

Pastor's Report

Spring Congregational Meeting 2025

Greetings, saints!

I'm thrilled to share with you some of the wonderful things Spirit is doing here at Founders MCC/ICM Fundadora. Our ministries are growing, as well as our membership, and there is an excitement in the air. I want to share some of my observations since our last Congregational Meeting.

Our Spanish-speaking Ministry has really accelerated. For the 1:30 service, we have initiated a Creative Worship Team similar to the Creative Worship Team at the English service. There are now two lay speakers (Raul Radilla and Fernando Trejo), both excellent preachers; they have begun the process of getting credentialed as MCC clergy! In addition to quality worship, they are getting more and more involved in the community. They provided an ofrenda (altar) for Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration in Santa Monica, and they've brought in special speakers such as an immigration lawyer and representatives from Las Memorias and Bienestar.

Our Student Clergy, Bam Noriega, is keeping us involved in the community, as well. Bam will be graduating from seminary the weekend of our Congregational Meeting with a Masters of Divinity. Bam will also continue to serve as Student Clergy through the rest of this year as they complete requirements for Ordination in MCC! We look forward to celebrating these milestones. Bam is heading up our Pride Ministry this year, and has helped us get more acquainted with our community here in Los Feliz. We are doing more advertising for church events than ever before.

Our card-writing ministry, our food bank ministry, our online prayer ministry, our worship ministry, our hospitality ministry, and our media ministry all continue to operate and fill the needs of so many people. Thank you to all the volunteers that make up these teams; we need ALL of you! If you're not currently on one of the ministry teams, let me encourage you to get involved; you will be blessed and you will be a blessing.

Who would have thought we would be facing so much turmoil in the United States right now? Two issues are especially challenging right now: trans and immigration. As federal, state, and local governments are seemingly trying to erase our trans family, we are highlighting ours here at Founders! Our Trans*Unity Ministry is growing in both services. I'm so thankful our trans members are out and proud.

With the leadership of Rev. Eric Buter, our Creative Arts Ministry is also thriving. What an amazing Passion Play performance by our combined congregations. We may be two

congregations with different languages, but we are ONE church, and we are united in our vision and ministry.

I want to thank Larry Rodriguez for the years he has been the Worship Experience Designer, bringing beauty to our sanctuary through every season. He has passed the torch to Pablo Jose Penate who is building his own team of designers to continue Larry's legacy.

As their reports will show for themselves, the Facilities Team and the Board of Directors are ALWAYS at work in ministry here at Founders. I just want to thank them all for their passion and support to make us the best we can be. I especially want to thank Kim Doneche, who is coming off the board, for all her hard work and faithfulness as our Clerk. Kim, you are invaluable, and we will miss your guidance on the Board.

I'm sure you have noticed that our Music Ministry has grown, too, since our last meeting! Thanks to Louis Ramirez, who now serves as Music Director for both services each week (in addition to being our Administrative Assistant!). Louis, your ministry is anointed!

This year, we have also had to say some hard goodbyes to several people who passed on to Glory: Evelyn Price, J Michael Johnston, Jerry Silverstein, and Gary Suderman. You all blessed us while you were here, and we miss you greatly. Thank you for giving of your wonderful selves here on earth.

While I haven't called everyone's name, I am just so thankful that I get to work in ministry with ALL of you. I've said it before, and I'll say it again, being the pastor of the "mother church," being Troy Perry's pastor (the man who saved my life!), is the highest calling and the highlight of my life. Let's continue this ministry together, shall we?

All my love.

Rev. Keith Mozingo

Property & Facilities Committee (Dean Coffey & Martin Miny)

2024-25 Accomplishments

1. Roof Replacement

Our Roof Replacement Project was completed at the end of 2024. The congregation and friends of the church gave a combined \$135,326 toward our goal of raising \$146,000. We are thankful for the gifts given, large and small, for finishing the new roof.

2. California State Nonprofit Security Grant Construction

Early in 2024, our church was awarded a California Nonprofit Security Grant in the amount of \$148,778 to do target hardening through replacement of 11 doors, 12 casement windows, 5 basement windows, courtyard gate improvements, CCTV motion activated camera system, high intensity security lighting, and a monitored surveillance alarm system Malloy Construction Company was selected to do the work. The CCTV camera system and alarm system have already been installed as well as two of 11 doors and six of 12 windows.

The performance period for this grant is 12/1/2023 to 12/31/2025. The mechanism for payment of the award is reimbursement of payments made by the church. As of mid-April, \$112,967 has been expended and \$101,704 has been reimbursed with \$11,263 approved by CalOES for reimbursement by the CA State Controller. We anticipate that construction will be finished in mid-2025. As part of these security upgrades, the Board of Directors appointed Don Mueller to be our official Security Coordinator.

3. Facility Updates

Recovery Groups. Our congregation perceives the provision of space for recovery groups as part of our mission to be the hands, feet and heart of Christ to our community and the world. There are currently 30 recovery groups meeting weekly in the church, as well as the bilingual, neurodiverse congregation, La Conexión, which meets in our Fellowship Hall on Sundays and Thursdays. The Board of Directors voted to increase the first hour rate for rooms used by \$10. effective 6/1/2025.

Education & Training Center. The Board of Directors voted unanimously in December 2024 to transform our former preschool into the Founders Education & Training Center to be used to promote spiritual growth and leadership development. The Board filed a request in February with the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor's Office to return the property to a religious exemption classification and is awaiting a decision from the Assessor.

Enhancement of Church WiFi. The Board of Directors made a strategic decision to upgrade our WiFi network capability to support church business functions, broadcast of church services, WiFi access for recovery groups, and use of Zoom platform for remote and hybrid business meetings. The cost for the upgrade was \$9,719 and is in process of optimization.

4. Projects Planned for 2025.

- a. Replacement of downspout on the east side of the church.
- b. Installation of a replacement tankless water heater on the roof of the main building to provide hot water to the church basement kitchen and restrooms.
- c. Installation of a garbage disposal in the Hunter Room.
- d. Installation of mini split air conditioning in apartment above the Education & Training Center.

Minister of Music Spring 2025 Report

A few months ago, I was reflecting on my life (especially the last few years of my 36 years of existence), and it came to me as a surprise when I realized that I have never been happier than I am right now. That realization was a surprise, given that my life has taken me all across this great nation of ours, singing at many very large churches, and at huge conferences. I have had much success with recording, singing, performing and recognition. A couple of years ago, after somewhat settling down, I was thankful for the success that was “now behind me,” and happy in general for how God had been faithful to me—but that was before coming to Founders. In my reflection a couple of months ago, I realized that I would not want to be anywhere except where I am right now. If I had to choose between my past recognized “success” and where I am now, I would choose the life I have now, with the church I have now, with the pastor I have now, and with the family I have now. I am thankful that God chooses to use me in service and ministry here.

[The following is what was in my last report] *In my last report this spring, I reported that in the 16 months I have been here, I had taught/used 148 songs to the 10am praise team, and in the 7 months that I had been leading the 1:30 singers, I had taught/led 64 songs. 5-6 months later, that number has increased to **182** and **87** respectively. [Update: that is now **201**, and **108**.]*

This report is being written right after a very busy few weeks with the Trans Day of Visibility Service, and the Palm Sunday Passion Play. I am thankful for the folks who have joined themselves to our music department, folks who are filled with talent and Spirit! I look forward to more of the Spirit moving in the rest of this year!

Blessings,
Louis Ramirez, Minister of Music

INFORME DE MÚSICA DEL MINISTRO PRIMAVERA 2025

Hace unos meses, reflexionaba sobre mi vida (especialmente sobre los últimos años de mis 36 años de vida) y me sorprendió darme cuenta de que nunca había sido tan feliz como ahora. Fue una sorpresa, dado que mi vida me ha llevado por todo este gran país, cantando en iglesias enormes y en conferencias importantes. He tenido mucho éxito grabando, cantando, interpretando y recibiendo reconocimiento. Hace un par de años, después de asentarme un poco, estaba agradecido por el éxito que había dejado atrás y feliz en general por la fidelidad de Dios; pero eso fue antes de llegar a Founders/ICM. Pero en mi reflexión de hace un par de meses, me di cuenta de que no querría estar en ningún otro lugar que no fuera donde estoy ahora. Si tuviera que elegir entre mi reconocido "éxito" pasado y donde estoy ahora, elegiría la vida que tengo ahora, con la iglesia que tengo ahora, con el pastor que tengo ahora y con la familia que tengo ahora. Estoy agradecido de que Dios elija usarme en el servicio y el ministerio aquí.

[Lo siguiente es mi último informe] *En mi último informe de esta primavera, informé que en los 16 meses que llevo aquí, he enseñado/dirigido 148 canciones al grupo de alabanza de las 10 a. m., y en los 7 meses que he dirigido a los cantores de la 1:30 a. m., he enseñado/dirigido 64 canciones. Cinco o seis meses después, esa cifra ha aumentado a 182 y 87, respectivamente. [Actualización: ahora son 201 y 108].*

Este informe se escribe justo después de unas semanas muy ocupadas con el Servicio del Día de la Visibilidad Trans y la Pasión del Domingo de Ramos. Agradezco a las personas que se han unido a nuestros departamentos de música, ¡gente llena de talento y del Espíritu! ¡Espero con ansias más mover del Espíritu en lo que resta de este año!

Bendiciones,
Luis Ramirez, Ministro de Música