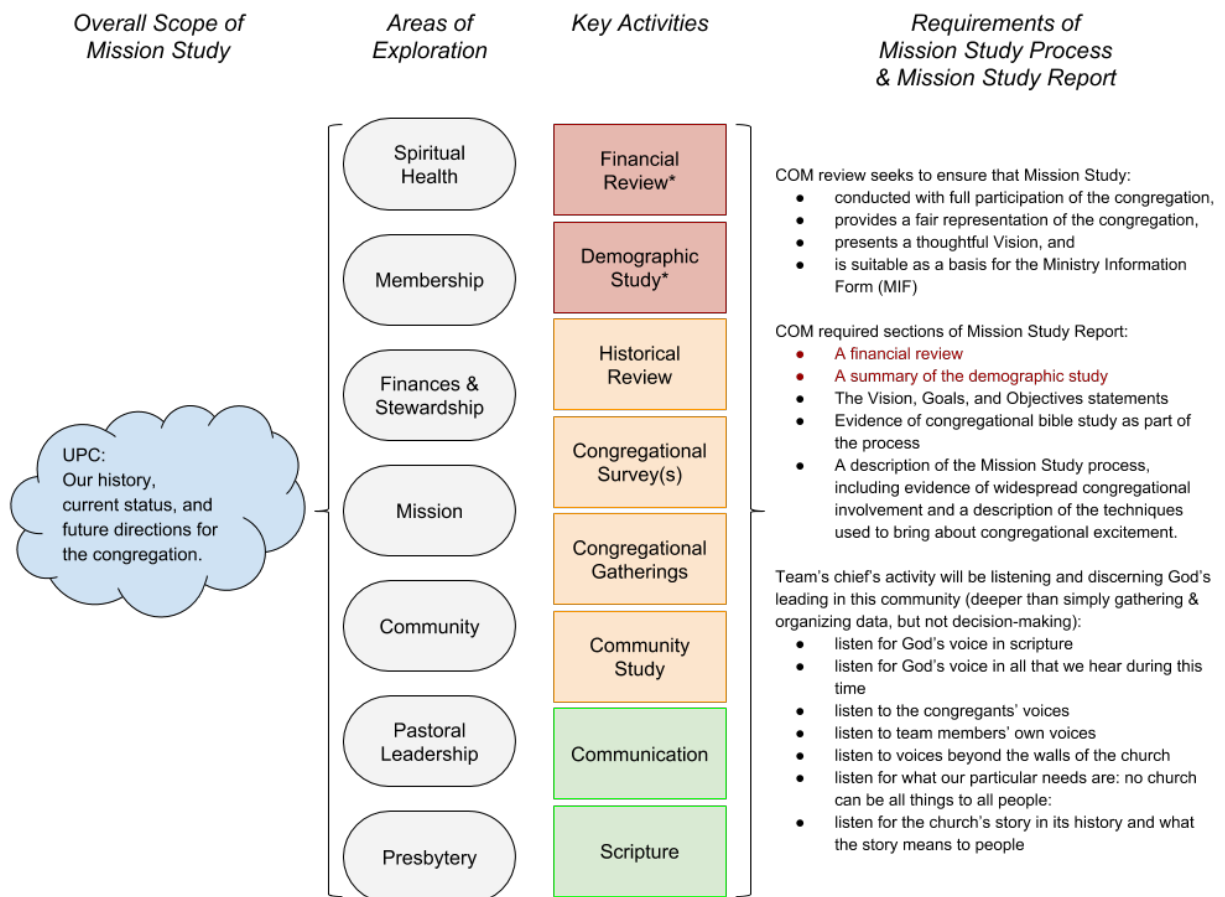


APPENDIX B. ORGANIZATION OF UPC'S MISSION STUDY PROCESS

The Mission Study Team (MST) began meeting biweekly in January, and then transitioned to weekly meetings in February, March, and April. The team's initial meetings were focused on team building, understanding the process outlined in New Hope Presbytery's [A Guide for Churches Entering into an Interim Time. Part 2: Conducting a Congregational Mission Study](#), and defining the scope, key activities, and process for the mission study as described below.

The MST focused on listening for God's voice in all that we hear during this time, including scripture, the congregants' voices, the voices coming from beyond UPC's walls, the team members' own voices, and UPC's stories in its history. Because no single church can be all things to all people, the team listened for our particular needs and calling in this place and time.



DEFINING THE SCOPE OF THE MISSION STUDY

Consonant with the Mission Study guide, conversation with UPC's liaison to New Hope Presbytery's Commission on Ministry, and guidance from Margaret, the scope of the mission study was defined to include an exploration of the history, current status, and future directions for the congregation in the areas of:

- Spiritual health
- Mission
- Membership
- Finances and stewardship
- Roles in and relationship to our community
- Relationship to our presbytery

DEFINING KEY ACTIVITIES

To engage, listen, and gather data, the team carried out the following Key Activities:

- Financial Review
- Demographic Study
- Historical Review
- Congregational Survey
- Congregational Gatherings
- Community Study
- Communications
- Scripture Study

The Financial Review and Demographic Study (red boxes in the figure above) are sections of the Mission Study Report that are required by the presbytery's Commission on Ministry. The Historical Review, Congregational Survey, Congregational Gatherings, and Community Study (orange boxes in the figure) were not required, but are recommended elements of a mission study process. Finally, Communications and Scripture Study (green boxes in the figure) weren't expected to produce data directly, but they were deemed crucial for encouraging broad participation by the congregation in the process, and for engaging with scripture throughout the team's work in all other discussions and procedural activities.

REFLECTION AND PLANNING

The MST members reflected on the scope, areas of exploration, and Key Activities defined above. The team met to brainstorm around the goals, key stakeholders, and potential report contents for each Key Activity. Each team member then identified his or her match for interest and skill-set from among the Key Activities. These leaders then individually used relevant resources (including books, other church Mission Studies, websites, church experts, etc.) to map the time-line, needs, resources, and process for each Key Activity, with reports to and reviews by other team members.

ENGAGING AND GATHERING DATA

Information was gathered by engagement with UPC members, participants, community leaders, and other stakeholders through the first six Key Activities listed above. While certain Key Activities were led by one or two individual team members, other Key Activities required a larger team effort, such as the Congregational Gatherings and the Congregational Survey.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

With the help of UPC's Controller, Katharine Yager, the MST studied UPC's financial and stewardship data, with a focus on the past five years.

DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY

The MST collected demographic data from PC(USA) Research Services, from the Congregational Survey, and the Town of Chapel Hill's Office for Housing & Community. These data describe aspects of who we and our neighbors are now, and who we and they probably will be in the coming years. This provided valuable information about the needs of our community as well as how we might reach out to potential new members.

HISTORICAL REVIEW

The MST delved deep into the history of UPC. A shared knowledge of our history will inform us about both those aspects of our identity that we continue to value, as well as how we must evolve to best follow God's leading for our church into the future.

CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY

The Congregational Survey captured both demographic data and thoughtful responses to open-ended questions that deepen our understanding of who we are and where we hear God calling us to act and serve.

CONGREGATIONAL GATHERINGS

Twelve Congregational Gatherings took place throughout March and April, and these gatherings were supplemented by a worship service during which individuals were further engaged in an aspect of mission study.

COMMUNITY STUDY

Two members of the MST interviewed nearly 35 community leaders to learn more about key needs in our community, the role of organizations of faith, and how our neighbors view us. The MST deliberated on the leaders' responses in an effort to discern where and how our passions can be directed to serve our neighbors.

COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout the mission study, the MST communicated details of the process, invitations for participation, points for consideration, and gratitude for members' engagement in several forms. The [MST website](#) provided detailed

information of the process, email links for contacting the MST, a virtual suggestion box, and updates to the MST-related activities engaging the congregation. The bulletin insert of “News & Opportunities” announcements and the [Weekly E-Newsletter](#) were updated on a weekly basis. Announcements to congregants preceded select worship services to highlight important events and dates for which participation from the congregation was needed. For the months of February, March, April and May, the MST provided greater details to the congregation in a one-page update within the church’s monthly newsletter, [The Chimes](#). In addition, three congregational emails were sent, inviting members to specifically participate in (1) the Congregational Conversations (March 8), (2) the Congregational Survey (March 22), and (3) the Congregational Town Hall meetings (April 9). A final congregational email will be sent to share the final draft of the Mission Study Report with the UPC membership once it is approved by the session. Finally, “minute-for-mission” updates were provided by the MST chair during worship services on February 18 and April 8.

SCRIPTURE STUDY

While much of the focus in this process is collecting and measuring data, the entire process is grounded in knowing that we are individually and collectively seeking to serve Christ and to glorify God in all that we do. In line with this, MST meetings opened with devotions led by team members, and closed in prayer. The team referenced specific lessons from scripture both internally and in communication with the congregation, including those that are shared in this document.

ANALYZE AND SUMMARIZE

Once collected, the MST set out to thoroughly review and analyze all information from research, conversations and survey data. We worked both individually and jointly to succinctly summarize the findings that apply to our history, as well as to our current and future direction. We have attempted to synthesize the vast amounts of information gathered into a thoughtful analysis that will be valuable to our church family, and those outside our walls who may be interested in a deeper understanding of University Presbyterian Church.