

Summary of discussion group and survey feedback
Discussions and Survey held October to December, 2019
Compiled by John Palmer, January 2020

Question 1: How and Why do you participate in the faith community?

How: We did connect with in the order of 120 people from the congregations. The vast majority of those that participated in the exercise are very or have been very involved in the life of the 2 congregations. (Question: how do we connect the remaining 900 or so members and adherents?)

Why: There are several common themes here and perhaps those could be used to build a common set of core values, our "Brand".

- open, inclusive, non-judgemental
- affirming
- honour our history with the (Deer Park, St.Andrew's, United) church
- social justice/helping others
- pastoral care and comfort
- music
- community, active groups,
- good ministry staff

Question 2: Experience of the Relationship between the 2 Congregations

Provides examples of what is working and some of the current challenges

- tentative at the beginning but improving/getting stronger (varying degrees of sharing/integration) - getting to know each other
- BUT - still lots of areas/examples of being separate and/or not connecting
- choir held up as success (but not aware of initial headship tension)
- appreciation of/participation in groups like the Women of Spirit, SAGES and men's groups
- examples of working together
- excellent ministers (ministry staff) working together
- more opportunities
- new comers - some see us as one congregation but others confused
- commitment to making it work

Question 3: How do you see growth?

Go forward together BUT several concerns to be addressed

- moving forward together - differing degrees of what that might look like - new name etc?
- reduction in duplication (consolidation) of similar and/or better coordination of programs/groups/events - single calendar
- need to grow (1) youth, (2) reaching more into the community, (3) young families, (4) 40 to 50 year olds.

- social media improvement - joint
- social enterprise - i.e. Seniors Facility on site
- provide transportation to Deer Park
- concern about those that don't make it to Deer Park and/or participate outside of Sunday AM
- concern about ensuring maintaining St. Andrew's Regional ministries
- concerns about space/location - lack of space at Deer Park, distance to Deer Park, focus on South (East), need to reach out to boarder community

Question 4: Next Steps

Develop a common vision

- work together
- take the time to do it right - be realistic
- set priorities/goals etc.
- many of the same concerns as Question 3 including appropriate space and staffing levels

Question 5: Other Comments (Monkey Survey only)

- keep up the good work
- value our church community
- open Hearts & minds
- Still challenges
- avoid going back to the old way of being church