

# Sausalito Presbyterian Church



## PART I

### Who We Are

### *Spiritual Identity*

# 1. Spiritual Identity



## MISSION STATEMENT

The theology and the aspirations of the members of Sausalito Presbyterian Church are reflected in the following mission statement. This statement is the first thing a visitor to the SPC website sees as they click onto our home page at [www.sausalitopresbyterian.com](http://www.sausalitopresbyterian.com). Our church community has recently reaffirmed this mission statement during the re-envisioning process in our 2002 Mission Vision Study.

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## Sausalito Presbyterian Mission Statement

We are a loving, spiritual family,  
founded on the teachings of Jesus.

We provide a nourishing environment  
for the spiritual growth of all beings  
to serve and support others.

We encourage open-minded exploration  
to understand, embrace, and  
celebrate the Grace of God.

## STATEMENTS OF FAITH

These statements of faith are based on the tenants of the Center for Progressive Christianity, of which SPC is a paid affiliate. The wording presented here has been recently revised, based on the results of the Mission Vision Questionnaire.

- Jesus Christ is the foundation to our path to God, but we recognize that he represents one of many ways to know God.
- We recognize the faithfulness of other people who have other names for the pathway to the Divine.
- We invite all sorts and conditions of people to join in our worship, our communion, and our common life as full partners, including but not limited to: believers and agnostics, conventional Christians and questioning skeptics, homosexuals and heterosexuals, females and males, the despairing and the hopeful, those of all races and cultures, and those of all classes and abilities, without imposing on them the necessity of becoming like us.
- We think that the way we treat one another and other people is more important than the way we express our beliefs.
- We find more grace in the search for meaning than in absolute certainty, more in the questions than in the answers.
- We see ourselves as a spiritual community in which we discover the resources required for our work in the world, striving for justice and peace among people, bringing hope to those Jesus called the least of his sisters and brothers.

## AFFIRMED SPIRITUAL NEEDS

In their responses to the Mission Vision Questionnaire, the members and congregants of SPC articulated their spiritual needs by saying that they thought it was important to:

- Regularly experience the healing, empowering love of God
- Regularly experience renewing moments of self-transcendence
- Develop vital beliefs and a worthy object of devotion that gives our lives meaning, purpose, and hope
- Improve our values, priorities, and life commitments to be centered in love, integrity, and justice in order to help us live in ways that are caring and responsible, both personally and socially
- Discover and broaden the capacities in our souls for wisdom, creativity, and agape love
- Experience our deep connections with other people and with God's wonderful creation, the natural world
- Cultivate spiritual resources to enhance our trust, self-esteem, hope, and love of people and life
- Grow spiritual resources to help heal the wounds of grief, guilt, shame, resentment, and self-rejection



## WORDS THAT DESCRIBE SPC

In their responses to the Mission Vision Questionnaire, members and congregants used the key words below to describe how they saw and experienced SPC:

- **Inclusive:** We enjoy an enlightened feeling of loving support, nurturing, and acceptance for every person; our members support other members and welcome all participants in communion and worship.
- **Open-minded:** We consider ourselves spiritually uninhibited, non-judgmental, tolerant, and even eclectic. There is an acceptance of a progressive theological path in which spiritual growth is not limited to one type of faith, though it is rooted in our Christian heritage.
- **Light-hearted:** Spontaneity, joyfulness, a positive spirit, cheerfulness, and having fun are all celebrated.
- **Caring:** We are a friendly congregation that sees itself as warm, comfortable, and like a “family of choice.”
- **Engaged in community service:** We have a strong commitment to outreach and mission within the surrounding geographic area as well as internationally in Mexico.
- **A safe harbor:** Adjectives like tranquil and peaceful describe our inner state of mind as we spend time with each other within our beautiful sanctuary.
- **Creative:** We celebrate the arts in all their many forms; the visual sacred arts, a broad spectrum of music, dramatization of scripture, and liturgical dance are presented by and celebrated with and for all age groups.

## CHURCH PROFILE

Nestled in the hills of Sausalito, the Sausalito Presbyterian Church attracts not only regular members but visitors from all over the world, due in part to its beautiful location across from the Alta Mira Hotel and overlooking San Francisco Bay. The church has a growing membership of 160 members and a mailing list of 300+ members and participants. The 1909 Coxhead-designed building has recently been renovated after a successful capital campaign of its members. In the Fall of 2000 SPC raised over \$900,000 in just eight weeks to support this work of seismic upgrade, foundation repair, fire safety upgrades, and handicap access.

Its picturesque setting and well-developed couples counseling program has created a unique ministry of 80 weddings each year, of which 30% currently are Japanese Blessings of Civil Ceremonies and the other 70% are American couples. The Pastor, Wedding Director, and Music Director on staff manage this ministry along with the volunteer Wedding Ministry Team. This program creates an income stream for the General Operating Budget that is significant but has diminished over the past 2 years. What does stand out about this unique program is the new members that often result from this Wedding Ministry.

Our members participate in sustained hands-on mission projects in several locations, both locally and internationally: Bridge the Gap Tutoring in Marin City was founded by an SPC member, Robert Hunter, and is in its 6th year of service. Robert Hunter also rallied the SPC support for our missions Casa Indigena and Casa Hogar in Leon, Mexico 5 years ago. Recently, SPC has developed a joint affiliate/supporter of the Mexican missions in the First Presbyterian Church of San Rafael.

SPC is also unusual in that we have a strong internet community with a weekly electronic newsletter called SPINN—the Sausalito Presbyterian Inner Net Network. This newsletter goes out to hundreds of members, whether they attend or not, to keep them abreast of the spiritual and life developments

in the community. We have a church website ([www.sausalito-presbyterian.com](http://www.sausalito-presbyterian.com)) and a wedding website ([www.romanticchurchwedding.com](http://www.romanticchurchwedding.com)), as well as an affiliation and link with the Center for Progressive Christianity at [www.tpc.org](http://www.tpc.org).

In addition, SPC has a strong Liturgical Arts Ministry where art and drama are welcomed and creatively woven into the service to deliver and reinforce the spiritual message.

Our congregation reflects the predominantly white, upper middle class residents of Sausalito and the middle to upper middle class of some surrounding cities. Housing is very expensive in the area. Less expensive housing may be found in the neighboring community of Marin City. Those affiliated with the Presbyterian faith in Marin City are served primarily by St. Andrew Presbyterian Church. Most of our members and participants live within 14 miles of church, but there are those who drive more than 20 miles to attend. They join us from as far north as Sonoma, Petaluma, Napa, and Vallejo, as far east as Martinez in the East Bay, and as far south as San Francisco, Redwood City, and San Carlos.

As shown in the Membership History Chart below, church membership has increased in 2002 to our highest level in 11 years, despite the retirement of both long-term pastors in 2001. However, attendance in Sunday worship has dropped significantly, with average attendance at about 80 in recent months as opposed to an average of 110 in 2001.

**MEMBERSHIP HISTORY CHART**

