

St. John – Dublin Ministry Priorities Survey

St. John is engaged in Ministry Planning as a way to direct our decisions in a variety of areas including staffing, volunteer needs, facilities, and budgeting. Currently, we are interested in MINISTRY PRIORITIES of the congregation. That is, assuming limits on our budget, the number of people who can become actively involved, and the facilities for us to use, it is important for us to ask ourselves, “Where should we focus as a congregation?”

To serve that goal, we have prepared a survey aimed at first of all *informing* people what is already happening at St. John. Where do we currently allocate our time and money? Second, we seek congregational input as to the areas *where our efforts should be enhanced* (or reduced). Third, we seek input on which among many desirable activities should receive *priority as a congregation*. These would be areas that might receive special emphasis in staffing decisions, volunteer efforts, or budgeting.

To be clear, this survey is NOT about particular “tactics” or ways to achieve ministry goals. In any given priority area, there might be many ways to address it (e.g., staffing, volunteers, technology, etc.). But those more specific decisions await discussions with a Senior Pastor, relevant boards, and, ultimately, the congregation who have already discussed the priorities that will guide those decisions.

Thank you for your input! You should also feel free to discuss ministry priorities with any member of the Ministry Priorities Subcommittee of the Executive Council (Robert Shenton, Chair; Mahlon Hamlin, Pete Hennessey, Beth Herring, Tracy Roloff, Pastor Adam Steinbrenner, & Duane Wegener)

For each question, please CIRCLE your response.

Broad categories:

1. Worship

This category is about:

- a. Activities involved with conducting our worship services—which includes choral and instrumental music. This also includes our property, buildings, staff, and miscellaneous supplies.

Did you know?

- On a given Sunday, across our two worship services, we have 2-3 staff members and about 40 congregation members assisting with these activities (i.e., elders, alter guild, readers, acolytes, ushers, audio/video support, child care, greeters, choir/worship team, etc.)!
- We spend about \$627,000 (about 90% of the annual budget) towards the foundational things that allow us to conduct regular worship services (i.e., Staffing, Property/Facilities, Supplies – of course, staffing and facilities also serve many of the other goals, such as education and parish care).

Survey Questions:

- a. For the number of worship services each week. [We currently have one service at 8am and one service at 10:45am on Sunday mornings.]

Reduce efforts
(fewer services needed)

About right

Enhance Efforts
(hold more services)

- b. For the style of worship services. [We currently have a more traditional – blended – service at 8am and a more contemporary service at 10:45am.]

Shift toward
More Traditional

About right

Shift toward
More Contemporary

2. Christian Education

This category is about:

- a. Equipping people to serve through Sunday School and Sunday morning Adult Bible Studies, mid-week Bible Studies, and Small Group Fellowship/Bible Studies (similar to the Story groups from this past year).
- b. St. John Christian Pre-School.
- c. New Member instruction.
- d. Parenting/Family education.

Did you know?

- Sunday morning education activities: We have about 90 members of our congregation regularly participating. Average Sunday School attendance is 40 children (22 in Pre-school through Grade 5, 18 in Jr. High and High School), with about 15 teachers of these various groups; Average Sunday morning Adult Bible Study attendance is 32.
- Across 4 mid-week Bible Studies, attendance is about 30 people each week. We also have 3-4 Fellowship/Bible Study groups with 8-10 people each that meet once or twice per month (some of these were Story groups that stayed together).
- Pre-School: We have 105 children enrolled – with 20 on a wait list. The Pre-School has 3 classrooms that offer 7 different ½-day classes. About 7% of children are St. John members. The rest come from the community and many are international.
- Adult New Member Instruction: We have approximately 10 people going through adult instruction each year; Sessions are led by a Pastor. Parish care prepares meals for each meeting, and groups rotate through serving the meals (8-10 people prepare and serve each meal; 12 meals per year).
- Parenting/Family Education: The most recent parenting/family activities have included parenting speakers (about 1 per year).
- We devote about 2% (\$13,350) of our annual operating budget to Board of Education activities (though we do not actually have a board – staff and volunteers organize on their own). The Pre-School operates largely outside the annual congregation budget, though we allocate \$4000/year for scholarships to help families who could not otherwise afford Pre-School. We budget \$3500/year for parenting/family education. We also currently fund a part-time Family Ministry Director (who also oversees Sunday School and other educational activities; about \$10,500/year).

Survey Questions:

- a. For providing Sunday morning and mid-week opportunities for Christian education and Bible Study and encouraging participation in those groups.

Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

- b. For providing a Christian Pre-School for our church family and community.

Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

- c. For providing New Member Instruction.

Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

- d. For providing Parenting/Family education.

Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

3. Evangelism, Community Outreach, & Congregational Growth

This category is about:

- a. How active we are in gathering others to our congregation—where we have opportunity to equip them to understand and share the love of Christ.
- b. How purposeful we are in sustaining a viable congregation population that sustains a long-term capability to act as a beacon of God’s grace within this community.
- c. Activities not specifically intended as evangelism, but as outreach to the community.

Did you know?

Evangelism & Growth

- Average attendance at Sunday worship services has slightly decreased from 282 in 2007 to 259 in 2016, whereas population within a 25-minute drive of Dublin increased by 70,620 people between 2010 and 2016.
- Only 35.1% of people in Dublin (38.1% in Columbus metro area) identify themselves as religious.
- We haven’t had an active Board of Evangelism for at least five years. The annual budget for Evangelism activities is \$3,300 or 0.49% of our annual operating budget.
- Perhaps the primary activity specifically aimed at community visibility is the booth at Hilliardfest (with about 20 people involved one weekend each year).

Community Outreach

- International Friends: The group meets weekly for English Classes (including introduction to American Culture and Bible Study; 55-60 participants each time; 6-8 volunteers). We budget \$1000/year.
- Faith Mission: Each month for the last three years, approximately 30 people each month have donated food, prepared food, and/or served meals. Most of the food supplies are donated from within the congregation as only \$2,750 of the annual budget goes towards this activity. In addition, we also provide \$2,750 annually to support the Lutheran Social Services Food Pantry and \$2,000 annually to support Lutheran Social Services of Central Ohio.
- Community Garden: This year 122 of the 132 plots belonged to non-members. We budget \$1500 annually to support the Community Garden (and charge \$30/plot per season), but with the addition of more water spigots, the community garden is probably costing us around \$4500 on our water bills.
- The softball/baseball field and cricket fields are used constantly from spring through fall.
- Summer camps: We haven’t conducted a Vacation Bible School program for 3 years. We started a week-long basketball camp last summer that was funded through donations and participant registration. We had 14-16 St. John volunteers – including 5 Pastors who started the day with a devotion – and 5 outside volunteers; we served 34 kids from 9am-3pm Monday - Friday. There is potential to add other camps at some point (e.g., music/arts/drama).
- Each October, the Trunk-or-Treat event draws hundreds of people, mostly from the community (estimate for this year was 600 people). The event is run mostly through volunteers (about 20 per year); Food (hot dogs, popcorn) is purchased through the Congregational Fellowship budget.

Survey Questions:

- a. For our efforts to have a visible presence in our community.

Reduce efforts

About right

Enhance Efforts

- b. For our efforts to “gather” more of our neighbors to SJD and recruit them as new members

Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

- c. For our efforts to reach out to and support people in our community.

Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

4. Missions

This category is about:

- a. Activities we conduct or sponsor to spread the Good News locally and globally.
b. Activities we sponsor to help build the Church at large (i.e., District, Synod, etc.).

Did you know?

- We currently spend 4-5% (\$31,500) of our annual operating budget for external mission work. Most goes to the following: \$8,000 (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach – local outreach to Muslims), \$10,000 (LCMS Synod & District, Appalachian Ministry, Central Ohio Missions, Disaster Relief), \$4,500 (Deaf Ministries), \$3,000 (Seminary Student), \$2,000 (Concordia University in Ann Arbor – the nearest Concordia University), and \$1500 (Lutheran Bible Translators).
- There are many other impactful mission efforts our congregation supports through time and talents, and financially through their own donations (outside the congregation budget), including Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, Dorcas Circle, and an orphanage in Haiti (Divine Family).
- In recent years, we have also sent people on mission trips to Haiti (about 10-12 people each trip), though unrest in Haiti has curtailed those direct visits.

Survey Questions:

- a. For support of local mission efforts that spread the Good News.

Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

- b. For support of global mission efforts that spread the Good News.

Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

- c. For support of programs that help build and strengthen the Synod and Church as a whole (e.g., supporting a seminary student and an LCMS university).

Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

5. Parish Care

This category is about:

- a. Gathering together and supporting the members of the St. John family.

Did you know?

- Youth Ministries: We have not had an active 4th-5th grade group for about 3 years. The Jr. High group meets about once per month either for fun (e.g., Clippers game or Cedar Point) or service (e.g., Angel Tree gift wrapping or Easter breakfast serving). They also attend an annual retreat at Concordia-Ann Arbor. The High School youth are in the process of renovating about 1200 square feet of space in the former music room below the sanctuary. They have about the same meeting schedule as the Jr. High youth. There are some shared activities, such as Cedar Point, and some separate (such as a different retreat at Concordia-Ann Arbor and the National Youth Gathering once every three years). We budget \$2000/year for youth ministry supplies across all age groups. We also set aside \$2500/year for the National Youth Gathering.

- Stephen Ministry: Twelve Stephen Ministers are trained to provide support for members in need. They meet to pray with members after services and provide support for members who request it.
- Shut-In visits: These visits are currently taken care of by a Pastor. We have 7-9 shut-ins who are each visited about once per month. Though not necessarily coordinated with the Pastoral visits, there is also a group of about a dozen people (More than Meals) who take meals to shut-ins.
- Card Care: The card care ministry (10-12 people) sends cards to members who celebrate a birthday or anniversary or to those who lose a family member. We budget \$1050/year.
- Bereavement care: The bereavement care ministry helps to set up funerals and visitations at the church and provides meals for family members surrounding the funeral (about 8-10 volunteers per visitation/funeral/meal). We budget \$500/year.
- Health Awareness: Each month 2-3 volunteers administer blood pressure checks for about 20 people. We budget \$100/year to support health checks and any related programs, such as the occasional health fair for members (with volunteer speakers).
- We have organized programs to tend to the emotional, physical, & spiritual needs of our members: Stephen Ministry, More than Meals, Bereavement Care Team, Senior lunches, and Health Checks.
- We currently devote about 0.4% of our annual operating budget to our Board of Parish Care (\$2,850) and about 0.45% of our congregational annual budget (\$3,100) to Youth Ministry.
- Christian Fellowship: We budget about \$6500/year, mostly for food at the congregational picnic at the end of summer, Blue Sunday breakfast at the start of Advent, and miscellaneous congregational meals throughout the year (3-6 people organizing each of these, with volunteers pitching in). This board also organizes Trunk-or-Treat (included under community outreach).
- Social Connections: Opportunities to connect socially with fellow SJD members was frequently mentioned in the Post-It note surveys this summer/fall. Such connections among members might be served in a variety of ways (such as the Mr. & Mrs. Club, Dartball, Small Group Fellowship/Bible Studies, or sporting events, such as softball or open gym for basketball), but not many of our current efforts specifically target community building among smaller groups of congregation members.

Survey Question:

- a. For our efforts in taking care of members of the St. John family.
- Reduce efforts About right Enhance Efforts

Ministry Priorities RANK ORDER:

Please rank the 5 categories in terms of highest (1) to lowest (5) priority for enhancing efforts in that area:

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Category</u> |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ | Worship |
| _____ | Christian Education |
| _____ | Evangelism, Community Outreach, & Congregational Growth |
| _____ | Missions |
| _____ | Parish Care |

TELL US WHY: For your TOP 2 priority areas, please tell us WHY you ranked it as high as you did. What should we enhance, change, or add to category? What need do you see for us to address?

Thoughts on my TOP (#1) priority area:

Thoughts on my SECOND (#2) priority area:

Any additional thoughts on ministry priorities:

It would also be helpful to us to get a better idea of who has responded to the survey (especially if we learn that there are certain groups we have not reached). Please let us know which broad categories you represent.

Please circle your response:

| Gender | Age | Relationship/Family Status |
|---------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Male | 17 & under | Single |
| Female | 18-30 | Married (no children) |
| | 31-50 | Married (children at home) |
| | 51-65 | Married (empty nest) |
| | 66 & older | Widdow(er) |

Thank you for your input! There will also be upcoming open meetings to discuss ministry priorities and later congregational meetings to discuss staffing and other steps necessary to address the priorities that are identified as a congregation.

Ultimately, what we do as a congregation is determined by where people are motivated to put their time and effort – not just in responding to a survey, but in getting involved! A key part of this process will be for members to find their place(s) in these efforts and dive in! New volunteer coordination efforts are underway and will be unveiled soon! Thanks again!