm what can be done, we recommend pursuing a ground lease for the entire East Property that allows for negotiation of spaces for the New Life Counseling Center, Recording Studio and Children and Youth ministries. This will retain long-term control of the property and

give the church the strongest negotiating position over which housing or businesses are developed in our vicinity.

In the meantime, we also recommend exploring the possibility of temporary tenants who align with First Church missions. This could help shore up our finances while we further explore the ground lease option. Out of necessity for the additional research that needs to be done by the Board of Trustees, in collaboration with Church Council and the pastoral team, to make a well-informed decision, the timeframe for this recommendation is longer than our previous two recommendations, potentially in the 3-5+ year range.

Financial Impact:

The sale of the parsonage (Recommendation #1) could yield up to \$1.5M, less fees and other expenses that are borne by the seller. The church's operating budget for Fiscal Year 2024 is being seriously impacted by the departure of the Warren Walker School and increases in expenses across the board. We recommend the Board of Trustees engage a broker who can advise on the strategies that will sell the property expeditiously and at a price that reflects market conditions.

The sale of the Ocean Beach parcels (Recommendation #2) will depend on the negotiations and availability of tax credits and other federal, state, and local incentives to make this project a worthwhile venture for an affordable housing developer. In California, developers often layer up to 15 different funding sources. The Church will need funding to pay for consultants, industry professionals and legal counsel to ensure our best interests are represented and protected during negotiations for the execution of an agreement. The funds generated from the sale can generate investment revenue to supplement the operating fund and/or provide seed funding for any needed renovations/improvements connected to the ground lease in Mission Valley.

The most complex transaction will be a ground lease on the East Property (Recommendation #3) and given the expansive East Property parcel and the growth of Mission Valley, particularly considering the recent sale of the Mission Valley mall properties and SDSU Mission Valley, this is worthy of consideration. Under a ground lease, the church would maintain ownership of the land and could realize both one time and/or ongoing payments. This may also be an attractive option for a potential developer to build on land without having to invest significant capital in a land acquisition. The Home Depot project is an example of a ground lease project with the Scottish Rite.

If the ground lease option is deemed unfeasible, the church could pursue an outright sale to an affordable housing developer or engage The Institute for Effective Education, which has expressed interest in the 2225 Camino del Rio South building and may be open to purchasing 2231 Camino del Rio South.

Responsible Parties:

We recommend the Church Council, in consultation with the pastoral team, the Board of Trustees and Finance Committee, delegate the appropriate authority for an immediate sale of the Ocean Beach parsonage. A First Church Property Transition Group will be needed to hire a broker to solicit proposals from affordable housing developers and focus on the exploration of a ground lease for the East Property parcel. This advisory task force would collaborate with consultants and staff to determine a minimum acceptable financial benefit for each transaction, regularly update, and provide recommendations to Church Council and the Board of Trustees, who retain full authority over the missions and real properties of the church, respectively.

Water's Edge Task Force Recommendations
August 25, 2023

Members: Barb Eveland, Marian Hart, Kevin McBryde, Jason Tucker, Laurie Tucker, Becca Vitale, Rev. Brittany Hanlin

Whereas the digital culture is changing the need for physical spaces;

Whereas it is financially unsustainable to continue worshipping at the Ocean Beach campus;

Whereas the Ocean Beach sanctuary complex and cottages have significant repair needs and deferred maintenance liabilities;

Whereas it is important to serve the fellowship and ministry needs of the OB community;

Whereas we want to ensure the legacy of the original Point Loma UMC and the Water's Edge Faith Community site as one of service to the Ocean Beach Community;

Whereas in the digital culture, people engage in service opportunities as a way of exploring and confirming their beliefs;

Whereas we are open to God's guidance as we explore new ministry opportunities together;

Whereas we affirm the spirit of God is always at work to do new and beautiful things in the world;

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **Recommendation #1** ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

We recommend the pursual of an affordable housing development on the Ocean Beach property at 1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd and 4823 and 4825 Saratoga Ave.

Affordable Housing has been a dream of our congregation for three years, beginning in October 2020. An architect was hired to create the initial plans for a 12-unit development. With the help of the BOT and congregant donations, we paid the architect \$16,100 for the schematic design. Initially, we sought a partnership for this project with Habitat for Humanity. Unfortunately, due to the limited units proposed, building restrictions, and overall cost of the project, Habitat for Humanity rejected the original proposal and schematic design.

After examining the 2022 Operating Budget, the annual deficit for Water's Edge was \$86,401.71 of the \$572,000 overall FUMC operating deficit. FUMC received government assistance during the pandemic and the last distribution was received in 2023, which was applied to the operating deficit, leaving us with a \$372,000 deficit.

While this recommendation is not an easy one to make for our community, we want the legacy of Water's Edge to live on by providing affordable housing to our neighbors in need. The cost of living continues to increase and there are many people struggling to make ends meet. As people of faith, we believe in caring for the most vulnerable among us, and this is an opportunity to do so.

We refer to the Board of Trustees and the Affordable Housing Committee, the work regarding the OB property and vision towards affordable housing.

~~~~~ **Recommendation #2** ~~~~~

**We recommend the Water's Edge Faith Community transition to the Mission Valley campus by December 31, 2023. Further recommendations:**

- The Water's Edge Faith Community be supported by the pastoral clergy team.
- The Water's Edge Faith Community become an Ocean Beach neighborhood group.
- The final worship service for the Water's Edge Faith Community in Ocean Beach be on December 24.
- The Water's Edge Care Team have representation under the Caring Hearts Ministry beginning in January 2024.
- The Sunday morning "Conversations Class" begin meeting on the Mission Valley campus beginning, January 2024 at 10am, between worship services.

Our first recommendation is the catalyst for our second. The 2023 Operating Budget estimates a deficit of \$211,000. This financial reality means a reduction in expenses and operating costs. Our community cares deeply for one another each week during worship service. The connections and bonds cultivated are apparent in our Sunday morning interactions, however, our presence and ministry are limited. Our average weekly worship attendance is 40, yet the overhead costs are \$6,000 per week. This translates to a weekly operating deficit of \$1,700.

The Cal-Pac Conference New Ministries Essential Ministry Team granted Water's Edge monies for three years in an effort to help the new start become self-sustaining within the 5-year limit for new church starts. Based on the Water's Edge grant proposal in 2018, we have not met our goals financially or in terms of weekly attendance for the last several years, including the years prior to the pandemic.

The pandemic highlighted the evolution of digital culture and provided opportunities to worship outside of the wall of the sanctuary. As a community of faith, we are called to adapt to an ever-changing world, and this is an opportunity to embrace a new, more networked style of community and connection. This less formal style community allows for broadened ministry, beyond the weekly discipline of congregational worship, which fewer people look to for meaningful connection these days. Contemporary worship services acted as a bridge for cross-generational worship during its inception, however, many people are looking for unique and creative spiritual connections beyond the offerings of contemporary worship. Worship like technology must too, evolve, if we are to be enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

Transitioning to a neighborhood group invites opportunities to gather for deep spiritual moments of connection with and service to others. The creation of the OB neighborhood group will serve the fellowship needs of congregants formerly worshipping at the WE campus and new community members who may join.