

First Church of Christ, Congregational, 1652
Summary
Congregational Survey, Summer 2009

40% of members responded to the survey. This is a very high rate. Most churches return about 18%.

Survey Highlights

- Overall, we are satisfied with the tasks that the church performs, ranging between 69% and 94% satisfaction when combining the very satisfied and generally satisfied categories, with the highest areas of satisfaction being worship and Christian education.
- We feel that our strongest task areas are meaningful worship, Christian education and contemporary worship.
- The top areas where we would like to see growth are: helping members discover their own gifts for ministry and service 12%; helping members understand their use of time, talents, and money as expressions of Christian stewardship 11%; engaging in acts of charity and service for persons in need 9%;and, helping members deepen their personal and spiritual relationship with God 7%.
- We differ in how we view our identity and mission, with between 66-69% generally agreeing, and 31-34% generally disagreeing with the statements.
- We also differ in the way we perceive our organizational characteristics.
- We often see ourselves as 'taking the middle ground' when defining our identity. Exceptions to this general perception include our approach to individual salvation, our belief that we are a prestigious church, and our willingness to partner with other churches.
- Although we rate meaningful worship as our strongest task, there are some differences in how we view it, with between 69-73% expressing some level of satisfaction with the music, the worship and the way spiritual needs are met, and 27-31% expressing some level of dissatisfaction.
- Most of us are initially attracted to First Church because of the ministers, the worship style, and the child & youth program and the denominational ties.
- We remain here for similar reasons and because we make friends. The highest rated areas for remaining at the church are the ministers, the worship style, the children and youth program, and friends.
- In general, we believe that the Bible is written by humans according to their beliefs in God, and the moral beliefs contained within must be interpreted in today's context. However, a large percentage of members see it as the written word of God and others who see it as a valuable book.
- Just as we have some diversity in how we view the Bible, we are diverse in our beliefs in ways to salvation, the development of humans, Jesus' resurrection, how we view religions, social justice and evangelism.

- Church Participation Statistics Include:
 - 51% of our respondents have been members for 10 years or more, 47% for 9 years or less, and 2% are not members;
 - 53% of our respondents attend service 2 or more times a month, 47% attend once a month or less;
 - Approximately 70% of our respondents belong to 1 or no committee or group in the church; approximately 30% belong to 2 or more;
 - 64% of respondents have continued or increased their level of activity, 36% have decreased their level. The highest rated reason for increase was accepting an office or responsibility, the highest rated reason for decrease was less time available; and
 - 50% of our respondents have never invited anyone to visit or join the church, 21% have invited one person, and approximately 30% two or more.
- Key Demographics Include:
 - The respondents were largely white (98%), female (65%) and married (72%);
 - 78% of the respondents were age 45 and above; approximately 22% were age 44 and under;
 - 57% of respondents work either full or part time, with 64% being in professional occupations;
 - We come from a wide variety of religious backgrounds;
 - 52% of our respondents live in households with one or more adults and with children, 34% live as couples without children;
 - Approximately 79% of the respondents have lived in the area for 10 or more years, approximately 21% for 9 or fewer years; and
 - 53% of respondents earn \$100,000 or more a year or more, 47% earn \$99,999 or less.

Food for Thought

The written comments and the survey results demonstrate that our beliefs cover a spectrum and that we hold a range of perspectives on the relation of faith to social and political questions.

- While the survey results identify worship as a strength, the comments indicated areas where it can be improved.
- Some members think we speak too little about social issues; others think we need more discussion.
- Most agree that we should work harder to welcome new members.

Opportunities for growth include:

- Learning to listen better to each other, to accept and value our diversity.
- Working with each other to grow in fellowship and spirituality.