

Second Service Plan

Basic philosophical questions:

1. Why go to 2 services?
2. When to add a 2nd service?
3. What worship style for services?
4. What model of two services; Back-to-back model or Sandwich model?
5. What time for two services?
6. Next Steps

We recognize that for each of these questions, there are several good options. No one option is superior to another option. We have tried to analyze our situation, who we are, and how we can move forward in accomplishing our vision. We have made some choices which we think are good, but we are not saying that the other options are bad. We just feel that we need to make a choice on these questions and move forward until God closes the door in some way.

1. Why go to two services?

- Aligns with our vision:
A growing community experiencing and sharing life in Christ that transforms people, our region, and the world.
 - Reaching our community with options, later times, and an appealing service, without watering down our faith.
- Two and a half years ago, a team was brought in to do an analysis of our church and help us see what we needed to do to become a growing healthy church. Paul Borden led the effort and gave us several prescriptions with the focus of becoming an externally focused church as a key to becoming healthy and growing. We have fulfilled most of them and have seen great benefit. He strongly advised that we go to two services of the same style as quickly as we could. We think it is time to move on this issue.
- We want to put ourselves in a position of growth. We should plan for growth, we should expect growth, and we should make decisions to facilitate growth.
- Research show that 80% of churches that add a new service experience growth (numbers, finances, conversions).
- A second service gives people an option of time to attend. Giving choices is a positive.
- Adding a second service will release a creative spirit in the church.
- A second service gives more opportunities to serve. Can attend one service and serve during another service.
- We are at about 70-75% capacity in our auditorium now. This is based on a seating capacity of 750 (including balcony). We now often have 450-500 in the auditorium. When we reach 80% of capacity, people will choose to go somewhere else. It is time to plan for this expansion.

Questions:

1. Critical mass.

Research shows that we need at least 35% of our total attendees in a service. This would be about 170. At the hymn sing we had about 225 in attendance. Our feeling is that we will need about 200 at least in a service so that it does not seem too empty in our auditorium. If it falls below this critical mass number, the risk of failure increases, according to research.

We will temporarily close the balcony for both services.

2. Unity of the body.

We believe that unity of our church should be centered around our vision and the goals of the church. Unity is not based on the having everyone in the same room for worship. In fact, studies show that we can only know well about 60-70 people at a time. So, in fact, we don't have everyone in the auditorium right now.

In order to provide times when all attendees can get together, we can plan all-church events, such as baptismal services, church picnics, business meetings, missionary meetings, etc.

3. Shouldn't we wait for the next Sr. Pastor?

Our church is continuing to grow and thrive. We do not know when God will bring the next Sr. Pastor. We see no reason to wait and are making decisions that the next Sr. Pastor can easily tweak or change. We think that by putting the second service in place will set the new pastor up for success.

2. When should we hold a second service?

Sunday Morning

- Almost all suggestions and advice are to add the second service on Sunday morning, rather than on Sunday evening or Saturday or some other day of the week. After two Sunday morning services are established, then you can add a third service at some other time or day, if needed.
- Most people, including unchurched people, think of church as a Sunday morning event. As we think of reaching out to the unchurched, we need to provide choices at the times they are most comfortable in coming.
- We have conducted research with several churches. They are almost unanimous that the sweet-spot for a Sunday morning service is 9:30 - 10:00 am. If we are going to target unchurched people, then we need a service held at this sweet-spot time on Sunday morning.

3. What model should we adopt with two services on Sunday morning?

Back-to-back:

Having two services back to back and Sunday school available during both services. The Adult Communities will decide which hour to meet.

Sandwich:

Service, Sunday school, Service

The Back-to-back-model for the following reasons:

- It is a shorter time span for people to be at church on Sunday morning than the Sandwich model.
- It promotes community, because whether you come to first or second service, everyone ends at the same time.
- Greater chance of mixing with people from other service during the break between services and at the end of the morning.
- Positions us best for sustainable growth. By having Sunday school classes during each service, we effectively double the space we have for Sunday school classes. We have the opportunity to add new classes and small groups.
- It is easier to use our resources of personnel and facilities when the services are together on Sunday morning.
- The Sandwich model would put classes in the sweet spot vs. a service

Questions:

1. Parking:

Right now we do not seem to have parking problem. With the parking in front, we seem to have enough spaces for everyone. Currently we are not using the golf cart.
4. What time to hold the two services?

9:30 and 11:00 am.

 - The first service in the sweet spot
 - A later service for those who sleep in. Many churches have an 11am service. Some start service as late as 11:30am
 - Each service would be about 65 minutes long.
 - This gives us about 25 minutes between the services, which is adequate for the transition of moving one audience out and another one into the sanctuary.
5. What worship style should have for the two services?

Both services will be the blended style that we now have.

 - We need to target an audience where we believe we will see growth in attendance for that service.
 - We have basically 3 target audiences:
 - 18-30 year olds. Generation Y. This is not our strength now. They are harder to reach because they are culturally different that who we are now. They would respond to a contemporary (rock) style.
 - 30 - 55 year olds. This is our priority audience right now. These are often families with children or youth. They come to provide those ministries to their children. They prefer a blended service. This is what we do well right now. We need to continue doing what we do well.
 - 55+ year olds - the Boomer generation and the Builders. Most have a history of church. Have some preference to a classic or traditional style of worship with hymns and organ, but many of them also like the blended style and want to have a cross generational service.
 - One advice is to start a new style service to reach a new audience only if you see God moving in that direction. God is moving in our midst right now in the 30-55 year olds.

- Nelson Searcy (The Journey Church) and others advise that when you add a second service, you should continue the same style. Change it later, if needed and you see God moving toward a different audience.
- Two styles can cause chaos in all community life
 - Chaos from people choosing worship style over classes and ministry – breaking apart classes and ministries
 - Chaos from people having to make a choice in worship styles – forced to make a choice of time
- To add a second style right now would take a lot more resources of personnel, technical equipment, and finances. A greater investment with less chance of success.
- A second style service would be much more difficult to manage logistically (stage set up, different worship teams, technical crews, etc.)

5. Next Steps

With these basic philosophical questions agreed on, we can then think clearly about the logistical questions:

- What effect will this structure have on children's ministries (Sunday school, preschool, children's church, etc.)
- What effect will this have on the greeters and guest services?
- What effect will this have on the college, youth, and children's programs?
- What effect will this have on ushers, greeters and the whole greeting/follow-up team?
- What effect will this have on the worship service teams?
- How will we do baptisms, business meetings, welcoming new members, all church events?

Our sense right now is that these logistical things can be worked out with your help!

We sense God leading us in our discussion, and thank you for your support.

Craig Fortunato, Dale Williams, Cheryl Blatchley, Rich Nibbe, & Steve Paxton