

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FALL 2009 SURVEY

Overall participation and Demographics:

- Overall participation was better than anticipated with 1073 responses from a mailing list of approximately 2,500 and a membership of about 2,000, or approximately a 43% response rate. While there may be speculation that a greater response might have produced different results, Session must act upon the information at hand.
- The demographic distribution of the respondents appears to reflect the participation of our membership in general at CPC with the exception of the age being skewed towards the more mature segment, as only 25% of respondents were 45 years old or less. A key learning is that CPC is composed predominantly of married people (87%) who are parents (93%)

The good news:

- Overall the respondents to the survey are excited and positive about CPC.
- 99.4% of the respondents believe in Jesus and almost half feel really close to Him and depend on Him for daily guidance.
- There was a significant positive response (~85%) by respondents who have experienced recent spiritual growth (at CPC) and whose involvement with CPC ministries has contributed to spiritual growth.
- Overall the survey confirms we are a congregation of strong sincere believers with many serving in a variety of ways within the CPC community and a huge number of our people engaged with our community in multiple, significant ways.
- There does not appear to be significant widespread dissatisfaction or a mandate for any single change. Individual comments reflect some things / topics we could or should do differently but the amount of data on these topics is inconclusive and requires further analysis and interpretation.
- Our members feel deeply about a variety of cultural issues and would welcome practical advice and instruction on how to witness to the community as they address these social concerns.
- We have a strong emphasis on marriage and families.

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Areas for further evaluation: There were a wide range of comments to the various survey questions with no dominant concerns. After carefully reviewing all of the survey comments, the Session identified a number of opportunity areas to consider for improvement:

1. The single most compelling piece of information is that very few people identify themselves as a “new” Christian. The fact that only 2% consider themselves to be Christians 5 years or less and that 7% consider themselves to be Christians 10 years or less **suggests that we must increase our emphasis on evangelism.** This should in turn have a positive impact on attracting younger people, married or single.
2. Undertake an **evaluation of our preaching** to determine if any changes in style or format would be appropriate. Comments seem to suggest there is a segment of people who want more strong biblical teaching and a change in worship, but it is not clear what type of worship they want. This is consistent with cultural shifts we are observing in the evangelical church from seeker sensitive to more serious expositional cognitive style. Within the comments some people express a desire to have “more meat” in our sermons / teachings and to dive deeper into the scripture.
3. From the responses we cannot discern whether or not peoples’ needs for spiritual growth are being adequately met by their experience at CPC, and if not, what area is falling short. At the next opportunity we should ask our congregation **how well CPC does in meeting their needs** in each of the areas people identified in response to Question 16 (“If I attend worship services / prayer gatherings other than at CPC, I do so to”) in the fall 2009 survey.
4. Some people feel that they are disconnected to the greater body. In future surveys we need to ask people to identify if they are in any type of Small Group formal or informal (e.g. Focused Living)) so that we can better determine **the impact of Small Group relationships on peoples sense of “connectedness”** and what would motivate people to attend CPC regularly.
5. There are many more members who may be interested in getting involved. Leaders of each ministry need to **inform the congregation about volunteer and mission opportunities available**, as well as provide a list of specific needs as they arise through a variety of means such as posting information at the hospitality tables, ministry fairs, electronically (such as broadcast emails and the CPC website) in publications (such as CPC bulletins and ALIVE), and announcements.
6. Consider and evaluate extending time individuals spend at church on **Sunday mornings to include adult equipping offerings.**
7. Create opportunities for people to **develop the disciplines of listening prayer and confession.**
8. Since a significant majority hold either a neutral or negative attitude toward the PC(USA) it is vital that our congregation enter into an open and transparent process of education and dialogue around the **issues of our affiliation with the PC(USA).**
9. Structure future educational opportunities (e.g. classes, seminars, sermons) around the cultural issues our congregation has identified and are passionate about and **provide practical advice and instruction on how to witness to the community** as they address social concerns.