

CHRONOLOGY OF THE FIVE CHURCHES OF MISSION SAN JOSÉ



1797

Founded on June 11, 1797, Mission San José did not see its first Christian house of worship until the initial set of structures forming a stockade (housing for the friars, barracks for the soldiers, and a storehouse) had been completed in August of 1797. Sometime between August 17 (the completion of the stockade) and September 2 (the first recorded Baptism), a small chapel was built of wood and covered with a thatched grass roof. In the chapel's second year, it was expanded to be 130 feet long, 11 feet high, and 16 ½ feet wide, with a thatched tule roof.

1809

Although the exact date of the groundbreaking for the first adobe church is unknown, construction is believed to have begun in the spring of 1805, as Mission churches typically took four years to build. The Mission church was solemnly dedicated on April 22, 1809, and destroyed during an earthquake on October 21, 1868.

1869

Less than one year after the earthquake, a Norman Gothic church was built on top of the tile floor and foundations of the 1809 adobe church. It was dedicated on September 19, 1869, and used continuously until 1965. On September 26, 1982, the church was cut into four pieces and relocated to San Mateo to make way for the reconstruction of the 1809 church.

1965

Construction of a temporary church and hall was completed in 1965. The church underwent its first interior renovation in 1979 and saw various renovations through 2022.

1985

In 1982, the reconstruction of the Mission church began. It is the most accurate replica of all the rebuilt California Missions. The reconstructed church was solemnly dedicated on June 11, 1985. The high altar was dedicated on June 11, 2022.

2023

From June to December, the 1965 church underwent major renovations, the most significant since the structure was first built, and the completion of which we celebrate today.

**This chronology does not include Ohlone houses of worship, the chapels of the Dominican Sisters of Mission San José, the chapel and oratory of the Sisters of the Holy Family, and the chapel in the present day museum wing of the Mission.*