

Future-Focused Church Worship Assessment

Summary Report

What is the purpose of this report? To provide the members of Cascades Presbyterian Church with the results of the Future-Focused Church assessment of Worship conducted May-June 2026.

What is a Future-Focused Church? A Future-Focused Church is one that is involved in relationally discipling young people, modeling kingdom diversity, and tangibly loving their neighbors.

How was the assessment conducted? Worship was divided into five key areas for assessment and questions developed for these five areas. Zoom interviews were conducted and for those members who did not/could not attend the interviews questionnaires were provided and completed in writing. Approximately 35 members attended an interview or completed a questionnaire in writing. The questionnaire feedback was reviewed and consolidated into the findings, goals and actions listed in this report.

Goals for Worship at Cascades

Actively cultivate Christ-centered intergenerational relationships with young and multi-cultural families.

Create an environment where families and individuals will feel welcomed to explore the claims of Christ and will be built up in faith along with their children and youth.

Physical Space

Findings: The sanctuary was felt to be a warm friendly place to worship. Some improvements could be made to the Audio/Visual equipment, camera system and acoustics. The online viewing experience could also be improved.

Goal: Improve the in-person and online Worship viewing and listening experience for members, visitors, and musicians.

Actions: Form a committee to determine what Sanctuary equipment and furnishing are needed to implement the Physical Space goal and create a budget estimate for these.

Order of Worship

Findings: There is a predicable Order of Worship that maps to the Book of Order. The children's message was considered important to the service. The predictability of how the elements of Worship are implemented, though comforting, can become routinized and stale. Children and Youth Programming was felt to be inadequate for youths during Worship. Liturgists are not currently involved in the Order of Worship when Cascades' Pastor is preaching.

Goal: While retaining most of the current Order of Worship, become more creative in how the elements of worship are implemented particularly in the use of children and youth.

Actions: See actions for Elders/Deacons and Children/Youth and Young Families.

Music

Findings: Music is highly valued by all members of the congregation. There is interest in a more dynamic range of music in Worship; from contemplative to lament to joy to uplifting to peaceful to energizing. There is a lack of involvement of children and youth in the music ministry.

Goals: Enrich the dynamic sound and emotional range of the music played and sung in Worship. Involve children/youth and the congregation more in singing during Worship.

Actions: The music team and selected church members meet to determine:

- How best to provide for and play music that offers a fuller range of emotions and styles/genres.
- How to implement more congregational singing.
- How to employ the Glory to God hymnal more in Worship.
- How best to involve children and youth more in the music, with an eye to possibly starting a children's choir.

Elders and Deacons

Findings: Elders and Deacons feel nurturing of youth and young families to be very important. They generally embrace their role in discipling children and youth. Elders do volunteer to assist as Liturgist when asked and are open to being coached in the duties of Liturgist. Both Elders and Deacons were open to "continuing education" in their roles. The role of Elders in worship has

diminished over the years. Though Elders and Deacons embrace their role in discipling children and youth, it's challenging for them to connect with youth new to Cascades.

Goals: Develop a core of Elders as Liturgists to fully participate in weekly worship led by the Pastor and also when the Pastor is away. Involve this core of Elders in worship planning throughout the year.

Actions: Begin recruiting Elders to perform the role as Liturgist during worship. Determine what tasks the liturgist will perform during and after worship. Develop a curriculum to assist in educating the liturgist. Include the core of liturgist in the 2027 worship planning and identifying new ways to accomplish the elements of worship.

Children/Youth and Young Families

Findings: Children of all ages are welcomed in Worship, and the family worship model is valued. There is visible participation of some children and youth – especially children under 5 – in Worship, creating a sense of belonging and purpose for them. There are very few young families. *Young families beget other young families.* The youth program is inactive. Youth want to interact with others their age. Parents would like options of keeping children and youth in Worship AND sending them out of service to planned activities. Intergenerational collaboration on Worship could improve.

Goal: Deepen the ties between young families by intentionally building community between them during Worship and through active ministries after Worship. By increasing the number of young families, the number of children and youth actively participating in Worship may also increase.

Actions: Broaden the responsibilities of the Youth Coordinator to one of Family Coordinator. Develop a new job description and recruit a Family Coordinator. Have the coordinator implement ministries that deepen ties between young families.

Pastor, Education Elder, Worship Arts Elder and selected members:

- Study ways to best help families link Sunday teachings to daily experiences.
- Thoughtfully design more opportunities for youth to meaningfully serve in Worship.
- Develop more intergenerational connection opportunities during Worship.

If you have questions reference the findings, goals and actions, you may contact the Worship Arts Elder Laura Livingston or Team Members Joan Detrick, Nancy Bisbee, Alex Berg, and Mary Beth Northrup.