

NEW CHURCHES

CostaMesa
Baptist
Association's
Priority Church
Planting Needs



Six Church Starting Priorities and Their Nearby Mission Fields

The demographics and population trends of the San Francisco Bay Area are complex. Many people who work in San Francisco or the Silicon Valley choose to live in more suburban parts of East Bay and commute to work or school, or simply find it more affordable.

Weekday traffic is a maze of travelers who carpool, use public transportation, or drive their cars into more congested areas. Many spend hours commuting each day. This means that what happens in one part of the Bay Area affects every other part as well. A cultural and spiritual “butterfly effect” is in place.

Some of the Bay Area’s most unchurched communities are located in the East Bay along a public transportation system called BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit), which connects cities in four

counties. Bay Area families may live in one county, work in another and attend school in a third.

BART’s average weekday ridership is over 367,000. The 1,500,000 people in Alameda County and the 1,000,000 residents of Contra Costa County are better connected to the rest of the Bay Area because of BART. The CostaMesa Baptist Association (named from the counties of Contra Costa and Alameda, both of which overlap the Association’s region) is praying for new churches in each of the cities where there are BART stations.

Six particular communities seem the most strategic. They are San Ramon, Dublin, Concord, Walnut Creek, Pittsburg, and a tri-city region called LaMorinda. These places were chosen because they are strategically located,

need new evangelical churches, and because they also have other nearby communities or multiple people groups within them warranting the need for new churches to take responsibility for their near mission fields and become church planting churches. New churches planted here could become key players in a regional church planting strategy.

Over the last decade, the CostaMesa Baptist Association has successfully planted churches with a very limited budget. Of the Association’s 60 churches, 32 have been planted since 2000. Of these new churches, 18 are indigenous. Only four can be considered Anglo churches, and the others are African, African American, Asian, South Asian, Russian, Hispanic, etc. We believe it will take outside partnership to start strong churches in the expensive suburbs of the East Bay, and we are eager to plant more new churches all over our region.

Priority #1: San Ramon

San Ramon grew 61.3% from 2000 – 2010, from 44,722 to 72,148. Almost 300,000 people live within a fifteen-minute drive. Much of the growth can be attributed to three master planned communities and a major regional employment center. The Bridges includes 5 neighborhoods surrounding an 18-hole championship golf course. Gale Ranch II, has 14 neighborhoods, many parks and great schools. Windemere, the newest development in San Ramon, features 5 new schools, a community college, a library, a huge community center, a senior center, and 18 neighborhood parks. The local school district is ranked number one in California. Bishop Ranch houses over 200 companies, which means that a large number of people who live in the area can work nearby. Residents point to this as a major contribution to the quality of life they experience in San Ramon.

San Ramon is affluent and educated. Although it is consistently rated as one of the best places to live in America, church planters can't afford to live there. Yet, it must be reached. Only 16% attend any evangelical church, and less than 1% are Southern Baptists. The 2010 census says that 58.1% (42,000 people) of San Ramon is white and 36.6% of the population is Asian. The Asian population includes 8,179 Asian Indians (up from 1,387 in 2000), 8,494 Chinese (up from 2,602 in 2000), 3,412 Filipino, 2,285 Koreans and 2,657 African Americans. The Hispanic population has doubled, and is now 6,250, or 8.7% of the city.

Just north of San Ramon is Danville, a city of 42,000, and is mostly Caucasian. The median home value is close to a million dollars. Danville is home to some of California's most expensive houses and most exclusive country clubs. A new English speaking church is needed in San Ramon, but the hope is that it would draw some people from Danville and eventually a church would be started there, too.

Priority #2 Dublin

few other stagnant SBC churches in Dublin. Two churches that reach whites but are multiethnic, one that reaches Hispanics, one that reaches Asian Indians, and one that reaches Chinese are needed now.

Dublin Ranch is a group of master planned community featuring community pools, tennis courts and parks, and a mega sports park. The plans include baseball fields, tennis courts, soccer fields, bocce ball courts, volleyball and a track. Fallon Sports Park will be built by the City of Dublin and Dublin Ranch Golf course is a public course. Like San Ramon, these new upscale communities are expensive and unchurched.

A new church in Dublin/ Dublin Ranch needs to responsibly plant churches in the surrounding area. East of Dublin is Livermore, with a population of 79,000. In 2010 it was named the third wealthiest mid-sized city in the United States. The non-Hispanic white population is 52,152, indicating a need for two or three new churches. The Hispanic population of Livermore grew from 10,541 in 2000 to 16,920 in 2010. At least three Spanish language churches are needed. There is an Asian population of 7,100 in Livermore, including 1,400 Asian Indian, 1,700 Chinese, and 2,300 Filipino. There is at least a need to reach out to these groups in a pan Asian or very multiethnic congregation, but there may also be a need for churches among each group. There is a Hindu temple that already attracts Asian Indians in Livermore, and there is a significant Russian population in the Dublin/ Livermore area.

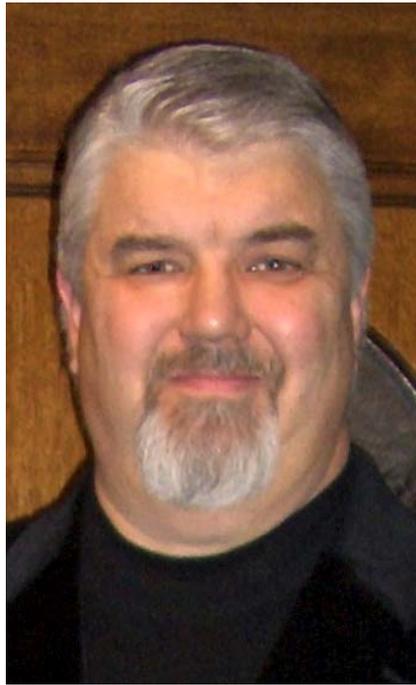


Priority #3: Concord

With a population of over 130,000, Concord is the largest city in Contra Costa County. It has a vibrant downtown core, an impoverished area, and several suburban developments. Four of the six Anglo/multiethnic churches in Concord are growing or healthy, but another church that attracts younger English speakers is needed downtown. The recently developed downtown is a high density area, with Todos Santos at its center. It hosts farmer's markets, free summer concerts, and many community events. Young urbanites live in nearby apartment and condominium projects, taking advantage of the proximity to public transportation, many good restaurants, and the farmers market.

A downtown church in Concord would inherit an interesting mission field. The non-Hispanic white population is 64,000, but many whites in Concord are Middle Eastern or Russian. Concord ranks fourth in the United States in number of first generation Afghans per population density. There is an Islamic Center, plus Afghan restaurants and markets, but no church that worships in their language. There are also many Muslim Palestinians in Concord. There is a growing Russian church in Concord.

A new church is also needed among Middle Easterners and other Muslim peoples. The Hispanic/Latino count is 36,000 and there are 5,000 African Americans. The Asian population includes 2,000 Asian Indians, 3,000 Chinese, and 4,600 Filipinos. Concord's Monument Corridor is a community of new immigrants, most of whom have Mexican origins. Homes are less expensive, schools are challenged, and the needs are greater. The Southern Baptist church ministering in the Monument Corridor has Central American, not Mexican roots, so a new church is needed. A church planter in the



"We really could name at least 50 sites where new churches are needed all around the area of the CostaMeda Baptist Association. English speaking churches are needed to reach various ethnicities, but so are Chinese churches, Hindi and Urdu speaking churches, Russian language churches and many Spanish speaking churches. We need to plant churches that plant churches."

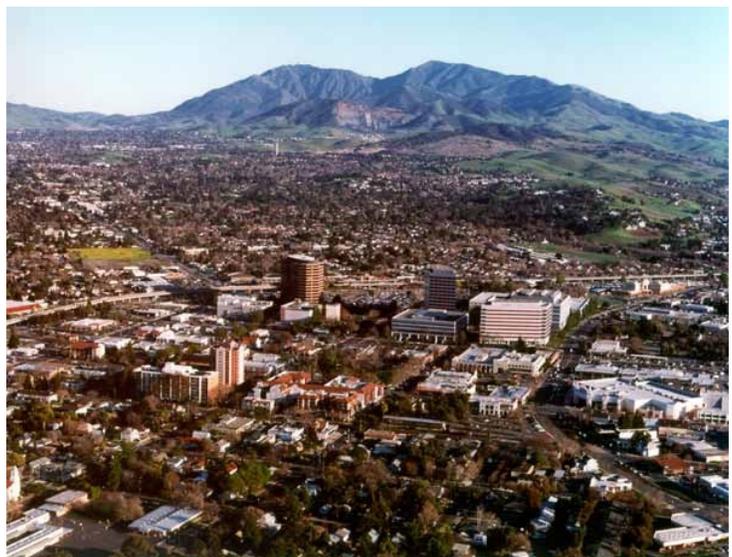
Jack Roberts, director of missions,
CostaMeda Baptist Association
(925)429-5314

Priority # 4 Walnut Creek

Walnut Creek is a exclusive, affluent, educated, pricey residential community, with an upscale urban center. With a population of over 65,000, Walnut Creek has seen its white population decline by over 3000 while its Asian population increased by 2000 in the last decade. However, it is still 78% Caucasian. Theatre, art, museums, and historical homes are part of Walnut Creek's landscape. It also has a dignified shopping district. A large hospital and some skilled nursing facilities are some of the city's largest employers, and provide at least one inroad into the population.

The CostaMeda Baptist Association has prayed for a long time that God would send a mature church planter who is a good cultural match for the people of Walnut Creek. They imagine that a second career individual might fit well, but are keeping their eyes and hearts open for God's will.

There is one growing SBC church in Walnut Creek that is reaching mostly Caucasians. A new English speaking church is needed in south Walnut Creek. If that church is not able to incorporate Asians, one pan Asian church is also indicated. Rossmoor, an affluent retirement community of 9,200 is two miles from Walnut Creek, also needs a church, or perhaps a campus of another church could begin in order to reach the active seniors who live there.





Priority #5: Pittsburg

Pittsburg recorded a population of 63,000 in 2010, up from 57,000 in 2000. The racial makeup of Pittsburg is approximately 23,000 White; 11,200 African American; 10,000 Asian, 5,600 of whom are Filipino 13,000 who claim "other race" and 4,600 from two or more races. There were 27,000 Hispanic or Latino of any race. The White and African American populations have decreased while the Hispanic and Asian population has grown since the 2000 Census.

There are three SBC African American churches (one in core group stage) and one Latino congregation in Pittsburg. No SBC churches are reaching Whites or the large Filipino group. At least one English speaking multiethnic church that can reach Caucasians and Asians is needed. Two Spanish speaking churches are needed, one of which would be non traditional, and a Filipino church is also needed. Los Medanos Community College, with 10,000 enrolled provides another significant outreach opportunity. One possibility in Pittsburg is to start a multi-congregation church that meets in several languages.

Bay Point shares a BART station with Pittsburg. It is a census-designated place of 21,000 people. Almost 55% are Hispanic of any race, but mostly of Mexican origin. Around 11% are African American, 21% non-Hispanic white, 10% Asian and the rest claim either "other" or two or more races. There are two Southern Baptist churches in Bay Point (white and Filipino). Neither of these is growing. There is a need for one Spanish language church and one English speaking multiethnic church in Bay Point, though it is possible for Bay Point residents to attend a new church in Pittsburg until a new church is started for them in Bay Point. Pittsburg, along with Bay Point is a high poverty, high unemployment, and high crime region of Contra Costa County. Families and Schools are suffering, and the body of Christ would find this a good place to make a kingdom investment of time and resources.

Priority #6: LaMorinda

Sometimes people refer to the three neighboring towns of Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda as Lamorinda. These three upscale communities share many characteristics. One of these is that there are no healthy Southern Baptist churches in the combined area of 57,000 people. It is a priority to start at least one English speaking church here, but the CMBA is praying for one in each town eventually. With a population of 24,000 the town of Lafayette is only a twenty-five minute BART ride from San Francisco. In some ways, you could say that Lafayette is closer to San Francisco than some of San Francisco is to itself. It is almost 85% white, with the next largest group being Asian (9%). There is only one, struggling SBC Church in Lafayette, and we need at least one strong church there.

Moraga, another small town, borders Lafayette to the south. Because Lafayette is so small, Moraga is just a few minutes from BART too. Moraga had a population of 16,000 in 2010, which is stable with 2000 data. The town is around 76% White (12,200) and 15% Asian (2,400 people). Median 2006-2010 home value was \$955,500. There are no Southern Baptist churches in Moraga.

The town of Orinda, just one BART stop east of Oakland, had a 2010 population of 17,500. The only significant sized non white population is the Asian population. The city is home to affluent professionals who commute to Oakland and San Francisco. The median age in Orinda is 47.8 years, the largest segment of which is 45 to 64 years old. Over 90% of Orinda is owner occupied.