

**Report of the State College Presbyterian Church
Self-Study Committee**

December 2011

Responding to our charge

A self-study is part of the process leading up to the search for a new pastor. Our committee was charged with conducting this study. The results are intended to help understand and share our history, to describe ways in which we are currently engaged as a congregation and to help think about our focus for the years ahead.

From the outset we were charged to listen widely and deeply. This helped us to hear what was shared with us in faith and in confidence and discern meaning, threads, and patterns that enable us to weave a tapestry of reflections of our ongoing journey as a community of faith. It is in a spirit of humble service, and with a strong sense of excitement for the future, that we present this report of the State College Presbyterian Church self-study committee.

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The committee would also like to thank Meg Meloy for her assistance in constructing the college age survey instrument.

Executive Summary

Over the course of eight months, we heard from over 650 persons in the church and community about SCPC.

This report is organized in three main sections reflecting: (1) who we are as a congregation, (2) where we feel called to respond to the needs of our congregation and our community, and (3) the desired characteristics of the pastor who will lead us through the next stage of our evolution as a community of faith. Each of the sections summarizes the central themes that emerged from our self-study.

Main areas of strength that characterize **who we are** include:

- our building and location,
- how we care for children and youth,
- meaningful worship and music programs,
- vibrant mission work,
- a stable and dedicated staff, and
- a diverse congregation that is involved in the life and work of the church.

The most commonly stated ideas for the **future direction of our church**, grouped into several broad categories, are:

- pastoral care issues,
- small group ministries,
- mission and social justice issues,
- improvements in communication/technology, and
- ever increasing variety in music programs.

Several characteristics of the person **who will lead us** include:

- deeply rooted faith,
- quality preaching,
- strong administrator and leader,
- gifts complementary to other staff,
- pastoral care.

Overall, we have tried to reflect both the content and the tone of feedback from multiple conversations with the congregation and the community. Additional detail is included in the appendices.

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Information Gathering Events

May 8, 2011	Congregational Survey administered during first and second services
May, 2011	Interviews with SCPC staff
June 23, 2011	Listening session with SCPC members at Brookline
June 29, 2011	Listening session with SCPC members at The Village at Penn State
July 20, 2011	Listening session with SCPC members at Foxdale Village
July 2011	College-Age Survey distributed via the web
June, July, & August 2011	Interviews with leaders of the State College community – domains include: police, judicial, school district, Penn State, health care, human service agencies, leaders of other faith communities
June, July, & August 2011	Listening session with individuals upon request
September, 2011	Listening session with PW Board
September, 2011	Open listening sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• September 12, 2011• September 14, 2011• September 15, 2011• September 18, 2011
October 5, 2011	Listening session with Fellowship in Senior High (FISH) participants
October 16, 2011	Open listening session during adult education

Introduction

This report is organized in three main sections reflecting: (1) who we are as a congregation, (2) where we feel called to respond to the needs of our congregation and our community, and (3) the desired characteristics of the pastor who will lead us through the next stage of our evolution as a community of faith. Each of the sections summarizes the central themes that emerged from our self-study. Additional detail is included in the appendices. Overall, we have tried to reflect both the content and the tone of feedback from multiple conversations with the congregation and the community.

Who we are

This section reviews our history, our core strengths as a congregation, and the ways in which we are engaged within the church and the community.

The State College Presbyterian Church (SCPC) is a community of faith established in State College in 1890. Our current Mission Statement reads, “The State College Presbyterian Church has been called by God and organized to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, to minister to the needs of members of the congregation and residents of the community, and to promote peace and justice in the world.” In living out that mission statement we have grown into a congregation of approximately 1,180 members.

SCPC is blessed in many areas. These areas have been identified by the Self Study committee through a congregational survey, meetings with staff and with leaders in the community at large, and through listening sessions with church members.

Main areas of strength that characterize who we are include:

- our building and location,
- how we care for children and youth,
- meaningful worship and music programs,
- vibrant mission work,
- a stable and dedicated staff, and
- a diverse congregation that is involved in the life and work of the church.

The church is located in downtown State College one block from the Penn State campus. Our original charter was to provide worship and Christian Education opportunities for students at Penn State and our location is ideal for that mission. Our building dates from 1911 with significant additions made in 1941 and 1994. Members appreciate the aesthetic appeal of the gray stone sanctuary and bell tower and especially value how well the physical plant is used, not just on Sundays but also throughout the week. An additional blessing related to our location is the presence of two large parking garages within one block of the church.

Programs for children and youth at SCPC include the Stay and Play preschool, Christian Education on Sunday mornings, midweek programs for elementary, middle school, and high school youth (LOGOS – which includes first through fifth grade youth - Geckos, and middle-school youth - Chrysalis, and Fellowship in Senior High - FISH). In addition there is an active college ministry within the church and also on the Penn State campus. All of these programs are almost universally valued by church members and are as important to older members as they are to families with children.

Our worship services are typically traditional services held twice on Sunday mornings. In addition, a Taize contemplative service is held once a month. Our membership identifies itself theologically in equal parts as conservative, moderate, and liberal. We are blessed to have so many viewpoints represented in our congregation and that we are able to worship together in meaningful ways. Members indicate a high level of satisfaction with worship and experience inspiration and a sense of God's presence

during worship. Considerable importance is placed on the quality of preaching. The expectation is that sermons will challenge us and deepen our understanding of our faith.

The music program at SCPC is a significant contributor to the high satisfaction with the worship experience in general. There are opportunities for participation beginning in first grade through late adulthood. Specific programs include the LOGOS and Chrysalis music programs, Voices of Praise which is a high school and young adult choir, the Chancel Choir, the Bell Choir, and other special choirs and orchestras. Overall, we value traditional music and hymns, but also have a significant number of members who appreciate contemporary music.

Doing God's work in serving congregation members, the local community, and the world at large is important to our members. Our community recognizes and values the mission and outreach work of SCPC. Our congregation is aware of the needs of our neighbors, both locally and worldwide. We value and support mission projects and initiatives for their positive impact and also for the opportunities they provide for members of the church to work together toward a common purpose. An example which is cited over and over again in group discussions is the Habitat House project which was completely funded and built by church members.

In each of our listening sessions the strength of our professional staff, individually and collectively was raised as an asset. The support and appreciation for our staff is very strong across the congregation. The programs that make us strong as a church would not be possible without the guidance of a dedicated and talented staff. We have been blessed by the lack of turnover in most staff positions and strong leadership from a long time senior pastor who encouraged the staff to work to its full potential.

Support for our programs and outreach is the result of both staff leadership as well as a high level of involvement and commitment by congregation members. Our membership numbers have remained stable which is noteworthy in a transient university community. Among our congregational survey respondents, 35 percent have been involved for more

than 20 years and 21 percent have become active or joined in the last five years. Almost half of those responding to the survey serve in leadership roles in our church programs. Equally important, slightly more than half of respondents are active in social service or advocacy groups in the community at large.

The strengths and blessings that define us as a community of faith are truly gifts from God which reflect the presence of the Holy Spirit in who we are and what we do.

Where we are being led as a congregation

What is the future of the State College Presbyterian Church? Where are we being led as a congregation? What are the unmet needs that need to be addressed? From our many conversations and the congregational survey, we found that there is a common desire to continue our strong work in the areas outlined above. But many members also voiced a wish to move in new directions to address unmet needs and to expand our mission activities. This section will describe the most commonly stated ideas for the future direction of our church, grouped into several broad categories:

- pastoral care issues,
- small group ministries,
- mission and social justice issues,
- improvements in communication/technology, and
- ever increasing variety in music programs.

Pastoral care

The need for greater pastoral care was mentioned at nearly every meeting held by our committee, and was a particular concern during our conversations with SCPC staff and with residents at the local assisted living facilities (Brookline, Foxdale, and the Village). There is a consensus that we, as a church, can do a better job keeping track of our members' needs and communicating those needs to the pastoral staff and/or matching those needs with what others in the congregation can offer.

Pastoral care is more than a single phone call or visit in a period of intense need – although these are also important – and in some cases may require semi-regular visitation for a defined period of time. Some examples of situations where ongoing pastoral care may be desired: continuing care for new babies, continuing care for family members with disabilities, individuals with heavy medical/social needs, and follow up visits after a period of grieving. Although pastoral care is an issue that affects members of all ages and family situations, we also recognize that pastoral care is especially important to our population of older members (age 55 and older) who are disproportionately affected by health challenges and grief. While some pastoral care may be achieved by other members of the congregation (some suggested approaches include, exploring the role of Deacons, visitation Deacons, or adding a Stephen Ministry), visits by one of the ministers are very important, especially to our members in assisted living situations and those who cannot attend services regularly. For examples relating to pastoral care, please see appendix 4.

Small group ministries

On the congregational survey, the three activities or programs of the church which received the lowest satisfaction scores were: spiritual formation/small groups (52 % of respondents said they were either very satisfied or satisfied), Presbyterian Women's group (38% very satisfied or satisfied), and Presbyterian Men's group (30% very satisfied or satisfied). Similarly, during our open meetings with the congregation, the second most frequent topic of conversation was a desire for small group ministries which could serve as an avenue for connecting with others in the congregation and forming stronger bonds within our church family. Recognizing that small group ministries require a lot of time and effort, this is another topic of discussion to take up with our new head pastor. It is clear from our work that this is an area of spiritual development that our congregation is craving.

Small group ministries were discussed with respect to several areas of possible growth for SCPC. These ministries could help people find their niches and get to know other individuals with similar interests, could be used to address shortages in programming that appeal to specific age-cohorts, and could provide an avenue to create more intergenerational programs which allow people to interact with members of different ages. In particular, this committee heard members wanting ministries involving seniors (55+ years old), college-aged and young adults (broadly, 20-40 years old), more gender-specific groups, single adults, married couples without children, and intergenerational groups.

Adult education is another type of small group ministry that many felt could be improved. Several people expressed interest in a greater number of adult Bible studies, including more long-term in-depth studies of the scripture.

For examples relating to small group ministries and adult education, please see appendix 4.

Mission and social justice issues

One question on the congregational survey asked worshipers how satisfied they are with 21 various activities, programs and services at our church. Overall, most respondents said they were very satisfied or satisfied with local mission/outreach (82%) and global mission/outreach (71%). More than half of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with social justice (63%) and inclusiveness/diversity (60%). Yet, the topics of expanding our mission focus, social justice issues, and being a welcoming church came up repeatedly during our open meetings with the congregation. This suggests that, although many church members are comfortable with our current mission endeavors and attention to diversity, a significant and vocal minority are ready to challenge our church to rethink our views in these areas and to do more.

Our current mission and outreach efforts include a variety of projects, mission trips and programs in which our members seek to serve beyond the walls of SCPC. Because mission needs and concerns are not static, our approach to mission should be dynamic and allow us to respond to new challenges as they arise. This includes continuing to provide leadership in the local community and Presbytery on a variety of social issues, promoting stewardship of the natural world, and showing compassion for those in need, both locally and globally.

We are already at work on becoming a more welcoming church. A theme for the 2011-2012 program year, as exemplified by several of Pastor Susan's sermons already, is "Welcome." This emphasis on welcoming and inclusiveness may mean different things to different people. At its simplest, it means being more friendly and welcoming to visitors by smiling and introducing ourselves to newcomers. It means making it easier for new members to get involved, by helping people to find their niches and use their gifts. Going a little deeper, we should strive to make the physical church more accessible to people in wheelchairs or with other physical limitations.

Several people suggested that SCPC increase our outreach to the international community in response to the growing international population at Penn State and in State College. We could make our food-related gatherings more welcoming by serving more healthy foods and being mindful of dietary restrictions. At its most complex, becoming a more welcoming and inclusive church may mean being more intentional about inviting *everyone* to be a part of our church. That is, it is not enough to be welcoming to all who come through our doors; we also must make sure everyone feels welcome to enter. Specifically, many felt we should explore what it means to welcome those whom the traditional Protestant churches have not included as full members and leaders.

As a congregation, we are not of a single mind with respect to social justice issues. This time of transition may be our opportunity to challenge ourselves with more discussion of social justice, at the same time being careful to respect our diverse opinions and not create unnecessary divisions within the church.

For examples relating to mission, outreach and social justice, please see appendix 4.

Communication and technology

Another theme that we heard when talking about future plans was to improve methods of communication, especially by increasing the use of technology. Right now, the main avenues of communication between the church and its members are the bulletins (used during the two services) and the PresbyPost. People who are unable to attend worship services (either on a particular Sunday, or systematically due to health/transportation issues) never get to see the bulletin. And the PresbyPost is delivered via postal mail only once per month. If there are more time-sensitive announcements to share with our members, how can we get this information out to all of our members quickly and efficiently?

In addition to the method of communication, there was also discussion about the importance of greater communication between different groups within the church. We are a large church and sometimes it is possible for one group to be unaware of what is going on within another group. More effective communication could also help get new members more involved by putting new members in touch with others (individuals and groups) in the church with similar interests.

A few persons also mentioned expanding the use of technology during worship services, for example, using a projector to display lyrics or images. Typically, these comments were balanced with concern that we don't want to bend over backwards to entertain, and that some will find the use of technology in this way to be distracting. Communication between the church and the State College community is also important.

Perhaps a greater emphasis on publicity and marketing (including, but not limited to, revising and expanding our website) could help to grow our membership and relationship with the larger community.

Ever increasing variety in music programs

The final theme highlighted by members of the congregation was a desire for more contemporary music in our worship. In the congregational survey, 89 percent of respondents said they are satisfied or very satisfied with music at SCPC. During our listening sessions, a few parents felt that the current worship service does not “speak” to their teenagers, and that adding contemporary music would enhance the worship experience for these youth. There is a feeling among some that we need to adapt to meet the needs of older youth (tweens) and teenagers in order to keep them and their families coming to church. Interest in contemporary music was not limited to parents of teenagers, but was expressed by people across the age spectrum.

Church members offered two specific ideas for how to achieve this goal. First, we could incorporate more contemporary music (or, more diverse music offerings in general) into our current worship services. Second, it was suggested that SCPC consider adding a contemporary worship service at a new time, possibly on a Saturday evening, to draw in new members. This idea appealed in particular to college students and families with older children who participate in many school and/or sporting events on Sundays. We should point out that, on this topic, the voices we heard during our open meetings were somewhat different than those who responded to the congregational survey. The survey results suggest that the current level of diversity in worship music is sufficient for most people who attend the worship services. However, the age-groups who are likely most interested in contemporary music – children/youth, teenagers, and college students – were much less likely (relative to older adults) to complete the survey.

A final aspect of the music program that was mentioned by several people was a desire to allow children and youth who do not participate in the mid-week LOGOS programs (Geckos and Chrysalis) to sing in the worship service.

For examples relating to the music program, please see appendix 4.

Final thoughts on future programming

Looking back through this report, we see the long lists of programs that our church currently supports and areas in which we would like to expand. As we look to the future, this committee acknowledges that increased programming will also require increased financial support. Further, expanding our program offerings and mission work may also be constrained by physical space and staff. One theme that ran through the many varied responses to the question “what challenges do we face as a church” was a caution not to overextend ourselves: we have limited facilities, staff, and resources, so we should make sure that whatever we do, we do well. That said, the State College Presbyterian Church should move in the directions where we truly feel called to be, and trust that God will provide the resources to sustain our efforts in these areas.

Who Will Lead Us?

This section outlines the attributes we are seeking in a new head pastor. Throughout the self-study process, the skills and talents identified here were consistently highlighted by members of the congregation.

As we move forward as a church, State College Presbyterian Church (SCPC) is looking for a strong head pastor who will lead us. First and foremost, we believe our next head pastor should have a “desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life” (2011, revised PC (USA) ordination standards). It is important to our staff and members that our next head pastor be deeply rooted in the scriptures and has

a high degree of spirituality that is continuing to grow. In being so, we hope she or he will be able to help the congregation meet the spiritual needs of its members and staff.

Quality preaching is important to the members of SCPC. While we may have a wide diversity of ideas when it comes to what should be preached on Sunday, we agree that strong, well-thought-out, engaging, and thought-provoking sermons are important.

We recognize that SCPC has many leaders – lay leaders, Deacons, Ruling Elders (Session), staff members, and Teaching Elders (Ministers) – all of whom are important in the life of this church. We have heard throughout this process that our next head pastor will need to be a good manager. He or she must be someone who will work with the strengths and weaknesses of the current staff, someone who will encourage leadership from the members of the congregation, and someone who is willing to admit their weaknesses and delegate tasks.

Another important characteristic of our future head pastor is strong administrative skills, including sound financial management. This point was heard in all meetings with staff and members of the congregation although it seemed to be of lower priority in the survey. Specifically, it is important that the new head pastor come to understand clearly how to make decisions on behalf of the staff, session, and congregation when needed. The associate pastor, and the role he has at SCPC, is very important to the congregation; therefore, it is important that the head pastor's gifts complement the gifts of the associate pastor, as well as other members of the staff. SCPC would like the head pastor to be a strong leader of a very diverse congregation, a talented and strong-willed staff, and in the community, the Presbytery and beyond.

A pastor, who is a good communicator, is approachable, has a warm personality, is honest and exhibits appropriate humility, and is compassionate and comforting, would work well with SCPC. Because we heard repeatedly from the congregation that pastoral care requires attention and improvement, we recommend the next head pastor excel in this area and be willing to creatively address this issue with the congregation.

Conclusion

The State College Presbyterian Church is a vibrant and dynamic community of faith. We give of our time, our money and our talents in a wide-array of programs within the church and in the local and global community. We value our youth, our staff, and the opportunity to serve through mission, recognizing and appreciating that we are a congregation with members at every stage of life and spiritual formation. What we have learned through this period of self-study is that we are a community of diverse opinions and talents, deeply connected to our faith and to each other and mindful of the power of fellowship to express our faith and live into our calling. As such, there is a solid foundation upon which to build as we call a new head pastor to lead us. We acknowledge that we are in a state of transition in our understanding of living as Disciples of Christ at the beginning of the 21st century. We look forward to the next stage of our evolution confident in our strengths and prepared to respond to the challenges and opportunities that lie before us.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Congregational Survey: Results



You and Your Congregation

1. How often do you go to worship services at this congregation?

- 1% This is my first time
- 2% Hardly ever or special occasions only
- 2% Less than once a month
- 2% Once a month
- 20% Two or three times a month
- 70% Usually every week
- 4% More than once a week

2. How long have you been going to worship services or activities at this congregation?

- 4% Less than 1 year
- 6% 1-2 years
- 11% 3-5 years
- 18% 6-10 years
- 24% 11-20 years
- 35% More than 20 years
- 1% I am visiting from another congregation
- 1% I am visiting and do not regularly go anywhere else

3. Are you currently a member of this congregation?

- 85% Yes
- 2% No, but I'm in the process of becoming a member
- 8% No, but I regularly participate here
- 5% No

4. Are you regularly involved in any group activities here? (Mark all that apply.)

- 34% Yes, in Sunday school, church school, or Sabbath school
- 17% Yes, in prayer, discussion, or Bible study groups
- 46% Yes, in fellowships, clubs, or other social groups
- 4% No, we have no group activities
- 31% No, I am not regularly involved in group activities

5. Do you regularly take part in any activities of this congregation that reach out to the wider community (visitation, evangelism, outreach, community service, social justice)? (Mark all that apply.)

- 9% Yes, in evangelism or outreach activities
- 37% Yes, in community service, social justice, or advocacy activities of this congregation
- 3% No, we don't have such activities
- 57% No, I am not regularly involved

6. Do you currently have any of the following roles here? (Mark all that apply.)

- 9% Member of the governing board
- 18% Member of a congregational committee or task force
- 7% Leading or assisting in worship
- 9% Officer or leader of men's, women's, youth, or other group
- 13% Choir member, musician, or choir director
- 13% Sunday school, church school, or Sabbath school teacher
- 11% Other role not listed here
- 51% None

7. To what extent do the worship services or activities of this congregation help you with everyday living?

- 46% A great extent
- 44% Some extent
- 8% A small extent
- 3% Not at all

About Your Faith

8. How often do you spend time in private devotional activities (such as prayer, meditation, reading the Bible alone)?

- 36% Every day or most days
- 23% A few times a week
- 5% Once a week
- 22% Occasionally
- 12% Hardly ever
- 3% Never



9. Over the last year, how much have you grown in your faith? (Mark only one.)

- 12% No real growth
- 53% Some growth
- 22% Much growth, mainly through this congregation
- 5% Much growth, mainly through other groups or congregations
- 8% Much growth, mainly through my own private activities

10. Which statement comes closest to your view of the Bible? (Mark only one.)

- 9% The Bible is the word of God, to be taken literally word for word
- 41% The Bible is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical context and the Church's teachings
- 34% The Bible is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural context
- 10% The Bible is not the word of God, but contains God's word to us
- 3% The Bible is not the word of God, but is a valuable book
- <1% The Bible is an ancient book with little value today
- 3% Don't know

11. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: "All the different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth"?

- 16% Strongly agree
- 40% Agree
- 21% Neutral or unsure
- 17% Disagree
- 6% Strongly disagree

12. Do you agree or disagree: "My spiritual needs are being met in this congregation or parish"?

- 28% Strongly agree
- 55% Agree
- 14% Neutral or unsure
- 3% Disagree
- <1% Strongly disagree

13. Which one of the following best describes your readiness to talk to others about your faith? (Mark only one.)

- 2% I do not have faith, so the question is not applicable
- 16% I do not talk about my faith; my life and actions are sufficient
- 17% I find it hard to talk about my faith in ordinary language
- 58% I mostly feel at ease talking about my faith and do so if it comes up
- 8% I feel at ease talking about my faith and seek opportunities to do so

14. Have you ever had a conversion experience or a moment of decisive faith commitment?

- 38% Yes
- 43% No
- 20% Not sure

About Your Involvement

15. Are you involved in any community service, social service, or advocacy groups not connected to this congregation? (Mark all that apply.)

- 52% Yes, social service or charity groups
- 7% Yes, advocacy, justice, or lobbying groups
- 45% No, I'm not involved with such groups

16. Would you be prepared to invite to a worship service here any of your friends and relatives who do not now attend a congregation?

- 37% Yes, and I have done so in the past 12 months
- 51% Yes, but I have not done so in the past 12 months
- 8% No, probably not
- 1% No, definitely not
- 4% Don't know



17. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? (Mark all that apply.)

- 16% Loaned money to someone outside your family
- 17% Cared for someone outside your family who was very sick
- 22% Helped someone outside your family find a job
- 61% Donated or prepared food for someone outside your family or congregation
- 89% Will vote or did vote in the 2008 presidential election
- 88% Donated money to a charitable organization (other than this congregation)
- 34% Worked with others to try to solve a community problem
- 28% Contacted an elected official about a public issue
- 28% Contributed money to a political party or candidate
- 13% Spoke at a decision-making meeting of this congregation
- 14% Went on a mission or service trip

18. How satisfied are you with what is offered here for children and youth (less than 19 years of age)?

- 68% Very satisfied
- 21% Satisfied
- 2% Mixed feelings
- <1% Dissatisfied
- 0% Very dissatisfied
- 9% Not sure or not applicable

19. Do you have any close friends in this congregation?

- 8% No, I have little contact with others from this congregation outside of activities here
- 19% No, I have some friends in this congregation, but my closest friends are not involved here
- 61% Yes, I have some close friends here as well as other close friends who are not part of this congregation
- 12% Yes, most of my closest friends are part of this congregation

20. Does this congregation have a clear vision, goals, or direction for its ministry and mission?

- 17% I am not aware of such a vision, goals, or direction
- 23% There are ideas but no clear vision, goals, or direction
- 27% Yes, and I am strongly committed to them
- 29% Yes, and I am partly committed to them
- 4% Yes, but I am not committed to them

21. Which one statement best describes your involvement in the making of important decisions in this congregation?

- 13% I have been given the opportunity and often participate in decision-making
- 29% I have been given the opportunity and occasionally get involved in decision-making
- 32% I have been given the opportunity but don't usually get involved in decision-making
- 22% I have not been given an opportunity to be involved and this is fine with me
- 4% I have not been given an opportunity to be involved and I am not happy about this

22. Do you have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation?

- 38% Yes, a strong sense of belonging that is growing
- 40% Yes, a strong sense--about the same as last year
- 8% Yes, but perhaps not as strong as in the past
- 2% No, but I am new here
- 4% No, and I wish I did by now
- 5% No, but I am happy as I am
- 3% Not applicable

23. While you may value many different styles of music, which two of the following do you prefer in congregational worship? (Mark up to two.)

- 73% Traditional hymns
- 16% Praise music or choruses
- 29% Contemporary hymns
- 12% Other contemporary music or songs (not hymns)
- 3% Sung responsorial psalms
- 18% Classical music or chorales
- 5% Contemplative chants (Taizé, Iona)
- 16% Music or songs from a variety of cultures
- 11% Gospel music
- 1% No music or songs
- 2% Don't know



24. Do you agree or disagree: "In general, there is a good match between our congregation and our minister, pastor, priest, or rabbi"?

- 48% Strongly agree
- 42% Agree
- 7% Neutral or unsure
- 2% Disagree
- <1% Strongly disagree
- 1% There is currently no leader here

25. Which of the following aspects of this congregation do you personally most value? (Mark up to three.)

- 34% Wider community care or social justice emphasis
- 3% Reaching those who do not attend church
- 43% Traditional style of worship or music
- 9% Contemporary style of worship or music
- 27% Sharing in Holy Communion, Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper
- 17% Social activities or meeting new people
- 39% Sermons, preaching, or homilies
- 11% Bible study or prayer groups, other discussion groups
- 52% Ministry for children or youth
- 2% Prayer ministry for one another
- 17% Practical care for one another in times of need
- 2% The congregation's school or pre-school
- 18% Openness to social diversity
- 6% Adult church-school or Sabbath-school classes

26. Before you started coming to this congregation, were you participating in another congregation?

- 14% No, I've come here for most or all of my life
- 18% No, before coming here I had not been attending any congregation for several years
- 3% No, before coming here I had never regularly attended
- 65% Yes, immediately prior to coming here, I was participating in another congregation

27. Before you started coming here, what type of congregation did you attend? (Mark only one.)

- 1% Assembly of God
- 3% Baptist
- 6% Catholic
- 3% Episcopal
- 5% Lutheran
- 12% Methodist
- 1% Nazarene
- 3% Non-denominational
- <1% Pentecostal
- 51% Presbyterian
- 0% Seventh-day Adventist
- 5% United Church of Christ
- 2% Other
- 10% I did not attend another congregation before coming here

About You

28. Age of worshippers:

- 7% 15-24
- 17% 25-44
- 32% 45-64
- 44% 65 and above

29. Gender of worshippers:

- 59% Female
- 41% Male

30. What is your employment status? (Mark all that apply.)

- 31% Employed or self-employed full-time
- 15% Employed or self-employed part-time
- 1% Unemployed
- 38% Retired
- 9% Full-time homemaker
- 11% Student
- 1% Other



31. What is the highest educational level you have completed? (reported for worshipers age 25 and older)

- 0% No formal schooling
- 0% Primary school through 8th grade (K-8)
- 1% Some high school
- 6% Completed high school
- 2% Trade certificate
- 4% Associate degree
- 44% Bachelor's degree from a university or college
- 43% Master's, Doctorate, or other graduate degree

32. What is your present marital status?

- 14% Never married
- 55% In first marriage
- 10% Remarried after divorce
- 3% Remarried after death of spouse
- 2% Living in a committed relationship
- 1% Separated
- 3% Divorced
- 12% Widowed

33. Do you have a spouse or partner who is also completing a survey here?

- 55% Yes
- 45% No

34. What is your race or origin? (Mark all that apply.)

- 1% Asian or Pacific Islander
- <1% Black or African American
- 1% Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- 1% Indian (American) or Alaska Native
- 98% White or Caucasian
- 1% Some other race

35. Where were you born?

- 96% In the United States
- 2% In another English-speaking country
- 2% In a non-English-speaking country

36. Where were your parents born?

- 90% Both born in the United States
- 2% Only father born in the United States
- 3% Only mother born in the United States
- 5% Both father and mother born in another country

37. Where did you live when you were 5 years old?

- 97% In the United States
- 3% In another country

38. When you were 5 years old, was English your primary language?

- 99% Yes
- 1% No

39. Which statement best describes the people who currently live in your household?

- 15% I live alone
- 37% A couple without children
- 3% One adult with child/children
- 36% Two or more adults with child/children
- 8% Some adults living in the same household

40. Most often reported ZIP codes of worshipers:

- 50% 16801
- 28% 16803
- 7% 16827
- 7% 16870
- 2% 16823
- 2% 16828
- 1% 16652
- 1% 16868
- 1% 16851
- <1% 10021

41. About how much do you give financially to this congregation?

- 9% I give 10% or more of net income regularly
- 38% I give about 5% to 9% of net income regularly
- 35% I give less than 5% of net income regularly
- 11% I give a small amount whenever I am here
- 6% I do not contribute financially here



42. Which of the following describes your total annual household income before taxes?

- 4% Less than \$10,000
- 5% \$10,000 to \$24,999
- 14% \$25,000 to \$49,999
- 20% \$50,000 to \$74,999
- 17% \$75,000 to \$99,999
- 15% \$100,000 to \$124,999
- 8% \$125,000 to \$149,999
- 16% \$150,000 or more

43. Respondents with at least one household member: (adjusted for multiple responses per household)

- 6% Less than 6 years old
- 21% 6 to 12 years old
- 23% 13 to 18 years old
- 16% 19 to 24 years old
- 97% 25 years old or older

44. Respondents with at least one household member participating here: (adjusted for multiple responses per household)

- 5% Less than 6 years old
- 21% 6 to 12 years old
- 22% 13 to 18 years old
- 10% 19 to 24 years old
- 96% 25 years old or older

45. How many children of any age do you have, whether they live at home or elsewhere? (adjusted for multiple responses per household)

- 24% None
- 9% One
- 37% Two
- 22% Three
- 8% Four or more

46. How many of your children of any age live at home with you? (adjusted for multiple responses per household)

- 66% None
- 14% One
- 17% Two
- 3% Three
- <1% Four or more

Some Final Questions

47. How long does it usually take you to get here?

- 15% 1-5 minutes
- 40% 6-10 minutes
- 31% 11-15 minutes
- 9% 16-20 minutes
- 4% 21-30 minutes
- 1% More than 30 minutes

48. Compared to 2 years ago, do you think you participate in activities of the congregation more, less, or about the same amount as you did then?

- 25% Participate more
- 55% About the same participation
- 15% Participate less
- 6% Not applicable (been coming less than 2 years)

49. Have this congregation's leaders encouraged you to find and use your gifts and skills here?

- 21% Yes, to a great extent
- 42% Yes, to some extent
- 20% Yes, to a small extent
- 10% Not at all
- 7% Don't know

50. How often do you experience the following during worship services at this congregation? (Always or Usually)

- 69% A sense of God's presence
- 69% Inspiration
- 5% Boredom
- 9% Awe or mystery
- 64% Joy
- 3% Frustration
- 12% Spontaneity
- 53% A sense of fulfilling my obligation

51. Do you agree or disagree: "Only followers of Jesus Christ can be saved"?

- 9% Strongly agree
- 17% Agree
- 23% Neutral or unsure
- 28% Disagree
- 22% Strongly disagree



52. Do you agree or disagree: "I have a sense of excitement about our congregation's future"?

- 22% Strongly agree
- 53% Agree
- 22% Neutral or unsure
- 2% Disagree
- 1% Strongly disagree

53. Over the last two years, has there been any conflict in this congregation? (Mark only one.)

- 62% No conflict that I am aware of
- 22% Some minor conflict
- 0% Major conflict
- 0% Major conflict, with leaders or people leaving
- 16% Don't know

54. Of the following, which one best describes your opinion of the future directions of this congregation?

- 2% We need to get back to the way we did things in the past
- 13% We are faithfully maintaining past directions
- 43% We are currently deciding on new directions
- 14% We are currently moving in new directions
- 7% We need to rethink where we are heading
- <1% Our future is very unclear or doubtful
- 20% Don't know

55. Do you agree or disagree: "This congregation is always ready to try something new"?

- 5% Strongly agree
- 50% Agree
- 37% Neutral or unsure
- 8% Disagree
- 0% Strongly disagree

56. To what extent does the minister, pastor, or priest here take into account the ideas of those who worship here?

- 37% A great extent
- 34% Some extent
- 3% A small extent
- 1% Not at all
- 25% Don't know
- 1% There is currently no leader here

57. Which of the following is the best description of the style of leadership of your pastor, minister, or priest?

- 7% Leadership that tends to take charge
- 54% Leadership that inspires people to take action
- 22% Leadership that acts on goals that people here have been involved in setting
- 2% Leadership where the people start most things
- 2% There is currently no leader here
- 13% Don't know

58. Do you agree or disagree: "God is directly involved in worldly affairs"?

- 21% Strongly agree
- 41% Agree
- 28% Neutral or unsure
- 7% Disagree
- 1% Strongly disagree
- 1% I don't believe in God

59. Do you agree or disagree: "God is angered by human sin"?

- 13% Strongly agree
- 34% Agree
- 29% Neutral or unsure
- 18% Disagree
- 5% Strongly disagree
- 1% I don't believe in God

60. Which of the following terms best describes your current stand on theological issues?

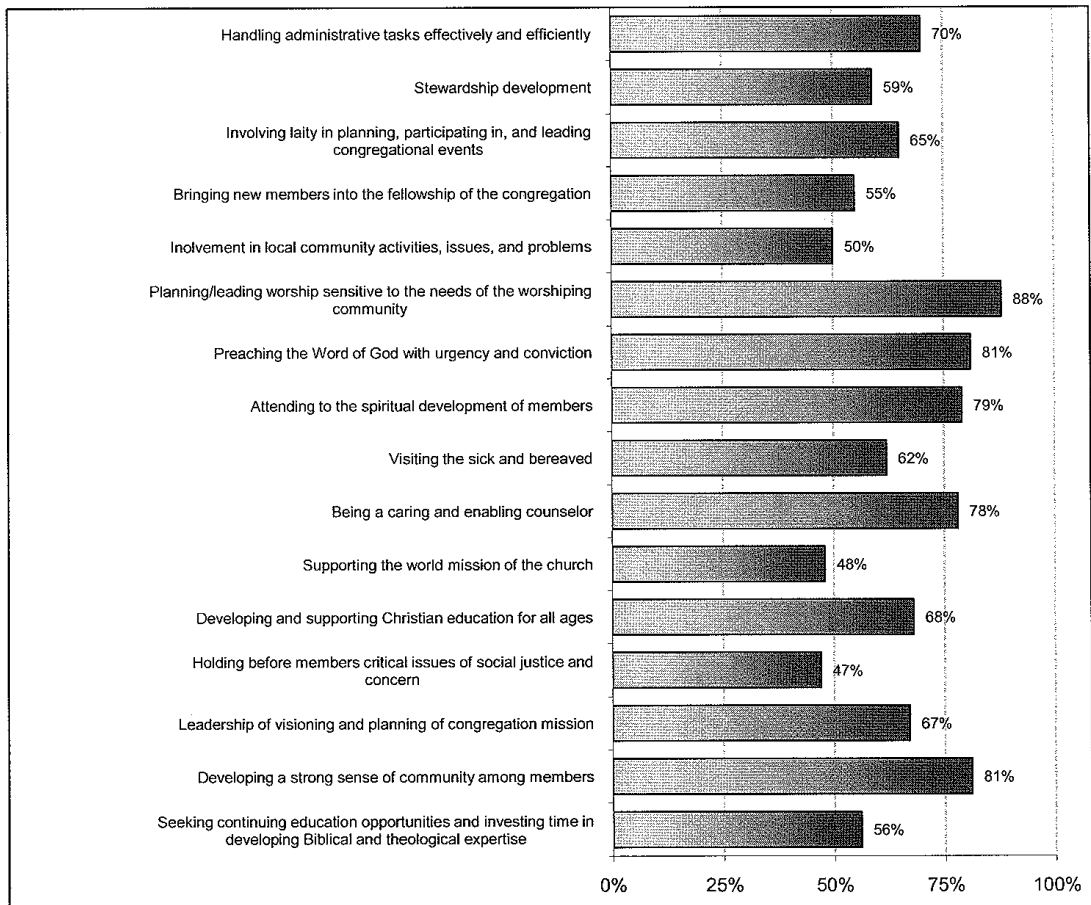
- 5% Very conservative
- 30% Conservative
- 30% Right in the middle
- 30% Liberal
- 5% Very liberal



Leadership Issues

What pastoral tasks and styles of ministry are important to those who worship here?

1 Tasks of the Leader Here: In your judgement, how high or low of a priority would you like each of the following tasks to be for the pastor, minister, or priest of this congregation? Remember, not every task can be highest priority.



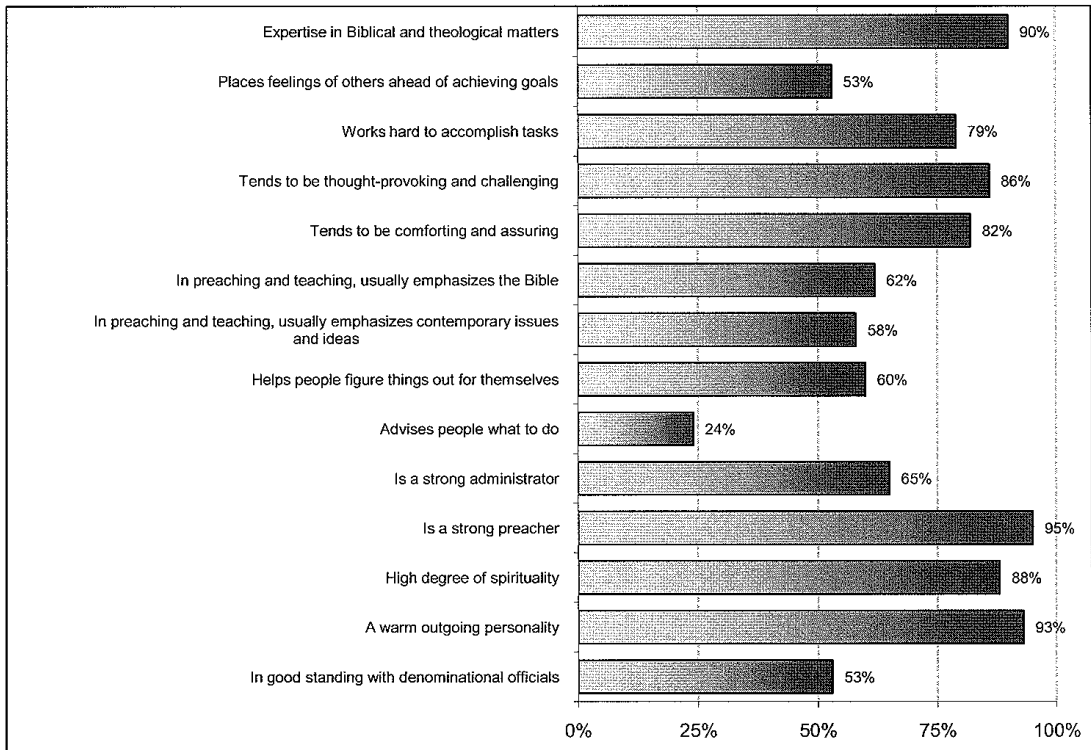
Percent Responding "Very High" or "High" Priority



Leadership Issues

What characteristics are those who worship here seeking in the pastoral leadership of the congregation?

2 Style of Ministry: In your judgement, how high or low of a priority would you like each of the following characteristics to be for the pastor, minister, or priest of this congregation? Remember, not every characteristic can be highest priority.



■ Percent Responding "Very High" or "High" Priority

Making the Connections

Review the leadership issues in your congregation and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

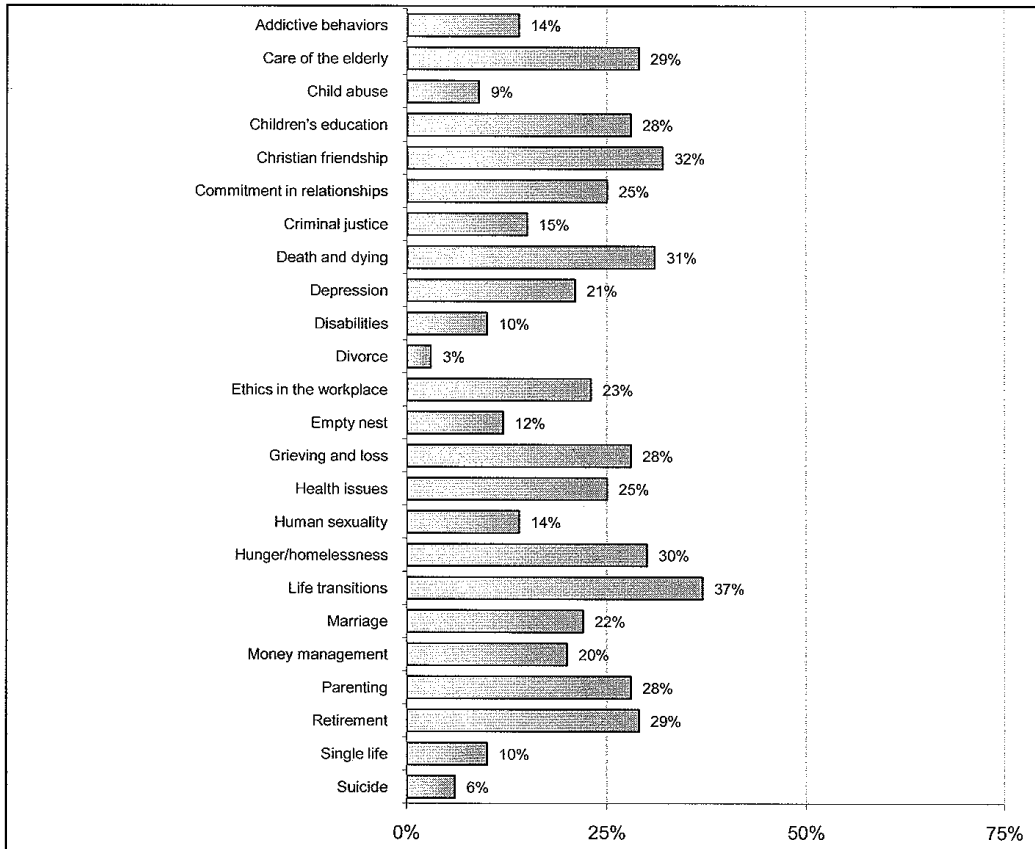
- ✓ What are the key leadership skills that your worshipers are seeking?
- ✓ Will ensuring your pastor has these skills set your congregation on the path to a positive future?
- ✓ How can your congregation support its leaders in achieving their goals?



Worshippers' Interests

What topics might be explored in future educational opportunities in your congregation?

1 Worshippers' Interests: Would you be interested in learning more about any of the following areas? (Check all in which you would be interested.)



Making the Connections

Review your worshippers' interests and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

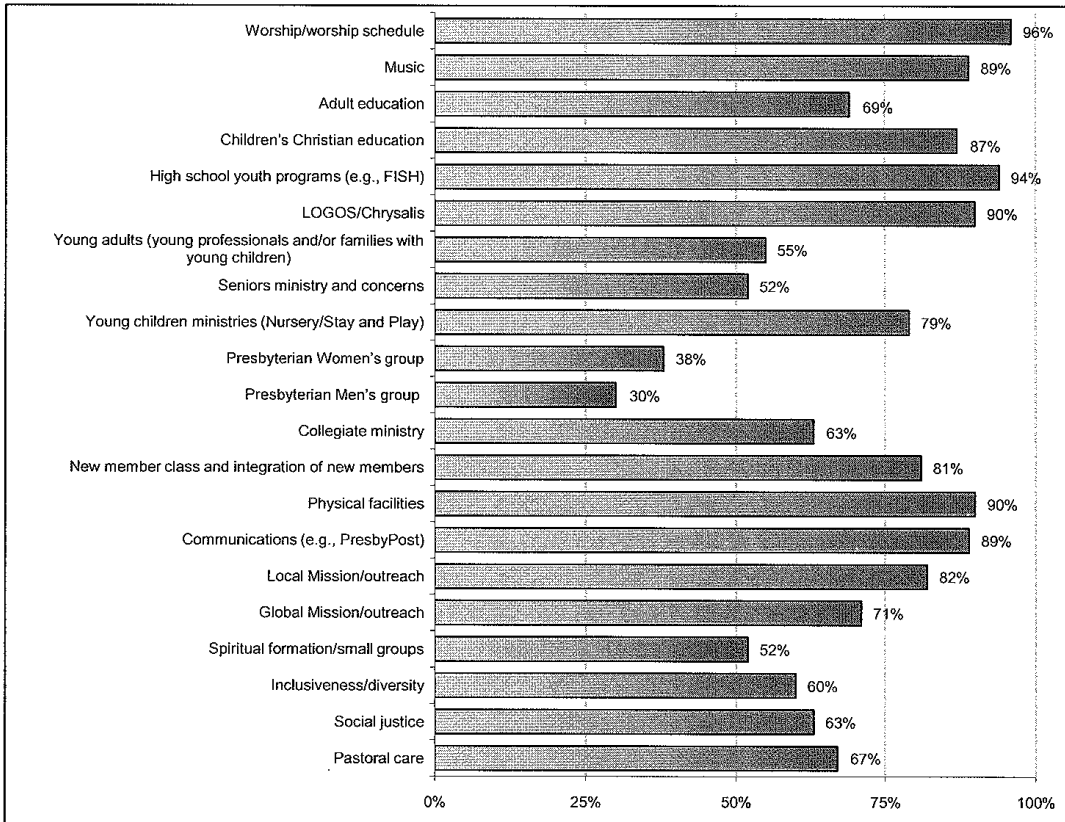
- ✓ What topics might be the basis for future programs in your congregation?
- ✓ Could some of these topics be combined into a series on related issues?
- ✓ Could programs on these topics be used to strengthen other connections in your congregation?



Feedback on Your Congregation's Activities

How do your worshipers evaluate the activities, programs, and services offered by the congregation?

1 Your Congregation's Activities: How satisfied are you with the following at this congregation?



Percent Responding "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied"
"Not applicable" responses excluded

Making the Connections

Review your worshipers' feedback and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

- ✓ What are the strengths in your congregation's programs, activities, and services?
- ✓ In what areas might worshipers be open to new programs or other new ideas?
- ✓ How do worshipers' evaluations relate to the other congregational strengths you've identified?

Appendix 2

Congregational Survey: Summary of findings

State College Presbyterian Church Congregational Survey: Summary of findings

Introduction (demographics)

On May 8, 2011, the Self-Study Committee administered a congregational survey during both worship services. We received 398 responses, representing 34 percent of total members (1,186) and 81 percent of average worship attendance (494), for the calendar year 2010. Overall, respondents are predominantly white (98%), English speaking (96%), and live within 15 minutes of SCPC (86%). Almost half of respondents (44%) are over 65 years of age, with another third (32%) between 45 and 64 years of age; six in ten (59%) respondents are female. Over two-thirds (68%) of respondents are married. While a majority of respondents (76%) have one or more children, only one-third (34%) have children living at home with them. The respondents are highly educated: a large majority (87%) has a college degree and 43% have a graduate degree (compared with the 29% of all Americans who have a college degree). Respondents come from relatively affluent households: more than half (56%) of respondents have annual household incomes above \$75,000 (compared to the US median household income of \$49,777). Most respondents regularly contribute money to the church, and nearly half (47%) of respondents give 5% or more of their net income to the congregation.

The following sections discuss overall strengths and areas for improvement as highlighted in the survey; provide a summary of other survey questions; and present survey responses on several special items for the future regarding pastoral characteristics and duties, and congregational topics of interest.

Strengths and areas for improvement identified by the survey

One question (on the survey insert) asked worshipers how satisfied they are with 21 various activities, programs and services at our church. The results, ranked from highest to lowest according to the percent “very satisfied” or “satisfied” are in the following table.

Program or activity	% responding very satisfied or satisfied
Worship/worship schedule	96
High school youth programs (e.g., FISH)	94
LOGOS/Chrysalis	90
Physical facilities	90
Music	89
Communications (e.g., PresbyPost)	89
Children's Christian education	87
Local Mission/outreach	82
New member class and integration of new members	81
Young children ministries (Nursery/Stay and Play)	79
Global Mission/outreach	71
Adult education	69
Pastoral care	67
Collegiate ministry	63
Social justice	63
Inclusiveness/diversity	60
Young adults (young professionals and/or families with young children)	55
Program or activity	% responding very satisfied or satisfied
Seniors ministry and concerns	52
Spiritual formation/small groups	52
Presbyterian Women's group	38
Presbyterian Men's group	30

These satisfaction scores highlight several strengths of the church: worship/worship schedule, children’s ministries (including Sunday school, LOGOS/Chrysalis, and FISH), mission/outreach, physical facilities, music, and communications (such as PresbyPost).

Strength: Caring for Children and Youth

The table above shows widespread satisfaction with FISH, LOGOS/Chrysalis, Children’s Christian education, and young children ministries (such as nursery and Stay and Play). This strong support for children’s and youth programs is also echoed in question 18, where the vast majority (89%) report being satisfied or very satisfied with programs for children and youth (<19 years of age). Similarly, over half (52%) of respondents chose ministry for children and youth as one of the top three aspects of the congregation that they most value (question 25); no other aspect of the church was selected by more than 43 percent of the respondents. Clearly, the SCPC ministries for children and youth are a strong and highly valued element of our church.

Strength: Meaningful Worship and Music

In the table above, 96 percent of respondents report being satisfied or very satisfied with the worship service and/or schedule. Similarly, when asked to identify the top three aspects of the congregation that they most value (question 25), 43 percent chose the traditional style of worship or music, 39 percent chose sermons/preaching, and 27 percent chose sharing in Holy Communion. Other indicators that our congregation engages in meaningful worship are that about two-thirds of respondents always or usually experience joy, inspiration, and God's presence during worship, but rarely experience boredom or frustration (question 50). Ninety percent of respondents feel that SCPC worship services and other congregational activities help them in everyday life (question 7).

One key aspect of worship is music during the service. The table above indicates that 89 percent of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with music at SCPC. Although many styles of music are enjoyed, there is a strong preference for traditional hymns in the service. When asked to choose their top two preferred styles of worship music, three-quarters of respondents listed traditional hymns (73%), with contemporary music as a strong second preference (41%). Sizable minorities ranked praise or gospel (27%), classical music or contemplative chants (23%), and music from a variety of cultures (16%) in their top two preferences (question 23).

Strength: Focusing on the Community

Regarding the top three programs/activities most valued by respondents (question 25), the final option selected by at least one-third of the congregation is: wider community care or social justice emphasis (34%). Further, 18 percent report "openness to social diversity" as one of their three most valued aspects. Members of this congregation are active in social service or advocacy groups both through the congregation (37%; question 5) and in the community (55%; question 15). And respondents are politically, financially and socially active in the community (question 17). For example, almost 90 percent donated money to a charitable organization (other than this congregation) and/or voted in the 2008 presidential election; 61 percent donated or prepared food for someone outside their family or congregation; and one-third (34%) worked with others to try to solve a community problem (question 17).

Strength: Participating in the Congregation

Survey respondents are very active in the life of this church. Almost three-quarters (74%) usually attend worship services every week or more than once a week; another 20% attend two or three times a month (question 1). Two-thirds (65%) are involved in one or more small groups (e.g., Sunday school, prayer, Bible study, discussion groups) (question 4). Almost half (49%) have one or more leadership roles in the congregation, for example, as Sunday school teachers, Session members, Deacons, choir members, and service leaders (question 6). We have many lifelong members (35% of respondents have been involved with SCPC for over 20 years), but we also have a sizable number of individuals (21%) who have been participating for five years or less (question 2).

Financial support is another method of being involved with the church. Most respondents (94%) regularly contribute to SCPC and nearly half (47%) of respondents give 5% or more of their net income to the congregation (question 41). This is about the same as the 2008 average for congregations (of all denominations) with more than 350 regular worshipers, but is somewhat lower than the 2008 average

for all Presbyterian churches (for which 58% of worshipers give 5% or more of their net income to the congregation). Focusing on the top level of giving, 9 percent of survey respondents regularly give 10% or more of their net income to our congregation; nationally, 18% of worshipers give 10% or more of their net income to their place of worship.

Areas for improvement for the future:

Looking instead at the bottom of the table above, where less than half of respondents reported being satisfied, we find several programmatic areas in which there is room for improvement: Presbyterian men's and women's groups; small group ministries in general; Seniors' ministry; and programs for young adults.

Area for improvement: Vision for the future

In addition to the program areas listed above, one place where we can do better is creating and communicating a vision for the future. This is to be expected given our current state of transition. While over half of respondents (56%) express a clear understanding and commitment to the vision, goals, and direction of our ministry and mission, a significant number (40 percent) do not believe there is a clear vision, goals, or direction. A small number (4%) agree that a clear vision and goals exist, but report that they are not committed to these goals (question 20).

On the other hand, there is a strong and positive sense of the congregation's future. Three quarters (75%) of the respondents have a sense of excitement about our congregation's future (question 52). A majority of respondents (57%) say we are currently deciding (43%) or moving (14%) in new directions as a congregation, 7 percent say we need to rethink our direction, and 15 percent feel that we are or need to maintain past directions (question 54). And over half (55%) of respondents agree with the statement, *"This congregation is always ready to try something new;"* only 8% disagree (with the remaining 37% neutral or unsure; question 55).

One purpose of the Self-Study committee is to help the congregation to clearly identify future directions for the church.

Summary of other survey questions

About Your Faith (Questions 8-14)

Overall, there is a strong and confident feeling of faith among respondents, and this congregation is meeting their spiritual needs. Respondents are open-minded about other faiths/religious traditions, but have a strong affinity to Christianity.

- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents reported spending time in private devotional activities at least once a week or more often (question 8).
- A large majority (88%) report experiencing a growth in faith over the last year (question 9).
- Three-quarters (75%) of respondents consider the Bible to be the word of God, to be interpreted in light of historical and/or cultural contexts and the Church's teachings. Another 9% say the Bible is the Word of God and should be taken literally, and 13% say the Bible is not the word of God, but contains God's word to us and is valuable (question 10).
- Over half (56%) of the respondents agreed with the statement: *"All the different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth"* (question 11).

- Over three-quarters (83%) agree with the statement: *“My spiritual needs are being met in this congregation”* (question 12).
- Two-thirds (66%) feel at ease talking about their faith with others (question 13).
- Just over one-third (38%) of all respondents report having had a conversion experience or distinct moment of decisive faith commitment (question 14).

About your Involvement (Questions 15-25)

A strong majority of respondents has close friends in the congregation, reports a strong sense of belonging, and would feel comfortable inviting family or friends to participate in worship.

- While nearly three-quarters (73%) report having close friends in the congregation, almost 1 in 10 (8%) say they have little contact with others from the congregation outside of SCPC activities (question 19).
- A clear majority (86%) of respondents report a strong sense of belonging to this congregation, and over one-third (38%) say their sense of belonging is growing; however, almost 1 in 10 persons (8%) report a strong but declining sense of belonging. And 4% report a desire to have a stronger sense of belonging (question 22).
- Eighty-eight percent (88%) would invite a friend or relative who does not attend a congregation to a worship service at SCPC, and over one-third (37%) have done so in the last year (question 16).

Additional Questions (Questions 47-60)

There is a sense of limited conflict and a balanced leadership style that respects and appreciates input from the congregation.

- Most (84%) respondents report no conflict (62%) or very limited conflict (22%) in the congregation in the past two years (question 53).
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents (74%) believe the pastor takes into account the ideas of the congregation (question 56).
- A majority (54%) of respondents describes the leadership style of the pastor as one that inspires people to take action; another 22% describe the leadership style as one that acts on goals set by the people (question 57).
- Nearly all respondents (90%) agree that there is a good match between the congregation and the pastor(s) (question 24).
- Over eighty percent (83%) have been encouraged to use their talents by church leaders (question 49).

Although most people feel able to participate in congregational decision-making, less than half choose to do so.

- Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents report that they have been given the opportunity to participate in congregational decision-making, but less than half say they often (13%) or occasionally (29%) get involved in actual decision-making. Of the one-quarter (26%) of respondents who say they have not been given an opportunity to be involved, 4% are unhappy about this situation (question 21).

Respondents believe in an active and engaged God, and the saving power of Jesus Christ.

- One-quarter of respondents agree with the statement, *“Only followers of Jesus Christ can be saved.”* Exactly half (50%) of respondents disagree with this statement, and one-quarter (23%) are neutral or unsure (question 51).
- Two-thirds of respondents (62%) agree with the statement, *“God is directly involved in worldly affairs.”* Eight percent disagree with this statement, and 28% are neutral or unsure (question 58).
- Nearly half (47%) of respondents agree with the statement, *“God is angered by human sin.”* Twenty-three percent disagree, and 29% are neutral or unsure (question 59).

The congregation is theologically balanced between liberals, conservatives and those who are right in the middle.

- One-third of respondents (35%) describe themselves as theologically conservative, an equal percentage (35%) describe themselves as theologically liberal and the remaining third (30%) say they are right in the middle (question 60).

Looking to the future

As we look to the future, three questions (on the survey insert) give guidance on respondents' preferences regarding pastoral leadership style, important pastoral tasks, and topics of interest.

First, with respect to style of ministry, the top ten leadership characteristics (those ranked as very high or high priority by 60 percent or more respondents) are:

Characteristics	% responding "very high" or "high" priority
Is a strong preacher	95
A warm outgoing personality	93
Expertise in Biblical and theological matters	90
High degree of spirituality	88
Tends to be thought-provoking and challenging	86
Tends to be comforting and assuring	82
Works hard to accomplish tasks	79
Is a strong administrator	65
In preaching and teaching, usually emphasizes the Bible	62
Helps people figure things out for themselves	60

Second, with respect to pastoral duties, respondents feel the ten most important tasks for the pastor (those ranked as very high or high priority by 60 percent or more respondents) are:

Pastoral tasks	% responding “very high” or “high” priority
Planning/leading worship sensitive to the needs of the worshipping community	88
Preaching the Word of God with urgency and conviction	81
Developing a strong sense of community among members	81
Attending to the spiritual development of members	79
Being a caring and enabling counselor	78
Handling administrative tasks effectively and efficiently	70
Developing and supporting Christian education for all ages	68
Leadership of visioning and planning of congregation mission	67
Involving laity in planning, participating in, and leading congregational events	65
Visiting the sick and bereaved	62

Third, with respect to worshipers’ interests, at least one-quarter of respondents expressed interest in the topics listed in the table below. These topics, along with the areas for improvement discussed previously (page 3), can be considered as the congregation articulates its vision for the future.

Topic	% expressing interest
Life transitions	37
Christian friendship	32
Death and dying	31
Hunger/homelessness	30
Care of the elderly	29
Retirement	29
Children's education	28
Grieving and loss	28
Parenting	28
Commitment in relationships	25
Health issues	25

Appendix 3

College Survey: Results summary

**Results of College-Age Survey: Questions specific to college-age ministry
(23 observations total, but for most questions there are only 10-15 valid responses;
many "observations" are completely blank)**

Why did you choose this church over an on-campus ministry?

- ** Because I do not live on campus
- ** Connection with a congregation
- ** It's more of a community, and I wanted a real congregation to worship with on Sunday (instead of just a group of students my own age)
- ** Loved the worship services; wanted a smaller fellowship group than those available on campus
- ** I wanted the community of faith comprised of a variety of age groups that on-campus ministries could not offer.
- ** The intergenerational nature of the church; also I like the connectedness of a denominational church to the denomination at large.
- ** I don't live on campus. The church drew me in mostly because it is the most similar to my previous background.
- ** I don't live on campus. The church drew me in mostly because it is the most similar to my previous background.
(this is most likely the same person, perhaps had two observations due to difficulty in using online survey. They only answered 3 questions so they don't affect results much.)
- ** I grew up in a family oriented church community, so SCPC was an outlet for me to worship in a way similar to what I was used to at home, not just a group of kids standing around an auditorium at the HUB. A big part of my faith process at school was the need to fit into a community like SCPC and be a part of all aspects of the church family, which is what SCPC is all about. I felt loved and taken care of, which was a key part of my college experience.
- ** This seemed to be the main concentration of Presbyterian students. This was also recommended to me through a brochure, a service at the Eisenhower Chapel, and contact with WPF's president.
- ** This seemed to be the main concentration of Presbyterian students
- ** I wanted something with lots of young children

What activities and events have you participated in through State College Presbyterian Church (SCPC)

	# Responses	Percent
Worship services	5	31%
Thursday night dinner and fellowship	2	13%
Luncheons	1	6%
Outdoor activities	1	6%
Youth/Children's ministries (Sunday School, LOGOS, Chrysalis, FISH)	3	19%
Music Ministry	4	25%
All the above except music; Youth and worship services and luncheons; All of the above; Worship Services, Thursday Night Dinner and Fellowship, and Luncheons		

How comfortable do you feel at SCPC?

	# Responses	Percent
Extremely uncomfortable	3	23%
Somewhat uncomfortable	0	
Neither uncomfortable or comfortable	0	
Somewhat comfortable	4	31%
Extremely comfortable	6	46%

Which service do you prefer?

	# Responses	Percent
9 am Sunday	5	38%
11:15 am Sunday	6	46%
I would prefer a different time or day (please specify)	2	15%
10 am or 10:30 am; Sunday night		

If you prefer a different time or day, please indicate why in the space below.

- ** 11:15 feels a little late and sometimes sparse but 10am, especially at my home church where it is packed at 9 and 10:30
- ** I think it would be a cool idea to try having a more contemporary worship service at night that is more focused on college students. Having a service at night feels like a great way to reflect and prepare for a new week.
- ** Later is often better

Are you interested in participating in the church in other ways (i.e. be in the choir, read /script?)

	# Responses	Percent
Yes	4	40%
No	6	60%

If yes, please specify in what ways.

- ** Logos, WPF
- ** Fill in for Ned (but he never takes a day off!)
- ** Helping lead service my reading one of the passages
- ** ...but I graduated in May

What would you like SCPC to offer that is not currently offered?

- ** nothing
- ** College age bible study
- ** Nothing, you're doing a great job for this college student
- ** It would be neat if there could be a praise/worship night with a praise band and more contemporary songs.
- ** Nothing, everything is perfect!
- ** Contemporary worship targeted towards college-aged people.

How welcoming and hospitable do you feel SCPC is?

	# Responses	Percent
Extremely inhospitable	2	20%
Somewhat inhospitable	0	
Neither inhospitable or hospitable	0	
Somewhat hospitable	1	10%
Extremely hospitable	7	70%

Who at SCPC has been especially welcoming to you?

- ** Diana Malcolm, Beth Essinger-Hileman
- ** Diana Malcolm
- ** The Shardas, the Bozanic, the Elliotts, Joel, Ned, Kim Hunziker
- ** Diana! And the congregation and staff as a whole.
- ** Diana Malcom, Everyone in my Men's group, Everyone in at the lunches and Young Adult meetings.
- ** Diana Malcom!!!
- ** Deannine, Diana, the LOGOS leaders, everyone I sat near in church.
- ** Diana Malcolm, Joel Blunk, Susan Reisinger, Sue, WPF
- ** Larry Dansky and Amy Frank

How did you first hear about SCPC or Westminster Presbyterian Fellowship (WPF)?

	# Responses	Percent
Pasquerilla/Center for Ethics and Religious Affairs	0	
Internet	2	20%
Bulletin Board	0	
Friend	4	40%
Personal Invitation	1	10%
Other (Please specify)	3	30%

How did you first hear about SCPC or Westminster Presbyterian Fellowship (WPF)?

- ** Looked up Presbyterian churches in a guide to State College
- ** Visiting churches downtown
- ** Brochure at Eisenhower Chapel

Appendix 4

End Notes

The goal of the self-study was to identify general themes rather than offer specific solutions. The following items reflect suggestions for specific actions gathered during listening sessions.

Adult Education/Sunday School:

- Offer 6- or 8-week Bible study classes that follow a specific, published curriculum including suggestions for reading and preparation to be done at home.

Building Community:

- Do more to serve university students and young families, particularly international students and families.
- Do more to support the large number of older church members. [Note from committee: Young at Heart, a small-group ministry aimed at older members (age 55+), is well attended. However, only 52 percent of survey respondents said they were very satisfied or satisfied with “senior ministry and concerns.”]
- Revive Life Groups, a small group ministry which meets in member’s homes for the purpose of building relationships and spirituality. [Note from committee: for additional information about Life Groups see <http://www.antiochlifegroups.com/about> or <http://internet.lifechurch.tv/lifegroups/>]

Mission:

- Become a leader on social issues and broaden our volunteer base within the church by increasing our involvement with Interfaith Human Services.
- The new head pastor could be a leader in the new local ministerium.
- Become more involved in the Huntingdon Presbytery, giving us more opportunities to discuss national issues relating to the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- While the Mission Ministry Unit provides leadership, recognize that all members are welcome to be a part of this team.
- Pick a few areas for mission and involve the church community at a deep level in these projects.

Music:

- Provide an opportunity for children in grades 1 through 8 to participate in a youth choir. Currently this opportunity exists only for children attending LOGOS.
- Use some the “Music and Movement” time (ages 3 through kindergarten) to create a younger children’s choir who could periodically sing during the Children’s Moment.

Outreach:

- Expand outreach to the Penn State community informed by a focus group of church members who are Penn State faculty or staff.

Pastoral Care:

- Expand the role of deacons to create a “circle of care” with each church family assigned to an individual deacon. Deacons would be responsible for sharing information about family pastoral care needs with the pastoral staff.
- Implement a Stephen Ministry, “a complete system for training and organizing lay people to provide one-to-one Christian care to hurting people in and around [a] congregation.” (www.stephenministries.org).
- Update our community resource and referral information. Communicate information about community resources more broadly and consistently to church members.

Personnel:

- Review and update staff job descriptions to better reflect current duties. Make annual personnel reviews more meaningful. (The Personnel Ministry Unit is currently engaged in this review.)

Worship:

- Broadcast the service beyond the sanctuary to accommodate parents with infants or others who need to leave the sanctuary during worship.
- Have communion more frequently and make communion available during pastoral visits to members who are unable to attend church.
- Use technology in worship to create an atmosphere that speaks to youth and young adults.
- Add a contemporary service on Saturday. Concern was also expressed that separate services may create isolated segments within the congregation.