

## Summary of Congregational Survey Results

### Sept, 2016

Thank you for your participation in the Congregational Survey as part of our JNAC. It is important to get feedback from as many members of the congregation as possible. We said that we would provide you with a synopsis of the results of the survey since they will not show up as a summary in the JNAC Report but contain important information on our congregation.

- 122 surveys were received
- 2.48 % of respondents were aged 12 – 17; 5.79% were aged 18 – 30; 9.92% were aged 30 – 39; 6.61% were aged 40 – 49; 16.53% were aged 50 – 59; 36.36% were aged 60 – 69; 14.88% were aged 70 – 79; 7.44% were aged 80+
- 51% said they attended 3 or more times per month; 28% said they attend 1 or 2 times per month; 9% said they attend every few weeks; 11% said they attend rarely. Of those who provided a reason for not attending, the reasons given were work schedule, travel, other commitments (family, children’s activities, etc.), illness, service time, being too busy, attend less in the summer
- In response to the request to rank what we believe to be priorities for St. Thomas, many people indicated they found this difficult because all of them were important. Of those that did provide a ranking, Worship was the highest priority followed by music, fellowship and welcoming, programs and ministries, and outreach.
- 86.6% said their needs were being met. Additional things that people stated they were looking for included:
  - Stronger connection to the local community
  - More fellowship/community building opportunities for younger families and for all ages
  - Young Adult ministry
  - Ways to build more involvement and enthusiasm among members
  - Relevant worship/sermons that connect to current events
- 29% believe St. Thomas is very liberal; 54% believe St. Thomas is somewhat liberal; 12% believe St. Thomas is in the middle of the spectrum; 5% said St. Thomas is somewhat traditional
- 36% say they are very liberal; 34% say they are somewhat liberal; 18% say they are in the middle of the spectrum; 8.5% say they are somewhat traditional; 2.9% say they are very traditional
- 96% believe that other beliefs are accepted and/or welcomed at St. Thomas.
- Characteristics the survey respondents felt the ministers should have included:
  - Ability to provide messages relevant to today
  - Ability to challenge/well educated/knowledgeable
  - Good speaking skills
  - Good communication skills
  - Compassionate, empathetic, kind, caring, accepting
  - Sense of humour
  - Friendly, warm, welcoming, strong interpersonal skills, good listener, approachable, down to earth
  - Ability to work with various age groups, ability to empower people/foster lay leadership
  - A team player
  - Open minded, flexible, slow to judge
  - Walk with congregation/involvement not control/servant leadership/collaborative
  - Good organizational skills

- What did respondents like about past staff that they would like to see continue or be re-instated?
  - Excellent messages: relevant to today, challenging, provided historical context, use of video clips/technology
  - Excellent pastoral care skills
  - Approachable, friendly, empathetic, caring, compassionate, accepting
  - Empowered congregation, ability to inspire lay leaders
  - Walking with us/being part of the community
  - Good communication
  - Team player, collaborative style
  - Sense of humour
  - Open minded
  - Music – using both old and new, involvement with the programs
- What did respondent want to see less of?
  - A variety of comments about announcements – will be passed to the worship committee
  - Services that go over an hour
  - Variety of comments both for and against use of technology
  - Minister driven &/or controlled environment
  - Aloofness/cockiness
- What additional things did respondents want the ministers to do?
  - Empower the congregation/lead from within/inspire lay folks
  - Greater visibility in surrounding community
  - Engage children/youth more in service
  - More Bible/book studies
  - Be involved in social events at the Church, mingle with congregation
  - Alternative or mid week service
- What is the role of the congregation in supporting the ministries?
  - Attend church
  - Volunteer
  - Participate in activities
  - Provide leadership for committees and initiatives
  - Financial support
  - Be welcoming, build relationships (community)
  - Constructive feedback, new ideas
  - Support the ministers in their work
  - Show appreciation
  - Provide the vision for the congregation
- What is your role in supporting the ministers?
  - Same answers received as to the previous question

- What do you see as the roles of the ministers?
  - Spiritual leadership
  - Pastoral care
  - Weddings, funerals, baptisms
  - Providing faith building opportunities, religious education for all ages
  - Prepare worship – make it relevant to today, messages that challenge our thinking and actions
  - Outreach/social justice
  - Friendly and welcoming to all, good listeners, approachable
  - Appreciate, encourage and empower volunteers, help develop lay leaders
  - Engaging children and youth in the congregation
  - Collaborate with each other and the committees/congregation...be part of the wider team
  - Advisors to committees
- What do you see as the main roles of lay leaders?
  - Committee work
  - Manage the property
  - Manage the finances
  - Bridge between the ministers and the congregation
  - Establish priorities/set direction for the Church/lead the Church
  - Ensure ministry staff is on the path set by the congregation/challenge if not
  - Initiate programs
  - Recruit volunteers
  - Support the ministers/offload task from staff
  - Assist with worship e.g. scripture readers, communion servers, etc.
  - Welcoming new people, promote community
  - Show appreciation for staff and volunteers
  - Support Sunday School, youth, religious education, programs
  - outreach
- Additional comments
  - A variety of comments around the need for the ministers to be team players with other staff members and with the lay leadership and congregation
  - Concerns expressed that we don't burn Tracy out in this interim period
  - Need to empower lay leaders/committees to fulfill their mandates
  - Need for programs/worship that attracts young families, youth, young adults
  - Desire to grow the congregation and diversify membership
  - Most comments re-iterated answers to the above questions