



Theme-Based Dashboard

Church Leadership and Transformational Change: 21st Century Strategies

Total Convergence Participants: 23
 Processed: 14 (61%)
 Outstanding: 9 (39%)
 Latest response: Yesterday, at 7:35 pm

AI= 79 36 =Sentiment

Theme Set: Topic Themes

Category Statistics

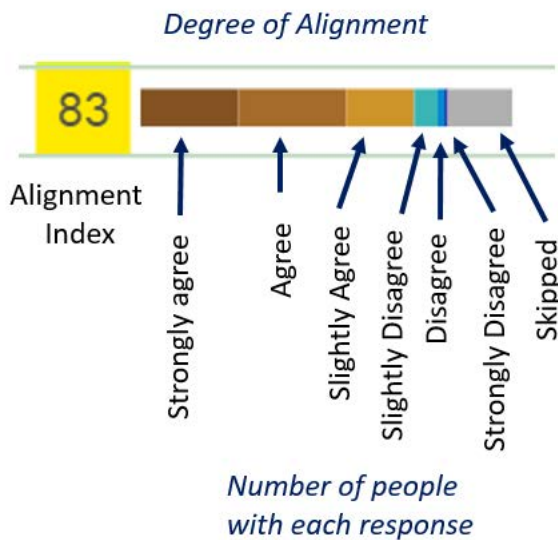
| Description | AI | Points Raised | SchellingPoints | Convergent | Moderately Convergent | Divergent | Minimal (Discard) |
|--|----|---------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Goals/Objectives/Indicators of Success | 78 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Potential Unintended Consequences | 70 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Issues and Barriers | 78 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Underlying Assumptions/Current State | 80 | 15 | 4 (+1) | 5 (-1) | 2 | 4 (+1) | 0 (-1) |

Points

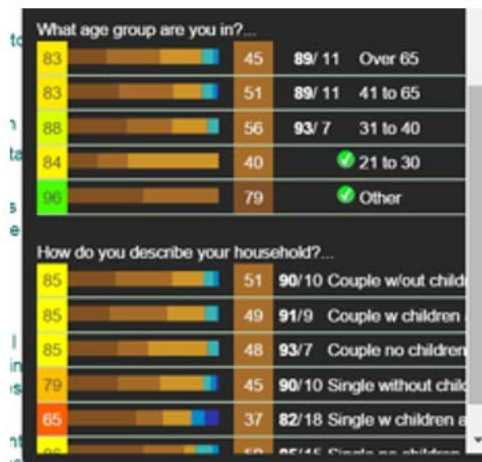
Explanation of analytics on the following pages.
 (NOTE: this example is from a different survey)

Please contact Tracy Morgan (tmorgan@north-star-strategies.com) for questions on analytics.

Example: "We actively welcome diverse views and beliefs."



Responses by demographic group



Comments

- I think we don't stretch ourselves and expand our outlook enough and tend to seek out those we can most easily bond with.
- Generally I feel most people are not open to hearing the views of others, especially more fundamental or 'conservative' viewpoints

▼ **Essential**

A UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS/CURRENT STATE

| | | | |
|--|----|--|----|
| Caring for people in need is an essential aspect of a church. | 98 | | 85 |
| Teaching is an essential aspect of a church. | 94 | | 71 |
| Praying in community is an essential aspect of a church. | 86 | | 60 |
| ▼ Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with people outside the congregation is an essential aspect of a church. | 75 | | 49 |

- This--to me--is evangelical Christianity. I don't believe that I should ever force my own beliefs on someone else. My belief in God is private. While I have tried to share my faith with my own children, because I would like them to have a faith they can have, especially during times of trouble, I otherwise do not like proselytizing, and I will not bring up my faith unless someone directly asks me about it.

| | | | |
|--|----|--|---|
| ▼ Visible prayer is an important part of ministry when out in the community. | 49 | | 2 |
|--|----|--|---|

- Our Episcopalian priests give ashes on Lent on a downtown Binghamton, NY, street corner each year. It has been then reported on TV. The 5:05 service in Wilmington, Delaware, is highly visible to passersby's on the waterfront. Both are ways of witnessing.
- Showing off in prayer is not appropriate. Being mindfully prayerful is. For example, Grace at table in a restaurant is appropriate. Invocations at gatherings. Blocking the sidewalk while making a long and loud prayer designed more to make those around uncomfortable or to make a statement of my group's piety is not.
- I am not exactly certain what "visible" prayer means. However, if it means that we need to be seen praying in public as we do ministry I tend agree: before meals, thanking God, asking for guidance, as part of Laundry Love or Pub Theology, etc. The prayers do not have to be long and should not be ostentatious.
- We might say a blessing amongst ourselves before serving a meal, for example, and bring a prayer book if anyone we are serving requests time with a minister.
- "Ashes to Go" at railroad stations has been visible and meaningful, as are marches on good Friday. I think how I lead my life, what I am involved in and being willing to talk about my faith is more important than "visible prayer".
- Asking others if we can pray for them is a "easy" opportunity to begin to build the relationship with that gives us the opening to share Christ. As part of a group that has been meeting at a public place, those who have come to know us and have seen us pray now feel comfortable asking us to pray.

Orthodoxy

G GOALS/OBJECTIVES/INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

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|--|----|--|-----|
| <p>Members of a church should affirm the orthodoxy of the denomination even when they sometimes have doubts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have always believed that my Episcopal faith allowed me to practice my faith and search for God while at the same time doubting some of the traditions. Plus, I find some comfort in following a more traditional service (what I consider the orthodoxy mentioned here) and I get thrown off my faith "game" when the service changes too often. I am likely reading this more narrowly than others. There is an underlying assumption in the sentence that the members understand or even know the "orthodoxy" (which I defining narrowly - very basic). My response reflects my belief that we need to better understand what the doubt is - often I have found the doubt to be a misunderstanding of the concept. Doubts should be expressed to a person with pastoral responsibility for sure. However I don't think saying the Creeds can be optional, for example. Church teachings provide a direction for people... it reminds us what is right and often you get no help when you need it most. And, if you reject parts of the faith because you sometimes disagree... you are assuming you are right and the rest of the group is wrong. | 82 | | -36 |
| <p>For church growth, more focus should be placed on sharing common spiritual practices than having common beliefs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Again, this seems too broad a blanket statement to completely agree with. Common spiritual practices and/or common beliefs should be shared because of commitment thereto not shaped by one's hope to lead to church growth. My context is likely different from others - large church near a major university in an area that is not yet experiencing post-Christendom (although it is coming). People want to know what our parish believes vs what others (esp Catholic and evangelical) believe. Many, especially the younger ones, are looking for practices that reflect the beliefs. I think spiritual practices are rooted in beliefs, not the other way round. However, for newcomers to the faith, I think they can share in spiritual practices before the affirm beliefs. If by spiritual practice you mean ministry to those in need, then I would agree that this practice can be very powerful. If you mean sitting down and talking, then, I am not so sure, although for those engaged together in ministry this may be useful and fun. so I guess I switch. I feel common core beliefs are necessary in order to share practices. The common beliefs tie people together despite every effort to undermine the important of common beliefs in the rest of our society. The constitution, pledge of allegiance, Boy Scout oath and historical traditions all reinforce common beliefs and are often attacked. You can't undermine common beliefs just to expand the group or facilitate the change a minority seeks. | 69 | | 14 |

A UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS/CURRENT STATE

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|---|----|--|-----|
| <p>Questioning orthodoxy is part of our historical religious culture.</p> | 93 | | 68 |
| <p>Reciting beliefs out loud during worship is inauthentic in a church that publicly states welcoming people with theological questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think this question was a bit hard to understand, and to be honest, when I answered it, I had a different thought about what it meant than I do now. If it means that I think reciting prayers from a prayer book is inauthentic, then...well, I would actually disagree with this. There is something about doing a set service that is some ways calming and centering, and thus can help me reach a meditative state. If, however, this refers to "calling back" such as "Hallelujah" or "Praise the Lord," I don't feel comfortable doing that. If we truly welcome people with theological questions and then publically recite what WE believe, how will those with questions feel comfortable asking those questions? I think that these are opportunities for conversation - both listening to those with questions and then being open to that conversation that helps to let them know what we believe. | 60 | | -14 |

Demographics

B ISSUES AND BARRIERS

Too many of our churches have a congregation that does not reflect the demographics of the surrounding community. 84 49

A UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS/CURRENT STATE

Without making an intentional effort to attract and engage younger people, a church will die. 82 45




- I think sometimes churches try to "attract" a younger crowd and give up traditions or core values and purposes of the church. That being said, obviously an aging church will not last forever and so a new generation needs to become a part in order to remain vital.

Depending upon pledges of members needs to change because younger people are reluctant to join formal organizations. 74 30

- The church needs to be able to plan a budget so pledges are needed for the bulk of income.
- 'Young people' join groups all the time, many of which make higher demands on their time, talent, and treasure than the church does. The issue is whether or not the demands made translate into meaningful, purposeful action toward a better world. If the dots don't connect, neither do the dollars. And I don't blame them one bit.
- I might have answered differently the sentence had been worded differently. I agree that in general we need to decrease emphasis on pledging and increase emphasis on giving. I have seen an increase in giving but decrease in pledging. Reluctance to join formal organizations is only part of the issue.
- Young people - and old people and all those in between - need to be taught about stewardship. We are missing a great blessing by not understanding the whole idea of stewardship.

▼ Diversity


A UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS/CURRENT STATE

| | | | |
|---|----|---|----|
| A person can be loyal to their own beliefs and practices while affirming others. | 94 |  | 78 |
| Genuinely listening to one another's experiences to learn from them is essential for a vital church community. | 93 |  | 71 |
| ▼ The early church, with many diverse theological viewpoints coexisting within Christianity, is analogous to the many types of religions coexisting in our society today. | 63 |  | 17 |

- Just look at how Trump got elected last year--there are some evangelical and fundamental believers who feel very strongly that there are behaviors that are unacceptable and should be damned. There are others who believe in a more liberal faith that believes that their version of God is all-merciful and more tolerant of diversity. This is much like James, the brother of Jesus, who believed Jesus wanted Jews to remain Jews but to believe Jesus was the Messiah, versus the beliefs of Peter or Paul.
- I misread this statement. the diversity within Christianity today and in the early church is somewhat analogous. The plurality of religions in the first century and today could also be analogous. Analogy within Christianity of the 1st century and across all religions today is not analogous.
- I slightly agree
- It depends on how tightly we want to draw the analogy and for what purpose.
- "Types of religions" is not completely analogous to "theological viewpoints", but there are similarities in that we are seeking to show God's presence in a society that has diverse faith identities and organizations, and we have to make it all work together.
- How do we know that our version of CHRISTianity is THE right way? I believe that we need to meet Christians where they are in their faith journey and help them to grow by testing their theology with what the Bible confirms or denys. We need to make disciples who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world - not drive them away.


▼ Clergy

G GOALS/OBJECTIVES/INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

Denominational leaders should increase promotion of alternative models to a church with a physical building and full time minister. 86  49


- I'm sort of not sure what this question means. If it means online services or other non-traditional techniques, I'm on the fence about this idea. If it were done well, maybe it would be okay, or at the least, could provide the possibility of a service for those who couldn't go to church that week. If it means slide show presentations or hymn sings where we follow the bouncing ball instead of using a hymnal, thanks but no thanks.
- Increase over what they do now? Many church leaders are exploring new models... leaving the traditional. New demoninations are inspired all the time. New church start and fail every year. People interested in change can elect to go to the newer churches. To me, this question is seeking permission to abandon the current practices and teaching of the faith so it's more convenient and less hard.

U POTENTIAL UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES


Young people won't go to seminary unless they can expect to be paid reasonably as a full time minister. 75  19

▼ **Collaboration**

G GOALS/OBJECTIVES/INDICATORS OF SUCCESS



- ▼ There should be more collaborative worship services among churches of different denominations. 90  65
- We have a number of churches in our area that are Presbyterian/Episcopalian or Lutheran/Episcopalian and the services just don't appeal to me. Likewise, I do not feel comfortable with more evangelical faith traditions, and so I would not feel comfortable in a collaborative service that incorporated aspects of this. This being said, I used to like the idea of collapsing the Methodist/Lutheran/Episcopal churches into a more universal Protestant religion. Practically speaking, I don't think it works well, though.
 - This sounds this a twit, but a couple thoughts: 1. I'd love to just simply focus for awhile on better worship within our own walls, before venturing into shared endeavors; 2. When we ARE ready to share worship well, we should lean toward Interfaith, rather than Ecumenical.

A UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS/CURRENT STATE


Collaboration among small churches is an effective way to share the costs of running churches. 93  66

▼ Place

G GOALS/OBJECTIVES/INDICATORS OF SUCCESS


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|---|----|---|----|
| More ministry should take place outside the sanctuary. | 96 |  | 79 |
| ▼ Denominational leaders should give online church communities the same level of respect as those with a physical building. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is such wide disparity in the quality, range, followers and offerings of online church communities, it seems not ALL would be entitled to the same level of respect. • Online communities are very important but my experience is that they tend to lack a certain degree of connection that comes with a face-to-face gathering. The question also raises for me issues about missional communities that may not have a building. Finally, not sure what "respect" encompasses: attention, resources, financing? • Online experiences should supplement the traditional experience but not be equal to. We must extend church to a generation that seeks to engage the world electronically... but it's different and should be a compliment to and not equal to physical church | 79 |  | 37 |

B ISSUES AND BARRIERS

| | | | |
|--|----|---|----|
| Online church communities lack the spiritual depth that comes from face-to-face relationships. | 71 |  | 11 |
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▼ **Innovate**

G GOALS/OBJECTIVES/INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

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- ▼ Denominational leaders should invest more resources into innovative approaches. 84  47
- See above.
 - As much as some believe that seeking innovative approaches brings people together...I think it also repels people from their current faith. We should experiment, but not at the expense of the core principles.

Change

G GOALS/OBJECTIVES/INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- ▼ The church should remain steadfast in its beliefs rather than changing to meet the culture. 62 2

 - While cultural shifts may impact how certain things are done or approached or explained, I don't see how it makes sense to change beliefs to meet the culture.
 - Refer to both answers above. In addition, its the core values that should remain unchanged. Love, reconciliation, Justice, the beloved community, the world house, etc. Most beliefs, in my observation, in mainline churches no longer support these core values.
 - I realize my answer to this seems to contradict what I just said above. I guess when I answered this, I was thinking about the changes we have undergone to allow women and LGBT to be priests. Maybe I'm liberal when it comes to beliefs and conservative when it comes to liturgy...
 - I believe the church should stand over against the culture of consumerism, greed, neglect of people, abuse of the environment. The church should carefully examine its stands on human sexuality, the role of women, welcoming of diversity and not meet the culture but reexamine its understanding realizing that revelation from God is ongoing. Too long we have bent to the ways of the dominant culture rather than the teachings of God. That is where we have made our mistakes. We must realize that our dogmatic beliefs were often shaped by the culture rather than a richer understanding of scripture. We need to do a lot more loving and a lot less believing.
 - We should not become so caught up in legalism and "being right" about our beliefs that we miss bringing people to know Christ. There are some who are so bent on being right that they have completely missed the mark. We are not the judge - God will do that.

- ▼ Churches should make changes to liturgy to be seen as more authentic. 56 8

 - Again, the phrasing just seems offensive: changes should be made because they ARE authentic, not to be seen as more authentic . . .
 - Why do we need to keep changing the liturgy to be authentic? What is INauthentic about the traditional service? In a world that is constantly changing, I take comfort from not having a lot of changes in my Sunday morning service. It's the one place where I might be able to gain balance again. Plus, our church changes the liturgy virtually every week, which really is off-putting to me.
 - Again, see above: I think 'more authentic' would be to perform our core liturgical life well first, before innovating, and any innovation must be contextual, 'taking on the flesh' of its time and place, not merely change for the sake of change.
 - Our "traditional" liturgy is considered a positive in our community; but we also have a contemporary service (with band) that is very family friendly (young children are acolytes, readers, etc) - this service follows Rite II closely. This is not to say that liturgy should be static or stuck in a certain time period.
 - Assumes that the liturgy is not authentic. If your church is not already authentic... change denominations now!we have plenty of them.

U POTENTIAL UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

By changing church practices to meet current desires in our society, we will offer an inauthentic version of Christianity. 65 -18

A UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS/CURRENT STATE

- ▼ Christianity is a dynamic religion having evolved over the centuries. 84 52

 - If it were dynamic, as I understand the word, religion would not be so archaic, static, unchanged, stoic, obtuse, disengaged, irrelevant and include a plethora of dying mainline churches in every major city in the country.

- ▼ Many of the issues facing non-believing people today are not addressed in the Bible or church tradition. 64 4

 - The way the Church frames their understanding of issues facing those outside the faith is to narrow, myopic, or already so skewed its impossible for the Church to fully understand the issues. This is especially true in the alt right or evangelical conservatives. Jesus began with the person, the situation, the context. Churches begin with their perspective, their interpretation, often wrong or not comprehensive, of scripture and then try to fit it to the person or context.
 - I am sure there are many passages in the Bible and church tradition about non-believers. But are today's issues being addressed?
 - It used to be that people would ask a question, then open the Bible with their eyes closed and point. There, ostensibly, would be the answer we are looking for. This does not work for me. Another reason I answered with 'agree' here is that is that the hierarchical structure of a church--I think--does not appeal to a world that is increasingly flatter. And some people just don't seem to believe in what they consider to be myths or legends from 2000 years ago.
 - The answer to this depends on how specific we might be in answering it. For example, mass shootings (and God's role) are not in the Bible, but mass violence certainly is. Genetic engineering (and religious/ethical issues) is not, but "creating God in our own image" is. The Bible can inform us on the modern issues, but often we face them in a different context.
 - Societal change in roles of men and women, and changes in technology and science, present new problems or issues that are not clearly dealt with in the Bible. However, in general terms the same issues and morals are present.

▼ Freeform

A UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS/CURRENT STATE

▼ Are there any other comments you would like to make regarding church leadership and transformational change?

- Attracting "young people" is a false economy -- they give little and demand extensive programming and services. I have found two markets that are very lucrative: empty-nesters who are getting serious about their spiritual lives and urban singles -- especially the LGBT community.
- Current leadership model is very male dominated and formed.
- Seminary training needs to be evaluated and made more relevant to current cultural, demographic, justice, economic, etc. realities. In addition, the process for ordination, certification or credentialing needs to be comprehensively reviewed and become more creative, accessible and realistic for today's potential leaders. We keep doing the same thing because the seminaries, in the main, keep doing the same thing. Different results will only come from an institutional shift at every level and component of the institution.
- There is a delicate balance at work, when trying to appeal both to new church-goers and to established, older congregants. The older congregants may not relish change, but are often the people who can financially support the church. The new members may want a new style of worship, but don't support the church financially.
- Churches need to be more missional. It is more important what we do than what we say.
- It's really, really hard -- but also richly rewarding.
- Not at this time
- In a time of enormous change in the church as a whole, we need to listen to each other, acknowledge others' faith and find ways to help those less fortunate with others outside of our own congregations. My experience with an interfaith food pantry has helped me in this area.
- Every generation faces the challenge of engaging the next generation. Always been that way. However every generation must deal with this old problem or face the end of the traditions and church as we know it.
- Building believers and making disciples of Jesus Christ is all about making relationships.