



**SAINT LAURENCE  
CHURCH PROFILE  
SURVEY RESULTS**

# DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

- The Qualitative Survey
- Forty-six respondents



# THREE QUESTIONS

- What do I love about St. Laurence?
- What are my major concerns about St. Laurence?
- Why am I a member of St. Laurence?



HERE'S WHAT WE SAID



Theme	Respondents
People: Friendly, loving, welcoming	85%
Outreach	54%
People: Diverse views	52%
Spirituality	50%
Episcopalian tradition	48%
Liturgy	48%
Physical environment (church, food)	30%
The priest personally	15%
Liberal / progressive view point	15%
Education life for adults	13%
Education life for children	9%
People: diverse ages	7%
Total respondents	46



# WE AGREE THAT ST. LAURENCE IS ABOUT...

- How much we love each other: The People
  - “I love the closeness of the parish and the family-feel to it. I love that I can be totally myself and know that I am completely accepted for it.”
- How much we love the reaching out: Outreach
  - “Besides the people, I’m really impressed with the Outreach program. St. Laurence does so much for our community that I’m proud to belong.”
- How we can agree to disagree: Diverse Views
  - “There is room for diverse points of views without condemnation



# WE AGREE THAT ST. LAURENCE IS ABOUT...

- The way we worship
  - Spirituality
    - “So I can continually renew my spirituality.”
  - Our strong Episcopalian tradition
    - “I have been an Episcopalian for most of my life. I feel very comfortable with the service, the Prayer Book and the closeness of God.”
  - Our liturgy
    - “I love the fact that our liturgy keeps us in touch with the things that are authentic in the history of the church.”



# TO SOME PEOPLE ST. LAURENCE IS ABOUT...

- Where we are: Physical environment
- Our current priest in charge. “I love Nina. I get a great deal out of her sermons...”
- Our special point of view-”the theological perspective near the liberal end of the Episcopal Church.
- The education-Adult Forum and youth education
- The kids



## WHAT DIDN'T COME UP

- Evangelism did not come up although outreach did.
- Lay ministry was not a strong theme although participation in church activities was.



## WHERE WE'RE HEADED: WHAT CONCERNS US...

N. B. Very few comments in the responses were about St. Laurence now. Most were about what might happen to the church in the future.



Theme of concern	Respondents
Stewardship	48%
The search for a new priest	30%
People: Friendly, loving, welcoming	17%
Failing to recognize diverse points of view	17%
Ceasing to recognize the liberal/progressive point of view	15%
Volunteer burnout	11%

# MAJOR CONCERNS

- Stewardship
  - Themes of concerns re growth and budget
  - “Lack of younger people with children...stewardship is difficult to work (too few people on the rolls that pledge at least something.”
  - “That those who are regularly attending church and not committing themselves to pledging on a regular basis.”
  - Too few people doing too many things-burnout.



## THE SEARCH FOR A NEW PRIEST

- Concern voiced that the search would lead to conflict.
  - “My main concern now is the unease of some of the parishioners since Father Phil retired. I know this is to be expected and I remember the same type thing happening when Father Larry left, but I wish there was some way to avoid it.
- Concern that good communication needed to be maintained between the vestry and the congregation during this time.



## WHERE DO WE DISAGREE?

- An equal number of people expressed concerns that their beliefs, liberal or not-so liberal views are not currently being recognized.
- “I am concerned that our present leadership seems to want to lead us in a more rigid understanding of theology, a “high-church” liturgical expression and possibly towards more rigid “belief requirements”.
- “That the beliefs (or unbeliefs) of a few may overpower the beliefs or searchings of others”.
- Some of the extreme thinking expressed by a few...It makes me not want to attend forum.”



# THE PARISH LIFE SURVEY

- Quantitative survey
- 67 respondents!

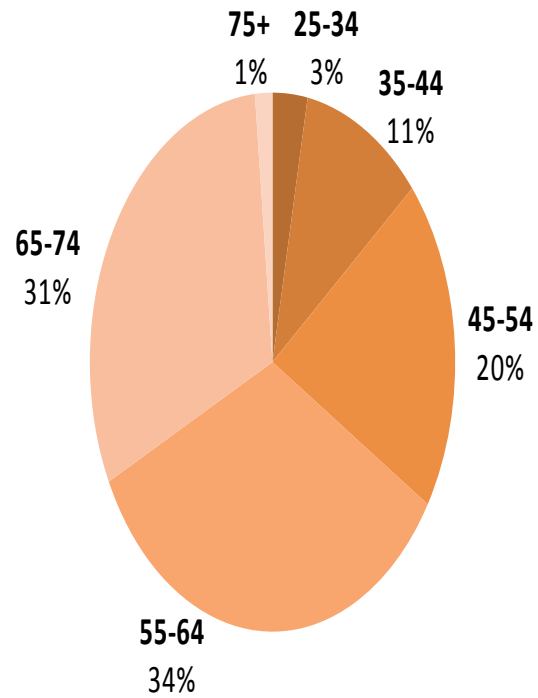


**WHO ARE WE?**

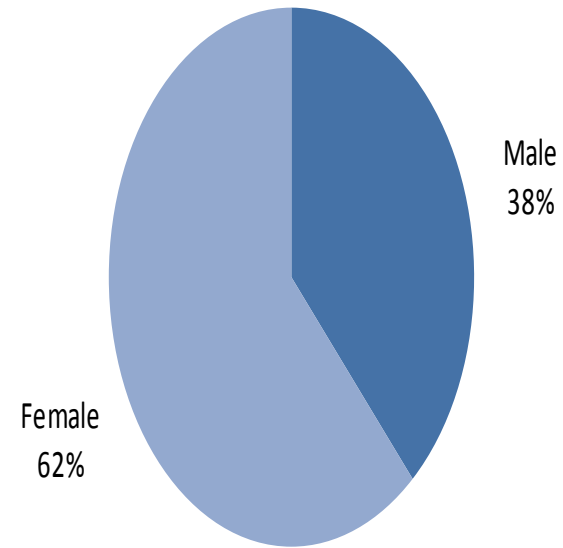


# WHAT DO YOU NOTICE?

## Age

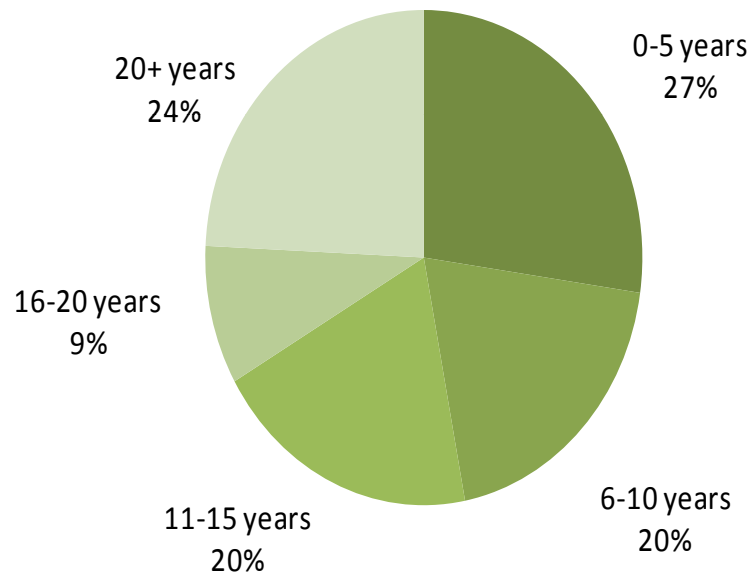


## Gender

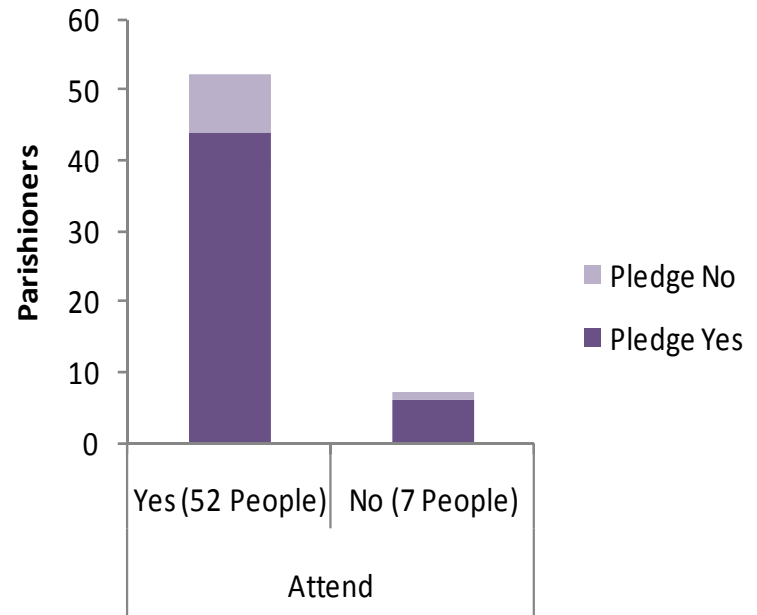


# WHAT DO YOU NOTICE?

## Tenure



## Commitment



# OUR BELIEFS

- Our beliefs define who we are as a church more than demographics do.
- This survey included five belief questions with choices ranging from more liberal to more conservative.
- The following slides summarize the results. They show a broad diversity in some beliefs.



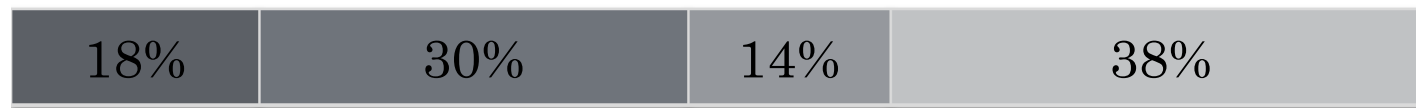
## Jesus Was



- Human but not divine, here to spread redemptive message
- Human but not divine, here to urge people to greater love
- Both fully human and fully divine, here to demonstrate how to live ethically
- Both fully human and fully divine, here to reconcile humankind and redeem them from sin



## Jesus' Death



- While an aspect of his life on earth, was not the most important part of his ministry
- Ultimate example of a holy man being martyred
- Ultimate act of love and empathy for human suffering
- And resurrection allow humans to be forgiven for their sins



# SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE RESULTS

Finding ways to integrate the many different beliefs in these two areas may pose a challenge to Saint Laurence in its search for a new rector and in the future.

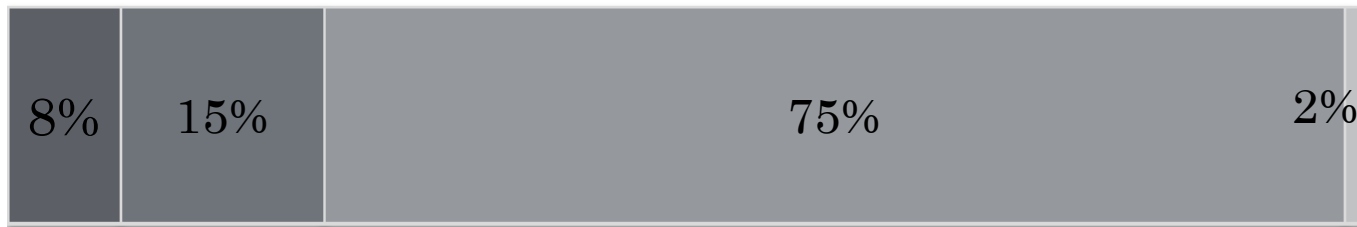


## WHERE MANY OF US SHARE COMMON GROUND IN BELIEFS

- The role of the Bible
- The value of Christianity as a religion
- The nature of God's judgment



## The Bible



- Is a great literary work
- Primarily serves to provide insight for ethical decision-making
- Ought to be read with the understanding that some of its statements are metaphorical
- Is a literal account of God's work on earth



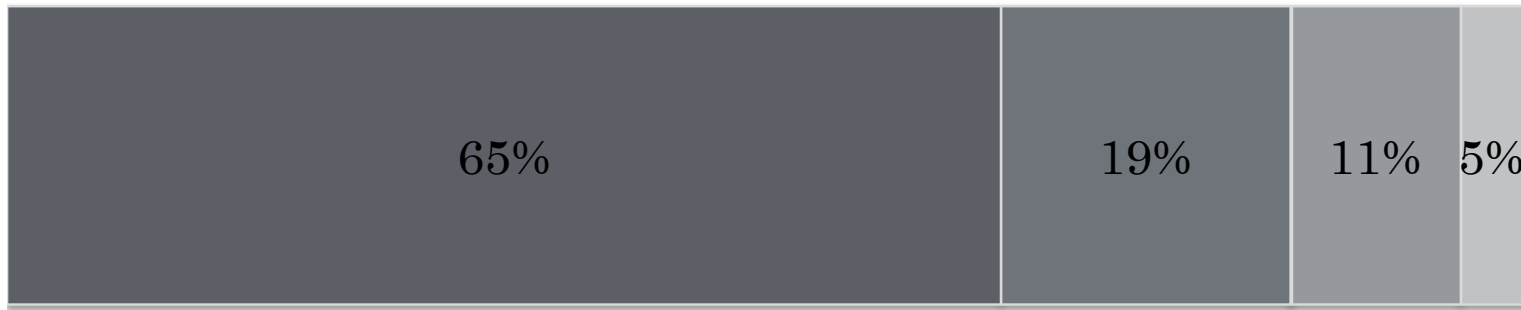
## Christianity



- Meets an important need in that it brings individuals together in a compassionate, caring community
- Provides valuable guidance for decision-making
- Like other religions provides a way to connect with God
- Is unique among religions in that it alone expresses the news and means of our salvation



## God's Judgment










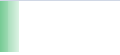










- God does not judge anyone
- God judges those who accept Christ on Christ's merits, not on their own merits
- Faith and good works together lead to salvation
- God judges people based on how much good or evil they do



**COMMON GROUND IN OUR CULTURE AND**  
**OUR COMMUNITY**



Elements of Church Culture with High Agreement	
We are...	 Outreach: other Episcopalians and denominations are welcomed
	 Outreach: parish supports the mission to reach beyond itself to help others in need.
	 Evangelism and renewal: parish ministers to its own membership and welcomes others
	 Outreach: parish sponsors community services and offers use of buildings
	 Leadership: rector is an important part of the identity of the congregation
	 Evangelism and renewal: parishioners reach out by calling, praying and offering to help others
	 Liturgy and spirit: congregation has opportunities to be involved in different levels of worship service
	 Liturgy and spirit: congregation participates in the services
	 Educational life: education centers on commitment to God, God's people, and the world
	 Liturgy and spirit: worship is more focused on the Eucharist
	 Educational life: education takes place primarily on Sunday
	 Evangelism and renewal: parish has not been involved in the renewal movement
	 Ministry of laity: opportunities for lay ministry
We are not...	 Educational life: education is focused on learning the traditions of the Episcopal church
	 People: parish is largely made up of elderly and retired
	 Evangelism and renewal: parishioners look chiefly to the clergy to reach out to others
	 Evangelism and renewal: parish has an active program for getting new members
	 People: parish is largely made up of young couples with children



# SUMMARY OF WHAT WE AGREE ON

St. Laurence is about outreach. We see ourselves as welcoming and reaching out to our world, our community, and each other. But internally, we are not particularly diverse, and we are not working hard to recruit new membership.



# DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

- Two primary perspectives held by respondents.
- Community mindset
  - About 80% of the respondents
  - Tend to agree strongly with statements that talk about how St. Laurence relates to the community around it.
- Identity mindset
  - About 15% of the respondents
  - Tend to agree strongly with statements that describe what happens inside our church and between ourselves in education and worship.



## COMMUNITY MINDSET

Believe that:

- The parish is a mixture of diverse people,
- The parish is *not* made up of elderly and retired people,
- The parish is *not* made up of young families, and
- Parishioners themselves reach out to others without relying on the rector.



## IDENTITY MINDSET

Believe that:

- The church is not actively seeking new members
- The rector is an important part of who we are as a congregation
- We come together for education mainly on Sunday, and
- The fact that we are not a part of the “renewal” or charismatic movement is important.



## WHAT WE EXPECT FROM LEADERSHIP

- Respondents were asked to endorse the five most important roles that a rector can fill from a selection of 16 items.
- Results follow.



<b>Rector's Role</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Plan and lead worship	71%
Prepare and preach sermons that teach and encourage parishioners	68%
Help members grow spiritually	63%
Provide visitation of those who are sick, shut-in, or bereaved	61%
Provide counseling for members with troubles	48%
Give good sermons	34%
Be involved in activities and issues in our community	27%
Develop and encourage Christian education for children and youth.	27%
Administration of church programs	23%

Be active in stewardship	20%
Plan and lead adult Christian education activities	20%
Lead the congregation in commitment to social justice	14%
Train & direct members to use their gifts & talents in service	14%
Lead congregation to greater involvement in world mission	7%
Lead the congregation in evangelism or reaching out to unchurched people.	4%
Be involved in denominational programs or activities	0%



## SUMMARY

Leading inspiring worship is the most important job of the St. Laurence rector. Also important are personal interactions with parishioners, especially those who are troubled or sick. At St. Laurence, it is less important for the rector to lead outreach in the community, the denomination, and the world. This is likely because the St. Laurence membership already takes a great deal of responsibility for reaching out, and the lay leadership manages most of the church's outreach efforts.



# MAINTAINING AND GROWING CONGREGATIONAL SATISFACTION

- Knowing something is true about Saint Laurence does not mean that we like it or that it is important to us.
- A statistical analysis was completed to determine what are the drivers of satisfaction with life at Saint Laurence.
- Here's what we found.



# TO MAINTAIN AND GROW SATISFACTION WITH ST. LAURENCE

We need to:

- **Increase our outreach to other Episcopalians and denominations.** People who see St. Laurence as welcoming Christians of all denominations are more satisfied.
- **Continue to offer liturgical flexibility.** People who see St. Laurence as a place where traditional and contemporary worship are mixed are more satisfied.
- **Increase opportunities for education outside of our Sunday offerings.** People who believe that the church only offers education on Sundays are *less* satisfied













## AND FINALLY...

- Remember that most respondents' concerns about St. Laurence were for the future, not the present.
- We asked you to prioritize your concerns for the future.
- The results in order of importance...



## Priorities for the Future in Order of Importance

	Future: our parish needs to more actively pursue a formal plan for growth
	Future: parish should diversify its sources of revenue
	Future: parish should do more Christian education
	Future: our laity needs to be more encouraged in their personal ministries
	Future: parish needs more activities that develop deeper spirituality
	Future: parish should have a more active plan to become more diverse
	Future: our parish should expand its program for outreach
	Future: our congregation needs more opportunity to participate in the liturgy
	Future: parish should include more contemporary music in the service
	Future: our parish should provide housing for clergy



# NEXT STEPS

Not quite yet. First...



**LINDY GROTE, RUSS AHRENS, SEAIRA  
CALDWELL, STAN JOHNSTON AND OUR  
OUTSIDE EXPERT, RIKI CONREY**



# AND NOW...

Next steps featuring our vestry!

