



RANCHO BERNARDO COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MISSION STUDY REPORT

August 2023



Who we are as a church:

Song: One Faith. One Hope. One Lord. Lyrics – One Faith, one Hope, one Lord, one church for which He died. One voice, one song we lift in praise to Him who was and is and shall be evermore. Though we be many people, diverse with various gifts, we are given to each other for the unity of faith that we grow in the knowledge of the Son of God, in the fullness of Christ.

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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE MISSION STUDY

Rancho Bernardo Community Church (Presbyterian)

“From You Will Flow Living Waters” - John 7:38

A. Background:

In January of 2021, Pastor Bryan Stamper departed from RB Community Church to accept a call at another church. The steps to identify a replacement pastor were initiated shortly after. An interim pastor nominating committee (IPNC) was formed and started the search process in February 2021. Our Session assigned the formation of the Mission Study Team (MST) to the Officer Nominating Committee (ONC). After thoughtful discussion, prayer, and discernment, the ONC proposed a seven-member team, which the congregation confirmed in May 2021. Finally, in July 2021, Dr. Geoff Kohler began his duties at RB Community, having been selected as our transitional pastor by the IPNC.

Members of the Mission Study Team include:

- Deborah Kelly (chair and member of the congregation)
- Brian Albright (member of the congregation)
- Mike Hughes (elder, class of 2024)
- Takuma Maruo (member of the congregation)
- Frank Roberts (elder, class of 2023)
- Andy Watt (elder, class of 2025)
- Kathy Wesley (member of the congregation)

B. Introduction: Defining the Mission Study and Its Process:

Pastor Geoff provided initial planning guidance to include the use of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as our central tool in the mission study. Appreciative

Inquiry has been used by numerous corporations, non-profit organizations, and churches. It is a process that starts with strengths, and the intent to get all members to engage in the inquiry, to share their stories of where, when, and how God made a difference in their lives, and in the life of the church. AI offers a positive, strengths-based process to the growth of the church.

Appreciative Inquiry has four phases:

- Discovery: to engage all members and stakeholders of the church to articulate strengths, best practices and what gives life to the church
- Dream: to determine strengths, to find our potential and higher purpose, including “What is God calling us to become”?
- Design: to articulate a church design or ideas that members brainstorm which focuses on realization of our dream(s) (the how can it be)
- Destiny: to strengthen members and staff, and encourage members to invest in action, and to sustain momentum for positive change and performance at this church

The first two phases in the AI started with the creation of four interview questions (see Appendix A), recruitment of volunteer-interviewers, and to inform the congregation about the AI and our timeline. Volunteer interviewers were composed of elders, deacons, the Mission Study Team and other members of the congregation. All interviewers attended a training session. Each interviewer received a list, averaging 15 names, to contact for interviews. Members were contacted by email, letter or phone, and received the questions in advance to allow them to think and prepare their responses. Interviews were conducted between October 2022 and February 2023. During this period, the interviewers conducted a total of 226 interviews.

A synthesis of all the interviews was completed by a team of elders and the chair of the Mission Study Team in March. As each team member read all the interviews, she/he strove to answer the following questions:

- What do the participants think are the core essences of RB Community that’s revealed when the Church is at its best?
- Can you imagine a metaphor or image of RB Community when it is at its best?
- What’s an exemplary story from those you gathered and why does it seem so to you?
- What dreams of the future stand out to you from this process?

This process resulted in identification of four core strengths of RB Community:

- Family Ministries
- Worship
- Core Leadership
- Connections

The synthesis then allowed us to host a Summit (Design Phase), which took place on Saturday, April 29th, 2023. All members, stakeholders, and staff were invited to participate in this one-day event. Upon conclusion of an opening session to introduce the day, attendees were allowed to choose and attend one of four breakout sessions. Each breakout session was a core strength as identified in the synthesis. Each breakout session was led by two elders. After a short, small group activity to activate the creativity of attendees, each breakout group brainstormed ideas about what would happen if we lived fully into the strengths that God has created here.

The goal of the Summit is for the congregation to have clarity on the church's identity and direction. Hopefully, this unites the church in purpose as well as gaining commitments from members to invest in accomplishing some of these ideas in the core strengths. Thus, we are now into our Destiny (or Delivery) phase.

This report's table of contents has additional elements that the Mission Study Team believe are important to the report, as well as to the knowledge of our congregation, and to any prospective pastor. The report shows the Holy Spirit has created an openness to active leadership for our next pastor-head of staff. As a congregation, we have an abundance of gifts for ministry, and the Appreciative Inquiry has revealed a desire to serve more fully and wisely as we strengthen relationships, deepen our discipleship and impact our community in the name of Jesus Christ.

A goal of our church for spiritual formation: "It is the process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the benefit of others." We hope and pray that our Session, congregation and future Pastor Nominating Committee will use this report as a reference to invest and grow our future at RB Community.

II. CHURCH CULTURE

A. Four Strengths from Interviews and the Summit

We discovered the four strengths—Family Ministries, Worship, Core Leadership, and Connections—of the church after interviewing more than 200 people and then synthesized their stories into these themes.

The elders who were involved with leading each of the strengths groups are now trying to move these ideas forward. They have small groups who are discussing the ideas, and they report to Session about their progress.

1. Family Ministries

Youth and family ministry remains a pillar of our community at RB Community Church. We have intentionally dedicated four specialized staff members to guiding our youth ministry, catering to the spiritual needs of children and teenagers from pre-K through high school and their families. Notably, our team sets us apart as the majority are a product of the RB Community programs, carrying forward their own experiences to inspire the next generation.

Our programs focus on creating an environment of joy and fellowship, integrating games, worship, music, theater, and Bible studies. Active on Sundays and throughout the week, our ministry offers a schedule filled with activities beyond the church walls, engaging in service missions, and seasonal summer and winter camps.

In the Appreciative Inquiry Summit, our staff, elders, and members likened our Family and Youth Ministry to a nurturing and supportive family. We aim to provide mentorship and education while remaining integrated with the broader congregation. In this ministry, we foster an environment where youth feel a sense of belonging and find their needs met.

Themes suggested to bring our vision to life, reflecting the principles by which Jesus lived, include:

- **Storytelling:** We aspire to intertwine the narratives of our church community and our youth. As mentors we actively partake in each other's lives.
- **Hospitality:** Encouraging service and care between youth and adults, we envision a community that serves one another - sharing meals and fellowship both within our church and to the broader community.

- **Welcoming:** We strive to be a sanctuary for youth seeking guidance. Our church aims to be a place where they feel safe and understood, as well as, the ability to connect and learn about Jesus together. A place they may turn to first.

The summit also gave rise to several suggestions for how to step into these themes, including dances uniting youth and seniors, and "technology transfer days" enabling seniors to share their wisdom and experiences. A strong interest was also expressed in acquiring a bus to add a fun, communal aspect to the journey to and from church activities.

We are working on the growth in the family ministries. It has been a challenge recruiting new families for our weekly activities, however our music and drama programs and summer programs do attract people from the community. This is a focus for how we can grow and incorporate more families into our church family.

2. Worship

Our service is blessed to offer a variety of worship styles ranging from contemporary, traditional hymns to a combination of both. Through the directorship of Liz Virkler, there are programs to invite people of all skills and backgrounds to join in a variety of worship groups including youth choir, string/wind orchestras, to a range of choral groups. In doing so, we have established our worship service to represent a safe space for all worship and faith backgrounds to come as they are and trust they have an opportunity to experience the Holy Spirit touch their heart in some way, shape or form.

Through the summit, members within the congregation have identified a few areas we pray continue to be at the forefront of seeking new opportunities to grow our space to worship in unity as one community:

- A stronger youth involvement and integration into the worship service.
- Renewed and repurposed excitement, love, and joy during the service which extends beyond the 1-hour Sunday morning. Empowered to extend the love, joy, and care witnessed during the service into our daily lives.
- More art exhibits, musical performances, and opportunities for all to join. These experiences build connections with others in our congregation and community.

3. Core Leadership

- **Intentional Mentoring** - One new idea that some Elders are exploring due to our Summit event in April 2023 is to offer mentoring. People may be interested in helping or learning or working with others, but they need some guidance. They need to understand what is required to be an Elder or Deacon. They need to understand what it means to lead like Jesus. We will be looking at how to offer classes or one-on-one sessions for people to grow in how they can grow in their faith and serve God in new ways.
- **Diversity** - Members and leaders will attract others with various backgrounds, ages, interest, races, etc. to our campus.
- **Community Connectivity** – Church members will continue to increase invitations to the community to connect at RB Community, not only for worship, but for the arts, education (classes), and assistance.

4. Connections

RB Community is being intentional about reaching out to members and visitors and this was reflected in the interviews in the Appreciative Inquiry process. We are a caring congregation with an outreach to the community and to our church family. An active Deacon's Board reflects the caring concern for all in the various aspects of life. There are also multiple activities for involvement that serve as ways to become involved and connected in ministry.

- All members are encouraged to wear their RB Community Church name tags when on campus, so we connect names and faces and better know each other.
- Small groups (LifeGroups) provide opportunities for deeper connection in a group setting for sharing, fellowship, and study. These groups meet in homes and often share a meal together.
- Bible studies allow for study and table discussions around questions of faith and spiritual formation.
- The patio area at RB Community provides a natural gathering place after the Sunday service. The hospitality team provides doughnut holes or other treats monthly to encourage fellowship and a time to connect. Recently certain Sundays have been designated to have games for all ages available to help integrate the various age groups.

What is one thing you will do to nurture and grow our strengths?

Mentimeter



Figure 1. Appreciative Inquiry Summit Word Cloud. At the end of the summit all attendees were asked to enter words that describe what they will do to nurture and grow our strengths.

B. Areas of Outreach

Direct evangelism: Church members being involved in telling others about Jesus Christ.

Missions: We partner with organizations and people in our community, across the country, and around the globe. From San Diego to South America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia, we discern God's priorities for our mission service based on our participation rate, an annual evaluation process, and our level of available funding. There are twelve agencies we assist with clothing, food, and supplies in the San Diego area. Our funded missions include Baja Presbyterian Missions, Escuela Cristiana Camirena (Bolivia), Gatyana Bible College & Grace Children's Shelters (South Africa), Agabus & Matthew 25:40 (managed directly by our congregants, and serving the Middle East), Centurion Military Ministry & Teachers New Life Ministry (Mongolia), MOTE Prison Ministries (Latin America), and Walindwa (Kenya), as well as supported missionaries serving various regions.

Outreach to youth and children: Our church represents a strategic ministry opportunity to youth and children in the community. We have a unique preschool recognized for its inclusivity for children of all abilities, Vacation Bible School, and



a strong music and theater program. We are blessed with beautiful spaces to worship God, to develop children ministries, and to raise up community programs for local youth. Our Youth, Music and Theatre programs offer an exciting, fun and safe place to learn the basics of theater, gain more experience on stage, or polish theater skills they already possess. A sampling of our programs includes Theater Explorers (ages 3-Kindergarten); Musical KIDS (1st-5th grades), and Middle & High School theater and music. The youth have served others in Mexico through house building and serving at an orphanage.

Vacation Bible School in August 2023 was a huge success. The attendance was 175 children with 90 adult volunteers to help execute this ministry. Below is a picture of everyone involved in this ministry.



Figure 2. Photo of children and volunteers attending the 2023 Stellar VBS.

Preschool: The enrollment for 2022-23 was 160 preschool students and 82 families in our Parent Education (Parent/Child) classes. Preschool children include those from 2 to 5 years old. The Parent Education classes host children 12 to 36 months old along with a caregiver. Enrollment continues to grow with waitlists for new people to participate.

The staff works to meet the needs of each child in their care. The teachers partner with parents to provide the best care and preschool experiences as well as offering support when needed.

Chapel is a highlight for many children. Pastor Geoff, in addition to our children and youth ministry leaders, shares chapel times to lead the children in Bible Studies, singing, and celebrating birthdays.

There are many fun events during the year for kids to participate in and for families to get involved. We remain committed to offering a loving, safe, nurturing, and learning environment for children. We want the children to learn about God and the world around them.

Outreach to seniors: RB Community invests in ministries that bless all generations, which includes our senior saints. Fellowship opportunities, study groups, mid-week Bible studies, and supportive care ministries are available throughout the year.

Military ministry: We have a program to reach out to those who serve in the armed forces and their family members and have a prayer wall for active military members.

Arts-related ministries: Our worship ministries include both vocal and instrumental groups for all ages and ability levels, an art gallery, drama, and Concert Series events. This is a community outreach ministry open to all who wish to be involved. Many artists involved in music, painting, dance, etc., feel a special connection with other artists that is often not found within a local church. Ministry in this area can help artists grow spiritually and provide opportunity for the arts to flourish within the church.

C. Community Engagement

1. Which segment of your community is likely to respond most readily?

Almost two-thirds of all households in our community are family-oriented and one-third of all households have children living at home. This is a highly educated community and thousands of people in our community are looking to solve a felt need in their life. Our church offers solutions to many people's needs. Many are looking to have a moral foundation for their children, to make themselves a better person or for comfort in times of trouble. We employ a multi-tiered outreach program to reach these segments to bring them closer to God.

2. What characteristics does your congregation have that can change your community?

We are a healthy church with a biblical purpose and a spiritual passion. Our belief is that *“From you will flow living waters. Jesus said it. Believe it. “*

Our congregation understands that its main purpose is coming together in worship and service to our God and his beloved creation in the world around us (both those who know him and those who do not).

We make sure that our congregation is invited to be actively engaged in making disciples locally and globally. Every member is a disciple maker in the world, and our church is both organized and administered in such a way that members are motivated to make disciples in whatever context God places them. Members of our congregation are involved in several of our Ministries including Arabic Ministry, Congregational Care, Family Ministries, Hospitality, Missions, Preschool, Senior Ministries, and Worship, Music & Arts Ministry.

A final characteristic is that we are Bible-based, centered on Christ, value everyone equally, and have strong leadership, exhibited by our Elders, Deacons church staff, and key volunteers.

D. Typical New Church Member

Why do people join your congregation and why don't people join your congregation? How do you assimilate these new members?

Pastor Geoff has held several new member classes since joining us as our Transition Pastor. The class is structured to meet weekly for 3 weeks and concludes with time for the new members to meet the Session members. The typical new members come from our local areas of Rancho Bernardo, Poway, Escondido, and surrounding areas and are similar to the current membership. Being largely of retirement age, we are aware of the lack of youth and young families and are looking at ways to draw them to our campus.

First impressions are a vital part of bringing visitors back and causing them to seek membership. The sermons, music, and Bible classes are all reasons people consider joining. The welcoming family atmosphere is often given as a reason for joining. Others move to the area to be closer to children and join by letters of transfer. A small number of those going through the class decide not to join as they aren't ready to make the commitment, or still have questions about the doctrine of the PC(USA).

The assimilation of new members is an area in need of development. While new members share interests during the new member class, we need more consistent follow-up as a means of getting them connected. There is a desire to put leadership in place to revisit a mentoring program that existed several years ago.

E. Adult Education/Congregational Gatherings/Bible Studies

The changes brought on by the pandemic necessitated changes to many of our programs. Worship services and regular Sunday Bible classes made the change to online options. Our small groups, other classes and various meetings turned to a zoom format, to continue connections. In the fall of 2022, the church began to add to the adult class schedule and start planning additional social programs. The current plan is to bring successful programs back with an updated format. Training leadership to make this a reality is part of the process.

1. Ministries/ Programs – Current Calling Cards

- Adult Bible Studies
 - Sunday morning class – taught by retired pastor
 - Tuesday/Wednesday – taught by pastor on staff
 - Wednesday night supper with video and small group discussion of *The Chosen* (Season 3, Fall of 2023)
 - Monthly study taught at a local retirement community by pastor on staff
- LifeGroups – Roughly 20 small groups meet regularly in homes during the week using a variety of study materials and building community together.
- Patio Gatherings – Worshippers are encouraged to gather on the patio following the service to enjoy coffee or tea, sign up for an activity, meet visiting missionaries, tie knots in quilts made for baptisms or High School Seniors, or to just chat with friends and newcomers. Periodically donuts, nachos, kielbasa, or cake are available.
- Adult Music Ministry Groups - The choir, choral ensembles, orchestra, and praise band offer their gifts to provide a meaningful worship experience, incorporating music to fit with the sermon. We sing with other Christians, and we feel the joy of worshiping as one body. Choir Trips have allowed

people to connect as they visit other churches and countries and share their musical abilities. Non-singers can join the choir trips, too.

- Youth Music Ministry - A unique opportunity is available for our youth through music, drama and the arts. In addition to a youth choir there are opportunities for participation in the Spring and Summer Musicals and Theater programs. Mentoring is available to help youth learn all facets of production, including set design, sound/lighting, and choreography.
- Preschool Program – A variety of preschool options attract families in the community, including a Fall Craft Fair that invites the community to buy items from local craft vendors.
- Community outreach organized by the Missions Committee provides monthly activities and contributions to those in need in our local community.
- Grief Share is a program taught by a trained leader open to members of the church and the larger community to share together after experiencing a loss.
- Prayer Groups - Prayer requests can be submitted during the week by email or on Sundays at the services. We have Prayer Warriors that spread the word to their group to make certain everyone is cared for.
- Stephen Ministry provides for a trained care provider to come alongside one another during a difficult season of life; this includes members of the community, as well as to church members.
- Parenting Adult Children classes sponsored by Marriage and Family Ministries – this recently added program provides the opportunity to explore challenges in the relationships between parents and their adult children.
- Children and Youth Programs
 - Sunday School
 - Vacation Bible School
 - Youth Mission Projects
 - Children’s Easter Service
- Wednesday evening events
- Breakfast in Bethlehem
- Family Christmas Eve Service

- Arabian Night presented by Arabic Congregation
- Arts Forum – members responsible for organizing shows that allow local artists the opportunity to display their work in our gallery area throughout the year.

2. Ministries and Programs – New/Exploring

- New Connections Program is in the early planning stages and is geared to bring members/friends together for quarterly luncheons, while encouraging opportunities for small group social activities, mini workshops, and activity groups. This revamp of a previous program is designed to reach a broad audience and keep members of all ages from feeling isolated.
- Rebuilding an Adult Discipleship team to expand the course offerings and help grow members in the likeness of Christ.
- Men’s Ministry – Men’s ministry remains strong in a few small groups that have maintained throughout the pandemic. Recently, men’s breakfasts were activated to reignite the fellowship amongst men. One of the primary challenges is finding individuals who are motivated or called to initiate or lead additional activities.
- Women’s Ministry – Plans are in place for an on-campus Women’s Retreat in October with leadership looking at ways to create follow up opportunities to provide additional connections for women.
- Expanding the hospitality team (i.e. “Team of 7”) will help ensure that visitors or returning members are greeted and warmly welcomed on Sunday morning.
- Mentoring of new members – There are plans being considered for ways to ensure that new members feel welcomed and enabled to use their gifts while getting to know some staff and elders.

3. Outside Groups that use the Church Campus

- Boy Scout Troop #680 – meets 3rd Monday of each month
- Cub Scouts - 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month
- Community Bible Study – CBS men meet on Monday evening, CBS women have two groups, one on Monday evening and the other on Thursday morning.
- Laubach Literacy program – meets Monday morning
- Love in Motion signing choir – meets Thursday evening

F. Arabic Congregation

RB Community Church has an Arabic Ministry that began in 1996, led by Associate Pastor Rev. Dr. Mofid Wasef. It has grown to have over 100 members. The Arabic ministry is not an auxiliary ministry but is a core component of our church. Members are full members in RB Community Church and have participated as elders, deacons, and on other committees in the church, which speaks to our church's unique status as a multicultural PC(USA) church. While the Arabic ministry services are in Arabic, there is live translation available to allow for those of different Arabic, and non-Arabic, language abilities. Attendees include immigrants and refugees from countries like Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia. Attendees come from various areas of San Diego and Riverside, with some driving over an hour to attend.

The Arabic ministry is active in San Diego and Middle East communities internationally. The ministry founded several missions in the Middle East and supports over 100 pastors of Presbyterian churches in Egypt, which support disadvantaged communities in the region through humanitarian aid work and services. This has included increasing students' access to education by providing scholarships for families in poverty and supplies from local Middle East and North Africa businesses, supporting local economies. Other projects respond to immediate needs from current conflicts in Syria and Iraq, such as sponsoring food packs for refugees.

III. GROWTH AND CHALLENGE FOR OUR CONGREGATION IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS

A. Addressing Diverse Needs:

- Youth and Young Families: There is a shared desire among members to attract more youth and young families. Though our youth drama outreach and preschool programs have success with students, they haven't drawn parents into worship or involvement. The challenge lies in creating appealing programming while competing with many other church options in the area, especially since our current niche tends to attract a retired population.

- **Balancing Age Groups:** As we grow, maintaining a balanced offering for senior members, youth, families, and ages in between becomes critical. This balance requires sensitivity to the needs of all members, from active children to seniors.

B. Worship Services:

- **Expanding Offerings:** With one growing Sunday service that fosters community, some members wish for a second more contemporary service. Some other members want an additional more traditional service. This would necessitate more staff and a blend of styles to keep everyone engaged.

C. Leadership and Volunteerism:

- **Stepping into Leadership:** As programs expand, there is a need for more members to take on leadership roles. Those with ideas must be willing to make them happen, broadening the talent base to prevent volunteer burnout.
- **Children's Programs:** To support successful children's programs, significant volunteer effort is required. Finding enough qualified individuals is a constant challenge.
- **Food Preparation:** Our return to Wednesday night suppers has been successful, but is constrained by the availability of volunteers with the proper credentials to work in our highly rated kitchen. We desire to take advantage of the facility through hospitality and food service.
- **Outreach, Inclusion, and Diversity:** This focuses around striving to reach corners of the community that are not currently represented within our congregation. In doing so, we recognize and embrace what our congregation currently embodies and pray for those not actively represented to have a home and feel welcomed into our community.

4. Conclusion:

Our congregation faces a time of opportunity and challenge as we recover from the pandemic and the preceding decline in membership. The longing to restore pre-pandemic activities is strong, and our path forward must include thoughtful consideration of the complex needs of all our members. The above points illustrate areas that require dedicated focus, volunteer effort, and an

embracing of the diverse community we serve. By addressing these challenges, we can continue to grow and enrich our congregation's spiritual life.

IV. FINANCES

Our essential strengths are in our endowment fund and our designated funds, which together provide substantial reserves. The endowment fund has over \$3 million in funds which can be used by Session when needed, plus about \$1 million in donor restricted funds. Our total designated funds are an additional \$3 million, divided among various purposes.

A further strength is that after more than a decade of downward sliding contributions, the total for this year is slightly above last year, suggesting that we may have finally leveled off.

In the last couple of years, Session has approved a budget that relies on additional funding from reserves and designated funds for facility maintenance and intentional growth opportunities. The weakness is that our current income does not support our current expense level. We can continue to draw on reserves, especially designated funds, but our financial position is not sustainable in the long term without increased giving per member, increased membership, or both.

We are blessed with a large facility, but it requires a lot of maintenance. Session has intentionally invested in the facility to repair and maintain many of the aging and neglected areas of our facility with the goal of sustainability. It is likely that we will have substantial facility expenses every year for some time to come.

The only significant debt is the Solar System. We owe \$706,267 on the principal. There are 13 payments of around \$82,000 left for a total of \$1,066,104 which includes the principal, interest, and fees.

The Budgeted and Audit Financial information for 2021 and 2022 are in Appendix C.

V. ROLE OF THE PASTOR

“Caring is just as important as growth” - Appreciative Inquiry interview response

Above all, our next pastor must be an active, engaged leader. He/she must be able to engage with and motivate the staff, the Session, and the congregation. The Appreciative Inquiry interviews revealed several desired strengths of a pastor that includes:

- Authentic (open)
- Inspires us to do more (elders, staff, and congregation)
- Preaches Bible based sermons
- Leads by example
- Consistent engagement with staff and congregation

Additionally, the A.I. Summit revealed many other leadership topics of interest. Examples are intentional mentoring, generating excitement to volunteer, and stewardship.

Strengths of our previous pastor included enhanced technology in streaming a message and service on-line during COVID. He created daily email devotionals, video testimonies of church members, challenged us to Read the Bible in 90 Days, he communicated the value and need for participation in the life of the church through volunteering and led a group to intentionally connect to men (this was mentioned multiple times in the interviews).

Our transitional pastor has nurtured and healed us while bringing new energy to the church. He has promoted inclusiveness within the congregation and community. He is positive in his message and makes us think about our relationship with God. While becoming head of staff, he has encouraged and supported us to be a Session-led church while advocating creativity (brainstorming), joy, relationships, and group (congregational) identity. He has preached on the value of community and participation in the lives of other members of the church.

A unique strength to our church is Associate Pastor Mofid Wasef. He is beloved by the congregation, respected for his knowledge of scripture and source of consistency through several years of change. His role is unique in that he brings diversity to the church through the leadership of our Arabic congregation. He is also an active leader and participant in congregational care with visitations to senior facilities and hospitals, memorial services, as well as Biblical education classes with the congregation and community. He visits senior facilities and takes communion to them monthly. He is a blessing to our congregation and the new pastor should complement Mofid's strengths. The PNC and the HR Committee should consider the division of the typical pastoral responsibilities for preaching, congregational care, and visitation.

What issues of faith are engaging your congregation?

In our interviews, we found a lot of positive ways that people are engaged with our worship services. Most people mentioned the sermons and/or music as what connects them to God and how uplifting it is every Sunday morning. The relationships they build with others to grow in their faith together are very important, also.

People mentioned how the sermons engage you and that they are Bible-based. We have had authentic pastors who connect the teaching to our everyday lives which helps us develop and think about our relationship with God. Specific pastors were mentioned in the answers to the interview questions. People mentioned previous pastors in their discussions about a high-point experience in our church or a core factor that gives life to this church.

All pastors have had a theme for a few weeks and a specific book of the Bible or verses that help emphasize and explain the theme as related to God. In our bi-weekly newsletter, we can read about the upcoming theme that will be preached.

The music is connected to the sermons. We like singing with other Christians and feel the joy as we sing. People feel comfortable clapping during a song or after the song since we are so connected to the words and want to express our love to God. Some people like the current mix of contemporary and traditional music and others do not. Before the pandemic, we had multiple contemporary and traditional services. Now, we have one worship service at 9:30 am. We have a mix of contemporary and traditional music, and it shifts from one week to the next which genre has the emphasis.

During the Pandemic, we started streaming our Sunday services. We have continued to stream them. The streaming service is very convenient for people traveling, people in Senior facilities, people who can't get to church by 9:30 am, and people not feeling well who need to stay home. People can stay connected to our church and still hear the message for the week. They can still grow in their faith and hear God's words. During the interview process, we did have people who pointed out how much they appreciated this resource.

Other engaging elements of this church have to do with the classes and mission projects we offer.

- Mission Projects – There are so many ways we offer to help others and share God with our neighbors or nonprofits in San Diego, the U.S., and other countries. We donate food, supplies, and clothing. We have people packing lunches for a nonprofit to distribute to their people in need. We

have done projects for some local schools and helped students to have the necessary supplies to accomplish their schoolwork. We have traveled to other countries to help people. Almost every week, we have something going on so we can reach out to others in need. We know God is with us as we work on these projects.

- Adult Education – There is a team dedicated to planning for seasonal classes.
- Congregational Care - Includes a prayer team, Stephen Ministers, and Grief Share team to serve a variety of members in our congregation. Retreats and healing services are held for people to feel supported and feel engaged with their faith.

This church will be celebrating their 60th Anniversary in 2025. It is amazing to see the growth of this church over the years and how it continues to touch people's lives every day. We have continued to keep people engaged and learning about God so they can continue to serve him.

What excites people in this congregation and what are they tired of?

People are excited that we have healed from the change in pastors and the pandemic, and they are ready to move forward. They like the practical examples in the sermons so they can relate it to themselves. Don't just read from the Bible, but instead tell them how to apply it to their lives and what actions they can take to get closer to God.

Session is excited about establishing joy, relationships, and group identity as a congregation. Many people understand what it means to be in relationships with others and have this as their church family. Having events that encourage conversations with others, being able to hang around after the services on the patio, and having the Wednesday night dinners together and then a class all help to see God working in each other's lives and we can live together.

People want to be open-minded and many people during the Summit suggested encouraging diversity. They want to listen and bring in more people that are different so we can move forward together. We care about people. Let us rejoice together.

VI. SESSION, DEACONS, AND CHURCH STAFF

RB Community Church enjoys a very healthy relationship between staff, session, and our congregation. Our Elders, Deacons, Pastors, and staff all take the initiative, especially with relationships in our church and personal relationships. We reach out to people by inviting them to lunches, breakfast meetings, coffees, new member events, etc. Our leaders and members are trained to introduce themselves to people who they don't know. Our leaders write a few notes a week to people in our church who went above and beyond with their service. We believe that our church is not a business – it is a local community of believers who are striving to be like Christ, both as a congregation and as individuals. Our relationships are marked by interdependence as our staff, session, and congregation work together. We see a good relationship in each Sunday service among congregational members who read the prayer of illumination and scripture, elders and deacons who offer communion, worship music, audio and visual support and sermons.

Organizational relationships:

Our church is a representative democracy, based upon the Biblical system of church government portrayed in Acts 15 and I Timothy 5:17-22. Our congregation elects “elders” to “session,” the primary governing body of our congregation. The system looks like this:

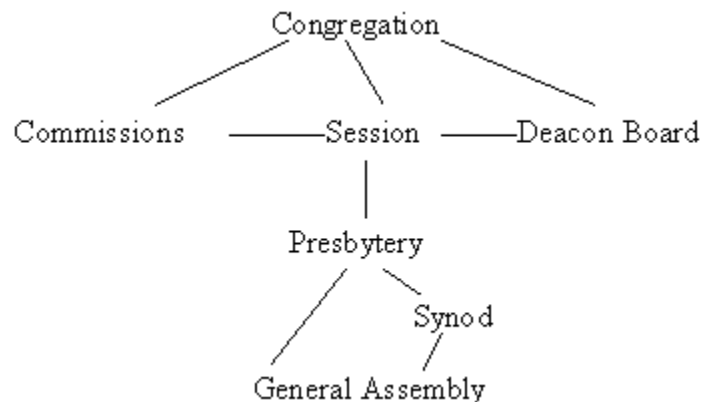


Figure 3. Organization of the church governing body.

This system of government is described in the PC(USA) Book of Order, which states that “a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, ... that a majority shall govern; and consequently, that appeals may be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church.” Thus, the central task of our elected leaders at every level of our church is to follow the will of Christ as it is revealed by the Holy Spirit through the scriptures. Our “lower” governing bodies are the Congregation, the Session, the Deacons, and the Commissions (Committees). Every member has some exposure to these groups.

A. The Congregation

Most of the work done in our church is accomplished through individuals and small groups, but the entire congregation is involved in four important decisions: 1) Electing elders and deacons. A majority may choose to accept or reject the recommendations of the Nominating Committee. 2) Hiring a pastor. A majority may choose to accept or reject the recommendations of the Pastor Nominating Committee. 3) Approving the pastor’s “terms of call” (i.e., salary) each year. A majority may choose to accept or reject the recommendation of the session. 4) Buying, selling or mortgaging property. A majority may choose to accept or reject the recommendation of the session. The Book of Order requires that written notice of congregational meetings be given at least one week in advance, and that 10% of the active membership shall constitute a quorum. In most cases, our Pastor moderates the meeting, and our Clerk of Session takes minutes. Most meetings are “called” meetings, during which only the previously announced items of business (e.g., an election) can take place. But there is also an annual meeting during which ALL congregational leaders can be questioned by the Congregation about their work during the previous year.

B. The Session

The session is the highest governing body in our church. Session is charged with “the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.” We are moving to a Session-led church. Session is open to all members of our congregation. We have 17 Elders, two of whom are alternates, who serve 3-year terms.

C. The Board of Deacons

We have 30 Deacons who are also elected to 3-year terms. They are charged with the ministry of pastoral care for the sick and shut-in members of our church and head up Committees and Missions for pastoral care. They meet monthly for prayer and mutual support. The Deacons are called to be the leaders who represent the hands and feet of Christ, complementing the Elders in their work related to our organizational leadership.

D. Standing Committees of Session and Deacons

Clerk of Session - Corey Buckner

Transitional Pastor, Moderator of Session - Geoff Kohler

Associate Pastor, Moderator of Deacons - Mofid Wasef

ELDERS	DEACONS
Admin & Finance	Calls & Caring
Adult Discipleship	Communion
Arabic Ministries	Family Assistance
Worship & Arts	Flower Mug Preparation
Facilities	Grief Share
Communications & Technology	Helping Hands
Family Ministries	Information Station
Hospitality	Memorial Services & New Baby Ministry
Human Resources	Sunshine
Officer Nominating Committee	
Missions	
Stewardship	

E. Church Staff

The staff at RB Community are essential to our Church. They are dedicated participants, leaders, and facilitators to the life of the church. They partner with volunteers to get things done. The staff member positions are Office Manager, Youth Director & Children's Directors and Leaders, Financial Staff, Director of

Worship, Youth Music & Theater Coordinator, Director of Communications, Facilities Manager, Facilities Technician, Parish Nurse, Memorial Coordinator, and Custodians. We also have volunteer “staff” handling Hospitality Coordination, Church Outreach & Missions, etc. A quotation from one of our congregation interviews is “The staff is “spirit-filled and confident to work in the Kingdom of God.”

Staff / Volunteer(v):

- Transitional Pastor - Rev. Dr. Geoff Kohler
- Associate Pastor - Rev. Dr. Mofid Wasef
- Director of Worship, Music, and the Arts - Elizabeth Virkler
 - Youth, Music and Theater Coordinator - Olivia Donald
 - Traditional Worship Assistant - Joy Cook
- Director of Communications - Luke Graham
- Office Manager - Lesa Haugh
- Director of Student Ministries - Timothy Wazny
 - Children’s Ministry Coordinator - Steven Karras
 - Middle School Leader - Richard Klusmeier
- Preschool Director - Kim Vandergrift
- Facilities Manager - Gabby Martin / Custodians: Monica Maciel Ramirez, Malaka Sinnachcharge / Facility Technician: Adam Martin
- Finance Office - Kathy Marshall Lund, Sheila Schmitz
- Treasurer - Tony Cook, Ex officio (v)
- Hospitality Coordinator - Joyce Schroeder (v)
- Pastoral Care/Parish Nurse - Marilyn Glover
- Memorials - Sue Melnyk (v)
- Outreach Coordinator - Elaine Johnson (v)

F. Staff Feedback about a new Senior Pastor

The Mission Study Team conducted a survey of staff (volunteers and paid staff) to understand what they would like to see in a new Senior Pastor. No names were attached to the responses. Here is a summary of the staff responses:

- Leadership – We need a strong spiritual leader. The new pastor needs to allow us to continue to heal as we move forward. Be a teacher and a listener.
- Work with the staff – Get to know the staff and appreciate their positions and how they serve the church. Do weekly staff check-ins and pray for them. Have some open-door time when they can drop in to ask questions or possibly have some 1-to-1 scheduled meetings. Recognize the staff's exceptional accomplishments. Add some more administrative staff positions. Build strong relationships. The staff should follow the lead of the pastor.
- Work with Pastor Mofid Wasef on the division of work and leadership.
- Work with elders to help them understand their leadership roles. Consider how we can mentor people in the church to help people use their gifts.
- The pastor should work with family ministries as they try to build their attendance with more kids and parents getting involved. Also, work collaboratively with the worship team to communicate plans for worship and trust their team to plan and lead a dynamic service.
- It would be nice to have a female mentor for our young women, youth, and seniors.

VII. MOST ENERGETIC DISPUTE

Background:

Our worship service(s) range from traditional choral hymns, contemporary worship music, to a mix of both. Through the exceptional leadership and guidance of our Music Director, Liz Virkler, our congregation, at one point, oversaw a contemporary service on Saturday evenings along with two contemporary and two traditional services on Sunday. In doing so, members of our congregation sought multiple avenues to praise the Lord through alternative subgenres of worship music.

Energetic Dispute:

Post-pandemic, we evolved into one centralized service, which is recorded and broadcasted live every Sunday morning. While we pray to hear God's voice

and guidance to grow into a multi-generational congregation and invite all age groups and worship backgrounds, a deeper question as a result of a centralized service arises:

“What type of worship music do we incorporate within the ~1 hour service every Sunday?”

Provided we currently have congregants from multiple generations, the topic regarding “type” of worship was periodically brought to the attention of the worship committee and direct members within the worship team.

Response:

Worship music often references how we experience the Holy Spirit touch our hearts in response to diving into Scripture. As such, the worship music for a given service is coordinated between Liz and the pastor to consider how we can experience a deeper understanding of the message and respond to God’s word. We considered the following question to further understand how we as a worship team responded to the congregation:

What factors do you consider when choosing worship songs to not only align with the message but the type of worship music (contemporary, traditional, etc.)?

The service is structurally broken into 4 parts:

- a) Opening Praise and Thanksgiving
- b) Inward focus and Confession
- c) Scripture and Sermon
- d) Response (monetary gift, communion, intercessory prayer)

Depending on the scripture and sermon for the week, the opening praise/thanksgiving and response for the given week can take many forms. In any case, members within a congregation respond differently to the form identified as most apt for the message of the week. Regardless of the subgenre, a verse, line, or phrase within a worship song often holds a great significance to the congregant. The Holy Spirit continues to move throughout any subgenre, or mix thereof, featured within the service. A common practice we have implemented is starting and ending a service with a familiar song or hymn to provide the congregation with a sense of belonging regardless of their preference and background. Finally, our church is blessed with the ability to incorporate an orchestra for any service. In doing so, we add an additional level of depth with strings and/or wind accompaniment, transcending any traditional or contemporary worship subgenre preference.

In our discernment to determine how we can continue to reach corners of the community not currently represented within our congregation (age, demographic, etc.), worship style/form is often a topic that rises to the forefront. One can be quick to point to needing more of a distinct style of worship (i.e.: more contemporary equals the presence of a younger generation). However, we have successfully pivoted our mindset not as much to the “worship style” subgenre segregation, but rather to a unified focus to worship our Lord as we are, regardless of our background or personal preference.

VIII. HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

1965 to 1982

- Pastors:
 - Rev. Henry Green D.D. 1964 – 1970
 - Dr. Lorne Belden – interim
 - Dr. John P. Lee 1971 – 1982
- Dedication of the original sanctuary / stained glass rose window.
- Added Pastor’s office and Sunday School rooms.
- Intentional outreach to new residents of Rancho Bernardo encouraged rapid growth.
- New 600 seat Sanctuary, Fellowship Center, and full kitchen.
- The church reached out to families in Rancho Bernardo, Poway, and Rancho Penasquitos, which resulted in more children’s programming and fellowship groups to build relationships.
- Striving for excellence in every program was evident, especially in the music area.

1983 to 1987

- Pastors:
 - Dr. G. Raymond Campbell - interim
 - Dr. James Hagelanz 1984 – 1987

- Mission projects helped the hungry and refugee families resettled in the local community.

1987 to 1996

- Pastor:
 - Dr. Woody Garvin 1987 – 1996
- Average weekly attendance was between 900 and 1200 during this time.
- Redesign of church site, a new chapel, expanded Sanctuary and Fellowship Center, restaurant-size kitchen, and negotiation of 50-year lease with Swim & Tennis Club for lower parking lot.
- A growing connection among the congregation members fostered participation in mission projects.
- The campus was a flurry of activity with classes, Bible studies, and fellowship, turning it into a seven-days-a-week church.
- Vision 2000 restructures the organization into six ministries: Worship, Music, Outreach, Connecting, Equipping, Mission, and Administration.
- In 1990, Jimmy Carter joined our church to work with Habitat for Humanity. They built 100 homes in Mexico and 7 homes in San Diego.

1996 to 2014

- Pastors:
 - Dr. Don Buteyn – interim
 - Dr. Bruce Humphrey - 1998 to 2014
- Average weekly attendance during this time period was 1452. The average was 1147 in 1997, and the highest was 1753 in 2002. The lowest was 1028 in 2014.
- Expanded Worship Center to 900 seats and expanded the administration/youth ministry building.
- The emphasis was on people finding their passion / purpose.
- Worship style choices and times were increased, which appealed to a more diverse population. Contemporary worship services were added starting with a Saturday night service. Eventually, we had Contemporary services on Saturday night at 6:30 pm, Sunday morning at 8:30 am in the Fellowship

Center, and Sunday morning at 10:00 in the Sanctuary. Traditional worship services were on Sunday at 8:30 and 11:30 in the Sanctuary.

- Many programs and ministries grew during this time given the extraordinarily gifted congregation. Wednesday night was a big night to include all families. Dinner was offered beginning at 5:30 pm (everyone paid) and then there were classes for adults and youth. Younger than junior high students had choir rehearsal before dinner.
- The outreach to have a second campus (The Porch) was not approved by the city. The decision was made to use the funds for new outreaches and ministries that address the community's needs. There was a Vision Task Force in 2008 to determine how to move forward reaching out into the community to be missional and relational.
- There was a vision to switch from just having classes that tell people about the gospel and instead help them live out the gospel.
- The Arabic Congregation began in 1996.
- The church reached out to the community to help those in need due to the 2005 fire that spent through the area. People still talk about the impact it had on the community attitude to the church.

2014 to 2015

- An Interim Team of resident leaders was used in lieu of a formal interim Pastor: Pastor Neal Nybo, Dawn Neldon, and Ryan Ross.
- Average weekly attendance was 1043.
- The team preached on a rotating schedule.
- The relatively young leadership of Ryan and Dawn attracted many young families.
- Added and promoted small groups so people could get to know each other more and do Bible Studies together.

2016 to 2020

- Pastor:
 - Rev. Dr. Bryan Stamper 2016 to 2020
- There was a lawsuit between Dawn Neldon and Bryan Stamper which caused a substantial loss of a number of young families.

- Average weekly attendance was 836 before the pandemic shut us down.
- A new Contemporary Worship Music leader was hired in 2017 and the attendance dropped dramatically for those services.
- During the pandemic, we had online services, outside patio services, and parking lot services.
- Specific effort was aimed to manage a balanced budget.
- Strategic Plans for each year:
 - Welcome Guests and be very intentional about integrating them into the congregation:
 - Classes were added about Spiritual Gifts, finding someone's fit in the church, finding a Life Group, and having small dinners so people can get to know each other.
 - Information booklets were created to let new people know more about what we have to offer.
 - Support Family Ministries to recruit new teachers, work on retreats, and coordinate teaching with the sermon topics.
 - Add Adult Education Bible classes almost every day of the week for people to learn more together.
 - Life Groups – the leadership team would have kickoff meetings and integrate people into groups.
 - Testimonials were recorded and shown often during the services so people could learn about other people's experiences with God.
 - Communication:
 - Weekly newsletters get information out to everyone about upcoming events – They were printed to distribute at church and emailed to everyone.
 - Put up banners and signs by the street to capture people's attention who are driving by, so they know what is going on.
 - Brochures about ministries are updated.
 - The website site was updated and improved to show every event, class, and sermon for everyone to access.

2021 to 2023

- Pastor:
 - Rev. Dr. Geoff Kohler Transitional – July 26, 2021 to present

- Average weekly attendance is 353. In addition, we have tape the live service, which is available on YouTube following the service.
- Sermons are about the value of healing and restoring a sense of community throughout our congregation. Themes have included healing, hospitality, and investment (time and treasure).
- We are coming back with adult education classes, Sunday morning adult classes, and Wednesday night dinner with classes and discussions.
- Mission projects are monthly (on Saturday mornings in the parking lot) to collect various needed items for local and foreign mission groups.
- Session includes elders actively involved in church committees and getting to serve our church together. They currently have a book study to discuss in each monthly meeting.
- Revitalized the new members' classes.

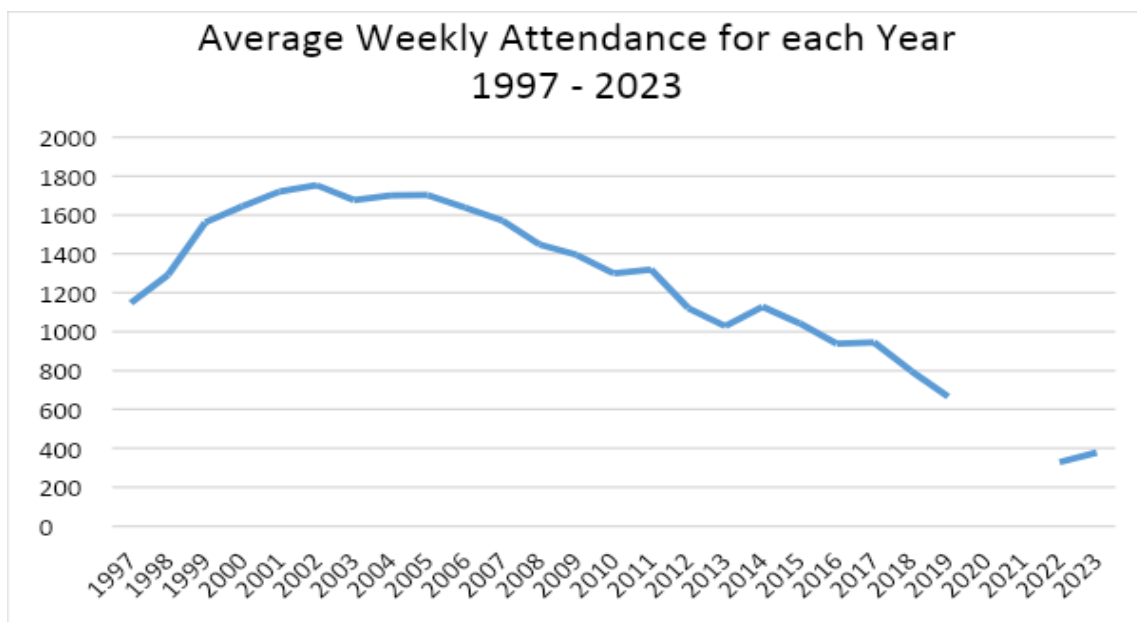


Figure 4. Average weekly attendance since 1997

The graph above shows the overall attendance since 1997 except for the two years during Covid (2020 and 2021) which are not included in this graph. Services on the patio, online, and in the parking lot were initiated during this time period.

The graph below compares the people coming to the in-person services and those who are streaming the service online. We have observed a steady growth in

attendance at the in-person service on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. since returning from the pandemic shut down. We are still streaming the service online and this helps people who can't come at 9:30, as well as, others who are in Senior Facilities in the area. Some people streaming the services are those who moved away from San Diego during the pandemic.

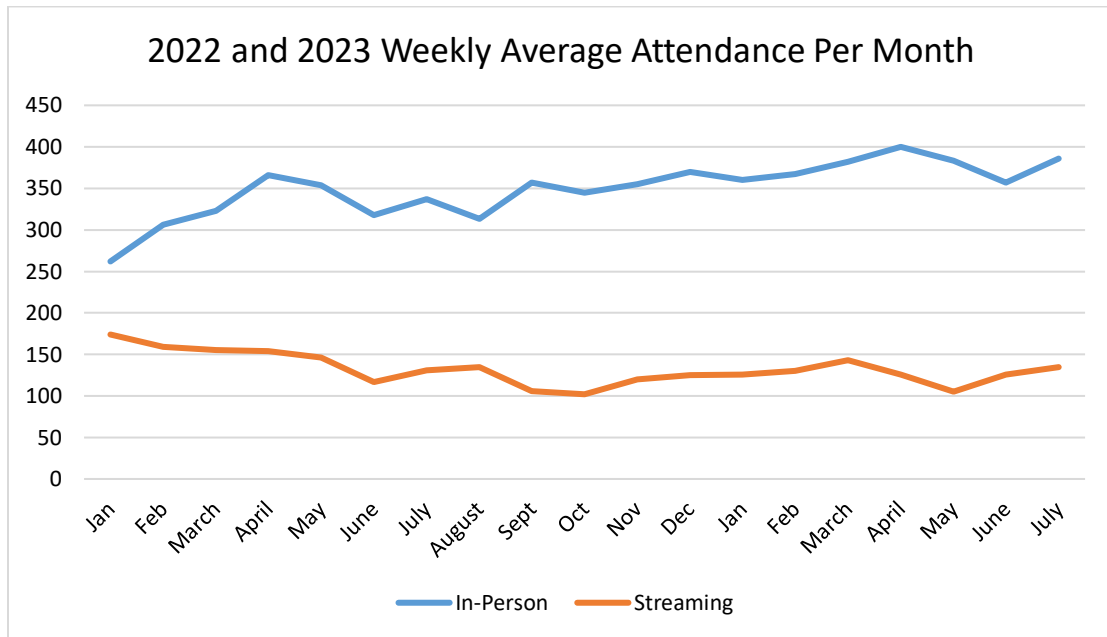


Figure 5. Detailed average weekly attendance since January of 2022.

The graph above allows you to see how the congregation has grown after coming back to the sanctuary and to be inside together. Geoff Kohler came at the end of July 2021 after having Presbytery pastors fill in when Bryan Stamper left in 2020. The average weekly attendance in 2022 was 334 in-person and 135 streaming services online in the first 24 hours. In 2023, the average weekly attendance in-person has been 376 and 127 streaming in the first 24 hours.

IX. DEMOGRAPHICS AND INFORMATION ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY, CHURCH AND OTHER CHURCHES IN THE AREA

The demographic data of the communities are from the Niche Community Profiles. The PC(USA) church data are from PC(USA) Research Services - Church Trends (psusa.org).

A. Demographics of our Communities

Approximately 85% of our church members live in the following areas of San Diego County:

- 40% - Rancho Bernardo 92128
- 21% - Poway 92064
- 13% - Escondido 92025, 92026, 92027, 92029
- 12% - 4S Ranch/Del Sur/Rancho Bernardo 92127



Rancho Bernardo is the northernmost residential community within the City of San Diego. Rancho Bernardo is centered on Interstate 15 just south of Hodges Reservoir and the San Pasqual Valley with a population of 17,308. The community planning area encompasses approximately 6,511 acres. Rancho Bernardo is a master planned community that includes private parks and clubs for each neighborhood in the community. The public schools in Rancho Bernardo are highly rated.

In 1962, the City Council adopted the original Community of Rancho Bernardo. Almost 2/3 of all households in Rancho Bernardo are family-oriented, and one-third of all households have children living at home. This is a highly educated community where a little over 80% of the residents either have some college or baccalaureate degree. Almost 92% of those employed in Rancho Bernardo hold white-collar jobs, and 78% of those working are either self-employed or work for private companies.

The City of Poway was incorporated in December 1980 as a full-service, general law city and operates under the Council/Manager form of government. Poway, with a population of just under 50,000 residents, is a unique community in San Diego County. Located in northeast San Diego County, Poway is known as "The City in the Country" and prides itself on the fact that over half of the city's 39.4 square-mile area is preserved as dedicated open space. The community offers a diverse range of housing options, an outstanding school district, a thriving business park with over 19,000 jobs, a broad range of dining and shopping opportunities, beautiful parks, over 82 miles of trails, 50 community events each year, and more. Poway has the lowest overall crime rates of incorporated cities in San Diego County since 1981, and one of the overall lowest in the state.

Escondido is the largest city in North County San Diego, home to a sprawling landscape, a diverse population, and a rapidly growing downtown that serves as the city's lifestyle hub. It's one of the oldest cities in San Diego County being established in 1888. Escondido sits just 30 miles north of San Diego and is uniquely located 15 miles east of the Pacific Ocean as part of North County San Diego. With a 2023 population of 149,482, it is the 37th largest in California. The city is home to a wide variety of people from many different backgrounds. Escondido has the state-of-the-art Palomar Medical Center, a 740,000-foot 11-story hospital facility, the largest facility in North County. The City's economic base is made up of successful small businesses, many of which are family owned. It is a diverse community with people of all income levels.

4S Ranch and Del Sur are planned communities situated between San Diego and the community of Rancho Bernardo. What is now known as 4S Ranch was first developed in 1987 with the goal of a business park. Housing development started in 2000 and was completed in 2014. The center of this community is the Commons Town Center, a shopping center and local spot for groceries as well as fitness and wellness. The neighborhoods branch out from this center with single family homes in development style housing and a luxury living apartment complex. 4S Ranch has its own library and maintains 6 community parks, which offer a variety of sports fields to outdoor recreation. 50,852 people live in Del Sur & 4S Ranch, where the median age is 38 and the average individual income is \$61,399.62.

Demographics of the 4 Communities

	Racial Diversity (%)				Gender (%)	
	White	Asian	Hispanic	Other	Female	Male
Rancho Bernardo	60	18	10	12	51	49
Poway	62	12	17	9	50	50
Escondido	35	6	52	7	50	50
4S Ranch/Del Sur	50	31	8	11	50	50

	Age (%)							
	<10 Yrs.	10-17 Yrs.	18-24 Yrs.	25-34 Yrs.	35-44 Yrs.	45-54 Yrs.	55-64 Yrs.	65+ Yrs.
Rancho Bernardo	11	7	5	11	12	13	14	27
Poway	13	9	7	12	13	13	14	19
Escondido	13	11	9	16	13	13	12	13
4S Ranch/Del Sur	16	14	7	11	16	16	9	11

B. Demographics of our Church

Membership as of 12-31-2021	769
Gender	
Females	454
Males	315
Racial Ethnicity	
Asian / Pacific Islander / South Asian	12
Middle Eastern / North African	59
White	698

C. How is our church different from other churches in the area?

RB Community Church has been a fixture in the Rancho Bernardo community for decades. Here are a few characteristics of our current church and congregation in comparison to other Protestant churches in our area:

- Our current congregation is older on average than most other churches in our area.
- Our congregational care ministry is well established and provides a high percentage of our congregation consist of older adults with care needs.
- We have a strong Arabic congregation and ministry.
- We currently offer one weekly worship service on Sunday mornings. Some other churches in our area offer multiple services.
- Our youth ministry is comparatively small, particularly our middle school and high school programs. This is an area of growth potential for RB Community Church.
- Our church has many families with multigenerational involvement in the church. Many members, staff, and elders grew up in the church.

D. Other Churches in the Area

Approximately 64% of adults in the greater San Diego area self-identify as Christian, with a nearly even split between Protestant and Catholic. 31% attend church at least once a week, 36% attend once or twice a month, and 33% attend seldom or never (source: Pew Research Center).

Within a 3-mile radius of RB Community Church there is a broad assortment of churches including Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist, Catholic, and

non-denominational churches. Some of these churches, including RB Community Church, support an English-as-a-second-language ethnic congregation (e.g, Korean, Chinese, and at RB Community Church, Arabic). The nearest Presbyterian churches to our church are Trinity Presbyterian Church 4.3 miles to the west, New Life Presbyterian Church 6.6 miles to the north, North City Presbyterian Church 6.1 miles to the south, and Westminster Presbyterian in Escondido 7.6 miles to the north.

Churches Within a 3.5 Mile Radius:

- Incarnation Lutheran Church (Poway, 0.6 miles)
- St John of Damascus Orthodox Church (Poway, 0.6 miles)
- St Bartholomew's Episcopal Church (Poway, 0.9 miles)
- Sammul Church (Poway, 0.9 miles)
- The Church at Rancho Bernardo (San Diego, 0.9 miles)
- Hope United Methodist Church (San Diego, 1.0 miles)
- Hope Korean Community Church (San Diego, 1.0 miles)
- San Rafael Parish (San Diego, 1.4 miles)
- Pomerado Christian Church (Poway, 1.5 miles)
- Olive Branch Christian Fellowship (Poway, 1.6 miles)
- Green Valley Evangelical Free Church (San Diego, 1.7 miles)
- St Michael's Catholic Parish (Poway, 1.9 miles)
- Life Bridge Church (San Diego, 2.0 miles)
- Tree Church (San Diego, 2.1 miles)
- Heart of God Church (San Diego, 2.4 miles)
- All Faith Center (Poway, 2.4 miles)
- North Coast Church Rancho Bernardo (San Diego, 2.5 miles)
- Maranatha Chapel (San Diego, 2.9 miles)
- Restoration Church (San Diego, 3.0 miles)
- City Church (San Diego, 3.2 miles)
- Green Valley Church (San Diego, 3.3 miles)
- Chinese Bible Church of San Diego (San Diego, 3.4 miles)

X. SUMMARY

More than 58 years ago, an inspired group of believers built the Rancho Bernardo Community Presbyterian Church, the first major church to take shape in Rancho Bernardo. Today, the congregation continues to grow the vision and values of that dedicated group of Presbyterians by shining a light for all who seek a meaningful relationship with God. Our congregation envisions a future where lives are transformed in Christ and people are fully engaged with one another, and in the life and mission of the church.

This has been a church that has had a lot of growth in numbers and in spiritual formation due to the amazing pastors we have had. The pastors attracted people from the community and taught us how to give back to the community through numerous classes, mission projects, building relationships, and worship services. It is true we have had high and low times, but we persevered knowing that God is with us.

- Our church has strengths in family ministries, worship, core leadership, and connections. The interviews that we conducted affirmed our understanding of what we have throughout our church community. The Summit brought people together and the excitement was there as we offered ideas to move forward and be involved in touching the lives of others. Now the elders are planning how we can execute some of the ideas.
- We have many family ministry opportunities with kids and youth getting involved in classes, mission trips, and drama/theater. We would like to grow this ministry as we did years ago to touch the lives of more families.
- The church staff seeks to work with a senior pastor who strives to connect, support, and lead the staff as they roll out the ways they are trying to move forward with our ministries.
- Our Preschool is an attraction in the community. We would like to continue that ministry as many families find out who we are as a church and then start attending events, classes, Mom's groups, and worship services.
- The Arabic Congregation gives us an opportunity to learn from others about different needs and how God is working in their lives. They are active in local and Middle East communities helping people in so many ways.

- We have volunteers working with Staff, Elders, and Deacons to spread the joy of God and to be there for people in need.

We are seeking a new senior pastor who can continue to teach us more and lead us as we grow in our faith. Going back to the lyrics from the song at the end of the Table of Contents: “Though we be many people, diverse with various gifts, we are given to each other for the unity of faith that we grow in the knowledge of the Son of God, in the fullness of Christ.”

XI. APPENDICIES

Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. What would you describe as being a high-point experience in our church, a time when you were most alive and engaged?
2. Without being modest, what is it that you most value about yourself as a member of this church, your participation, and the church as a whole?
3. Other than God (Father, Son, and Spirit), what are core factors that give life to our church, without which it would cease to exist?
4. Assume you wake up from a 10-year sleep and come back to our church and discover how it is and what it is doing 10 years from now. Imagine that powerful and important and positive changes have taken place that make you proud of what you see. What do you see happening that is new, changed, better, or effective in your imagination?

Appendix B: Interview Story Themes

Below is a list of some of the themes from the Interviews we did. It really shows who we are as a church. It was fun reading all the stories about the high point experiences people have had in this church to come up with our key strengths.

- Members of our congregation felt most alive when they were actively involved in the church. People are willing to help. They have opportunities to try new things. There is a lot of support and mentoring to guide them. We have a caring congregation with extended time to chat with others on

the patio following the services to build relationships. We can witness other member's faith in God.

- There are many times in meetings, classes, or after the services people reference experiencing "God Moments." People feel that God is with them and experience a clear direction on how to approach a certain situation. The ample moments experienced by our congregation is reassuring to know God is working in and through our community.
- They enjoy small women's groups, men's groups, and Life Groups that allow people to get to know a few people at a more intimate level. They feel safe having conversations and studying the Bible or books together. Adult education classes can provide this small group learning, too.
- We help people outside our congregation with mission projects and outreach. We collect food, clothing, food, and school supplies to give to others. We have built homes for others. It is a wonderful way to show God's love to others.
- People mentioned how they appreciate the Children's Easter and Christmas Eve services. It is a special time for many in our congregation and for others in our community. It draws a lot of people, and our members bring their extended families that are here for a visit. They like the special Breakfast in Bethlehem event in December and the Easter Egg Hunts.
- The music is amazing! Many people mentioned how they have been involved in the choir. Others appreciate how the sermon themes are seen in the music during the service. The choir and variety of music groups (orchestra, small singing groups, and contemporary musicians) bring energy to the services. People feel joy.
- The sermons engage with us. The pastors tell stories that we can relate to when trying to understand the scripture. The core factor of the church is the pastor. They are the people who lead us in our faith.
- Here is a story about a special moment during a contemporary worship service when Bruce Humphrey was here. The person still remembers this special moment, and a few other people mentioned this, too.
 - "The service was packed with people. He stopped preaching in the middle and said, "The Holy Spirit is speaking to me." He asked the musicians to come up. Then he said, "Do you feel the Holy Spirit

coming to you, touching your mind and heart, putting your whole soul into this church family? If you feel this, come forward.” More than half of the people came forward. People were crying. I remember who I was standing next to. There was love everywhere. It is the most Holy Spirit moment in this church.”

Appendix C. Financial Statements

Attached pdf files:

- 2021-06 RBCPC Audit
- Audit FY 2022 RBCPC
- Budgeted Financial FY21
- Budgeted Financial FY22