



## Section Three: Interpreting the Results



## Setting up Your Interpretation

The information on how to create healthy, vital churches is largely available today. The obstacles to this information are primarily emotional, not cognitive. Fear, guilt, shame, grief, sadness, and anger form barriers to receiving and acting on the information that can help move a church into greater vitality. The presentation of *Vital Signs* must generate enough trust among participants so that a genuine exploration can take place.

Communicate with your host church your set-up needs. It is important for folks to have a writing surface and facing you. Anything you can do to encourage engagement is important and taking notes in their report booklet can be one aspect of participation.

If you work best as a presenter using a laptop computer, video projector, and screen, you will have to make sure that is available and set up. The PDF version of the report works well in projection though the aspect ratio generally limits you to showing only a portion of a page at a time. We usually present using a powerpoint that then can be emailed to the church after the presentation.

If you want the church to provide name tags, let them know that as well. If the church leadership would prefer paper copies, consider having the reports printed as 8½” by 11” booklets saddle stapled. Often the printer will do this less expensively than printing single sheets and stapling them in a corner.

Because data itself tends to be perceived as impersonal, you will need to try to balance that with your own warmth and humanity. Create an atmosphere of engagement right from the start. Make sure to welcome people as they arrive.

Make every effort to begin and end on time. This signals that you, as the leader, respect the group’s time and that you are capable of creating a safe environment where they can give voice to their thoughts and feelings.

## Opening:

- Begin with prayer (it seems obvious but you might be surprised)
- Have people share whatever information will help you understand their roles in the room and their history with the church.
- If the data is particularly deflated it might help to start with an appreciative inquiry exercise. A few that work well are:
  - Share about a time where you experienced God working in this congregation.
  - Why are you a part of this congregation?
  - Think of someone you are grateful (other than a spouse or partner) for in this congregation. Share who that is and why.

As you begin your presentation, start by

- Let them know that the CAT tool has been used in churches large and small for over 20 years and has a track record of accurately assessing the vitality of congregations, which is essential to becoming more vital.
- Their congregation is being benchmarked against over 2,800 other congregations that have taken the CAT in the last 6 years.
- Explain why benchmarking is important.
- Say only enough to elicit confidence in what you are about to present.

Let them know that the results will help:

- Make better decisions because as leaders they are listening to the entire congregation rather than a few vocal people who have their ear.
- Avoid the time consuming exercise of guessing or merely stating opinions when factual information is available. It does not eliminate the need for discernment! By eliminating guess it saves time for real discernment to take place!
- Give leaders the right information so they can be more confident. It is difficult to feel confident when you have to guess about where you are. Knowing where you want to go without knowing where you *are* is the operational definition for being lost. Being lost not only feels bad; it takes a lot of time.

The assessment process is a kind of pastoral conversation.

- Encourage folks to listen *empathetically*, that is, trying to understand thoughts and feelings rather than *analytically*, that is, needing to pass judgment on the perspective of others.
- People may think it is impersonal. Point out that it is not *impersonal*. People provide personal information on the *Congregation Assessment Tool* that they might never disclose, even to their clergy.
- It is *impartial*. By being anonymous, all these very personal responses get equal weight regardless of the member's social status, economic resources, or persuasiveness.

This is the beginning of a conversation, not the end.

- The *Vital Signs* Report is part of a larger discernment process.
- Leaders will want to talk with people to clarify their thinking on key issues.

This is a conversation using symbols. Make sure that people understand that this conversation takes place using symbols.

- A number is a symbol. Ask people what comes to mind when you say twenty-twenty. Twenty-twenty is a symbol for perfect vision. How about 1040? A symbol for taxes. 120 over 80? Blood pressure. Numbers are symbols.
- When a person puts a number on the assessment, it symbolizes the aggregated stories that come to mind in response to a particular question. The number can also symbolize deep emotions, joy, sorrow, gratitude, and disappointment.
- Christians are a people of symbols. Help people remember that just as the cross symbolizes a story and is not merely two pieces of material notched and fastened together, a number symbolizes a set of personal stories and is not merely a “statistic.” You may need to say this more than once.

Help people to expect to be confirmed in their perceptions as well as surprised.

- If they are only confirmed, they have not learned much (but they may be more confident)
- If they are only surprised, it will be important to discern where that disconnect is

The more confidence you can give people in the instrument and their ability to deal with the information, the more likely they will be to engage it constructively. Let people know that there are three things that years of experience have taught us. First, we can measure the vitality of a congregation just like a doctor can measure the temperature of a patient. Second we know what it takes to build vital, healthy, effective churches. Emphasize that the “we” is not merely the folks in the room, or yourself, but the entire Body of Christ. This means that we have to be humble and teachable. Third, we will hear nothing today that cannot be improved or remedied. None of us is so effective that we can’t grow in our effectiveness. None of us is so confused that we cannot be put on a path of effective ministry.

You are almost ready to dive into their *Vital Signs*® report. Remind them that they are on a spiritual journey.

**Then turn to the Key Indicators page.**

**What You Will Say**

- 1) As people arrive
  - a) Booklet or PDF
  - b) Work on Notions
  - c) Don't jump ahead
- 2) Welcome and thanks
- 3) Introduction and credentials
- 4) Why the CAT is helpful
- 5) A pastoral conversation
  - a) Listen empathetically rather than analytically
  - b) Not impersonal, but impartial
  - c) A conversation using symbols
  - d) The beginning not the end



***Vital Signs for***

**Church Name Here**

generated from

*The Congregation Assessment Tool*

9/20/23

*"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God."*

Philippians 1:9-11

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Patterns**

- Best to start with leaders not entire congregation
- Best to deliver the report at the same time as the interpretation
- People tend to jump ahead and miss what you are saying now

**Interpreting the Results**

- T F If members authentically feel that their church is warm and supportive, all other problems tend to take care of themselves.
- T F The more people agree on a basic set of conservative Christian beliefs, the better they get along with one another.
- T F The best predictor for high morale in a church is the quality of pastoral care given by the clergy.
- T F The percentage of household income given in an average size church is about 4%.
- T F Churches that rank "reaching new members" as the highest priority tend to be growing.
- T F The strongest predictor of a growing church is its spiritual vitality.
- T F The best predictor for strong financial giving in a church is the priority given to developing stewardship programs.
- T F About 80% of the members of a typical parish are clearly satisfied with things in the church.
- T F In general, churches are much more interested in improving the music in worship than in improving their building.
- T F Churches where members indicate they have a vital faith have a more difficult time raising money.

Your Thoughts:

### What You Will Say

- 1) Many of the answers will become clear in the presentation
- 2) Answers will be given at the end. (All are false.)
- 3) Have someone remind you.

### Patterns

- Often people don't know what they don't know
- We must move from unconscious incompetence to conscious incompetence before we will begin the seeking that will move us to conscious competence



### What You Will Say

- 1) A spiritual journey
  - a) from shadows into light
  - b) in trust rather than fear

Lord, you are the God of all truth.

*You know us through and through.*

You reveal to us what we do not yet know.

*You bring us out of darkness and into your wonderful light.*

You invite us to return to the Garden where we know and are known.

*You offer us love that delivers us from fear and hiding.*

You reconcile us to our loved ones.

*You deliver us from blame and accusation.*

You disclose to us the gifts in the depths of our souls.

*You fill us with your Spirit and empower us for service.*

You open our eyes to the brokenness that cripples our best intentions.

*You pour oil into our wounds and carry us in your arms.*

You show us the patterns that keep us bound to failure.

*You open the bars of our captivity and set the prisoner free.*

You are patient with our resistances to change.

*Your judgment is always mixed with mercy.*

When our minds cast a shell about our hearts,

*Your love melts a pathway to the depth of our beings.*

Open our minds and our hearts to the witness of our brothers and sisters,

*Give us that love that casts out all fear.*

AMEN

Holy Cow! Consulting  
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### Resources

The Spiritual Journey of Assessment – Page 2

### Patterns

- People need help understanding that an assessment process is a spiritual journey.

Interpreting the Results

## Key Indicators



### Overall Satisfaction

On the whole, I am satisfied with how things are in our church.

Clearly agree	70%
On the fence	29%
Clearly disagree	1%
Rating of church satisfaction level	High

### Overall Energy

It seems to me that we are just going through the motions of church activity. There isn't much excitement about it among our members.

Clearly agree	8%
On the fence	24%
Clearly disagree	68%
Rating of church energy level	Very high

### Attendance Trend

Compared with 3 years ago, I attend worship...

Less	15%
Same	56%
More	28%

Average annual change in attendance 4%

### Value of Activity Beyond Worship

On the whole, participation in church activities is very meaningful to me...

Clearly agree	65%
On the fence	30%
Clearly disagree	5%
Rating of church activity beyond worship	Average

### Top Three Priorities

Where would you like additional energy placed to expand or improve our ministries?

First	Question #57	Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
Second	Question #59	Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
Third	Question #58	Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life.

### Survey Process Statistics

Number of respondents	158
Response rate as percentage of average attendance	122%

## What You Will Say

- 1) How do you begin a conversation?
- 2) Define "Clearly agree" etc.
- 3) Define benchmarking
- 4) Define rating
- 5) Importance of satisfaction and energy
- 6) Review satisfaction level
- 7) Review energy level
- 8) Review attendance trends
  - a) Explain annual change
  - b) Explain adjustment
- 9) Review top three priorities
- 10) Review statistics – remind people that we don't need every person to respond to have reliable data any more than a doctor needs to take all your blood to get a good blood test.

## Patterns

- Because folks who are no longer at the church (moved, joined another church, died) did not take the survey the attendance trend is generally 3%-5% too high.

## Resources

FAQ – Interpreting the CAT®  
- Pages 3-5



## What You Will Say

- 1) Not all questions are of equal importance. While we are concerned about how folks responded on all the questions, we are most concerned about those issues that people focus on.
- 2) Some questions are more important because they are having a large impact on how folks are feeling about the church overall.
- 3) The questions that are having a bigger impact are called drivers.
- 4) Changes in drivers are likely to have an impact on how folks are feeling about the church overall.
- 5) The intensity of the driver tells you how important the question is.
- 6) Review drivers of satisfaction
- 7) Review drivers of energy
- 8) Check for clergy focused
- 9) Check for malaise
- 10) Sometimes we look at an x-ray and don't see anything definitive. Sometimes no drivers are identified.

## Resources

Drivers – Pages 6-8  
 Clergy Focused Churches – Pages 12-13  
 Power Focused Churches – Page 14

## Drivers (Areas of Focus)



### Drivers of Member Satisfaction

When members are asked how they feel things are going in their church overall, they generally don't think about the entire array of ministries and qualities that characterize the congregation. Instead, they focus on a relatively small number of things. By way of analogy, when persons are asked what they like about their car, they generally focus on a few things that vary depending upon the person. One person might focus on fuel economy and reliability. Another might focus on luxury and performance. Hardly any will focus on things like the exhaust system or brakes, even though those items are very important. In other words, they are very focused on some things, less focused on others.

What members focus on is unique to every congregation, much like a fingerprint is unique for every individual. Some churches are more focused on the work of their clergy person (clergy-focused), some on the decision making group (power-focused), and some on the various ministries of the church (ministry-focused). In some cases, we can identify what people focus on when they think about how satisfied they are with the church overall. We call these areas of focus "Drivers of Satisfaction". In some cases, we can identify what people focus on when they think about the level of excitement in the church. We call these areas of focus "Drivers of Energy."

### Drivers of Satisfaction

The pattern of responses from your members suggests that when they think about how satisfied they are with things in your church overall, they tend to focus on the areas below, called "Drivers of Satisfaction". The degree to which they focus on these items is indicated in the column to the right. This column does not tell us how you scored on the question, it tells us how important the item is to your members in determining how satisfied they are. (If there are no items listed below, it means that we are unable to identify what members are focused on from their responses.)

		Degree of Focus
Driver #1	Persons who serve as leaders in our church are representative of the membership.	High
Driver #2	Problems between groups in this church are usually resolved through mutual effort.	High
Driver #3	Our church does a good job helping each member understand that he or she is called to ministry.	High
Driver #4	Our church prepares our members for ministry by helping them discern their gifts.	Moderate
Driver #5	Our church changes its program from time to time to meet the changing needs of its members.	Moderate

### Drivers of Energy

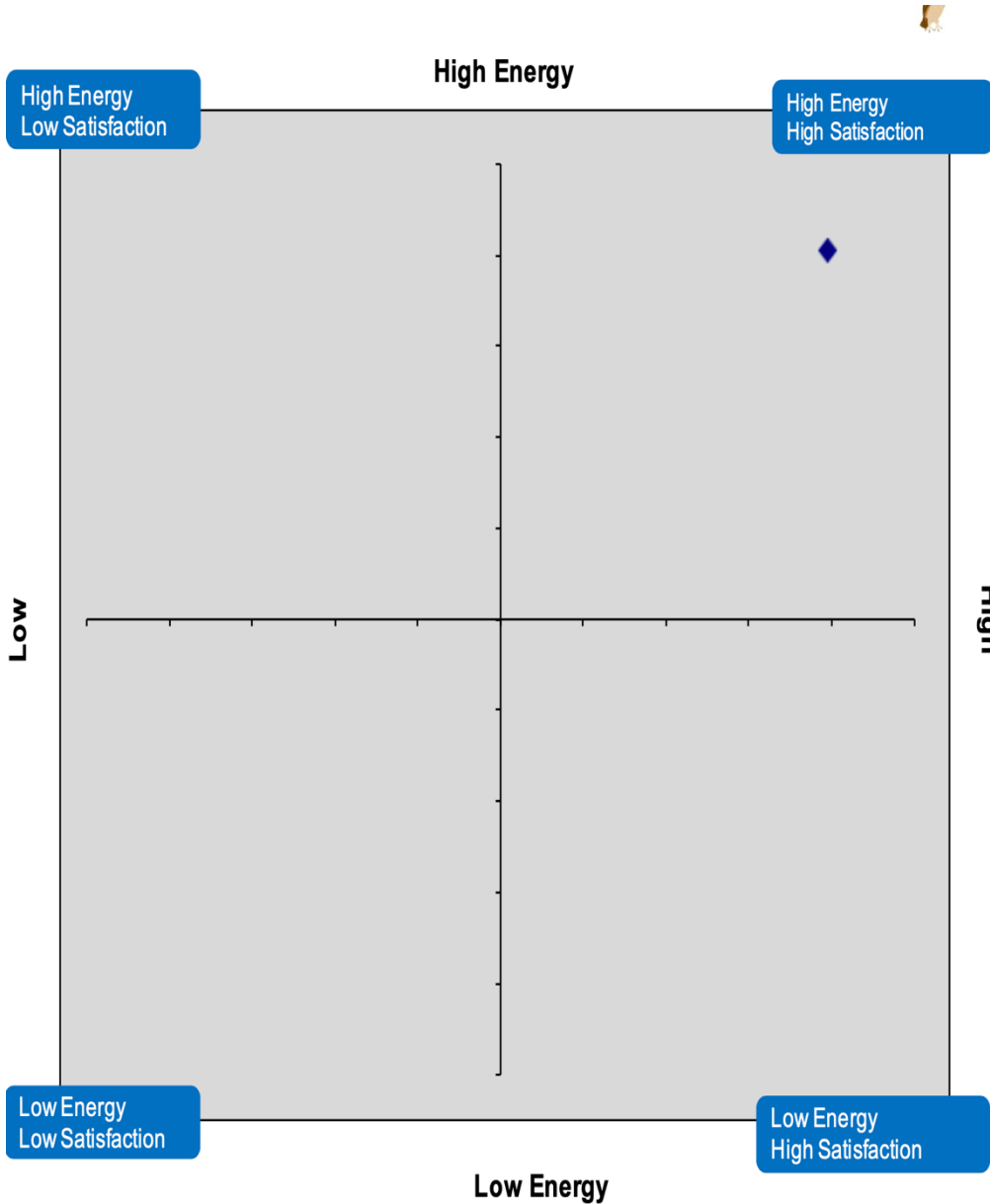
The pattern of responses from your members suggests that when members think about the level of excitement in your church overall they tend to focus in the areas below, called "Drivers of Energy." The degree to which they focus on these items is indicated in the column to the right. This column does not tell us how you scored on the question, it tells us how important the item is to your members in determining the energy in the church. (If there are no items listed below, it means that we are not able to identify what members are focused on from their responses.)

		Degree of Focus
Driver #1	There is a disturbing amount of conflict in our congregation.	High
Driver #2	Our church does a good job helping each member understand that he or she is called to ministry.	Moderate

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## Patterns

- When the drivers are very high or high in intensity, it means the church may be sharply focused on that issue.
- When the drivers are all moderate-low-very low it may mean the church is in malaise due to an issue not addressed in the assessment.
- When the Conflict Management score is low, the drivers give you clues to what the conflict is about.
- When the Conflict Management score in a Clergy-focused church is low, the conflict has become focused on the Rector or Pastor.



### What You Will Say

- 1) Churches are like people...when they feel good about themselves and have energy, there are many things they can do. The converse is also true.
- 2) The four quadrants
  - a. Recovery (reinvention)
  - b. Chaos
  - c. Transformational
  - d. Static
- 3) The goal is to head northeast
  - a. Search
  - b. Strategic planning
- 4) Churches in the recovery quadrant must find inner renewal before they can effectively turn their attention to reaching new people or else they will create dissatisfaction in the people they reach.

### Patterns

- Satisfaction and energy tell you 95% of what you need to know about the vitality of the church. The rest is the “how”.
- In *general*, the factors that contribute most are
  - a) Flexibility
  - b) Worship
  - c) Open governance
  - d) Church gives new meaning to life
  - e) Healthy relationships
- Non-contributing factors include
  - a) Theological perspective
  - b) Spiritual vitality

### Resources

The Energy-Satisfaction Map – Page 9-11

## What You Will Say

- 1) We have said it is important to move northeast on the Energy-Satisfaction Map. What do we focus on to do that?
- 2) We have mentioned factors that are *generally* important. But what are the factors *particular* to this congregation? These are those factors.
- 3) Some questions are more important. These, you remember, are called drivers.
- 4) In some areas you have more room to grow than others.
- 5) If an area is both important AND you have room to grow it becomes a critical success factor.
- 6) Critical success factors have different levels of urgency. Let's review these.
- 7) Your top five critical success factors have what in common?
- 8) How urgent are these?
- 9) If there are none look to growth, expansion.

## Resources

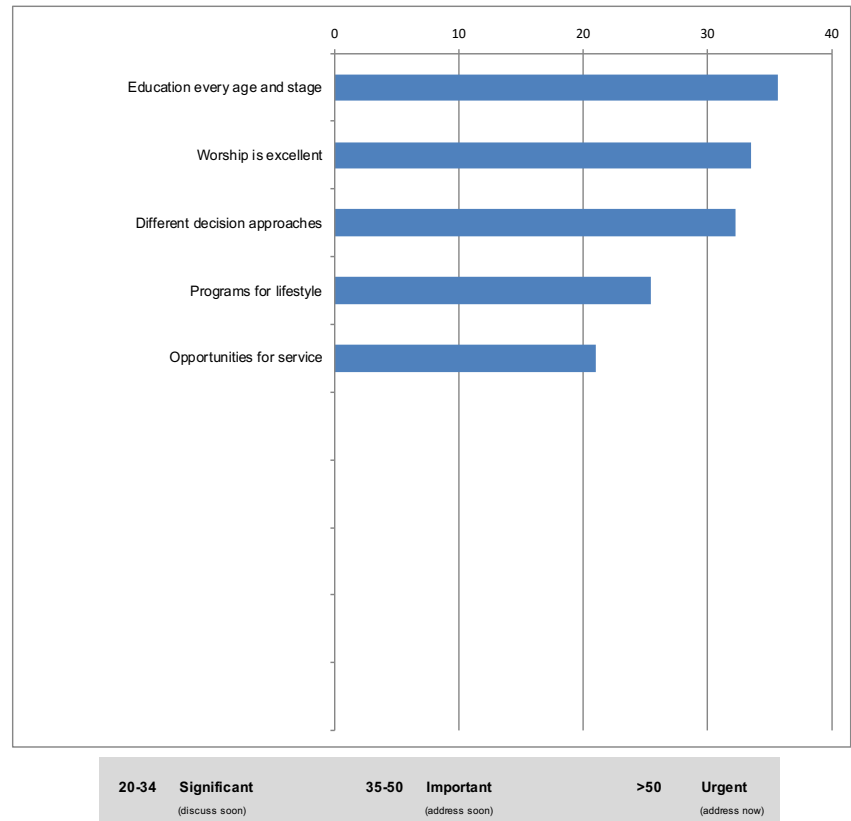
Critical Success Factors – Pages 15-17

## Critical Success Factors for Improving Satisfaction

If the goal is to move a church as high into the transformational quadrant as possible, where do leaders begin? The chart below suggests where improvements might have the biggest impact on how members are feeling about the church overall. The higher the factor on this chart, the more important it is. The longer the bar, the more urgent is the need to address that issue. Items that do not appear on the list may be important, but working on them may not change how people feel about the church overall.

Critical Success Factors in the *Urgent* range generally need immediate attention. External resources are often helpful to leadership teams dealing with these issues. These resources might be found in a regional or national association, through colleagues serving in other churches, or by contracting with professional consultants.

If there are no Critical Success Factors listed below, it means that the Congregation Assessment Tool did not identify any significant *internal* issues that need to be addressed. This suggests that the leadership can turn its attention to strategic options that include numeric growth, expansion of facilities or programs, replication in other locations (including mentoring of other leaders), or increased external impact.



## Patterns

- Churches with critical success factors in the urgent range almost always require some type of external resource or intervention.
- Important critical success factors should be considered as priorities for action...along with the goals on page 8.
- Churches with low or no critical success factors are usually vital. They should be encouraged to consider taking additional risks for the Kingdom.

## Priorities

### Overall Priorities

When members were asked where they wanted additional energy placed, this is how they ranked the seventeen options on the survey:



Rank	Question #	Priority	Mean
First Average	Question #57	Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.	3.63
Second Average	Question #59	Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.	3.25
Third Average	Question #58	Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life.	2.92
Fourth High	Question #64	Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners.	2.85
Fifth Average	Question #51	Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc).	2.82
Sixth High	Question #66	Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society.	2.81
Seventh Low	Question #65	Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.	2.81
Eighth Average	Question #54	Strengthen the process by which members are called and equipped for ministry and leadership.	2.68
Ninth High	Question #62	Work as an advocate for social and institutional change so that society might better reflect the values of the kingdom of God.	2.65
Tenth Average	Question #52	Develop the spiritual generosity of the people to financially support the ministry of the church.	2.63
Eleventh Average	Question #63	Strengthen the management and support of persons in various ministries.	2.48
Twelfth Average	Question #61	Adapt the opportunities provided by the church making them more accessible given the pace and schedule of my life.	2.20
Thirteenth Average	Question #50	Deepen our sense of connection to God and one another through stronger worship services.	2.13
Fourteenth Average	Question #55	Strengthen the pastoral response of the church in serving people in times of need.	2.10
Fifteenth Average	Question #60	Expand the international mission of the church with both financial resources and personal involvement.	2.01
Sixteenth Average	Question #53	Enlarge or improve the physical facilities of the church to expand or enhance our ministries.	1.82
Seventeenth Average	Question #56	Change or improve the music of the church to deepen our worship experience.	1.47

Note: Items can be at the bottom of this list for one of two reasons. An item can be at the bottom of the list because it is *less important to respondents*. Alternatively, it can be at the bottom of the list because it is very important to respondents, but *already being performed at such a high level* that additional energy is not required. The rating beneath the priority rank (*very low, low, average, high, very high*) indicates its strength compared to other churches.

### What You Will Say

- 1) Now we turn our attention to the future.
- 2) We saw the first three priorities on the Key Indicator page. Now we see the rest.
- 3) Numbers in the right column help you see the spacing of your priorities. Some are closer than others.
- 4) Ratings on the left show you how the church compares with others on this priority.
- 5) Look again at what's at the top.
- 6) Also important to know what is at the bottom
- 7) The two reasons something might be at the bottom
  - a. Less important
  - b. Important but already being done well.

### Patterns

- Growth issues and education issues tend to be at the top of the list. Any significant departure from this should be noted as worthy of discussion. Note: Creating relationships has become more important post-pandemic
- Facilities, music, and international mission tend to be at the bottom of the list. Any significant departure from this should be noted as worthy of discussion.

### Resources

## What You Will Say

- 1) Not all age groups have the same priorities.
- 2) What is common to all groups? These are areas of consensus to build upon.
- 3) What is unique to each group? These are areas that may need to be negotiated.

## Priorities by Group



### Top Priorities for Persons Under 35 Years

First	Q#66	Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society. (i.e. homeless, immigrant, transient persons)
Second	Q#65	Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
Third	Q#57	Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
Fourth	Q#59	Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
Fifth	Q#64	Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.
Sixth	Q#62	Work as an advocate for social and institutional change so that society might better reflect the values of the kingdom of God.

### Top Priorities for Persons 35 to 64 Years

First	Q#57	Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
Second	Q#59	Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
Third	Q#51	Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc).
Fourth	Q#58	Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life.
Fifth	Q#64	Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.
Sixth	Q#65	Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.

### Top Priorities for Persons 65+ Years

First	Q#57	Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
Second	Q#59	Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
Third	Q#58	Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life.
Fourth	Q#66	Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society. (i.e. homeless, immigrant, transient persons)
Fifth	Q#64	Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.
Sixth	Q#65	Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.

## Resources

### Patterns

- Stewardship is often a higher priority for those over 65 years of age compared to younger cohorts.
- Ministries are often a higher priority for those under 35 years of age.

## Priorities by Group

### Top Priorities for Infrequent Attenders (Once per month or less)

First	Q#57	Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
Second	Q#59	Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
Third	Q#52	Develop the spiritual generosity of the people to financially support the ministry of the church.
Fourth	Q#63	Strengthen the management and support of persons in various ministries so that they are able to do what they do best in work that is meaningful and celebrated.
Fifth	Q#65	Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
Sixth	Q#64	Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.

### Top Priorities for Frequent Attenders (More than once per month)

First	Q#57	Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
Second	Q#59	Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
Third	Q#58	Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life.
Fourth	Q#51	Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc).
Fifth	Q#64	Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.
Sixth	Q#66	Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society. (i.e. homeless, immigrant, transient persons)

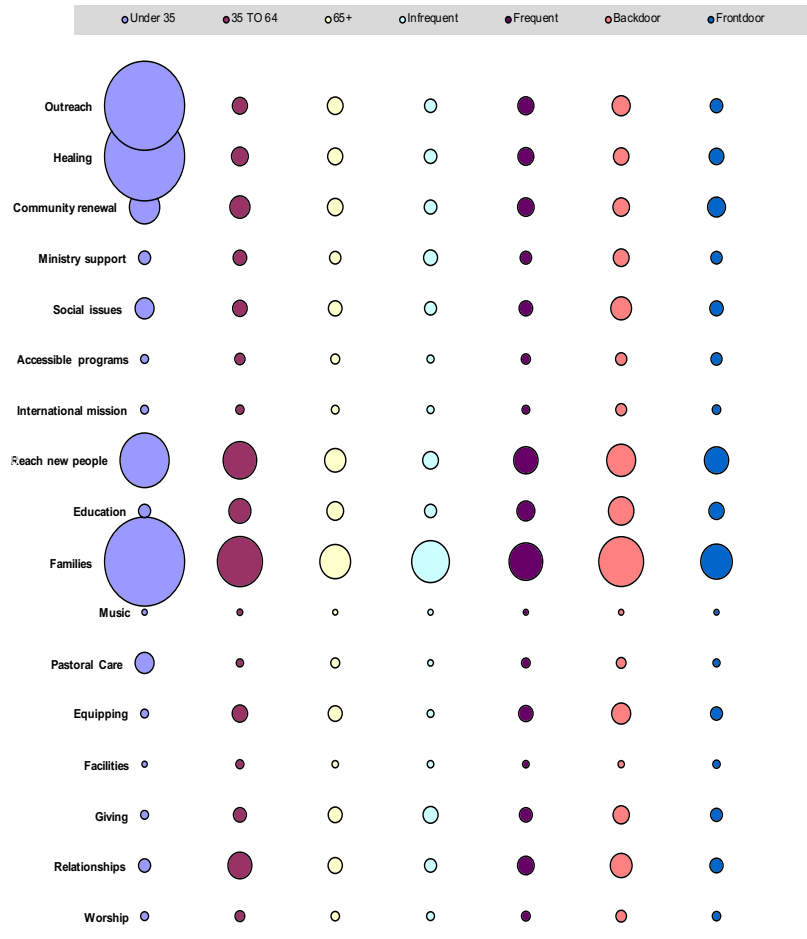
## What You Will Say

- 1) Folks who attend more may have different priorities than those who attend less.
- 2) What is common to all groups? These are areas of consensus to build upon.
- 3) Priorities that are unique to infrequent attendees may indicate reasons they have become inactive.
- 4) People may attend infrequency for understandable reasons like work, illness, family, etc.

## Priorities by Group

### What You Will Say

- 1) This chart shows you at a glance the priorities for different groups.
- 2) The larger the bubble, the more important the goal.
- 3) The goals are listed in abbreviated form along the left column.
- 4) The groups are
  - a. under 35
  - b. 35 to 64
  - c. over 65
  - d. Infrequent attendees
  - e. Frequent attendees
  - f. Back door (worshipping less than 3 years ago)
  - g. Front door (worshipping more than 3 years ago)



## Descriptive Indices



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### Theological Perspective Index

The Theological Perspective Index is a measure of the degree to which members of the congregation hold more conservative or progressive views regarding such issues as the nature of the Scripture, the role of conversion in social change, and their relationship to the historic declarations of the church.

Unlike the other indices such as Hospitality or Morale, the value of the Theological Perspective Index varies from leader to leader. Some pastors may want to see the index increased. Others may feel personal growth requires that it decrease. Each church will have to prayerfully consider how they feel led in developing the theological climate of the congregation.

#### Question Text

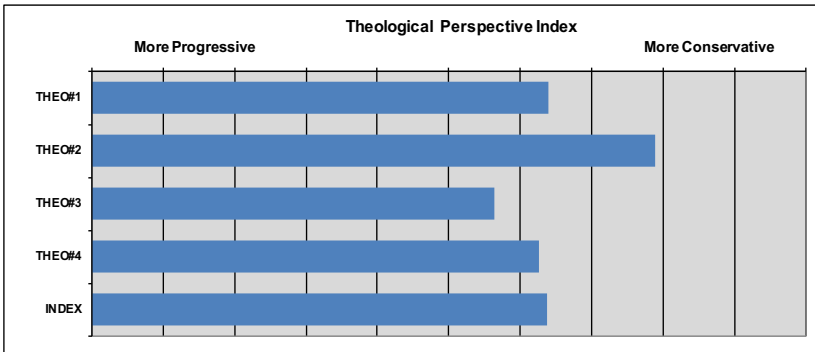
- THEO#1 Converting persons to Christ must be the first step in creating a better society.
- THEO#2 Our congregation is committed to abide by the unchanging, historic faith as handed down through the centuries.
- THEO#3 Scripture is the literal Word of God without error, not only in matters of faith, but also in historical, geographical, and other secular matters.
- THEO#4 The main purpose of Christian education is to help people know what is in the Bible.

**Response Percentages** (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
THEO#1	3.5	12.1	18.4	25.5	24.8	15.6
THEO#2	1.7	6.0	11.1	29.1	35.0	17.1
THEO#3	19.4	13.9	18.1	15.3	20.1	13.2
THEO#4	1.4	14.8	20.4	34.5	21.8	7.0

**Comparative Profile** (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)

Compared with other churches your theological diversity is High



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### What You Will Say

- 1) Now we turn to indices
- 2) Define "index"
- 3) Two kinds of indices
  - a. Descriptive
  - b. Performance
- 4) Go over page layout
  - a. Narrative
  - b. Questions
  - c. Percentage responses
  - d. Comparative profile
  - e. Index score is an aggregate
- 5) Reflect on theological diversity. Can be a strength if tolerance is high, a weakness if tolerance is low. (See Conflict Management Index.)
- 6) All denominations (yes everyone) has both theologically conservative and progressive congregations

### Patterns

- There is a wide variation in these questions across the church. For example, on THEO#3, the folks who clearly agree varies from 3% in the most progressive churches to 95% in the most conservative churches.
- There is no correlation between theological perspective and satisfaction or energy.
- More conservative churches tend to have a tougher time dealing with conflict, especially if they have low tolerance scores .

### Resources

Descriptive Maps pages 18-25



### What You Will Say

- 1) Define “flexibility” – distinguish from theology
- 2) Review scores
- 3) Compare contrast flexibility with goals, e.g., “make necessary changes to attract families”
- 4) Need to work through strategic-tactical dissonance to keep from setting leaders up failure

### Flexible Style Index

The Flexible Style Index registers the degree to which the church is willing to make adjustments in the way it goes about its ministry. The more flexible a church, the more likely it is to adapt to the particular context in which it is serving to meet either the needs of its members or those of the community. The less flexible a church, the more likely it is to believe that a particular style is central to its identity.

The degree of flexibility in a church should be consistent with its strategic priorities. For example, if a church indicates that one of its priorities is to make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth, it should have the degree of flexibility necessary to achieve that goal.

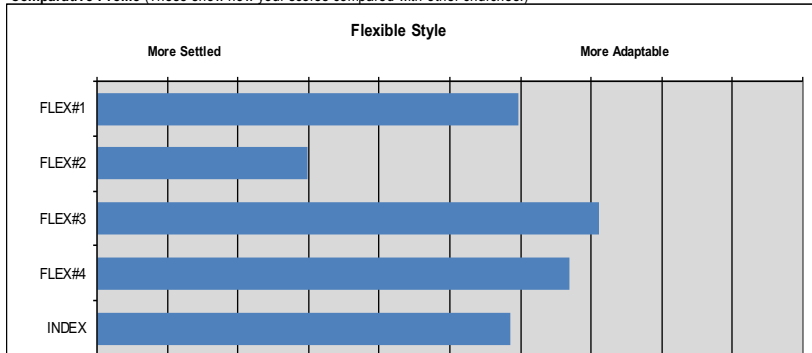
**Question Text**

- FLEX#1 Our members welcome changes in worship.
- FLEX#2 Our church tends to stay very close to established ways of doing things.
- FLEX#3 We are willing to adapt our worship to the needs and circumstances of the people we want to reach in our local community.
- FLEX#4 Our church changes its program from time to time to meet the changing needs of its members.

**Response Percentages** (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
FLEX#1	6.2	6.2	27.9	41.1	18.6	0.0
FLEX#2	0.0	2.8	7.6	42.8	36.6	10.3
FLEX#3	0.8	4.9	21.3	26.2	38.5	8.2
FLEX#4	0.9	7.7	12.0	32.5	35.0	12.0

**Comparative Profile** (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)

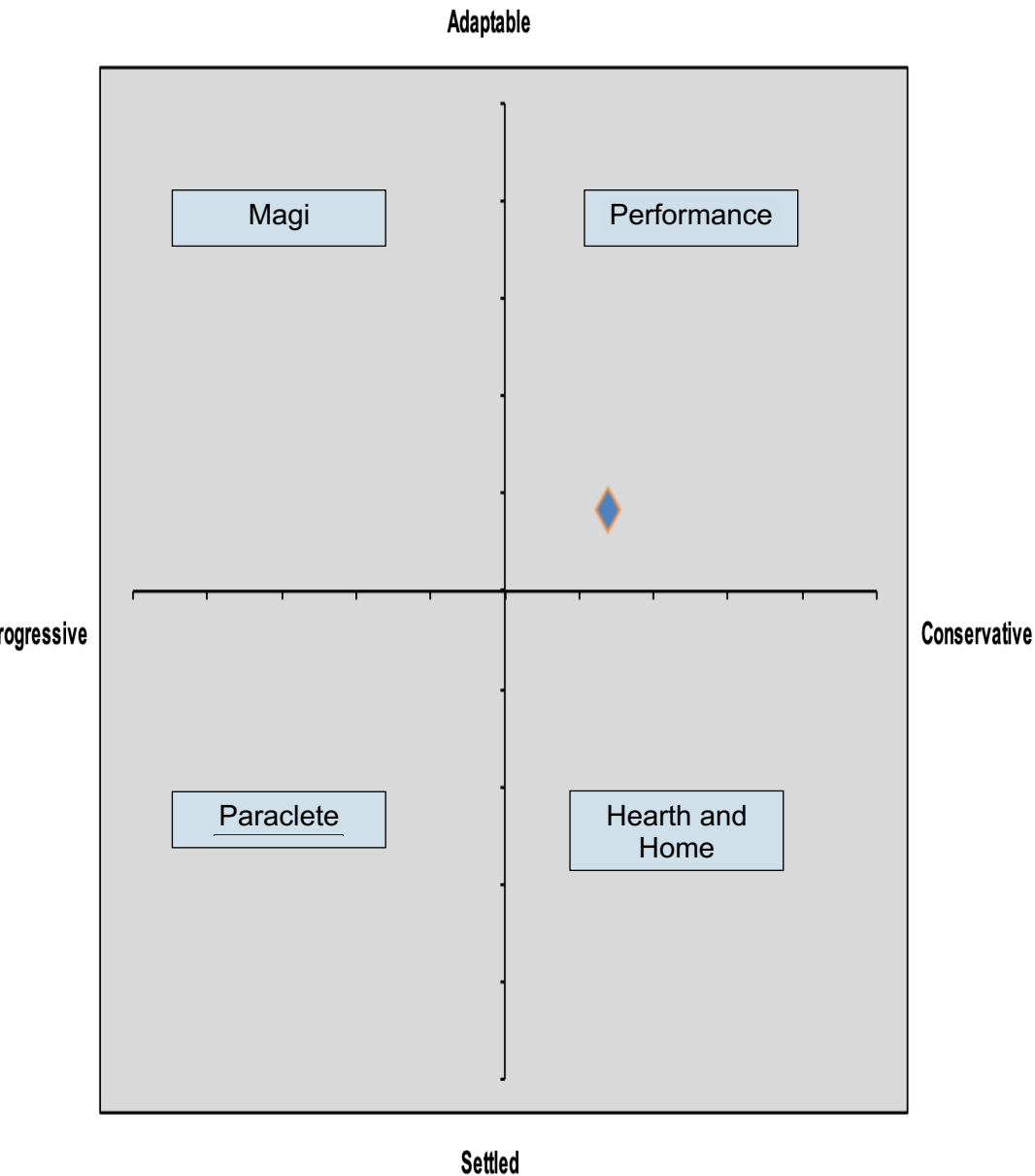


Note: Question two (2) is negatively worded relative to the index. In the Comparative Profile, the polarity has been reversed. In every case a longer bar suggests a more adaptable evaluation.

### Resources

### Patterns

- Very settled churches almost without exception have low morale. A major strategic challenge of every regional association is to help their churches move from settled to adaptable.
- Strategic-tactical dissonance is a frequent pattern in struggling churches because they want growth (strategic) but are unwilling to take the practical steps (tactical) to achieve it. This sets leaders up for failure.



### What You Will Say

- 1) The two descriptive indices are represented on this map.
- 2) Note where you are. Does this seem right?
- 3) Every quadrant has potential strengths and liabilities.
- 4) Give some words describing the strength of this quadrant. It is important to build on these strengths.
- 5) Say a few words describing the possible weaknesses of this quadrant. Indicate it may be important to devote some energy to these areas as well to keep them from sabotaging strengths.
- 6) Understanding the different church cultures is very, very important.

### Patterns

- The most challenging area of this map is deep in the lower right quadrant. Churches here tend to be unhappy and difficult to move to an area where they might become more happy.
- Each culture deals with change, ministry, conflict and strategic planning differently.

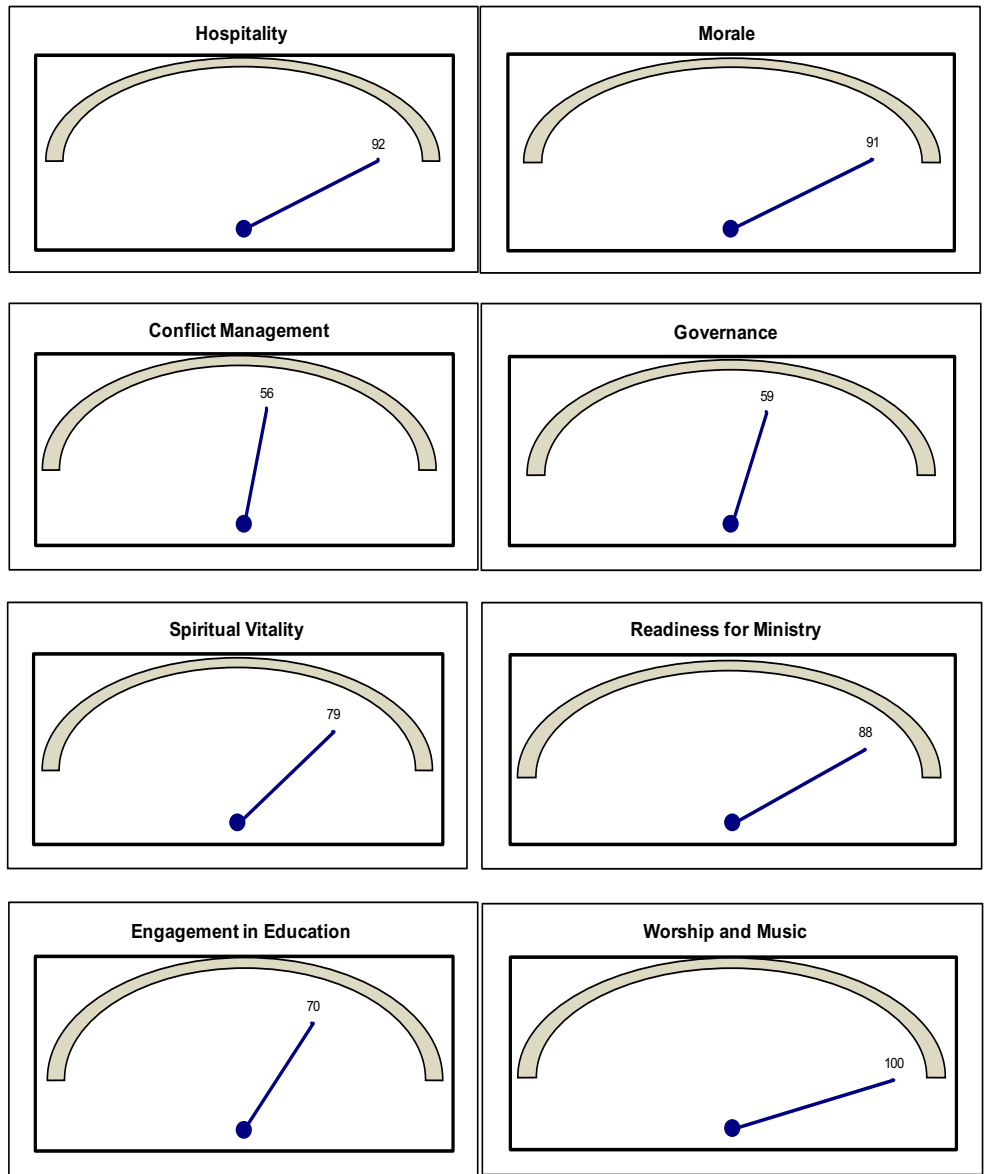
### Resources

Descriptive Map Typology – Pages 20-25

## What You Will Say

- 1) The information on this dashboard is like the dashboard on your car...it tells you how all the systems are running.
- 2) Let's skip for now and actually pull up the hood.

## Performance Dashboard



## Performance Indices

### Hospitality Index

The Hospitality Index seeks to measure the degree to which members perceive that the congregation is engaged in offering themselves and their resources to folks who are new, different, or in need. Persons generally expect that churches will be inviting and supportive communities. However, church communities have decidedly different "temperatures" to those who enter them. Some churches feel cold. Others feel warm. It can be difficult for members to gauge this accurately since some may have a network of relationships that others do not. If scores in this indices are low, it is important to give it priority.

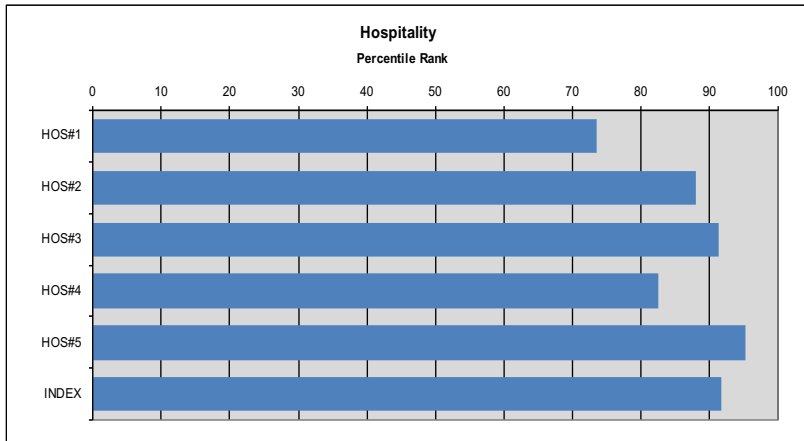
#### Question Text

HOS#1	Our church welcomes and is enriched by persons from many different walks of life.
HOS#2	Being part of this church community has given new meaning to my life.
HOS#3	A friendly atmosphere prevails among the members of our church.
HOS#4	I sense an atmosphere of genuine care and concern among our members in time of personal need.
HOS#5	Members in our church have been prepared to personally welcome guests in worship services.

**Response Percentages** (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
HOS#1	1.3	1.3	4.5	20.8	35.7	36.4
HOS#2	0.0	1.3	6.7	16.7	42.0	33.3
HOS#3	0.0	0.7	0.7	11.2	30.3	57.2
HOS#4	0.7	0.0	0.7	9.5	38.5	50.7
HOS#5	0.7	2.1	1.4	17.7	39.7	38.3

**Comparative Profile** (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)



Holy Cow! Consulting  
Page 17

### What You Will Say

- 1) Define performance index.
- 2) Define hospitality and why it is important
- 3) Review the questions
- 4) Review percentage responses
- 5) The difference between churches is not the folks on the negative side of the questions, but the number in the middle rather than raving fans.
- 6) Define percentile rank
- 7) Define a rating scale
  - a. 0-10 very low
  - b. 10-30 low
  - c. 30-70 average
  - d. 70-90 high
  - e. 90-100 very high
- 8) Look at highest score (longest bar)
- 9) Look at next highest score (next to the longest bar)
- 10) Look at lowest score (shortest bar). This is your room-to-grow area.
- 11) Which questions might relate to church growth?
- 12) Which question relates to diversity?
- 13) Look at overall index

### Patterns

- Low scores on HOS#1 in a community with high diversity may be a missed opportunity for growth.
- There are two questions that have been shown to relate to high satisfaction and energy in a church, HOS#2 and HOS#3.
- A low score on HOS#4 can indicate a pastoral care problem.
- A low score on HOS#5 can be a missed opportunity for growth.

## What You Will Say

- 1) Define morale...
- 2) Morale is different from hospitality...very loving people can be very tired.
- 3) Explain what it means to have a question with an asterisk.
- 4) Explain that a shorter bar is preferred on a question with an asterisk.
- 5) Explain that when the overall index score is calculated we treat the asterisk question in a different way in the calculation (folks often wonder if we do this right.)
- 6) Say it again...Churches with high morale...high satisfaction and high energy can do many things.
- 7) Churches with low morale...low satisfaction and low energy find it difficult to do the basics.
- 8) If scores are low, stay focused on the purpose. For example, given where we are what kind of leader do we need?

## Performance Indices

### Morale Index

Morale is the positive, passionate, and persuasive engagement of members in the mission of the church. It is positive in that people find energy generated in their experiences with the church. It is passionate in that it engages people emotionally and not simply conceptually or in dutiful behavior. It is persuasive in that people sense the need to bring others into the experience.

Developing high morale must be a critical long term strategy. It is not as easily changed as the Hospitality Index. It requires clear direction, the ability to set goals and meet them, and the development of a sense that the work of the church is very important in the world.

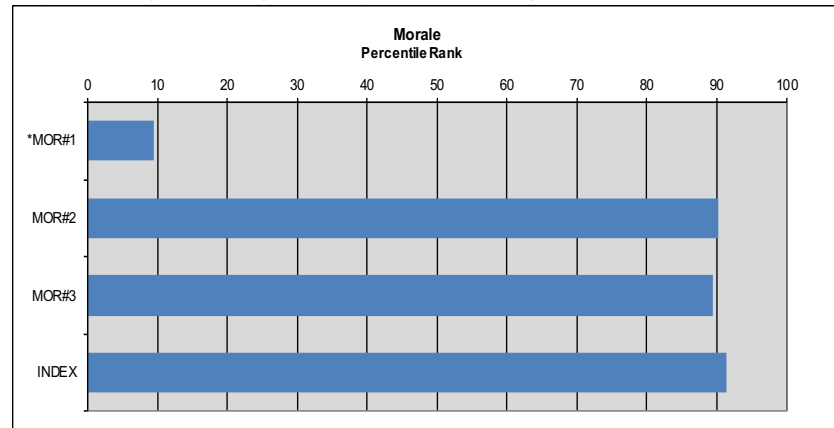
#### Question Text

*MOR#1	It seems to me that we are just going through the motions of church activity. There isn't much excitement about it among our members.
MOR#2	The whole spirit in our congregation makes people want to get as involved as possible.
MOR#3	On the whole, I am satisfied with how things are in our church.

**Response Percentages** (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
*MOR#1	22.7	45.4	18.4	5.7	4.3	3.5
MOR#2	0.7	1.4	8.9	41.8	38.4	8.9
MOR#3	0.7	0.7	6.2	22.8	40.0	29.7

**Comparative Profile** (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)



Note: A question with an asterisk is negatively worded relative to the index. In the Comparative Profile, a shorter bar is preferred for questions that are negatively worded. The overall index scores takes this into account in its calculation.

## Performance Indices

### Conflict Management Index

The Conflict Management Index measures the degree to which members believe that conflict is appropriately managed and, where possible, resolved. It is important to note that the Conflict Management Index does not correlate strongly with the Hospitality Index or the Spiritual Vitality Index. This means that a congregation can perceive itself as having a strong faith and a genuine concern for one another, yet still experience painful conflict. This is because the tools required to deal with conflict go beyond good intentions, and involve specific training that nearly anyone can learn...if they choose to do so.

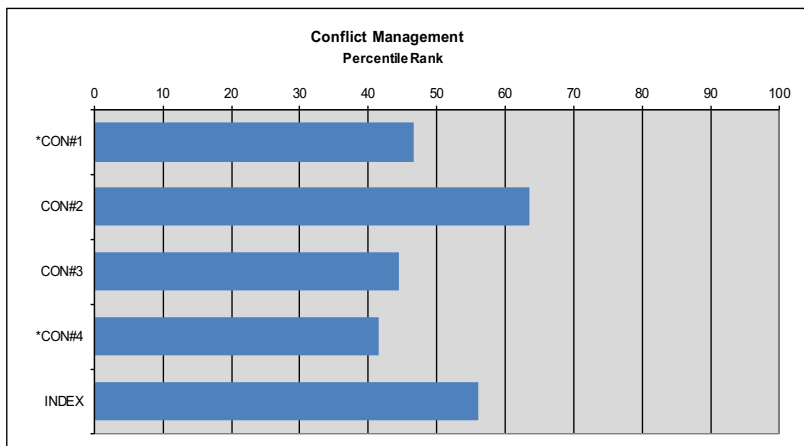
#### Question Text

*CON#1	There is a disturbing amount of conflict in our congregation.
CON#2	Problems between groups in this church are usually resolved through mutual effort.
CON#3	Among most of our members there is a healthy tolerance of differing opinions and beliefs.
*CON#4	There is frequently a small group of members that opposes what the majority want to do.

**Response Percentages** (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
*CON#1	10.4	50.0	18.9	16.0	2.8	1.9
CON#2	2.2	2.2	10.9	29.3	46.7	8.7
CON#3	1.6	2.4	14.5	37.1	34.7	9.7
*CON#4	4.6	29.2	29.2	21.5	12.3	3.1

**Comparative Profile** (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)



Note: A question with an asterisk is negatively worded relative to the index. In the Comparative Profile, a shorter bar is preferred for questions that are negatively worded. The overall index scores takes this into account in its calculation.

### What You Will Say

- 1) Define conflict management...
- 2) Indicate that conflict is part of every relationship, and every church. It only becomes a problem when it is "disturbing", there is a lack of tolerance, etc.
- 3) Point out negatively worded questions
- 4) Review percentages
- 5) Review comparative profile
- 6) When scores are low you may want to go back to the Drivers to see if any of those are part of the issue.
- 7) You may want to inquire regarding the obstacles to resolving the conflict.

### Patterns

- Folks have generally had no training on conflict resolution yet they often do not name a lack of training as an obstacle.
- Churches deeply settled churches often have low conflict management scores
- People find it helpful to mention the five ways that churches deal with conflict: avoidance, negotiation, mediation, appeal to higher authority, power.
- Churches in high conflict situations may find that the conflict bleeds over in the other indices and bottoms them out.

**What You Will Say**

- 1) Define governance...
- 2) Point out negatively worded questions
- 3) Review percentages
- 4) Review comparative profile
- 5) When scores are low you may want to go back to the Drivers to see how important these questions are.
- 6) Explain that while most churches are governed by a small group of people \*GOV#2 is addressing the issue of the same small group of people—entrenched. Small churches may score low on this question because of a limited pool of potential leaders.
- 7) Point out that the CAT/Vital Signs® process itself is a way of opening up the decision making.

**Governance Index**

The Governance Index measures the degree to which members believe that the decision making structures and processes of the church are open to their concerns and input. While church polity may lodge almost all decision-making in one group of persons, a Board for example, there are many creative ways in which that authority can be delegated or shared. Committees, commissions, task forces, leadership assemblies, and joint meetings expand the decision-making circle. Regular input from surveys, focus groups, and interviews can give people a sense of involvement in the way decisions are made. As people perceive openness in the way leaders make decisions, they are more likely to have high morale and support the decisions that have been made.

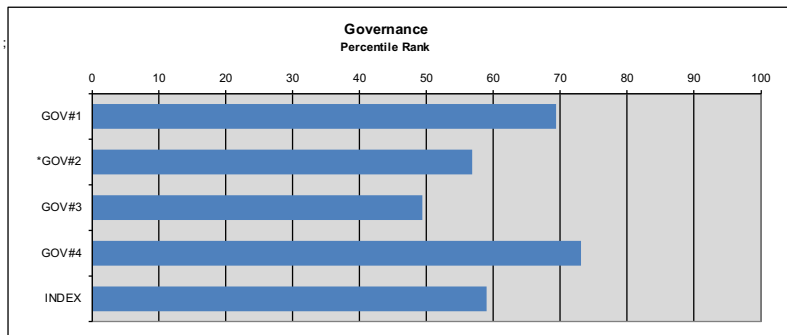
**Question Text**

GOV#1	The leaders of our church show a genuine concern to know what people are thinking when decisions need to be made.
*GOV#2	The same small group of people seem to make most of the important decisions in our church.
GOV#3	In important decisions in our church, adequate opportunity for consideration of different approaches is usually provided.
GOV#4	Persons who serve as leaders in our church are representative of the membership.

**Response Percentages** (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
GOV#1	1.5	1.5	7.7	23.1	46.2	20.0
*GOV#2	0.8	4.8	8.7	44.4	21.4	19.8
GOV#3	1.9	3.7	16.8	28.0	40.2	9.3
GOV#4	0.8	0.8	5.3	26.7	45.0	21.4

**Comparative Profile** (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)



Note: A question with an asterisk is negatively worded relative to the index. In the Comparative Profile, a shorter bar is preferred for questions that are negatively worded. The overall index scores takes this into account in its calculation.

**Patterns**

- Churches with low conflict management scores tend to have lower governance scores.
- Churches tend to appeal to their polity as a way of explaining low governance scores, but there are many ways of opening up the system.
- If the governance score is higher than the Conflict Management score by more than 10% it might indicate the leaders are helping the congregation work through a recent conflict effectively.

**Spiritual Vitality Index**

The Spiritual Vitality Index measures the degree to which members believe that their faith is central to their lives rather than peripheral or episodic. It is an important index in that it correlates mildly with the Hospitality Index. In addition, the Spiritual Vitality Index relates strongly to the percent of household income that members give to the church. This would seem to confirm what Jesus said: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

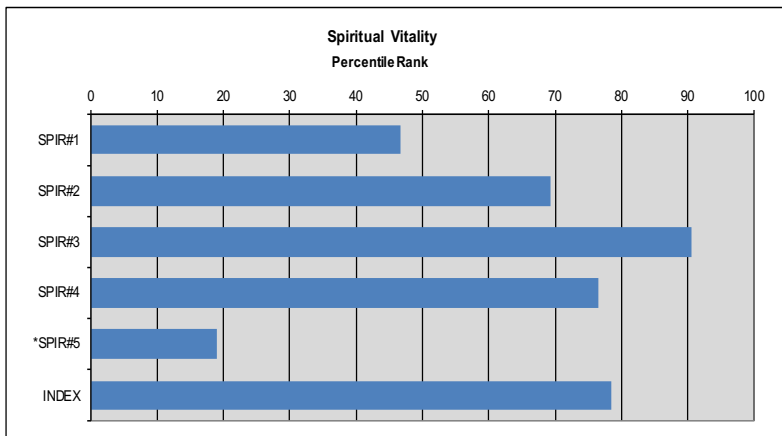
**Question Text**

- SPIR#1 My spiritual experiences often impact the way I look at life.
- SPIR#2 My spirituality is really the basis of my whole approach to life.
- SPIR#3 I experience the presence of God in my life.
- SPIR#4 I work to connect my faith to all the other aspects of my life.
- \*SPIR#5 Although my faith is important to me, I feel there are other things more pressing in my life right now.

**Response Percentages** (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
SPIR#1	4.4	0.0	1.3	19.0	27.8	47.5
SPIR#2	1.3	0.6	5.8	24.5	35.5	32.3
SPIR#3	1.9	0.0	0.0	7.7	30.8	59.6
SPIR#4	0.7	0.0	4.1	20.4	41.5	33.3
*SPIR#5	19.0	31.3	27.2	14.3	7.5	0.7

**Comparative Profile** (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)



Note: A question with an asterisk is negatively worded relative to the index. In the Comparative Profile, a shorter bar is preferred for questions that are negatively worded. The overall index scores takes this into account in its calculation.

**What You Will Say**

- 1) Define spiritual vitality...
- 2) Point out negatively worded questions
- 3) Review percentages
- 4) Review comparative profile
- 5) When scores are low you may want to go back to the Drivers to see how important these questions are.
- 6) Point out that the questions are all personal in nature and do not address corporate spirituality. You might want to have folks circle the personal pronouns.
- 7) Point out that lower spiritual vitality scores can be a problem or it could mean that people who are spiritual seekers are comfortable in the church.

**Patterns**

- There is no correlation between spiritual vitality and other major indices like hospitality, morale, governance, education, worship, etc. For this reason, increasing the individual piety of members alone is not a strategy for developing a vital church.
- High or Very high spiritual vitality tends to be a predictor of giving as a percentage of household income.



## What You Will Say

- 1) Define readiness for ministry...
- 2) Review percentages
- 3) Review comparative profile
- 4) When scores are low you may want to go back to the Drivers to see how important these questions are.
- 5) Point out how well the church is doing in the development and support of people relative to the opportunities.

## Performance Indices

### Readiness for Ministry Index

In the last thirty years, a shift has taken place in our understanding of ministry. Some churches call it lay ministry, some lay leadership, others, the ministry of the baptized. In each case the basic concept is that all members of a church are called to ministry, and it is the responsibility of the church to help members identify their gifts and connect to ministries that best fit those gifts. The Readiness for Ministry Index measures the degree to which the church has helped members make this transition in their understanding and equipped them for their own particular ministry.

#### Question Text

RMIN#1 Our church does a good job helping each member understand that he or she is called to ministry.

RMIN#2 Our church prepares our members for ministry by helping them discern their gifts.

RMIN#3 Our church provides opportunities for members to engage in active ministry within the church and to the world.

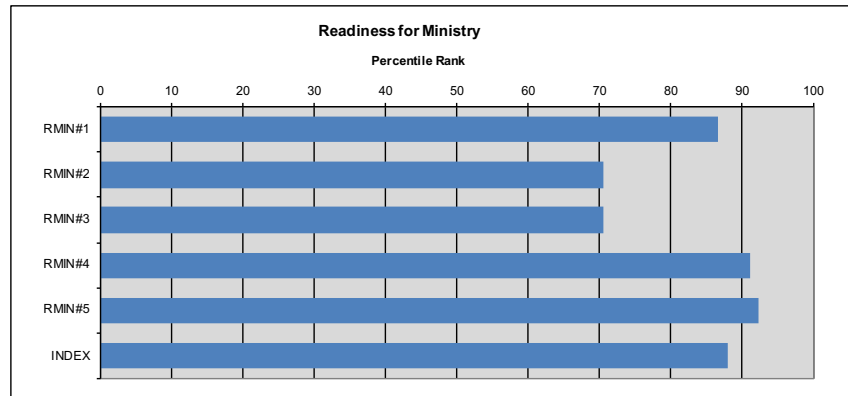
RMIN#4 Our church does a good job supporting persons in ministry by reminding them that they are making a difference.

RMIN#5 In our congregation lay people work with the Pastor in leading and planning worship services.

**Response Percentages** (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
RMIN#1	0.8	4.9	5.7	36.9	41.0	10.7
RMIN#2	0.9	7.8	19.0	36.2	29.3	6.9
RMIN#3	0.0	1.4	4.2	18.2	47.6	28.7
RMIN#4	0.0	0.8	4.2	22.0	50.0	22.9
RMIN#5	2.6	2.6	0.9	16.2	47.9	29.9

**Comparative Profile** (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)



### Patterns

- Low scores on RMIN#1 and RMIN#2 may indicate weakness in *developing* people for ministry.
- Low scores on RMIN#3 may indicate inadequate opportunities for people to serve.
- Low scores on RMIN#4 may indicate weakness in *supporting* people in ministry.
- When RMIN#3 is significantly higher than the other questions it often means that opportunities for service are outstripping the processes for developing and

**Educational Engagement Index**

Christian education is a life-long process that enriches a person's spiritual life and better prepares him or her for service in the world. The Educational Engagement Index measures the degree to which members share in that understanding. It also gauges the degree to which the church provides developmentally appropriate education across the entire span of life. In addition, it recognizes that members are living with a variety of schedules and that education must be provided in a way that adapts to member needs.

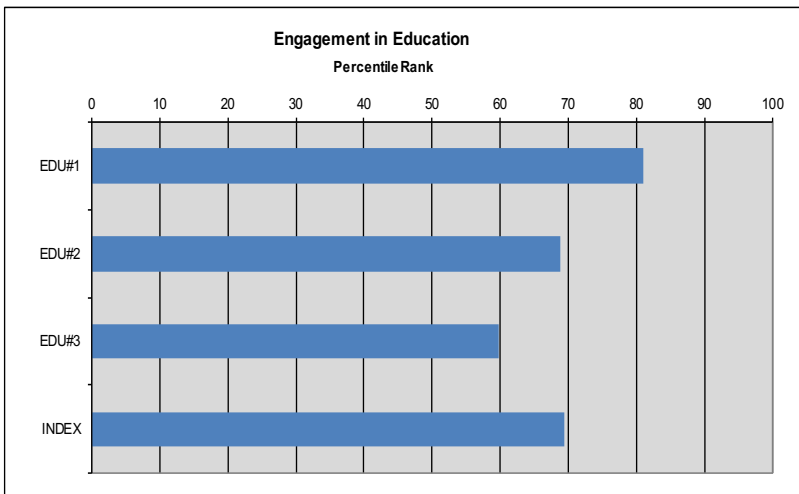
**Question Text**

- EDU#1 Our members understand that they have a spiritual responsibility for life-long learning and formation.
- EDU#2 Our church provides opportunities for education and formation in a variety of ways so that I can find one that fits my complex lifestyle.
- EDU#3 Our church provides high quality education that is appropriate to every age and stage of life.

**Response Percentages** (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
EDU#1	0.7	1.5	5.2	31.9	48.9	11.9
EDU#2	0.7	1.4	11.6	28.1	51.4	6.8
EDU#3	0.0	8.8	15.2	28.0	41.6	6.4

**Comparative Profile** (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)



**What You Will Say**

- 1) Define educational engagement...
- 2) Review percentages
- 3) Review comparative profile
- 4) When scores are low you may want to go back to the Drivers to see how important the questions are.
- 5) Point out large church and small church patterns where appropriate.
- 6) Point out that the educational ministry provides the means by which members are equipped to achieve the goals of the church.

**Patterns**

- In smaller churches, motivation for education (EDU#1) tends to outstrip educational programming (EDU#2 and EDU#3).
- In larger churches, education programming (EDU#2 and EDU#3) tends to outstrip motivation for education (EDU#1).
- It is the exceptional church that has high scores on all three questions.

## What You Will Say

- 1) Define worship and music...
- 2) Review percentages
- 3) Review comparative profile
- 4) When scores are low you may want to go back to the Drivers to see how important these questions are.

## Performance Indices

### Worship and Music Index

The worship experience is central to the vitality and growth of a congregation. While members are often engaged in a wide variety of activities, worship is the one experience that every member shares. Research suggests that worship is a primary factor in the morale of a congregation and that when the worship experience of a congregation is vibrant, members also tend to feel energized about the work of the church. The Worship and Music Index seeks to capture the congregation's feelings about the quality of the worship experience.

#### Question Text

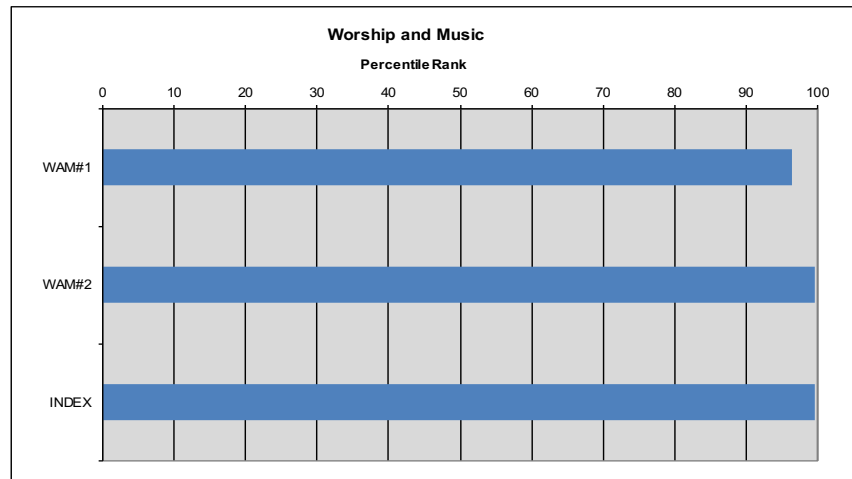
WAM#1 The music at our church is outstanding in quality and appropriate in style to our congregation.

WAM#2 The worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and spiritual content.

#### Response Percentages (These are the scores from your congregation.)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Tend to Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
WAM#1	0.0	0.0	1.3	6.0	18.8	73.8
WAM#2	0.7	0.0	2.7	6.1	36.1	54.4

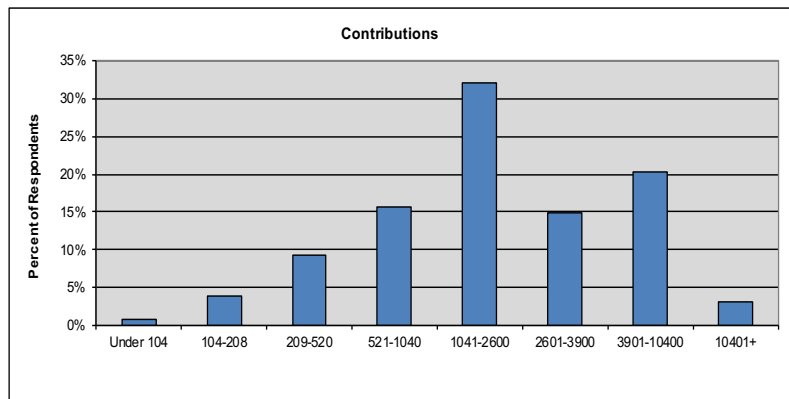
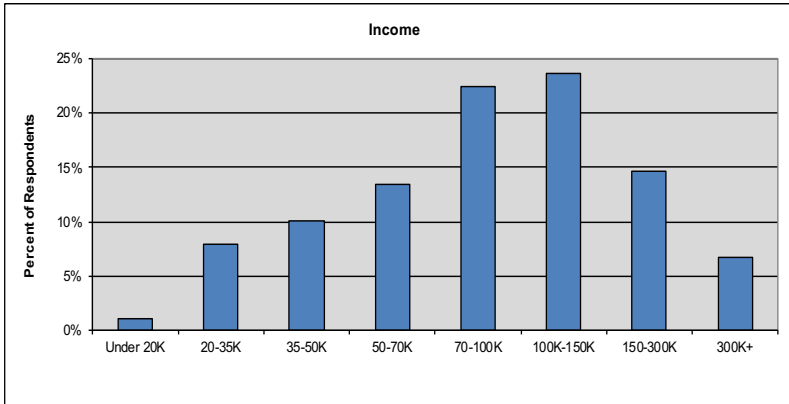
#### Comparative Profile (These show how your scores compared with other churches.)



Holy Cow! Consulting  
Page 24

## Patterns

- Outstanding worship is generally a component of high satisfaction and energy.



Total church income	\$415,000
Contribution per household	\$5,188
Average household income	\$119,719
Average percent of income given	4.33%
Percentile rank	90

### What You Will Say

- 1) Explain the top chart... income profile
- 2) Explain the bottom chart...giving profile
- 3) Are these roughly the same shape or skewed one direction or the other?
- 4) Explain how the total church income figure is obtained.
- 5) Explain how the per household giving is calculated.
- 6) Explain how the average household income is obtained (from the survey).
- 7) Explain how the percent of household income given is calculated.
- 8) Provide an idea of the additional giving capacity of the church.
- 9) Review percentile rank of giving.
- 10) Compare giving with priority for stewardship in the Priorities section.

### Patterns

- Remember that giving is related to spiritual vitality
- Whether a percent of household income is high or low is dependent upon what is preached and taught in the church regarding money.
- In most cases, 3% is a realistic capacity. Do a calculation...if the giving were 3%, how much additional revenue would the church have for its ministry?

## Demographic Data

### What You Will Say

- 1) Review age – Who is missing? Is this representative of your community?
- 2) Review tenure – Are there any surges or holes in the 5 year percentages? What was happening then? Is that still having an impact?
- 3) How far are people driving to the church? Is this a community church or a regional church?
- 4) Does the marketing approach match the reality (community or regional)?

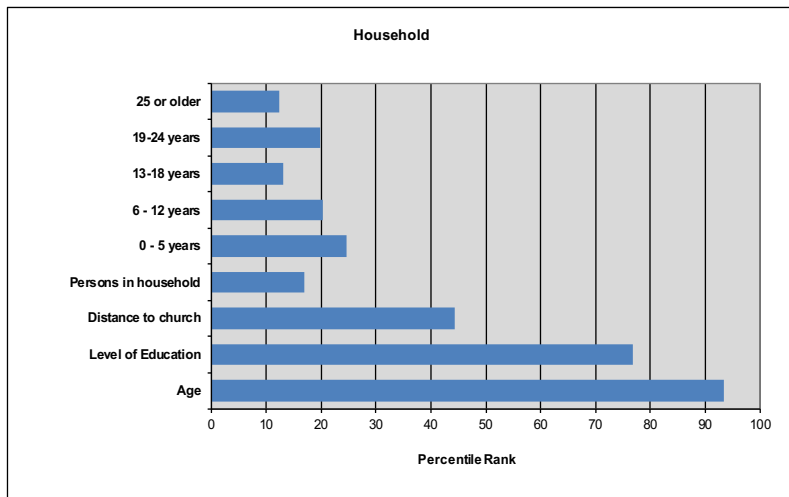
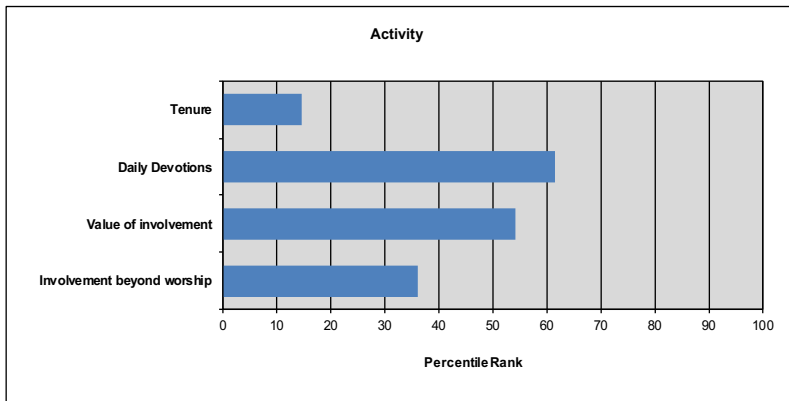
Age	Below 19	19-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	0%	1%	1%	4%	6%	15%	74%
Tenure	Under one year	1-2 years	3-4 years	5-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	Over 20 years
	7%	8%	13%	21%	11%	8%	31%
Distance to Church	Under 4 blocks	5-8 blocks	1-2 miles	3-4 miles	5-9 miles	10-15 miles	Over 15 miles
	4%	3%	23%	24%	27%	9%	9%
Attendance	None	1-4 times	Once per month	Twice per month	Three times a month	All but 4 weeks	Every week
	1%	4%	6%	15%	30%	18%	26%
Attendance Trend*	Third as much	Half as much	Somewhat less	Same	Somewhat more	Twice as much	Three times as much
	4%	4%	7%	56%	14%	4%	10%
Ethnic Background	Black/African American	White	American Indian/Alaskan Native	Latino/Hispanic/Spanish origin	Asian	Multi-ethnic	
	0%	99%	0%	0%	0%	1%	
Level of Education	Less than high school	Some high school	High school grad	Some college	College graduate	Some post graduate	Graduate degree
	0%	0%	1%	12%	35%	12%	41%
Persons in Household Total	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six or more	
	20%	66%	7%	5%	2%	0%	
0 - 5 years	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six or more
	96%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6 - 12 years	95%	4%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
13-18 years	96%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
19-24 years	95%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
25 or older	35%	13%	46%	6%	0%	0%	0%

Holy Cow! Consulting  
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### Patterns

- Often it is the younger cohort that is missing. Paying attention to what is important to that group (using the Bubble Chart) may be important.
- Often churches do not give adequate attention to the demographics of their community, miss opportunities and have unrealistic expectations.
- Surges or holes in the tenure data usually indicate a period of vitality or stress.
- Many regional churches have community outreach strategies.

## Activity and Demographic Data



### What You Will Say

- 1) Review comparative data for each area in the Activity Section.
- 2) Explain that longer than average tenure may mean that new groups need to be formed for new people.
- 3) Time for spiritual growth will often support the information in the spiritual vitality index.
- 4) Church is meaningful will often support the information in the morale index.
- 5) Involvement beyond worship will often connect to the readiness for ministry index.
- 6) Review comparative data for each area in the Household Section.
- 7) Talk about implications of this information for developing a church profile in anticipation of a search.

### Patterns

- Churches with a higher level of education tend to be in the progressive-adaptable quadrant on the flexible style map.

**What You Will Say**

- 1) These are statistics provided by the church on the Church Data Form.
- 2) They do not come from the *Congregation Assessment Tool*<sup>®</sup>.
- 3) Leaders might want to check the community data against official

**Church Data Form**

Most recent membership	180
One year earlier	185
Two years earlier	190
Three years earlier	200
Most recent new members	15
One year earlier	
Two years earlier	
Three years earlier	
Most recent average Sunday attendance	130
One year earlier	130
Two years earlier	60
Three years earlier	160
Church Assessment Roll	200
Number of households	80
Givers of record	86
Letters sent out	200
Number returned/participated	158
Total receipts most recent	\$ 415,000
Total receipts one year earlier	\$ 412,000
Total receipts two years earlier	\$ 421,000

**Community**

Population trend	A church where the community within one mile of the church has a population that has been in slow decline over the last three years
Income trend	A church where the income in the neighborhood within one mile of the church has increased at the same rate as the larger community over the last three years

## Executive Summary

The Congregation Assessment Tool was recently administered in your church. 150 persons were invited to participate; of these, 78 persons responded. A response from every member is not required to provide valid results. For a complete readout, please review the Vital Signs report that was sent to your church. A summary of that report is provided below.

Overall, approximately 36% of your members are clearly satisfied with things in the church. This, along with other information, indicates that members can imagine a church with a higher level of vitality than they are currently experiencing and are searching for a pathway that will lead them to a stronger church.

Not every question is of equal importance to members. When asked how satisfied they are, members tend to focus on the issues addressed in the questions below. When they feel more positive in these areas, they tend to feel more positive overall.

- **The worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and spiritual content.**
- **The whole spirit in our congregation makes people want to get as involved as possible.**
- **In our congregation lay people work with the Rector in leading and planning worship services.**
- **Our church does a good job helping each member understand that he or she is called to ministry.**
- **Persons who serve as leaders in our church are representative of the membership.**

Conversely, when your members feel less positive about the areas above, they tend to feel less satisfied with their experience in the church overall.

Every church exhibits patterns in its life that contain strengths and potential weaknesses. Your church has potential strengths related to openness and structure of religious practice. Potential weaknesses include a tendency to become tradition-bound and overwhelmed with needs.

As members look to the future, their top four goals are

- **Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.**
- **Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.**
- **Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc).**
- **Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life.**

In comparison to other churches, three goals that are unusually strong for your church are

- **Strengthen the pastoral response of the church in serving people in times of need (emotional, mental, physical, spiritual, etc.).**
- **Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc).**
- **Deepen our sense of connection to God and one another through stronger worship services.**

These may warrant attention from the leadership even if they are mid-level priorities.

All the information in this report should be explored and validated in further conversation. **Survey data is not the end of a conversation but the beginning.**

### What You Will Say

This one page summary is computer-generated and may be more helpful in some situations than others. For that reason it is provided only to the interpretive consultant. It is left to the best judgment of the interpretive consultant whether it should be shared in the presentation.