

UUBN Congregational Self-Assessment

Data gathered February 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Committee on Ministry followed the “Comprehensive Congregational Self-Assessment Process” format developed by John Buehrens and Lawrence Palmieri Peers and provided by the UUA¹ to create this survey and report. We also added questions of particular interest to various committees in the church. Forty-six people responded to the survey, providing a sense of the congregation’s perceptions of our strengths, potential strengths and challenges. Our perceived strengths include Lifespan Religious Growth, Worship, Stewardship, Facilities, Awareness of Opportunities to Participate, Diversity and friendliness toward the LGBTQ community. Potential strengths include Sense of Direction, Leadership Support and Training, Clarity of Expectations, Inclusiveness, and Community Involvement as a church. Finally, our perceived challenges are Numerical Growth, Young Adult Ministry and Involvement, and Levels of Newcomers. A blank planning tool is included at the end for the Board’s use. If the self-assessment is repeated, we recommend more emphasis on getting a more representative range of age groups to complete it.

SECTION 1: CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

Current Membership

1. Total number of current voting adult members = 215
2. Total number of children (under 12 years old) = 73
3. Total number of youth (ages 12 to 18 years old) = 38
4. Total current members and youth of our congregation (add #1-4) = 326

Age Grouping of Children and Youth

Category	Numbers in each category
Nursery:	5
Pre-school:	13
Kindergarten - 1st Grade:	16
2nd - 3rd Grades:	22
4th - 5th Grades:	17
Middle School (6th - 8th Grades):	20
High School:	18

¹ Available at www.uua.org/documents/ftp/congselfassessment.pdf

Visitors and New Members

Do you have a visitor's book or way of recording your visitors' names and addresses? Yes

If so, how many local visitors signed your visitors' book last year? 50

Do you contact visitors who have signed your book? Yes. They receive a personal email from someone on the Membership Committee. Additionally, a new process of also sending a form letter from the office is just beginning.

How many new members joined last year? 9

Programs and Participation

Number of worship services your congregation has each month: 4 or 5 (1 per Sunday)

Average attendance at Sunday worship services:
119 (average for 2012, including summer months)
138 (average for January & February 2015)

SECTION 2: CONGREGATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS

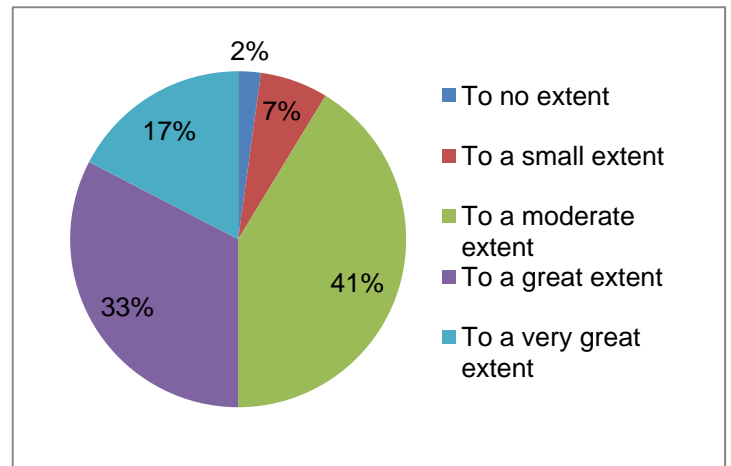
The data in this section was gathered via an online survey of the congregation which was open for responses January 28 -March 6, 2015.

Who Responded to the Survey

We received 46 responses to the survey.

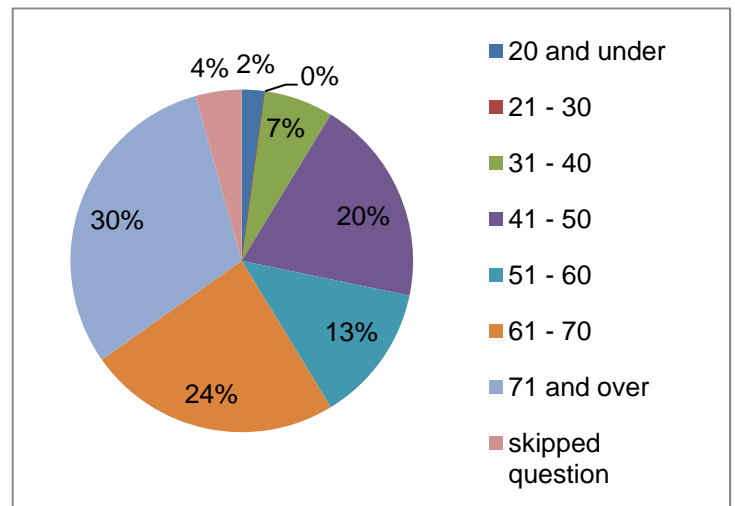
Q5. How involved are you in church?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
To no extent	2%	1
To a small extent	7%	3
To a moderate extent	41%	19
To a great extent	33%	15
To a very great extent	17%	8
skipped question	0%	0



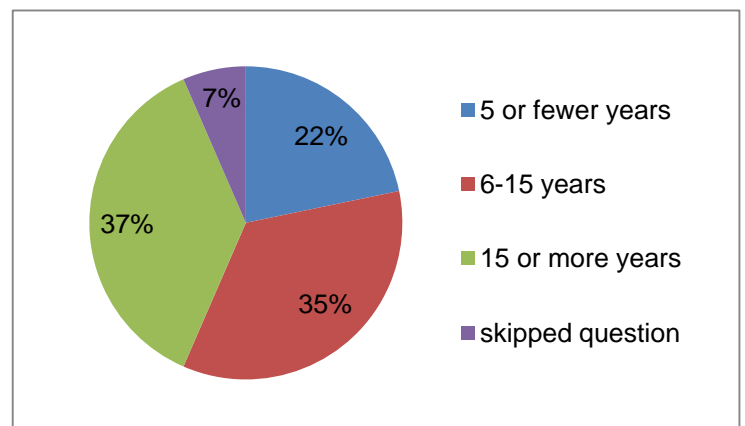
Q51. Please select your age.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
20 and under	2%	1
21 - 30	0%	0
31 - 40	7%	3
41 - 50	20%	9
51 - 60	13%	6
61 - 70	24%	11
71 and over	30%	14
skipped question	4%	2



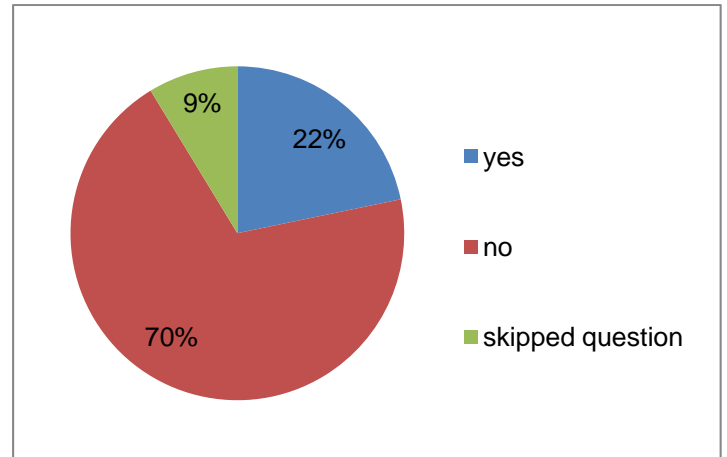
Q52. How long have you been participating in the church?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
5 or fewer years	22%	10
6-15 years	35%	16
15 or more years	37%	17
skipped question	7%	3



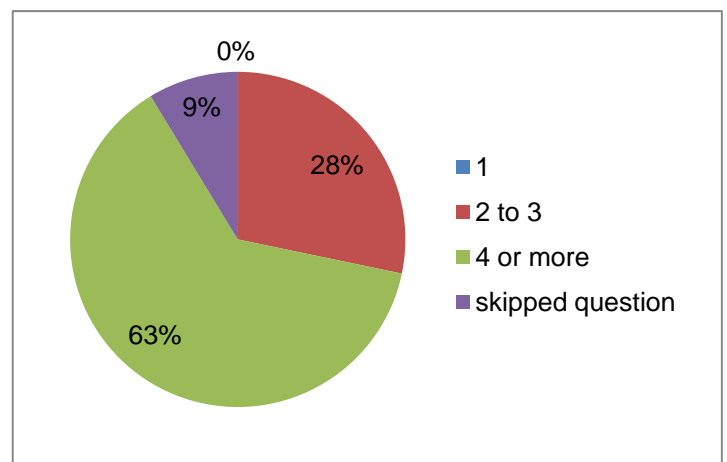
Q53. Do you have children in the Religious Education program?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	22%	10
no	70%	32
skipped question	9%	4



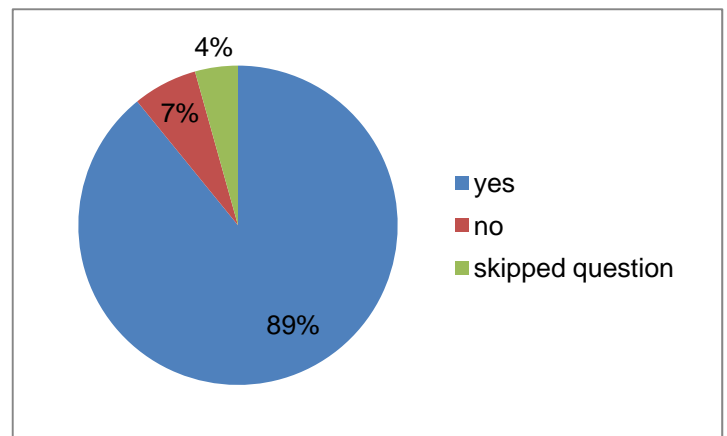
Q54. How many times per month do you typically attend church?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1	0%	0
2 to 3	28%	13
4 or more	63%	29
skipped question	9%	4



Q55. Have you signed the membership book?

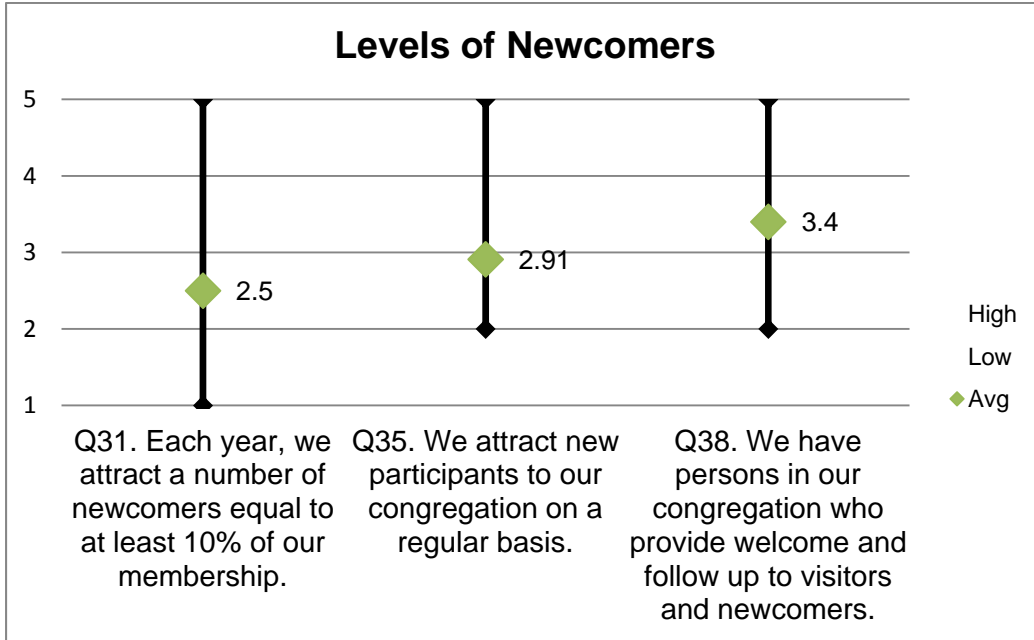
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	89%	41
no	7%	3
skipped question	4%	2



The following questions were answered using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 = "To no extent" and 5 = "To a very great extent". "N/A" answers were not included in the charts below; however, if a significant number of respondents answered "N/A", that is noted below the chart.

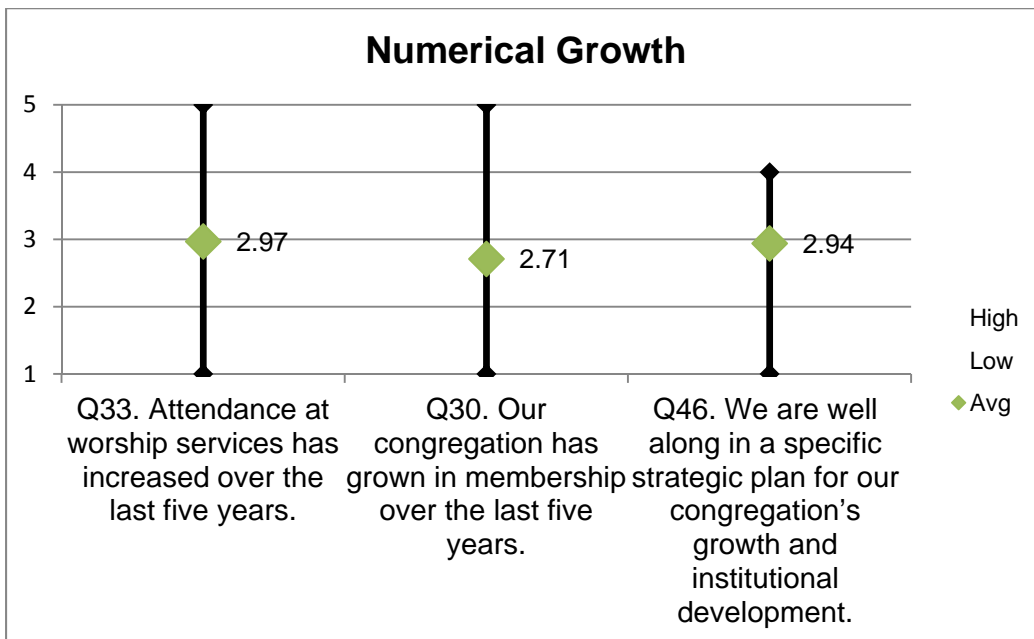
Attraction of New Members

- I. Levels of Newcomers: the ability to attract newcomers (e.g., the relative percentage of people who were not members of the congregation five years ago)



* 14 people (32% of respondents) answered “N/A” to question 31.

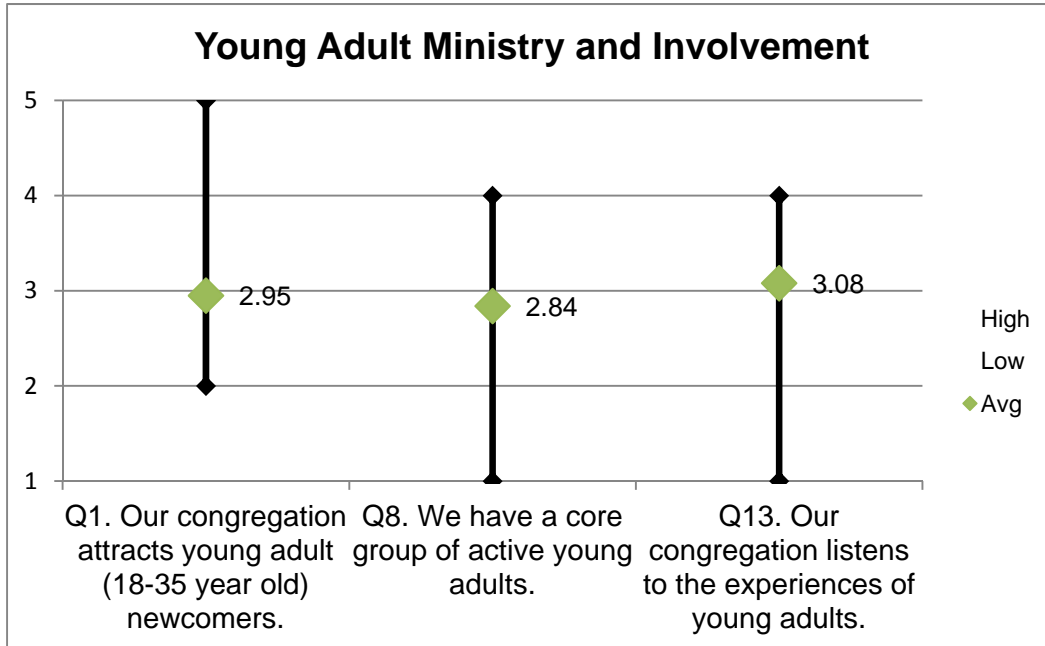
- II. Numerical Growth: the growth rate of church attendance at the congregation over the last five years. Note “attendance” is NOT the number of people in membership,



* 11 people (25% of respondents) answered “N/A” to question 46.

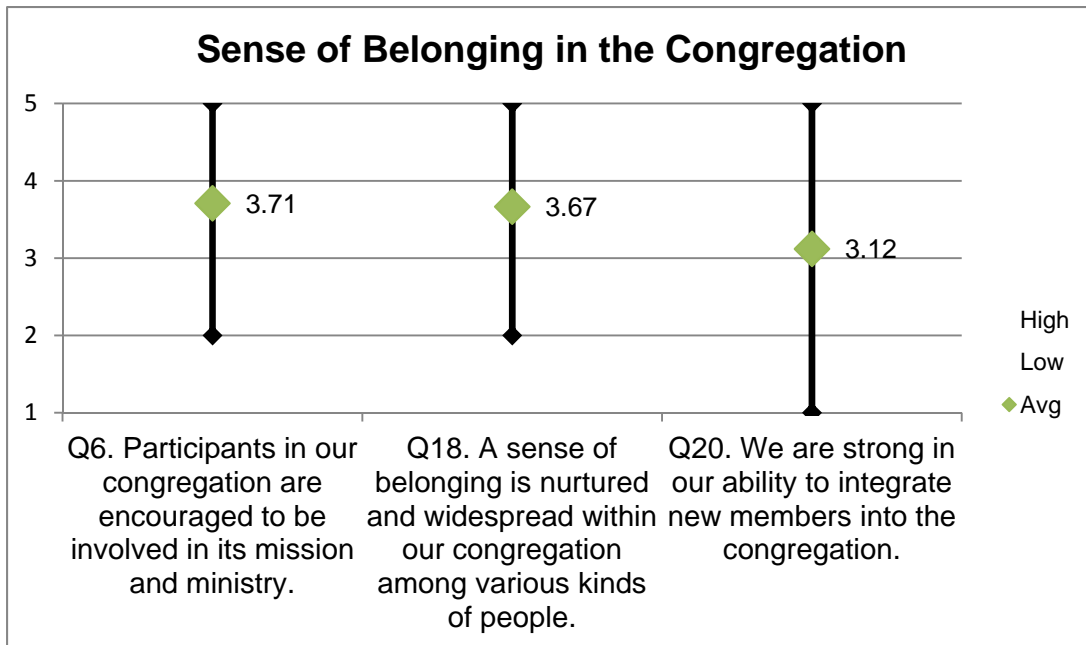
Community Building

- I. Young Adult Ministry and Involvement: the ability to retain young adults as active members of a Unitarian Universalist congregation or young adult ministry of the congregation (e.g., young adult group, campus ministry, etc.)



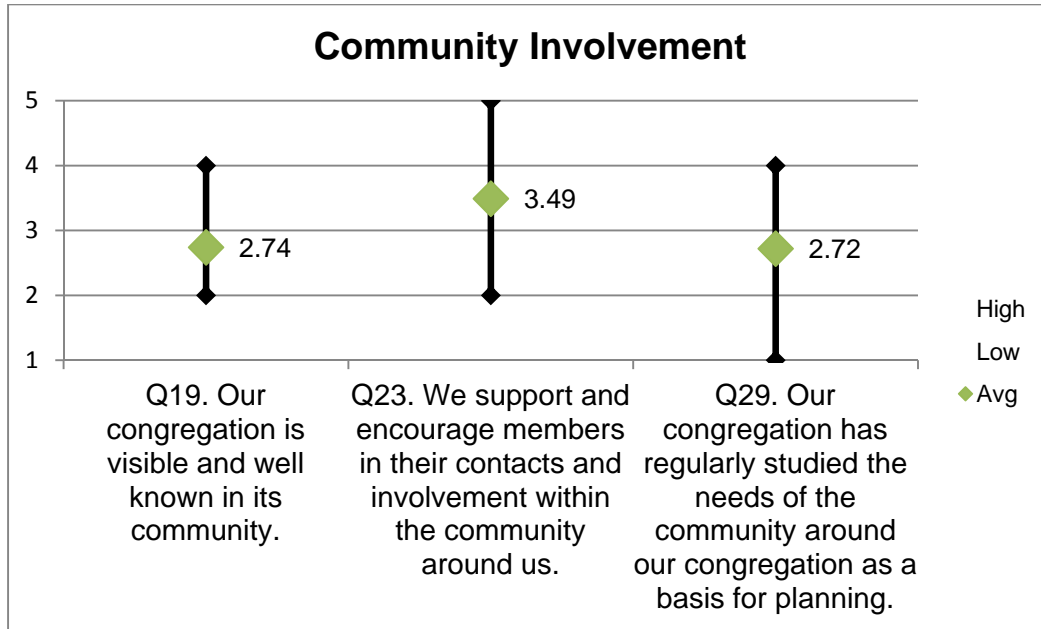
* 9 people (20% of respondents) answered "N/A" to question 13.

- II. Sense of Belonging in the Congregation: members and participants feel a strong and growing sense of belonging to their congregation

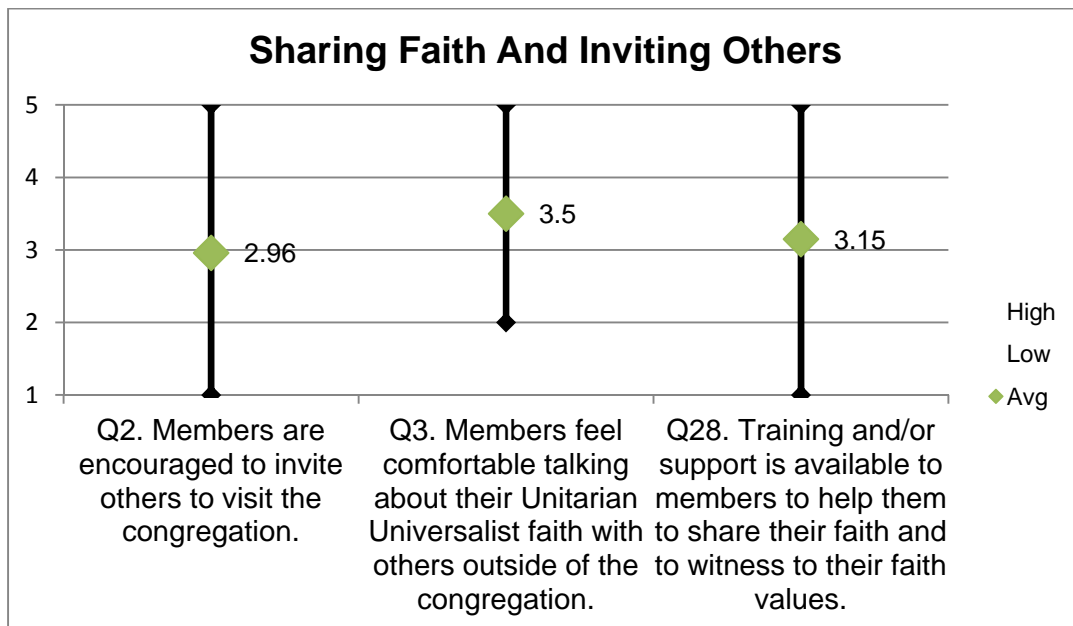


Outwardly Focused

- I. Community Involvement: The involvement of members in community activities both within and outside the church. This includes service, social action, etc.

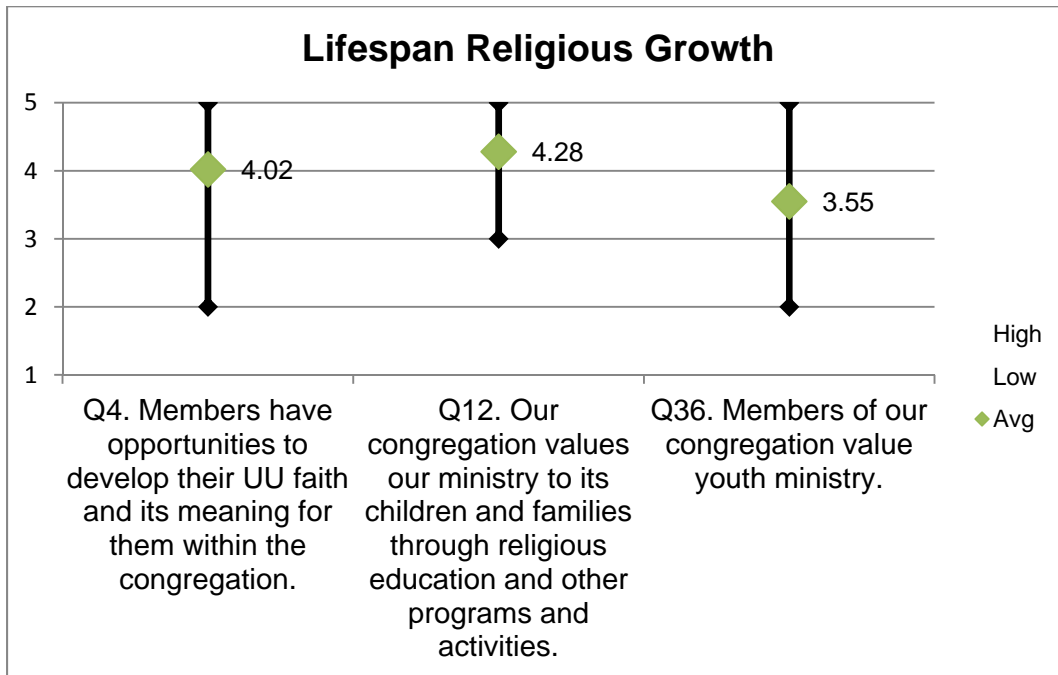


- II. Sharing Faith And Inviting Others: The willingness of members to discuss their faith with others and invite others to congregation activities

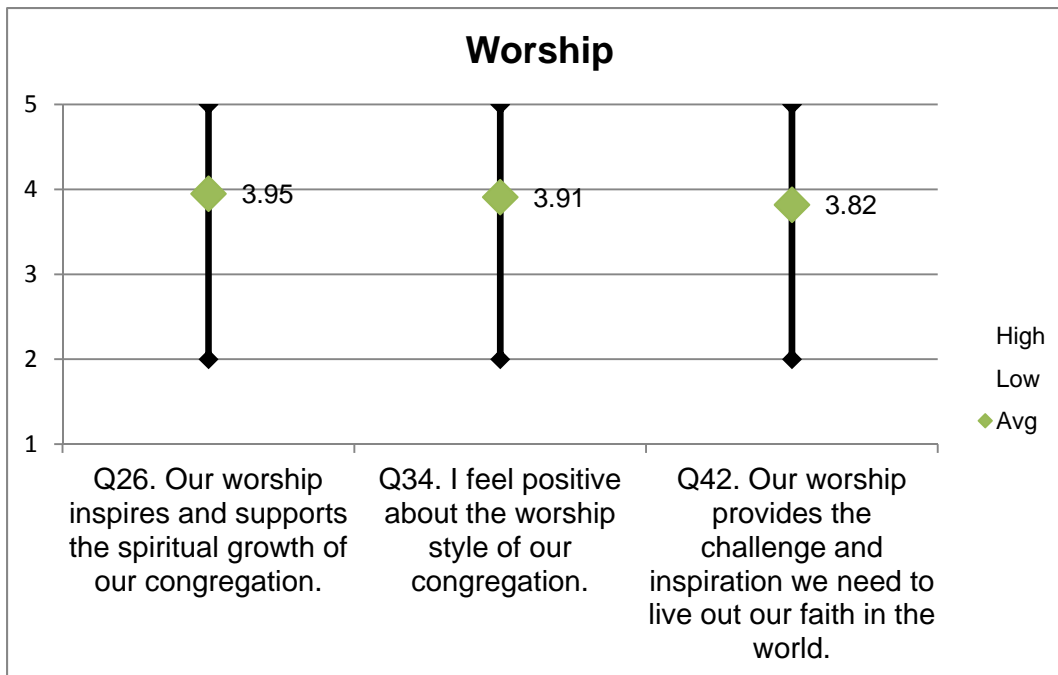


Ongoing Exploration of Faith

- I. Lifespan Religious Growth: Faith development of people of all ages is valued in the life of the congregation.

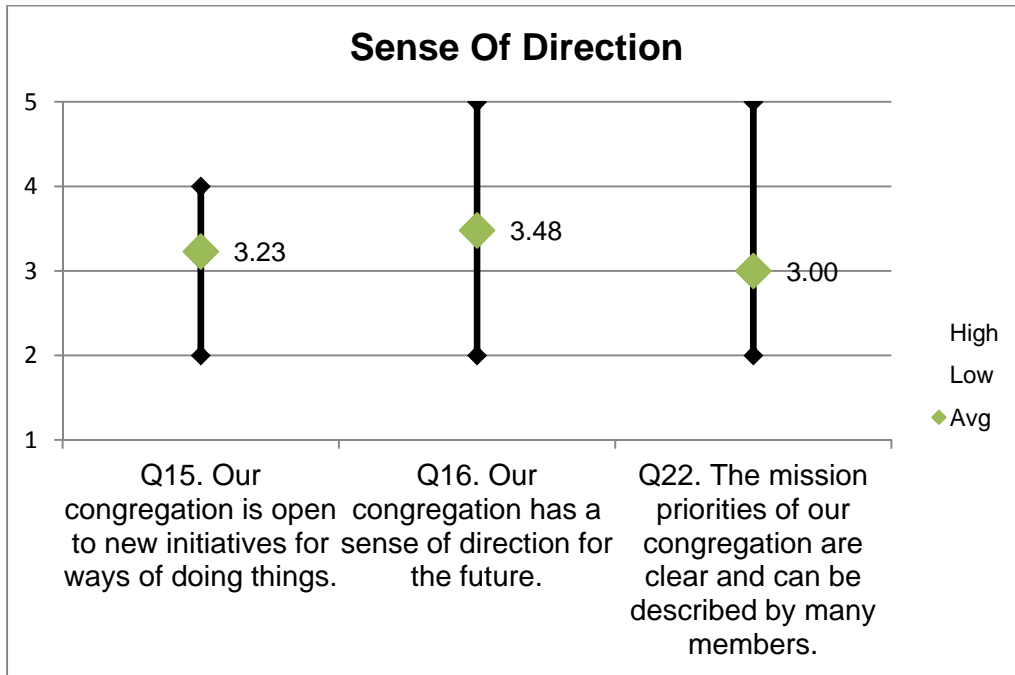


- II. Worship: Worship content and style that inspires and challenges members and visitors, old and young alike.

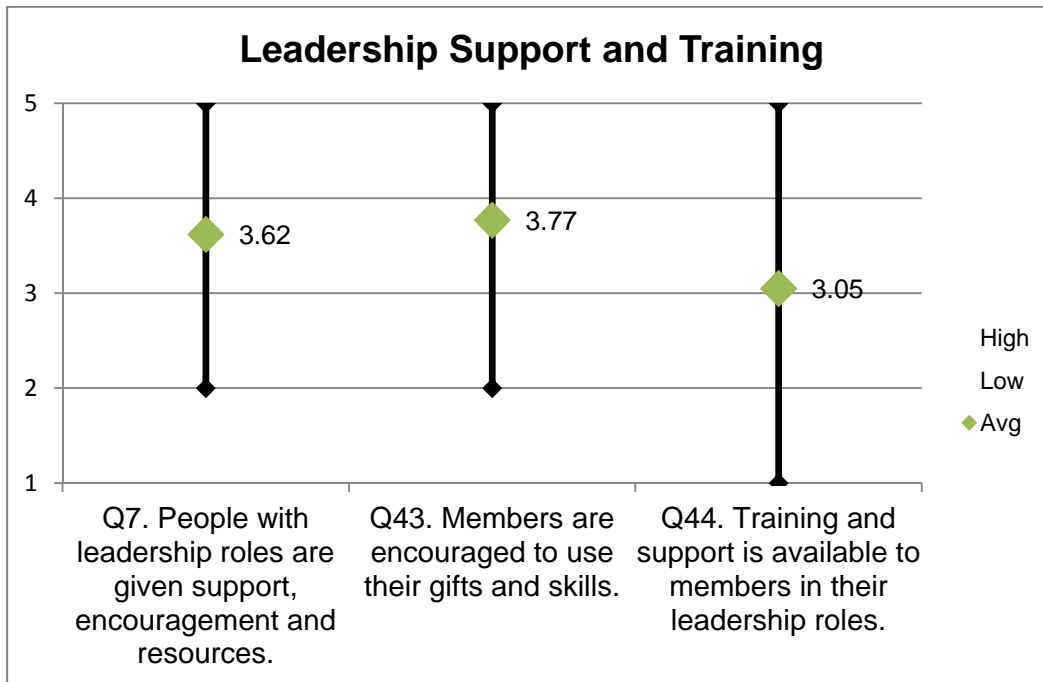


Mission Focused Leadership

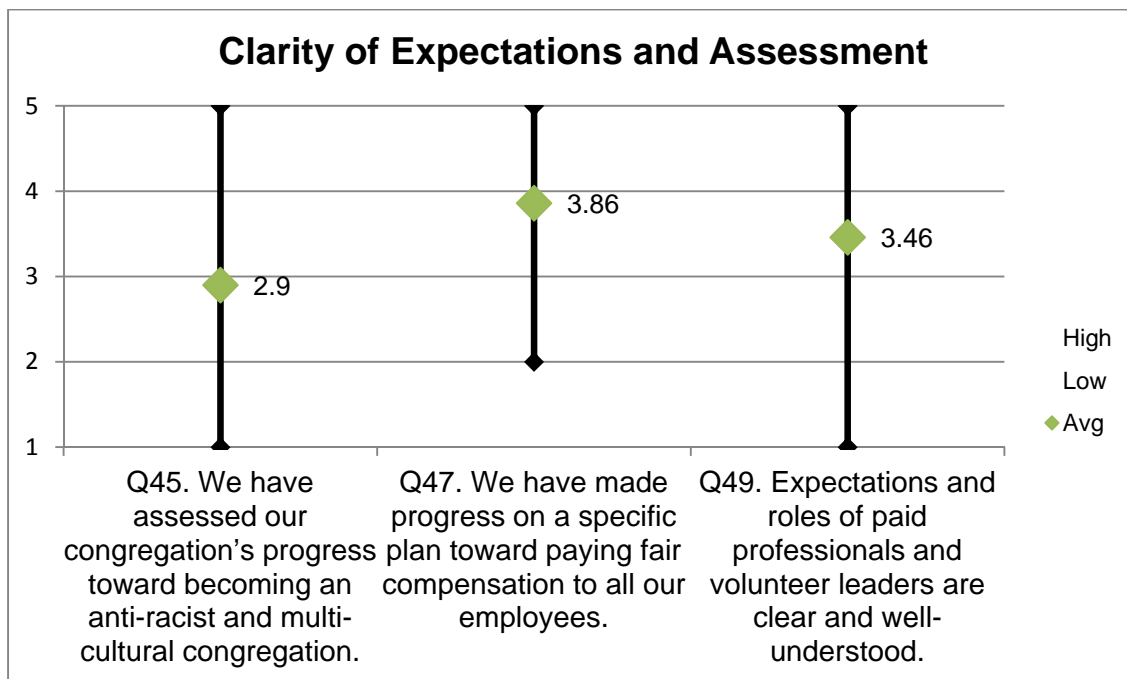
- I. Sense Of Direction: A clear sense of mission and purpose, with a plan for next steps.



- II. Leadership Support and Training: Volunteers are given what they need to do their jobs.



III. Clarity of Expectations and Assessment: Leadership roles, fair compensation, and transformational processes are clear.

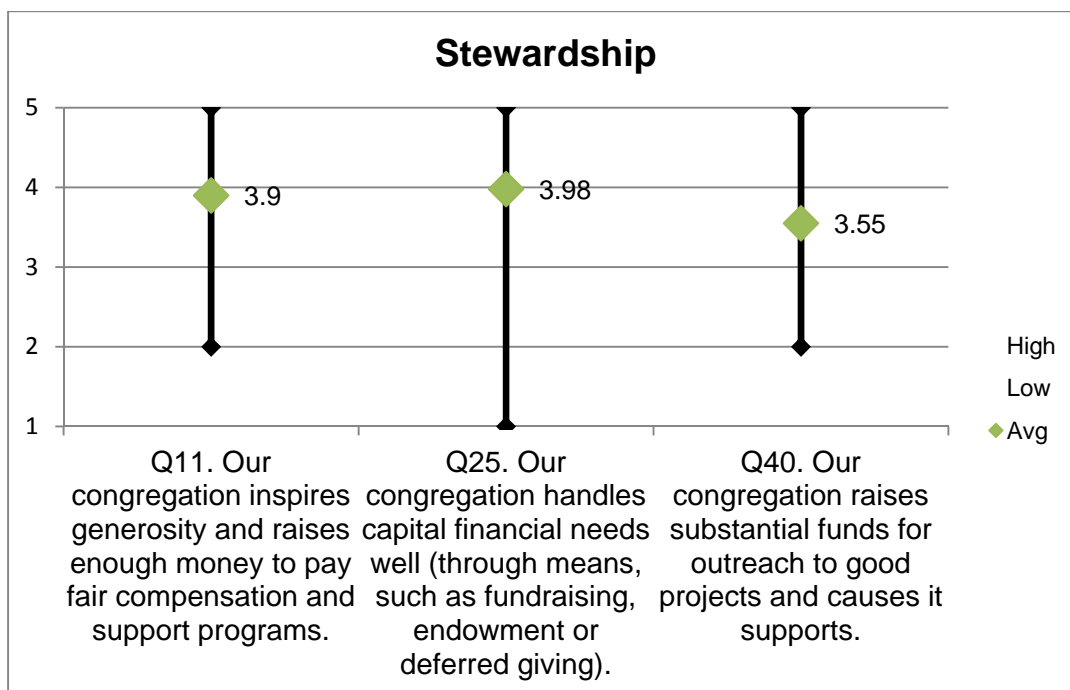


* 7 people (16% of respondents) answered "N/A" to question 47.

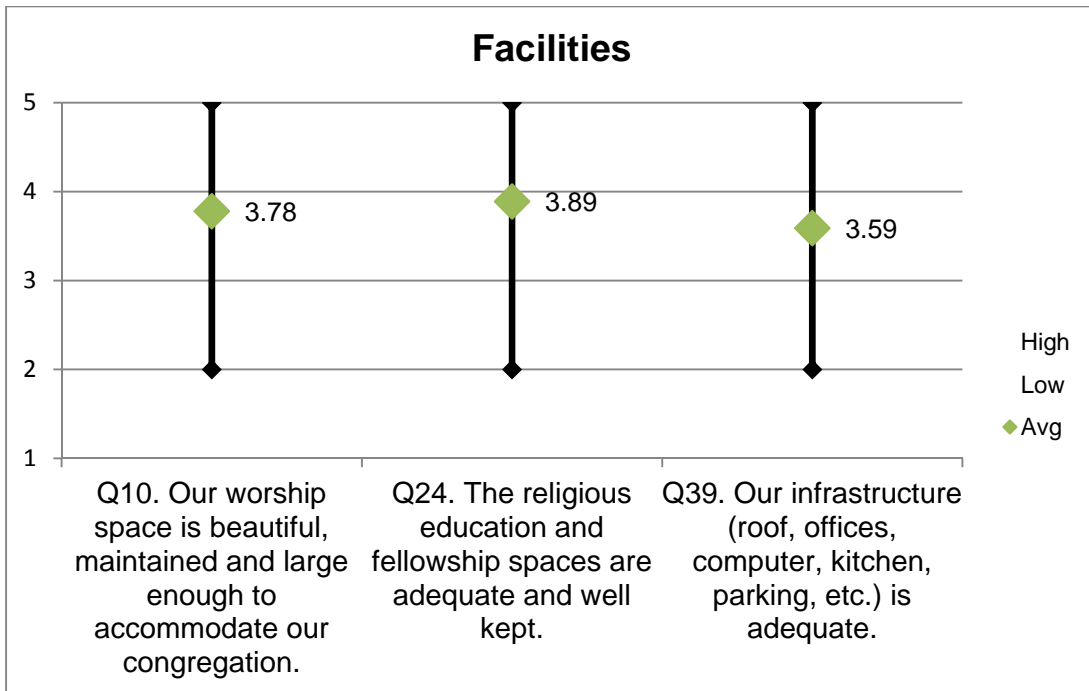
* 12 people (28% of respondents) answered "N/A" to question 45.

Resources

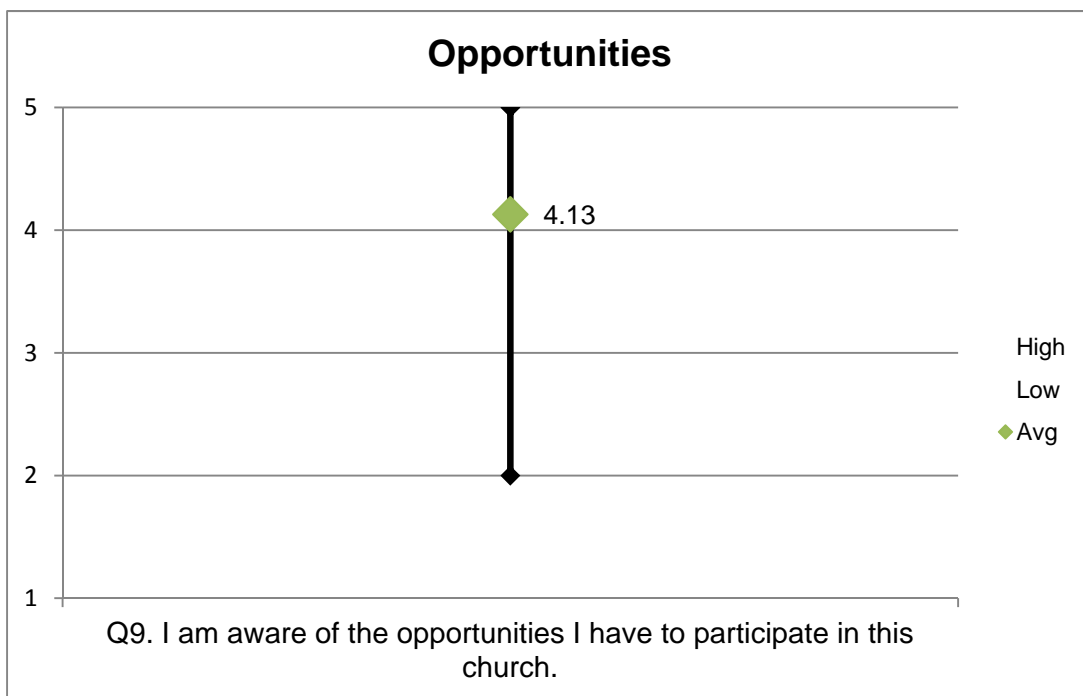
I. Stewardship: The congregation elicits generosity with time, money.



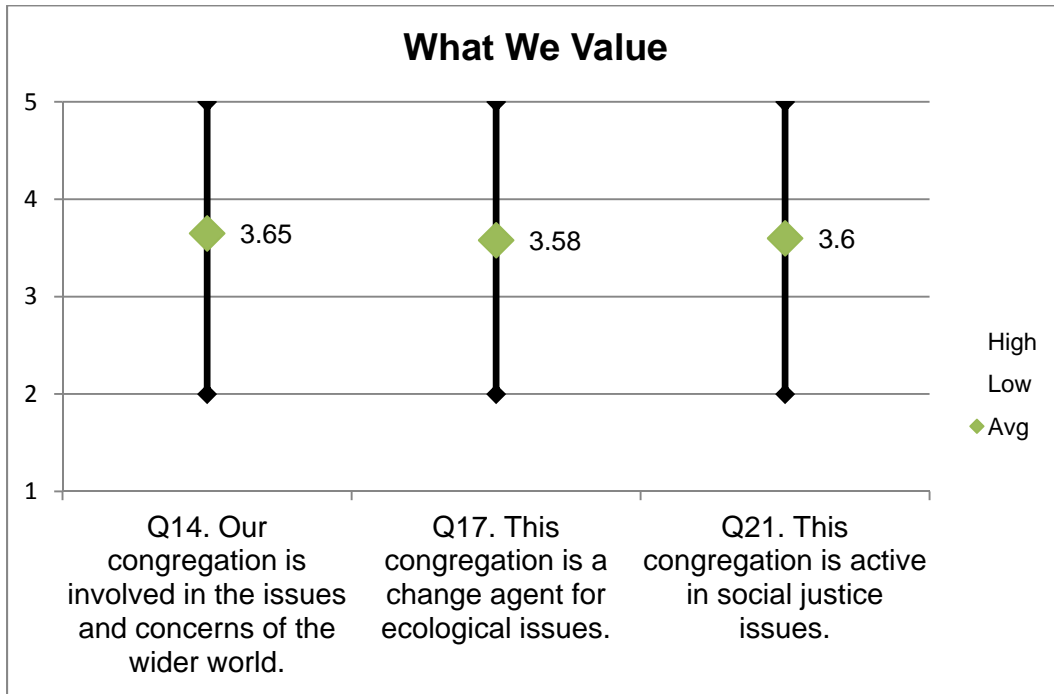
II. Facilities: Adequate space, parking, and infrastructure for present programs and for growth.



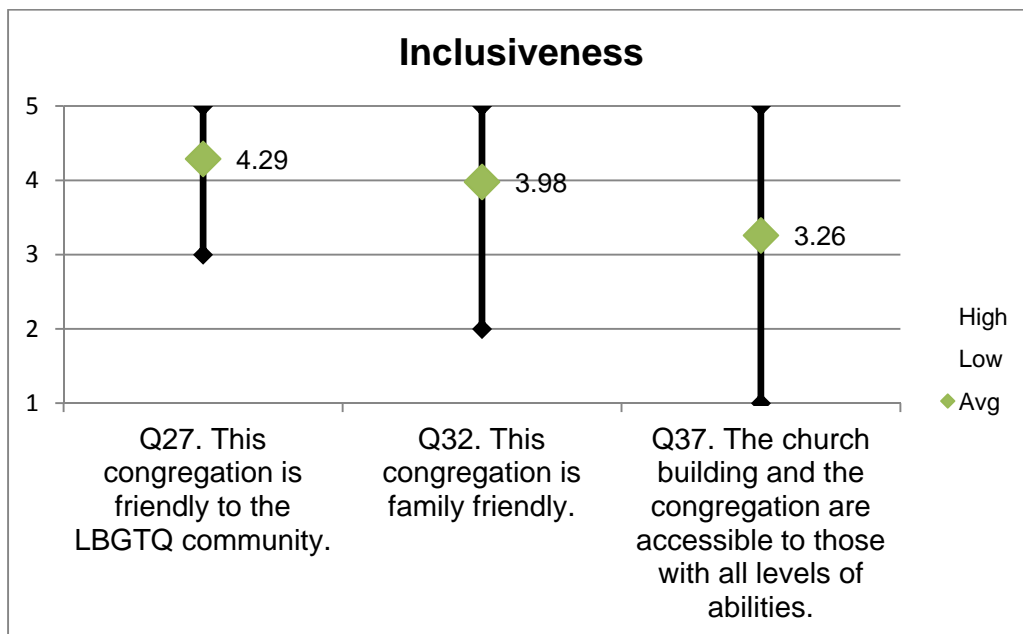
Awareness of Opportunities



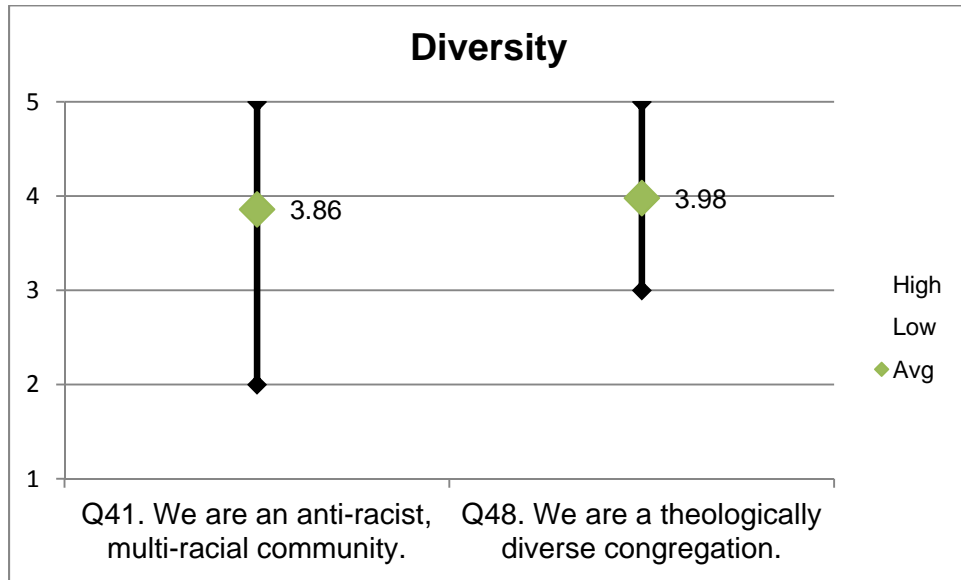
What We Value



Inclusiveness



Diversity



Q50. For which local, not-for-profit community organizations do you volunteer?

Organization	Responses
Safe Harbor	7
PTO/Schools	4
League of Women Voters	4
Crossroads	3
WGLT	2
ISU	2
Heartland Theatre	2
YWCA	2
Illinois People's Action	2
United Way	2
Midwest Food Bank	2
Humane Society	2
Ecology Action Center	2
Prairie Fire Theater	2
Red Cross	2
Junior Great Books	1
Conflict mediation	1
Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies board of directors	1
McLean Cty Master Gardeners	1
ISU Civic Chorale	1
Bike BloNo	1
Friends of the Constitution Trail	1

Unity (University of Illinois Extension)	1
One Heart for Congo	1
UUBN	1
Special Olympics	1
IWU	1
Marc First	1
Judy Mason Thanksgiving Project	1
CPA (Center for Performing Arts)	1
Normal Theatre	1
youth organizations	1
Big Brothers, Big Sisters	1
Immigration Projectt	1
Easter Seals	1
Autism Society	1
Home Sweet Home Mission	1
Sugar Grove Nature Center	1
Girl Scouts of Central Illinois	1
Sun Foundation	1
4-H	1
Parklands Foundation	1
Soroptimist of Bloomington-Normal	1
Normal Historic Preservation Commission	1
Planned Parenthood	1
Faith in Action	1
RSVP	1
PFLAG	1

SECTION 3: SUMMARY OF OUR CONGREGATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

A. Our congregation's perceived strengths are:

- Lifespan Religious Growth (p.8)
- Worship (p.8)
- Stewardship (p.10)
- Facilities (p.11)
- Awareness of Opportunities to Participate (p.11)
- Diversity (p.13)
- LGBTQ friendly (p.12 under "Inclusiveness")

B. Our congregation's perceived potential strengths are (areas in which we received strong scores on 2 of the 3 questions or slightly above-average but not the highest scores on all 3 questions):

- Sense of Direction (p.9)
- Leadership Support and Training (p.9)
- Clarity of Expectations (p.10)
- Inclusiveness (p.12)
- We also think the data around Community Involvement points to a perception that we are very involved as individuals but could be more involved as a church. (p.7)

C. Our perceived challenges are:

- Numerical Growth (p.5)
- Levels of Newcomers (p.5)
- Young Adult Ministry and Involvement (p.6)

SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

This is a part of the self-assessment that the Board may choose to use as a tool to develop a plan for improving some of the particular areas of congregational life. You may also choose to work with a consultant from your district or from the continental UUA.

Instructions: This section is intended to carry your assessment further by recommending some actions to take (a) to “tweak” or build on current strengths you have in this area OR (b) to significantly change your current practices OR (c) to remove barriers to your progress in this area (i.e., stop doing something).

	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:		
	To “Tweak” or build upon current strengths you have in this area:	To significantly change your current practices:	To remove barriers to your progress in this area:
LEVELS OF NEWCOMERS: the ability to attract newcomers (e.g., the relative % of people who were not members five years ago.)			
YOUNG ADULT RETENTION: the ability to retain young adults as active members of a Unitarian Universalist congregation or young adult ministry of the congregation (e.g., young adult group, campus ministry, etc.)			
NUMERICAL GROWTH: The growth rate of church attendance at the congregation over the last five years. Note “attendance” is different than the number of people in membership.			
SENSE OF BELONGING IN THE CONGREGATION: Members and participants feel a strong sense of belonging to their congregation.			

	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:		
	To “Tweak” or build upon current strengths you have in this area:	To significantly change your current practices:	To remove barriers to your progress in this area:
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: The involvement of members in community activities both within and outside the church. This includes involvement in community services, social action, etc.			
SHARING FAITH AND INVITING OTHERS: The willingness of members to discuss their faith with others and invite others to congregation activities.			
GROWING IN FAITH: Faith development of people of all ages is valued in the life of the congregation.			
SENSE OF DIRECTION: A clear sense of mission and purpose, with a plan for next steps.			
WORSHIP: Music, message, and more – inspiring members and visitors, old and young alike.			
LEADERSHIP SUPPORT AND TRAINING: Volunteers are given what they need to do their jobs.			
STEWARDSHIP: The congregation elicits generosity with time, money.			
FACILITIES: Adequate space, parking, and infrastructure for present programs, accessibility and for growth.			
CLARITY OF EXPECTATIONS AND ROLES: Leadership roles, fair compensation, and transformational processes are clear.			
Awareness of Opportunities			

	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:		
	To “Tweak” or build upon current strengths you have in this area:	To significantly change your current practices:	To remove barriers to your progress in this area:
What We Value			
Inclusiveness			
Diversity			