

Report on the
**CONGREGATIONAL ASSESSMENT
TOOL**

WPC Congregational Meeting
Nov. 6 2016



Reliable data

- 229 respondents
- 155% of our average weekly attendance
- 59% of 385 recipients (in 251 households)
- 61% of 327 emailed recipients
- 45% of 58 mailed recipients

“A vital congregation”

- Overall member satisfaction:
- **High!**
- Overall energy:
- **High!**

A rare combination

- Of 1,800 congregations in the Holy Cow! data base, only 203 – one out of nine – score both high in energy and high in satisfaction.
- WPC is in an elite category.

In general, what contributes to a church's satisfaction and energy?

- Inspiring and engaging Worship.
- Flexibility (able to change to meet the needs of the congregation)
- Conviction that church has given new meaning to life.
- Inviting, friendly body of people with good relational skills.
- Open, responsive decision making process (not thwarted by the same small group of people)
- Opportunities for service in the church and the world that fit a person's gifts and passions.

Two key drivers of satisfaction at WPC

- 1. Our church provides high quality education that is appropriate to every age and stage of life.
- 2. The worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and spiritual content.
- And the survey “did not identify any significant internal issues that need to be addressed.”

Chaos

Churches in this quadrant are often struggling to structure and channel their into a direction they feel good about.

Transformation

Churches in this quadrant are sources of new meaning and purpose for their members. They also serve as mentors to other churches.



Churches in this quadrant require major changes in order to regain a significant level of vitality and health.

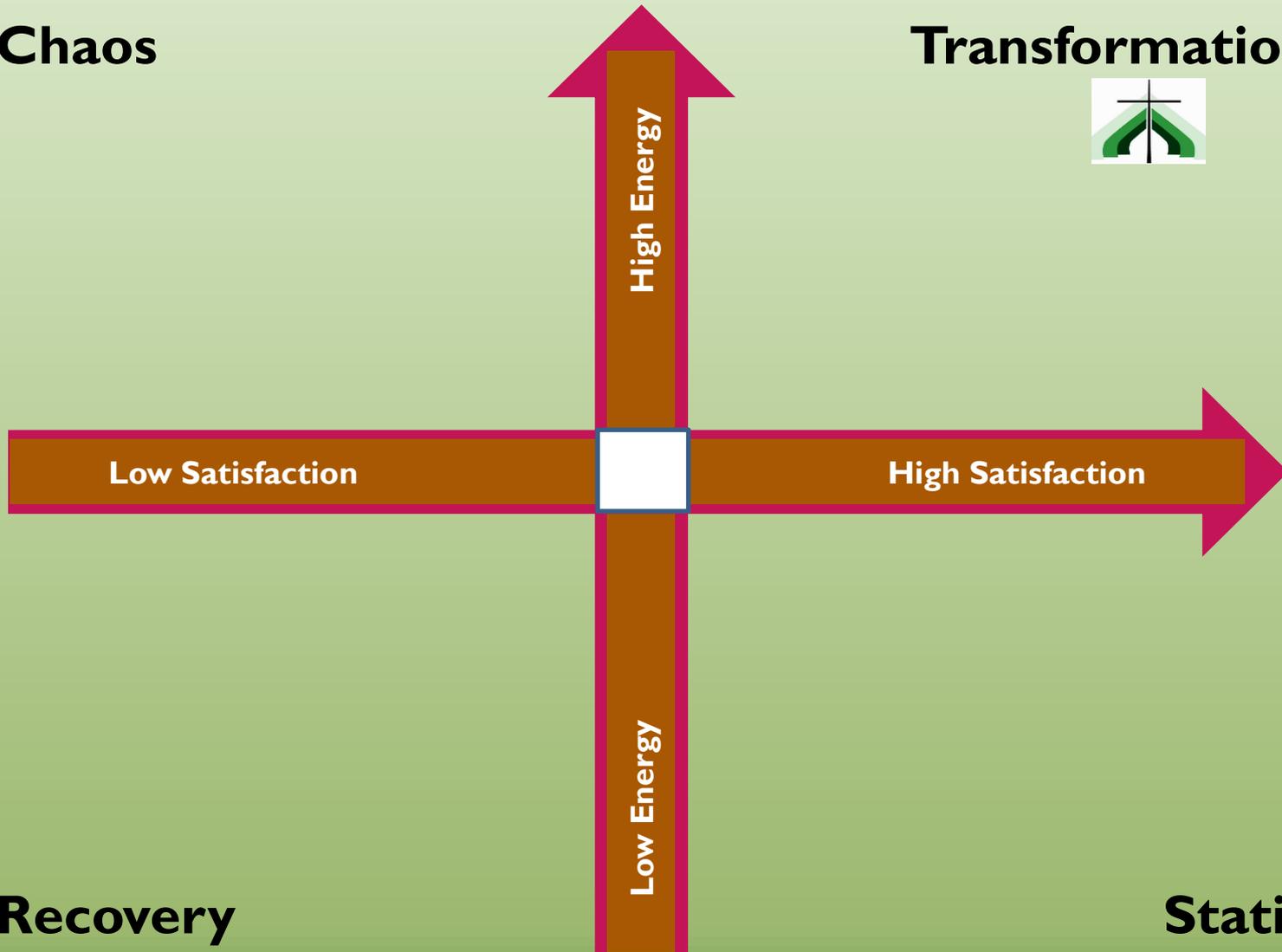
Churches in this quadrant have normalized a low level of vitality in the church which enables them to be relatively satisfied.

Recovery

Static

Chaos

Transformation



Where do we want to go?

- We have a responsibility to use our talents and energy to move forward
- Where will we focus?

The survey clearly
identified three top
priorities

Our top priorities (I)

- Growth: develop and implement strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into our congregation

Our top priorities (II)

- Growth: **make necessary changes** to attract families with young children and youth

Our top priorities (III)

- Ministry: develop ministries that work towards healing those broken by life circumstances.
- Also ranking high: expanding outreach and working as advocates so society might better reflect the values of the kingdom of God.

These are shared priorities

- Our top three priorities were listed among the top six priorities in each of our three age groups
- They were also reflected, more generally, in top priorities among those who attend frequently and those who don't.

Another high priority

- Strengthen the process by which members are called and equipped for ministry and leadership.

And some unique priorities

- Each age group also had one unique priority among its top six.

Age 35 and younger (9% of respondents):

- “Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc.).”

Age 35 to 64 (49% of respondents):

- “Strengthen the process by which members are called and equipped for ministry and leadership.”

Age 65 and older (41% of respondents):

- “Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.”

Who are we as a church?

- The CAT provided some valuable insights about our personality and perspectives as a congregation.

Our theological perspectives

- As a group, we are progressive, not conservative.
- Yet 1 in 4 of our members hold conservative theological views
- We need to embrace all approaches

We are flexible

- Much more flexible than most churches
- We welcome changes in worship, are not bound to the old ways, can adapt to the needs of those we want to reach.
- We can change our program from time to time.

We anticipate the need for change

- We have a healthy attitude toward reaching our priorities.
- 81% of the respondents said “some change” or “moderate change” would be required to realize their vision for the church.
- We recognize that achieving priorities requires effort and flexibility.

We need to stay flexible

- We will need to maintain this flexibility and continue with an adaptable leadership of the laity as we move forward with new clergy leaders.
- We cannot stagnate and wait for someone to tell us what to do during the period of transition.

A critical area for flexibility:

Pastoral care

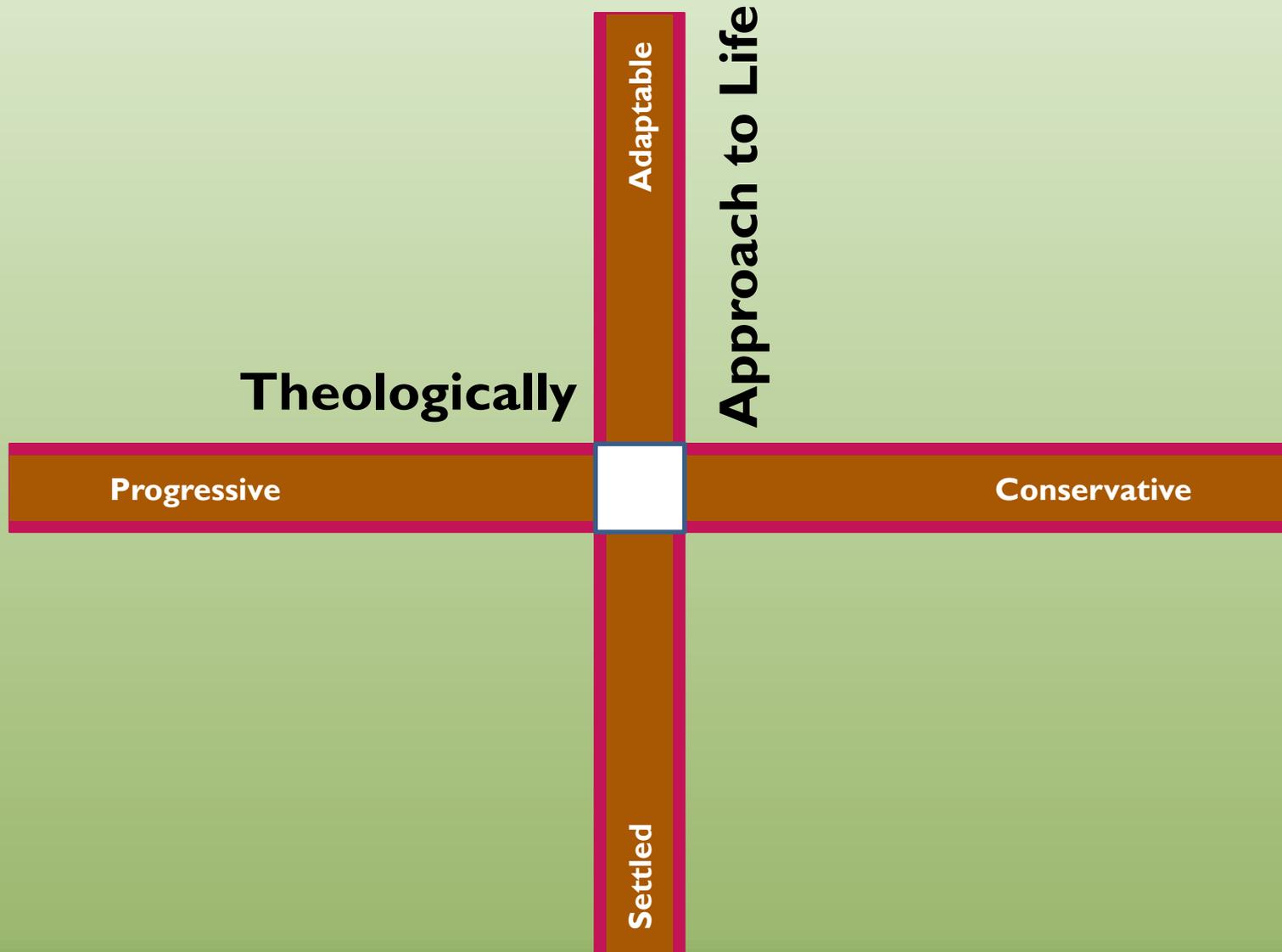
- Our members placed a higher than expected emphasis on pastoral care.
- In a congregation this size, it's an expectation that demands too much of our pastors.
 - It doesn't leave the pastors with enough time and energy for effective preaching and leadership.
- Lay leaders must step in where appropriate, and members must know that this care also shows the full scope of congregational concern and God's love.

Other key areas for flexibility:

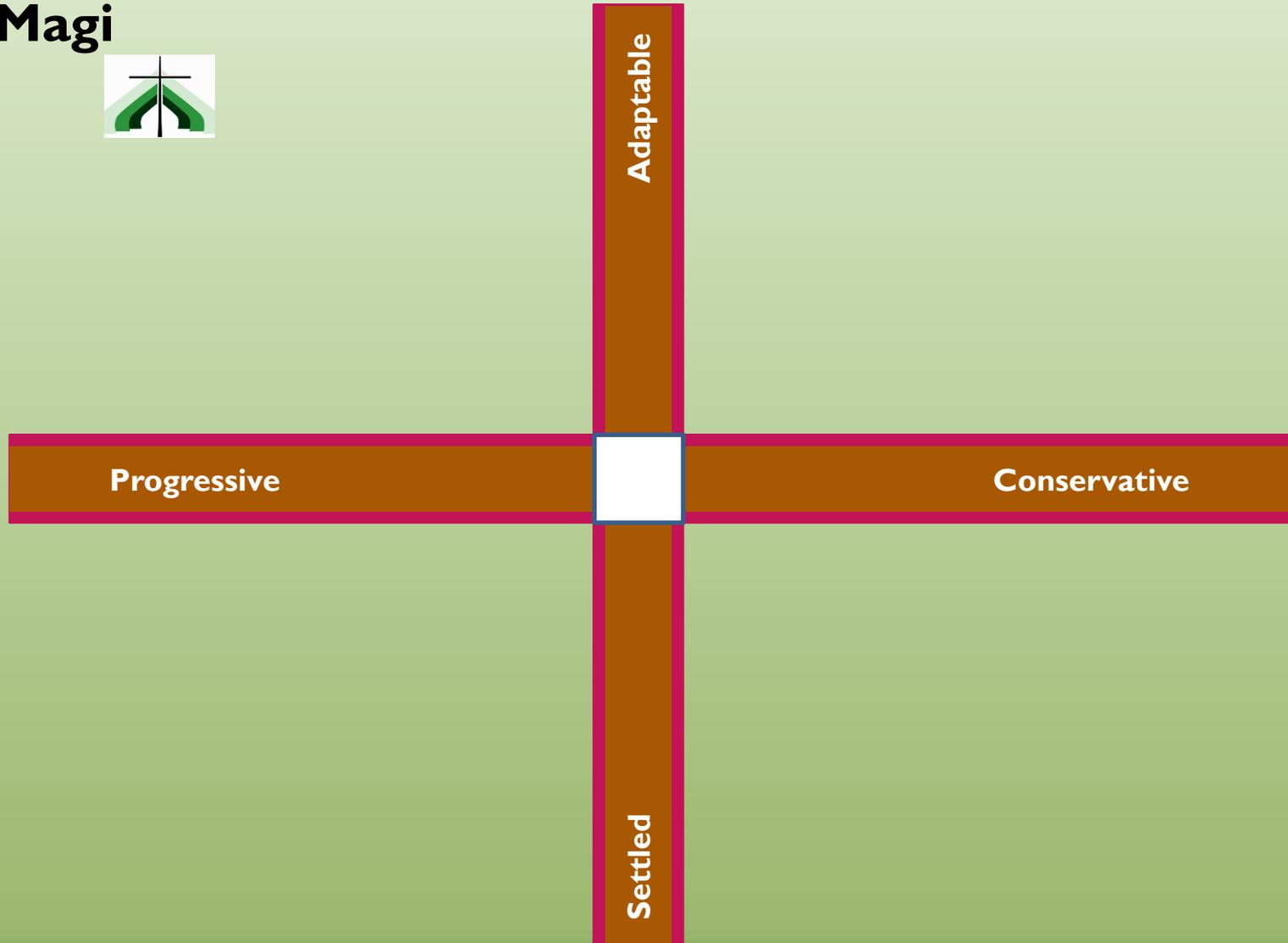
- **Worship:**
- Be *flexible enough* to create a high quality, meaningful worship experience, not only for members, but also for those we want to reach in the community.
- **Relational networks**
- Be *flexible enough* to relate to and serve people of various backgrounds and stations in life.
- Be willing to create new groups for new persons.

Other key areas for flexibility (con't):

- **Education and Formation:**
- Be *flexible enough* to offer education and formation in a variety of formats, venues, and schedules.
- Be willing to engage in a process of learning how to be effective in the world today.



Magi



Magi culture at its best

- Intellectual curiosity; analytic approach to faith.
- Open to “wandering,” exploration, journey of understanding.
- Powerful ally and advocate for minorities, powerless.
- Adaptable, progressive, inclusive.
- Works to develop clear and compelling vision for the future.

Magi shadow side:

- Overthinks issues.
- Tries to be everything to everyone.
- Can overlook the role of emotion in generating enthusiasm that leads to action.
- Can be too cool and analytical; must focus on developing the relational and emotional aspects of life in community.

How are we doing as a church?

- The CAT provided some valuable insights about how we see ourselves performing as a congregation.

PERFORMANCE:

HOSPITALITY

- **HIGH**
- Good hospitality is important for growth.

PERFORMANCE:

MORALE

- **HIGH**
- Good morale is important for growth.
- And for moving forward toward new programs and leadership.

PERFORMANCE:

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

- **HIGH**
- No issues at WPC.

PERFORMANCE:

GOVERNANCE

- **VERY HIGH**
- Trust in leadership; members feel concerns are heard and accounted for.
- “Your folks are ready to be led.”

PERFORMANCE:

READINESS FOR MINISTRY

- **VERY HIGH**
- The embodiment of our belief that we are a congregation “Where all members are called to ministry.”
- Yet there is still untapped potential.
- Some 25% of respondents said that, to some degree, they felt they had something to give to the church – but didn't know how to give it.

PERFORMANCE:

EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

- **VERY HIGH**
- Members value lifelong Christian education and expect high-quality programs.
- We're meeting that expectation.
- Important, because it's one of the two drivers of satisfaction.

PERFORMANCE:

WORSHIP, MUSIC

- **HIGH QUALITY**
- Members expect high quality preaching, worship, and music.
- And we get it.
- Again, one of the drivers of satisfaction.

Critical abilities for the next pastor

- Preaching
- Pastoral care
 - But this can't become a burden that takes away from time for preaching and leadership.
- Strategic Leadership
- Teaching & training

Narrative comments

- The survey asked respondents:
“In a few sentences, tell about an experience you had in the church where you walked away feeling, ‘Now THAT’s what it means to be the church!’ ”
- 136 answered this question, and the responses can be best summarized by this “word cloud,” which shows the most common words in the largest type.

Care Word Congregation Preaching Love Spirit

Service Night Live Experiences

Communion Mission Teaching Church

Genuinely Community Baptisms

Sermon School Support Moment Friendly

Black Choir Return Included

Some demographics

- Age
 - **35-44:** 10%
 - **45-55:** 15%
 - **55-64:** 24%
 - **65+:** 41%
- Tenure
 - **35-44:** 5-10 yrs, 22%
 - **45-55:** 11-15 yrs, 15%
 - **55-64:** 16-20 yrs, 4%
 - **65+:** 20+ yrs, 38%
- Avg. household income: \$95,313
- Giving/household: \$2,461
- Male 36%, Female 64%
- 94% White
- 67% college or graduate degree
- 74% one or two in household

Some more....

- **Membership**

- **Now:** 390
- **1 yr ago:** 409
- **2 yr ago:** 403
- **3 yr ago:** 404

- **Attendance**

- **Now:** 148
- **1 yr ago:** 158
- **2 yr ago:** 175
- **3 yr ago:** 188

- **Total Receipts**

- **Now:** \$617,664
- **1 yr ago:** \$578,849
- **2 yr ago:** \$623,146

Giving

- The average percent of income given is 2.58% (64th percentile)
- 3% is a reasonable goal; higher is unrealistic
- When spiritual vitality is high, giving goes up, too.
- This is an area we can explore. Our spiritual vitality – the degree to which members believe their faith is central to their lives – is very low compared to other churches.

Questions so far?

**This is not the end of the conversation;
it is the beginning!**

***The first work of Grace
is simply to enable us to
begin to understand...”***

-Simon Tugwell



What's next for WPC?

- Move toward our goals, while...
- ...preserving our core values.
- Do this pre-transition...
- ...so the transition plan is clear.

Move forward with courage and strength

- Our courage comes from our strength
- Our strength comes from our past experience
- Working together to solve issues
- It's the congregation that solves problems
- And this will continue during times of transition