



**2012**  
**ANNUAL**  
**REPORT**



NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH USA



## LETTER FROM OUR DISTRICT APOSTLE

I often think about the first words of Samuel Morse on the telegraph - What has God wrought? It is worthwhile to stop from time to time for a moment and reflect upon all that our Heavenly Father is. He causes so many things to move within our lives, all with the express purpose to bring us closer to Him.

The next few pages are a brief, yet incomplete testimony of some of what God has done over the past year in the New Apostolic Church USA. Truly He has led us on a journey of new understandings; a sure sign that His church is vibrant and evolving. We experienced the wise leadership of Chief Apostle Leber and now over this past year can see the Lord's guiding hand in the new Chief Apostle Schneider.

I thank you for the support you have provided to our vision. You give time to serve in many ways. Your financial gifts are enabling our church to touch the lives of thousands of people every week who are coming to know Christ more and more. In these pages you will see the impact of your service and gifts. Let us continue to put our vision into action. I am thankful to belong to you. Together we form a family in this church that strives to be transformed in the nature of Jesus. May our great Heavenly Father continue to prosper our ways with good favor and blessing.

God bless you.

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## OUR VISION & MISSION

ALL DATA IN THIS PUBLICATION IS BASED ON  
YEAR-END 2012 (12/31/2012).

A vision tells an organization where they  
want to be in the future.

Our Vision is to create a church in which people feel at home and, inspired by the Holy Spirit and their love for God, align their lives to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and thus prepare themselves for His return and eternal life.



A mission tells an organization  
how they will get there.

Our Mission is reaching out to all people in order to teach them the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to baptize them with water and the Holy Spirit.

Providing soul care and cultivating a warm fellowship in which everyone shall experience the love of God and the joy of serving Him and others.

Many different activities and projects are ongoing in our church these days: New programs are being developed and introduced. Different events are being planned and hosted. New systems and communication channels are put in place. This first Annual Report of the New Apostolic Church USA is only one example of these.

We understand that at times it can be difficult to connect all these dots in a cohesive way. After all, implementing multiple initiatives across the country in more than 250 locations is a challenge.

And yet: the gospel and our doctrine have not changed! Based on these cornerstones all our activities are guided by the Vision and Mission for "our" church. The report you hold in your hands is a reflection of both:

Our Vision is where the continued development of our church leads us. It's the ultimate objective of our faith and our daily journey towards salvation.

To successfully achieve our Vision, our Mission statement describes the pathway which will enable and assure us to achieve and reach this objective.

Come and join us on this journey!

# 2012

In

we...

**WELCOMED** the Chief Apostle Leber into our country in two locations: Erie and Philadelphia.

**ESTABLISHED** a new planned giving and charitable fund program.

**REDESIGNED** the national church website, [www.nac-usa.org](http://www.nac-usa.org).

**ESTABLISHED** the Executive Committee as part of a new governance structure.

**RELEASED** a new English organ hymnal with introductions, interludes and postludes.

**BROKE GROUND** for a new flagship church in Woodbury, NY.

**COMPLETED** the transition of former East African missionary countries into an independent district church.

**INTRODUCED** a new grief program for minister training.

**RESTRUCTURED** the apostle work areas as a result of a retirement and ordination, reducing long distance travel.

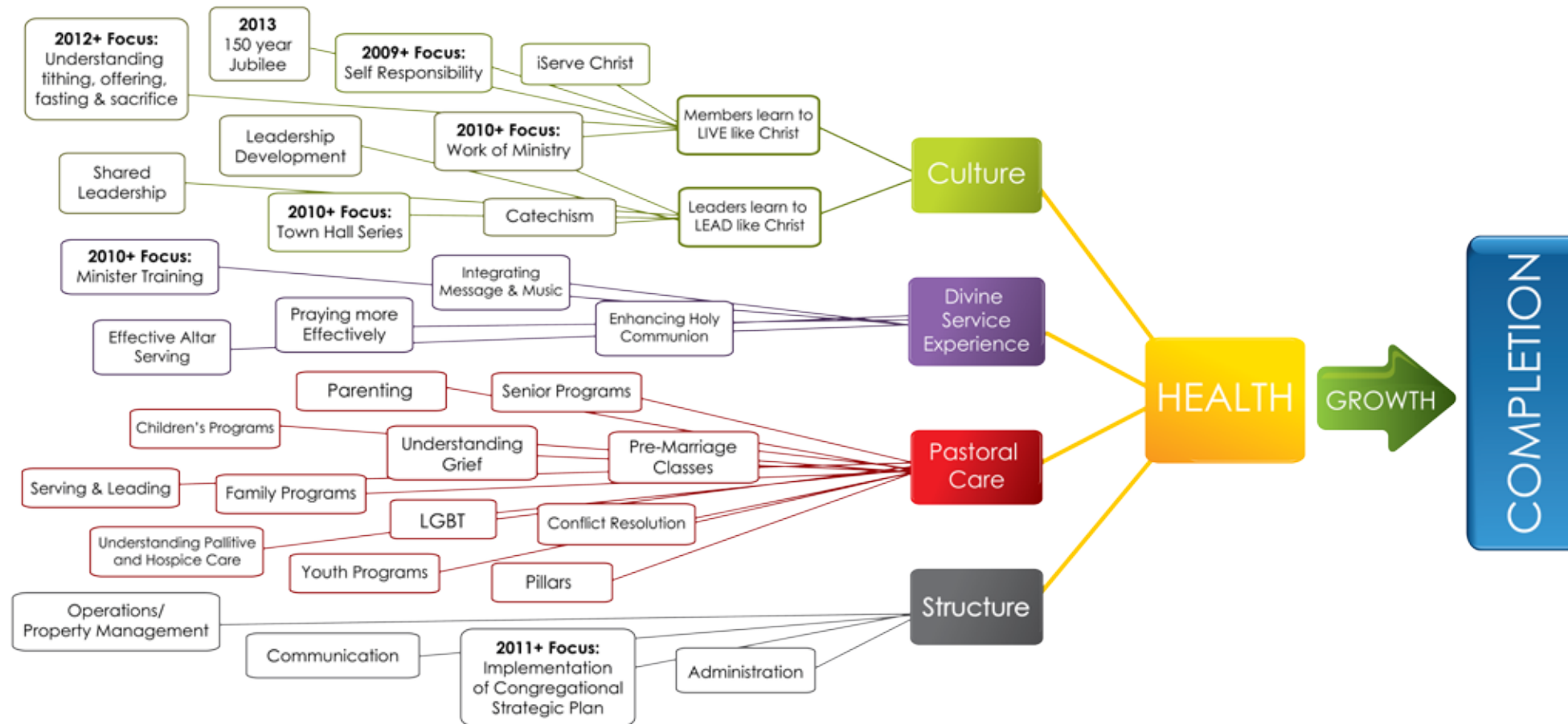
**STARTED** the implementation of Strategic Plans in a first wave of districts, including creation of new flagship congregations.

**LAUNCHED** a new pre-marriage and marriage enrichment program - PRE-PARE & ENRICH.

## STEPPING FORWARD

It is our VISION that where we gather in vibrant, welcoming and inspiring congregations the spiritual wholeness or HEALTH provides us with the necessary foundation for our relationship with Christ. From there it is our deep conviction and firm belief that GROWTH into the likeness of Christ will ultimately lead to the COMPLETION of our faith journey, where we will be together with God for all eternity.

The pathway to this goal is not always an easy one. In its most basic form it is a journey of each one of us individually. But that doesn't mean we have to do it alone! We, as members of the New Apostolic Church USA, strive to create an environment of faith that enriches, inspires, supports, comforts, and strengthens, based on these four objectives of our Strategic Plan:



**Culture** - which is warm, welcoming, inclusive and Christ-centric.

**Divine Service Experience** - the living and touching experience of God's word. The fundamental building block in our personal faith journey.

**Pastoral Care** - the meaningful and relevant implementation of Christ's teachings for all people within our church.

**Structure** - the provision of trustworthy and transparent decisions based on the highest professional and ethical standards.

As outlined before, our MISSION describes the pathway to achieving the ultimate goal reflected in our VISION. To do so, we invite you to join us daily in STEPPING FORWARD.

Culture is individual and joint at the same time. Building our relationship with Christ, we strive to learn to live like Christ. Living more like Christ in turn then enables and prepares us to lead like Christ. And yes, this crosses all lines, guests and 'old-timers', young and old, brothers and sisters, ministers and members - this is for ALL of us!

CULTURE

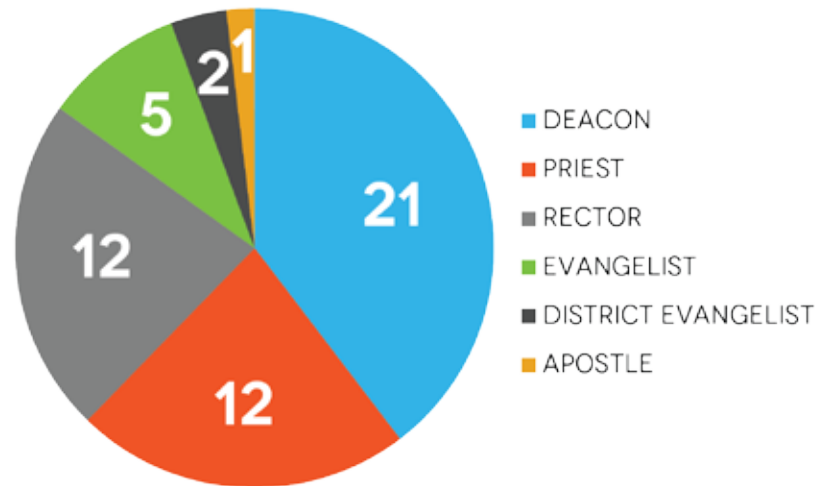
## MAKING THE DECISION TO LIVE LIKE CHRIST...

is such a fundamental, eternal and awesome step to take! However, we cannot live like Christ if we do not accept Christ in our life. Ultimately, we have to do this on a daily basis, but we consciously and deliberately do so on various occasions in our faith: Baptism with water and spirit and Confirmation. Maybe for some of us our parents took the first two of those steps on our behalf. For others, they were given the opportunity to take these steps on their own.

But in the end these three steps, while fundamental and necessary, are only the beginning. Living like Christ means to recommit to Him every day, in matters large and small!



## MAKING THE DECISION TO LEAD LIKE CHRIST



Do not believe that you are too small or too insignificant to grow in Christ: we all are called to lead like Christ, in our daily life, our surroundings, at work, in church and among friends. The chart to the left shows new ministry ordination that took place in 2012. While there are many ways to accept the call to lead like Christ, we want to especially say thank you to our ordained ministers for their decision to do so.

## GROWING IN YOUR DECISION TO LIVE LIKE CHRIST... WORK OF MINISTRY

When it comes to following a call to lead like Christ, we could often feel inadequate, uncertain, uncommitted. The fundamental question is - how can I live out my calling? This is a deeply personal question, one only an individual can answer by seeking Christ and understanding His plan.

One way to do this is to learn and appreciate the many gifts He has given and entrusted to us. Our Work of Ministry program takes you on this personal journey. This journey awakens the understanding of where each of us fit in to the Body of Christ and is vital to the health of our congregations.



## A CULTURE OF LEARNING... NEW CATECHISM

For the first time ever, a systematic description of the New Apostolic doctrine has been developed. The New Apostolic Church is active in many countries of varying cultural backgrounds, which makes a uniform foundational work such as this necessary in order to strengthen doctrinal unity despite all other differences. This book brings to expression fundamental convictions common to all Christians, but also sets forth the special features of the New Apostolic faith. The Catechism has been written in faith for people of faith. The Catechism is a fundamental reference work. It is a standard for New Apostolic faith life. You can purchase a hard copy or download a pdf of the Catechism on [nac-usa.org](http://nac-usa.org).

Translated and printed into **6** different languages worldwide:



## A CULTURE OF GIVING & GRATITUDE

Our voluntary offerings, brought to God in appreciation and thanksgiving for that which He has provided for us, are the foundation of His church. Our regular freewill offerings and our special Thanksgiving offering make up most of the church's revenue.

The events of the past years have directly and fundamentally affected many of our families. As a result, since the beginning of the financial crisis overall offering has decreased by slightly more than \$3 million or 16%. Thanksgiving offering was more directly affected, decreasing 28% over the same period of time.



## eOFFERING



In 2012 \$2.1 M or 13 percent of all donations were received via eOffering.

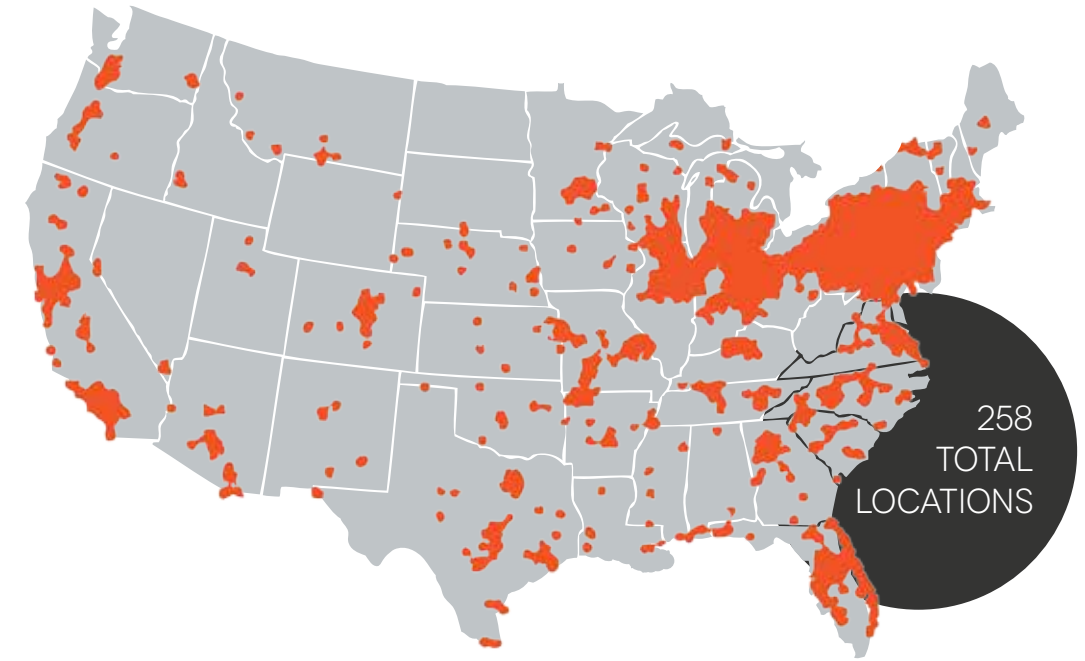


7,394 eOffering transactions took place in 2012



By the end of 2012, we had 493 active eOffering users

## OUR CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE



## MEMBERSHIP DISPERSION

Out of our personal culture of living and leading like Christ comes our intangible contribution to the feeling and fabric of our congregations. Separately, our culture of gratitude and giving provides the means necessary to keep open and maintain our congregations. Both together form the foundation of each congregation's unique culture as a place of worship and fellowship.

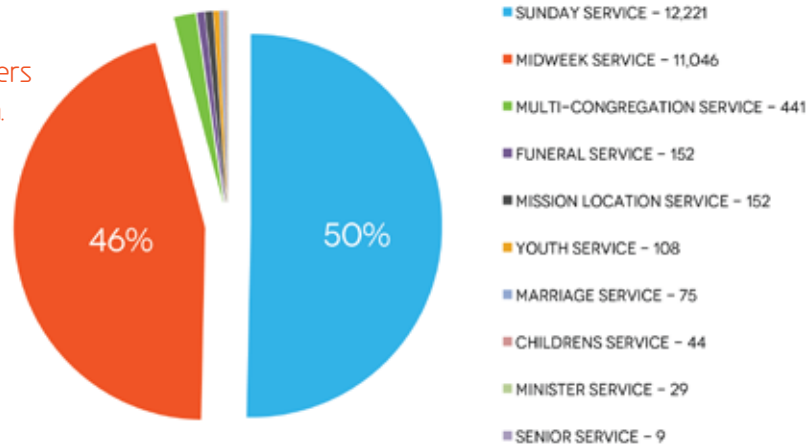
Thanks to the pioneering spirit of our ancestors our church has a national presence. Not surprisingly, however, the dispersion of our membership is not even. While certain areas have a comparatively high density of members in their area, our congregations in large parts of the country are limited in size and long distances.

The unity of our members, ministers and congregations is one of the strengths of our church. At the same time, our Stepping Forward initiative recognizes the fact that the needs of a congregation outside of the church's high-membership areas are different than those for congregations within these areas.

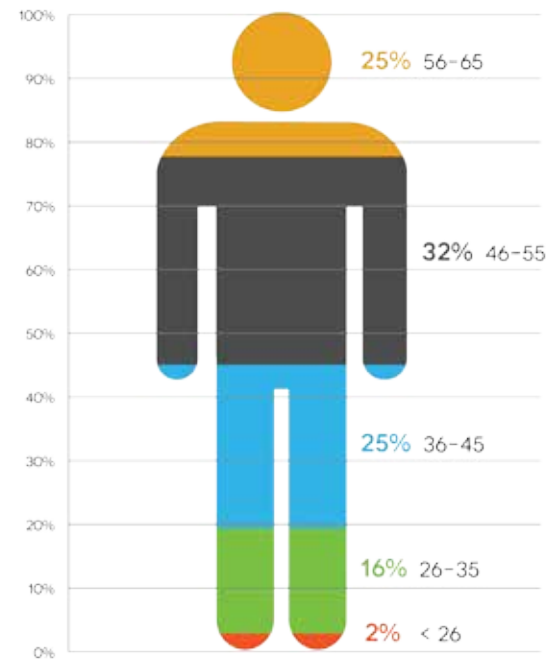
## OUR CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE

We are a diverse and inclusive church! New Apostolic congregations spread from the East to the West ends of our country. Whether small or large congregation - we want them to feel that they are part of the greater USA church. While all of them are based on the same faith, they have unique needs when it comes to their congregational cultures.

Our ordained lay ministers and called volunteers are at the heart of each congregation. Without them no divine service takes place, no Sunday School class is taught, no Bible Study conducted. In 2012, the number of divine services conducted alone reached almost 25,000!



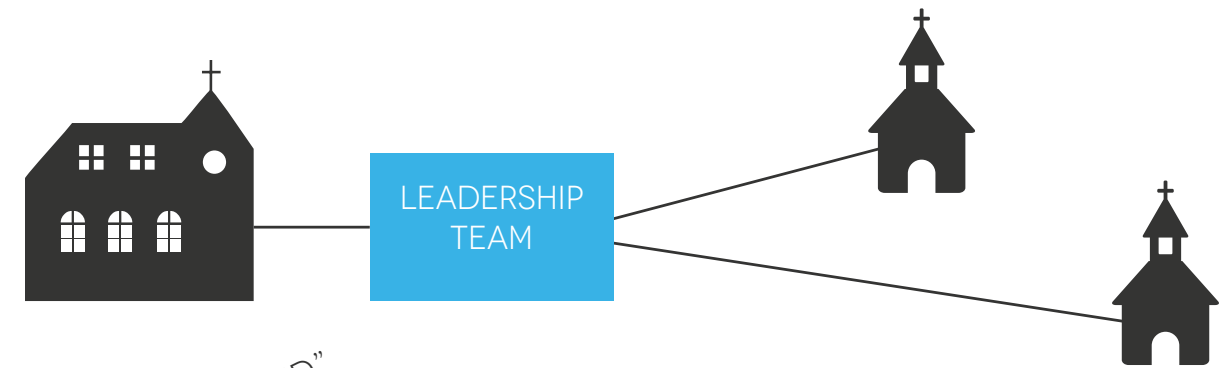
One of the organizational responsibilities of our church is to create an environment where serving our God can take place in a balanced way, recognizing the many demands being placed on our volunteers these days. Caring attention to their families, spiritual dedication to their church, as well as successful professional responsibilities must go hand in hand to allow them to be effective in their lives and avoid "burn-out". We acknowledge the changes in our society over the past years and the effect this has on volunteering in a church capacity. It is part of the reason we are seeing an increasing average age in our minister base. To create an environment where our volunteers hear God's calling and can act upon it in a productive and fulfilling way is one of the key objectives for us in the immediate future.



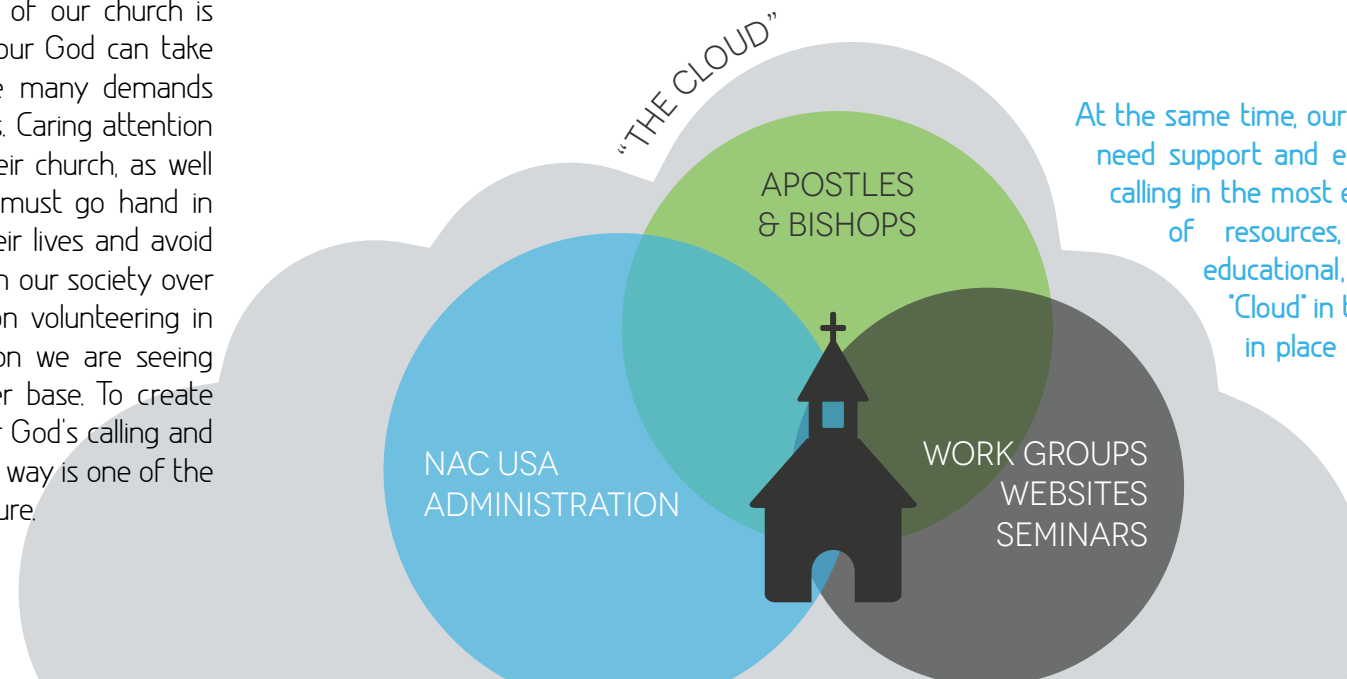
## OUR CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE

Faith is experienced in different ways across one's life. We strive and desire to provide relevant and meaningful programs and spiritual encounters for all our members. This requires committed and gifted volunteers across all functions of our church. At the same time, we cannot place this burden on a few ministers only.

A key element of our Stepping Forward program therefore is to identify and establish Leadership Teams within our working areas. Where geographically possible, the objective is to create such teams across a network of congregations, small and large. This allows our congregations to assist and support each other, share the spiritual gifts present in our volunteers, and thus provide a complete and fulfilling faith experience to all our members.



At the same time, our volunteers and ministry workers need support and enrichment as well to fulfill their calling in the most effective way. A national network of resources, spiritual, administrative and educational, similar to the often mentioned "Cloud" in the technology world, is being put in place for this specific purpose.



Faith is based on our personal relationship with God. It is out of this relationship that the richness and relevance of our faith arises. At the same time, faith requires continued nurturing by the apostle ministry, God's guidance and strength in His presence.

Through the Holy Spirit God leads us, through the Gospel He transforms us, and through communion with Christ He liberates us from sin and guilt.

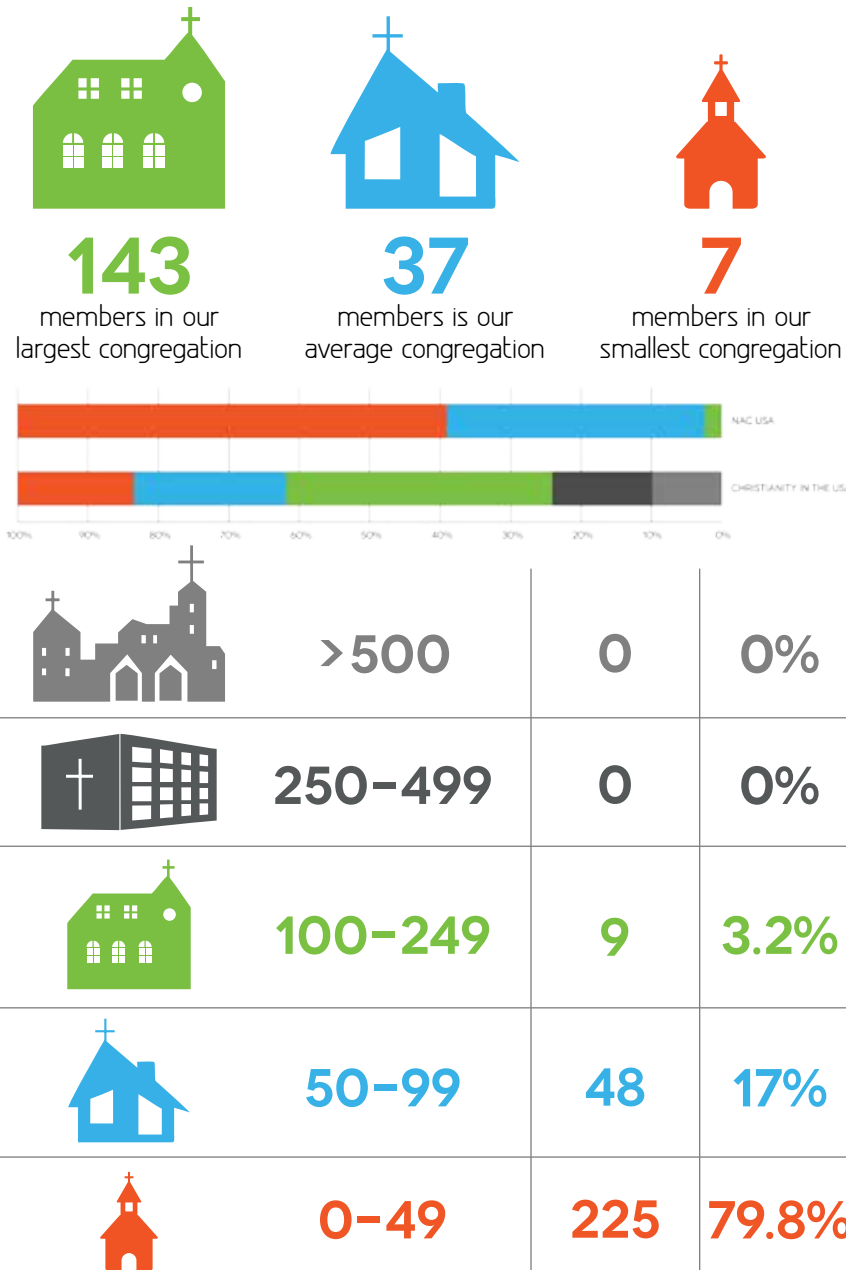
Therefore, the individual experience we make in a divine service is one of the most fundamental aspects of our life - relevant, engaging, uplifting, strengthening, comforting - in short, His message to us is personal.

## OUR SUNDAY EXPERIENCE

We are a big church with more than 250 locations around the country; yet, we are small - most of our congregations fall into the general Christian classification of a small church, that is a divine service with less than 100 attendees on a Sunday.

To be absolutely clear: there is nothing wrong with being a "small" church. An intimate, spiritual and meaningful divine experience and fellowship can occur in any congregation. But we also need to acknowledge that being a small church means there are fewer shoulders to distribute the work and responsibilities.

Larger congregations provide us with the opportunity to achieve a new and different divine service experience; as well as enable us to provide innovative and needed support to our small congregations out of a position of strength.



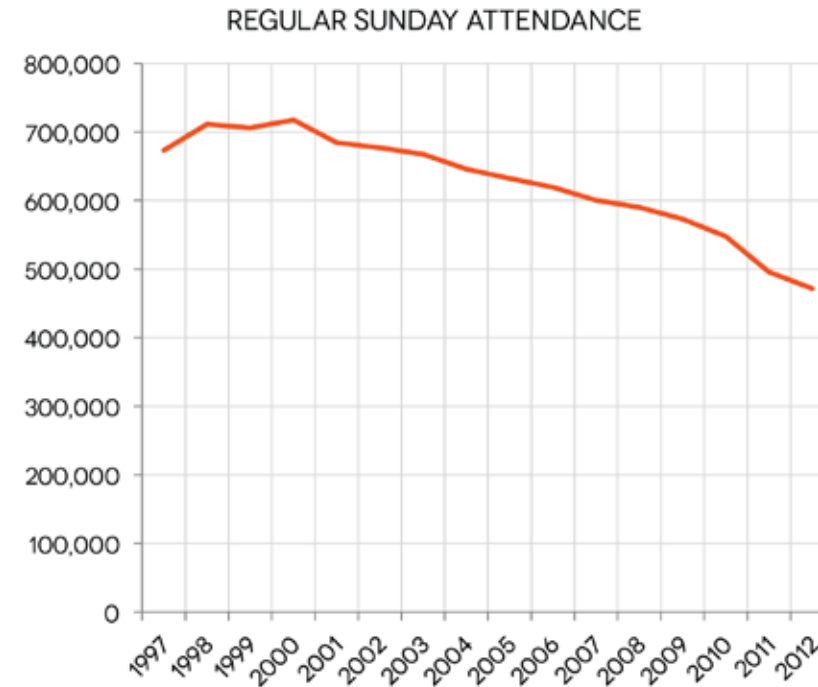
## SUSTAINABILITY & URGENCY

Stepping forward in a confident way is only possible by knowing our strengths while also having the courage to face challenges. Like many mainstream Christian churches in the US, our attendance has seen a persistent decline over the past decades.

This decline in attendance comes after years where our church expanded around the country.

One of the realities of these trends is that in 2012, on average, only about 40 percent of our seating capacity around the country was utilized on any given Sunday morning. Put differently - for each member attending a divine service there were approximately 1.5 empty seats next to them.

While our buildings hold special meaning to us we also have to recognize that the time and cost required to clean, maintain, and decorate them is increasingly falling on fewer members. As part of the church's Stepping Forward the question of a more sustainable building and facility strategy is therefore a key element.




**FOR EVERY 1 SEAT THAT IS OCCUPIED DURING A SERVICE, 1.5 SEATS ARE EMPTY**

## CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

When you come into our church, you will meet people from all walks of life:

Our seniors who built the foundation of our church.

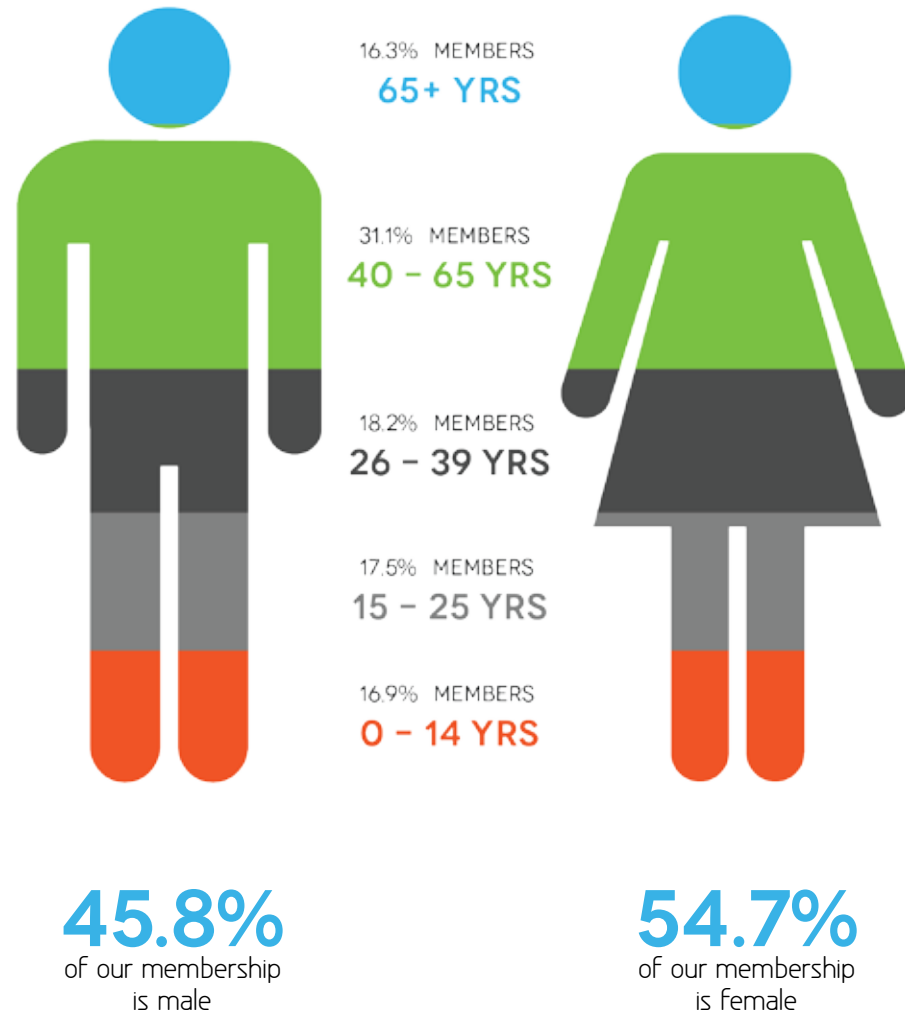
Our adult members, singles, couples, families, who form the backbone of our congregational life.

Our young adults, who represent the next generation of leaders.

Our youth, who we invest in as the emerging leaders to carry the Gospel teaching forward.

And our children, who bring joy to us on a daily basis, and ultimately are the future of our church.

We are thankful for all of you!



## IF YOU WALKED INTO OUR CHURCH YOU WOULD SEE...

### WORSHIP

**Organ Hymnals**  
New hymnals were printed for all the congregations to assist organists in leading the congregation in worship. This new edition features accompaniments, preludes, and postludes as well as spacing to avoid turning pages.

**Congregational Singing**  
Engaging the entire congregation in the worship before midweek services has spread across the nation, resulting in a more intimate, and personal preparation for the divine service.

**Bible Study**  
New initiative of Small Group centered around connecting with other members in your congregation, and growing spiritually - especially through biblical study.

**Prayer**  
The Effective Prayer seminar that was started in the Town Hall meetings of 2009 is now available to ministers as an Minister Development Institute course on Minister Companion.

**Worship Evenings**  
Congregations around the country have embraced the concept of a worship evening, where members can come together to sing, pray and feel the presence of God in a more informal atmosphere.

Our journey of faith is one of discovery and learning. While anchored in the divine services, this journey is an ongoing one, not limited to once or twice a week. Living and leading like Christ is a daily concern for us! Our church strives to provide its members with a positive and nurturing environment to strengthen and develop their personal relationship with Christ.

Over the past years we have introduced various programs, tools and resources to support and enrich our members' journey of faith. A selection is listed to the left.

Faith is personal. It is a relationship with Christ, centered on becoming more like Him, allowing Him to permeate our life. And Christ responds: directly to you as His disciples, and also through the community of Christ.

It is no coincidence that the word 'pastoral', already in its original meaning of shepherding encompasses fundamental ethical concepts like responsibility, care, protection and stability. We take this to heart when providing pastoral care. And this care is not only through our programs and other formal means, it takes place among each other, provided by all of us.

# PASTORAL CARE

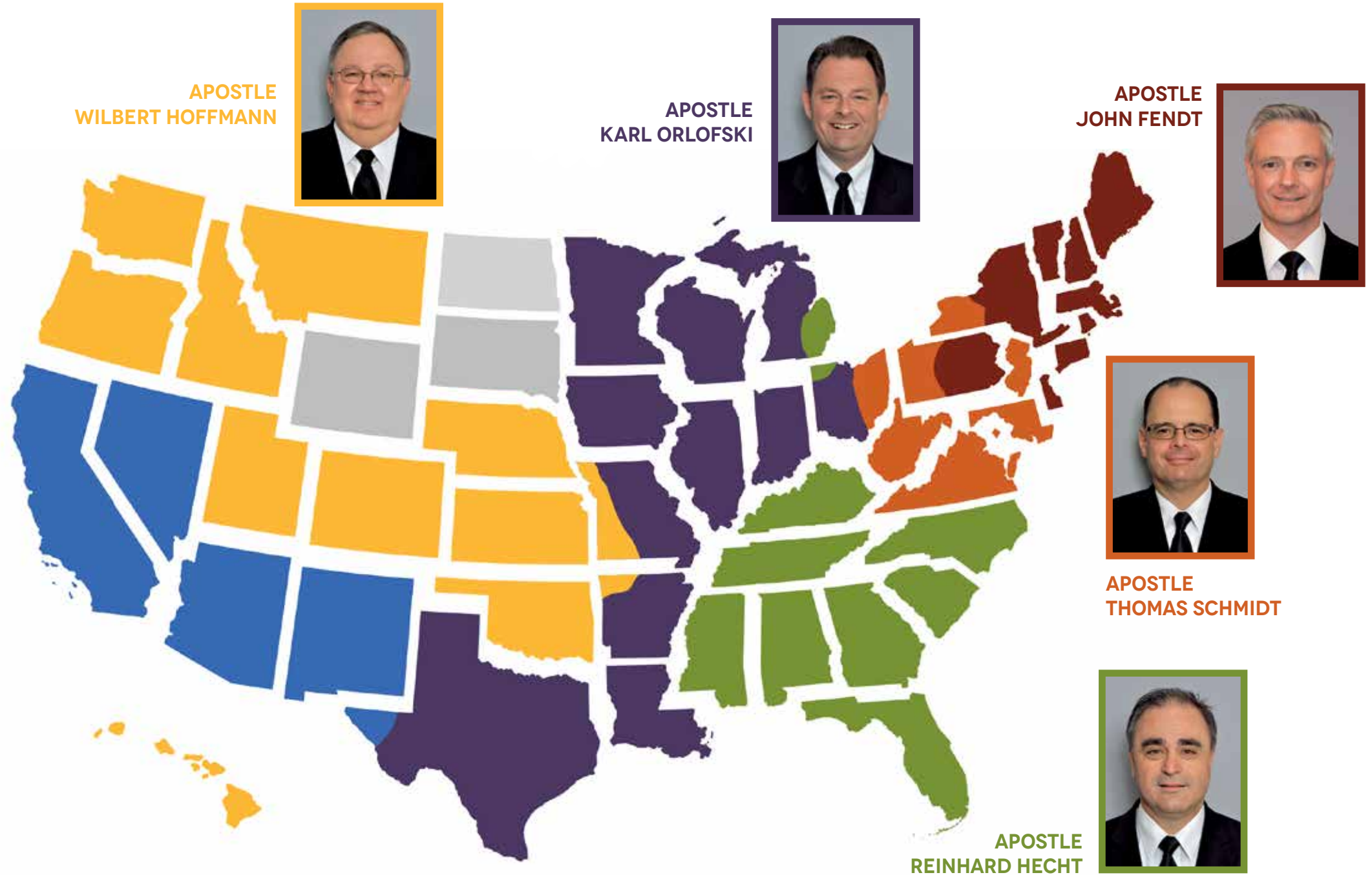
## APOSTLE WORK AREAS

Ongoing pastoral care, including the strategic implementation of new programs and activities in each part of the country is the responsibility of an Apostle, together with the Bishops and District Leaders in this area.

In 2012, the church had one retirement (Apostle Hammer) as well as a subsequent ordination (Apostle Buehner). This change resulted in a re-alignment of work areas, in particular in the Northeastern and Western parts of our country. When defining work areas, various factors are usually considered, ranging from number of members and congregations in each area to travel distances, accessibility and existing connections between districts.



**APOSTLE  
EARL BUEHNER**



**APOSTLE  
WILBERT HOFFMANN**



**APOSTLE  
KARL ORLOFSKI**



**APOSTLE  
JOHN FENDT**



**APOSTLE  
THOMAS SCHMIDT**



**APOSTLE  
REINHARD HECHT**

## PASTORAL CARE PROGRAMS HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2012

### CHILDREN

We recognize the enormous importance of providing our children with a strong foundation and understanding of what it means to have Christ in their life.

Our Sunday School program is constantly being developed to incorporate key Bible teachings, the Gospel of Christ, as well as educational . Living and leading like Christ starts here.

#### STARTING THEIR JOURNEY OF FAITH

■ BEGINNER ■ PRIMARY ■ RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

857 CHILDREN

1386 CHILDREN

542 CHILDREN

### YOUTH

During adolescence our youth start to experience their faith in a much more direct and personal way. This is necessary. But it often comes with challenges, resulting from the many transformational experiences in this phase of life. Providing an environment where they feel safe, find friends to trust in and share their concerns with, can ask any question, dig deeper in their faith, deal with doubts... our Youth ministry recognizes these needs and addresses them in many different ways.

### PRE-MARRIAGE

Life and our society have become more complex and challenging. Just being a "good Christian" in our time is no guarantee for enriching and fulfilling marriages anymore. Our focus on the true and deep benefits of a long-term relationship is often distracted by short-term, shallow social expectations.

Commitment, sincerity, the willingness to invest time, effort and work into a relationship.. in our pre-marriage program we offer young couples (but also those who want to "refresh" their relationship) the opportunity to prepare themselves for each other and their life together.

## COMMUNICATION & RESOURCES – ONLINE



[www.nac-usa.org](http://www.nac-usa.org) Completely re-built in 2012, our main web site offers a wealth of information to those new to our faith as well as existing members. Weekly devotional thoughts, access to the Vision Newsletter archives and our Catechism, congregational address finder and other features provide a connection with the touch of a screen or the click of a mouse.



**Minister Companion** Supporting our lay minister base is one of the key focus areas of the church's Stepping Forward program. Minister Companion is an online resource system dedicated to our active, ordained ministers. Theological background information, explanations of specific doctrinal aspects, divine service preparation materials and relevant, ongoing communications are being made available here.



**Music Companion** An important part of the overall divine service experience is the communal worship of God through music. Our volunteer music coordinators, choir directors, orchestra leaders and worship leaders utilize this platform to select pieces of music which enhance our divine services, as well as obtain guidance and background information on music rehearsal, performance and study.

facebook

**Facebook** For the increasing number of our members connected online these days the church's Facebook page offers opportunities to prepare for upcoming services via the bible word posting, share comments about recent national events as and connect with friends across the country and around the world.

As communication channels become more diverse in society we strive to provide more ways to be touched by the Gospel of Christ.

Historically, this was done in print and to this day, this medium still plays a key role. But, for many of our members communication has become virtual. It has changed our lives, the way we communicate, even how we approach our day. It is important to recognize the opportunities it offers our church. Our life and faith - no separate worlds, but one and the same! These days we connect with our members wherever they are, whenever and in whatever form they prefer. Check them out!

## COMMUNICATION & RESOURCES – PRINTED

A consistent and broad way to reach our members is important, especially in times of change. Our Vision Newsletter has become the key communication platform for our members nationwide. The newsletter introduces new concepts and programs, provides deeper spiritual thoughts on selected topics and keeps the membership even in remote locations up-to-date with what is taking place in the church.

Our VISION newsletter is translated and printed in **3** languages. So far, **16** editions have been distributed to **6950** households nationwide, totaling **116,800** newsletters printed. **477** users also receive the newsletter online.

A relationship with Christ - devoted to Him? Having Christ in our lives can and should have many forms. In the hectic of each day this often is forgotten or being pushed aside. A normal human reaction. Our annual devotionals provide us with daily and weekly opportunities to take a minute or two and reconnect with Him, make our faith relevant and personal, not only on Sundays.



## DEVOTIONAL

## FAITH JOURNAL



Taking responsibility for your own faith, how it will impact your life and what role it plays for you on a daily basis, is a fundamental step for every Christian. To help challenge and accompany our Confirmands in the preparation for their special day, the Faith Journal was developed to create a deeper understanding of the teaching contents presented in their confirmation classes. It provides additional information, creates connection points and discussion topics with parents and assists in applying faith concepts in the participant's daily life.



More than 250 locations.

An unbelievably dedicated and committed volunteer workforce, who deserves only the best support and as much relief from non-spiritual tasks as possible.

Programs, events, supplies, news that need to be planned, procured, processed, disseminated.

Missionary responsibilities entrusted to our church by our international leader, the Chief Apostle.

Legalities, responsibilities and regulations which we need to adhere to as part of the religious and governmental fabric of our great country.

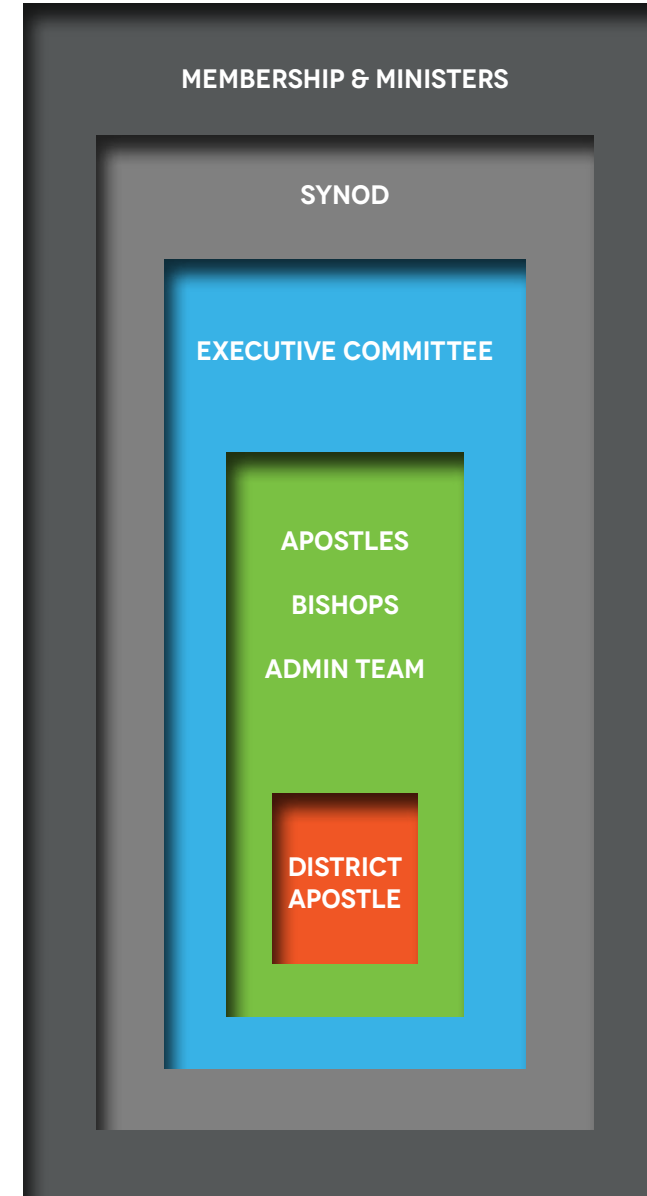
Our church doesn't have a supporting organizational structure for the sake of being a church. Instead, it is part of why we can be who we are: as small, individual, and local as possible, and as nationally and globally unified as needed. And with one goal - to provide the best support to our ministers, members and congregations possible.

# STRUCTURE

# WHO IS THE CHURCH? IT IS YOU AND I.

As much as this applies to what happens in the Divine Services, our Pastoral Care and our congregational Culture, it is also true of the Structural side of the church. Generous free-will offerings support every aspect of our church. For us, free-will offerings are a deeply personal, intimate matter between you and God. And while we are guided in doing so by the biblical concept of tithing, there is no formal obligation or mandate to do so.

What happens in our congregations, buildings and missionary activities is thus a direct reflection of the funding available to the church on an annual basis. The church's administrative team and corporate governance structure provide careful management and professional stewardship for the resources entrusted to the church by you.



Our church operates in an increasingly complex and changing environment. To ensure continuity as well as proper stewardship and control of the church's affairs a balanced corporate governance structure was put in place over the past years.

Our **District Apostle**, as the church's president, leads the church in all spiritual and administrative matters. He does so in close connection and unity with our Chief Apostle. For ongoing strategic and operational matters, the District Apostle is supported by the **Apostles** and **Bishops** on the spiritual side and the church's **Administrative Team**.

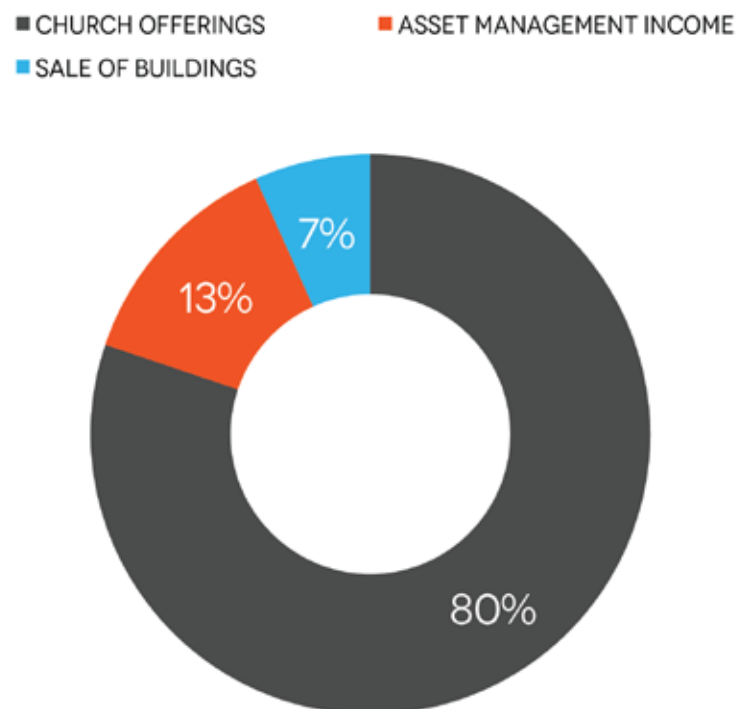
Ultimately, however, the church happens in our congregations. There our **Ministers** and **Members** provide tireless support for all ongoing congregational matters as well as the implementation of our Stepping Forward program. Besides their spiritual responsibilities for the congregations under their care, our **District Leaders** also represent their members in the annual **Synod** meeting of the church.

For ongoing matters of strategic importance, the Synod each year selects and authorizes an **Executive Committee** to advise the District Apostle and the church's leadership in a timely fashion.

## FINANCIAL RESULT SOURCES OF FUNDS 2012

After challenging years, due to attendance trends and economic hardship endured by many of our members, we are thankful to report that 2012 offered a more stable picture. Regular offering was mostly unchanged and thanks to various special donations and bequests overall offering and donation revenue actually increased slightly compared to 2011. The only item of continued concern - a further noticeable decrease in Thanksgiving Offering.

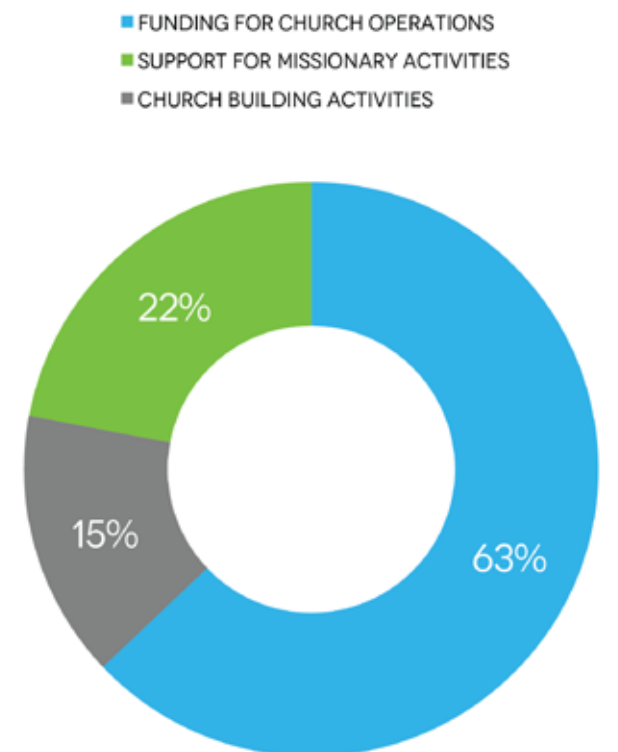
In addition to regular offering the church sustains itself with income from financial and building assets (e.g. rentals of unused churches). Sales of unused buildings also added to the amount of funding available in 2012.



REGULAR OFFERING	\$	13,436,826
THANKOFFERING	\$	2,120,037
SPECIAL DONATIONS	\$	767,239
OTHER REVENUE	\$	217,449
<b>CHURCH OFFERINGS</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>16,541,551</b>
ENDOWMENT INCOME	\$	2,401,609
REAL ESTATE INCOME	\$	304,477
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT INCOME</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,706,086</b>
<b>SALES OF BUILDINGS</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,382,867</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>20,630,504</b>

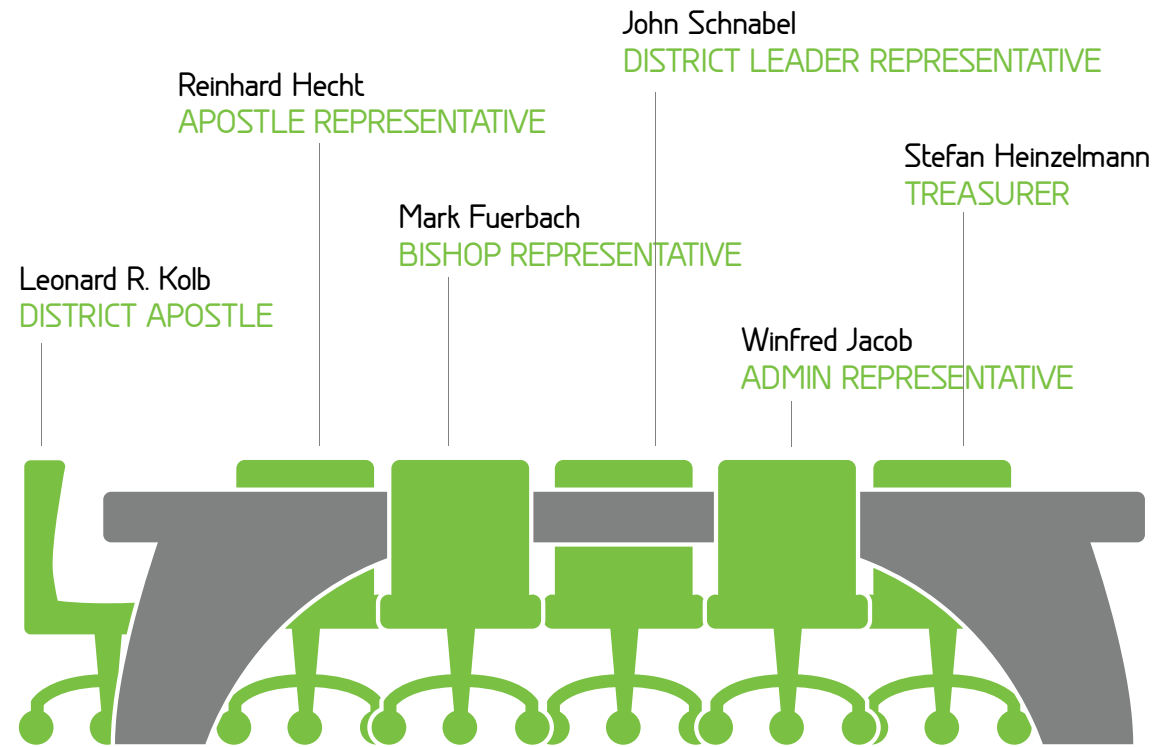
## FINANCIAL RESULT USES OF FUNDS 2012

Responding to the challenges of the past years the church undertook necessary steps to ensure that its cost base is in line with current revenue. Not only has this allowed the church to operate with a positive bottom-line, but in 2012 also provided the means to start implementing the first of a series of congregational mergers and flagship projects. Any surplus funds at the end of a fiscal year are added to reserves for future use.



CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT	\$	2,520,999
CHURCH BUILDING OPERATIONS	\$	3,439,863
SOULCARE, PROGRAMS & EVENTS	\$	2,621,414
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES & WELFARE	\$	654,326
CHURCH ADMINISTRATION	\$	2,696,996
<b>FUNDING FOR CHURCH OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>11,933,598</b>
<b>SUPPORT FOR MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,858,253</b>
<b>CHURCH BUILDING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,175,541</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS USED</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>18,967,392</b>

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2012/2013



To provide ongoing and timely critical review, input and advice outside of the once-a-year Synod meeting, the church's Synod each year authorizes an Executive Committee. In addition, the Synod identifies specific responsibilities which the Executive Committee is tasked to exercise on behalf of the Synod.

The Executive Committee consists of representatives of each spiritual leadership level, that is District Leaders, Bishops and Apostles, as well as the church's administration. The District Apostle is chairman of the Executive Committee.

For 2012/2013 the Executive Committee was tasked with reviewing and approving major building purchases, assisting in the analysis and prioritization of the church's Strategic Planning/Flagship projects, as well as reviewing and approving the church's audited financial statements.