

## **Tentative Fall Schedule for Sunday Morning**

### **Why are we changing the Sunday morning schedule?**

Our pre-COVID-19 Sunday morning schedule, though vibrant and active for many, was considered too hectic by others. There were multiple instances where individuals were expected to be in two places at the same time or where competing activities are occurring in the same space. The staff and then Council felt it was appropriate to explore alternatives which would provide a better balance among four priorities: worship, fellowship, faith formation, and building a sense of community.

### **Who was involved in developing the new schedule?**

The staff started a process of discernment last fall and shared its analysis of issues and priorities with the Moderator and Assistant Moderator in January. The Moderator then convened a task force that included: Chairs of the Boards of Deacons, Fellowship, Adult Education, Children's Education, and Youth Ministries, plus Pastor Cameron Barr, Pastor David Mateo, and the Director of Music, Jenny Anderson. These individuals consulted with their respective constituencies.

### **What issues and options were considered in developing a new schedule?**

It was clear from the beginning that any schedule represents a balancing act among competing desires and that not all desires could be achieved. Our analysis of multiple alternatives led us to the following observations and conclusions.

- Our past Sunday morning fall schedule started at 8:45 with worship, followed by 10:00 Faith Formation and 11:00 worship, squeezing in a bit of fellowship. This schedule forced musicians involved in the 8:45 service to come even earlier and those participating in the 11:00 services to miss out on Faith Formation activities to warm up or set up. The Task Force decided that reducing the number of major time slots from three to two and reducing the number of worship services (one in the Sanctuary, currently called *Worship of the Living God*, and the La Mesa service in the Fellowship Hall) was the best starting point to creating a less hectic schedule.
- The next key decision related to whether these services would occur at the same time or at separate times. We recognize that hosting two worship services at the same time prevents someone from attending both services during the same Sunday, but it also enables us to schedule Faith Formation activities (children, youth, and adults) at a time that does not conflict with worship. The Task Force decided that the services should occur at roughly the same time and that a shared Fellowship time would follow these services.
- We then took on the question of whether our worship services would occur before or after our Faith Formation activities. Many children, youth, adults, and parents are involved in music activities on Sunday mornings. On Sundays when groups are participating in worship, they need to warm up for at least 30 minutes before the service. Faith Formation activities become disrupted if Faith Formation is scheduled at the same time as music warm up. This tension led us to scheduling worship first (with musicians arriving earlier), followed by a fellowship time, followed by Faith Formation.

We have not yet worked out all of the details and we are actively looking at how traffic patterns and sound isolation can be enhanced to optimize this new schedule, but we are confident that the resulting schedule will be an improvement over our existing schedule. It is summarized below.

**What is the new schedule?**

- We will have two worship services on Sunday mornings, both continuing in their current locations and styles.
  - The La Mesa service, which is a bilingual (Spanish and English) contemporary service, will be in the Fellowship Hall and will start at 9:30 am. The service will continue to be informal and interactive. It will typically be led by Pastor David Mateo and the La Mesa Band, though other pastors and musicians will support the service at times. Communion will be served each week.
  - The Sanctuary Service, which is more traditional in its structure and liturgical format, will be in the Sanctuary starting at 9:45 am. The service will be led primarily by Pastor Cameron Barr, but Pastor Mary Elizabeth Hanchey and Pastor Ian McPherson will also preach several times each quarter. The service will be supported by a variety of musical groups. Communion will be served the first Sunday of each month.
  - This timing enables musicians who are involved in worship services to set up and rehearse for 30 to 45 minutes before the worship service without conflicting with Faith Formation or other activities.
  - The Sanctuary Service will start a few minutes later than the La Mesa service to decrease the likelihood that it will end before the La Mesa service is over. This timing is intended to minimize noise or foot traffic through the Fellowship Hall that is disruptive to the end of the La Mesa service.
- Fellowship with coffee and light snacks will be offered in the Fellowship Hall starting at about 10:45 (or as soon as possible after the La Mesa service concludes) and extend until about 11:15 with the expectation that children and youth will depart by 11:00.
- Children and youth Faith Formation activities will start at approximately 11:00 in their usual locations (downstairs).
- Adult Faith Formation classes will start at approximately 11:15, using the Parlor, the conference room, classrooms 235 and 239, the Assembly Hall, and potentially the Sanctuary. On most Sundays, we would expect that the Fellowship Hall will remain available for continued fellowship and informal conversation.
- The table below summarizes the schedule

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approximate Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Music rehearsals and warm-up	8:30–9:30	Multiple
La Mesa Worship Service	9:30–10:30	Fellowship Hall
“Worship of the Living God” Service	9:45–10:45	Sanctuary
Coffee — Fellowship	10:45–11:15	Fellowship Hall
Faith Formation — Children & Youth	11:00–12:00	Lower Level classrooms
Faith Formation — Adults	11:15–12:00	Multiple

We are confident that this schedule will be an improvement over our existing schedule, but we also expect to re-evaluate it after several months, to make further improvements, if warranted.

Gaylen R Brubaker

Moderator

Approved by Council May 25, 2021