

Hyde Park Mennonite Facilitated Small Group Results April and May 2016

Below is the summary of congregation small group meeting responses held April 2016. Question 2 includes counts showing how the congregation weighted the importance of each response. See the numbers in parenthesis. Counts were added at the May 15, 2016 Congregational meeting and the following three Sundays.

1. What do you most value/appreciate about HPMF?

Ministry to Young People

- Our youth feel loved
- Youth involvement
- Intergenerationalism

Insightful Reflection

- HPMF doesn't propose to have all the answers but helps us understand the questions
- Safe place to question and expand spiritual beliefs

Worship

- Pastor
- Thoughtful sermons/Hope filled sermons
- Music
- Opportunities to congregate/fellowship together

Our Anabaptist/Mennonite Values & Worldview

- Biblically based
- Peace focus
- Creation care emphasis
- Pastor
- Open to question and uncertainty on faith journey
- Being part of larger network of people (denomination, MCC)

Putting our Faith into Action

- The example set by many
- Living Christ's way
- The way HPMF pushes me in my spirituality
- Our global vision

Location

- Work and life geographic intersection

Wise, skilled pastor, leadership and congregation

Our community

- We exhibit an accepting, tolerant community
- There is levity and sincerity at gatherings
- People pitch in and support efforts and each other
- People worship and play together
- There is a sense of hospitality and welcoming
- The flow, ambiance, loving feeling are visceral
- We continue to seek understanding, learning from each other and open ourselves to interpretations
- Multi-generational involvement appreciation and learning

2. What we would like HPMF to be like in 5 years?

Children & Youth Focus (39)

- Grow the youth
- Reaching out across generations
- Children's involvement in all aspects of church

Our Role in the Larger Community (30)

- Peace and Justice
- Faith in Action
- Social Responsibility
- Anabaptist Focus
- Service

Preserve & Enhance Community – all ages (37)

- Deepening community through fostering, welcoming diverse ways to encourage spiritual growth, experiment, more opportunities to be together

Spiritual growth through worship and study (20)

- Faith stories in worship, musical gifts, spiritual formation tools for youth and families, inclusive language in worship

An improved physical space (28)

- Fully wheelchair accessible to whole building
- Improved basement space (bathroom, lighting)
- Within our footprint

Growing in Inclusivity & Diversity (43)

- Desire for racial, ethnic, age, and socio-economic diversity
- Become fully LGBT inclusive and publically welcoming

Organizational design and leadership through (6)

- Continuity of leadership so decisions and follow through occur
- Hospitality focus (ie. group to deal with funerals)
- Remain faithful to beliefs/mission

Managed **increased** growth to achieve better Sunday school, youth groups, music, leadership and maintain a sense of community (13)

3. When you think about the future at HPMF what are you afraid of losing?

Sense of community

- Don't want to lose community
- If you grow in numbers, how do you maintain community?
- Relationships and sense of community
- Connections with each other as our lives change if church grows and location of church changes
- Small community feeling ability to have close relationships
- Any of the people...
- That somehow we don't incorporate new folks in a way that we lose team/family feel
- A sense of welcome - Do others feel that?
- Sense of community
- Community intimacy
- Our building, our community. I am at HP because it is a small church. I just as soon split than outgrow our building.
- Getting too big (losing intimacy)
- Uniqueness
- Intimacy
- Connectedness if too much growth
- Closeness/community
- the intimacy of a small community
- connectiveness
- community
- our welcoming spirit
- Quirkiness
- Intimacy- knowing what's happening in each other's lives through e.g. sharing time
- Community feel if we grow to large
- The awesomeness that we are
- A fear the we will no longer know each person who attends
- Sense of community
- Sense of community and trusting relationships

The way we do/are church

- Careful decision making
- Becoming too “slick”
- Independent thinking
- Vision
- Harmony over building
- simplicity
- Spirit moving us
- Becoming focused on a better-better-better mindset

Pastor and Leadership

- Marc as pastor
- Challenging and burnout for leadership (don't want to do this)
- Pastor (x3)
- Energy- for the work
- If Marc and Jenna leave- we and the youth would suffer

Financial resources

- Spending resource not in line with our vision and mission
- Spending money in ways not in-line with our values
- We have money to give to missions because we don't have a mortgage

Location/space

- Other users of building could be impacted if move
- N. End Community
 - The location is an intersection of church and daily life
 - Part of our theology
- A Mennonite church in our community within bike range.
- Losing sanctuary
- Our location at 12th and Eastman
- We don't want to lose this building

Our Mennonite-Anabaptist identity, beliefs, & values

- I am concerned that any growth in numbers will result in a shift from the values that the congregation currently supports
- Softening of views (justice) to try and attract people/growth
- Loss of action replacing with dogma
- Clear Cause (don't get sidetracked)
- Active Christian witness in community
- (Losing) Our tie to the greater Mennonite church
- Becoming environmentally unfriendly
- Growing Church and connecting with conflict i.e Mennonite Connection, our values
- Our Mennonite focus
- When we change pastors- that there'd be a chance we would lose our Anabaptist focus

- The passing down of our rich heritage to the next generations
- Connection with other Mennonite churches (through theological differences)
- Trouble articulating- fear losing our call to follow Jesus
- Impact on being a part of MCUSA because of LGBT issue
- Fear of losing sense of service or community
- Fear of losing the sensitivity to the “orphans and widows”
- Mennonite identity and Biblical focus
- Biblical focus-core values

Youth and Younger families

- Our young families
- Critical mass of youth... and their families
- youth
- basically, our church: need younger people and families or we will die out.

Other

- No fears- perfect love
- my mind
- older members (our many leaders are aging in our community)
- Need to find a sense of balance

4. When you think about the future at HPMF what are the things you wish to see changed?

Diversity: Ethnic, cultural, racial, LGBT

- More diversity
- A more diverse community
- Open and comfortable with more diversity
- Inviting others
- HP understand that we are implicitly racist, we discriminate- understanding and undoing our racism and oppression
- More cultural/racial diversity
- If we are welcoming new people- may need more orientation or mentoring and fostering inclusion
- More open to LGBT
- Our response to LGBT community

Children and Youth

- Sunday School – kids don't enjoy it now
- Love to see more willingness to volunteer with the children and youth
- Children's leadership and parents/families in sync
- Stronger family links with stronger education

- Something for kids during church service
- New model for youth development in a small church
- Explore combining with other churches' youth groups
- A slightly younger congregation (many, more are the same age)
- More youth

Deepening our Anabaptist-Mennonite identity, beliefs & values

- Biblical literacy
- Knowledge of Mennonite history
- More emphasis on the needs of creation e.g. oceans, air, other species, water
- Jesus talks a lot about money. I would like more support and encouragement in examining my personal privilege-white, educated, wealthy American
- Involvement with GAP with MCC

Our presence in the world/larger community

- modeling a "third way" in our polarized society
- Collaboration with other churches on peace and social justice issues
- Alerting new people to Columbia- sister church
- Should we be doing different things with Columbia?
- Empowering people in their own missions

Worship service

- Prayer time – more focused requests to make it easier to pray
- Sing one old four part harmony hymn at Sunday service – acapella
- More inclusive liturgical language – Gender- see God referred to as female more often
- Consider sensitivities to the disabled (ie. References to 'the blind', 'the deaf', 'the lame')
- fewer hymn books
- relook at language in our music and written descriptions
- More opportunities for communion
- Emphasis on church (liturgical?) calendar
- Try having a time of silent/personal prayer separate from the sharing of joys and concerns
- Worship leaders trained in communication
- Worship services having a flow or movement from beginning to end
- The use of inclusion language would become more and more natural
- It's time for video!
- Some storming and norming over sharing time
- More interesting for kinetic learners

Our physical space

- Add on to or reconfigure meeting room to accommodate more people

- Plan for our current facility
- The house next door-needs a plan- but I know it's in process
- Improving the space downstairs
- The accessibility of restrooms and building
- The kitchen a washer and a dryer
- Improving the building maintenance
- Creative long-term vision for the house next door- a peace and justice mission? To meet a housing need
- The front door
- Chop down sycamore trees
- More sinks for dishwashers
- Longer bike rack and need for longer bike rack
- I would like to see a common space/display where church projects are highlighted and their progress displayed
- 10th and Alturas sidewalk ramp

Increased places for being community together

- More small group involvement on a regular basis
- Want to hang out more with people. More life together
- Yes to small groups
- More small group activities: potlucks, games, discussion groups
- More communal activities
- Meet with interested members in communal ideas
- small musical groups – choir?
- more intergenerational activities
- Adult ed evenings
- More places for intergenerational relationship and service
- barn building outreach
- Increase points of intergenerational activity
- more options of working together in service

How we do/are church [church business, integration of new members]

- Membership – need more commitment to church
- Enough with Post It notes!
- Positive, joyous, and open view of the future
- Better institutional memory
- A church organization plan that facilitates good work and doesn't burn people out
- Encouraging new people to find a place to get more involved
- An easier way to integrate new comers. When do new folks get a mailbox? When do they become a member of the church?
- Smoother ways/processes of handling "business" of the church
- Other Church models – home churches

- Small churches can make it hard for newcomers
- Numbers of people don't determine success
- Website

Other

- More options of allergy friendly food
- People with more energy than me!
- caring for aging; learning about aging
- Open to all and safe for those who are moving on the openness continuum
- Not a thing!
- Fear of growth