Mountain View Presbyterian Church

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Mission Study

May 2020

Mission Study 2019-2020 Index

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Mountain View Vision and Mission Statements

The Mission Study Committee recommends the Session adopt the following Vision and Mission Statements.

OUR VISION

Glorify God and enjoy Him through a welcoming and growing church fellowship that is biblically-worship-driven in obedient gratitude for the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

OUR MISSION

In obedient gratitude for the Grace of God in Jesus Christ:

- **We seek the Holy Spirit's guidance through prayer.**
- **We equip our members to share the gospel.**
- **We work with people in every place, sharing our resources and inviting them into our fellowship.**
- **We grow our church to the Glory of God in accordance with His purpose.**
- **We welcome all who enter our doors.**
- **We help individuals ascertain their spiritual gifts and integrate them fully into the life of the church.**

Summary

After 17 years and with one review in the interim, the MVPC Session authorized a committee representing many of the interests of the church to conduct a new analysis, a Mission Study update, of the current position and future direction of the church.

While the length of time since the last mission study was the chief reason for this effort, it was also true that declining church attendance with the subsequent potential losses in revenue and the effects on church programs were also major considerations.

Two areas emerged as the most important for reversing the declining attendance trends: better communication both within and outside the church to convey our mission, programs and activities; and increased congregational support, involvement, and interest to attract and retain new parishioners.

Our church values, mission, and vision are as valid today as they were in 2003. Biblically driven worship and preaching are our greatest strength regardless of the worship style.

Both the electronic Church Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) survey and our face-to-face meetings with individuals in the congregation confirmed that the strengths of the church lay in preaching and God Exalting Worship, as well as confidence in stewardship and mission work.

Efforts should continue, in spite of three decades of mixed results, to attract young families. However, it may be as productive, given the nature of our congregation and social trends to direct our efforts toward individuals who have fallen out of the habit of church attendance in spite of (or perhaps because of) youthful religious experiences. Increased Sunday attendance, however, is not the only goal: greater exposure to the many facets of MVPC's

mission, programs, activities, and service opportunities should be emphasized as well.

Greater congregational participation during Sunday services and in the many other activities of the church will result in a stronger and more committed worshiper. A greater understanding of opportunities within our church lies in better communication of what these opportunities are. This communication depends on the support of the church leadership, including the clergy and the elders. This proposal differs from previous mission studies in that a robust system of accountability is built into the recommendations.

The Mission Study Committee recommends the contents of this report be thoroughly reviewed by the Session. Suggestions for committee and group action should be implemented, supported, and encouraged. Time lines and completion dates, as well as progress reports, should be established by Session to ensure implementation.

Mission Study Methodology of Surveys and Questions

After an introductory meeting with representatives of the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM), the Personnel, Planning, and Coordination Committee proposed to the Session the creation of a new Mission Study in April of 2019. The major factors that were cited as the reasons for this Mission Study were the length of time since the last such effort (2003) as well as the marked declining attendance in worship. The Session approved the undertaking. The 2019-2020 Mission Study Committee consisted of members at large and Elders from a variety of committees.

The newly formed Mission Study Committee met with COM members on July 9th to go over the process for a mission study and obtain recommendations for tools to use. In total, the Mission Study Committee met with Committee on Ministry three times. The second meeting was a status update and the third meeting was to get examples for the written Mission Study Report.

The Mission Study Committee selected the Church Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) Survey as our first method to get information from the congregation. The CHAT survey was a web based tool. The survey was open for responses for over three weeks. Congregation members could use their own computer and work from home, or use computers that were set up at the church after worship. There were also paper surveys available for those not comfortable with computers, the data from which was then entered in the CHAT program. The participation rate for the CHAT survey was 30%, which met the expected turnout predicted by the CHAT organization.

Based on results of the CHAT survey, the Mission Study Committee created Sunday Morning Survey Questions. These questions were posted on large post-it papers in the Narthex. People could write their answers on the paper or on cards anonymously. Two questions were posed each week for 3 weeks.

The purpose of this exercise was to get the congregation thinking about the survey and the scheduled group discussions.

Responses from the CHAT survey and Sunday Morning Survey Questions helped form the questions for the small group discussions. Small group discussions were held on two different Sundays, one between worship services and one after traditional worship. In addition, a Wednesday evening session was scheduled. In total, there were nine separate sessions totaling 55 participants. A scribe documented the discussions so the facilitator could focus on leading the small group. The information and comments received were recorded on poster paper for review by the Mission Study committee. Additionally, people had the opportunity to write comments on cards anonymously.

Mission Study Demographic Summary

Community Snapshot of the Loveland Area and Mountain View Presbyterian Church

The source of the demographic information for Loveland comes from the World Population Review and information about Larimer County comes from the State Demography Office's website.

Facts about our community:

The city of Loveland's estimated population is 77,446 people. This makes Loveland the 14th largest city in Colorado (by population). In 2010, Loveland's population was 50,610. Loveland's annual population growth last year was 1.13%. The state of Colorado population growth rate was 1.2% in 2019.

Loveland demographics have remained rather consistent despite the growth.

Racial Composition:
93.5% white
3.09% two or more races
1.22% other races
.92% Asian
.65% Native American
.46% Black or African American
.14% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Additional demographics for Loveland:

- Females make up 51.23% and males 48.77% of the population
- There are 59,599 adults in Loveland; 14,240 are seniors.
- The median age is 40.5 years

- The overall marriage rate is 53.2%
- Average earnings are $40,973
- 71.6% have at least some higher education up to graduate degrees

Loveland is still predominately a "senior" community with a ratio of 31:4 of 65+ year-olds to 18-64 year-olds. As a point of reference, Fort Collins' ratio of 65+ to 18-64 year-olds is 14:6, because of the presence of Colorado State University.

What was learned about Mountain View Presbyterian Church:

Mountain View Presbyterian Church's demographics mirror that of the community somewhat. According to the respondents of the CHAT survey:

- Females make up 68.1% of our congregation
- 65.3% are married
- 95.8% of our congregation is white
- 80.6% of our congregation has some higher education up to graduate degrees
- Members 60 years and over make up 80.6% of our congregation

Worship Attendance Trends:

Highlighted as a concern for the longevity of MVPC is the trend in declining attendance at worship. Annual attendance reached a peak in 2004 with 3475 attending annually (all services) to 1755 in 2019.

The trend in declining church worship attendance is well documented by Pew Research, Gallup, and many other research organizations. Fewer and fewer U.S. adults are identifying as Christians and even when they do identify, church attendance is not a priority. Weekly church attendance stands at 38% according

to a Gallup poll in 2018. That same poll in 2008 showed weekly attendance at 42%. Christians comprise 65% of the adult American population. According to BestPlaces.net, 41.9% of Loveland's population identifies with various religions, including Protestantism, Catholicism, Church of Jesus Christ, Judaism, Eastern faiths, Islam, etc.

Recommendations to Session

A. Call for an **All-Church Prayer Vigil:** Focus on the mission and future of MVPC.

B. **Improve and Expand Communications:** Utilize more effective, creative, diverse, and up-to-the-minute methods to communicate the many positives of MVPC. Task specific committees with **specific action steps and deadlines.**

C. **Develop and Improve Training of Church Leaders and Members:**

1. Create a new, larger Connections Card for visitors to fill out. Develop a clear process for those gifted with hospitality on how to **welcome and integrate newcomers** to the church. Involve the appropriate Session committee in designing the process, materials, and follow-up methodology.

2. Provide a **Spiritual Gifts** class for the entire congregation and for new members to identify spiritual gifts. Provide specific opportunities for all members to exercise their spiritual gifts and a follow-up process to ensure members have connected with a ministry, mission or activity that uses their gifts. Involve the appropriate committee to oversee.

3. Train individuals gifted in hospitality and encouragement to be effective greeters. Staff a Welcome Center in the Narthex. Establish a Care Committee to follow up on prayer requests, questions about the church, CE pods, and how to get plugged in at MVPC (perhaps establish an online portal for questions and answers for newcomers).

4. Develop an orientation and training course to develop **Servant-Leader Elders** before they take office.

5. Offer more CE pods on how to reach out to friends, family, and neighbors with the love of Christ.

D. Appoint a Single-Service Sub-Committee: Explore options and develop a plan for a single Sunday morning service. The plan should include guidance for how music will be handled. The plan could be tested in the summer or on a once-a-month basis and fine-tuned as necessary.

E. Gather information on Church Growth: Visit other churches in the area to garner ideas on how to grow our own church. Invite friends to visit and offer feedback on how we might become a more attractive and welcoming church. Obtain information through exit surveys from members who have stopped attending or who have chosen to attend another church. Ascertain why they left and what we might have done differently to retain them at MVPC.

F. Create a Robust System of Accountability: Help ensure prioritized A and B Action Steps are implemented in a timely fashion:

1. The Mission Study Committee should first share clear, measurable goals and action steps with our pastors--our most persuasive and influential opinion leaders--and engage their support in presenting the goals, action steps, and accountability process to Session.

2. Recommend Session appoint a committee of three elders (with term expirations in 2020, 2021, 2022 to maintain

continuity) charged with oversight of committees assigned to carry out action steps.

3. Recommend Session require monthly reporting on progress toward implementing action steps.

4. Mission Study Committee members will remain involved and committed to bringing these action steps to fruition and cooperating with God's purposes for His church.

G. Looking to the Future:

1. We encourage Session, pastors, leaders, and church members to emphasize more strongly the servant nature of Christ followers, inviting all the church family into greater involvement in the mission and daily work of the church and building of God's Kingdom.

2. We encourage Session, pastors, teachers, and church leaders to remind the congregation to look for more creative ways to be consciously inclusive. Ideas may range from having members sit in pews where they don't normally sit to making a concerted effort to socialize during coffee hour and other times with people less familiar to them, to finding creative ways to include newcomers into their lives and the life of the church family.

3. We encourage our pastors to invite greater participation from the church family in Sunday worship services: plan for more frequent Minute for Missions to keep the congregation apprised of service opportunities, invite lay readers to participate in the reading of Psalms and the liturgy, incorporate children's choir, youth ushers, candle lighters, dramatic presentations, etc.

4. We commend our pastors for the excellent quality of their inspiring, uplifting sermons Sunday after Sunday—sermons based on Biblical passages, confirmed by scripture, and true to our Reformed heritage.

Specific Action Recommendations for Session and Session committees

	Recommendations for **Session**
A1.	Devise an orientation and training course to develop **Servant-Leader Elders** before they take office.
A2.	Appoint a single-service sub-committee to explore options including alternative days and times for services and develop a plan. The plan should include guidance for how music will be handled. Portions of the plan could be tested in the summer or on a once-a-month basis, and then fine-tuned as necessary.
A3.	Provide periodic training in hospitality techniques to deacons, elders and the congregation.
A4.	Appoint a committee of three elders charged with the oversight of timely completion of recommended action steps and progress reports.
B1.	Increase participation from both the congregation and children in worship service
B2.	Utilize more frequently the non-staff pastors that attend our church.

	Recommendations for **Evangelism**
A1.	Evaluate all forms of MVPC advertising including signs, printed materials, newspaper articles, personal invitations, Welcome Wagon materials, handouts, newsletter, social media, etc. Consider rebranding church name and logo.
A2.	Create and develop a Welcome/New Visitor Team and establish a volunteer staffed Welcome Hub/table
A3.	Improve follow up with new attendees and worship service dropouts.
A4.	Initiate more in-depth training for the ushers, greeters, and attendance committee.

	Recommendations for **Worship and Music**
A1.	Explore blended/single service options, including alternative days and times for services. Coordinate with Session Sub Committee.
A2.	Develop consistency in Worship Service and Sunday School times to better accommodate members with inflexible transportation and other challenges.
A3.	Develop alternatives to cancelled programs.
B.	Disseminate timely information about musical events and services (such as Kirkin' service, Easter Service, musical ensembles).

	Recommendations for **Christian Education**
A.	Explore opportunities to identify, develop, and exercise the spiritual gifts of the congregation.
B.	Provide instruction to members on how to share the gospel with others.

	Recommendations for **Fellowship**
A.	Review and evaluate the value of more food-involved activities, such as after-service meals.
B.	Sponsor social activities that bring congregation and newcomers into more contact and greater fellowship.

	Recommendations for **Mission**
A.	Promote increased knowledge of Mission Information to the congregation, the local community, and beyond.
B.	

	Recommendations for **Personnel, Planning, and Coordination**
A.	Review, evaluate, and monitor the duties of standing committees.
B.	Analyze paid staff positions for need/value/consolidation.

	Recommendations for **Deacons**
A1.	Coordinate All-Church Prayer Vigil with emphasis on the mission and future of MVPC.
A2.	Increase the interaction between the attendance committee and the Session with regard to the monitoring of the attendance and methods of improving communications and follow-up with newcomers and worship dropouts.
B.	Provide timely information to members in need of rides and non-church transportation for service attendance.

Appendix A.

Sources:

https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/242015/church-leaders-declining-religious-service-attendance.aspx

https://www.pewforum.org/2018/08/01/why-americans-go-to-religious-services/?utm_source=link_newsv9&utm_campaign=item_242015&utm_medium=copy

https://www.statista.com/statistics/245491/church-attendance-of-americans/

https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/attendance-at-religious-services/

https://religionnews.com/2019/04/18/gallup-number-of-americans-who-belong-to-a-church-or-house-of-worship-plummets/

https://www.bestplaces.net/religion/city/colorado/loveland

Appendix B.

SMALL GROUP MEETINGS RESULTS GROUPED BY QUESTIONS

Question #1:

What thoughts do you have about growing our church?

Summary Results from all Small Groups for Question #1:

1. **Advertising (Electronic media, Welcome Wagon, all methods to get the word out)**
2. **Young People (No Early Service, innovative programming, different styles, different times, after-school programs)**
3. **Grand families – mission focus**
4. **Getting ideas from other churches**
5. **Personal Invitation**
6. **Review and Rebrand MVPC Name**
7. **Consider Alternate Worship Times**
8. **Observe other churches and invite others to observe us and give us feedback**
   Or: Observe other churches. Invite them to observe us and provide feedback
9. **Advertise information on MVPC's Mission outreach**
10. **We need to decide on our desired demographic.**
11. **We also need to have a timeline (immediate and long-term focus)**

Responses from all Groups Unedited:

- Advertising – Facebook, print, mailed cards, signs, personal invitation, chamber of commerce welcome wagon, handouts for members, cards, brochure
  Tell / advertise our outreach activities in the community
- Small Groups – ALL ages
- Need college, young adult program!!
- Young people come for fellowship – want more opportunity to be a group.
- "Grandparent" Sunday school and outreach to grandchildren who are adopted.
- Integrate people through programs, then to worship.
- Is there a Presbyterian Church that has been successful at attraction and integration? Could we send representatives to observe and learn?
- The young people don't like early service times.
- Write-ups for the community- flyers, advertising in paper for church events
- Getting younger people with families – how to? Younger people want a different style

- Institute after school program, music and/or education for kids
- Attract families from Loveland Preschool
- Encouraging Grand Families
- Kids from 1st service are singers and participate during Praise service – start a Children's Choir again
- Are any churches in the area growing?
- Yes – what are they doing? (Need to look there first)
- Does Contemporary service need to be less traditional?
- Current attendees to Contemporary like format.
- Focus has been on Traditional
    - Not successful for drawing young/families.
- Traditional members drive the direction
- Not marketing the church (newspaper faith page)
- Summer combined Worship
    - Music style a concern
- Target populations through social media – esp. how to appeal to those who would enjoy structure.
- Advertise in the newspaper – service times, special events – different approach – possible paid?
- Target population that has to work with Alternative service in the evening.
- Individual invitations – youth, Live Wires, small groups, Bible study groups, Talk on Tuesdays.
- Invite outside 3rd party to critique
- Feedback from friends – observe other churches.
- Support-Groups
- What is the desired demographic? Target group?
- Community Outreach (Easter Egg Hunt, etc.)
- Youth – guests, programs to attract
- Variety and diversity – attraction
- Welcoming atmosphere
- Advertising (different media, newspaper, Facebook, Instagram, word of mouth, invitation)
- Traditional Service a draw, strength
- Website advertising
- Article /notice in paper (advertising brings name "out")
- Social Media presence (re: events, age group interest esp. Gen X, younger (future/study ex. Read better) (i.e. different ages use it)
- Timely article 10/19: face culture less interested (WSJ) in church...
    - fewer people just "walk in" cited new church – "House"
    - Encourage/need – invite people, many backgrounds- ask difficult questions of ourselves

- Point: today young people (rushed, life demands) – (may impact decision to go to church, Sunday).
    - Busy – sports took over Sunday.
- "religion of Sports"
- Ex. Crossroads – (Thurs/other day), for worship. Need: ways to share our faith.
    - How to include? (ex. Kids who have never been to church)
    - Certain stigma, i.e. if don't have denomination name – do better
- Better known / tools / environment
- Personally invite neighbors
- Christian Education – Focus on Young Children / Families (committee, social media)
- Don't change who are, but advertise who we are
- Members need to review church on social media (and Google reviews)
    - Give your reasons for going.
- Promote events on Social Media

Question #2:

What are your thoughts as to how to integrate newcomers into our church family?

Summary Results from all Small Groups for Question #2:

1. **Need a new "Ruth" for more effective outreach to visitors**
2. **Need new training and procedures for greeters, Welcome Hub ~~(Need New)~~**
3. **Follow up for newcomers**
4. **Talk to Attendance Committee – What is current procedure?**
5. **Funnel new people through created procedure**
6. **Small gift for new visitors with flyer about who we are/ways to get involved**
7. **As a new member, found it difficult to find out what is going on**
8. **Need to communicate who we are**
9. **Pastoral contact for new visitors**
10. **Follow up / with non-attending members (is there a process / procedure)**
11. **More "Food" fellowship opportunities (beyond donuts)**
12. **Hospitality Training for members (long term development of relationship)**
13. **Outings – Social. Invite visitors**

Responses from all Groups Unedited:

- Personal invite to activities
- Interfaith activities – for youth
- Attendance group reaches out to those who haven't visited in a while
- Not sure what's being done since Ruth's departure
- Use Greeters to capture thoughts from visitors
    - Used to be done by casting off to nearby members
    - Need to do it again
    - Card with a few questions
    - Most deacons are Traditional, need Contemporary coverage
- As a new member, found it difficult to find out what's going on
    - Not impressed with greetings at first few visits
- Easy to tell when churches are 'cliques'
- All it takes is ONE FRIENDLY PERSON
- Can be too much pressure too
- People don't look for mainline denomination
- Concerted effort by all of us to meet and greet newcomers
- Review the follow-up for newcomers
- Concerted effort ~~form~~ from all pastors, all leadership for welcoming visitors
- Training – in welcoming visitors
- Acknowledge and welcome visitors during service – small gift

    - In previous ~~year's~~ years, loaf of bread delivered to visitors the week after visiting.
- Review new members classes and procedures
- Both pastors support w/ different personalities / gifts
- Welcoming congregation to strangers
    - Lessons from Ruth – who has that gift?
    - Discernment of newcomer desires / interests
- Volunteers who are designated to meet newbies
- Show hospitality immediately –
    - invite to lunch
    - Invite to activity
    - Invite to programs
- Tell of nursery, Sunday School, programs for youth / kids
- Need to attract the under 50! Ask what desire?
- How to target the churched who no longer attend? Expand on youth inviting friends (Christy's model)
- Continue to be encouraging without being forceful
- Start sports outings with FOOD!
- Feed people. Kirkin' was good / Easter
- Relationships and connecting with people
- Small groups – 10 or so people meeting weekly; mid-week activities; more than just Sunday; need a "hook"; Champion / small group leader
- Open to groups with special focus: divorce, alcohol, etc.
- Recognize when someone is missing. Care and check, connecting
- Attraction: Preaching style, choir, tradition
- Keep coming: friendliness
- Marking our strengths (preaching style, choir, tradition). People have options
- Market our strengths-
    - Teaching from the Bible; format of education
    - Mission – local and nationwide
    - Friendliness
- All should be willing to help with integration
- An established couple mentor new members
- The dinners for nine – ask new people
- Focus on Younger members
- Advertise our strengths
- Invite neighbors
- Social Media: Snapchat, Instagram
    - Dedicated information disperser – everyday!!
- Use screen pre-service to show our many activities

Question #3:

Fifty percent of those responding to the written questions indicated they would prefer one blended service. What are your thoughts on this?

Summary Results from all Small Groups for Question #3:

1. **Better together**
2. **Seeing kids / everyone**
3. **Sound TOO loud (Praise Music)**
4. **Liturgy (how to do in a modern world)**
5. **Design a Blended Service for us**
6. **Analyze growth and loss trends in attendance with timeframe**
7. **More congregational involvement in service**
8. **Certain Elements must be present (Doxology, Confession, Gloria Patri)**

Responses from all Groups Unedited:

- Blended Service would allow for interaction for all, time for fellowship
- 9:30 or 10:00 worship
- Sunday School afterwards
- Concern for volume – praise music
- Every service can be a combination of musical style and groups
- Create a NEW style of blended worship incorporating participation by congregation in liturgy
- Corporate confession, Doxology and Gloria Patri – Always – every service
- History of different approaches – services offered
- Tends to "water down" for people who like one or the other
    - Ex. Kirkin 'o Tartans / service to bring all together & see the children
- Wonderful to see full sanctuary (as during special services)
- Experience with another blended type service
    - 2 contemporary songs – rest traditional.
- One Service – is it to have all together? (Would some miss the elements they like?)
- What about a blended service once a month (outside of summertime)
- Music
    - Traditional – liturgy, participation vs. contemporary
    - Need more study about what God calls us to be (sensitive topic)
    - Summer (clarification) – not a blended service

    - For some: deep theological concern r/t?? what will be in a service
- Full Liturgy for contemporary service is missing
- One blended service, so all can be in worship together.
- Have a blended service more often.
- Sounds like a split church / congregation
- In the summer, ¼ Sundays goes to Contemporary; need 50/50 to be blended; people will leave
- Strength is in pastors / message
    - Remember Bob preaching about "shame on us" for only attending based on music
    - Not about the time either
- If we don't go after younger families, aging congregations will not occur.
    - Services at facilities causing some decline in Traditional
    - Will force eventual decrease in services and staff
- Attendance declining at both services
- Need to know which service people attend and prefer
- Acolytes
- Scripture – lay readers
- Involvement by congregation in liturgy
- Combined Service
- Updated current info, pamphlets
- Intergenerational Activities
    - Arts and crafts
    - Try out instruments with kids, parents, grand families (instruments provided by a music store)
- Better together
- Love summer service
- Pastors who support both
- Music should be both
- Will ??? come to blended service
- Who is the blended service for?
- Our contemporary service is not contemporary
    - Traditional dictates our service direction
    - Sanctuary update is traditional space
- Preaching not relevant to 20-something generation
- Why? Where are the children of congregation?
- Would evening church have more appeal, more contemporary?
- Music that appeals to various populations
- Liturgy doesn't typically appeal to younger
- How to reconcile liturgy with younger?
- Over 60 want recognizable songs

- MVPC as "Praise Songs" rather than typical loud, rock contemporary
- Analyze trends in growth of both services.
- Crowd draws people
- Older people can take part with children
- Saturday night or Thursday night for families who have children in activities
- Nice to see everyone
- Work toward blended service
- Situation – Need volunteers – congregation older.

Question #4:

Have we left anything out? Anything we are missing?

Summary Results from all Small Groups for Question #4:

1. **Both Pastors need to be more visible / accessible at both services**
2. **Theology of who we are and what we believe (Less focus on denomination)**
3. **Think outside the box**

Responses from all Groups Unedited:

- Think outside the box – ask leadership or mission study committee to visit other churches to get growth ideas
- More info on missions from pulpit
- Need full time pastor
- Should sermon themes reinforce biblical values? (strong marriages, drugs)
- Seeker churches go this route, focus on correction
- Must be supported by God's Word
- Calling out sin, No fights in the parking lot! ☺
- Why are the post-church people not attending church?
- Why not return? Are they too busy? Is it a habit they have replaced with other things: shopping, sleep, sports?
- Both ministers in church every Sunday.
- Prefer robes on ministers – could be intimidating?
- Come as you are – even right after work in casual dress.
- How important is it to be known as Presbyterians?
    - Not much difference?
    - Turn off?
    - Important to remain true to fundamental Christianity!
    - Lose essence of MVPC if drop Presbyterian

CHAT
CHURCH HEALTH ASSESSMENT TOOL

A Ministry of Leadership Transformations, Inc.

MOUNTAIN VIEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SURVEY REPORT

Generated On: August 30, 2019

Section I: Executive Summary

Section II: Additional Comments

Section III: Suggested Next Steps

Appendix: Detailed Survey Findings (Separate Report) Including Custom Questions

APPENDIX C

LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMATIONS INC
FORMATION | DISCERNMENT | RENEWAL

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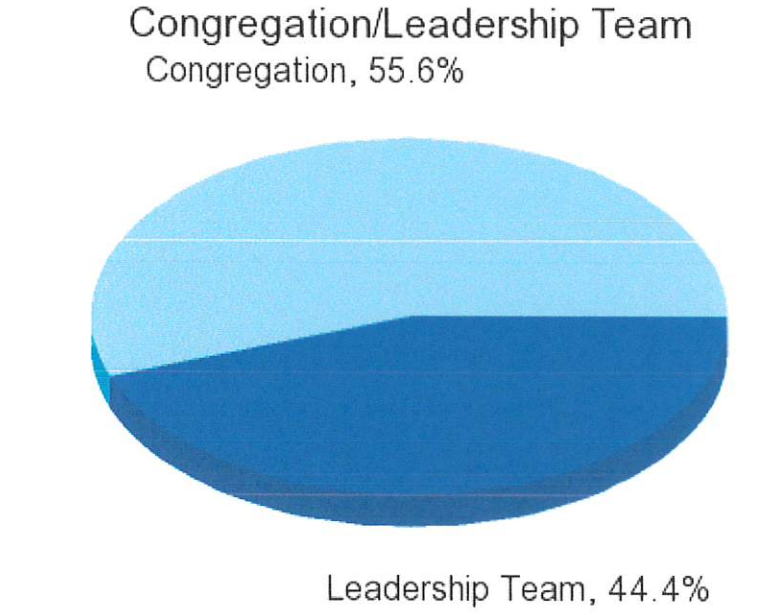
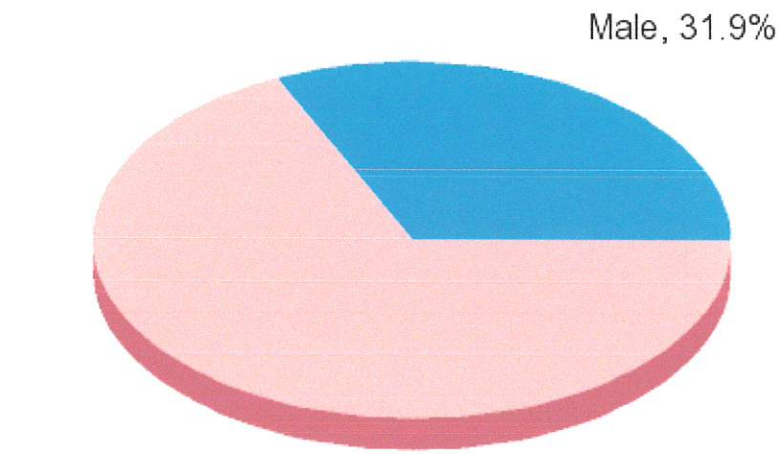
New England Office *Colorado Springs Office*

Section I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

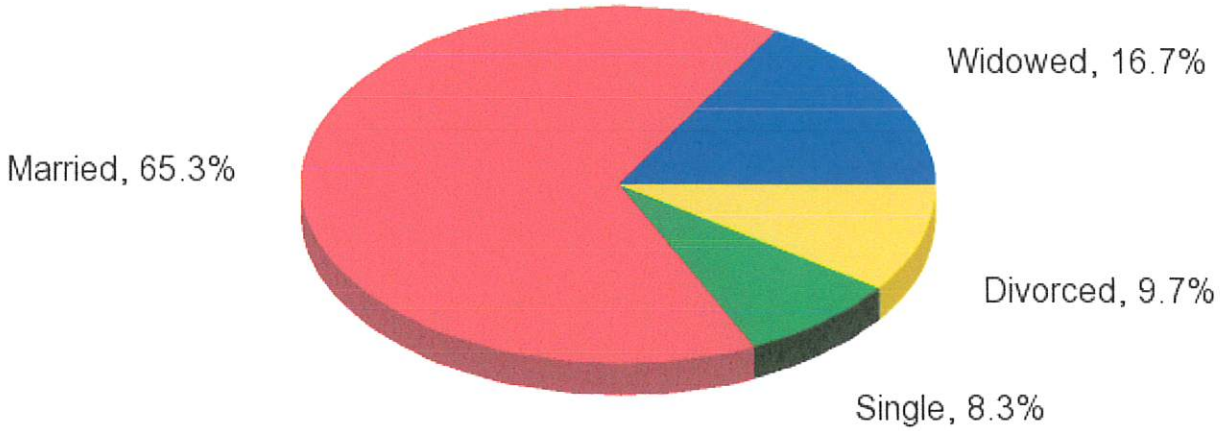
This section will give you a quick overview of the data findings in visual form. Below you'll find graphs of the assessment participants displayed in various categories.

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

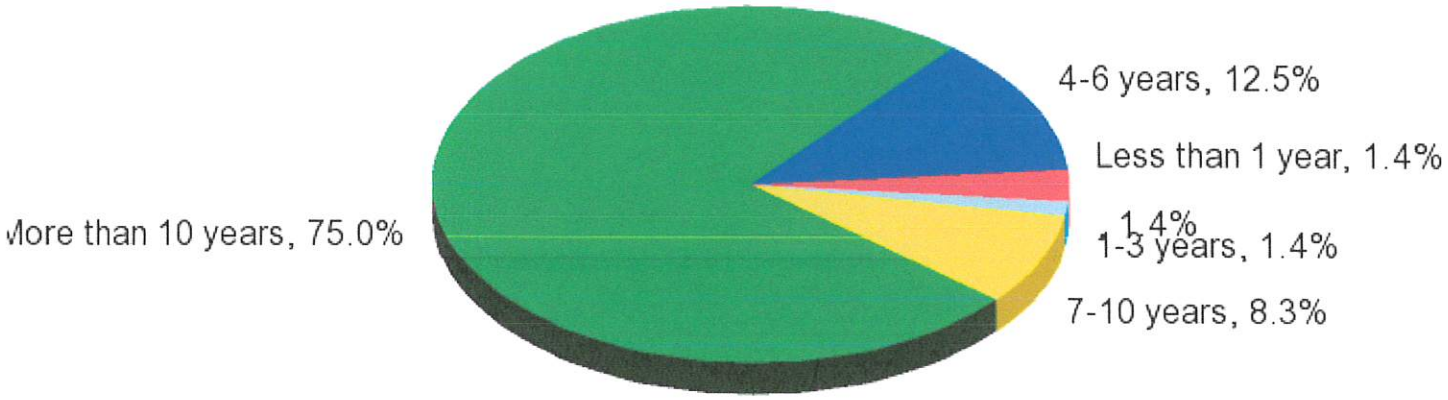




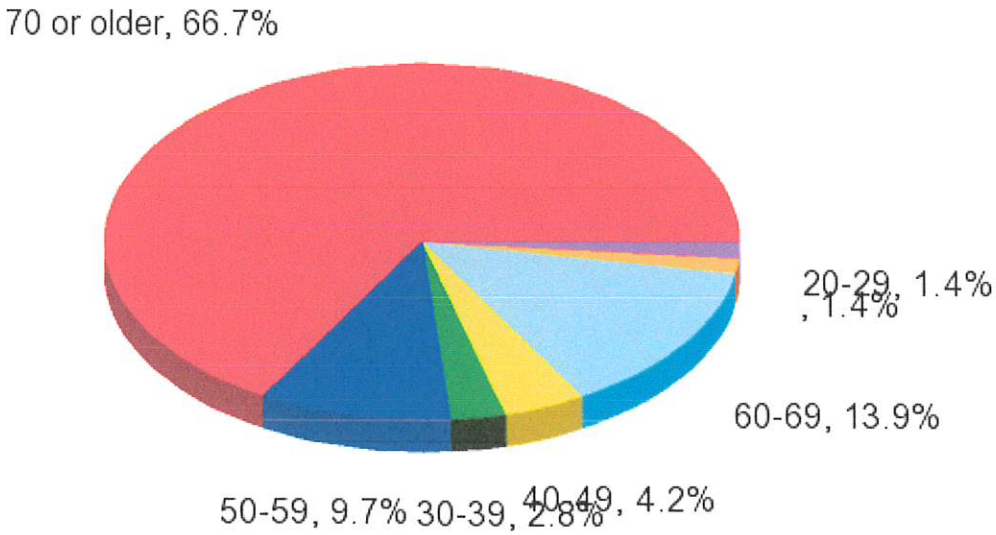
Marital Status



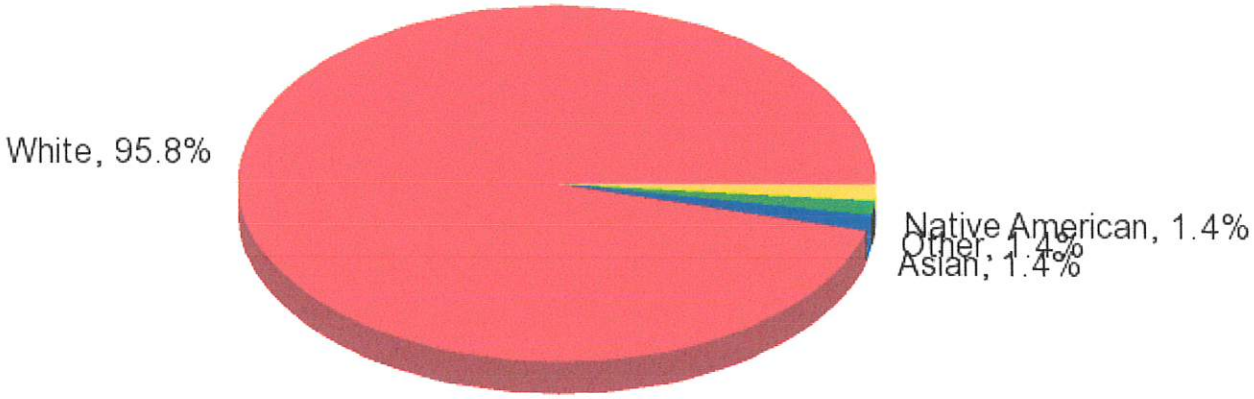
Years at our Church

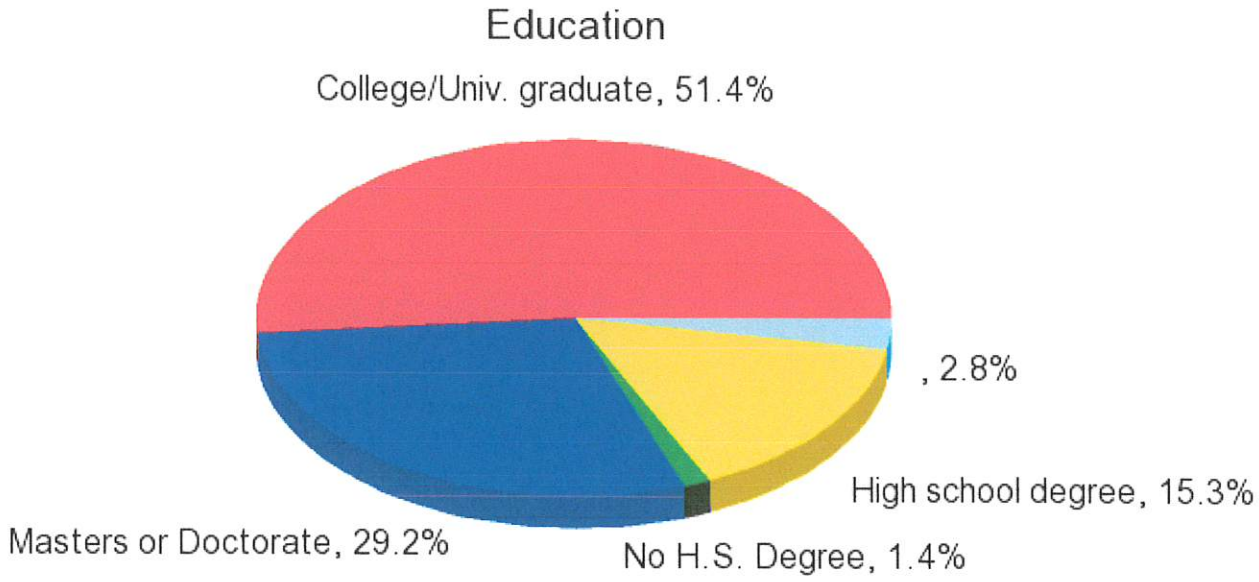


Age



Ethnicity

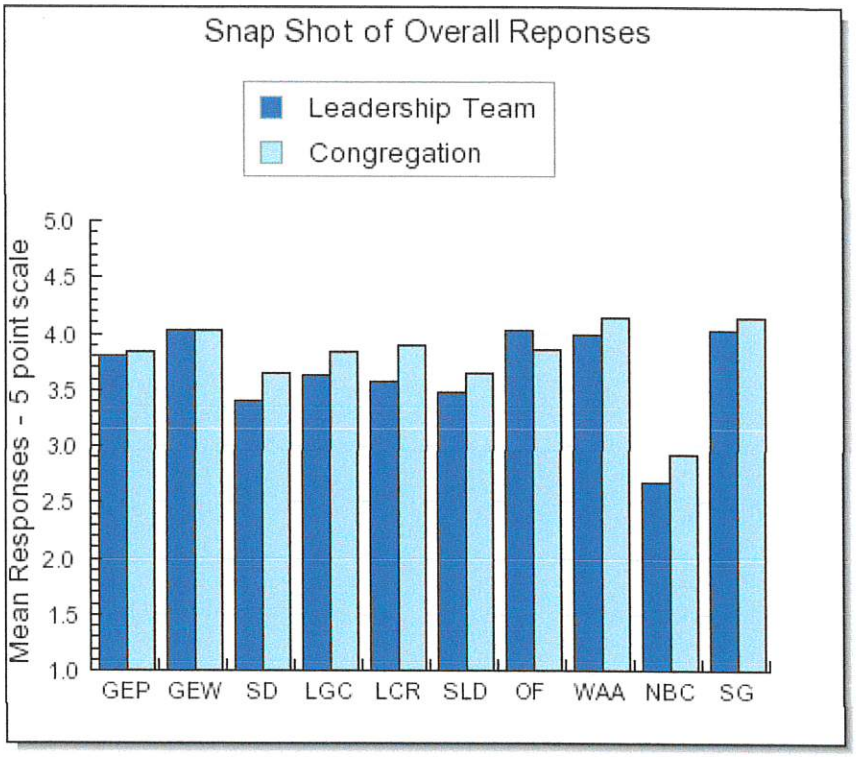



Education
College/Univ. graduate, 51.4%
, 2.8%
High school degree, 15.3%
No H.S. Degree, 1.4%
Masters or Doctorate, 29.2%

SUMMARY OF THE COLLECTED DATA

Congregation and Leadership Team responses are compared side by side.

The following graph shows the mean responses to the question, "Overall, how effective are we at living out [this characteristic] in our church?" which was asked at the end of each characteristic section.

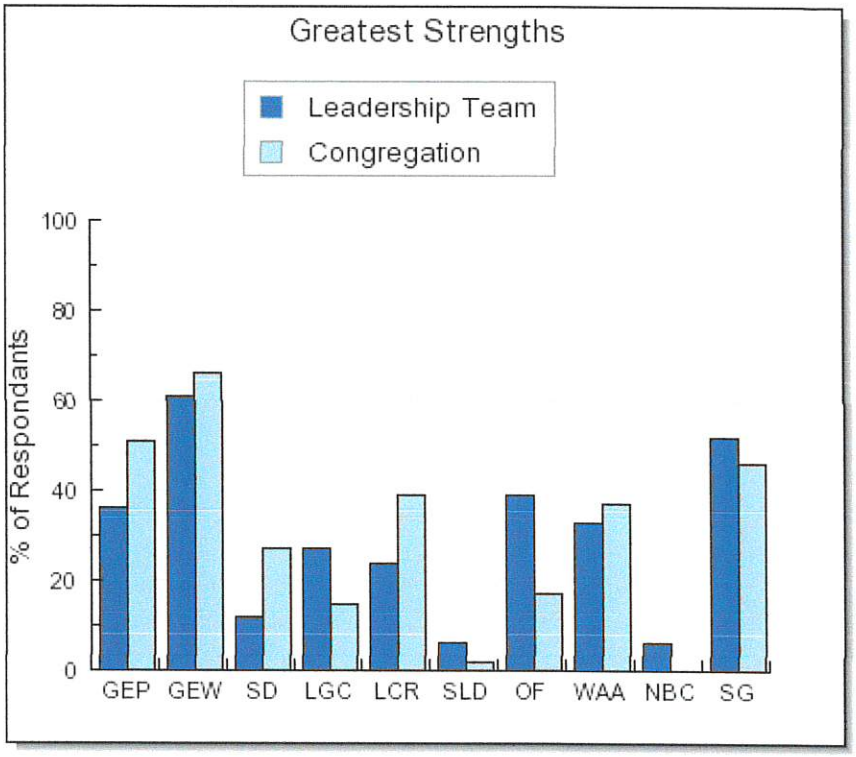


The 10 Characteristics

1. ***GEP***-God's Empowering Presence
2. ***GEW***-God-Exalting Worship
3. ***SD***-Spiritual Disciplines
4. ***LGC***-Learning & Growing in the Community
5. ***LCR***-Loving & Caring Relationships
6. ***SLD***-Servant-Leadership Development
7. ***OF***-An Outward Focus
8. ***WAA***-Wise Administration & Accountability
9. ***NBC***-Networking with the Body of Christ
10. ***SG***-Stewardship & Generosity

GREATEST STRENGTHS OF OUR CHURCH

Keep in mind that each participant was asked to choose *three* characteristics. The following graph shows that for each characteristic, X% of the respondents chose that trait as one of their top three selections.



The 10 Characteristics

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Note: Pay careful attention to areas where there was a stark discrepancy between what the Congregation said and what the Leadership Team said. Discuss why you think this discrepancy exists.

The Congregation identified your church's strongest characteristics as follows (more than one trait indicates a tie in percentage response):

66% of the Congregation chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three strengths of our church."

God-Exalting Worship Typically, when your congregation affirms "God Exalting Worship" as one of your greatest strengths, they are celebrating the fact that the experience of gathering together for worship as the people of God is refreshing and renewing, uplifting and meaningful (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is affirmed). Worship is a value that your congregation encourages you to consider a high priority on a weekly basis and generally appreciates the ways in which they are ushered into the presence of God. When worship is a strength, it's important to keep building on this so the people are fed by the Word of God, nurtured by prayer, and encouraged to engage the world as instruments of God's mercy, wisdom, and strength.

51% of the Congregation chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three strengths of our church."

God's Empowering Presence Typically, when your congregation affirms "God's Empowering Presence" as one of your greatest strengths, they are sensing that the church actively seeks the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit for its daily life and ministry (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is affirmed). Is there an obvious presence of God's abiding peace when you gather for worship, fellowship, and/or service to others? God's empowering presence is a fresh reminder that the people of God need to depend solely on the Spirit for every decision made, every relationship pursued, and every action lived out in His name and for His sake.

46% of the Congregation chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three strengths of our church."

Stewardship & Generosity Typically, when your congregation affirms "Stewardship and Generosity" as one of your greatest strengths, they are thrilled with the ways in which the budget is raised, the resources are stewarded, and the generosity of the church is expanded (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is affirmed). It is through this trait of a healthy church that you will see evidence of "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The local church that stewards the abundant love of Christ in tangible ways will experience the joy of seeing how personal and financial gifts are multiplied for the glory of God. The more this trait is taken seriously by the congregation, the more inclined will be their hearts toward the needs of the church, the community, and toward others who live in much less fortunate environments.

Out of all 70 questions, the Congregation gave the following specific questions their highest marks (more than one question indicates a tie in mean response):

1. **Mean Score: 4.77 out of 5**
   When we gather to worship together, how well do we as a church emphasize biblical and relevant preaching? (GEW)

2. **Mean Score: 4.57 out of 5**
   How well does our church give generous portions of the annual budget to local and international missions? (SG)

3. **Mean Score: 4.56 out of 5**
   When we gather to worship together, how well are we as a church invited to listen attentively to the reading of Scripture? (GEW)

The Leadership Team identified your church's strongest characteristics as follows (more than one trait indicates a tie in percentage response)

61% of the Leadership Team chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three strengths of our church."

God-Exalting Worship Typically, when your leadership team affirms "God Exalting Worship" as one of your greatest strengths, they are celebrating together the ways in which the weekly gathering of God's people is edifying, enriching, and renewing for all who attend (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is affirmed). In this trait of a healthy church, the public worship experiences are held in high regard as the place where the church comes together to dedicate their lives to fulfilling believers' primary reason for being. As a result, each worship service is designed to create the space for the ministry of God's Spirit to be evidenced through the music, praying, Scripture reading, preaching, giving, sharing, baptism, communion, etc. - all for the glory of God.

52% of the Leadership Team chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three strengths of our church."

Stewardship & Generosity Typically, when your leadership team affirms "Stewardship and Generosity" as one of your greatest strengths, they are celebrating how effective the members of the church serve as stewards of their God-given resources and how sacrificially they share them with others (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is affirmed). This attitude is a tangible expression of the heart of Jesus, who taught that "from everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded" and "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Building on this strength will require church leaders to consider ways to teach on generosity and financial planning, family and church budgeting, and principles of financial accountability. Having this trait as a positive contributor to the health of the church will undoubtedly deepen faith, strengthen relational trust, and enliven service to others in the name of Christ.

39% of the Leadership Team chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three strengths of our church."

An Outward Focus Typically, when your leadership team affirms "Outward Focus" as one of your greatest strengths, they

are placing a high priority on communicating the truth of Jesus and demonstrating the love of Jesus to those outside the faith (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is affirmed). Recognizing this trait as a strength leads to intentionality in designing creative ways to train and release members into places of front-line ministry with the lost, the least, and the last in our world. There is a willingness to experiment with new ways of communicating the timeless gospel of Christ in an ever-changing world. Building on this asset will result in strategic awareness and involvement in local, regional, national and international missions endeavors.

Out of all 70 questions, the Leadership Team gave the following specific questions their highest marks (more than one question indicates a tie in mean response):

1. **Mean Score: 4.78 out of 5**
   How well does our church give generous portions of the annual budget to local and international missions? (SG)

2. **Mean Score: 4.74 out of 5**
   When we gather to worship together, how well do we as a church emphasize biblical and relevant preaching? (GEW)

3. **Mean Score: 4.72 out of 5**
   How well does our church develop a strategy for global awareness and international mission involvement? (OF)

AREAS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT FOR OUR CHURCH

Keep in mind that each participant was asked to choose *three* characteristics. The following graph shows that for each characteristic, X% of the respondents chose that trait as one of their top three selections

The 10 Characteristics

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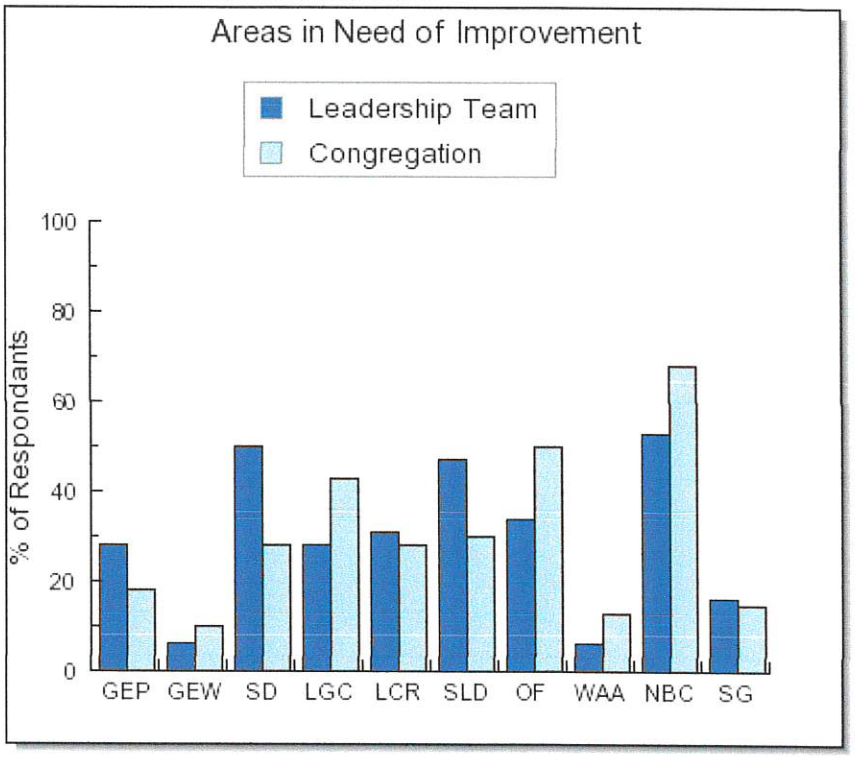

Note: Pay careful attention to areas where there was a stark discrepancy between what the Congregation said and what the Leadership Team said. Discuss why you think this discrepancy exists.

The Congregation identified the characteristics most in need of improvement as follows (more than one trait indicates a tie in percentage response):

68% of the Congregation chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three areas in need of improvement."

Networking with the Body of Christ Generally, when your congregation identifies "Networking with the Body of Christ" as a trait in need of improvement, they are voicing their fears about becoming exclusive and distant from the wider community of believers (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is highlighted). They do not want the church to become watered down in your shared convictions about "unity" among other congregations. Instead, they are desirous of connecting with others of like mind and heart in places where Christ-centered worship, community service opportunities, church facilities and training events can all be shared in a spirit of cooperation and collective witness. Congregations with a "kingdom" mentality are richly blessed as they combine their efforts and resources for building up the body of Christ with others who share our faith commitment in Christ.

50% of the Congregation chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three areas in need of improvement."

An Outward Focus Generally, when your congregation identifies "Outward Focus" as a trait in need of improvement, they are expressing collectively their concern about the local church's lack of outreach (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is highlighted). This may include reaching out evangelistically to unchurched neighbors, serving the tangible needs of people in impoverished communities, practicing hospitality to internationals living in our country, and/or supporting missionaries in other parts of the world. When this trait of a healthy church is lacking in your faith community, there are many ways to transform your shared mission toward strategic initiatives of outreach. Capture the best ideas among your members and mobilize as many as possible to engage in the Great Commission of "going and making disciples of every nation" for the sake of building up the kingdom of God.

43% of the Congregation chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three areas in need of improvement."

Learning & Growing in Community Generally, when your congregation identifies "Learning and Growing in Community" as a trait in need of improvement, the people are sharing their collective concern about the lack of community-building opportunities within the church (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is highlighted). In addition, there may in fact be concern about the existing "group" experiences that the church offers, which may not be meeting the expectations of your members and attendees. Concentrating creative efforts toward the enhancement of community life will lead to meaningful growth within the context of safe, affirming environments. The word "community" will require special focus, resulting in a deeper walk of faith side-by-side as the family of God.

Out of all 70 questions, the Congregation gave the following specific questions their lowest marks (more than one question indicates a tie in mean response):

1. **Mean Score: 1.71 out of 5**
   How often does our church join area-wide celebrations where Christians from other churches worship God together? (NBC)

2. **Mean Score: 2.67 out of 5**
   Do our ministry leaders receive training for their specific ministry with other leaders from other churches? (NBC)

3. **Mean Score: 2.86 out of 5**
   How well does our church serve as a place for supporting the needs of single adults? (LCR)

The Leadership Team identified the characteristics most in need of improvement as follows (more than one trait indicates a tie in percentage response):

53% of the Leadership Team chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three areas in need of improvement."

Networking with the Body of Christ Generally, when your leadership team identifies "Networking with the Body of Christ" as a trait in need of improvement, there is concern about how minimal is the contact of the local church with the wider body of Christ (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is highlighted). When churches are connecting in a healthy way with other like-minded local churches, there is collaboration, sharing of resources and learning opportunities, as well as united celebrations of worship. Evidence of unity among like-minded churches will also include pastors from various churches who enjoy being together for prayer, friendship, and iron-sharpening-iron spiritual growth. Leaders acknowledge that this is not a watering down of theological conviction, nor is it acquiescing to liberal ecumenism, but instead an opportunity to be strengthened by the unity expressed in Jesus' prayer for His Church in John 17.

50% of the Leadership Team chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three areas in need of improvement."

Spiritual Disciplines Generally, when your leadership team identifies "Spiritual Disciplines" as a trait in need of improvement, the anxiety being expressed is in recognition of the lack of attention given to the spiritual vitality of each member (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is highlighted). Practicing the ongoing disciplines of prayer, Scripture, and reflection will enhance daily personal worship experiences for all ages. When this priority is established, a lifestyle of worship is promoted and achieved. Encouraging all leaders to pursue regular times with the Lord will have a ripple effect throughout the congregation. This trait is vital to the health of the church and will affect every other aspect of the ministry.

47% of the Leadership Team chose the following trait(s) as one of their "top three areas in need of improvement."

Servant-Leadership Development Generally, when your leadership team identifies "Servant Leadership Development"

as a trait in need of improvement, there is a recognition that too few people are handling too much responsibility (consult your detailed findings for specific ways in which this trait is highlighted). If this is true, this will allow you the opportunity to begin fresh initiatives that will assist members in discovering their God-given gifts, provide places to utilize their gifts, train in the development of gifts, and commission members to serve God in a vast array of ministry arenas within and outside the local church. Creating an environment of servant leadership will empower and assimilate many in the active ministry of the local church.

Out of all 70 questions, the Leadership Team gave the following specific questions their lowest marks (more than one question indicates a tie in mean response):

1. **Mean Score: 1.96 out of 5**
   How often does our church join area-wide celebrations where Christians from other churches worship God together? (NBC)

2. **Mean Score: 2.66 out of 5**
   How well does our church encourage and equip its members to practice reflection (such as journaling, prayerfully reviewing the day's events, etc.)? (SD)

3. **Mean Score: 2.82 out of 5**
   How well does our church serve as a place for supporting the needs of single adults? (LCR)

Appendix D.

Committee Members

Kimberly Caldwell
Kathryn Dunlevy-Wilson
John Dynes
Aaron Heizer
Gary Jens
Ken Johnson
Garry Neuschwanger
Cheryl Rugh
Carolyn Straight
Ken Wilcox