



"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; ¹⁰ then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine" (Proverbs 3:7-10).

Background

Saint Paul's City Church (SPCC), was formed as a church plant within the Diocese of Western Anglicans, part of the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA), in early January 2013. It was started by two newly-ordained priests for the purpose of building a multi-ethnic, diverse church that would be "Active, Authentic, and Ancient" within the Temecula Valley of California. Their vision drew from the city church vision defined with the anticipation that God would bring people to the church who were hungry for His Word, wanting to be engaged in His work within the Temecula Valley community and desiring a loving church community that represented the "city;" that is, one that is diverse in regard to culture, race, age, denominational background and economic resources. Led by our founding pastors with this vision being undergirded in prayer, God has raised up an amazing group of loving people to be His representatives of Jesus to our community.

Our founding pastors, Jamal Scarlett and Cameron Lemons, met while serving in a local church together. At that time, Jamal, who was working diligently for his MDIV degree at Fuller Theological Seminary, and Cameron, having graduated from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and serving as a youth pastor, jointly became interested in the worship and traditions of the ancient church. They found that the Anglican tradition offered liturgical worship while professing God's Word and bringing the saving Grace offered through His Son, Jesus Christ. Both Cameron and Jamal had theological background in the Pentecostal and Baptist traditions of the aforementioned traditionally African American churches, which added a charismatic component to their vision.

The ACNA brought the ancient roots to their vision moving forward. So it was that in 2011 they met with the Bishop of Western Anglicans and sought support for their idea from him. After ordination to the transitional diaconate, they were assigned to Christ Church in Fallbrook, CA for discernment and oversight as they developed in the teachings and liturgy of the ACNA. Once Jamal graduated from Fuller, they were ordained as Priests and the church was started the following day.

A small group of 15 or so people gathered as a core group meeting in the home of two of the founding members. Within 3 months, we found a rented space at a local Lutheran church and the congregation began to grow. On Easter of 2013, the Bishop received our group as a church plant and installed Jamal and Cameron as co-pastors. The church reached its fifth anniversary this January. After several moves of location, the church has settled into the northern part of the Temecula Valley in the town of Lake Elsinore. The congregation has grown to around 60 members/attenders and has remained true to its founding vision. Congregants come from as far north as Corona, as far east as Hemet, and as far south

as Temecula. We are blessed that a number of our members have formal training in theology from schools such as Fuller, Gordon-Conwell, and Liberty University., providing a rare group of qualified lay leadership. These people have played a large role in the development of the ministry groups within the church. The majority of our congregation comes from traditions other than Anglican or were unchurched. Their attraction to the church emanates from the teaching of the gospel, the welcoming, diverse environment, the loving nature of the people in the congregation and the Spirit-filled worship. Instructions in the ancient traditions are offered to give insight behind the reasons for doing them for those unfamiliar with those practices.

From the outset, St Paul's City Church has been undergirded in intercessory prayer by a very active and powerful prayer team. They continue, to this day, meeting weekly to lift up the ongoing vision and needs of the church and its leadership and the Lord has encouraged them by proving faithful in His response. We have realized from the beginning that this is the Lord's church and He is building it. Through prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, the Lord has directed us in His will and His ways.

What is SPCC?

In December of 2017, SPCC brought in an outside church consultant and leader who has experience working with congregations seeking help with identifying their identity and strengths, casting new vision, building up their ministries and aiding in focusing on what God is already doing in their midst. She led an afternoon working meeting/discussion to answer this question "What is St Paul's City Church? In order to help shed light on where we are going. The following summarizes the results:

1. We are people who genuinely love, especially in:
 - A. knowing and caring for one another;
 - B. being authentic, safe and welcoming;
 - C. valuing differences; and
 - D. embracing community togetherness across ethnicity, economic levels, and Religious backgrounds.

To put "skin" on this attribute of our church, people who genuinely love, here is a recent example. One of the women of our church decided to host a baby shower for the granddaughter of one of the other members of the church. The granddaughter does not attend SPCC and is under-resourced; but many had prayed for her over the years as her grandmother had shared her prayer requests for this beloved young woman who had struggled with addiction and had committed to staying drug-free when she learned she was pregnant. This young woman came to a shower that was a joyful, affirming event; more than 10 women of SPCC showered her with baby gifts, a full luncheon, and prayers of encouragement and acceptance. This young woman was so touched, and tears flowed as she thanked all for their love for her.

2. We are people who trust that God is intensely present, especially in the way we:
 - A. talk to God personally;
 - B. pray expectantly for God to intervene;

- C. listen to and depend on the Holy Spirit; and
- D. experience the presence of God.

One of the ways that SPCC is committed to being a people who trust that God is intensely present happens in every Sunday service and has since the church's inception. In each service, there is a time where all the speaking and music ceases and an invitation is given for all to listen to what God may be saying and to share a word, a song or a scripture that God may have given them to share. For those moments, as a congregation we wait on the Holy Spirit and fully expect Him to speak, to be active in our midst, and to show Himself to us in ways that encourage us all. Typically at least one or two, but sometimes more people will share what the Spirit has given them. We do not merely say that we rely on the Holy Spirit, but we want to give Him the time and the space to move among us.

- 3. We are people who express the presence of Christ in the world, especially by:
 - A. serving people outside the church doors;
 - B. helping with practical assistance and actions; and
 - C. aspiring to advocate for justice.

An example of how SPCC serves people outside the church is its ongoing outreach to those who are under-resourced in the local community. This has taken many forms including offering the Alpha course, with a weekly hot meal provided by church volunteers, to the poor and homeless in the neighborhood twice in 2017 that resulted in new members to the church. At the 2017 Christmas Eve service one of the women who had received help over the year, had completed an Alpha course and now is serving in the course, could barely contain her excitement for the New Year as she gave her testimony about how Jesus had completely changed her life. She became a SPCC member in October. We are so grateful for the serving and loving members that drew this woman to our Lord.

SPCC Ministries

Ministries	Frequency	Avg. # Participants
Alpha Outreach	Weekly (Fall)	35
Church Potluck	Monthly (12 mos.)	20
Movie Night	Weekly (Summer)	10
Worship Night	Approx. Quarterly	10
New Membership Class	Semi-Annually	6
Homeless Outreach	Monthly (12 mos.)	15
Men's Hike	Ad hoc	12
Women's Brunch	Annual	15
Small Groups	Weekly	15
Spanish Bible Study	Weekly	5

The Unique Identity and Call of SPCC

Like all churches, SPCC is a church that is called to be, a **visible sign of Christ’s on-going loving Presence on Earth**. This is expressed in Ephesians 1:23: “The church is Christ’s body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with his presence” (MSG). More specifically, as described above, what makes SPCC unique is that it really is a racially and economic diverse family which loves and accepts, a community which it serves, and a body that adheres to Bible-based orthodox theology with a strong life in the Spirit. SPCC will continue to be and become a place that:

1. Reveals the nearness of God;
2. Gives people a chance to see and experience the character and values of God;
3. Demonstrates what the kingdom of God is meant to be;
4. Draws people into the life of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
5. Motivates people to show what Jesus is like;
6. Embodies Christ’s reconciling, sacrificial love for the well-being of the world; and
7. Continues the compassion of Jesus by serving and helping all human beings.

Below is a table which resulted from the consultant’s work with the congregation identifying our priorities. Participants were asked to choose either the left or the right value as their preference on each line. The yellow highlighted values were preferred by the majority of the participants.

WHAT SORT OF CHURCH ARE YOU MOST DRAWN TO?

Place yourself on each continuum. Go by your “gut reaction.”

Where I experience the presence of God		Where I learn how to follow Jesus
Time-honored words and practices		Beautiful words and images
Meeting people's practical needs		Speaking out against injustice
Invites people to receive Christ as Lord		Awakens in people a longing for Jesus
A like-minded group of Christian friends		A diverse group of Christ followers
Welcomes me into its vision and ministry		Empowers my vision and ministry
Helps me understand my faith		Helps me serve Jesus
Accepts my struggles		Teaches me how to talk to God
I feel God in my heart		I sense the beauty and glory of the Lord
Makes me want to shout with joy		Makes space for me to be still and know God

Key =

Preferred

Equally Divided

Slightly Leaning

The results present a fairly accurate picture of our church. These are also the things the current members value and are the things that have attracted new people to our midst.

We are in the process of finding and calling a new Rector. It is the wish of the Vestry and the expressed desires of the congregation that we keep the things that make Saint Paul's what it is, and move forward enriching life in Christ.

Moving Forward

The congregation was also asked what would improve the experience of God through Christ moving forward. Both members and attenders contributed to the list. The four most frequently cited were:

1. While training has taken place, there was a desire to see stronger sustained training and equipping the saints with a focus on discipleship, specifically:
 - a. Teach people how to study the Bible;
 - b. Explain the facets of the Liturgy;
 - c. Expand the equipping and teaching the use and practice of our spiritual gifts; and
 - d. Train to become even more obedient disciples.
2. Grow and expand our Youth and Children's ministries with:
 - a. A larger youth and young family presence;
 - b. Launching a Teen Bible study; and
 - c. More congregational participation in children's ministry.
3. Work to build stronger and better small groups, particularly:
 - a. Men's groups;
 - b. Women's groups;
 - c. Deeper studies for mid-week small groups; and/or
 - d. Adult education.
4. While SPCC has been active in outreach, there was an expressed desire to see a clearer mission and more focused efforts in outreach, especially the areas of:
 - a. Giving targeted additional support to the local ministry partnerships that have already been established through relationship;
 - b. Encouraging and attracting more direct participation on SPCC outreach programs;
 - c. Increasing advocacy for justice and equality given the diverse congregation; and

- d. Establishing prayer intercessors in our neighborhoods who will pray to see our region transformed.

Some of these things will come with growth. Some will have to have focus and energy from the current and future Vestry. And all will need leadership from our new Rector.

Our Geographic Area and Community

See the attached demographic profile for the City of Lake Elsinore.

St. Paul City Church Stats

	<u>Number</u>
<i>Individual Members</i>	
Men	17
Women	28
Child 0-5	5
Child 6-14	6
Youth 15-18	5
College 19-24	0
Total	61
<i>Family Units (members and non members)</i>	
All Family Units	28
Families W/Children	7
Families W/Youth	5
Married/No Children	19
Empty Nesters	8
<i>Worship Participation in 2017</i>	
	Avg. Weekly
10:30 AM Attendance	40
10:30 AM Nursery	3
Home Communion	1
<i>Children's Church in 2017</i>	
	Avg. Weekly
Nursery	1
Elementary	3
JR/SR High School	2
