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CONTACT: Susanna Corcoran  
Manager of Media Relations  
+1 (510) 486-1166 x443  
[susanna@meyersound.com](mailto:susanna@meyersound.com)

2832 San Pablo Avenue  
Berkeley, California 94702

T: +1 510 486.1166  
F: +1 510 486.8356

[info@meyersound.com](mailto:info@meyersound.com)  
[www.meyersound.com](http://www.meyersound.com)

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## **Abundant Life Turns to Meyer Sound for Abundant Audio**

Pastor Perry Gaspard left the life of a rock 'n' roller behind and returned to his hometown of Lake Charles, La., to start the Abundant Life Fellowship church in his house in 1978. The congregation has since grown from its humble roots to encompass 80 acres, including a 14-acre park, ministries for all ages, a food distribution center that helps thousands of needy people every year, and an in-house recording studio, which produces inspirational music for sale on the church's web site. The service each Sunday is recorded for broadcast the following week throughout Louisiana as well as on stations in Indianapolis and Denver.

But Abundant Life's sound system was not keeping up with the demands of the burgeoning church's needs. It was clearly time for an upgrade, and the pastor had some thoughts of his own on the matter. "Pastor is a very talented musician," reports Brad Daigle of design-build firm MSC Systems of Beaumont, TX, "He wanted something with pristine sound and very transparent reproduction." After a side-by-side comparison of their options, the decision was quickly made to install a carefully configured system of Meyer Sound self-powered loudspeakers.

The final phase of installation for the new system was recently completed with the addition of six Meyer Sound UPA-2P compact narrow coverage loudspeakers to provide delay fill for the back rows of the 3,000-seat sanctuary. These join an existing system of Meyer Sound UPA-2P and UPA-1P compact wide coverage loudspeakers, complemented by USW-1P compact subwoofers.

According to Daigle, the Meyer Sound cabinets are arranged in three concentric quarter-circle hangs covering the fan-shaped seating arrangement from the stage area to the rear in the sanctuary of the church, which is of a contemporary design. "Four UPA-2Ps form the primary speaker system, over the stage," he explains. "Then, we did a secondary delay ring from a catwalk of four UPA-1Ps and four more UPA-2Ps. They were done in a vertical hang for long-throw/short-throw." This is accomplished with two pairs of UPA-1P cabinets hung from the front of the stage for long-throw, each pair being configured with one cabinet hung under the other. The UPA-2P cabinets for short-throw similarly are hung in two pairs that are positioned further out to the sides.

"It's a stereo system and multi-zoned," Daigle continues. "Our primary zone, with four speakers in it, is in a left-right configuration, and each box is timed to a center point. Then, we go to the second ring, the long-throw/short-throw vertical hang, which is similarly configured left-right. Again, each box is individually timed and EQ'd."

"The four speakers over the stage basically provide stereo to the first five or six rows," adds church associate minister Charles Cloutman. "The second ring, which is about 20 feet out, feeds from there to the back of the bottom section of seating in the auditorium."

To this initial setup has now been added coverage for the rear of the raked floor and balcony seating in the form of the final half-dozen UPA-2P systems — also configured in stereo with their own processing — and an additional USW-1P sub.

Meyer Sound's Design Services team pitched in with MSC Systems on the design, using Meyer Sound MAPP Online® software to generate a layout of the system implementation, "We also put in three of the USW-1P subs," Daigle points out. "They were done in a center array from the catwalk so that they all couple together." The second installation added a fourth USW-1P cabinet and redeployed them into one pair on the first catwalk and another on the second catwalk.

The new sound system, including a digital mixing console, replaces an older setup in the church. "It was a retrofit," Daigle recounts. "They had an existing system that had been there for a while. It was okay, but not great; they wanted something better. It's a beautiful sanctuary, and they've gone way 'out of the box' (with the facility design). Their choir loft, when not in use, is hidden away by a flyaway wall that closes."

The choice of loudspeaker brand was easily arrived at after MSC Systems arranged for an on-site shootout between three different speaker system brands. Pastor Gaspard was instrumental in making the final decision following the shootout. Cloutman reports that the Meyer Sound system was the obvious winner. "Meyer Sound was clean and it was clear. It stood out." In Cloutman's view, the other two speaker systems, while putting in respectable performances, were not as consistent overall and offered a sound quality that could only be described as 'normal.' "We didn't want that," he asserts. "We wanted something clear and pristine. What we were trying to do was lower the overall SPL in the building but still have the music wrap around you."

Daigle agrees. "Some of the other boxes sounded good loud, some of them sounded okay at low volume. But loud to soft, and in overall fidelity, Meyer Sound was there. Meyer Sound maintains that wonderful, pristine sound all the way through. The system's integrity is impeccable."

The final result, according to Daigle, is even better than they had hoped. "It exceeded our expectations as a design-install contractor. It actually sounds better than we thought it would, set up in a stereo configuration for that type of venue. We were very surprised with the separation that we achieved. It sounds wonderful."

An added benefit is that the system has plenty of gain in hand to satisfy even the youth ministry and their contemporary music services, Cloutman reports. "If we crank it up, it can rock the building, so there's headroom. But we're barely pushing these puppies and it'll comb your hair!"

#### **ABOUT MEYER SOUND**

Meyer Sound Laboratories, Inc. designs and manufactures high quality sound reinforcement loudspeakers, studio monitors, equalizers and sound measurement tools for the professional audio industry. Founded in 1979 by John and Helen Meyer, the company has grown to become a leading worldwide supplier of systems for theaters, arenas, stadiums, theme parks, convention centers and touring concert sound rental operations. Meyer Sound's main office and manufacturing facility are located in Berkeley, California, with field offices and authorized distributors located throughout the USA and around the world.

More information is available at Tel: +1 (510) 486-1166, Fax: +1 (510) 486-8356, e-mail: [info@meyersound.com](mailto:info@meyersound.com), or by visiting [www.meyersound.com](http://www.meyersound.com).

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