

DEFINITIONS

COMMUNITY

Relationships: People rated things like warmth, caring and fellowship. High scores here indicate that people sense the church is like a healthy family.

Support: This reflects how well people feel cared for and ministered to. High scores here indicate that people feel that they are personally growing and that the church effectively supports them.

Ownership: This facet measures whether or not people feel they have ownership and can make a difference at the church. They have a personal sense of responsibility for the church's well-being. They believe that they count.

Connectedness: People experience connectedness to a church in many ways. When newcomers quickly connect and the church has an effective assimilation process for all, people will understand and engage in the mission of the church beyond just the weekend worship service. Further, when people are connected they will more readily embrace change.

CODE

Vision: When the vision is clear and compelling, people get excited. Vision, however, must be shared and can never be dictated. High scores indicate that leaders are unified, the vision is clear, and new people quickly experience what the church is all about. The church is welldefined.

Worship: This facet measures levels of satisfaction with music and sermons. It looks at whether or not the worship services are attracting new people. It looks at whether or not people are experiencing life-change as a result of the overall worship experience.

Learning: This facet measures your congregation's sense of personal growth that goes beyond mere knowledge. High scores indicate that your adult learning environment is resulting in people who feel prepared to minister and who believe your church has made a significant difference in their lives.

Building: A church's building and facilities express, symbolically, the church's code. This facet measures how well the buildings and facilities support your various ministries. It measures how appealing, friendly, and accessible the facilities are.

CALLING

Leadership: While there are many definitions of leadership, the tci focuses on how well your leadership handles conflict and disagreement. It looks at whether or not people perceive leadership to practice what it preaches. High scores indicate that leadership does a good job with change management and has created an environment of trust.

Finances: This facet looks at how well the church manages finances, how financial issues are discussed (not too much, not too little), and whether or not people support the church financially.

CAUSE

Outreach: Is the church making an impact outside of itself? High scores indicate that the church has a good reputation, is making a contribution to the community, and is interested in making a difference in people's lives. It is more concerned about external impact than internal church growth.

Families: This facet measures how effective the church is at reaching, serving, and nurturing children, teens, and families.

Involvement: This facet measures the depth to which people feel personally involved at the church. High scores here indicate that people are involved in smaller groups within the church, that they feel personally cared for by leaders, and that they have a clearly defined role. They are active participants in church events.

CHANGE

Innovation: This facet looks at how people perceive the church related to such words as creativity, cutting edge, upbeat, and innovative. High scores show a significant level of perceived relevance to current culture.

Implementation: This facet examines how well a church manages itself. High scores indicate that the church does a good job of communicating, meeting goals and deadlines, celebrating achievements, mentoring people, and making decisions.

Transforming Church Insight

A congregation engagement survey of Bethesda Lutheran Church
by Leighton Ford Ministries

How we see ourselves in an electronic survey October-November 2021
in 15 facets, 135 questions and 161 completed surveys

OUR BEST SELF
Physical Building
Outreach to the Community
Innovation
Clear Vision
Leadership and Management of Change
OUR LESS SELF
Warm, Caring and Personal Relationships
Personal Involvement
Serving Youth and Families
Adult Learning
Support for Personal Growth

Open-ended Questions

If you had to describe this church in one word, what word would you choose?

caring comfortable disappointing diversity effort
elderly evolving faith family friendly fulfilling
home inclusive loving lutheran open
progressive resource spiritual stable struggling supportive
traditional vibrant welcoming

Sample Quotes

- Family
- Fulfilling
- Sucks
- Comfort
- Open
- Resourceful (main resource? Scriptures)
- Excellent
- Calming
- Traditional
- Effective
- Faithful and striving to be a welcoming and inclusive congregation.
- Welcoming
- Old
- Stable Encouraging
- Evolving
- Clique
- Developing
- Traditional
- Well-intentioned.
- Inclusive
- Welcoming!
- Great

Are there any new ministries, programs or opportunities that you would like the church's leadership to explore?

activities adult bible church education families
groups helping immigrants involved kids leader
members middle none opportunities program senior
small social something studies support young youth

Sample Quotes

- A program on meditation and prayer
- Modern preaching
- Immigration, support of LSI Beloit campus next door (recently closed!)
- Opportunities for young adults, especially singles. Adult educational opportunities for scriptural study.
- I would like to see a stronger senior program.
- Encouraging families with school age children
- Bible Study. Old and New Testament.... Like ALFA or something similar. Small groups.
- Young adult ministries. Interesting youth activities to bring in new Middle School and High School youth. Youth bible studies. Additional opportunity for Men's bible studies and support for parents/fathers.
- Improve modern worship music
- Visitation of new members and non-mobile members
- In spite of having programs, we seem unable to grow especially not effective in attracting young families to membership.
- It would be great if we could get the Decon here to help with the children's programs.
- No
- How will our worldwide climate changes and political unrest effect Bethesda. Will we be able to open our hearts to helping resettle the refugees and immigrants
- I like the new senior citizen socials
- For single or divorced members
- Sexual exploitation of minors
- Cut down on the number of organizations we give money to.
- More emphasis on community service and less on internal "fun" activities

What are the church's most significant challenges or weaknesses?

aging attendance attracting children church congregation
families getting groups growing involved lack leadership
members membership ministry pastors people
politics programs volunteers worship young younger youth

Sample Quotes

- Internal communication, esp. from the office to members or groups
- Getting people to volunteer, getting people to volunteer for leadership, quality programs for children and young families
- Leadership poor pastors
- Need more young members, young families, need to serve younger people in today's world and U.S.
- Education for children and youth
- Ministry to youth, but also to isolated elderly
- Age of members
- Membership, attendance, to expand youth and young families, an aging population
- Growing membership
- Pastoral worship sometimes comes off as irreverent (i.e., flippant extraneous comments that distract from otherwise meaningful worship experiences.
- Developing programs for young adults.
- Children
- Families with children
- Getting people involved enthusiastically in the various ministries in the church. Good, solid, Bible studies, not just for children, women's groups, or men's groups, but for all.
- Children and Youth Education and Ministry. Do we have a nursery? Is it staffed? Youth of Ames and surrounding communities are struggling to bounce back from the pandemic. There is no effort for personal contact with our children.
- Support for youth programs & need for increased volunteer participation
- Sat/Sun congregational divide

What are the church's greatest strengths, currently?

bethesda caring church closet clothing
community facilities food friendly inclusion
leadership location members music outreach
pantry pastors people room sermons
service support tradition welcoming worship

Sample Quotes

- Becoming an RIC church
- Excellent pastors and worship programs, including music leadership and programs
- The facility
- Music, active members, people care about this church
- Fellowship, sermons, opportunities
- Talent (MUSIC), many new details--elevator, lighting, sound system
- Friendly
- Well established in the community, many volunteers
- Dealing WITH COVID
- Strong ministry leadership. Music leadership. Communication. In-person and online worship Opportunities
- The church is very welcoming and caring.
- Music
- Music
- Continuing growth in technology to support worship and communication. Good messages from the pulpit. Work on building understanding of issues in the community, i.e., LGBTQ, refugees and Asylum Seekers, understanding other faiths such as Muslim faith.
- We have an amazing worship space. Our Bethesda Food pantry and Clothing Closet. One of our biggest draws in the community has been minimized and basically shut down in the past 3 to 4 years. Covid was just the excuse needed to sweep it away.
- Pastors and caring members
- Stability, preservation of history, community outreach
- Church leaders have a strong commitment to the church and the community, as demonstrated by the food pantry, clothing room and reconciling in Christ. Our physical plant is well maintained.
- Our pastors