

Sunday, May 21st



What was Good?

Everything

It was just right! We touched on lots of ideas and discussing them will promote further thinking.

I liked the gathering into small groups.

Honest discussion.

The food. It is nice to have the dining experience. Table facilitators were a very good idea.

All conversation and coming together is good!

Supper. Small groups – facilitator excellent. Discussion of over the years. Sunday night.

Frank conversation about strengths and weaknesses.

Excellent preparation. Planning very focused, and small groups great.

Covered a lot of ground – procedures were clear.

Many views expressed. Main subject seems to be togetherness and collegiality.

An excellent way to present ideas in a non-threatening way. Met people I did not know which brought me into the group more.

Our group worked diligently.

Good organization.

Preparation and format (packed a lot in). Inspiring.

Focused structure along with social time.

Kept on time. Dialogue was respectful and thoughtful.

Leadership was excellent and resources (color-coded sheets, rules of engagement, etc.) were excellent.

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Good food! Good discussion. Loved small groups.

Well-structured and paced.

People had a lot to say.

Writing down, and then discussion of ideas.

Open, free discussion. Three clear questions. Good organization. Good leadership.

Good food and strict timing.

A great event! Everyone from the table participated.

Jean as facilitator. Sense of collaboration and contribution in big group. Keeping time schedule.

Small group work – nice to hear how others view the church.

Collegiate.

The leaders, facilitator, and the process.

Pace was good. Not as rushed as the pot luck. And the questions led to excellent discussion, especially with our individual time to consider first.

Good dialogue in small groups.

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What Could Be Improved?

More time in small groups.

Way too much time spent explaining the process and not enough for conversation.

No complaints!

Continue the open dialogue.

Goal is a little too ambitious. Need more of the same small groups to get deeper. Singing together with the words missed.

Nothing, it was a great evening.

Really need more time to do what we set out to do.

Not enough time to do what was asked.

A bit more time for further discussion.

Longer time allotted. 2x group – i.e. 40 minutes

I would not go for more time.

Sorrento's

We do need more time to do this important work.

No more Unitarian Ministers until Catholics, Baptist, Episcopal, Rabbi

Thirty minutes longer would've helped.

Keep discussion on issue within the individual groups. Easy to spend time off topic.

Let's not try to do too much.

Not enough time to express concerns.

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I would like to know what was behind what people wanted changed. We could use more time.

Working pens.

Add another half hour for more discussion. Jean needs a scribe so she can face group and facilitate more. Too hard to do both jobs.

Sunday night is a hard time to listen. Maybe go right to activities.

Felt rushed.

Need more time on #2 and #3 to develop profile on next senior minister.

Discussion could've gone on and on, which means the questions were good!

Improved time in dialogue in small groups.

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THE WAY WE WERE: TOGETHER IN MINISTRY
Trinitarian Congregational Church, Concord MA
Sunday, May 21, 2017

Table #1

About You:

(Please include here such information as how many years you have been involved at TriCon and how you have been involved in its ministry, i.e. regular worship attendance, just holiday attendance, held an office, been on a committee, taught Sunday School, or volunteered other ways. You can share your name if you like, but it is not necessary. Just speak from your own experience. If you don't know how to answer a question, or it doesn't apply to you, that is okay.)

- 19 years; regular worship attendance; held an office
- 19 year member; committee member/committee chair; taught Sunday school; helped with city year, 2 adult mission trips to Biloxi; headed associate minister search committee
- about 10 years; regularly attend worship service; mentored 4 confirmands; served on Fellowship Committee and Church Council; volunteer and back for Antiques Show each year; deliver altar flowers; attended 4 women's retreats
- moderator 199-2001, member since 1994. served on many committees (mission, nominating, pastor parish, stewardship), been a mentor 4-5 times (Jeff Campbell)
- 23 years; pastor-parish committee; social action; assistant moderator; diaconate
- 23 years, mission and social action committees; finance committee, fellowship committee

Questions:

1. What ministry did the congregation and its pastoral leaders accomplish together over the last twenty-five years? (Please list a few specific, stand out ministries.)

- Mission work. Mission trip. Support for other programs, maintained building while not accumulating debt. Organ.
- Youth Ministry – the building of the youth ministry including the mission trip. It was one of the many reasons we joined. The Lenten and Advent series. The partnerships with nonprofits, i.e. Sharing Foundation
- Guide amazing 9th graders through Confirmation class with church member mentors. Sunday night yoga. Filipov Peace and Justice Forum.
- We learned faith development through worship. We got good at identifying and cultivating each other's gifts. We reached out to the wider world in meaningful ways. We created a safe sanctuary in our community. (Jeff Campbell)
- Several "campaigns" – building and organ. Enriched youth programs. Enriched pastoral care. Include parishioners in worship service.
- Mostly focused on the congregation and its children; internal more than external in its priority and direction.
- Open and Affirming. Growth in the youth program. Renovation and organ. Expanded volunteer involvement in church school.

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- It helped me to be part of the community; a way to be with others with similar outlooks and social responsibility.
- Open Table. Syrian Musical program. Caring Connection.

2. Pastoral leaders and congregational members develop a style of working with one another over time. How would you describe the working relationship in ministry that you experienced with the various pastoral leaders during this twenty-five year period?

- I saw difficulty in the senior minister working with the associates. I always thought the committees worked well and communicated what was happening to the congregation. The office staff always worked well together and with the congregation.
- Somewhat hierarchical. There's something about leading a church this size. Listened to my dreams. Supported my dream. Available when I needed him.
- Karin Case asked me to be a mentor. From the pulpit, John asked for people to deliver altar flowers and I approached him to volunteer. From the first time I met John, he always knew me and what I was doing for the church, how I was serving. John reached out to me for a fellow member's cell phone# when her mother was hospitalized.
- Top-down at times (post sabbaticals) – not always effective. Hierarchical, in a traditional UCC way – ok, but often came with a lack of energy. Home grown. (Jeff Campbell)
- Faith-based strength
- Polite, restrained, kind; verbal rather than experiential; "Sunday" oriented; acts of kindness to one another; internal expenditures; unfocused giving
- Described as collegial but not truly with lay leaders and other clergy; strong pastoral care
- It has been open and honest but sometimes I think that I don't quite fit. Our lack of history with the church on spiritual beliefs.

3. Going forward into the future, what about this style of working together in ministry would you want to continue and what would you want to do differently?

Continue

- Communication between groups and committees and congregation
- Communication between committees and pastor; strong worship; youth ministry
- in-touch leader; rich worship services; church takes care of each other (pastoral care, caring connection)
- Faith-based aspects
- Kindness, maintain support
- Openness to community; pastoral care emphasis
- I'd love to see more/continued congregation gatherings that involve meals. Eating food we've "brought to the table" collectively is a blessing we should encourage, and share. And more pie!

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Do Differently

- Collaborative; more open and honest communication; adult mission – mission themes
- more adult mission; go beyond Sunday; more honest communication; less political, more transparent; who is in charge of what – staff, council, diaconate??
- More social action, i.e. menu of options for engaging on social issue from days of service to adult mission trips.
- Social engagement; expand focus beyond TriCon; build greater sense of community and relationships with other communities – ongoing, not flashes
- Willingness to be open/honest with lay leaders and clergy

Table #1 Notes

Same

Youth Ministry
Ability to maintain and upgrade building
Well run
Open and Affirming
Inward Looking
Partnerships with nonprofits
Commitment to Mission
Filipov Forum
Caring Connection
Focus on worship, a rich service, music, thoughtful
Taking care of each other
Small group discussions
Kindness
Pastoral Care
Emphasis on worship but not to the exclusion of external focus
Faith-based strength – link worship with putting our faith to work in practice
Polite and respectful
Kind
Constructive

Do Differently

Adult mission
External focus
Honesty among pastoral and lay leaders
Culture of honesty to build a deeper community
Pastoral team work
More engagement and transparency
Greater collaboration between clergy and lay ministry and congregation

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Organ project and long range planning

Top down

Some bubble up

Sunday oriented

Committee process

Hierarchical

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Table #3 Notes

Highlights

Member wants to see a lean toward Pentecostal using the Bible/Scripture and sharing spiritual gifts. More literal words of the Bible, a little more evangelistic.

Mission Trips - Kids doing service. The processing before/during/after was so impressive.

Sunday Service – relevant, insightful, inspirational, and foundation of faith for the kids. Connecting on individual baseline, small groups, committees. Service to the community.

Missionary drew us to the church. Appealing as parents. TriCon become more of a role as leader in town. Ecumenical connection to town.

Good – facilities upgrade. John really used/looked for resources for church community.

Pastoral Care is important.

People need support and need to care for each other – Caring Connection

A lot of ideas/initiatives percolated “If you’d like to do it, I’d support you. We can give more resources. How can I help?” Good style. Encourages people to own what they believe in ... BUT perhaps have ideas to be examined through lens of “the mission of the group.”

Newsletter would have categories

Leader who is in the fray as opposed to at a distance.

Fellowship is a strong part of the church. People get together. Parish Hall reflects that. The small groups are a part of our fellowship.

Conclusions

Strong commitment to lesson of service for young people.

Commitment to mission – 20% of budget to mission

Small groups are a fabulous addition

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THE WAY WE WERE: TOGETHER IN MINISTRY
Trinitarian Congregational Church, Concord MA
Sunday, May 21, 2017

Table #4

About You:

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- I have been a member for twenty-five years or so – attending a couple of times a month, serving on the membership committee, caring connection, and kitchen help.
- 1993 – John Lombard called (Dave DeLong)
- Married here in 2003 after meetings with John. 2007 – Addison was baptized here. 2008 – Penn was baptized here. 2011 began attending regularly when we moved to Concord. I have helped with the Caring Connection – making meals. Periodically teach Sunday school. Attend regularly.

Questions:

4. What ministry did the congregation and its pastoral leaders accomplish together over the last twenty-five years? (Please list a few specific, stand out ministries.)

- Growth of children's and youth programs. Bob Brown brought us small groups, Anchor Group, and more adult ed. Growth in Mission. Vibrant healthy church. Growth of Caring Connection and working with our own in-need.
- I think the congregation and the pastoral leaders in general accomplished so much – i.e. outreach programs, caring connection, funds given to so many – I gave all of the above an A+!
- Became an Open and Affirming church. Started Anchor Group. Renovated church sanctuary and new organ. Made high school youth mission trips a core part of church culture. Caring Connection founded. Ministry and service in Christ's name. (Dave DeLong)
- Brought people together. A welcoming place for all. Being an active member of the Concord community.
- Renewed stewardship vision regarding the building (inside and out) and its role in the community. Recently increased spiritual vitality through small groups.
- Caring Connection. Hosannah singers.

5. Pastoral leaders and congregational members develop a style of working with one another over time. How would you describe the working relationship in ministry that you experienced with the various pastoral leaders during this twenty-five year period?

- John Lombard was extremely hierarchical. I was frustrated with the way he treated female associate ministers, so frustrated we lost some amazing associate ministers and congregants.

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Bob Brown, on the other hand, works with fellow clergy AND with congregational participants in a very PARTICIPATIVE way. Bubble up ministries already happen. Delegation of activities HAPPENS.

- Working with Bob Brown in starting the Anchor Group and developing a program independent of Bob was very collaborative, engaging, and sometimes challenging experience. I had virtually no “working relationship” with John Lombard on any committees or projects. Almost all of my perspectives on John are second-hand. (Dave DeLong)
- Welcoming. Intellectual.
- Very hierarchical, delegating the ideas carrying out to others in the congregation, CEO style.

6. Going forward into the future, what about this style of working together in ministry would you want to continue and what would you want to do differently?

Continue

- Collaboration between pastors and congregants. Truly appreciating and honoring gifts of others. Strong organization and communication so volunteers know what is going on. Some MANAGEMENT expertise is needed with the strong and giving group.
- Strong, collaborative style between pastor(s) and youth group. (Dave DeLong)
- Involvement with the community. Focus of youth programs. Music very important.
- Embracing tradition while still being open to new ideas.

Do Differently

- NEED MORE PASTORAL CARE FROM MINISTERS OR CONGREGATION
- I would like to see the ministry continue as is but not become too informal or folksy
- Need a much more collaborative senior pastor, who takes input from the congregation and adapts his or her behavior and priorities. Need more strategically, future-focused ministry. If you think of working together as partly how the pastor engages with the congregation in sermons, I want much more engaging messages. Sermons should be more contemporary and less traditional. (Dave DeLong)
- Actually welcome new families to Concord.

Table #4 Notes

thoughts on question #1

Outreach of church is WONDERFUL

Children and Youth growth and focus

Vibrant church

Mix of ages is important

Children and Youth celebrated

Community of this church is an example; feel at home here at church

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Small groups increase spirituality of congregation
Became an open and affirming church
Started Anchor Group (men)
Church organ
RENEWED stewardship of church, inside and out, and our church in the community
Our church is animated – smiling and warm
Engaged congregation
Chatty when entering
Good we are open to the community

thoughts on question #3

Strong collaborative style between Bob and parents of youth group.
Bob and staff like Nick Bruning
Collaborative with music
Bob wants all the detail and too last minute
Old style Vickie could do her own thing
Nurturing and development of associate ministers needed, or maybe different Co-Ministers
We embrace tradition and we are not afraid to try something new. (The church evolves at a pace that is right for the church.)
We are welcoming to all.

STRATEGIC future focus needed for our church – none in last two decades.
Church does not need to be different, so some worried about too many changes – church not broken.
Worried that the church might become too informal or too folksy.
Generational differences about music, what we wear, etc.
ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS OF SENIOR AND ASSOCIATE MINISTER (CO-MINISTERS) AND CONGREGANTS MIGHT NEED TO BE REDEFINED.

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Table #5

About You:

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- At TriCon as a member for 8(?) years; 3 years as a choir member. (Posy Dyer)
- Regular worship attendance. (Fred Kinch)
- 10 years. Regular attendance. Chaired one committee; participated in one other. Trained facilitators for Advent and Lenten Series. (Allie Kussin)
- 58 years – member of Diaconate; Filipov Forum committee; Nominating committee; Interim Search committee; Christian Ed committee; Caring Connection – meals; Knit Wits
- Started in 1982 when mother died across the street. Was close with Tuck as he knew my college minister. Committees: Library, Deacon, Sunday School, Caring Connection, nursery, Lenten and Advent groups, Marriage enrichment group, once Confirmation mentor, Choir, Fellowship
- Began attending in 1991; returned 1993. Regular attendance. Clerk, Mission, Caring Connection, Liturgist, Meal preparation (Barbara Stevens)
- Choir member since 1980. Became more involved in church governance after Tuck Gilbert left and TriCon became a divided congregation. (Chuck Stevenson)
- Joined approximately 38 years ago (maybe more?). Committees: CE; Library; Diaconate (2 terms); Strategic Planning Com; Stephen Ministry 2003; Caring Connection; Knit Wits. Now attend most every week, less active than when I was younger, but still very engaged.

Questions:

7. What ministry did the congregation and its pastoral leaders accomplish together over the last twenty-five years? (Please list a few specific, stand out ministries.)

- Pulling together and keeping the congregation well informed about big projects such as the organ, and rebuilding of the balcony
- Mission –local (prison, preparing meals), Africa, disaster relief, etc. – focus is on Social Justice. Children/Youth – Christian education, youth group, mission trips, etc. Music/Choir – beautiful! Organ is great.
- The adult education program, especially its small group format which is unique. Growth/improvement of the physical plant – organ and fellowship hall, heating systems, etc. even in difficult times. Maintaining/growing mission programs and focus on social justice. (Fred Kinch)
- TriCon is a very friendly church. There are no strangers who walk through the doors. If you are ill and in the hospital – someone visits in person to see about you. Sometimes food is part of that visits. Sincere interest.

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- Children. Sanctuary. Grief counseling. 9/11 consultations. Counseling with parents, illness, and friendship. Assisting on passing of parents/deaths.
- Created small groups: Anchor and Seasonal groups. Built fellowship hall. Came to consensus on being open and affirmative. Maintained church structure (physical) and weather through cultural events.
- Open and affirming congregation. Trust. Beginning of the Filipov Peace and Justice Forum. The African AIDS choir. Jan and Ruthann Hall's ministry in Africa. Staff model accomplished under Tuck Gilbert continues. Outreach and Community. I think, under John, the lay leaders were established. He was also good at delegating and it seemed that "something" was always happening.
- Spiritual enrichment through the groups and retreats. Meditation. Yoga and Book group. Trips in the summer. Mission trip for women (Hurricane Katrina). Monthly supper (soup salad) with spiritual learning. Cambodia. Open and affirming. Filipov Forum. Advent and Lenten series.
- CE/Youth Ministry has blossomed under Bob and Carrie and Nick. Music Ministry – this has always been strong under Vickie's guidance. but it thriving now. (Barbara Stevens)
- Congregation learned how to like and respect each other. It took a long time (8 years) to become an open and affirming church. At John's suggestion, we developed a truly professional church service. (Chuck Stevenson)
- Created and maintained Mission commitment of 20%. Maintained excellent Youth group and Mission Trip. Became Open and Affirming. Small groups – lent and advent (had existed before but in different format, early morning). Established Filipov Forum. Organ. Building parish hall. Rebuilt trust after division over David Butler.
- John Lombard – mission increase, Sharing Foundation, church addition and organ, Stephen Ministry

8. Pastoral leaders and congregational members develop a style of working with one another over time. How would you describe the working relationship in ministry that you experienced with the various pastoral leaders during this twenty-five year period?

- Seems to me that the congregation members feel free and confident about making suggestions to the clergy, or commenting on either positively or adversely.
- Structured and hierarchical ... component of top-down in service and church organization. Very organized – seemed well put together and much time and ownership put in.
- Congregation is well engaged in the work of the church. Getting volunteers doesn't seem to be a problem. Large attendance at congregational meeting and functions. Emphasis on the congregational members to do the ministry; clergy are more facilitators than enablers. Clergy helps the congregation form a vision for the church.
- Openness and caring of the whole church family.
- I am an intellectual and scientist. I have serious doubts regarding biblical acts. I believe astronomical facts challenge bible. However, I have faith!! My faith stabilizes my religion.
- It tended to be a top-down style, although there were congregational times where the community spoke clearly. (Allie Kussin)
- Karen Lord made a difference, just as Ellie Stengel made a difference in the early years. Tuck Gilbert and John Lombard were always available – their doors were always open. John was inspirational, and continued our visitation to hospitals.

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- Connect people to people – especially Judy Walpole.
- In the role of Clerk, I observed strong leadership skills in committee chairs at Ch. Committee meetings. We've always had strong moderators. I've always had the sense that Judy Walpole is indispensable. She knows everything and everyone. This has been a positive, but what would we ever do if she retired. We probably should do more! (Barbara Stevens)
- We had talented Associate Ministers that kept and dedicated church members who shared their talents and time to keep the church moving forward. (Chuck Stevenson)
- Inspirational leadership; Cooperative shared ministry. Encouragement to become active and lead something we are passionate about (example, bible studies). Outreach.
- Openness – caring – change – variety – many associates

9. Going forward into the future, what about this style of working together in ministry would you want to continue and what would you want to do differently?

Continue

- Listen suggestions from each other programs from Community involvement – movies, forums, concerts (Posy Dyer)
- Not stuffy. Ministers personally involved, give meaningful sermons and messages. Continue more of the church adults with our youth. People already involved; good balance.
- Balance between the clergy and congregational members is good. Should be continued (clergy should not become the primary doers). Communication with congregation is satisfactory, very satisfactory. (Fred Kinch)
- Caring for people who may be outside our normal social boundaries – caring through offerings for mission opportunities.
- More attention to belief versus faith.
- Building a culture of shared work toward reaching both within and outside our congregation - collaboration. (Allie Kussin)
- Involvement in community; staff model continues; small groups; inspiration from pastors; welcoming; more spirituality
- Late evening Christmas service; trips in the summer; small groups; caring connection has been great; Antiques Show; associate ministers brought enlightenment
- Continue and increase collaboration; continue strong and healthy CE and Youth program and Music program. (Barbara Stevens)
- Continue the activities, such as the Youth Group program, that attract new members and actually give the young group opportunities to participate in experiences that help them realize the real world is not just like living in Concord. (Chuck Stevenson)
- Emphasis on cooperative leadership. Meaningful worship – scripture, sermon, music and prayer that relate and connect – requires coordination and cooperative approach. Caring emphasis.
- Welcome EVERYONE. Openness between pastors and congregation. Mission focus. Mission trip. Youth programs.

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Do Differently

- Please note in the Sunday bulletins the names of the young people who light the candles on the altar table. (Posy Dyer)
- Focus on spiritual matters, more pastoral care visits. We don't have Stephen Ministry anymore but still better with the minister (eg. Margaret C and her role). Not much dealt with for end of life – area that seems ignored. Sponsor use of church for other groups, eg. AA.
- Better acoustics
- More attention to caring for death issues, counseling and love.
- Involve those who attend (but are not members) more fully. Variety in service to keep it fresh. Engage current events – from spiritual perspectives. (Allie Kussin)
- Learning more of how to put spiritual practice in our lives. More small groups. More informal gatherings. Life transition groups with spiritual guidance, not just secular. More pastoral care. More learning about social justice (forums and speakers)
- Ditto Michele Forinash's table's thoughts, including time for silence. (Barbara Stevens)
- More opportunities for adult mission trips. Retreats (co-ed) around specific subject – i.e. forgiveness, activism – which may lead to more involvement in co-op ministry.
- More cooperation between pastors

Table #5 Notes:

Caring at the front

Need to be more welcoming and follow through – reach out to friends/visitors

Caring Connection very important

Mission Statement important – 2 relatively new members strongly believe in mission

Music is a big deal

We support ministerial consultation to sick patients in hospital

Deacons visit to shut ins is great. But ministers must also visit with shut-ins

Ministers should “reach out” to shut-ins and others who need outreach help and associations

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THE WAY WE WERE: TOGETHER IN MINISTRY
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Table #7

About You:

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- Member since 1975; served on Diaconate, Sunday School teacher, Building Committee, Organ Committee, Finance Committee, Mission Committee (Rick Johnson)
- 40+ years – regular worship, Sunday School teacher, Diaconate, helped start Caring Connection, 20 years on Memorial Reception team, 15 years on Café team for Antiques Show, Pastor-Parish Committee, search committee for Bob Johnson. (Weezie Johnson)
- Came in 1966. Taught Sunday School, was a Stephen Minister, served in the library committee, worked for sick members, visited an elderly woman at lunchtime for several years, sings in the choir.

Questions:

10. What ministry did the congregation and its pastoral leaders accomplish together over the last twenty-five years? *(Please list a few specific, stand out ministries.)*

- Started Caring Connection. Healed church after David Butler. Renovated parish hall. Acquired new organ. Raised funds for mission endowment. (Rick Johnson)
- Caring Connection. Expansion of parish hall facility. Antiques Show and café funds to mission. Filipov Forum. Open and Affirmative. Organ. Healed church after David Butler. (Weezie Johnson)
- A sense of trust and sharing was established by the minister. Minister knew what challenges members were experiencing and offered support. Talks in the library by church members who have written books (i.e. Bob Watson). Caring Connection. Antiques Show.
- Establish Filipov Forum. Expand church's reach outside the country. Experiment with two Sunday services.
- Spiritual Enrichment group (on Mondays) with Diane Frost, Mitzy Hill Crampton, Deanna Kohl. Youth Group/Youth Ministry. (Carol Anne Skellie)
- Great service to people – spiritual mission trips are rewarding. Antiques Show gives more to charities and great for volunteers.

11. Pastoral leaders and congregational members develop a style of working with one another over time. How would you describe the working relationship in ministry that you experienced with the various pastoral leaders during this twenty-five year period?

- Informal and easy-going relationship w John Lombard – left big decisions entirely up to congregation (Rick Johnson)

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- Top-down hierarchical style. Supportive of volunteers. Pastoral leaders expected too much from congregation, initiating too many project (Weezie Johnson)
- Minister delivered messages that gave insight and way of looking at life
- Minister either led a project with others supporting sometimes a parishioner suggested a project with minister supporting or not
- I did not work with the ministry. I was helped by the Caring Connection. (Carol Anne Skellie)
- Great relationship with all ministers. Study the bible in classes. Enforcing sample of stories. Show love and compassion to all. Music is great – music retreats help

12. Going forward into the future, what about this style of working together in ministry would you want to continue and what would you want to do differently?

Continue

- Strong pastoral care program. Strong youth ministry. (Rick Johnson)
- Want ministers to continue to be supportive and appreciative of lay volunteers/leaders. Strong youth program with pastoral leaders involved. Lay ministry empowered through Caring Connection. (Weezie Johnson)
- The people who attend this church are one of its biggest assets. I like small group discussions.
- More bible study classes – gives different ideas, help more who need it. Forgiveness is important. Talk about God and Jesus to others. Small groups.
- Youth program, Small groups, Caring Connection. Active membership that is welcoming. Balance between ministers and members.

Do Differently

- Senior minister should be more of a leader in church operations and activities, e.g., stewardship, and not leave so much up to the staff and congregational leaders. (Rick Johnson)
- Want pastoral leaders to work more collegially with congregation. Want pastoral leaders to initiate less events/projects, etc. i.e., role model a “less is more” expectation. (Weezie Johnson)
- I would like to see more collaborative work.
- More quiet when entering church.
- Introspective look at mission and pastoral care by ministers to members.

Notes Table #7

Question #1 – Accomplishments

Filipov Forum

Antiques Show

Caring Connection

Parish Hall expansion

Continued strength of membership

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Organ – coming together
sense of caring

Question #2 – Pastoral Style

Support and collegiate
Cambodian orphanage
sometimes butted heads with John Lombard
Pastoral leaders expect too much of congregation – sometimes get burned out

Question #3 – What to Continue/What Different

Small groups good
warm, friendly, good humor
pastoral care is good
what if traditional style doesn't work for some people?
continue strong youth ministry and music ministry

Question #4

We should continue our strong ministries in pastoral care, youth ministry, and small groups, but try to avoid burning out our ministers and ourselves!

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- 10 years, regular worship attendance, teach Sunday School, committee membership

Questions:

13. What ministry did the congregation and its pastoral leaders accomplish together over the last twenty-five years? (Please list a few specific, stand out ministries.)

- Ministry to youth, Sunday School, meals to homeless shelter, improvement of facilities
- Worked hard to update the facilities. Feel we moved from an "old style" ministry to a more modern ministry
- Day of service in April. Small group meetings (Advent/Lent). Voyagers (5th & 6th gr). Christmas pageant. Hosanna singers.
- Fellowship events – ham and bean dinner. CE program. Youth Group. Open and Affirming. Filipov Forum.

14. Pastoral leaders and congregational members develop a style of working with one another over time. How would you describe the working relationship in ministry that you experienced with the various pastoral leaders during this twenty-five year period?

- Supportive. Caring. Challenging to people to come forward to accomplish tasks.
- I have always had an "open style" with our ministry
- Church leaders work well together. Last 5-6 years have been difficult with senior clergy.
- Warm, but w appropriate distance/formality. Sunday services – relevant. Unfailing personal attention.
- Hierarchical – sort of autocratic. Ideas originate at the top – w senior minister – not open to new ideas – shuns validation of lay leadership. (Associate ministers are different.)

15. Going forward into the future, what about this style of working together in ministry would you want to continue and what would you want to do differently?

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Continue

- Cooperation - using talents of lay people
- Caring Connection. Working with shut-ins and nursing homes
- Small group gatherings. Caring Connection. More congregational involvement during service expand Stephen Ministry to support clergy.
- Pastoral care (visiting, calls, emails, 1-1 meetings). Relevance in Sunday morning worship. Bible-based preaching.
- Passion to mission involvement. Passion for Youth program and CE. Tap into gifts of individual members.

Do Differently

- Be a little more
- Get rid of pews – want workable chairs. Enlarge outreach with a substantial commitment to Africa engagement
- Strengthen Christian Education program – too daunting for new volunteers, often too young for target audiences. Create Senior and Associate Minister job descriptions from the laity.
- Improved encouragement of lay leadership. Open ourselves to community wide events. Open to new ideas. Opportunity for women’s fellowship. More collegially among pastoral leaders.

Notes – Table #8

#1

Update facilities – shortchange mission and outreach? Coordination with clergy, congregation, and staff.

Christian Ed – Sunday School, Youth Groups, Hosanna singers, Voyagers, Seekers, Small Groups Old style (traditional) and new style ministry – technology. More relaxed style from Bob. More willingness to try new things – open.

Reverence/formality in Sunday Service

Reaching out – Filipov Forum and other outreach to Muslims.

Ministry to more diverse congregation.

#2

Tolerant

Warm/present – formal

Sr. Minister in charge

Shift to disconnected from Congregation

Theological strength

#3

Continue

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small groups – expand scope

Cooperation

Theological strength

Do Differently

Sr. Minister w Youth – more open

Collegial help between Sr. and Assoc. minister

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THE WAY WE WERE: TOGETHER IN MINISTRY
Trinitarian Congregational Church, Concord MA
Sunday, May 21, 2017

Table #9

About You:

(Please include here such information as how many years you have been involved at TriCon and how you have been involved in its ministry, i.e. regular worship attendance, just holiday attendance, held an office, been on a committee, taught Sunday School, or volunteered other ways. You can share your name if you like, but it is not necessary. Just speak from your own experience. If you don't know how to answer a question, or it doesn't apply to you, that is okay.)

- Church School, committees, semi-regular attendee (Andrew Thut)
- Member 20+ years, fairly regular attendee. Church Council rep from Mission for 10+ years. Served on Mission committee for 15 years; chair for 5+ years. Initiated & Coordinated meals for United Homes Shelter in Dorchester (15 years)
- 20 years, regular worship attendee, Property Chair, Fellowship. Church school teacher. Youth Mission trip leader.
- Been with TriCon for 15 years. Attend church about 1/6 weeks. Taught Sunday school, been on membership, property, and CE Committees.
- Only been a member 3-4 years.
- Member for 2 years.
- We've been involved for 23 years. Regular worship attendance. Served on committees and volunteered other ways.
- 35 years at TriCon. Regular attendee. Served on many committees.
- 40+ years, reg. attendance at worship, ONA process, Sunday School, Diaconate, Laity worship, PPRC, organize retreats, mission trip, search committee (2x), Antiques Fair, Lent and Advent Small Group Facilitator.
- I'm in 60s and have been attending for 35 years. I raised 3 kids in the church, have attended pretty regularly and also served on many different committees.

Questions:

16. What ministry did the congregation and its pastoral leaders accomplish together over the last twenty-five years? (Please list a few specific, stand out ministries.)

- Small groups and Anchor groups. Commitment to being active and engaged members of the community. Youth.
- Outreach to those in need w/in our Congregation (Caring Connection, Knitwits, ministerial visits). Sunday School and Youth Programming. Outreach to those in need outside our congregation (Mission, Social Concerns, Youth Mission Trip). Open and Affirming process. 9/11 gatherings and Filipov Forum.
- Growing a community of faith that is close knit, yet open and welcoming. We hug each other while smiling out. The love of Jesus Christ is the unity of the faith journey (this is sometimes waivering). A giving community – mission money/cooking/mission trip – want to grow this

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- They kept us together as a church, and staff as well.
- I have been a church member for about 5 years, so really do not have a good sense of the direction of the church prior to John Lombard, specifically what changes may have been made. Organ. Community involvement.
- Relevant, insightful, sometimes inspirational Sunday services. Connection with individuals through small groups and committee participation. Foundation of faith for the children through Sunday School, Youth program and Mission trip. Many ways to serve the community.
- Mission. Open. Antiques Show. Small groups. Confirmation. Reaching out to sick and elderly.
- Lasting lessons of service for our young people.
- Mission trips. Shelter meals. Filipov Forum services after 9/11. Christmas pageant. Music in the service. Youth Group. Discussion Group. Easter Sunday. Regular Sunday worship. Flowers to shut-ins. Pastoral visits to hospitals and nursing homes. Funerals. Fellowship. Lenten and Advent series.
- Mission commitments – 20% of our budget – very important and this expands out to our youth – mission trip. Fellowship – reflected in capital campaign for refurbished parish hall where fellowship is encouraged. Very high level of music ministry, again reflected in large capital investment for organ and choir loft.
- ONA – healing after Butler. Al Filipov Forum. Connection to prisons – AVP, xmas gifts, sign along, parenting, other volunteer – resume writing - music, library
- Mission Committee – well organized, well-funded, “pro” outreach. Youth Program from Seekers through Senior High Youth Group. Caring Connection really helped my mom – outreach “within.” Small groups discussions.

17. Pastoral leaders and congregational members develop a style of working with one another over time. How would you describe the working relationship in ministry that you experienced with the various pastoral leaders during this twenty-five year period?

- Shepherding sheep (Andrew Thut)
- Some ideas/programs/initiatives have sprung up from individuals or committees (esp. Mission, Social Concerns, Stephen Ministers) while others from Minister directly. It was difficult to say “no” to Minister’s initiatives. I’ve felt that if there was not “buy in” from staff, various programs and initiatives would be successful. Extremely competent staff - so easy for congregants to let them “do the work.”
- Open door- approachable – conversational yet respectful – leading the spiritual growth leaving day to day business to lay people and committee work. John was ritualized and ceremonial in a traditional style that was comfortable to me. Youth ministry worked best when there was a lay person and an ordained spiritual leader.
- We’ve kept in prayer in small groups to help our leaders
- Again, have not been at TriCon as long as most members, but it certainly seems like John had a very good rapport with members. I would say Bon does also and personally I have had most interaction with him. Carrie O’Brien as well. Message of inclusion and tolerance (thinking of Bob and Carrie). Approachable.
- With John, leadership from a place of genuine devotion, knowledge, and authority. With Bob, leadership from open devotion, knowledge, accessibility, and relativity.

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- I think that the senior minister style was a little “academic” and “preachy” (for instance, did not generally attend coffee hour). I would describe it as somewhat pedantic – there was much to learn there – good sermons, but not quite “interpersonal” – maybe paternalistic ministry sometimes in a not so great way.
- Sometimes there seems to be a sense of self-consciousness there is not necessary but in general it is clear everyone wants to be open and forthright, transparent.
- Personal. Caring.
- I have always felt that the laity was very much encouraged by the ministers. We have never felt shut out. This style has resulted in a very vibrant church. Free flow of ideas, sharing of special talents has made our worship community strong and effective. Also, this is a highly welcoming environment. Everyone can play a role.
- Ideas of congregation given support and encouragement – sometimes independently, sometimes in conjunction with ministers, sometimes without.
- Reverend John was a strong leader at the top. He was the main engine. Margaret Crockett performed important pastoral care work. Until Bob came, the associates worked mainly with youth and not as well integrated with adults. John’s style was to be captain. The church became very organized under John.

18. Going forward into the future, what about this style of working together in ministry would you want to continue and what would you want to do differently?

Continue

- Continue to cultivate different avenues for people to pursue this journey of faith outside of just Sunday morning.
- Collaborative and open
- Traditions and rituals, open door, learning scripture based growth and education. Stay Jesus focused. Be open and affirming without apologizing for my beliefs. Nurture people wherever they are on their faith journey.
- Regular congregation services.
- Community involvement especially for the youth groups. I do feel like more of this would be beneficial as part of church school curriculum, youth groups, and mission. Especially might be an important, safe place for teens. Small groups seem to be much valued.
- Accessibility
- Good sermons. A sense of being a leader – I like the idea of a commanding leader in that not everything can be consensus bound.
- Open Table service. Mission Trips. Caring Connection.
- Keep our strong commitment to Mission. Keep emphasis on Fellowship and Community.
- Personally, I have been very happy with the way things have been going. Don’t feel any pressing needs to change much.
- Ideas of congregation given serious consideration, support, and encouragement.

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Do Differently

- The Laity could assume more leadership. The Senior Minister could be more of a partnership with the associates and collegial with staff – a bit more pastoral care within the community.
- Adult and Family mission opportunities. Find ways to remain relevant to people’s lives. (Andrew Thut)
- Utilize the talents of the members. Encourage them to do the ‘work’
- Ministering to the young in real ways
- Regular bible reflections and lean more towards Pentecostalism
- Much of my church experience has largely been teaching Sunday School so I have felt disconnected from what else is going on at the services, etc.
- Bring in young families
- Be more interactive, but maintain boundaries. More connected to religion.
- Change the Sunday school curriculum.
- Make the sermons more accessible, less intellectualized.
- Have a way to take ideas proposed and consider them against our “mission” as identified and agreed upon – those that fit under our mission, move forward. Those that don’t are put on hold – but not lost – revisited at later date. This way our many activities are focused on our agreed upon mission – reminding us of our purpose.

Table Notes #9

I.

Mission

Sunday evening services

Open and Affirming

Caring Connection

Outreach

Giving and Social Concerns

Ministered to our youth lay and ordained

Minister in times of crisis – 9/11 – embracing

Community involvement – adult and youth

Commitment to small groups growth; to mission; to active and engaged members of community; to youth

Sustaining giving and volunteering

Giving of people’s time in areas on need

Youth Group ministry

Women’s Fellowship

Committee structure

Three major capital campaigns

II.

John –

- Directive. Strong Ideas. Communicative of vision.
- Superb pastoral care.
- Intellectual Christian preacher

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- Student of the heart
- More distant

Associate Minister –

- Servant leader style
- Open to ideas and mentoring
- Willing to be flexible
- Very warm
- Bob's preaching style is emotional, experimental, from the heart, less theological, more direct

Overall –

- educational/learning environment
- omni-present
- John – distant; Bob – warm/connected
- traditions and rituals
- open door style

People led directives – less powerful

Minister led directive – more powerful

Minister does not have leadership unless staff is 100 percent behind it

Lots is reliant on competent staff – decreases outside input and decreases volunteerism

CD Director is a key position

III.

Cultivate different avenues. Pursue a journey of faith outside of Sunday. Committed to Youth.

More Adult and family mission options

Find ways to remain relevant

Increase growth of spirituality

Openness at senior levels coming up from congregation

Utilize talents in organization – need to be nurtured and drawn out

Aim high - growth as community – but stay focused so we don't overextend or burnout. We need to nurture ourselves as well one another as a community and outreach to outside.

Don't forget to deepen our spirituality and inner strong faith.

Music is so important to worship.

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THE WAY WE WERE: TOGETHER IN MINISTRY
Trinitarian Congregational Church, Concord MA
Sunday, May 21, 2017

Table #10

About You:

(Please include here such information as how many years you have been involved at TriCon and how you have been involved in its ministry, i.e. regular worship attendance, just holiday attendance, held an office, been on a committee, taught Sunday School, or volunteered other ways. You can share your name if you like, but it is not necessary. Just speak from your own experience. If you don't know how to answer a question, or it doesn't apply to you, that is okay.)

- 20 years or thereabouts. Organ committee (x2); Music Committee; Sunday School teacher; worked with Angel Choir (Michele Forinash)
- 24 years; ran the Heifer Fair; taught some in church school grades K-2
- I've been attending services fairly regularly for twenty-one years and I've served on 4 committees, including chairing the Mission Com. for 3 years; I've also served significantly by volunteering my professional skills and knowledge
- Founder of Anchor Group. Attend Tuesday Anchor meetings as often as my schedule allows. My "ministry" has also embraced town government, Ignation Volunteer Corp, church committees, etc. I don't attend Sunday services often due to schedule.
- 15 years as parishioners; 14 years as staff
- 45 years; quite involved (Ruth Piper)

Questions:

19. What ministry did the congregation and its pastoral leaders accomplish together over the last twenty-five years? (Please list a few specific, stand out ministries.)

- New organ. Open and Affirming congregation. Youth mission trip. (Michele Forinash)
- Maintaining a vibrant church school program. Improved the function of the building which facilitated in maintaining the membership.
- First and foremost, for me, the church has ministered to the spiritual needs of my community in times of joy, sadness, need, and celebration.
- Builds community, nurtures community. Helps members explore and question their faith in a safe, caring environment.
- Open and Affirming and inclusive church. Anchor Group and Small Groups programs. Supported the growth of church school programming. TriCon has been steeped in a community that continues to grow and support one another. We are very welcoming. Property improvement; new organ.
- Accomplished a better Sunday School (cooperative teaching), better youth programs, lots of new construction and improved property, more congregational involvement in worship service, more hired positions.
- Strong youth program. Expanded adult education program. Strong leadership of church school; difficult environment. Sunday services: avoidance of political; not guilt-trips; aspirational.

20. Pastoral leaders and congregational members develop a style of working with one another over time. How would you describe the working relationship in ministry that you experienced with the various pastoral leaders during this twenty-five year period?

- It has been more hierarchical in the past. I see it moving toward more shared ministry and more transparent. More open and direct communication. (Michele Forinash)
- Quiet church/don't applaud; restrained. If you're lucky enough to be here, you're lucky enough. Centering. Stiff upper lip. Christmas Eve – the things that are not done shall remain undone – well said.
- I very much appreciate the collaborative quality between ministers and the congregation.
- Collaborative
- In my role as Church School Directory I am grateful for the collaborative working relationship with Bob Brown, members of the staff, and volunteer committees.
- Two leaders: administrative – Judy Walpole; spiritual – John Lombard. Almost no involvement of minister's spouse. (Ruth Piper)
- work together – members and pastoral leaders; respectful; openness to suggestions; look outside "marketing" non-political

21. Going forward into the future, what about this style of working together in ministry would you want to continue and what would you want to do differently?

Continue

- The focus on the youth program and the leadership there is amazing; would love to see this continue. Allow for searching, allow for questioning – this is magical. Share gifts – collaborate. (Michele Forinash)
- Child the 'poor get everything'; connections/sustained/together; we realize we are fortunate in the material sense – still everyone looks to church as the centering force in the world. Church has welcomed/accepted people getting involved in new ways with new projects.
- Continue to target levels of mission commitment, i.e., specific percent of budget dedicated faithfully
- Continue to create/cultivate safe place to be vulnerable and questioning
- Continue collaborative relationships
- Continue to emphasize children; liturgists; youth; technology; hired staff to lead volunteers (Ruth Piper)
- Continue the way we work together as a team; how to reach/gain psychological commitment to importance of church school

Do Differently

- More focus on social action. More into the community focus on contemporary issues. More contemplative evening, quiet service. (Michele Forinash)

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- We need space in church for people – more the new organ to the front in place of the old organ. Joys & Concerns – from children/church school and from our college students via technology) text, email, facebook, Instagram); better getting podcasts to our college students. Want child and family ushers.
- Expand on social action of congregation in which members engage directly
- More small group church experiences. Evening, meditative, contemplative services. Put our faith in action. What does faith look like in the context of modern society?
- Would love the opportunity to have parents and non-parents share their gifts with the church school program. The Pipers are a wonderful example of this. I believe clergy presence in the church school community is important. More opportunity for quiet, meditative worship during the service.
- More technology (Ruth Piper)
- Reach out to other schools/churches to learn possibilities

Notes - Table #10

I.

A vibrant church school based on a cooperative model

Property has been very well maintained and improved which has made ministry more successful

Church builds and nurtures community

Great at nurturing investigation and exploration of community

Church has supported church school

Open and affirming, through could be more diverse

II.

Collaboration between clergy and congregation

Be quiet and respectful has morphed recently to more boisterous

Whatever is not done shall remain undone

Style is familial and trusting with little finger pointing or guilt-tripping

At times, more attention to order of service and choice of hymns

Can there be outreach to children take more advantage of technology (i.e. social media)

Family join church school but don't necessarily attend

Take old organ out and move new organ to new space

Until John Lombard, spouse of minister was part of the "ministerial package"

Sunday, May 21st



THE WAY WE WERE: TOGETHER IN MINISTRY
Trinitarian Congregational Church, Concord MA
Sunday, May 21, 2017

Table - unspecified

About You:

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- 24 years, generally regular worship attendance, former moderator and choir of mission and social concerns committee, pastor parish relations committee, currently on membership committee. Taught Sunday school, acted as a mentor to 4 confirmands and been on 2 mission trips.
- 15+ years attendance in choir to present; finance committee for 10+ years, also as chair; anchor group
- Regular worship attendance; in choir; stewardship and finance committees – and head; taught Sunday school
- 23 years with children in church school and completed numerous mission trips; fairly regular attendance with much committee work and church school leadership

Questions:

22. What ministry did the congregation and its pastoral leaders accomplish together over the last twenty-five years? (Please list a few specific, stand out ministries.)

- Youth ministry (church school, angel breakfast, seekers, sr high yg, DG, mission trips). Formal and informal worship service (high holiday-seasonal church services, small groups, 1st Sunday). Mission outreach (Africa, Cambodia, etc.)
- Speak kindly to each other, all people. No grandstanding.
- A real sense of church family: Intergenerational programs. Being able to feel a sense of family as an age difference.
- Kept church strong, growing congregation. Youth program – very strong. Music – new organ – very good, enjoyable, powerful
- Mission trips (youth). Small group mission work – after hurricane Katrina (women went to MS). Exodus 2016. Ministry with South Africa and Zimbabwe w Rev. Fungayi Mutsumbei.
- Mission – various. Sunday evening services. Maundy Thursday service. Parish hall renovation and organ. Open and affirming. Small groups, Lenten and advent. Spiritual enrichment.

23. Pastoral leaders and congregational members develop a style of working with one another over time. How would you describe the working relationship in ministry that you experienced with the various pastoral leaders during this twenty-five year period?

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- Varied as expected. John – big picture, many ideas, often his idea of what the church should or could be. Could absorb all meeting time with style of speaking. Could be hard to talk to. Bob – engaging, provocative in his presentation of the bible
- Autonomy – each committee could and did operate on its own, and with respect toward others. For a few years, I did express a wish that members and other committees could think about the financial implications of their works.
- Quite organized, but opportunity for everyone to participate. Children and young people being responsible for services, parts of services.
- Open, everyone listens to committee members. Strong at the top – re mission; whole church did not contribute. Stewardship – not accepting of new ideas. Sunday School – very open, try new ideas, everyone grateful. We don't do walks for bread.
- Top-down: I recall being chair of membership com. John Lombard set our membership schedule and would not allow us to change how we approached membership. Bottom-up: small group mission trip to Mississippi was organized by a lay leader. Sideways communication: trying to share info with Pastor Parish Relationship Com never really went anywhere.
- With Stephen Ministry experienced a directive leadership. Pastoral Care. Intellectual preaching. Nurturing style.

24. Going forward into the future, what about this style of working together in ministry would you want to continue and what would you want to do differently?

Continue

- Open dialogue, a minister who listens sometimes more than they talk, still needs vision & leadership
- Commerce and openness between members, clergy, and committees. Youth Program
- Pastor being the leader but the involvement of lay ministry has been great. Lay members being able to do many of the things pastor usually does (visiting, etc.) Continued involvement of children.
- Listen to everyone. [We don't know what the conference does with our contribution.] Bob listens better than John did. Committees listen to everyone; not-good ideas just float away. Keep the great youth program. Keep fellowship events; keep small groups.
- Keep small group ministries and small-home group discussion! Both mission groups (youth and adult). The continuity with Voyagers – Seekers – Youth Group
- Cultivate servant leadership of the Asst. Minister. Preaching from the heart and emotions

Do Differently

- Less abstract, less academic relationship of pastor to parishioners
- Set up executive committee or persons to see that tough decisions are made and carried out. More/better stewardship effort and expectations of members.

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- Know the children. Where there is control from the top, not trying new ideas – especially on stewardship. Mission (taking 20% of pledges) be more open ... I wish there was a board of directors, board of visitors, etc. that you could go to if there is something that is wrong or bothering you.
- Change how some committees were “directed” or lead by clergy in the past. However, increase awareness of children and youth to ministers. Increase lay leaders’ involvement with shut-ins and seniors. Increase social interactions between congregants and ministers or congregants and other congregants.
- Adult/Family mission trips. More openness to congregational and asst. ministers. Ideas on part of senior minister. More pastoral care. Remain relevant.