

Purpose

To gain a better understanding of the congregation and its preferences. Whether part of a marketing planning process or not, a survey can help you understand how to be of greater service to congregants.

Considerations in Conducting the Survey

To achieve the best results, here are some suggestions:

- Conduct the survey in the same way with all respondents. For example, if you are doing the survey during a worship service, collect all the surveys before the end of the service. People's responses *will* vary if they have a chance to talk about it with someone else. Also, your response will be severely affected if people take them home. Conversely, if you send the survey in the mail, do not hand them out in person.
- For the lowest cost, we recommend that you conduct the survey during the worship service. Since you may miss some folks on any given Sunday, plan to do it two Sundays in a row.
- As a rule of thumb, if your "universe" (congregation) numbers less than 1,000, a 50% response will give you a reasonable confidence in the results. The smaller the universe, the higher percentage return you need for good confidence. If your response is less, be sure to keep in mind that your results may not be representative.
- The determining factor of where you conduct the survey is time. Test it by timing while someone unrelated to the project fills one out. If your survey is very long, you may want to send it in the mail. You might also consider doing it in two installments at different times. Set the stage by letting people know you will be doing some research over several weeks or months. Allow time to elapse between installments.
- The more multiple-choice questions you include, the faster and easier it will be for people to complete, even though it may require more paper. Another advantage of this format is that it is far easier to analyze and compile.

- When deciding whether to include a question or not, ask yourself:
 - *Does the answer tell us what we want to know? (See the first question under Research planning questions below.)*
 - *Do we know what we will do with this information?*
 - *Do we feel confident that we can follow through on the answer we receive? Asking a question can set up an expectation in the mind of the respondent - so be sure it's an actionable area. (As an extreme example, you wouldn't want to ask people if they would like to receive a check for \$1000 from the church!)*
 - *Will the answer affect plans we have for this year? Don't try to collect information that you might want "someday."*
- Once you have gathered and compiled your results, be sure to share them with your congregation. People feel heard and validated when you share the results. If you are making changes because of the information, you can further reinforce positive feelings by communicating this.

Research Planning Questions

These questions will help you plan ahead as you consider how you will conduct the survey.

1. *What are our research objectives? For example, the objectives of the Basic Congregational Survey are:*
 - *Who are our congregants demographically? How does this relate to the following questions?*
 - *How did they hear of this church?*
 - *How much involvement do they have?*
 - *What do they value most in their spiritual growth?*
2. *How much time do we have to conduct the survey?*
3. *Who will need to be involved?*
4. *Who will need to be informed?*
5. *What materials are needed? What is the associated cost?*
6. *Who will evaluate the results? What equipment is needed for this?*
7. *How will the results be used?*
8. *How will we report the results?*

Basic and Custom Surveys

- The first part of the following survey is the basic survey. The Marketing Department is collecting results from these questions so that it can compile information to share for the benefit of all Unity churches. Those churches willing to share their results will receive a reduced price for the basic survey. We will provide a clean hard copy of the survey layout for you to photocopy for your project.
- The second part of the following pages is labeled “*Optional questions.*” For those ministries wishing to collect more information than the basic survey, these questions are possible ideas of interest. You may also design your own. Our hourly fees apply to work done to add optional questions to create a custom survey and layout. We can provide an estimate before work begins. Again, a clean hard copy will be supplied to you for photocopying.
- If you need assistance with analyzing your data, contact us for an estimate.

YOUR CHURCH NAME
CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY

You are a vital part of our church, and we value your input. By completing this survey, you can help us to know you better, and to serve you better. It will also aid us in spreading the word of Unity more effectively throughout our community. Thank you for taking part in our ministry, and for sharing this information. Since all individual answers will remain strictly anonymous, please do not write your name on this form.

Please check the box next to the one letter or word that best applies to you, unless otherwise instructed.

ABOUT YOUR CHURCH PREFERENCES

1. How did you first learn of this church?
 - a. previously attended another Unity church
 - b. family member
 - c. friend
 - d. attended a workshop, program or class at this church
 - e. acquainted with the minister
 - f. attended a special ceremony (wedding, memorial, christening)
 - g. read the Daily Word
 - h. newspaper ads
 - i. news stories
 - j. other _____

2. How long have you attended this church?
 - a. up to 6 months
 - b. 6 months up to 2 years
 - c. 2 years up to 5 years
 - d. 5 years or more
 - e. attending for the 1st or 2nd time
3. Do you attend another church as well?

Yes No

If so, do you consider Unity to be your home church? Yes No
4. On average, how many times *per month* do you attend worship services at Unity?
 - a. less than 1
 - b. 1
 - c. 2
 - d. 3
 - e. 4 or more
5. On average, how many classes per month do you attend at Unity?
 - a. less than 1
 - b. 1-2
 - c. 3 or more
6. About how many hours per month do you spend volunteering at Unity?
 - a. less than 1
 - b. 1-4
 - c. 5-9
 - d. 10 or more
7. How often do you meditate?
 - a. more than daily
 - b. daily
 - c. semi-weekly
 - d. weekly
 - e. less than weekly
 - f. do not meditate
8. What has been of greatest value to you in your spiritual growth, including activities outside of Unity?
 (*Please check the top 3*):
 - a. worship
 - b. music
 - c. prayer
 - d. fellowship
 - e. the teachings (including minister's talks)
 - f. service to others
 - g. tithing
 - h. church leadership
 - i. Bible study
 - j. books
 - k. retreats
 - l. other _____

ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

1. How many children are in your household? *(If child's other parent is answering this question on a separate survey, please indicate.)*

- infant-2yrs Number _____
- 3-4 yrs Number _____
- 5-9 yrs Number _____
- 9-13 yrs Number _____
- 14-18 yrs Number _____
- no children
- other parent answered

2. Your gender: Male Female

3. Your age:

- a. 18-24
- b. 25-34
- c. 35-44
- d. 45-54
- e. 55-64
- f. 65-74
- g. 75+

4. Marital Status:

- a. single
- b. married
- c. divorced
- d. alternative
- e. separated
- f. widowed

5. Occupation:

- a. self-employed
- b. sales
- c. professional
- d. healthcare
- e. government
- f. education
- g. homemaker
- h. retired
- i. other _____

6. Yearly *household* income:

- a. less than \$15,000
- b. \$15,000-24,999
- c. \$25,000-49,999
- d. \$50,000-74,999
- e. \$75,000-99,999
- f. over \$100,000

7. Your highest level of education?

- a. some high school or less
- b. graduated high school or equivalent
- c. some college or Associate's degree
- d. Bachelor's degree
- e. graduate work or degree

8. Any comments you would like to share?

Thank you and bless you!

OPTIONAL QUESTIONS

The following questions are idea starters for other questions you might want to include. If you don't find a question here that meets your objective, we'll be glad to help you formulate one.

1. If you have been here more than once, what made you want to return?
2. If you've attended events in addition to Sunday services, what made you want to do so?
3. Are you a recorded member of this church? Yes No
4. Ethnicity _____
5. Your religious background:
 - a. Protestant
 - b. Catholic
 - c. Judaism
 - d. another religious background (fill in) _____
 - e. no formal religious background
6. About how many minutes do you travel from your home to Unity?
 - a. less than 5 minutes
 - b. 5 - 14 minutes
 - c. 15 - 24 minutes
 - d. 25 - 35 minutes
 - e. more than 35 minutes
7. What is your zip code? _____
8. Approximate monthly financial contribution to this church?
 - a. less than \$10
 - b. \$11-24
 - c. \$25-49
 - d. \$50-74
 - e. \$75-99
 - f. \$100-149
 - g. \$150-199
 - h. \$200+
9. Which weekly service do you most frequently attend? (give choices)

Why? _____

10. Please rate the following by circling one number for each. If you are unfamiliar with an activity, draw a line through it. (Least important 1, to most important 4.)

Worship services, overall	1	2	3	4
announcements	1	2	3	4
meditation	1	2	3	4
message	1	2	3	4
fellowship	1	2	3	4
Music, overall	1	2	3	4
musician	1	2	3	4
music selection	1	2	3	4
quality of music	1	2	3	4
New Member Sunday	1	2	3	4
Member orientation	1	2	3	4
Holiday services	1	2	3	4
Nursery, Infant-2 yrs	1	2	3	4
Youth Ed Toddlers	1	2	3	4
Youth Ed 6 yr-9yr	1	2	3	4
Uniteens 10-13 yr	1	2	3	4
Y.O.U. 14-18	1	2	3	4
Guest Speakers	1	2	3	4
Counseling	1	2	3	4
Lay ministry	1	2	3	4
Dial-a-Prayer	1	2	3	4
Ushers/Greeters	1	2	3	4
Volunteer opportunities	1	2	3	4
Bookstore	1	2	3	4
Lending library	1	2	3	4
Unity Singles	1	2	3	4
Women of Unity	1	2	3	4

CHURCH SURVEY

11. Please rate the importance of including the following in the Sunday message *(On a scale of 1 to 4. Rate least important 1, to most important 4.)*

Unity Principles	1	2	3	4
Metaphysical lessons	1	2	3	4
Bible history	1	2	3	4
Bible Metaphysics	1	2	3	4
Personal application of teachings	1	2	3	4
Responsibility	1	2	3	4
Commitment	1	2	3	4

12. What additional programs or activities would you like to see offered?

13. What is the best time to attend programs or activities? Weekday morning, afternoon, evening, or Weekend morning, afternoon, evening

14. Which newspapers do you read / radio stations do you listen to? (list)

15. How effective are the following in providing information and answers to questions about our church? *(scale of 1-4, poor to excellent)*

Announcements during Sunday worship	1	2	3	4
Bulletin boards	1	2	3	4
Newsletter	1	2	3	4
Direct mail	1	2	3	4
Newspaper ads	1	2	3	4
Flyers	1	2	3	4
Minister	1	2	3	4
Staff	1	2	3	4
Volunteer fair	1	2	3	4
Sunday bulletin	1	2	3	4
Website	1	2	3	4
Word of mouth	1	2	3	4
Member mailboxes	1	2	3	4

16. (User defined questions also possible.)