

SEO & Web Design Best Practices

practical advice to turn your church website into a
ministry powerhouse

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mission lab



mission lab

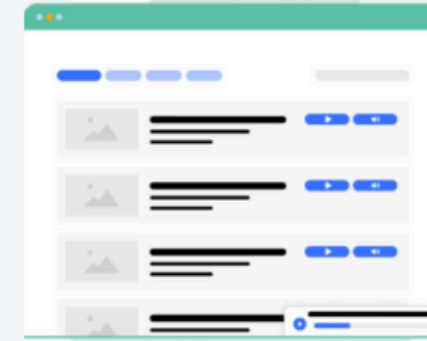


CALVARY **PHX**



church plugins

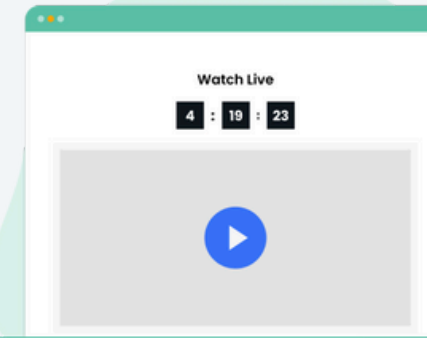
CP Sermons



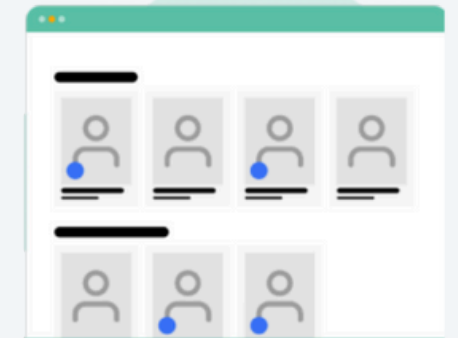
CP Groups Directory



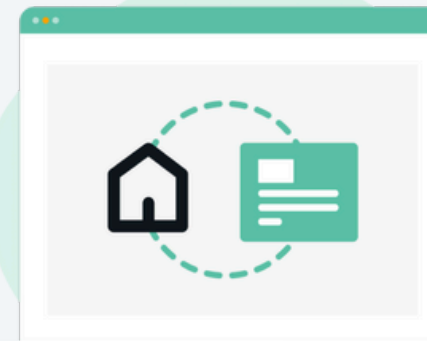
CP Live



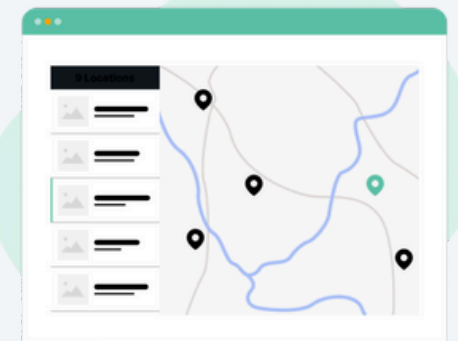
CP Staff Directory



CP Connect



CP Locations



SEO & Web Design Best Practices

Agenda



missionlab.dev/citn24/

1

The Audience

2

Content Strategy

3

Accessibility & SEO

“

Making your website welcoming and easy for people to use is a way to love people you've never even met.... It also increases the chances you'll actually get to meet them.



The Audience

Remembering the people we are serving

The Audience

4 Audience Types

1. Prospective Visitors

2. New & Not Yet Connected

3. Engaged Regulars

4. Staff & Volunteers

Prospective Visitors

- ✓ Snap judgements on credibility / trustworthiness (first 0.2 to 2.6 seconds)
- ✓ Do I look like I'd belong here (scan for people like me + obvious red flags)
- ✓ Some users will want to diving deeper into info about the church, the pastor, ministries, and sermons
- ✓ Logistical checks - Verifying proximity and presence/times of key ministries (e.g. Middle School Ministry)



The Waylen Family

New to town with 1st grade boy and 3 year old girl

New & Not Yet Connected

- ✓ Connect (groups, relevant ministries, service opportunities, upcoming events, etc)
- ✓ Stay Informed (Emails, texts, podcasts, social media)
- ✓ Seek help or guidance (discipleship, groups, peer groups, counseling, self-serve research)
- ✓ Grow Spiritually (listen to latest sermon, find resources on a topic, learn about baptism, start giving)



ERIN

Shy single woman craving connection, unsure where to start

Engaged Regulars

- ✓ Serve (learning where there are service needs, signing up, etc.)
- ✓ Update my data (address, family info, managing email subscriptions)
- ✓ Manage giving (update payment info, setup recurring donation)
- ✓ Discipleship (seeking to be mentored and to find mentoring opportunities)



ART & ERIKA

Struggling with their teenager and looking for wisdom from an older couple

Staff & Volunteers

- ✓ Attempting to do great things on a limited budget
- ✓ Keep data updated and synced across systems
- ✓ Wearing lots of hats, including some that are outside of their comfort zone
- ✓ Need to rely on volunteers who may or may not be consistently reliable
- ✓ Adapting to changing or competing priorities.



PHIL (COMMS DIRECTOR)

Trying to balance need for process without losing site of relationship.

EMPATHY: putting yourself in others' shoes to understand their needs and feelings, so you can create solutions that truly help them.





Content Strategy

Intentionality produces clarity

Navigation Guidelines

- ✓ Navigation is clearly visible at all times
- ✓ No insider language in navigation items
- ✓ No more than 5 navigation items (6th ok if a button)
- ✓ Dropdown options are organized and no more than 7 items
- ✓ Avoid Non-Standard Patterns

Navigation Guidelines

Navigation is clearly visible at all times





ABOUT CONNECT **EVENTS** WATCH GIVE HELP BRIDGE MEMBERS



Contrast Checker

[Home](#) > [Resources](#) > Contrast Checker

Foreground Color
#00E5FE
Lightness

↔

Background Color
#FFFFFF
Lightness

Contrast Ratio
1.53:1

[permalink](#)

Normal Text

WCAG AA: **Fail**
WCAG AAA: **Fail**

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.

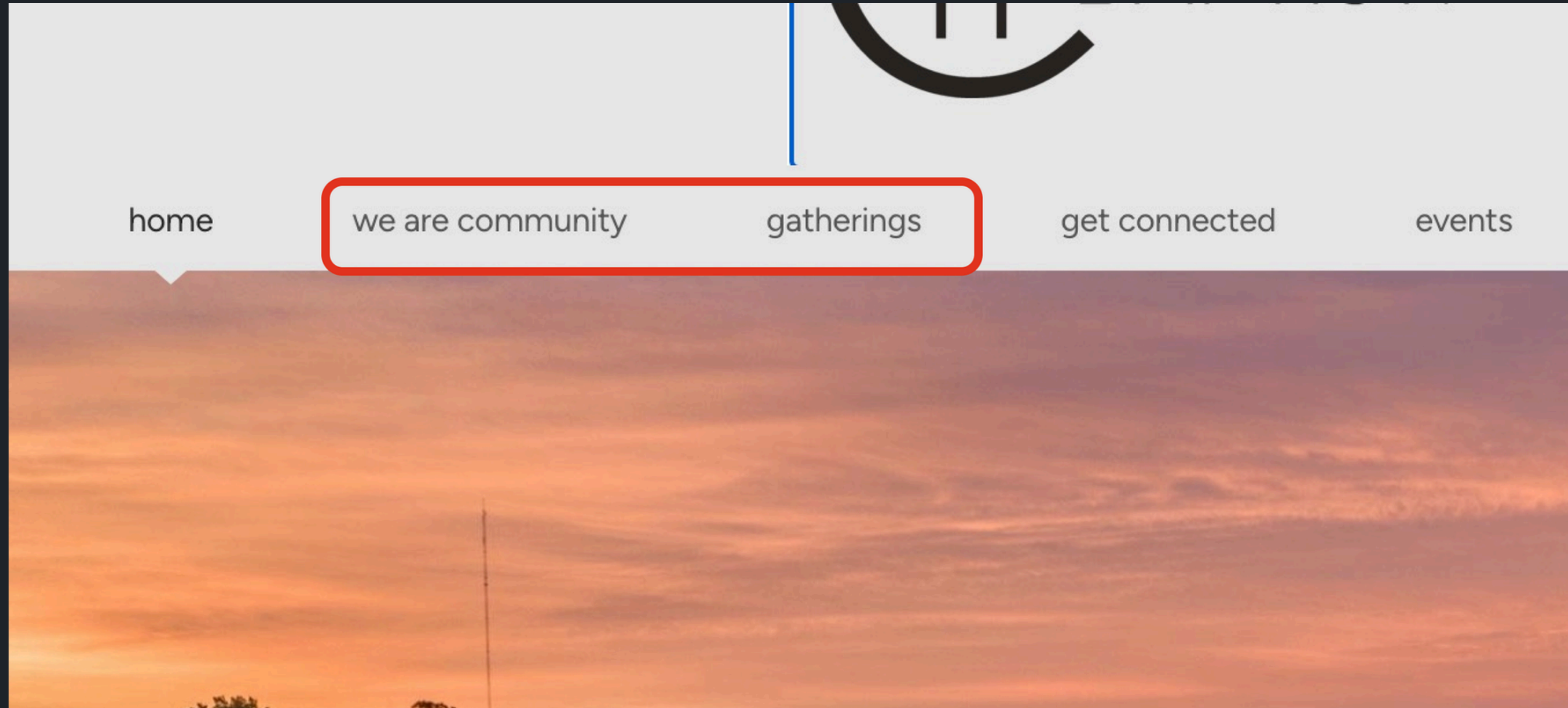
Large Text

WCAG AA: **Fail**
WCAG AAA: **Fail**

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.

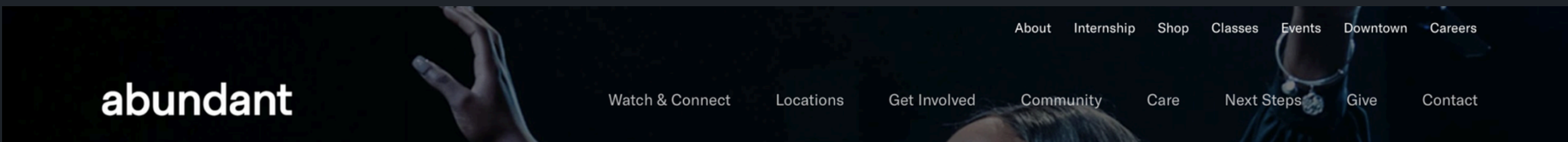
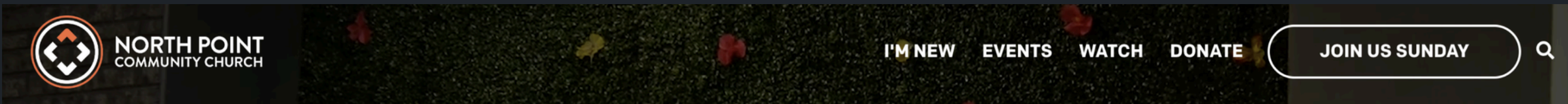
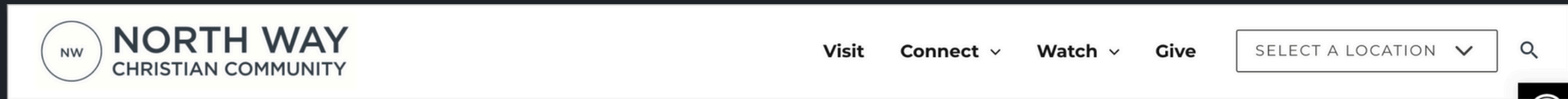
Navigation Guidelines

Avoid Non-Standard Language



Navigation Guidelines

5 navigation items (6th ok if button)



Navigation Guidelines

Super Dropdowns - 5 categories max



MARINERSCHURCH

01 About

- About Mariners
- Statement of Faith
- Leadership Team
- Careers
- Contact Us

02 Watch

- Mariners Live
- Messages
- Mariners Kids Online
- Junior High: JHM Live
- High School: Upside Down

03 Get Involved

- I'm New / Welcome to Mariners
- Join a Group
- Volunteer at Mariners
- Events
- Baptism

04

- PLAN A VISIT
- MY MARINERS
- GIVE ONLINE
- I BELIEVE
- MULTIPLY CAMPAIGN

05 Outreach

- About Outreach
- Local Outreach
- Global Outreach
- City Outreach
- Disaster Relief

06 Ministries

- Worship
- Women
- Men
- Kids
- Youth
- Young Adults

07 Resources

- Prayer
- Chaplains
- Marriage
- Weddings & Memorials
- Mariners Cafe
- Food Pantry & Thrift Store

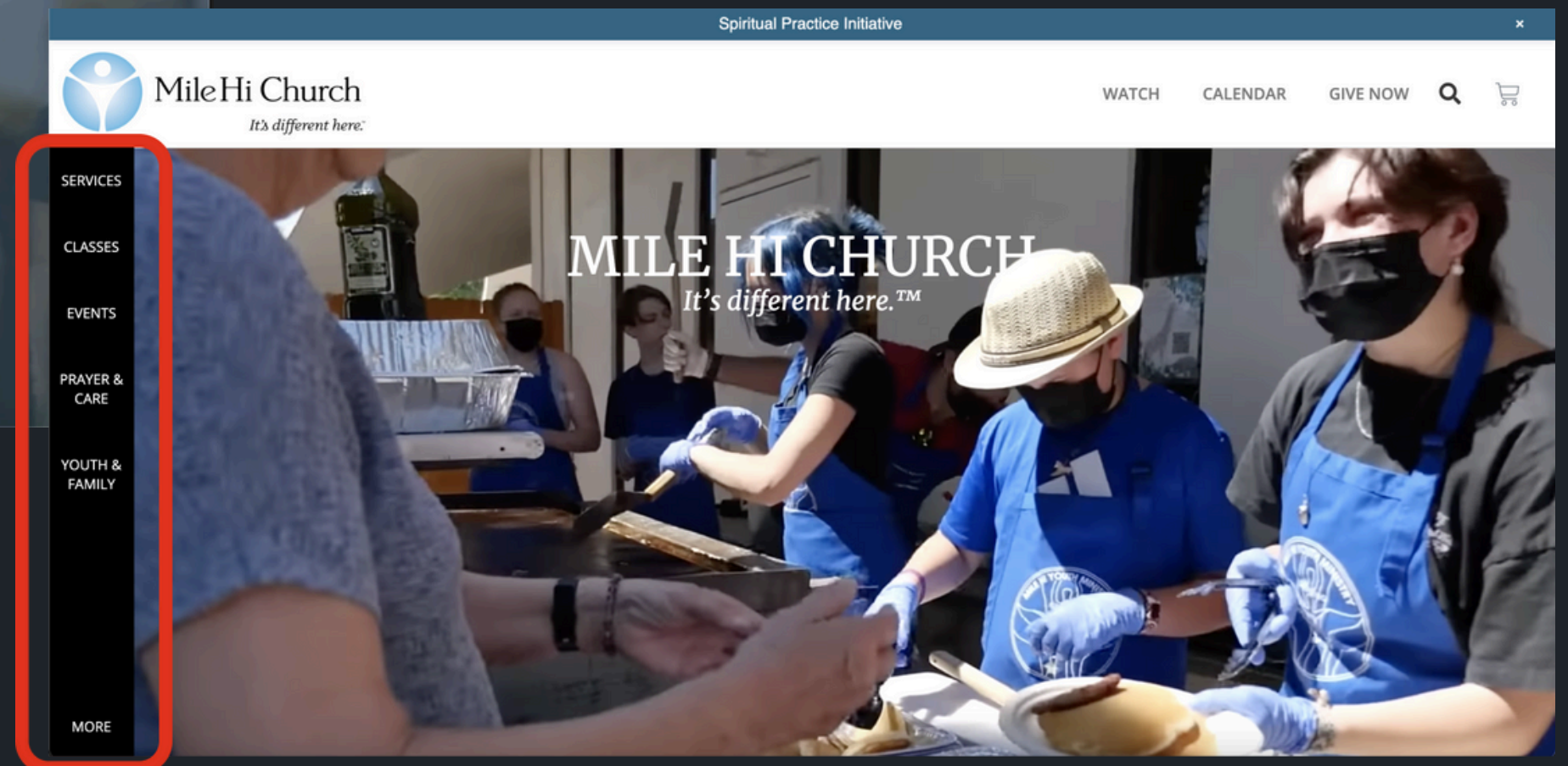
08

- Irvine
- Huntington Beach
- Mission Viejo
- North Irvine
- Santa Ana

SO LARGE IT REQUIRES SCROLLING ON 13 INCH MACBOOK

Navigation Guidelines

Avoid Non-Standard Patterns

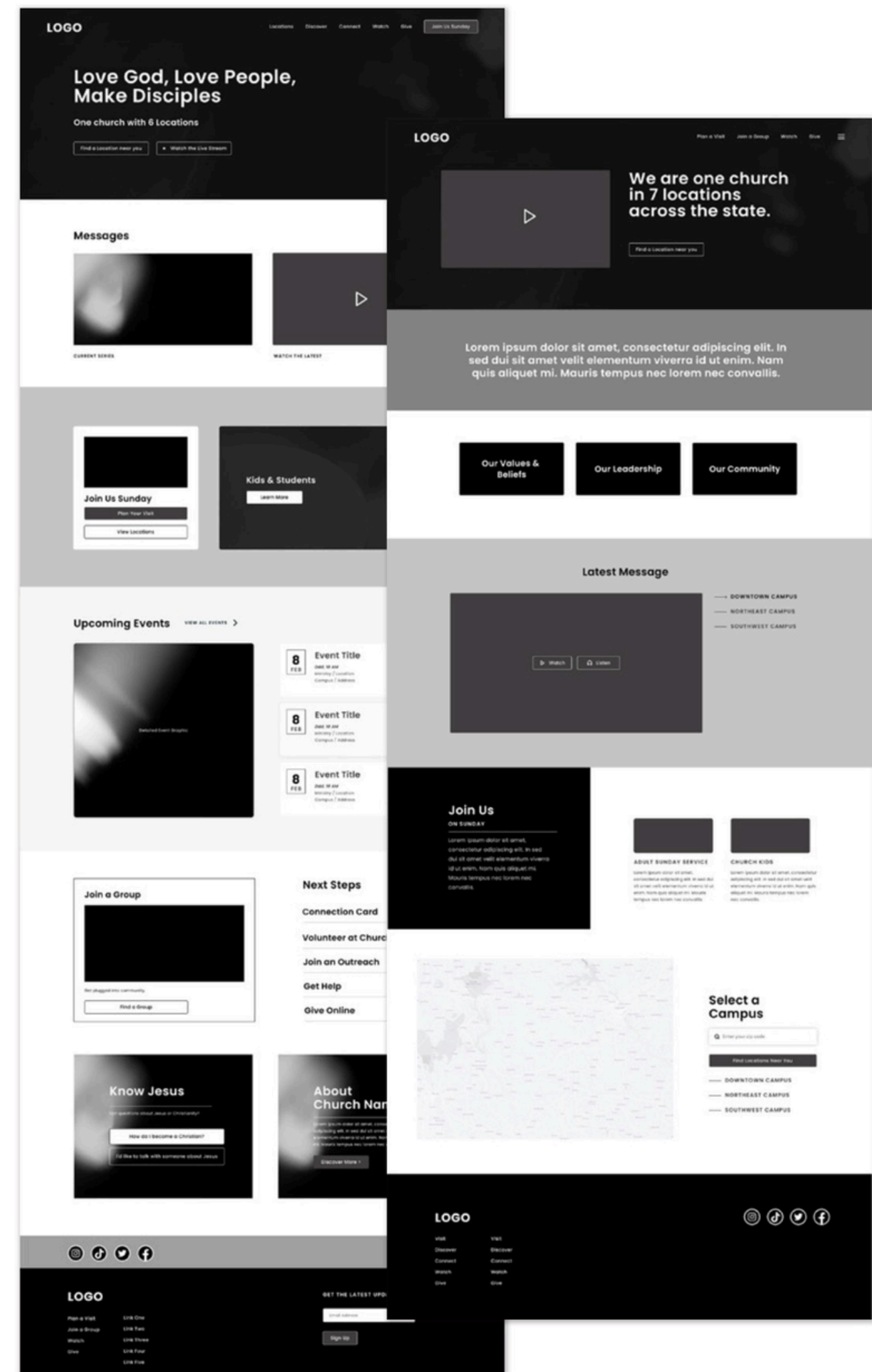


Home Page Content

- ✓ Address or crossroads
- ✓ Kids ministry summary (what ages at what times)
- ✓ Student ministry summary (what ages, what times, where)
- ✓ Lead pastor summary
- ✓ Service time(s)

Recommended Home Page

- Hero Banner
- Latest Message and/or Current Series
- Plan a Visit / What to Expect
- Kids / Families (ages + times)
- Events
- Groups
- Next Steps
- Select a Campus Map
- Jesus / Altar Call
- About
- Newsletter



Primary Supporting Content

1 click from home page or less

- ✓ Directions (open in google maps/new tab)
- ✓ What to expect when visiting (Plan a Visit)
- ✓ Latest Sermon
- ✓ Learn About Jesus
- ✓ Contact Info
- ✓ Events, Ministries, Staff, Small Groups (list or general information)

Secondary Supporting Content

2 click from home page or less

- ✓ Beliefs / Statement of Faith
- ✓ Church's Priorities (Mission, Vision, Values, Outreach Programs/Partners)
- ✓ Denominational affiliation (if applicable)
- ✓ Ministry Pages (Children, Student, etc)



Accessibility & SEO

Communication that is clear and searchable

Global Settings

- ✓ The site title includes the church's name and location
- ✓ Google Analytics and Search Console tracking codes are installed
- ✓ No Keyword stuffing! Write for humans and Google will reward you.
- ✓ Add redirects for any 404 errors

Page Titles & Headings

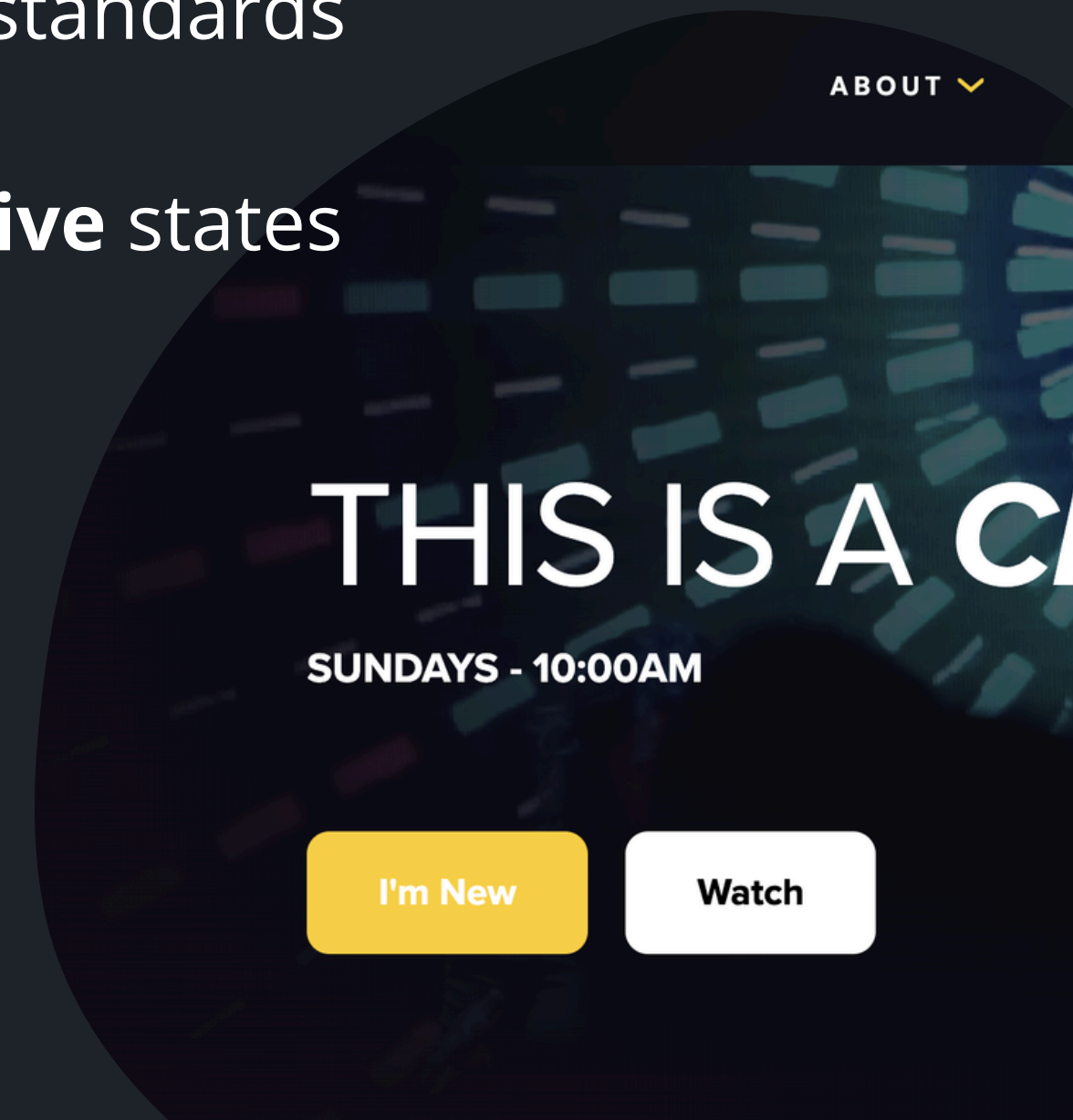
- ✓ Use the church's name and location where appropriate
- ✓ Consider search terms (ex: About Us vs. About Grace Church)
- ✓ Make sure every page has an H1 element
- ✓ Use headings for page sections - it doesn't matter if it *looks* like a heading, it must *be* a heading

Images & Videos

- ✓ Use ALT tags for images that describe the picture with relevant keywords
- ✓ Do NOT put important information as text in an image
- ✓ Avoid videos with rapid cuts or strobing lights
- ✓ Avoid stock photography... people want to see an accurate representation of the church

Colors & Contrast

- ✓ Design with color blindness and other visual impairments in mind
- ✓ Make sure your buttons and text pass accessibility standards
- ✓ Links and buttons should have clear **hover** and **active** states
- ✓ For background media, ensure a high contrast between the background and the content.



Accessibility & SEO Tools





Next Steps

Now you know, what now?

Something is better than nothing

- 1 Start with low hanging fruit
- 2 Prioritize updates that help visitors
- 3 Set aside time each week to make the site better
- 4 Connect with church leaders about the role the website performs in the church's mission

“

Want to get more traction with your church leaders? Reframe problems and opportunities into human-centered stories.

SEO & Web Design Best Practices

Q & A

- 1 The Audience
- 2 Content Strategy
- 3 Accessibility & SEO

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missionlab.dev/citn24/


church plugins

mission lab