

# Children's Ministry Team (CMT)

## Response to the Report of the Strategic Analysis Task Force (SATF)

December 17, 2013

### Executive Summary

The Children's Ministry Team (CMT) has addressed the Session action to respond to the Strategic Analysis Task Force (SATF) by (1) extracting the related sections of the report, (2) proposing modifications, (3) developing implementation plans, and (4) referencing the implementation plans back to the relevant report recommendations. From the SATF report, sections 1.1, 1.3, 2.5.1-3, 4.1, 4.3, 5.1, 5.3, 6.1, and 6.3 were considered relevant and included in **Part I**. Guiding verses for the Children's Ministry response were provided in Section 1.1.

Suggested modifications to the list of Key Christian Education Activities (Section 2.5.1) that were related to the Children's ministry are noted in Part 1 of this response report. These suggested modifications are provided to enhance the accuracy and completeness of the list. There was also a proposed change to Section 2.5.2 to keep art as an equivalent focus to science. Suggested additions to Section 2.5.3 are also provided from the CMT perspective.

A list of references to cross-list the SATF recommendations in sections 2.5.2, 2.5.3, 4.3, 5.3, and 6.3 to the steps in six implementation plans are provided. These plans are provided in **Part 2**, which are:

1. Embrace new methods and technology for shared learning, communication, fellowship and worship;
2. Evaluate and, if feasible, develop a plan to accommodate special needs children/families;
3. Work with other committees to enhance children's ministry facilities;
4. Support growth/outreach/needs for the whole church;
5. Provide and communicate an overarching message for our ministry to children.
6. Expand the parental/volunteer leadership opportunities with children.

**Part 3** contains the recommendations that flow from this report. Distinctions between CMT-only actions, CMT plus another ministry area, and Whole-Church Task Forces are made. However, not all will not come to fruition without leadership from within the congregation.

12/16/13

# **Part 1**

## **CMT Specific Excerpts from SATF Report with Proposed Updates and References**

# CMT Specific Excerpts from SATF Report with Proposed Updates and References

*Note #1 - Updates proposed by the CMT on 12/17/13 in **bold italic underline**.*

## 1.1 Guiding Thoughts

**Guiding Verse:** By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.  
John 13:35  
New International Version (NIV)

*Note #2 - First Guiding Verse for CMT Response: “Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me,” – Matthew 18.5*

*Note #3 – Second Guiding Verse for CMT Response: “Train up a child in the way he should go. When he is old, he will not turn away from it.” – Proverbs 22.6*

**Webster Presbyterian Church (WPC) Vision Statement:** “Webster Presbyterian Church is to be a place of worship in the Greater Bay Area that welcomes all God’s children, serving Christ as active disciples to create a more loving, affirming, and just world through openness to spiritual inquiry, civility of discourse, scientific ideas, artistic expression.”

**Webster Presbyterian Church Mission Statement:** “We are a church that strives to encounter the loving God, to nurture follows of Jesus Christ, and to meet human needs”

# **CMT Specific Excerpts from SATF Report with Proposed Updates and References (cont.)**

*Note #1 - Updates proposed by the CMT on 12/17/13 in **bold italic underline**.*

## **Questions 1 and 2**

### **1.3 SATF Recommendations Overview**

*Question 1) Where is the working of God and the Holy Spirit perceived in the life of WPC? To what ministries and missions is God calling the congregation?*

God is calling WPC to welcome and minister to all people including:

- Families, children, and youth
- Singles
- Traditional Presbyterians
- Individuals with special needs

by providing a presence in the Bay Area that welcomes alternatives views of expression of the Christian faith and dialogue about other faith traditions through openness to spiritual inquiry, civility of discourse, scientific ideas, and artistic expression.

*Question 2) What, in the current life of the congregation, needs to die to make room for God's new and unfolding claim on the life of the congregation? Just as Christ had to die to make room for new life, what things here need to die to make room for new life at Webster?*

The task force recommends that the appropriate Ministry Teams examine what needs to die in their respective areas and either take appropriate action or develop a plan of action to be ready by January 1 for use by the PNC in the preparation of the Mission Information Form.

# CMT Specific Excerpts from SATF Report with Proposed Updates and References (cont.)

Note #1 - Updates proposed by the CMT on 12/17/13 in **bold italic underline**.

## 2.5 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**Goal:** to provide opportunities for all to learn more about their faith, the Bible and themselves

### 2.5.1 Key Christian Education Activities

#### Children

- Children's Time during Worship Service
- Worship Books for children
- **Children's Music Ministry**
- **Children's Chapel (ages 3-8 yrs) for Traditional Service**
- **Child Care (ages infant-age 10) during both services (8:30 am to 12:15)**
- **Sunday School – Preschool-5<sup>th</sup> grade**
- ~~**Sunday School – Preschool**~~
- ~~**Sunday School Kindergarten/First Grade**~~
- ~~**Sunday School – Second and Third grade**~~
- ~~**Sunday School for Preteens – Fourth and Fifth Grade**~~
- **Wednesday Night activities**
- **Vacation Bible School**
  - **Mission activities**
  - **Multi-generational interaction**
- **Kingdom Kids in collaboration with Mission Team**
  - **Local community interaction**
  - **Multi-generational interaction**

#### Resources

- Christian Library
- **Computer Lab (Christian Software)**

# **CMT Specific Excerpts from SATF Report with Proposed Updates and References (cont.)**

*Note #1 - Updates proposed by the CMT on 12/17/13 in **bold italic underline**.*

*Note #2 – References to CMT Proposed Implementation Plans in **bold italic**.*

## **2.5.2 Christian Education: God Calls us:**

To act like Christian education is important for all, since it is the bedrock of God’s calling and is how we “grow” and enrich Christians (5.A)

To make the schedule “family friendly” and flexible (6.A.i, 6.A.ii)

To include more intentional Bible study (5.A.i)

To take advantage of appropriate media (1, 5.A.ii, 6.A.i)

To address the **situations of families with special needs members** (2, 4.B)

To better equip lay people to be effective teachers (1, 5.A)

To build on the **art/science/theology connections** (3.A.iii, 3.A.vi, 5.B.i, 5.E)

## **2.5.3 Christian Education: God is calling the following to die:**

Belief that CE only happens on Sunday morning (2.E, 3.A.iii, 3.B, 4.A, 6.C, 6.E)

Ineffective teaching (1, 5.A)

Expectations about ownership (6)

Poor education facilities (1, 2.B, 3)

**An unwillingness to try new things in Children’s Ministry** (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

**Lack of parental/volunteer leadership in Children’s Ministry** (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

**Impediments to children having a greater role in worship including leadership** (5.A.i, 5.B)

# **CMT Specific Excerpts from SATF Report with Proposed Updates and References (cont.)**

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## **Question 3 - Review of Staffing Model**

### **4.1 CHARTER**

The task force reviewed the staff positions to develop an answer to the following:

*Question 3) “What staff configuration will best supports the faithful implementation of this God-centered mission?”*

### **4.3 RECOMENDATIONS**

The task force recommends:

- WPC operate with the current paid positions through a period ending after the new pastor, head of staff, is installed and fully transitioned.
- The PNC should inform all candidates that it is likely that in the fullness of time, they may become a solo pastor here at WPC contingent on the evolving size of the congregation and the need to faithfully support God’s vision for this church.
- Session should both adjust staffing assignments and call gifted lay people to lead some areas of our mission. This activity will require additional time and attention from the pastoral staff on whom the burden falls to call, train, co-plan, and supervise

Implementation Plan References (**4, 6**)

# CMT Specific Excerpts from SATF Report with Proposed Updates and References (cont.)

*Note #1 - Updates proposed by the CMT on 12/17/13 in **bold italic underline**.*

*Note #2 – References to CMT Proposed Implementation Plans in **bold italic**.*

## Question 4 - Review of the Campus

### 5.1 CHARTER

The task force reviewed the campus facilities to develop an answer to the following:

*Question 4) “Does the current physical campus serve that mission and ministry? What modifications are required to be faithful to God’s calling in the life of the congregation?”*

### 5.3 RECOMENDATIONS

The task force recommends that:

- Session form a planning task force to evaluate the entire campus and develop plans to improve the campus to better serve the families, children, and youth; singles: traditional Presbyterians; and individuals with special needs that God is calling us to serve. The plan should span a five year period and identify improvements that can be accomplished as church finances are available. The overall objective is to be more welcoming to all who visit or attend our services.
- Some other guiding goals of this improvement plan include consolidate all administration offices in one area, that all rooms be available for multiple uses, that the facilities be as welcoming as possible.
- The plan should be ready when the new pastor/head of staff is installed.
- The ministry teams using the facilities should note and report on a regular basis to Campus Management any maintenance need (i.e., lights out, electrical outlets not safe or not working).
- Campus Management should consider Habitat days for WPC using the talents of our Habitat volunteers to accomplish both small and large projects around the campus.

Implementation Plan References (*1.C, 2.B, 3.0*)

# CMT Specific Excerpts from SATF Report with Proposed Updates and References (cont.)

Note #1 - Updates proposed by the CMT on 12/17/13 in ***bold italic underline***.

Note #2 – References to CMT Proposed Implementation Plans in ***bold italic***.

## Question 5 - Review of the Stewardship and Church Budget

### 6.1 CHARTER

The task force reviewed the current stewardship and finance programs to answer the following:

*Question 5) “Does the current stewardship of the congregation support God’s claim and call on the congregation? How does the budget need to be shaped to faithfully implement this mission and ministry to which God is calling WPC?”*

### 6.3 RECOMENDATIONS

The Task Force has the following Stewardship related recommendations:

- The stewardship ministry be separated from the church financial ministry.
- The finance ministry requires dedicated resources applying sound financial principles that are consistent with economic realities.
- The stewardship ministry requires dedicated resources to apply theological principles for yearlong stewardship and to coordinates all fundraising activities.
- The stewardship ministry needs to be assigned the fundraising activities associated with the operations budget, debt reduction, and engaging skills of church members. This ministry needs to coordinate these church-centered activities with the special giving Sundays of PC(USA), the mission fundraising of WPC, and other fundraising events.
- The stewardship ministry needs use the church vision and the ministries WPC is called to perform as the important motivator for sacrificial giving to fund our missions, our ministries, and our debt reduction.

The Task Force has the following budget related recommendations:

- Realizing the debt impedes the high level of commitment to the mission God is calling us, WPC should implement an intensive program to pay down the debt.
- We recommend that WPC keep the extra “pay the debt down” line on the pledge card.
- Session needs to take the lead in holding the budget and cutting spending where possible while the focus is on reducing the debt.
- The budget needs to make room for pastor search function (estimated \$10,000 in 2014), the new Pastor (estimated \$125,000 TOC, \$15,000 relocation both), and fair pay for staff.
- During this time or intensive debt reduction, special projects need to be delayed.

Implementation Plan References (*1.C.iii, 2.B.iii, 3.A.viii, 4, 5.F, 6.H.ii*)

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## **Part 2**

# **CMT Proposed Implementation Plans for The SATF Report**

## **CMT Proposed Implementation Plans for The SATF Report**

1. Embrace new methods and technology for shared learning, communication, fellowship and worship.
  - A. Begin immediately -
    - i. Develop email/text message/Twitter distribution lists;
    - ii. Virtual meetings/information exchange;
    - iii. Use available technology to reach Children as they live today (e.g. electronic advent calendars); and
    - iv. Use available technology to keep parents informed of upcoming events and needs.
  - B. Begin planning and implement when possible -
    - i. Limited class-room electronics to support new learning and communication; and
    - ii. Send parents or volunteers to other churches to see how multimedia and electronics are used in Children's Ministry.
  - C. Develop a multi-year plan for incorporating digital and other emerging technologies into Children's Ministry -
    - i. Task force formed with other involved committees/teams;
    - ii. Include the classrooms, hallway bulletin boards, the Parlor, etc.;
    - iii. Break the plan down into prioritized smaller packages to facilitate donations;
    - iv. Begin with a single area, then roll out as feasible;
    - v. The plan should include volunteer installations, possible wiring runs, and security of the hardware;
    - vi. The plan may include tablets for the teachers and the students.

## **CMT Proposed Implementation Plans for The SATF Report (cont.)**

2. Evaluate and, if feasible, develop a plan to accommodate special needs children/families.
  - A. Prepare an immediate action plan to accommodate a visiting child who cannot get up to the second floor of the Ed Building;
  - B. Develop a long term plan for reasonable accommodation,
    - i. Include stairs, classrooms, electronics, doors, etc,
    - ii. Consider video in Parlor or a window to create a room for atypicals,
    - iii. Provide the plan in small packages to facilitate donations;
  - C. Create opportunities for children to get to know youth and adults with special needs (i.e. VBS);
  - D. Work with other Nurture teams to have adult/youth classes to help the congregation understand the needs and faith stories of special needs families;
  - E. Work with Mission and Nurture teams to include local mission opportunities for special needs individuals such as Special Olympics, school transition centers, special needs daycares, etc.;
  - F. Understand how other churches accommodate special needs families (send teams of parents or volunteers to visit other churches); and
  - G. Begin a limited program to periodically work with current special needs children and members.

## **CMT Proposed Implementation Plans for The SATF Report (cont.)**

3. Work with other committees to enhance children's ministry facilities;
  - A. Create a physical environment that is more inviting and receptive to children;
    - i. Upgrade lighting in classrooms to provide softer and brighter lighting (use lamps if necessary),
    - ii. Add appropriate decorations as needed,
    - iii. Consider adding murals to walls -
      - a. Consider each mural's content and production as an enhancement to the children's faith formation,
      - b. Plan each mural with sketch and pencil,
      - c. Start with one room and expand over time,
      - d. Involve kids and volunteers in planning and execution;
    - iv. Upgrade flooring,
    - v. Bring classroom doors to code,
    - vi. Increased access to counters, sinks, and hot water for art projects,
    - vii. Upgrade toilets for reliable use by nursery, childcare, and children, and
    - viii. Plan and prioritize the work in small packages to implement as volunteers, materials, funds become available;
  - B. Consider other locations for some events such as individual's homes, playgrounds, community venues, the fellowship hall, etc.
  - C. Implement electronics multi-year plan as resources become available (#1);  
and
  - D. Implement any facilities special needs plans as called for and as resources become available (#2).

## **CMT Proposed Implementation Plans for The SATF Report (cont.)**

4. Support growth/outreach/needs for the whole church.
  - A. Develop mission opportunities for the children -
    - i. Continue mission activities associated with VBS and Kingdom Kids, and
    - ii. Maintain a dialog with the Mission Committee and Youth Ministry Team to capitalize on inter-generational mission activities;
  - B. A super committee or task force should be formed from multiple committees (including CMT) to focus on the cooperative goals of church growth and demographic needs;
  - C. Work with the Outreach committee to hold intergenerational events that might bring in the local community or the WPC demographic community such as a fall festival, movie night in the yard, community service talks of current interest to parents; etc. (note that Kingdom Kids week might be a good time for some local community events);
  - D. Assess adding a Children's Chapel to the first service as a potential attendance enhancement;
  - E. Implement electronics multi-year plan as resources become available (#1);
  - F. Implement the special needs implementation plan (#2); and
  - G. Implement the facility improvement plans for Children's Ministry areas (#3).

## **CMT Proposed Implementation Plans for The SATF Report (cont.)**

5. Provide and communicate an overarching message for our ministry to children.
  - A. Provide teachers and parents with more insight into the general nature of the entire ministry along with specific weekly plans.
    - i. General nature involves faith formation over time including
      - a. The child realizing that he will be developing his own relationship with God,
      - b. The child gaining the foundation to develop a statement of faith,
      - c. The child gaining tools for life-long faith development.
    - ii. Use newsletters, emails, printed materials training sessions and other methods to convey this information.
  - B. Work with Worship Committee to increase the participation in Worship by children. Examples include
    - i. Reading or dramatizing bible verses,
    - ii. Increased musical contributions,
    - iii. Increased role in services (such as carrying in the chancel Bible or the elements for communion).
  - C. Implement electronics multi-year plan as possible (#1);
  - D. Implement campus update plans to create a more amenable environment to children's ministry (#3);
  - E. Add specialized activities to allow children to explore the relationship between art, science, and faith. Examples include –
    - i. Field trips, such as appropriate exhibits at museums,
    - ii. Participation in mural creation.
  - F. Evaluate a single fundraising event to fund un-budgeted programming activities; and
  - G. Consider some Sunday's when the lesson might parallel the Sermon.

## **CMT Proposed Implementation Plans for The SATF Report (cont.)**

6. Expand parental/volunteer leadership opportunities:
  - A. Expand the CMT membership -
    - i. Assess virtual meeting possibilities,
    - ii. Consider two sessions of the same meeting (one on Wednesday one on another day),
    - iii. Actively seek out parental/volunteer input on a regular basis,
    - iv. Utilize Active Parenting Class as an input source for information,
    - v. Call non-traditional members for CMT membership;
  - B. Seek out parents and volunteers to support task forces mentioned previously (#1, #2, #3, #4) as representatives of Children's Ministry;
  - C. Cultivate and empower parental and volunteer leadership for VBS programming;
  - D. Cultivate and empower parental and volunteer leadership for specific plans mentioned previously (#1, #2 - for example mural creation, #3);
  - E. Plan activities beyond the walls of the church that would by necessity require expanded leadership such as field trips or in private homes;
  - F. Expand volunteer participation in the child care ministry;
  - G. Establish a communication network to keep parents and volunteers informed of upcoming events and needs; and
  - H. Continue to offer childcare to enable parental support;
    - i. On-going communication will be required, and
    - ii. Plan for potential budget impact.

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## **Part 3**

### **Recommendations**

## Part 3

### Recommendations

This response includes a mixture of efforts that the CMT can undertake on its own, activities that require coordination with other ministry areas, and those that require integrated work by multiple committees.

The CMT can implement sections 1.A, 2.A, 2.C, 2.F, 2.G, 3.B, 5.A, 5G, 6.A, 6.C, 6.E, 6.F, and 6.G. In fact these activities will be implemented and coordinated as needed – provided sufficient volunteers can be found. The recommended approach will be to offer up these CMT-only needs (that cannot be met with the current slate of volunteers and staff) in faith to the congregation and allow those to move forward as the membership feels moved to support with time and talent.

The CMT must work with other specific ministry areas to implement sections 1.B, 2.D, 2.E, 4.A, 4.C, 4.D, 5.B, 5.E, 5.F, and 6.H. Conversations with the other ministry areas are recommended to assess joint interest, feasibility, and alternatives. If joint interest is available to proceed, then once again congregational volunteers must be found to support these initiatives that cannot be implemented in the current environment. There is utility in at least having the discussion on these topics and allowing active discernment concerning if and when these plans are to be initiated.

The CMT will play a role in the following whole-church initiative sections: 1.B, 2B, 3A, 2C & D, 4.B, 4.E-F, 5.E-F, and 6.B& D and may lease some initiatives. The recommendations for these sections are that Session field the appropriate Task Forces (#1, #2, #3, #4) from the church membership and begin the process of assessing the integrated desire for and plan for these underlying recommendations. Once again, agreement, resources, and volunteer input will be critical to determining which initiatives move forward. The full implementation of these activities is not possible with the current expected budgets. However, the staged and incremental implementation plans should be developed and in-place to allow the workings of the Spirit over time to be realized.