



COURTESY OF MALIBU PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Heigh Ho, Heigh Ho! Church members gathered for the groundbreaking of the new Malibu Presbyterian Church, which will replace the one that burned down in the 2007 fires.

Rebuild: 'rose from the ashes'

From A1

"It has been so much more than just a building. It's been our sanctuary. It's been our place where we meet with the Lord. It's where the Lord has met us. It's been our place for weddings. It's been our place for memorial services. It's been the place where we've had our children baptized."

Now comes the time for generations of member to forge new memories with the soon-to-be church facility.

At the groundbreaking ceremony, Pastors Hughes and Michael Mudgett spoke of their excitement for the new chapter in the church's lineage.

"[I feel] extreme joy," Hughes exclaimed. "This is a great day and a long time coming. I'm so excited to see our church rising up from the ashes here as we build our new sanctuary and house of worship."

Mudgett agreed. "It's been four years in the making and a long, patient waiting process. We're ready to get going and everything is coming together. The time is now."

Construction will be performed for approximately one year, in which time the remodeling

and rebuilding will take place in multiple phases. The new \$10 million church facility, covered by insurance, will consist of a sanctuary, fellowship hall and administration and preschool area. Architects assured that the new church would be very fire-resistant, including elements like stone and copper to insure the stability of the church.

The new structure will be comprised of glass walls, allowing members to look outward to the beautiful beaches. Additionally, a charred metal spire from the original sanctuary will be included in the new structure to serve as a remembrance of the church that "rose from the ashes."

During the day's service, Building Reconstruction Committee (BRC) member Karin Larsen spoke of how much stronger the church will be because of this experience.

"MPC had unique ministry in this neighborhood, a light on the hill that is Christ-centered, a message of love and redemption aimed at this particularly unusual community," Larsen said. "This is the beginning of a new phase of God's work in Malibu. We know that we've been blessed again and over again, and we will be blessed in the future."