



A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

CHURCH INFORMATION FORM

The Ministerial Vocation Committee and the Office of the Stated Clerk of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church are responsible for denominational vocational services. As part of the process of “matching” ministers and congregations, the Office of the Stated Clerk provides resources and advice to both pastors and congregational search committees. To that end, we ask congregations and ministers to complete information forms as an introduction to each other, and a first step in the process of calling a minister for a congregation. For both the pastor and the congregation, this is an opportunity for self-study and evaluation of current ministry and goals. This calls for honesty, effort, and open communication.

This Church Information Form (CIF) presents the local congregation’s history, challenges, and goals. It is our hope that this will help facilitate the search process by assisting both the church in focusing on future directions and applicants in gaining some sense of the nature and uniqueness of this congregation.

We encourage churches to list their vacancies on the Ministry Staff Opportunities webpage at www.epc.org/mso. For more information or to send your posting, email info@epc.org.

Guidance for church-based human resources questions such as background checks, personnel policy manuals, and more is available at the Office of the General Assembly by contacting Marti Ratcliff at marti.ratcliff@epc.org or 407-930-4263.

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Please return completed form to:

Evangelical Presbyterian Church
ATTN: OFFICE OF THE STATED CLERK
5850 T.G. Lee Blvd., Suite 510
Orlando, FL 32822

Phone: 407-930-4239
Fax: 407-930-4247
E-mail: info@epc.org





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Part 1: Church Information

1. Church Name Bay Presbyterian Church

Address 25415 Lake Road, Bay Village, OH 44140

Telephone (440) 871-3822 Fax (_____) _____

E-mail questions@baypres.org Website baypres.org

2. Presbytery Presbytery of the Alleghenies

Presbytery Ministerial Committee Liaison Richard Gash

3. Search Committee Chairman Amy Free / Matt Pedone (Co-Chairs)

Address (Amy) 4287 White Pine Dr., Avon, OH 44011

(Matt) 23499 Quail Hollow, Westlake, OH 44145

E-mail amyfree23@gmail.com matthew.r.pedone@gmail.com

Telephone (_____) Amy 773-314-7174 Matt 440-590-3641

4. List all paid staff positions (use additional sheet if necessary)

See attached list for staff positions

- | | | |
|-------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time |
| _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time |
| _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time |
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| _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time |
| _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time |



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5. List all key volunteer positions

Respite / Special Needs

Greeters / Ushers

Care Team

Community Group Leaders

Children's Ministry

Student Ministry

6. List all vacant positions

Position Available Director of Student Ministry Date of Vacancy 7/1/2024

Position Available Volunteer Coordinator Date of Vacancy 8/1/2024

Position Available Events & Environment Coordinator Date of Vacancy 6/15/2024

7. Membership (state approximate numbers and percentages)

	Five years ago	Currently
A. Number of church members	<u>1,845</u>	<u>946</u>
B. Number of family units	<u>1,115</u>	<u>613</u>
C. Worship attendance	<u>950</u>	<u>590</u>

8. Community Growth Increasing Static Declining

9. Profile of church members

A. Age:

n/a* % 0-11 n/a* % 12-18 1 % 19-24 6 % 25-34
18 % 35-49 25 % 50-64 50 % 65+

* Between weekday preschool and other programs we have over 1,500 children involved in some way in the church but the kids are not considered members



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B. Occupation:

20 % Business 30 % Professional 5 % Trades
0 % Agriculture 10 % Stay-at-Home Parent 25 % Retired
10 % Other (Please Specify) Education / Healthcare

C. Educational level of adults

3 % some high school 97 % high school 64 % college 25 % graduate school

D. Percentage of members belonging to the congregation

Less than one year 0.3 %
5 years or less 9.7 %
6-10 years 12 %
10 years or more 78 %

10. Racial/Ethnic composition of:

A. Congregation

1 % African-American 0.5 % Asian 98 % Caucasian 0.5 % Hispanic
_____ % Other (Specify) _____

B. Community (within 5-mile radius of church)

1 % African-American 0.5 % Asian 98 % Caucasian 0.5 % Hispanic
_____ % Other (Specify) _____

11. Community Setting (check as many as apply):

Location

Rural Small Town Metropolitan Suburban Inner City

Function

Industrial Agricultural Recreational Military College/University

Approximate population of community: 16,047

Within a 5 mi. radius of Bay Village - est. population 129,000



12. Worship

A. Worship Time	Average Worship Attendance	Worship Style
<u>9a</u>	<u>264</u>	<u>Traditional</u>
<u>11a</u>	<u>381</u>	<u>Contemporary</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

B. Frequency of communion celebration: 12 per year

C. How are members involved in planning and participation in the liturgy/worship?
BPC staff plan worship and elders, deacons and members participate throughout the service through greeting, ushering, reading scripture, praying, singing, playing musical instruments, distributing communion and other contributions.

D. Style of liturgy used in your worship (e.g., traditional, contemporary, variety)
Variety

E. Type of music used in worship (e.g., traditional, contemporary, variety)
Currently a blend of traditional and contemporary

13. Ministry Programs

- A. Average attendance in Church School (under 18 years): 130
- B. Average attendance in Adult Education (Sunday): 50
- C. Average involvement in Small Groups: 420



14. Organizational Structure

List major boards, committees, and organizations that are part of your church and frequency of meetings (monthly, weekly, etc.)

Name	Purpose of Group	Number of members	Frequency of meetings	Leadership Role*
Session	Leadership & Sheperding	12	1x mo	1
Deacons	Care & Support	9	1x mo	3/4
Board of Directors	Financial & Property Oversight	6	1x mo	2
Personnel Committee	Support Lead Pastor In Staffing Matters	4	1x mo	1
MomCo (formerly MOPS)	Outreach To Moms	100	4x mo	3/4
Mission Advisory Board	Misson Evaluation	9	4-5x yr	3/4
Student Ministry	Outreach & Discipleship	5+	4x mo	4
BPC Preschool	Outreach & Discipleship	100+	Mon-Fri	4
Special Needs Ministry	Outreach	5+	1x mo	3/4
Children's Ministry	Outreach & Discipleship	100+	4x mo	4

*Indicate leadership role expected by using the number below:

1. Pastor takes primary initiative and responsibility.
2. Pastor and laity share responsibility.
3. Laity takes primary initiative and responsibility.
4. A staff person takes primary initiative and responsibility.

Part 2: Financial/Church Campus Information

1. Current annual budget: \$ 2,967,693 Last year's annual budget: \$ 3,118,742
(Attach a copy of current budget)
2. Percentage of income received toward budget: 100.00 %



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3. Amount contributed for year (most recent complete reporting year)

- A. EPC Percentage of Income \$ 29,800
- B. EPC World Outreach Global Workers \$ 12,000
- C. EPC Special Projects \$ 0
- D. Presbytery Per Member Asking/Percentage of Income \$ 18,850
- E. Other Missions/Missionaries \$ 289,265

4. Property owned by church

A. Describe buildings and property (other than manse), including condition.

BPC's main campus sits on the shores of Lake Erie. The 90,000 sq. ft. campus includes a sanctuary (1988) that was updated in 2019, a children's education wing (1999) with classrooms that also house our Weekday Preschool, meeting spaces, a kitchen, and staff offices, the original worship space dedicated to student ministry, a large meeting room and additional staff offices (1951). In Cleveland, the Bridge CLE campus was acquired from the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland in 2011. That campus has five buildings totaling 66,584 sq. ft. including a sanctuary (1953) where our church plant, Bridge City Church worships, the Community House (1900), the Fulton House (1960), Sandy's House (1920) and the Jones Building which is utilized by ministry partners and other urban based mission groups.

- B. Are your buildings adequate for your present program? Yes No
If no, please explain:

- C. Is a building program or capital project projected? Yes No
If yes, describe what, when, and projected cost

- D. Does the church own a manse? Yes No

Condition: Good Fair Poor # of Bedrooms

Pastor's Office/Study: In Church In Manse Not Provided

Other _____



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5. Compensation:

A. The salary range we are prepared to offer:

Position: Lead Pastor \$ Commensurate with experience

Position: _____ \$ _____

Position: _____ \$ _____

B. The average annual increase over the past three years is:

Position: Lead Pastor \$ _____ or 3.00 %

Position: _____ \$ _____ or _____ %

Position: _____ \$ _____ or _____ %

Position: _____ \$ _____ or _____ %

C. Housing

Housing Allowance

Manse Only

Either of the Above

D. Benefits and expenses

Yes Retirement Plan (minimum 10% gross effective salary)

Yes Medical insurance (EPC medical coverage required for full-time TEs)

Yes Life insurance

No Social Security

Yes Travel/mileage

Yes Book allowance

Yes Study leave allowance (minimum 2 weeks)

Yes Annual vacation days (minimum 4 weeks)

10-12 Number of worship services per year for which pastor is provided relief (in addition to vacation and study leave)

Yes Sabbatical frequency and length No Set Policy, typically every 7-8 yrs

Yes Other (Specify: Expense account for meals, books, etc.)

E. The church participates in the EPC's medical benefits plan Yes No

F. The church participates in the EPC's retirement plan Yes No



Part 3: Church Characteristics

Check the box that most closely describes the current characteristics of the congregation.

Our congregation...	Agree		Disagree	
1. Is spiritually vibrant	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
2. Demonstrates love for the pastor and his/her family	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
3. Readily shares their gifts with the rest of the congregation	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
4. Places a high priority on sound biblical preaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
5. Effectively integrates newcomers	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
6. Is engaged in evangelism	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
7. Is often found living their faith in their communities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
8. Has a spirit of unity	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
9. Cares about each other	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
10. Is supportive of the Session and pastoral leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
11. Ministers well to members that are hurting	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
12. Uses members' gifts in worship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
13. Contains people willing and able to lead the congregation	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
14. Is capable of change when and where appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
15. Is connected to and prayerful about what God is doing in the global church	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

16. How are elders and deacons initially trained and equipped for ministry?

This is an area where we continue to evolve, but today elders and deacons are trained and prepared for ministry through a process that includes biblical and theological education, understanding Presbyterian polity and governance, and practical skills for pastoral care and leadership.



17. What is the Session's current practice regarding the ongoing discipleship of elders and deacons?

New leaders go through mentorship and orientation programs to learn their roles, followed by ongoing training and spiritual development opportunities such as workshops, retreats and denominational resources from the EPC throughout their respective term.

18. In what ways does your church participate in ecumenical activities?

BPC in 2020 joined with New Life at Calvary, a predominantly urban African-American Presbyterian church, to plant a new church, Bridge City Church on our mission campus, Bridge CLE. The three churches continue to engage in ministry together and often celebrate Ash Wednesday and other special services together. BPC elders are also engaged with our Presbytery of the Alleghenies, attending Presbytery meetings and special workshops.

Annually, our special needs ministry hosts a special event in partnership with the Tim Tebow Foundation called 'A Nite To Shine' offering a celebration of special needs families in the community. This is often the first interaction with our church for a number of special needs individuals and their families.

In partnership with New Life at Calvary and Bridge City Church, BPC is hosting a marriage weekend for communities in Spring 2025.

This is just a sampling of activities.

19. Describe the strengths of your congregation.

BPC's congregation is characterized by several key strengths that provide a solid foundation for its future. The church has a devoted and resilient core of long-time members who remain deeply committed to its evangelical mission and biblical teachings, even amidst recent challenges such as declining attendance and internal conflicts. The congregation is known for its strong engagement in church life, demonstrated by high participation in key ministries like the well-regarded Special Needs ministry and family-oriented programs, including a thriving preschool and children's ministries. These ministries are highly valued and foster a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment that draws in families and new members.

Additionally, the church's commitment to self-reflection and renewal is evident through the congregation's active involvement in summits and initiatives aimed at deepening their relationship with Christ, rebuilding community, and clarifying their vision for the future. Overall, BPC's strengths lie in its faithful membership, active engagement in ministry, and desire for growth and renewal, which are vital for advancing its mission and vision.



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20. List specific problems with which your congregation struggles.

BPC, like most historically mainline churches in the US, has struggled with declining attendance and engagement, particularly in attracting and retaining younger members such as Millennials and Gen Z, which is crucial for the church's future vitality. Over the past decade, the congregation has decreased to about half its size due to continuous changes and internal conflicts that have caused disillusionment among some members. It is worth noting that in the 18 months following the VCM renewal initiative and report, our average weekly attendance numbers have increased by about 150.

Most importantly, the church faces challenges in reaching out to those within a 5 mile radius of the church and effectively connecting with those who are unchurched or de-churched. While these issues persist, the church (via session) has taken significant steps through a Vital Church Ministry (VCM) led renewal process that includes healing from past conflicts, updating our vision, mission, and values, and implementing policy governance to foster unity and strategic alignment. These efforts aim to rebuild community and guide the church into a more cohesive and vibrant future, making it imperative to address the ongoing need to grow and diversify the congregation.

21. List major goals that the congregation has set for itself.

1. Becoming a Disciple-Making Church Led by the Next Generation:

The plan emphasizes the goal of having 75% of attending households complete a Discipleship Pathway, focusing on spiritual growth and community building. This pathway includes steps for spiritual maturity, equipping members to lead, and fostering intergenerational mentorship where older generations mentor younger leaders.

2. Engaging Younger Generations:

A significant goal is to grow the church's Millennial attendance to 18% and Gen Z attendance to 10% of total attenders. This involves developing strategies that make the church more welcoming, relevant, and engaging for these demographics, including innovative worship styles, outreach methods, and programs that cater to their needs and interests.

3. Creating a Welcoming and Others-Oriented Culture:

The church aims to foster a welcoming environment where all feel included and valued. This involves enhancing the sense of belonging within the congregation and the broader community. The plan includes designing a robust volunteer system to ensure every attender is involved in a Community Group or Ministry group, promoting active participation and deeper connections.

4. Developing Strong Leadership and Governance:

The plan includes implementing policy governance to ensure better alignment between the Session, staff, and congregation. This structure will support the church's mission and vision, helping leaders to work more cohesively and effectively in decision-making and ministry execution.

5. Enhancing Evangelism and Community Engagement:

Strengthening evangelism is a priority, with a goal of developing a biblical stewardship model and training attenders to share their faith with others. The church seeks to increase its impact within the Bay Village community and beyond, ensuring its outreach efforts are innovative and risk-taking while staying true to being Christ-centered.

22. Has there ever been disciplinary action taken against a pastor of your congregation?

Yes No

23. Has there ever been any disciplinary action against an elder or deacon of your congregation?

Yes No



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If you answered “Yes” to either 22 or 23, please explain.

24. Have you completed a mission statement, vision statement, and/or a strategic plan for your congregation?

Yes No

If yes, Date completed 8/2024

If yes, enter each statement or strategic plan (or attach copies if space below is limited).

see attached



Part 4: Leadership Expectations

1. What are some key character strengths a person should bring to this position?

Alignment with EPC and Church Vision: The candidate should be deeply aligned with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) standards and the specific vision of BPC, ensuring their ministry philosophy and approach align with the church's theological and strategic direction.

Focus on Spiritual Renewal and Evangelism: A strong commitment to spiritual renewal and a passion for evangelism are essential. The candidate should inspire and lead the congregation in a renewed focus on sharing the gospel and deepening their relationship with Christ.

Strong Leadership and Relational Skills: The ability to lead with strength, clarity, and relational warmth is crucial. This includes building trust, fostering unity, and facilitating collaboration among staff, session, and congregation members.

High Emotional Quotient (EQ): The candidate must possess a high level of emotional intelligence to navigate complex relationships, handle conflict gracefully, and maintain healthy, constructive interactions within the church community.

Commitment to Biblical Reconciliation: A strong emphasis on biblical reconciliation is necessary, ensuring that the church fosters an environment of grace, forgiveness, and unity grounded in scripture.

Stability and Community Involvement: Demonstrating stability and a deep commitment to engaging with the community, both within and outside the church, is important to build lasting relationships and foster a sense of belonging and mission among members.

2. What are five key gifts/skills/abilities a person should bring to this position?

Strong Leadership Skills: The ability to lead effectively, foster unity, and align the staff, session, and congregation around the church's mission, vision, and strategic goals, with a servant's attitude.

Evangelism and Outreach Proficiency: A proven track record in evangelism and the ability to develop and execute outreach strategies that engage both the congregation and the broader community.

High Emotional Intelligence (EQ): Skills in managing interpersonal relationships, resolving conflicts biblically, and maintaining a compassionate and supportive environment for staff and congregation members.

Teaching and Preaching Excellence: Strong biblical teaching and preaching skills that resonate across generational lines and encourage spiritual growth and discipleship among members.

Strategic Planning and Execution: The ability to create and implement strategic plans that support the church's long-term vision, including stewardship, discipleship, and leadership development initiatives.

3. What are the primary pastoral duties for the position? (Attach a position description)

Spiritual Leadership: Leading the congregation in spiritual growth and renewal by preaching and teaching biblically grounded sermons that resonate across generational lines and encourage spiritual maturity and discipleship among members.

Administrative Leadership and Governance: Overseeing the church's ministries, staff, and administrative functions to ensure alignment with the church's mission, vision, and values. This includes collaborating closely with the Session and staff to create a cohesive and effective team dynamic.

Discipleship and Evangelism: Focusing on discipleship and fostering a culture of evangelism, empowering members to actively engage in sharing their faith and making disciples within the church and the broader community.

Building Unity and Community Engagement: Facilitating unity and collaboration among the congregation, session, and staff while actively engaging with the local community to enhance the church's outreach and impact.

Pastoral Care: Providing pastoral care, including shepherding, counseling, and supporting the spiritual and emotional needs of the congregation, ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment.



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Part 5: Church History

1. What do you consider to be the three most important events in the history of your church?

1.) Founding in 1917

Ida Cahoon established our mission as a grace-filled, outreach-minded church with a heart for children in 1917. That legacy has shaped our identity over our 100-year history.

2.) Stability & Growth

We had enjoyed stability in pastoral and senior staff leadership from 1965 to 2008. During that time, the church grew in numbers, influence and maturity as members were equipped and sent out to follow God's call into our communities. Transitioned from PCUSA to EPC which was a significant undertaking spiritually and financially.

3.) Discerning Our Future While Faithfully Serving His Kingdom

During the 15 year period we entered after decades of having the stability of the same pastor, we experienced continuous change as we tried to figure out who we were in a new era -- we experienced significant growth in our membership and finances, acquired the family ministry center in Cleveland which would later become home to a church plant, we went through two different lead pastors and a number of associates, had leadership transitions and some internal conflicts that ultimately led to a later decline in attendance. Eventually our session through prayerful discernment led BPC to embark on a critical renewal journey with VCM. Despite some tumult and conflict during that period, there remained a core of engaged members and hardworking staff that helped provide much needed stability.

2. What do you consider to be the most interesting and challenging event in the life of your church in the last three years?

Facilitated by Vital Church Ministry, our renewal process, involved a series of summits where the congregation engaged in deep self-reflection, addressed past conflicts, and clarified the church's vision, mission, and values. This pivotal moment allowed the church to refocus on a Christ-centered mission, fostering a new season of unity, spiritual growth, and a renewed commitment to building a vibrant future grounded in faith.



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Part 6: Other Information

1. List the last three individuals who held this position

Name	Dates of Service	
<u>Mark Tumney</u>	<u>3/2019</u>	to <u>1/2023</u>
<u>Garnett Slatton</u>	<u>2/2009</u>	to <u>9/2016</u>
<u>Hu Auburn</u>	<u>1/1975</u>	to <u>11/2008</u>

2. Describe any significant factors about the church not covered in previous questions.

Between Garnett Slatton's departure and Mark Tumney's call, we had two transitional pastors:

- Bob Hopper, from February 2017 until his unexpected death in June 2017
- Chris Scruggs, from October 2017 through February 2019



Statement of Acknowledgment

The EPC believes that honesty and a commitment to open communication are critical to building the body of Christ. In that spirit, please confirm your agreement to the following statements by your signatures below.

1. We attest that the information contained in this Church Information Form is true and complete to the best of our knowledge.
2. We authorize applicants for the position(s) listed herein to make inquiries regarding all statements contained in this Church Information Form.
3. We authorize the Office of the Stated Clerk to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share this Church Information Form with potential candidates for the position(s) listed herein.
4. We acknowledge the Medical Plan and Retirement Plan services offered by the EPC's Benefit Resources, Inc., exist to serve EPC churches and their staff members. We also acknowledge the EPC's Book of Order requirement that EPC churches provide medical insurance to ordained staff members through BRI as mandated by the following Acts of the General Assembly:
 - 81-04 Terms of call for any minister of member churches shall provide for participation in the denominational hospitalization and disabilities programs. (*Minutes of the 1st General Assembly, 1-32*)
 - 81-06 The denominational group insurance plan providing health, disability, and life coverage shall be mandatory for all ministers within member churches. (*Minutes of the 1st General Assembly, 1-36*)
 - 88-08 Assembly amends participatory requirements for group health insurance plan by requiring participation of all ministers on the rolls of presbyteries with the exception of:
 1. Missionaries laboring in cooperative agreements with mission agencies;
 2. Ministers laboring in institutional agencies providing their own group insurance plan;
 3. Ministers afforded group insurance coverage as part of retirement benefits from a previous employer;
 4. Ministers without call, and ministers laboring less than 20 hours in a place of ministry. (*Minutes of the 8th General Assembly, 8-24*)

For information about EPC benefits through BRI, see www.epc.org/benefits, email benefits@epc.org, or call 407-930-4267.

Clerk of Session John Engelbrecht Date 9/24/2024

Search Committee Chair Amy Free / Matt Pedone Date 9/24/2024

<u>FINAL BPC 24/25 BUDGET</u>		
DEPARTMENT	BUDGET LINE	AMOUNT
Children's Ministry	CM Preschool	\$1,200
Children's Ministry	CM Elementary	\$2,700
Children's Ministry	Childcare Expenses	\$500
Children's Ministry	Special Needs Min Expenses	\$0
Children's Ministry	CM Supplies	\$3,000
Children's Ministry	KCO	\$8,000
	TOTAL: \$15,400.00	0.52%
Student Ministry	Student Retreat - Middle School	\$2,250
Student Ministry	Middle School Ministry	\$5,000
Student Ministry	Student Retreat - High School	\$2,250
Student Ministry	High School Ministry	\$5,000
	TOTAL: \$14,500.00	0.49%
Worship	Contemporary Worship	\$3,000
Worship	Traditional Worship	\$1,500
Worship	Seasonal Displays/Decorations	\$6,000
Worship	A/V Worship	\$7,500
Worship	Instrument Maint/Replacement	\$12,500
Worship	Copyright License	\$1,400
Worship	Worship Materials	\$6,000
	TOTAL: \$37,900.00	1.28%

Congressional Care	Congregational Care Expenses	\$3,000
Congressional Care	Legacy Ministry	\$2,500
	TOTAL: \$5,500.00	0.19%
Family Life	Women's Ministry Exp	\$4,500
Family Life	Adult Education	\$4,000
Family Life	Men's Ministry Exp.	\$2,000
Family Life	Community Groups	\$2,000
Family Life	Parenting	\$500
Family Life	Milestones	\$3,500
	TOTAL: \$16,500.00	0.56%
Evangelism	NextSteps/Membership	\$2,500
Evangelism	All Church Events	\$15,000
Evangelism	Volunteer Engagement	\$2,000
	TOTAL: \$19,500.00	0.66%
Facilities	Building Insurance	\$29,815
Facilities	Furniture	\$10,000
Facilities	Security	\$15,000
Facilities	HVAC	\$18,000
Facilities	Telephone/Internet	\$21,000
Facilities	Utilities	\$100,000
Facilities	Storage Expense	\$0
Facilities	Food Supplies	\$8,000
Facilities	Kitchen Supplies	\$3,000
Facilities	Equipment	\$5,000

Facilities	Janitorial Supplies	\$12,000
Facilities	Snow Removal	\$15,000
Facilities	Lawn/Garden	\$19,000
Facilities	Tree Maintenance	\$4,000
Facilities	Parking Lot Maintenance	\$2,500
Facilities	Service Contracts	\$44,040
Facilities	City/State Fees	\$5,200
Facilities	Maintenance Staff	\$10,000
Facilities	Property Maintenance	\$10,000
Facilities	Operations/Cleaning Svc	\$115,000
Facilities	Software (Computer)	\$8,000
Facilities	Hardware (Computer)	\$5,000
Facilities	Computer Support	\$0
	TOTAL: \$459,555.00	15.49%
Mission	Local Missions	56,500.00
Mission	Global Missions	66,000.00
Mission	Special Commitments	18,350.00
Mission	Outreach Program	
Mission	Bridge CLE Support	168,000.00
	TOTAL: 308,853.00	10.41%
Administration	Postage Exp	\$3,000
Administration	Office Supplies	\$12,000
Administration	Financial Svc Fees	\$42,000
Administration	Human Resources	\$10,000
Administration	Protection Policy	\$1,500

Administration	125 Plan Admin Fees	\$1,000
Administration	Payroll Expenses	\$5,000
Administration	Commun/Publications	\$15,000
Administration	Advertising	\$9,500
Administration	Pastor Search/Recruiting	\$60,000
	TOTAL: \$159,000.00	5.36%
Staffing	Salaries/Wages/Housing	\$1,487,615
Staffing	Pensions/Benefits Plan	\$231,406
Staffing	Soc Sec/Med-ER (FICA)	\$89,169
Staffing	Leadership Development	\$14,000
Staffing	Life Insurance/Key Man Insurance	\$0
Staffing	Acct Exp Reimburse	\$7,300
Staffing	Acct Auto Expense	\$1,500
Staffing	Workers Compensation	\$14,650
Staffing	Full Staff Expense	\$7,000
Staffing	Pastors' Self Develop.	\$1,250
Staffing	Ind. Contractor Payments	\$1,200
	TOTAL: \$1,855,090.00	62.51%
Other Expenses	Audit	\$18,000
Other Expenses	Presbytery of Alleghenies	\$13,980
Other Expenses	EPC	\$30,885
Other Expenses	Session Expenses	\$3,000
Other Expenses	Operating Contingency	\$10,000
	TOTAL: \$75,865.00	2.56%

	Total	\$2,967,663
	Last Year	\$3,118,742
	Difference	-\$151,079

First Name	Last Name	Employment Status	Job Title
Julie	Hazlett	Regular Part-Time	Director of BPC Weekday Preschool
Ryan	Dewey	Regular Part-Time	Director of Communications
Elizabeth	Golik	Regular Part-Time	Director of Disability Engagement
Erin	Ritchie	Regular Part-Time	Elementary Ministry Coordinator
Erica	Maddux	Regular Part-Time	Facility Ministry Assistant/Welcome Desk
Bethann	See	Regular Part-Time	Graphic Design/Communications
Hailey	Desmond	Regular Part-Time	Human Resources/Finance Administrator
Kirk	Taylor	Regular Part-Time	Maintenance & Operations Coordinator
Melissa	Estridge	Regular Part-Time	MomCO/ Womens/Small Group Coordinator
Jennifer	LaRiccia	Regular Full-Time	Director of Care
Melissa	Derrick	Regular Full-Time	Director of Children's Ministry
Armin	Karim	Regular Full-Time	Director of Classic Worship
Carolyn	Klenkar	Regular Full-Time	Director of Finance
Graham	Nieder	Regular Full-Time	Director of High School Ministry
Elizabeth	Ritchie	Regular Full-Time	Executive Assistant to Discipleship
Sharon	Brumagin	Regular Full-Time	Executive Director
Rick	Foster	Regular Full-Time	Interim Lead Pastor
Myron	Davis	Regular Full-Time	Marketing and Production Director
Tammy	Winkhofer	Regular Full-Time	Mission Coodinator
Jack	McClelland	Regular Full-Time	Pastor of Missions/Director of Bridge CLE
Terry	Schordock	Regular Full-Time	Property/Systems Director
Josiah	Strack	Regular Full-Time	Sound Technician/Ministry Assistant to Children, Students & Special Needs Ministries
Debra	Campo	Casual Part-Time	Elementary Worship Coordinator
Mary	Schordock	Casual Part-Time	Infant/Toddler Ministry Coordinator
Tim	Slager	Casual Part-Time	Interim Part Time Care Pastor
Samuel	Grossman	Casual Part-Time	Marketing Associate
Angela	Kaschube	Casual Part-Time	Organist
Keon	Abner	Regular Full-Time	Bridge City Church Lead Pastor

OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS USING THE BPC CAMPUS

1. AA
2. ACA (Adult Children of Alcoholics)
3. Al-Anon
4. GA (Gamblers Anon)
5. Artists in Bloom
6. Men's Bible Fellowship
7. Catholic Schoolhouse – homeschool group
8. Joel's Place – grief support for children
9. Mental Health and the Church Conference – annual event for Key Ministry (a ministry partner)
10. Feeding Souls – ministry partner
11. Welcome House Conference – annual event
12. Various Recitals (piano, violin, guitar)
13. HEARTS for Jesus Concerts – annual events
14. Westside Christian Academy Concerts – annual events
15. Bay Village Early Childhood PTA – annual events
16. Provide cones in the parking lot for young drivers practicing maneuverability

Bay Presbyterian Church Executive Summary

Definition of Terms

Vital and Recurring Terms in this report include: **Tenure Groups (how long people have attended BPC)**

- New Attenders: those who have attended your church for five years or less.
- Intermediate Attenders: those who have attended your church for six to 19 years.
- Pioneers: those who have attended your church for 20 years or more.

Generation Groups:

- Gen Z: people 25 years of age and less
- Millennials: people who are currently 26-42 years of age
- Gen X: people who are currently 43-57 years of age
- Boomers: people who are currently 58-76 years of age
- Silents: 77+ years of age (no Silents participated)

Scope of The Report

The criterion for a satisfactory survey sample is to have at least half the year's average attendance take the survey. 436 people participated in taking the survey with a most recent attendance figure of 474 in both services and an average of 115 households online, we have a response rate of almost 80%, which is excellent!

Additionally, the VitalChurch Discernment Team was able to meet with 113 people in the input sessions plus nine others in an online group meeting. The survey results coupled with the input sessions should accurately reflect the current reality at BPC (the *mirror*) with the primary objective being to develop a pathway forward for God's preferred future at BPC (the *map*).

Strengths to Build On

(As Pastor Rick shared these strengths, he punctuated the list by repeating, “O Lord, Great is Thy faithfulness!”)

God has blessed this body of believers over the years, and there is a rich history here. It is important to acknowledge and celebrate the strengths, the good things, that by God’s grace, we have. Data from the online survey reveals numerous areas and ministries that are strengths, which translate into amazing opportunities.

A strength we can build on is the humility of the Session to recognize the need to deeply evaluate where BPC is and listen to the church.

Our top-rated ministries:

1. 94% saw the **Special Needs** ministry as a strength.
2. 87% saw the **facilities** as a strength.
3. 87% saw our **preschool program** as a strength.
4. 85% saw our **Sunday morning Nursery** as a strength.
5. 84% saw our **K-4th grade ministry** as a strength.
6. 81% saw **MOPS** as a strength.
7. 80% saw our **Bridge City Church plant** as a wonderful ministry.

A second strength is what keeps people coming: high rating for the Bible studies and also the Sunday morning preaching. In fact, 49% of New Attenders say this is what keeps them coming.

A third strength is the **large number of mature Christians** at BPC. The average number of years an attender has been a believer is 42.9.

A fourth strength is the **high level of agreement on evangelism**. We are unashamedly evangelicals and desire to share our faith. Ninety-four percent of survey participants agreed that they should be sharing their faith with others.

But our strengths are not limited to what we have and what our ministries are doing. They’re also seen in the untapped potential of **what we want**:

1. High percentage of people desiring to be trained in leadership (44%).
2. Eighty-three percent are willing to spend an hour or more a week supporting the ministry focus of the church.
3. Thirty percent would be willing to spend four or more hours per week supporting the ministry focus of the church.

The imagery that comes to mind is BPC is like a sleek muscular horse, pawing the ground with its hooves, tossing its head, anxious to be let loose to run. All the rider has to do is relax the reins and utter, “Tcch, tcch” and that horse will take-off like a rocket.

God has been so good to BPC! So, it is right and appropriate to celebrate, it’s right and appropriate to build on and leverage these strengths for the future. And then let’s exclaim again, “*O Lord, Great is Thy Faithfulness.*”

Hindering Core Issues

After the survey data has been analyzed and the input sessions have been completed, our Discernment Team holds a four-hour online meeting to synthesize the data with what we heard in the input sessions. The goal is to identify BPC’s primary hindering factors (based on what you told us). During one of our prayer times, we were drawn to the Luke 10 passage regarding Martha and Mary (vs. 38-42).

This short 5-verse narrative addresses the ever-present temptation to substitute activity for intimacy. The gospel is the message of God’s gracious sacrificial love toward us and the invitation and availability to orient our lives around regularly sitting at the feet of Jesus. As Jesus said to a busy and anxious Martha, “*only one thing is necessary*” (v. 42). In some circles this activity-oriented business is referred to as “The Martha Syndrome.” While Scripture is clear that Martha was a godly woman doing necessary and important work, the essential message of the narrative is that the most effective ministry is born out of having been with Jesus.

Measuring our success as believers or as a congregation, can be determined by our satisfaction in Christ. Is our sin confessed and satisfied in His death? Is our guilt satisfied by His sacrifice? Is our security satisfied with His care? Is our purpose satisfied in His sovereign plan? Is our joy satisfied in His resurrection? Is our hope satisfied in His promised second coming? Is our love satisfied with His redeeming love?

Nothing we strive after in life will ever satisfy our created purpose to know God, glorify God, and enjoy Him forever. Only in continually immersing ourselves in gospel grace at the feet of Jesus will we truly find our satisfaction.

When all is said and done, the calling of every church involves loving God with Mary’s heart and serving God’s purpose with Martha’s hands.



As we move on to what is hindering your vitality at this time, we often use the language of Taproot and Branch Root Issues to identify the current threats to your church's vitality. While BPC has multiple strengths to build on, this report will show there are a number of very real threats that should not be ignored. BPC is at a distinct crossroads, and it is time for your *status quo* to be relinquished.

The *VitalChurch* Discernment Team, through analyzing the data, conducting input sessions, prayer, and with decades of experience sees **one taproot issue** and **four branch root categories** (some of which are overlapping) as the primary hindering factors at this time. These will need to be addressed with humility, confession, repentance, prayer, and planning—even as you celebrate your strengths and build on them (see Nehemiah 1).

Taproot Issue

As a congregation, you have been busy with traditions and preferences. Now is the time to return to the feet of Jesus. Seek to share, serve, and manage well, but first be occupied with returning to the feet of Jesus, lingering in worship, and receiving His empowering grace for a new season of fruitful ministry.

Over the last several years, many of you have been living off your legacy as the big church in town. We would urge you to be aware of engaging in activities of service to the detriment of enjoying true and transforming intimacy with God. John Piper, in his book, *The Supremacy of God in Missions* says, "Missions is not the ultimate goal of the Church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate. Worship is both the fuel and the goal of missions [because] we cannot commend what we do not cherish."¹

Verbatim Responses:

- "There's a lot of pride in our church. Let's humbly love each other and seek the face of God. I believe that our church relies on its own cognitive form of understanding

¹ Adapted from *Let the Nations Be Glad! The Supremacy of God in Missions*, by John Piper, Baker, 1993/2003: 17.

and does not give the time and space for the Holy Spirit to actually move as a real and active member of the Triune God.”

- “That we become [more] centered on Christ and the Holy Spirit.”
- “There’s a lot of verbal speech about God, but decisions seem to be made more cognitively like a business, not like people seeking God’s face ... including the Holy Spirit in everything (sincerely) will bring the change the church hopes for.”
- (Someone who know longer attends) “Help people learn to know and love God and to spread the Gospel and love others.”

Four Branch Root Categories

Many congregants expressed concern that your current issues, if ignored, will significantly hinder the future fruitfulness of the church. One longtime member told us he didn’t think BPC could make one more significant mistake. The best time to address these issues is now. If embraced and addressed, these issues will become redemptive in the life of BPC.

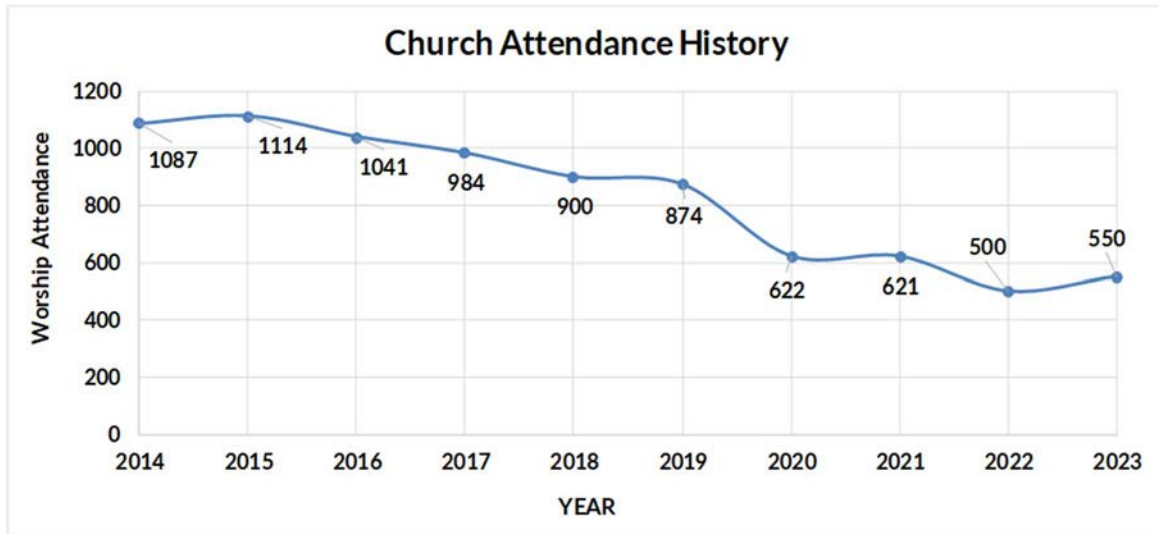
Branch root issues fall in these categories:

1. The Effects of Continuous Change
2. A Craving for Clarity
3. A Concern for Community
4. A Calling to Come Home to the Feet of Jesus

Rationale (The Mirror)

1. The Effects of Continuous Change

BPC has been in a drawn-out 15-year period of seemingly continuous change. There have been difficult (and tragic) transitions, with relational disagreements and the loss of longtime friends, which has resulted in BPC being about half the size of what you were 10-years ago. The data indicates the diminishing attendance will continue unless you make some deliberate changes.

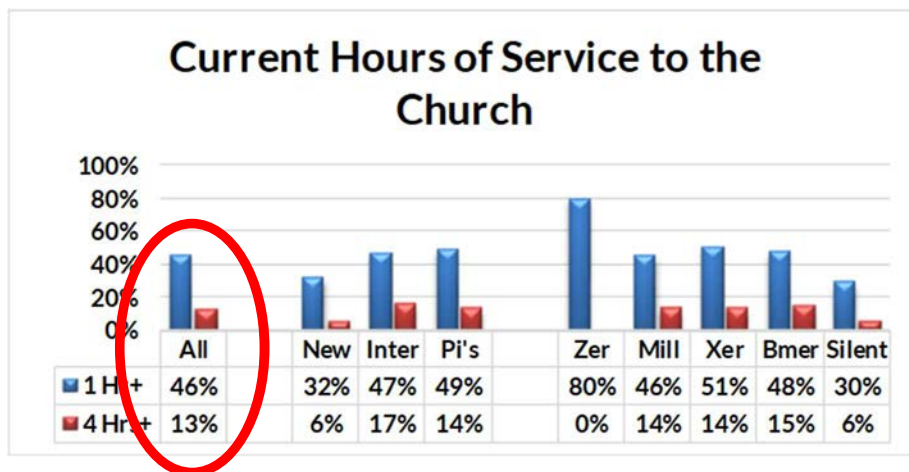


Many congregants seem to be in a fog of disillusionment and grief that will need attention and processing in the coming months. Currently there is a lack of both **vision** and **soul care** at BPC. In our input sessions we heard that congregants want to be pastored and listened to by the leaders.

Verbatim Responses:

- [Pastors] “need to listen before they speak. We need a sense of beauty and awe for what God has done here.”
- “Greater effort to have ministers reach out to the congregation. Better relationships between ministers and congregation.”

There are currently very low rates of member mobilization (46%). A vital church would be 60%+.



There has been a very weak **Pattern of Evangelism** over the past 20 years—even though you know this to be part of the Christian’s calling. Almost all evangelism (26 of 28 survey

respondents) took place during the Pioneer period 20 or more years ago. In the past 5 years the rate of adult evangelism is 1%. A vital church would have a 15-20% rate of evangelism.

	All	New	Inter	Pi's	Zer	Mill	Xer	Bmer	Silent
Number who were not Christians when they came	41	1	2	38	1	5	10	20	5
Still Seeking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number currently attending who came with their parents and have since become Christians	13	0	1	12	1	2	6	4	0
Net conversions from the world	28	1	1	26	0	3	4	16	5
Rate of Evangelism	6%	1%	1%	10%					

These low scores are indications that frustration, sadness, confusion, and grief have disrupted joyful invitations to know, love, and follow Jesus. There have also been disruptions in longtime relationships, the discipleship process, as well as living out BPC's values, vision, and missional engagement.

Verbatim responses:

- “Seems like lately we can't get along.”
- “I love the work being done in the city, but we need to pay attention to and care for our BPC congregants. This last decade has been extremely trying for our church body.”
- **AVOID:**
 - “Constant changes in pastors”
 - “The divisions that have been occurring since Pastor Auburn retired.”
 - “So much changing”

Consider what one author has said about church culture, “Culture—not vision or strategy—is the most powerful factor in any organization. It determines the receptivity of staff and volunteers to new ideas, unleashes or dampens creativity, builds or erodes enthusiasm, and creates a sense of pride or deep discouragement about working or being involved there. Ultimately, the culture of a church shapes individual morale, teamwork, effectiveness, and outcomes.”²

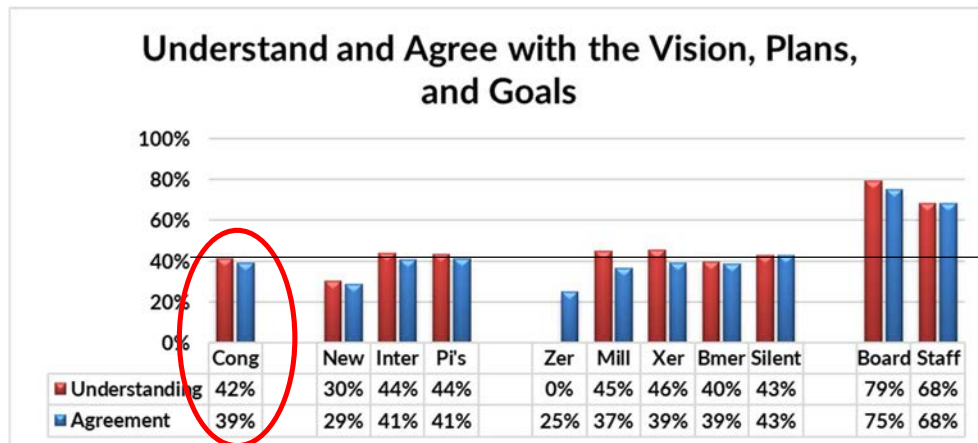
Church culture is strongly influenced by the level of trust toward one another, how people are encouraged and developed, how leaders listen and respond, how conflict is resolved, how change is navigated, how teamwork is cultivated, the way communication is carried out, and the impact that comes from learning to be and to love more like Jesus.

² Samuel R. Chand. *Cracking Your Church's Culture*, Jossey-Bass 2011:34.

The culture of BPC has been fragmented over this extended period of not achieving a clear and compelling vision to focus and unify the congregation (other than planting Bridge City).

2. A Craving for Clarity

Certainly, there is a **lack of a clear and compelling vision** at BPC.



Only 42% of the survey respondents indicated they understand the vision, plans and goals of the church and only 39% are in agreement with the vision, plans, and goals. Notice that the Session and Staff have a very different perspective. This is a clear indication the **congregation is not on the same page as the Session and Staff**. This presents an opportunity over the next several months to reach consensus between the congregation and church leaders on a fresh Holy Spirit inspired vision with accompanying plans and goals/priorities that will unify and mobilize the church into the future.

The data and verbatim responses also suggest that church leadership has promoted the vision of addressing racial inequality and social justice during weekend services. Many of the current attenders are questioning if this is the best venue for this—and many have left BPC over this decision as well. At present, there seems to be a disconnect about this focus between many in the congregation and church leaders, including staff. In the verbatim responses there were 84 negative statements and only about 3 positive ones. Clearly there needs to be thoughtful dialogue to determine when, where, and how to address these social, racial, political, and cultural issues.

AVOID Verbatim Responses:

- “Getting caught up in culture wars and media hot topics” (someone who no longer attends)
- “We have...been beat over the head with this political agenda.”

Clarity is also needed around the perception of leadership, conflict, and communication.

Leadership

The leadership team seems a bit unwieldy with 12 on session (24 survey respondents identified as being members of the Session), 6 board members, 25 ministry staff, and 10 admin staff. The confidence in the current leadership is very low with only 32% of the survey respondents indicating the leaders can lead BPC into the future. The session/board and staff have quite a bit more confidence in themselves (the 6 Gen Zers who took the survey appear to be giving them the benefit of the doubt), which further **indicates a disconnect** between the congregants and the leadership.



The leadership situation HAS to be confusing to the congregants and considering the continuous drop in attendance, many congregants are of the opinion that church leaders are not getting the job done. This perplexing condition has led to conflict and people choosing to leave the church.

Conflict

Over half of current attenders (52%) are of the opinion that the church is currently conflicted.

Describe the current atmosphere of your church.	All	New	Inter	PI's	<58	>57	Board	Staff	1st	2nd
Everyone is getting along	9%	16%	7%	16%	8%	10%	0%	6%	10%	8%
Mostly everyone is getting along	57%	44%	34%	44%	42%	33%	33%	49%	45%	33%
Some distinct undercurrents/conflicts/disagreements	46%	37%	50%	37%	45%	46%	58%	43%	40%	53%
Situation is highly conflicted	7%	3%	8%	3%	4%	10%	8%	3%	5%	6%
Red total	52%	40%	59%	40%	50%	56%	67%	46%	45%	59%

There is an opportunity during this transition season to streamline the various leadership teams to become focused, effective, accountable, and most importantly, responsive to congregational input.

Note, on the chart below, that only 18% have indicated that the church and the leaders are good at conflict resolution. This score is exceedingly low. Any score under 70% is cause for concern.

AVOID Verbatim Response: “Avoidance of conflict resolution, inability for leadership to support each other”



The cause of conflicts falls into two categories: poor communication and between specific people or groups of people.



Biblical conflict resolution is critically important for BPC to get back on track and is ultimately a leadership issue. Church expectations in the area of conflict resolution are set by your church leaders. If church leaders do not model good biblical conflict resolution

skills creating an expectation that issues will be addressed in reasonable time frames and with fairness, the rest of the congregation is not likely to rise above the level of resolution set by church leaders. If church leaders do not resolve issues, the church will have low expectations in the area and issues will then tend to smolder for a season and then burst into flames causing bitterness that can “defile many” as Hebrews 12:15 states, which will hinder progress in the church’s mission and vision. Also, relational discord can permeate church gatherings causing the church to become generally unattractive to new people.

Communication

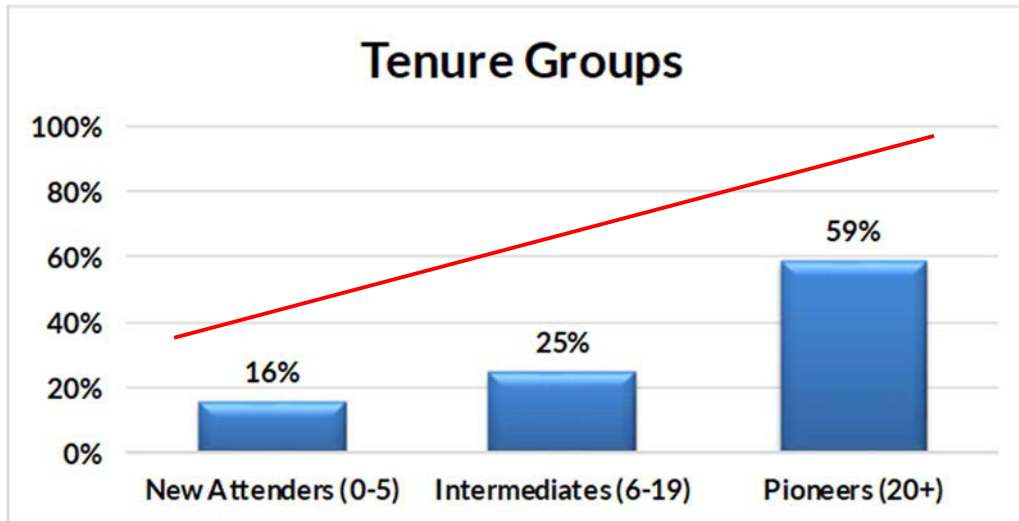
Poor communication is an issue at BPC. In the chart on the previous page we see that 43% of the survey respondents identify poor communication as a leading source of conflict. Vital churches have a clear set of ministry goals and objectives that have been well communicated and affirmed by the congregation. There is also the need for consistent communication from the leaders as well as regularly scheduled town hall gatherings.

The church leaders may be trying to lead the congregation toward the goals, but the congregation does not appear to be following, or at least they are not enthusiastic about following. For BPC to truly make progress toward recovery from its long pattern of disjointedness and decline it is essential for the church to unite behind a clear and compelling vision with accompanying plans and goals. The congregation needs to have input and be heard to be onboard.

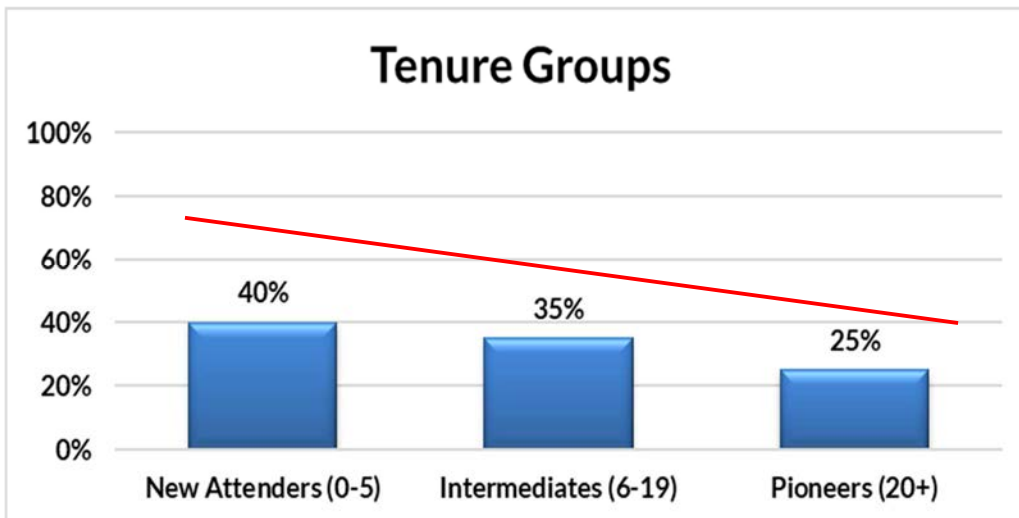
3. A Concern for Community

BPC has a small front door and a big back door.

An analysis of the three Tenure Groups reveals that BPC has been extremely weak in attracting and assimilating new people with only 16% New Attenders in the last five years. (40% New Attenders are needed to grow, 30-39% are needed to maintain.) BPC has been in a pattern of decline over the past eight years. You may see your church as a friendly church, yet you do not appear to be a welcoming church.



Notice the Tenure Group Analysis in a vital church where the New Attenders are the largest group, and the Pioneer Group are the smallest group.



- 16% New Attenders and 25% Intermediates are both seriously low. There seems to have been a failure to attract and keep people for the better part of 20 years.
- 59% Pioneers is seriously high and the result of not attracting and keeping new people.

The Pioneers seem to be an intact group of those who are now mostly Boomers or Silents and who share a common history and have grown old together. The Pioneer Group likely depended on Pastor Auburn’s gifting to attract and keep New Attenders. Additionally, it is likely that the Pioneer Group’s fellowship circles are mostly closed, or they are likely very difficult to penetrate—except for family.

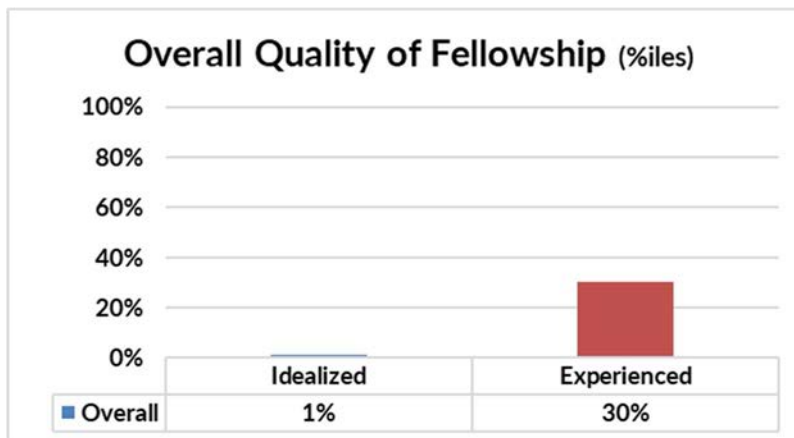
Interrelatedness measures relatives attending the church who live in different households. Interrelatedness is a factor that affects how people experience fellowship in

the church. BPC has a 31% rate of interrelatedness and when interrelatedness is 20% or more, a church's ability to effectively include new people tends to be compromised because at the conclusion of a service, related people tend to bunch-up instead of greeting and sponsoring New Attenders into the life of the church.

BPC is Aging Out. In the U.S. about 4,000 churches a year close because of a condition called "Aging Out." Churches are considered to be on their way to aging out when the average age of adults passes 55 years of age. The 436-survey respondent's average age is 61. Pioneers average 66 years. Aging out is a VERY serious threat. Will the Pioneers be willing to make the necessary changes to include younger people?

Quality of Fellowship scores measure how biblical *koinonia* is pursued and practiced at BPC. There are two parts to the Quality of Fellowship equation. How much do people desire or idealize it, and how much people are experiencing it?

Here is the overall data for BPC in both categories:



**40 to 60%ile is the "normal" range for both scores.

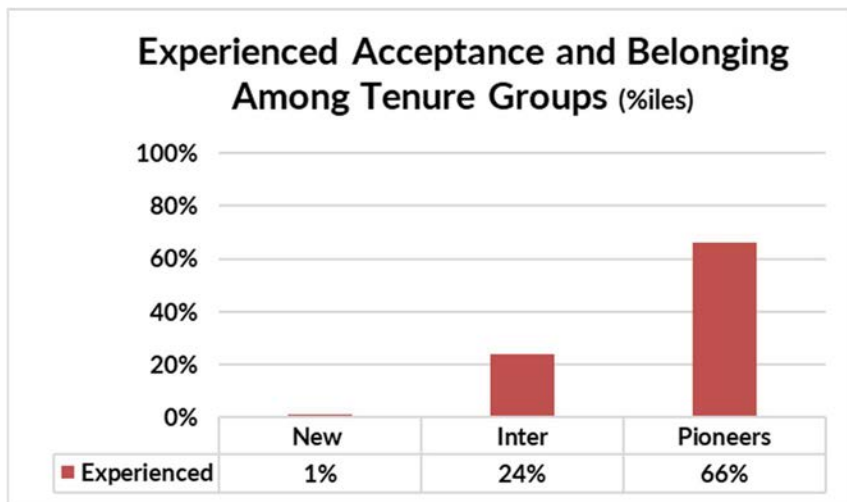
What this chart shows is that achieving a high quality of fellowship is not important to those who attend BPC when compared to other churches of similar size (400+ in average worship attendance in the VitalChurch database), it is less important to those who attend your church than to similar sized churches.

AVOID Verbatim Responses:

- "I don't want a church that has limited opportunities to develop relationships."
- "A closed, unwelcome environment"
- "Groups that are too "cliquish."
- "This place is very lonely, and relationships are superficial. Trust is not existent which is why I left ministries. Small groups were more about staff conflict than

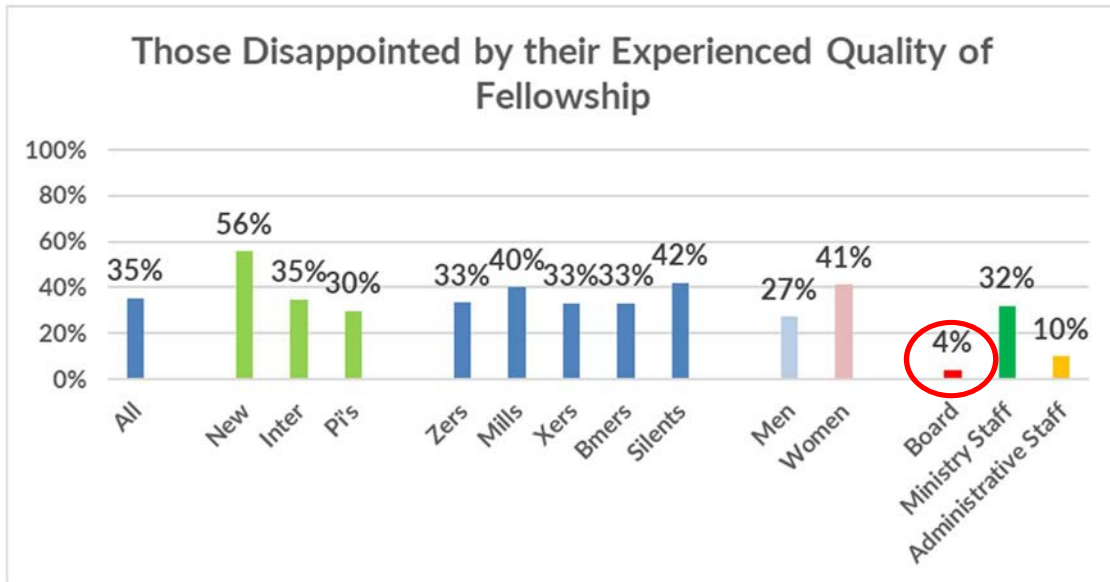
God's Truth. Who are these controlling members that have such influence? Why do they?"

Acceptance and Belonging is an aspect of Quality of Fellowship and research has shown that 90% of those looking for a new church home are seeking a church that will offer the level of acceptance and belonging that they desire, including larger churches. It is this factor that often defines a church that is reaching people for Christ as well as attracting and keeping new church members. The failure of people to find acceptance and belonging in the church is the number one reason why people drop out of a church.



Compared to other similar sized churches in the VitalChurch database, the Pioneers are the only tenure group experiencing above average quality of fellowship (66%ile), which is in the “high normal” range (50%ile is average). The Intermediates at 24%ile are barely in the “low normal” range and New Attenders at 1%ile do not feel like they belong or are accepted as part of BPC.

On the next chart, the scores show the percentage of people in each group who rated the quality of fellowship that they are experiencing at BPC as lower than what they said they wanted. We see that, overall, 35% of the survey respondents are currently disappointed with their quality of fellowship and over half of the New Attenders (56%) are as well. Even the Ministry Staff is struggling with Acceptance and Belonging (32%).



Many would like BPC to intentionally focus on providing higher quality of fellowship opportunities for those who attend. A final point is to notice that Session/Board members as a group are not in the disappointed group, which strongly suggests a disconnect between many church leaders and the congregation.

Here is what you told us you DO value.

What do you value most?	All	New	Inter	Pi's	Gen Z	Mills	Gen X	Bmrs	Silnts
Being spiritually fed	66%	69%	60%	67%	67%	43%	56%	72%	80%
Finding a sense of family/fellowship	22%	19%	24%	22%	17%	33%	27%	19%	14%
Finding a place of service	6%	9%	8%	4%	0%	17%	11%	1%	3%
Having my family's needs met	7%	4%	8%	7%	17%	7%	6%	8%	3%

50%+

30-50%

By a three to one margin, “finding a sense of family/fellowship” lost out to “being spiritually fed.” Finding *koinonia* type relationships has not been a strong focus at BPC for a very long time. There are two things to notice in the chart above:

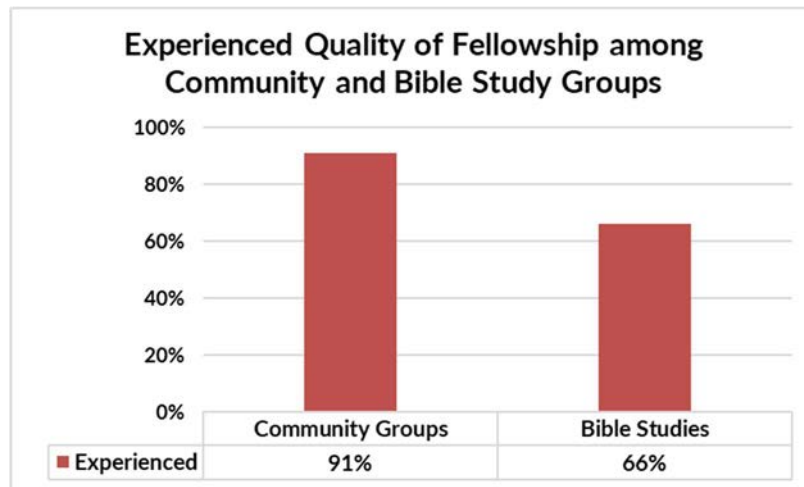
- The percentages in the rows of “Being spiritually fed” and “Finding a sense of family/fellowship” should be close to being equal in a church if Acts 2:42-47 is seen as a relational objective.
- The Millennials are the only generational group that currently are desirous of both Bible teaching as well as finding *koinonia*.

Overall, it is clear that, as a congregation, BPC is not actively and intentionally making room for new people.

A likely working assumption is that the average member/attender at BPC views welcoming and assimilating new people into the life of the church as the staff’s responsibility. This reflects a pattern that VitalChurch has seen in other affluent communities. Churches in affluent communities tend to staff people to do the work of ministry instead of “*equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ*” (Eph 4:12). For a large church to keep growing (i.e., realize their potential) ministry has to be increasingly mediated by volunteers. There is a need to create multiple systems that are suitable for volunteers, with lay levels of skill but higher relationship factors, to do ministry that will bring people along. Basically, this means that committed members and attenders need to be active and intentional about their fellowship groups, being open and inclusive, and that there are systems in place to multiply ministry and care.

Some Good News

In larger churches, the most common place where New Attenders get to know church people and begin to feel part of the church family is in small groups. Currently, participation in Community Groups and Bible Studies at BPC is making a huge difference in the degree of acceptance and belonging that participants experience as seen in the chart below.



Those who are participating in Community Groups report experiencing a “high” level (91%ile) of quality of fellowship and Bible Studies a “high normal” level.

4. A Calling to Come Home to the Feet of Jesus

The invitation that is being presented to you in this report is to return to the feet of Jesus, to be with Jesus, your first love, and the reminder that “*only one thing is necessary*” (v. 42).

To make the most of this transition season, return to a primary focus on being WITH Christ and growing IN Christ. Once again make Jesus Christ your greatest hope and boast, your deepest longing and delight, and your most passionate song and message. As you do

this you will see evangelism rekindled—and as you are willing to open up your fellowship circles, you will see new people added and BPC will begin to grow again.

Consider the words of A.W. Tozer...

“Every age has its own characteristics. Right now, we are in an age of religious complexity. The simplicity, which is in Christ is rarely found among us. In its stead are programs, methods, organizations, and a world of nervous activities, which occupy time and attention but can never satisfy the longing of the heart. The shallowness of our inner experience, the hollowness of our worship, and that servile imitation of the world which marks our promotional methods all testify that we in this day, know God only imperfectly, and the peace of God scarcely at all. If we would find God amid all the religious externals, we must first determine to find Him, and then proceed in the way of simplicity.”³

Recommendations (The Map)

Recommendation #1: Initiate a season of corporate prayer, worship, and repentance, which will culminate with a time of Sacred Assembly⁴, which is an all-church service, which can be viewed as an opportunity to consecrate yourselves afresh to God and dedicate yourselves to allow Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit to do a refreshing work in your lives and in the life of this church. Charles Spurgeon once said, “I have learned to kiss the wave that throws me against the Rock of Ages.” A Sacred Assembly Service is where you gather to specifically and formally repent of your missteps and sin, acknowledge and confess the failures of the church, and recommit to a new season of delighting in God. This leads to authentically loving one another, embracing newcomers, committing to peacemaking (instead of peacekeeping), and reaching out to the lost, poor, sick, and brokenhearted.

³ *The Pursuit of God*, Paperback 6733rd edition 2009: 17-18.

⁴ Depending on your preferred Bible translation this is sometimes referred to as a Solemn Assembly. In times of severe struggle and pain a church may have no recourse but to cry out to God in humility and repentance. Those times of corporate repentance and confession are known as a Sacred Assembly. The term and concept of Sacred, or Solemn, Assembly is used several times in Scripture. In Leviticus 23, each feast of Israel was to be a sacred assembly (23:2); each Sabbath was to be a sacred assembly (23:3). (Note also 23:7, 8, 21, 24, 35.) The concept is further developed by the Old Testament prophet Joel and from the book of Nehemiah. Joel describes a situation where the nation finds itself at odds with God because of their sin. Nehemiah 9:3-38 is an example of a sacred assembly. Though the term is not used, the concepts are clearly articulated. In the NT, see 1 Corinthians 7 and Revelation 2-3 for further insights into this concept. And at some level, all church services are to be considered a sacred assembly where sin is confessed, and the gospel is celebrated. Contact *VitalChurch Ministry* for more resources if necessary.

VitalChurch would adamantly assert that every church (and every person) has a collection of sins and sinful patterns that require an ongoing lifestyle of repentance.⁵ We do not believe that you should find a call to repentance demoralizing, we would like you to find it liberating and transforming. We never outgrow our need for repentance or the life generating gospel.

The preparation for the Sacred Assembly should go well beyond regularly scheduled prayer meetings and involve prayer in people’s homes, individual and all-church fasting, repentance, and concerts of prayer with extended worship.

- 1) Humble yourselves before Christ. Surrender completely to Christ and receive His grace.
- 2) Change business as usual. Let go of personal preferences and traditions. Our preferences (particularly regarding music and preaching styles) are not what it means to worship Jesus.

In preparation for a Sacred Assembly, each attendee at BPC must willingly own his, or her, part of the sin that has created barriers between you and those whom God wants you to reach—and sponsor into your church family. Start today by committing to a passionate pursuit of the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40) that will flow into Great Commission endeavors (Matt. 28:19-20).

Recommendation #2: Appoint a “Transition Team” made up of 10-12 godly men and women who possess a heart and desire for BPC to be refreshed and to engage in an all-church “Focusing the Church” process to reaffirm values, mission, and vision to fulfill your missionary calling to Bay Village and the region beyond. We would recommend that at least half the Transition Team be 45-years or younger.

Verbatim Responses:

- (By someone who no longer attends): “Renewed excitement for the church’s mission & vision. I think people are holding their breath waiting [for] ‘the next shoe to fall.’ They don’t want to participate until they know BPC is secure and has restored its identity.”
- “A clear vision that everyone in the congregation can articulate; agreement on the tenants/essentials of the historic Christian faith among members and leadership;”

BPC has taken on some of the traits of an Institutionalized Church, which occurs when a church moves away from an outward focus (of enthusiastic mission and evangelism) to an

⁵ As Marin Luther stated in his 95-Theses.

inward focus (taking care of itself). When a church becomes institutionalized, maintaining the status quo becomes a priority and resistance to change can become normal.

Transition Team members should possess administrative capacities and leadership potential to plan and implement the Focusing the Church process. This group can be disbanded when the Focusing Process has been completed. The Transition Team will plan and implement the three All-Church Summits (which will take a great deal of pressure off the Ministry and Administrative Staff). Take the next several months with as many people from BPC who are willing and work through the following focusing questions:

- 1) Who has God shaped us to be?
- 2) Why do we exist as a church?
- 3) Where is God leading us in the future?
- 4) Whom has God called us to reach?
- 5) Which ministry model best fits with our vision AND facilitates our vision?
- 6) How will we accomplish our vision?
- 7) What is our plan for ministry for the next 2-4 years?

Recommendation #3: Overhaul your governance structure and update your current Constitution/Bylaws.

Read *Leading Leaders* by Aubrey Malphurs⁶ and adopt and implement Policy Governance as the governance model of the future.

Train the Session to be the servant-leaders required in Scripture. Church polity, leadership qualifications, tenure, nomination process, means of congregational input, and a detailed grievance procedure should all be recast and clarified.

Organize your ministries by ministry teams that are empowered to make most of the decisions related to the implementation of their respective ministries within general policies made by the Session and carried out by the Teaching Elder and his staff.

Delegate the management of all ministries to the Teaching Elder who is accountable to the Session, which oversees general church policy, doctrine, and biblical discipline.

Together with the Teaching Elder, the Session forms a plurality of servant-leaders sharing as overseers of the congregation. The Session is charged with the responsibility to defend correct doctrine and refute those who contradict it; however, special honor is given to those who excel in preaching and teaching (see 1 Tim 5:17-19).

⁶ *VitalChurch* and the EPC encourage a *policy governance* model, which Aubrey Malphurs has adapted for the Church.

Re-evaluate whether or not the Board should be absorbed into the Session as well as keeping the Session to no more than 12 Elders at this time. The Session should be large and diverse enough to ensure strong servant leadership, wisdom, and accountability, yet small enough to not get bogged down in over analyzing options and opportunities.

Recommendation #4: Rebuild staff culture into a cohesive, focused, and organized movement that works together towards God’s clearly stated objective by updating and developing clear role descriptions with specific ministry and personal objectives (MOs and POs) for all staff, including the Teaching Elder.

Here’s how the survey respondents are evaluating the staff:

Staff Mentoring	Congregation	Board	Staff
Excellent	16%	14%	17%
Good	45%	52%	57%
Hit and Miss	29%	24%	17%
Tendency to do their area of ministry on their own	10%	10%	9%
Red Total	39%	33%	26%
Don't know	41%	13%	8%

A total of 39% of the survey respondents indicated that Staff Mentoring (or Equipping) is either Hit and Miss (29%) or have a tendency to do ministry on their own (10%). Even 26% of the Staff feels similarly.

Therefore, all staff members (ministry and admin) need to make the transition from *minister* (i.e., doing ministry) to *equippers* and *team builders* (i.e., effecting high quality ministry through the development of multiple teams of lay volunteers).

Evaluate all staff, including the Teaching Elder, on their skill in developing others for ministry and empowering them to do it. Use Ephesians 4:12 as a basis and a template: “*for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.*” All staff must consistently pursue and develop their capacity to Recruit, Train, Deploy, Monitor, and Nurture (RTDMN) congregants “*for the work of service.*”

Update job descriptions as needed and conduct developmental performance reviews twice a year for the first year (and for new hires) moving to yearly thereafter.

Direct reports should conduct performance reviews based on previously determined and agreed upon ministry objectives (MOs) and personal objectives (POs).

The elders should conduct a yearly performance review on the Teaching Elder.⁷

With the current lack of a clear and compelling vision it seems likely that there are multiple ministry silos—each going in their own direction with no clear understanding of how one ministry fits with another. The lack of clarity in direction has given rise to significant levels of frustration on the Staff. Work with Pastor Rick to develop clarity, focus, and unity by working toward a clearly defined mission and strategy, which is critical to the vitality of this congregation.

As a staff, read and engage with, *Cracking Your Church's Culture* by Samuel R. Chand, which describes five identifiable categories of church culture (inspiring-accepting-stagnant-discouraging-toxic), with diagnostic descriptions and a separate online assessment tool. Readers will be able to identify strengths and desires for their church's culture, and then apply practical strategies to improve their church's culture. This book may also be very helpful for the Session to read as well—and then schedule times to meet with the Staff to build consensus.

Recommendation #5: Learn to practice biblical conflict resolution and pursue relational reconciliation as needed.

Learn to practice biblical conflict resolution skills, starting today. Church conflict grows over time to the extent that confession and repentance is ignored. Only 18% of the survey respondents think that BPC and your leaders are good at conflict resolution. (Any score under 70% is cause for concern.)

⁷ Practice on Pastor Rick and let him coach you in this essential component of vital governance.



Inevitable conflict is an instrument God uses to develop qualities in our lives that aren't developed any other way. When faced with conflicts we must ask, "What is God trying to tell me?" In Acts 6:1-7 conflict was used by God to release a greater number of leaders in the fledgling church and bring to light a grievous sin (in their case, it was racism). Conflict becomes redemptive when it highlights these areas of needed growth and clarifies God's sanctifying plan for our lives.

Begin to practice straightforward biblical conflict resolution steps like:

- 1) Focus your efforts on identifying and owning the *log/s* in your own eye before you attempt to remove the *speck* in another's (Matt 7:5).
- 2) Commit to making things right when you've been offended by someone or offended someone—proactively seek to be reconciled (Matt 5:23-24).
- 3) Learn how to *speak the truth in love* to one another (Eph 4:15).
- 4) Restore your brother or sister with *gentleness* (Gal 6:2).

Verbatim Response's

- "I'd like to see us have a better reputation in the community to repair some of the damage done in recent history..."
- "Unity and conflict resolution"

Often it is helpful to grapple with the deeper issues at work underneath our conflicts (see Deuteronomy 5:9). When a system (either familial or organizational) is confused, deceptive, and/or unable to deal with situations in a straightforward manner, problems are allowed to continue to the point of crisis.⁸ The crisis can begin as a low-grade fever but

⁸ *The Addictive Organization*, Anne Wilson Schaefer, HarperOne: 1990.

if not treated it will eventually engulf the whole body. Keep in mind that church conflicts can also exacerbate our individual family of origin issues.

Some excellent resources include:

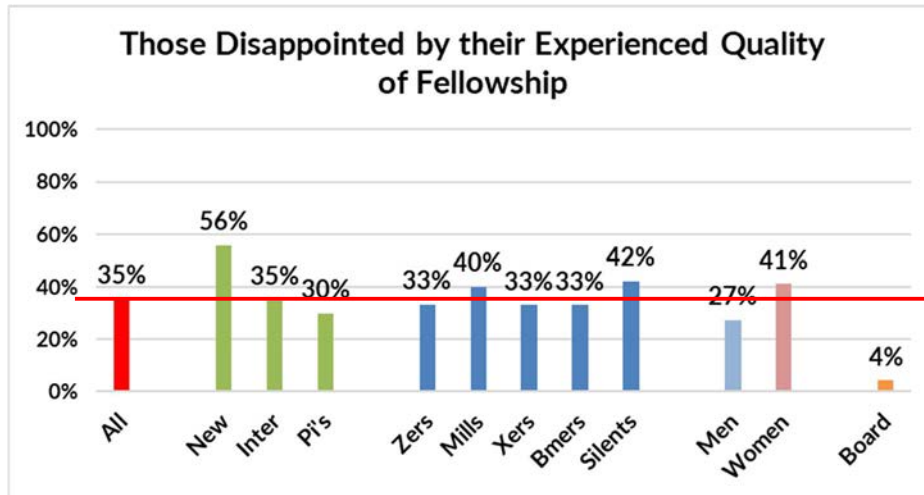
- *Making Peace: A Guide to Overcoming Church Conflict* by Jim van Yperen.
- *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to Be Spiritually Mature, While Remaining Emotionally Immature* by Peter Scazzero
- *Relationships-A Mess Worth Making* by Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp.
- *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High* by Joseph Grenny, Kerry Patterson, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler, and Emily Gregory.
- Church leaders should read, *Creating a Healthier Church: Family Systems Theory, Leadership and Congregational Life (Creative Pastoral Care and Counseling Series)* by Ron Johnson.

Recommendation #6: Re-establish biblical community by rethinking your Community Group and Bible Study ministries.

Usually, one of the biggest factors in effectively including/assimilating of newcomers is making room for them to participate in Community Groups and/or Bible Studies. Currently, only 27% of New Attenders participate in a Community Group and 30% participate in a Bible Study.

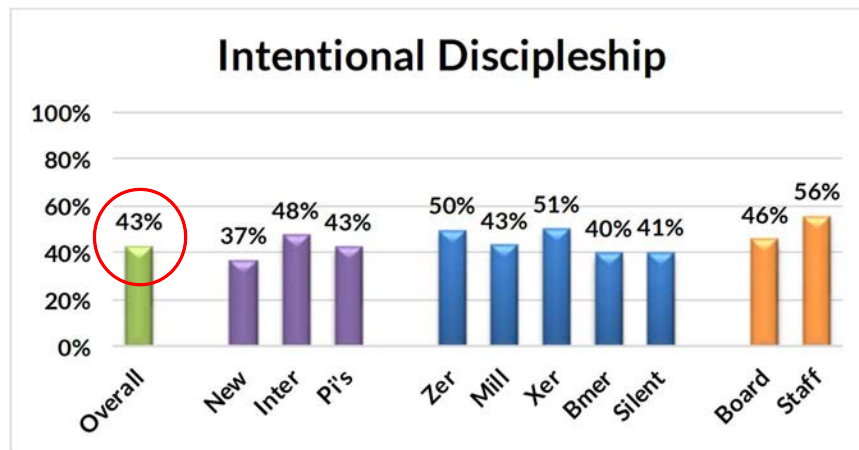
% of New Attenders participating in Community Groups	27%
% of New Attenders participating in Bible Studies	30%

Overall, more than a third (35%) of survey participants reported disappointment in the quality of fellowship they have experienced at BPC, including more than half (56%) of New Attenders. More than a third of Intermediates (35%) are in the disappointed group, as are 30% of Pioneers. The conclusion is that many, even long-termers, would like to see a more consistent focus on providing *koinonia* across all generations. The church would be much more likely to keep new people and grow again if there was a refreshed focus on multiplying Community Groups as well as Bible Studies.



Discipleship in the Church

At BPC, only 43% of the survey respondents say they are aware of an intentional discipleship process. Many evangelical churches seem to assume that attending church alone is adequate to support spiritual growth. Even those raised in the church benefit from a ministry of intentional discipleship or spiritual formation. Forty-three percent is low and is a weakness.



AVOID Verbatim Response: “Attractional programs that lack long term discipleship making.”

Reengage and develop your small group ministry that disciples and builds authentic community at BPC. In the book of Acts, we see that the church grew both in large groups and in small groups (Acts 2:41-45). Larry Crabb states, “A real church aims toward

spiritual community where souls connect, where shame weakens, where sin surfaces, where failure meets grace, where irritations soften, where holy desire grows.”⁹

Make disciple making a priority over the next few years by considering the following resources:

- *Gospel-Centered Discipleship* by Jonathan K. Dodson
- *Transformational Groups: Creating a New Scorecard for Groups* by Ed Stetzer and Eric Geiger.
- Resources developed by John Mark Comer at practicingtheway.org.
- *Real-Life Discipleship: Building Churches That Make Disciples* by Jim Putman.

Recommendation #7: Clearly define the relationship with Bridge City. There needs to be a clear timeline of autonomy established. Once the congregation and leaders are established, it is important to develop a clear set of benchmarks along the road to full autonomy. When the leaders of both churches collaborate and clearly communicate these benchmarks and work towards them it will build cohesion of mission along with clear and measurable goals—for both congregations. Partnership for further collaboration in gospel projects can then be considered.

Recommendation #8: Be proactive in continuing to pursue BPC’s relationship with the Presbytery of the Alleghenies. It was much appreciated by the Presbytery that several of the elders and staff attended the General Assembly. Moving forward, it will be important to participate as much as possible in all Presbytery meetings and engage the Presbytery leaders. There is an enormous amount of support within EPC leadership, through the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). Dean Weaver, the Stated Clerk, has been at BPC several times. Dean’s COO, Zenaida Bermudez, is also very familiar with BPC. Finally, Rosemary Lukens, the Chairperson of the National Leadership Team (and a VitalChurch volunteer), has also stated that she will be available as BPC moves through this transition season.

Recommendation #9: Keep the Intentional Interim Teaching Elder focused on preaching, training, leadership, and overseeing the recommendations in this report.

⁹ Larry Crabb. *Real Church*, Thomas Nelson 2009:152.

Do not expect your Intentional Interim Teaching Elder to carry out all the functions of a normal teaching elder. Instead have him work on executing the recommendations of this report which will include, but not be limited to:

1. Resolving any unresolved relational conflicts.
2. Updating and developing systems, policies, and procedures.
3. Making polity and governance changes with the input from the Presbytery, Session, Board, Staff, Transition Team, Ministry Leaders, and the congregation (through a study of the Scriptures).
4. Equipping lay leaders for the work of ministry (Eph 4:12).
5. Preparing sermons and sermon series that explore Scripture in ways that speak directly to the current revealed, Holy Spirit breathed needs of BPC and the un-churched population of the surrounding region.

The result will be the BPC session, board, staff, ministry leaders, members, and attendees be released to minister to one another in ways the Intentional Interim Teaching Elder cannot. Then at the appropriate time, the Intentional Interim Teaching Elder will work with the Session to develop and coach a Search Team to identify the next permanent Teaching Elder of BPC.

Conclusion:

The most direct pathway to retrieving Mary's heart is a wholehearted re-connection and re-commitment to the GOSPEL.

The word *gospel* means *good news* and is not simply the entry point into the Christian life, but it is also the foundation and power that shapes all we do as followers of Jesus Christ, both in our daily lives and in our experience as a community of Christ-followers.

The Good News of Jesus Christ is not only the *fire* that ignites the Christian life, but also the *fuel* that keeps Christians going and growing each day.

The gospel is the gloriously great announcement of what God has done through the birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ to satisfy (or settle) the opposition against sin which God's holy nature requires and to secure unrestricted access to God that includes the free gift of eternal life, a free and perfect righteousness for all who trust in Christ alone for salvation, the empowering gift of the Holy Spirit, and a coming new creation free from decay, disasters, disease, evil, sin, and death.

Therefore, the gospel is central because it is not what God *requires* it is what God *provides*. The gospel is not an *imperative*, demanding things we must *do*. The gospel is an *indicative*, declaring what God has *done*. The gospel is not about *human activity*; it's about *divine achievement*.

As a congregation in the days ahead, focus on making the gospel beautiful. All church-wide renewal begins with individual renewal and all individual renewal begins with each of us owning our own issues. I'll close with this verse and then quickly provide some practical next steps...

"Therefore, repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." --Acts 3:19

First Steps:

1. Acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Senior Pastor and Chief Shepherd of BPC and ask Him to lead, guide, protect, and unleash His presence afresh on you and on Bay Village and the surrounding region.
2. Pray, pray, pray, and pray some more.
3. Continue to learn how to disagree agreeably. Humble, prayerful, civil, and convictional dialogue is the way forward.
4. Celebrate the strengths that need to be reinforced and built upon.
5. Repent of your lack of welcoming and enfolding new people into the life of the church, your lack of a gospel community, and your lack of evangelism.
6. Be openhanded with your personal preferences as you consider what God has for the future of BPC.
7. Dialogue with one another regarding this report.
8. Choose to accept the recommendations, and with Pastor Rick's help, begin to prioritize and implement the recommendations.
9. The wisest decisions concerning your future will include respect for and preservation of the strength of your heritage rooted in the EPC and the authority of the Scriptures.

One Page Overview

Taproot Issue, Branch Root Categories, and Recommendations

Taproot Issue: As a congregation, you have been busy with traditions and preferences. Now is the time to return to the feet of Jesus. Seek to share, serve, and manage well, but first be occupied with returning to the feet of Jesus, lingering in worship, and receiving His empowering grace for a new season of fruitful ministry.

Rationale (The Mirror): Four Branch Root Categories

1. The Effects of Continuous Change
2. A Craving for Clarity
3. A Concern for Community
4. A Calling to Come Home to the Feet of Jesus

Nine Recommendations (The Map)

Recommendation #1: Initiate a season of corporate prayer, worship, and repentance, which will culminate with a time of Sacred Assembly.

Recommendation #2: Appoint a “Transition Team” made up of 10-12 godly men and women who possess a heart and desire for BPC to be refreshed and to engage in an all-church “Focusing the Church” process to reaffirm values, mission, and vision to fulfill your missionary calling to Bay Village and beyond.

Recommendation #3: Overhaul your governance structure and update your current Constitution/Bylaws.

Recommendation #4: Rebuild staff culture into a cohesive, focused, and organized movement that works together towards God’s clearly stated objective by updating and developing clear role descriptions with specific ministry and personal for all staff, including the Teaching Elder.

Recommendation #5: Learn to practice biblical conflict resolution starting today and pursue relational reconciliation as needed.

Recommendation #6: Re-establish biblical community by rethinking your Community Group and Bible Study ministries.

Recommendation #7: Clearly define the relationship with Bridge City.

Recommendation #8: Be proactive in continuing to pursue BPC’s relationship with the Presbytery of the Alleghenies.

Recommendation #9: Keep the Intentional Transitional Teaching Elder focused on preaching, training, leadership, and overseeing the recommendations in this report.