

Congregational Self-analysis Survey

In late October of 2018, the people of St. Andrew's Presbyterian church were asked to fill out a survey over the course of three weeks. The survey was to verify some basic demographic information, but more importantly, for the purpose of determining the priorities and goals of this particular church body, the direction they feel God is leading them, and what they feel may help them move in that direction more effectively. The underlying concept is that once we know the direction we are taking, it will become more clear what qualities we will need in the person who will lead us there.

The survey was divided into seven sections: demographics, personal experience at St. Andrews, evaluation of our Sunday worship, congregational support, Christian education and youth ministries, mission and evangelism, and finally, a personal ranking of pastoral roles. While multiple choice answers made analysis of many questions clear, open-ended questions allowed for a wider range of answers, that needed to be grouped into categories for analysis purposes. While every effort was made to keep this process objective, it should be kept in mind that by very nature the process of categorization was a subjective one, based on interpretation of individual answers. We are also reminded that, *"Needs are tricky things to discern, as I assume many people will often mistake their unmet preferences for needs. It would seem like a mis-step to hire a pastor based on the felt needs of the congregation *as a primary criterion*. The congregation might also benefit from someone who could challenge the congregation with the message of the Scriptures."*

Survey Results: of 186 surveys completed

Demographics:

More complete demographic data is available elsewhere and demographic highlights from this survey can be found in the appendix. However, it is important to note that roughly half of the surveys completed came from each of the Sunday worship services (9 and 11 o'clock). Of those surveyed, just over 30% have attended St. Andrew's longer than 25 years. Otherwise there was good variety in years of attendance, including an encouraging 16.6% that have joined St. Andrew's within the last 5 years.

Personal Experience at St. Andrew's:

Responses in this category were varied but included several main themes. The top reasons people gave for attending St. Andrew's were that they see it as a Bible based/Christ centered church, and they appreciate the fellowship they share with a friendly and caring congregation. These, along with missions and youth ministries were seen as some of our main strengths. Interestingly, some of those areas of strength were also prioritized as areas needing further growth (missions, more congregational participation, more youth and young families). People at St. Andrew's tend to be most involved in Bible studies, some area of governance, missions, youth, and music ministries.

Sunday Worship Services:

Responses were generally favourable (scoring on average 4 out of 5) in regard to how well the sermon, music and prayers meet people's needs, and how people feel the Sunday service connects

with them. Respondents feel less strongly that the service connects with teens (scoring an average of just 3 out of 5). A large number of comments in this section of the survey noted that they appreciated the two different styles of services offered. It is interesting to note that several people also commented that they would prefer to combine the two services into one, or at least increase interaction between the two groups. A variety of suggestions were put forth as to how the service might be improved/changed, ranging from sermon and music improvements, to greater involvement of laity and youth in the services (Bible readings, prayer, responsive readings, skits, dance, taking up offering, youth choir, etc.)

Congregational Support:

Responses in this category were quite favourable, with people giving an average score of 4/5 on how well they feel cared for by the congregation and leaders at St. Andrew's. Comments were overwhelmingly positive as well, the largest concern being a request for better communication of needs, so that people would be better equipped to pray/meet those needs, along with a desire for greater connection between members of the congregation, including elders.

Christian Education and Youth Ministries:

People generally feel that Bible studies and Sunday School programs at St. Andrew's are spiritually stimulating, 80% of respondents giving them a rating of 4 or 5 out of 5. Again, respondents feel less strongly that teens' and young adults' needs are being met, the majority of respondents rating education ministries a 3 or 4 out of 5 for this age group. People feel that the most alive/exciting programs at our church are youth, missions, Bible studies, and music. Ideas for where we might expand our education and youth ministries were varied, including many suggestions for more local missions, as well as programs for teens (especially girls), young families and couples, education around social issues, etc.

Mission and Evangelism:

While the average score for how well our church does at attracting newcomers was a modest 3 out of 5, the church scored a stronger 4 out of 5 for how well new people are welcomed and integrated into our community. People report feeling welcomed first and foremost by the congregation members, but also by greeters, and church leaders, especially during coffee hour and other events, and by getting involved in church activity and ministry themselves. A small number of respondents reported not feeling welcomed. Respondents commented that we could do more to reach teens, young adults/families/couples. Most respondents gave the church a 3 or 4 out of 5 for how well we minister to our community, although many commented that we should be doing more mission outreach locally. Most feel that the church does a good job ministering to people throughout the world, largely through our Haiti and Nicaragua ministries, as well as Women on a Mission, refugee sponsorship, and Presbyterian World Sharing. Many also voiced a desire to do more global mission outreach and to hear more information/updates about what we already do.

Pastoral Roles Inventory

The rankings for pastoral priorities were determined based on total number of votes received, regardless of what number (from 1-6) that role was ranked. The pastoral role that received the

most votes in total, as well as the most first place rankings, is the pastor's ability to lead worship and preach. Also important to the congregation of St. Andrew's are personal and spiritual development, crisis visiting, Christian education, and equipping church members, followed by leadership development and counselling to a slightly lesser extent. (see Appendix)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the congregational survey paints an encouraging picture of a growing and vibrant Christian community, made up of friendly people, generous of heart, with a desire to reach out within their own church family, to their local community, as well as to the world. While we certainly have ideas for doing more, the St. Andrew's family is a body made of many active members, each working to complete their role to the best of their ability.

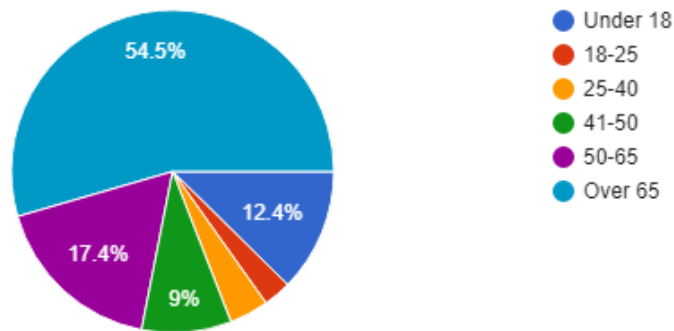
"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all." 1 Cor 12:4-7

To God be the glory.

Appendix: Demographics

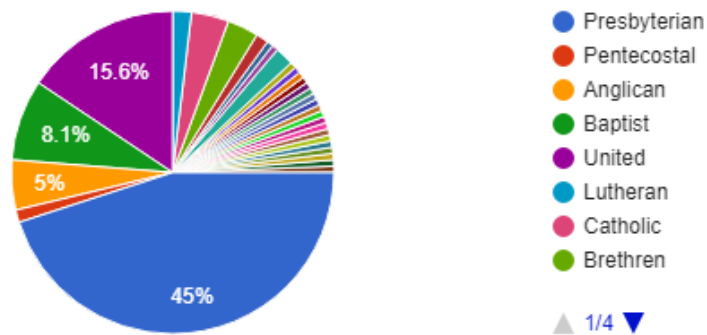
Age Group

178 responses



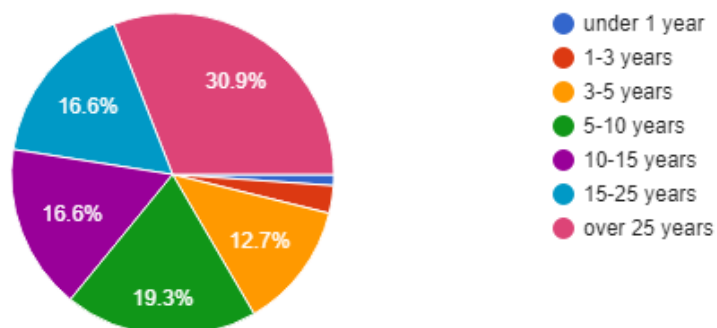
Your Denominational Background

160 responses



How long have you been attending St. Andrews

181 responses



Pastoral Roles Prioritized

Rank	Pastoral Role and Interest Category	# of votes
1	Leading worship and preaching	133
2	Personal and spiritual development	107
3	Crisis visiting	106
4	Christian Education	94
5	Equipping church members	93
6	Leadership development	71