Ministry Context: Christ Presbyterian Church and Santa Barbara

Christ Presbyterian Church

CPC is a downtown congregation with 156 active members (including non-communing), 175 to 200 people in Sunday worship, and roughly 300 people in its broader ministry orbit. The congregation includes young professionals, families, retirees, college students, longtime Santa Barbara residents, and people who have moved here from elsewhere.

We belong to the Presbyterian Church in America. Our worship is historically rooted, liturgical, and sacramental. We value theological depth, the ordinary means of grace, pastoral care, and the application of the gospel to the whole of life.

The congregation serves generously. Roughly two-thirds of regular attendees participate in some form of volunteer ministry. The next stage requires more leaders who can gather teams, accept responsibility, and help others serve well.

Learn more: CPC website | Philosophy of Ministry | Our Team

A church entering a new season of opportunity

CPC has undertaken a renovation and expansion of over $10 million that will roughly triple its downtown physical footprint. The facility will support hospitality, the arts, community gatherings, ministry partnerships, education, and wider use throughout the week. The renovated downtown facility creates a timely opportunity for CPC to become more present to its neighbors and more connected as a congregation.

The building also increases organizational complexity. More activity requires clear priorities, coordinated calendars, healthy systems, developed leaders, and intentional pathways for newcomers. Staff surveys identified assimilation and leadership development as pressing needs.

Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara is a small coastal city shaped by natural beauty, the arts, outdoor life, high educational attainment. Many take great pride in living here. Its culture is active, independent, busy, and often private. Residents have little meaningful exposure to Christianity; others approach the church after absence or disappointment.

Relationships usually grow through patient initiative. Ministry often begins with basic Christian categories and develops through trust, hospitality, thoughtful conversation, and steady engagement.

For most middle class residents home ownership is often delayed or out of reach. Many households make substantial trade-offs to remain and find or create clever, non-traditional solutions to live here. CPC is actively pursuing housing options that would mitigate the burden of high housing costs. Candidates and their families should consider the call in missionary terms.

Learn more: City of Santa Barbara | Visit Santa Barbara | U.S. Census QuickFacts