



FAIRLAWN
Connect with what matters in life.

What you told us in the Fairlawn Survey

About respondents

- 182 responded (age 21-35, 5%; 36-45, 8%; 46-60, 23%; 60+, 64%)
 - Declared 'very involved' (more than 3 activities apart from Sunday worship service), 30%
 - 'somewhat involved' (one activity apart from Sunday service), 38.5%
 - 'casually involved' (intermittent participation), 22.5%
 - Mostly around Christmas and Easter, 9%

Top responses to some key questions

[Note: items do not necessarily add up to 100% because some people abstained from answering some questions or they felt the question was not applicable to their experience]

- Generally, Fairlawn is doing well in living its purpose
 - Strongly agree, 48.4%
 - Agree, 46%
 - Disagree, 2.2%
 - Strongly disagree, 0.55%
- EXPLORE SPIRITUALITY: Fairlawn helps me explore my spirituality in a way that challenges my thinking and meets my and my family's needs
 - Strongly agree, 23%
 - Agree, 58%
 - Disagree, 12%
 - Strongly disagree, 0%
- EXPERIENCE BELONGING: I feel welcome and respected at Fairlawn
 - Strongly agree, 60%
 - Agree, 39%
 - Disagree, 0.5%
 - Strongly disagree, 0%
- EMBRACE ACTION: Fairlawn is a wonderful place to help create a just and caring world
 - Strongly agree, 53%
 - Agree, 44%
 - Disagree, 0.5%
 - Strongly disagree, 0%
- MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL: I understand the role of the Ministry and Personnel Committee
 - Strongly agree, 30%
 - Agree, 44%
 - Disagree, 15%
 - Strongly disagree, 1%

- PROPERTY COUNCIL: Fairlawn is a good steward of the property that we own
 - Strongly agree, 27%
 - Agree, 60%
 - Disagree, 3%
 - Strongly disagree, 0%
- COMMUNICATIONS: Fairlawn is effective and efficient in its communications to the congregation
 - Strongly agree, 47%
 - Agree, 49%
 - Disagree, 4%
 - Strongly disagree, 0%
- STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE: Fairlawn is effective in communicating with each congregant and encouraging them to provide a level of givings that meets their ability to give
 - Strongly agree, 29%
 - Agree, 56%
 - Disagree, 7%
 - Strongly disagree, 0%

Key themes in the Fairlawn Survey

The following identifies key themes from the findings of the Fairlawn Survey, with selected comments related to each.

Some key things you appreciate about Fairlawn

Opportunities exist for individuals and families to experience belonging [EXPERIENCE BELONGING]

- Fairlawn is ready to embrace them as they are ready to receive.
Working well; better than most churches
- Because I cannot attend church services regularly, I am less plugged in than I would like to be. But for the times I am able to attend, I feel SO welcomed and warmly received
- After a nasty fall and missing 2 Sundays at church, experienced dear messages of concern, flowers one Sunday morning, visit and lunch prepared one day, offers of help which I fortunately did not need.
- From the first time I entered this church almost 7 years ago, I felt and continue to feel the warmth and acceptance from everyone I have met.
- The Fairlawn Church is abuzz with activities, many of which are not things I would have expected to find at a church (a good thing!).

People like the approach of introducing more small-group sessions for spiritual reflection [EXPLORE SPIRITUALITY]

- The more opportunities for smaller group worship where there are opportunities for interaction/active participation, the better!
- I'm thrilled that the small groups ministry is going to begin in September. Perhaps one of those might eventually provide a "hook" to interest 20-40 year-olds.

The rationale of The Fairlawn Call resonates with people [THE FAIRLAWN CALL]

- The three purposes have been among the best Fairlawn Call innovations; people have really taken to them.

- I think we are on the right track in focusing on the Fairlawn call and aligning all our activities with it.
- I love it that the Fairlawn Church accepts that different people are at different places with their spirituality, and that the church not only tolerates this, but encourages people to come together and explore this with each other, without judgment.
- *However, people respond more to the words "connected by community" or "connected to each other" rather than "connected by love"*

Some key requests for further development

Introduce fresh, alternative approaches to worship service while still retaining elements of traditional service [EXPLORE SPIRITUALITY]

- Would like to see new and innovative ways to explore spirituality during the Sunday service
- Passing of the peace at end of service if we have it or the beginning before we settle down to worship (It's disruptive otherwise.)
- Music is too hymn-orientated. We have an amazing choir but the music, although beautiful, is too 'vanilla.' Let's breathe some life into it.
- While I can enjoy Sunday morning worship, I am looking for a more personal venue in which to explore spirituality, and will probably consider joining one of those groups at some point in the future.
- Replace the fixed pews with comfortable moveable chairs.
- Please work to continue to redefine the meaning of the word "church" so that alternative ways of connecting with others and exploring spirituality have an equal and valuable weight with the Sunday morning service.
- *While many said that they did not need a second service, Wednesday evening was the most popularly identified time for one*

Need to build Spirit Space and Teens program [EXPLORE SPIRITUALITY]

- Developing the Spirit Space and youth program is vital to the future of the church.
- (Desire for Christopher to speak on) How to engage with people who are 18-40
- You need teen music and activities in church to engage them there. Maybe the new youth minister is making inroads, but unfortunately because of the past 3-4 years of no activities for tweens or teens, my kids are looking to other churches to attend.

Need to show the community more about our reaching out to others and connecting with community [EMBRACE ACTION]

- I would like us to investigate a more active role in ongoing refugee support using the church building.
- We are focused on church growth and not on being of service to our community (*also a perception of our priorities and concern about our perceived focus*)
- It would take a lot to get it underway but I wonder if Fairlawn could offer a Friday night community meal to those living in poverty. It would provide an opportunity for interaction between Fairlawners and those living on the margins, and might attract younger people in our community (the 20s-40s) to come and help.
- We need to create ministries for those who are not yet part of Fairlawn

Be More Visible [OUR COMMUNITY]

- Use the lawn – have picnics on the front lawn

In addition to good works, want more on personal connections with God and Jesus [EXPLORE SPIRITUALITY]

- There is a lack of spirituality at Fairlawn - lots of service to others, which is great, but not a lot about having a personal relationship with God and Jesus. How many people at Fairlawn really believe God exists?
- Our church is in a funny position of clearly not taking the Bible literally, but having difficulty providing context for Bible stories used, or for explaining why we still use some very archaic notions (why, for instance, we rarely attribute a gender to God, and yet why do we still recite *Our Father* each Sunday? Not that we shouldn't necessarily, but we need to address these contradictions.)
- Desire to have some more intentionally meditative services
- We need more ideas and direction in enriching or finding a personal experience of the Divine.
- Desire for a Bible study group

Need to be mindful of barriers we may be putting up that discourage people from participating [EXPERIENCE BELONGING]

- Sometimes I've heard of people who try to get involved and are told there are enough helpers already (e.g. Tuesday Lunch group). I also have felt that way about the Women's spirituality groups. I had to jump through hoops to get into one.... You can't just ask someone in the group if you can join. You have to talk to church administrator, who next talks to leader of group to see if they are willing to accept another person and eventually you hear that you've been accepted. WOW

Questioning the need for Growth [THE FAIRLAWN CALL]

- The focus on new people is a mistake. Focus on being a church that serves.
 - A number of comments questioned whether we should be striving to grow, vs focusing on serving existing members
 - *This suggests more of a focus on Vibrancy as the key goal*

Questioning need for always asking for more money [STEWARDSHIP]

- The days of a building existing for the purpose of worship, alone are unsustainable. I like to hear about the needs of the church, and then do what I can to help out. I don't like to feel the pressure to generally just 'give more'
- I think we have good communication but there is a concerted push to have people continually giving more. I think the giving of time is as important as money and needs to valued in the same way that significant financial donors are valued
- As long as we are moving toward a balanced budget, whether it happens in 2021 or some later time doesn't matter to me. We have a nest egg of savings that should be thoughtfully used to explore how to continue to make Fairlawn relevant in the years to come.
 - *Suggests heightened attempts through other means to realize revenue, in addition to givings and other personal means of contribution (for example, focusing on receiving more Rental money)*

Questioning our use of corporate language [THE FAIRLAWN CALL]

- We have tried to user softer, non-corporate language
 - *Continuing to be cognizant of this*

Accessibility [PROPERTY]

- We need ramps at the front doors
- The elevator needs to be put on independent use – waiting for someone with a key is not convenient
- The sound!! I know I'm not the first (or last) to complain, and I'm only 27 and have good hearing. If I struggle occasionally, I can't imagine how people who are hard of hearing must find it.

Need to increase communication to congregation about how church runs [COMMUNICATIONS]

- We need to help people understand the differences between operating spending and investment spending. We need to put people's minds at rest about the former, so that they will support us in doing the latter.
- I think we could do more to educate the congregation about the role of M&P.
- What is the United Church Women's Group?