

Mission Discovery Team
Results from the Survey:
What we do well and what we need to work on

Back in September we took a survey during the worship service about how committed we are to our stated mission and how well our ministries reflect that vision. 167 people filled it out, 154 from Sherman Street and 13 from Step of Faith.

As a whole, both quantitative and comment sections indicate a lot of positive energy, commitment to our mission, and prayerful support for it. This is very good news, and establishes a foundation on which to build for the future.

On a 10 point scale, our highest score was 9.2 (“our mission reflects our vision”). The worst score was 6.6 (a tie between “we do a good job of identifying and training new ministry leaders,” and “we have established objectives/goals and tools to help measure progress”). The Mission Discovery Team (MDT) was delighted to see that our average score was around 8.0. That tells us that Sherman Street and Step of Faith congregants are generally happy with the way things are going.

In reviewing the surveys, the MDT identified some specific strengths that we can build on as well as some areas in which we could do better. Here are some of the highlights:

The Youth: There is a deep, shared desire for greater engagement of all the youth in our church community. Some would like to build up the staff who work with the youth, while others would like to see the youth focus more on building cross-cultural relationships.

Stories: It seems we love hearing and sharing stories of our lives and our ministry, which leads to a strong interest in increasing storytelling about congregational life and local mission. As one person wrote, “There are wonderful stories and many lovely people who live in our neighborhood and it would be great to find ways for these stories to find expression.”

The Neighborhood: We possess a firm hope for more intentional engagement with our neighbors and our neighborhood. We realize there is a gap between our hopes and the current reality, but we are committed to the neighborhood and want to grow in our ability to embrace our neighbors and our neighborhood in mutually supportive mission.

Training Ministry Leaders: The surveys speak clearly that we could do a lot better at identifying and then actually training leaders for ministry. This will be a clear area of growth for us in years ahead.

These are the four issues that come out a number of times and in a number of ways, but there are other important findings too:

- Our churches need to communicate better all that is going on

- We need to work harder at strengthening the SSCRC/SOF relationship
- We need to do a better job of enfolding new members

The mission discovery process has now moved on from the written survey to a set of oral interviews that bring us into conversations about the strengths of our churches as well as the hopes and dreams we have for our ministry in years to come.

The process is filled with hope and promise. It is inspiring to hear people's stories of faithfulness and what they appreciate about Sherman Street and Step of Faith. Their ideas for the future are giving us many excellent ideas for how we should direct our energy in years ahead.

For the rest of the winter, our focus will continue to be on our congregations. When the sun comes out again and warms up the streets, we'll head back into the community and engage directly with our neighbors.

By the end of the summer, we hope to present council with a ministry action plan that takes account of all we are learning throughout the year. Feel free to ask us about our discovery journey and to tell us what you are thinking too. We love to think together with you about what our church is and to dream together about what it could become.

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