

GROWING TOGETHER

Piedmont Community Church
2023 Giving Campaign

COMMITMENT SUNDAY IS FEBRUARY 5, 2023



Jan Zovickian and Cathy Nancarrow share a laugh at the Homecoming Picnic held at Piedmont Park in September. ABOVE RIGHT: A child is entertained while playing a water balloon game. RIGHT: John Becker enjoys time with daughter Elizabeth (right) and Caroline Benson (left).



Welcome Home

Giving Campaign celebrates church's return to vitality

In recent years, Piedmont Community Church has celebrated a 'homecoming' each fall to welcome back everyone from summertime adventures, and to prepare for the upcoming program year.

While this occasion isn't particularly unique, the energy we experienced last September was very different.

Our first worship service of the new season witnessed the return of our Chancel Choir after a nearly two-year hiatus due to COVID-19.

We celebrated a 20% increase in worship attendance compared to the previous year and our new Senior Pastor, Steve Schibsted, gave in to the spirit of the day by preaching in

shorts in anticipation of the Homecoming Picnic to follow.

The day welcomed familiar faces of all ages. New faces, too. An excitement for new direction and new beginnings was in the air.

None of this success happened by accident, of course.

While our church continues to be in transition, we have embraced the challenge by working in unison - bringing us together in fellowship and in deed.

Your lay leaders have dedicated tireless hours to provide a foundation for continued church growth - both physically and spiritually.

Your church staff has renewed their commitment to offer the best worship and program experience around.

You and other members have returned with hearts wide open, ready to tackle new projects, welcome new members and to love one another.

We are experiencing the restoration of a healthy, vital church home.

And now, our giving campaign, *Growing Together*, will help ensure that the spirit we experience today will continue for decades to come.

In God's grace.

Photos by Michael Barber

Growing in gratitude

Last fall, our clergy invited a few people to share their faith stories with the congregation. Some were longtime members of the church. Others had only recently attended or joined.

In all cases, each described their faith journey and how the people of Piedmont Church have been a positive influence in their lives.

Marilyn Siden and Suzie Skugstad are two that shared their stories in person or on film and are included on this page of testimonials.

Cal and Nancy Walters, Steven Thorne and Sarah Pae and Al Lee provide their personal experiences and their excitement for toward the church's future.

The music at Piedmont Church is outstanding and sets the tone for worship - a little taste of what heaven's choir might be like.



I love that our pastors preach biblically sound principles that give me something to strive for - rarely a typical sermon.

I truly have felt embraced by the entire congregation. People have reached out on so many levels. It feels like family.

- Marilyn Siden

It has been exciting to see the recent surge of new families attending - a testament to a vibrant congregation.

- Cal and Nancy Walters

New Members

Nancy and I are so excited to be part of a local, vibrant church that serves the neighborhood and the broader community.



We were looking for a place where we could count on regular spiritual renewal - the teachings, music and classes at

Piedmont Church do just that.

The congregation has been so welcoming for us newcomers, making us feel right at home.

While we have lived here for 25 years, we love having a church we can now walk to (bumping into others doing the same and catching-up on our way to worship has added to the neighborhood feeling).

It has also been exciting to see the recent surge of families and new families attending - a testament to a vibrant congregation.

- Cal and Nancy Walters

Piedmont Church and my family here has been my spiritual foundation for over 15 years.



My faith has deepened thanks to the love and grace I've witnessed between one another, and to what has been shown to me directly.

Financial stewardship has been an important element of my Christian upbringing, and one that I strongly believe is critical as both an expression of gratitude and thanks to God. Specifically, for how God has blessed my life, but also how God is working through me and others in our church family, to both help one another, and more broadly the greater world.

The future for Piedmont Church is truly bright and I look forward to both contributing to, and experiencing fully, the spiritual reigniting that is just beginning.

- Steven Thorne

As a new member of Piedmont Church, I'm so grateful for the warmth and welcome I've received from this loving community from day one.



After years of hesitation, I finally took the leap and am growing into a sense of true belonging, and I hope to give back by participating in whatever areas I can best serve.

I look forward with excitement to each Sunday service, Don Ashburn's weekly Bible study, the classes offered for spiritual

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growth, our Life Groups and the music that lifts my heart and soul.

I can't wait to attend my first retreat and connect deeper with the wonderful folks I've met here. I feel lucky and thankful every day for finding this unity in Christ here at Piedmont Church!

- Suzie Skugstad

From our first visit to Piedmont Church, we were met with a caring, welcoming, and multi-generational congregation.



We love that this church is deeply intertwined with our surrounding community; from events that are open to the public, to

creating safe spaces for our youth, to numerous volunteer projects locally and abroad, or simply sharing space with other local organizations.

We are encouraged that our children can grow up knowing that their faith in God is ever-present, and not something that is limited to Sunday mornings. God has an inspiring vision of renewal and growth for the church, and we are excited for our family to contribute to that future.

- Sarah Pae and Al Lee

Financial stewardship has been an important element of my Christian upbringing, and one I strongly believe is critical as an expression of gratitude to God.

Steven Thorne
Church Member Since 2008



Photo by Michael Barber

Giving As An Investment

Those of you who heard my stewardship sermons last year heard me say that, unlike most pastors, I love preaching about stewardship. I love it because talking about stewardship encourages us to think about giving to the church in a way that takes the emphasis away from money. Stewardship is about challenging ourselves to evaluate what's important to us and what we really value. It's about reminding each other to consider where we want to invest our finances and our lives.

I like to think about giving to the church as an investment. We give, or invest in, what is important to us, what we value, what we believe in and what we love.

During our stewardship campaign this year, you will hear a lot about investing in our church. In many ways, we are rebuilding after a once in a 100-year pandemic and some challenging years of leadership transition. Many of our programs need to be re-imagined. We need to do ministry in a new way.

We need to reach out to our community creatively and winsomely. And in order to realize this vision, we must sacrificially invest our money, time and energy.

The focus and priority of our investment in the coming years will be our ministry to children, youth and families. You will hear more about the work of the Children, Youth and Families Task Force and our new vision in the coming weeks.

Our children and youth have suffered greatly during the pandemic. Our plan is to develop ministries which will have great impact in the lives of students and their families. By investing in these critical ministries, we will be investing in both the present and the future. We will be investing not just in programs or buildings, but in young lives.

In the coming weeks, I hope you will prayerfully consider how you will invest in Piedmont Community Church. In my short time here, I have been impressed by the commitment, dedication and great love you have for this church. My prayer is that our giving will reflect that love.

With gratitude in being your pastor,

Steve Schibsted, Senior Pastor

The Excitement Is Growing

Following are a few ways we are experiencing a sense of renewal for 2023

- **Dr. Steve Schibsted** was hired as our new Senior Pastor and was formally installed on January 8, 2023.
- **Worship attendance** is up 56% over a year ago, and in recent weeks has doubled.
- Our **Homecoming Sunday**, held on September 11, had 225 participating in worship while 100 attended our annual Homecoming family picnic.
- **Task Forces** have been working since the spring of 2022 to bring new life and energy to ministries serving communications, young families and missions. Recommendations have been presented to the board and implementation has begun.
- Our **Chancel Choir** and **Bell Choir** returned to worship services. Our **Chrysalis Youth Choir** gave their inaugural performance on November 20 and sang during the 4pm Christmas Eve service.
- **Small groups** continue to be popular with upwards of 60 members participating.
- **22 new members** have joined our church this year.
- **Mission groups** are in full swing with Mission Action Team (MAT) and the Refugee Task Force continuing their work.



TOP: Joyce Hicks and Eric Behrens speak with Al Lee during the Advent Fair held in Guild Hall December 4. More than 100 people attended the event, including those from the wider Piedmont community.

ABOVE: Board member Rich Thompson enjoys fellowship with Randy Litteneker.

RIGHT: Suzie Skugstad washes windows during a fall work day at the church. In addition to windows, hundreds of chairs were washed, Courtyard lights were strung and mulch was laid.



Photos by Michael Barber

Commitment Sunday

What You Can Expect on Sunday, February 5

On Commitment Sunday, February 5, you will be presented a Commitment Card.

We ask that you prayerfully consider your financial promise to Piedmont Community Church for 2023 and indicate your support on the card.

If worshipping in person, you will be asked to come forward with the rest of your church family to deliver your card as part of our service.

Those worshipping online will be asked to visit a page on our website to fill out a digital commitment card.

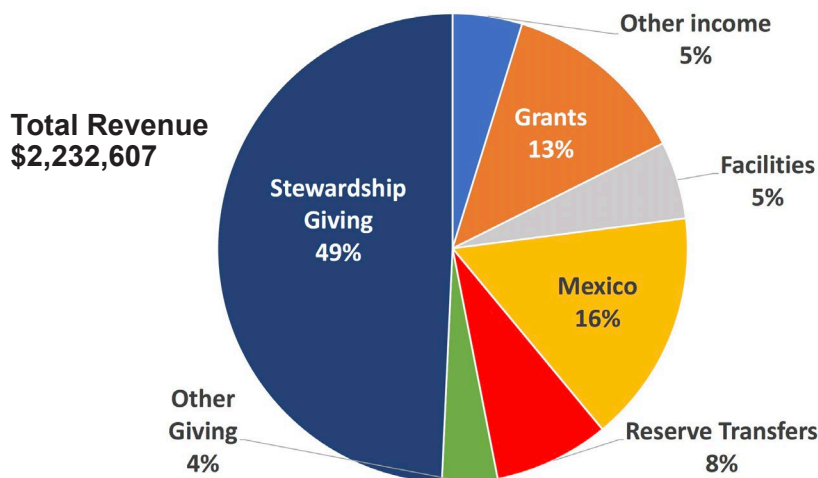
If you are unable to attend Commitment Sunday, we will follow up with you by mailing a card with a return envelope. You can also participate in the Giving Campaign by calling or writing Toni Fischer in our business office, or by making your commitment on our website.

This is a very important day in the life of our church. Our goal will be to celebrate God's faithfulness to us as individuals and as a church, and express our gratitude in the tangible way of dedicating our financial commitments to Piedmont Church.

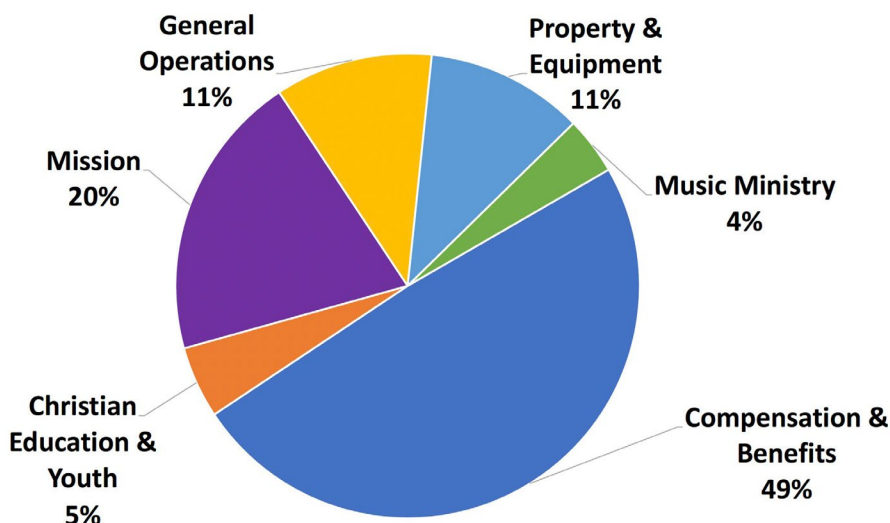
- Steve Schibsted
Senior Pastor

Growing in generosity

Revenue Sources FY 2022/23 Budget



In fiscal year 2022-23, 49% of the church's total revenue came from financial commitments made by our congregation. While \$985k was committed in 2022, our commitment goal for this campaign is \$1.1M.



This chart details your contributions, and how they are used in the life of Piedmont Community Church.

Growing in faith & Service

Spiritual Formation is critical focus heading into 2023

The cornerstone to any healthy church is the Holy Spirit and its members' growth in the faith. Spiritual formation can take different forms - from a very personal journey to a group pathway.

The church is listening to the needs of all of its members and working to provide a safe, nurturing environment for you to explore your spirituality.

In recognition of this, a Spiritual Formation Task Force was formed, and began meeting in June, 2022. It's report to the board can be found at <https://bit.ly/3Chda10>

The report outlines the elements of spiritual formation, catalysts for growth, principles in developing plans and programs and program ideas. We already have many opportunities for spiritual growth in place including the following:

- Worship
- Local service projects
- Overseas mission trips, e.g. Mexico or Africa
- Adult education classes or retreats
- Bible study - individual and group
- Prayer - individual and group
- Choir and Bell Choir
- Small Groups, such as Life Groups

- Just Breathe
- Fellowship gatherings; both formally or informally organized by the church
- Family Camp
- Service within the church; on boards, committees, ushering, teaching Sunday school, mentoring youth, preparing and delivering meals
- Affinity Groups (Needles and Hooks, Walking, Potlucks, Theater)
- Financial Giving through commitments and other projects

There are many opportunities for spiritual formation at Piedmont Church. There are already things we do well, and other fruitful avenues to pursue.

We are excited to explore all aspects of our faith journey and look forward to all that this coming year brings.



A dedicated group of church volunteers pose for a quick photo while picking up trash in Oakland.



Students prepare sack lunches for the homeless.



Meal prep for a CityTeam lunch took place in the church's kitchen while CityTeam's kitchen was temporarily closed.

Transitional Gifts

Rethinking investments leads to renewal

Story and Photo by Michael Barber

Two years ago, Church President Pat Leicher decided to fast track financial gifts set aside in her will to help the church. “I started to look at the path ahead toward revitalization and growth,” Pat said. “I began to rethink the money I had in my will to go to the church upon my death and I realized we need to invest now if we want the church to grow – if we want to make it relevant in the 2020’s and beyond.”

Pat considered the specific challenges the church was facing, including the transition of the Senior Pastor position, declining worship attendance and a global pandemic that closed the church for more than a year. Additionally, the children’s program had declined dramatically. “That’s a slow road to nowhere,” Pat said.

“My conclusion was that I wanted to give some of the money I set aside for the church now.”

Pat labeled this a Transitional Gift and presented her idea to the Stewardship Committee as a giving option for all church members. The category was created during the 2022 campaign, raising \$144,000 in additional funds – money above and beyond regular annual commitments.

Some people say we can’t spend money until we have more money, but actually, it’s the other way around. Investment leads to growth, it can’t work the other way.

- Pat Leicher
Church President

New this year is the ability to make a Transitional Gift in honor or memory of a person. Pat will give a Transitional Gift in memory of her children’s nanny of 22 years, Barbara Hammond, who also went by the name ‘Lois.’

Barbara assumed the name ‘Lois’ from Pat’s son, Adam, who was 3-years-old at the time. “Like most little boys, he became Superman, but it went way beyond that as he also became Clark Kent,” Pat said. “He dressed like Clark, or Superman, for 3 years. In his imaginary play, Barbara had to be Lois Lane.”

“Barbara wasn’t a member of our church, but she so loved children,” Pat said. “Giving a Transitional Gift in her memory, perhaps to help the children’s ministry, touches my heart.”

Pat sees Transitional Gifts as a way to help bring new life, and new members, to the church.

“We really need a new, updated website,” she said. “And, as we’ve looked at our children’s and youth ministry, we have such incredible space with our Christian Education building, but it looks the same as it did when my children attended Sunday school 25-30 years ago. A contemporary space can be made with really bright colors and



Church President Pat Leicher embraces Transitional Gifts as a way to revitalize the church.

bold graphics. You can transform the space in a couple of weeks. It’s not a huge expense, but it’s outside the regular budget.”

“Some people say we can’t spend money until we have more money, but actually, it’s the other way around,” Pat said. “Investment leads to growth, it can’t work the other way. It just doesn’t happen.”

Transitional Gifts can be made in a variety of ways, including money earmarked for the church in your personal estate planning. Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) and appreciated securities. Consult your financial advisor.



Piedmont Community Church

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“ Our business is changing lives. We exist as a church to help people in our community and all over the world to explore a life-changing relationship with our loving God. We are here to spread grace and mercy and peace and love.”

- Dr. Steve Schibsted, Senior Pastor



SCAN TO GIVE

The 2023 Stewardship Committee: *Patti Heilbron, Ann Lin, Sara Smith Hirsch, Steven Thorne, Dani Montague (Chair), Steve Schibsted, Bill Molmen, Lisa Fuller and Paul Schroeder. Not pictured; Roger Eliassen, Geoff Colton and Michael Barber*

GIVE ONLINE AT [PIEDMONTCHURCH.ORG/GIVE](https://PiedmontChurch.org/Give), OR CONTACT TONI FISCHER AT (510) 547-5700 EXT 102