

Small Congregations and Alternative Ministries Task Force



ELCIC Saskatchewan Synod

Survey

Worship, discipleship and leadership will be at the centre of the questions in this survey and we will be looking for ways your congregation engages its community through these disciplines. We will also be asking what resources you take advantage of now and what resources you need to continue in your mission. The Task force intends to use the results of this survey to support and encourage congregations within our Synod. We plan to compile and share the results within the Synod and make appropriate recommendations from the information gathered. Please take time to fill in this survey with your positive responses. If you need more writing space please submit it on an additional piece of paper.

Worship

Preamble - "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:22-26, NRSV)

Worship is multi-faceted. Worship includes: the praising of God in thanksgiving; being loved and being loving through the Sacraments; making a joyful noise unto the Lord; praying in the Spirit; the proclamation of the Word; the confession of sin. Does worship have to be in a building? Can worship be at home? How does your congregation worship? When Joshua and the Israelites crossed over to the Promised Land they built an altar outside and worshipped God in thanks and praise for promises fulfilled.

1. Please share a time when your congregation successfully tried to worship in a different place.

2. Please share a time when your congregation successfully tried an alternate worship style.

3. Do you presently worship in your own building or do you have alternate space arrangements?

4. Are your services pastor-led, lay led or both?

5. Do you share your church building with anyone else?

6. If you have worshipped together with other denominations tell about that experience. What worked, what didn't?

7. If you had all the options and resources available to you in your community where would your congregation gather for worship?

8. Please share a time when your congregation was involved in a community worship service and what was it like to be involved?

9. Please share a story of what has worked in your community and congregation for its worship and gathering needs.

10. If you had all the options and resources available to you in your community what would your congregation do for worship?

11. What are the various styles of worship and/or liturgies and that your congregation uses?

12. How does your congregation effectively administer the sacraments of Communion and Baptism?

3. What type of social gatherings does your congregation have and are they effective for mutual support and up-building of your community?

4. Share a time when your congregation effectively invited and welcomed people into its community of believers.

Leadership

Preamble - "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ," (Ephesians 4:11-12, NRSV)

Jesus taught his disciples for three years during his ministry. Throughout the Gospel of Matthew chapters 5-11 Jesus taught the interpretation of Scriptures, he taught them new ways of understanding, he showed them how to do ministry by living it out with them, he showed them how to pray, he taught them how to heal and then he sent them out. Leadership training is about teaching people how to do ministry whether they be lay, diaconal or ordained and the subsequent discernment of their call for service.

1. As a disciple of Christ share a time when you were motivated or encouraged to take a leadership role (short or long-term) in your community.

2. As a disciple of Christ what do you need for further leadership training?

3. Share a time when you or your congregation successfully trained lay or leaders or helped those preparing for ordained ministry for service in your community.

4. What does your congregation do to promote continuing education for its leaders?

5. Do you need help in training local lay leaders? If so, please share what kind of assistance would be needed.

6. Are you aware of any other models of leadership training that have been used in your community or elsewhere?

Every community needs a person or persons to organize and motivate it. Jesus specifically trained the disciple Peter to be a leader. In the book of Acts chapter 15 we hear of the Jerusalem Council that makes decisions for how the church will be organized. Organization is not necessarily a detriment but how we are organized can be detrimental.

7. How does your congregation/worshipping community organize itself?

8. Is the ELCIC model constitution an adequate guide for how your congregation operates? If not please share what might be helpful to reflect your current structure and way of being.

9. Are you aware of another model of congregational structure that would work in your situation?

10. In your congregation who organizes and who is responsible for the visitation of shut-ins and the sick?

11. How are decisions made in your congregation?