

Church of the Cross

*Church Assessment Tool (CAT) Results**

*Extracted from Holy Cow! Consulting
Vital Signs Report

Overview

Overall, the results of the survey are very positive and encouraging. Although the survey did indicate some disagreement with worship style and strong preferences for music styles, we scored extremely high in a measure of our spiritual vitality. What this means is that some of us may not always agree on “how we do church,” but we are united by a very strong faith that is central to our lives. Other positive indicators are that 80% of the respondents agreed that “the worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and quantity,” 92% agreed that “being a part of this church community has given new meaning to my life,” nearly 98% agreed that “I experience the presence of God in my life.”

The written comments expressed strong support of the present staff as well as a desire to hire an additional ordained pastor, at least on a part-time basis. The written comments also expressed a strong recommendation to review the job duties of the current staff and to realign their responsibilities to cover some of the non-pastoral duties previously handled by the two pastors.

Demographics

187 members participated in the Church Assessment Tool (CAT) survey. The following charts provide the breakout of the gender and age statistics:

| Participants | Male | Female | Total Number |
|--------------|------|--------|--------------|
| | 37% | 63% | 187 |

| Participants | Age 34 and Below | Age 35 -64 | Age 65 and Above | Total Number |
|--------------|------------------|------------|------------------|--------------|
| | 10% | 63% | 27% | 187 |

Key Indicators

According to the survey author, the following three questions and the associated responses provide a measure of the general health of our church.

Overall Satisfaction

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

Agree 80%

Disagree 20%

Worship Attendance Trends

Compared with 3 years ago, I attend worship:

Less 9%

Same 76%

More 14%

Value of Church Attendance

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

Solid positive 74%

On the fence 24%

Solid negative 2%

Overall Priorities

When members were asked where they wanted additional energy placed, this is how they ranked the 17 options on the survey:

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people.
2. Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
3. Strengthen the process by which members are called and equipped for ministry and leadership.
4. Deepen our sense of connection to God and one another through stronger worship services.
5. Change or improve the music of the church to deepen our worship experience.
6. Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society
7. Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
8. Develop the spiritual generosity of the people to financially support the ministry of the church.
9. Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church.
10. Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships.
11. Work as an advocate for social and institutional change so that society might better reflect the values of the kingdom of God.
12. Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life.
13. Strengthen the management and support of persons in various ministries.
14. Adapt the opportunities provided by the church making them more accessible given the pace and schedule of my life.
15. Strengthen the pastoral response of the church in serving people with special needs.
16. Enlarge or improve the physical facilities of the church to expand or enhance our ministries.
17. Expand the international mission of the church.

Priorities by Worship Attendance

Infrequent attendees (once a month or less) indicated the following four top priorities:

1. Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc).
2. Develop the spiritual generosity of the people to financially support the ministry of the church.
3. Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
4. Adapt the opportunities provided by the church making them more accessible given the pace and schedule of my life.

Frequent attendees (2 times a month or more) indicated the following four top priorities:

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
2. Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
3. Deepen our sense of connection to God and one another through stronger worship services.
4. Strengthen the process by which members are called and equipped for ministry and leadership.

Priorities by Age

Although some difference in priorities were indicated by respondents in different age brackets, the following two items were in the top four priorities in each of the three age brackets:

- Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.

Respondents 34 years or younger indicated the following four priorities for the future:

1. Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
2. Deepen our sense of connection to God and one another through stronger worship services
3. Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society.
4. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.

Respondents 35 - 64 years indicated the following four priorities for the future:

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church
2. Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
3. Strengthen the process by which members are called and equipped for ministry and leadership.
4. Deepen our sense of connection to God and one another through stronger worship services.

Respondents 65+ years indicated the following four priorities for the future:

1. Change or improve the music of the church to deepen our worship experience.
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
3. Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
4. Develop the spiritual generosity of the people to financially support the ministry of the church.

Performance Indexes

Questions were grouped to construct indexes covering a number of key performance factors. The performance indexes include the following items:

- Hospitality
- Morale
- Governance
- Spiritual Vitality
- Readiness for Ministry
- Educational Engagement
- Worship and Music

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.

- 96% of respondents agreed that a friendly atmosphere prevails among members of the church
- 95% agreed that they sensed an atmosphere of genuine care and concern among our members in time of personal need

When compared with other churches our size, COTC ranked slightly above average.

Morale Index

Morale is the positive, passionate, and persuasive engagement of members in the mission of the church.

- 81% of respondents agreed that on the whole, they were satisfied with how things are in our congregation

When compared with other churches our size, COTC ranked slightly above average.

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

- 89% of respondents agreed that leaders of our church show a genuine concern to know what people are thinking when decisions need to be made.
- 86% of respondents agreed that in important decisions in our church, adequate for consideration of different approaches is usually provided.

When compared with other churches our size, COTC ranked significantly above average at approximately the 75th percentile.

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.

- 96% of respondents indicated that their spirituality is really the basis of their whole approach to life
- 97% of respondents indicated that they worked to connect their faith to all the other aspects of their lives
- 97% of respondents agreed that their spiritual experiences often impacted the way they looked at life

When compared with other churches our size, COTC scored extremely high at about the 95th percentile.

Readiness for Ministry Index

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,

- 81% of respondents agreed that our church does a good job helping each member understand that he or she is called to ministry
- 98% of respondents agreed that our church provides opportunities for members to engage in active ministry within our church and to the world

When compared with other churches our size, COTC ranked significantly above average at approximately the 75th percentile.

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.

- 89% of respondents agreed our members have a spiritual responsibility for life-long learning and formation
- 89% of respondents agreed that our church provides high quality education that is appropriate to every age and stage of life

When compared with other churches our size, COTC scored extremely high at about the 95th percentile.

Worship and Music Index

The worship and music index seeks to capture the congregation's feelings about the quality of the worship experience. It is comprised of questions about the quality and appropriateness of the music program and the quality and spiritual content of our worship services.

- 67% of respondents agreed that the music at our church is outstanding in quality and appropriate in style to our congregation
- 80% of the respondents agreed that the worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and quantity

When compared with other churches our size, COTC scored below average on the music component of the worship and music index at approximately the 15th percentile and slightly above average on the worship service component of the same index at the 55th percentile.

Summary

The survey results are indeed positive and encouraging. They indicate that COTC is on very strong spiritual ground and that the congregation supports our church leadership. Although differences in worship preferences do exist, and in some case very strongly, our members feel that they are being spiritually fed and cared for. The survey also indicates that COTC is strongly theologically conservative and some what resistant to change. This is tempered by findings that 66% of respondents agreed that COTC is willing to adapt our worship to the needs and circumstances of the people we want to reach in our local community.