

## Service Time Change - The Process

By Jason Fickes | July 2018

The question I was tasked to answer was:

**“Should we consider making a change to our current service times?”**

In order to answer the question, I used the advice process in our new decision making model. In the advice process I sought advice from the following (30+ people/conversations) from January through March:

1. **Sunday morning ministry directors at both campuses (Worship Arts, Children's/Student Ministries, Hospitality, )** - to see how our current times were working for these ministries, what they would recommend, and what the ramifications of a service time change would be.
2. **A mix of Daybreak members/attenders in different life stages from both campuses (Single Young Adults, Married Couples w/ Young Kids, Married Couples w/ Students, Empty Nesters)** - to see which service they choose now and why and to see what services they would choose if times were changed and why
3. **A few local pastors who made a change in the past year or two away from an 11 AM service** - to see why they made the change, what they've learned and what their results have been
4. **A couple of churches local to GP** - to see how a change in service times could affect traffic on Gettysburg Pike on Sunday mornings.

**The biggest thing the research revealed is that the 11 AM service did not seem to serve the majority of our church family well.** Collectively, we've noticed: 1) An overall decrease in attendance, energy, and engagement in the adult service, 2) Lower numbers in kid attendance, and 3) A challenge for Sunday AM ministries to consistently secure enough volunteers for that service. Many were in agreement that 11 AM was simply too late of a start time, especially for families with kids because it pushed lunch (and naps if applicable) too far outside of their normal rhythms. I was convinced really quickly that 11 AM was not a service time that could continue to effectively grow and build momentum.

With feedback also pointing towards ideal service times starting between 8:30 and 10:30 AM, I came up with what I believed were 5 viable service time options in that time range. I recalled the feedback I received from several conversations when I asked people what service they would choose if both services were to start earlier than they currently do. Many 1st service attenders said they would try to stay with 1st service but felt like a 2nd service start time between 10 and 10:30 AM would be much more helpful than 11 AM. Some 1st service attenders said they would move to 2nd service. Current 11 AM attenders said they would primarily continue to attend 2nd service. **This confirmed to me that service times of 8:30/8:45 and 10/10:15/10:30 could help us achieve more equity between the 2 services and give us 2 services that would allow us to grow.**

At this point, I narrowed down the 5 options to 3 - 8:30 & 10, 8:30 & 10:15, and 8:30 & 10:30. **Collectively, with the Campus Pastors, we narrowed it down to what we believed would be the 2 best options: 8:30 & 10:15 and 8:30 & 10:30.** For a number of reasons (and from feedback received in the advice process), we felt like only having 90 minutes between service start times would have been (at least in this season), challenging for our Sunday morning ministry teams.

With it down to 2 options, I asked for another round of feedback both from the entire staff as well as the elders with just those 2 options in mind. **Their feedback led to the final decision to make 8:30 and 10:30 our new service times. This means services would ideally run no longer than 8:30 to 9:45 AM and 10:30 to 11:45 AM.**