



Covenant Community Church

September 15, 2013

“Do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment.”

Romans 12:3

How can we have conversations that are civil, compassionate and Christ honoring?

... our relational covenant

As a body of Christian believers, we commit to seek God's guidance in our interactions, and to establish a culture of love, mutual respect, humility, and self sacrifice, in which each individual is affirmed as an equal and uniquely valuable voice to be heard.

(Colossians 3:12-17, Philippians 2:34)

We promise to...

- **Listen** to one another with open minds to understand content, opinions and feelings and respond with thoughtfulness and sensitivity (James 1:19-24)
- **Speak** openly, honestly, and respectfully (Ephesians 4:15)

- **Accept** disagreement, conflict, and evaluation as natural and normal. We understand conflict as an opportunity for growth in Christ and in healthy relationship with one another (Philippians 4:23)

- **Seek and extend grace and forgiveness** in relationship with each other
(Colossians 3:13)
- **Love, care and pray** for each other, our pastor, the leadership of the church, and our surrounding community (John 13:34-35)

...as we seek unity in the Kingdom of God.

The Purpose of PULSE



Provides awareness of current reality

Updates progress periodically

Links the church more closely with the mission and message of Jesus

Suggests next steps

Encourages spiritual discernment



How PULSE Works

Holy Spirit,
Scriptures

Perspectives:
Pastor, Chair,
Vitality Team
Leader,
Denomination,
Conference

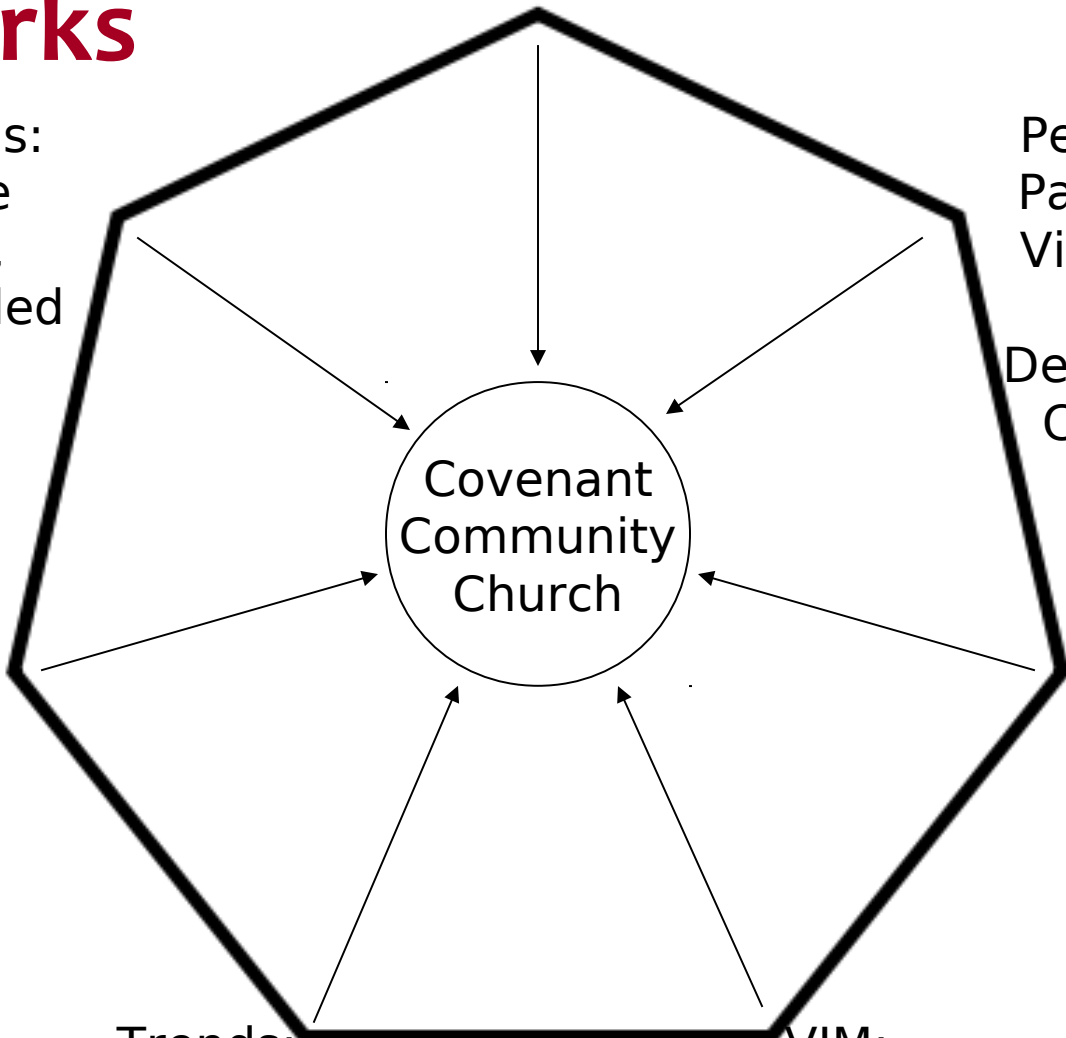
Congregational
Groupings:
Total Group,
Leadership,
Tenure

VIM:
Vision, Intention,
Means

Trends:
Attendance,
Giving

Questions:
Multiple
Choice,
Open-Ended

Demographics:
Internal,
External



Covenant
Community
Church

The Role of the Denomination and Conference



To come alongside Covenant Community Church and help you discern what the Spirit is saying.

“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Revelation 2:7

The answers are not in PULSE.

**The answers are found
in the conversations
we have about PULSE,
as the Holy Spirit leads and guides.**

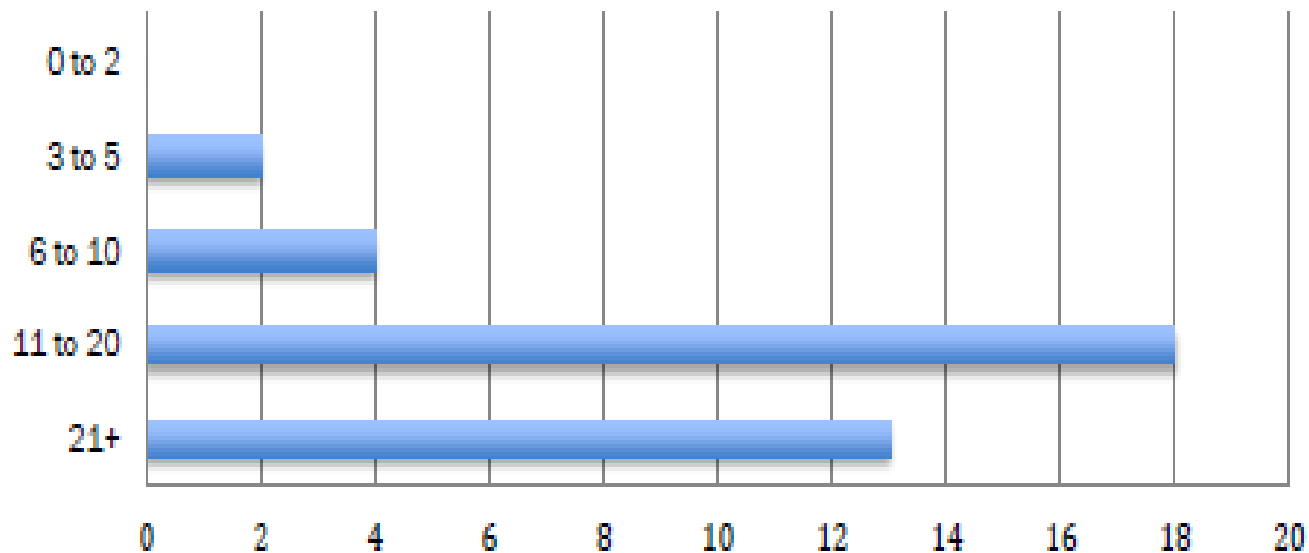
Taking Your PULSE



- Covenant Community Church
- **37** surveys submitted in ***June 2013***.
- All responses confidential, including open-ended questions.

Who Took Pulse?

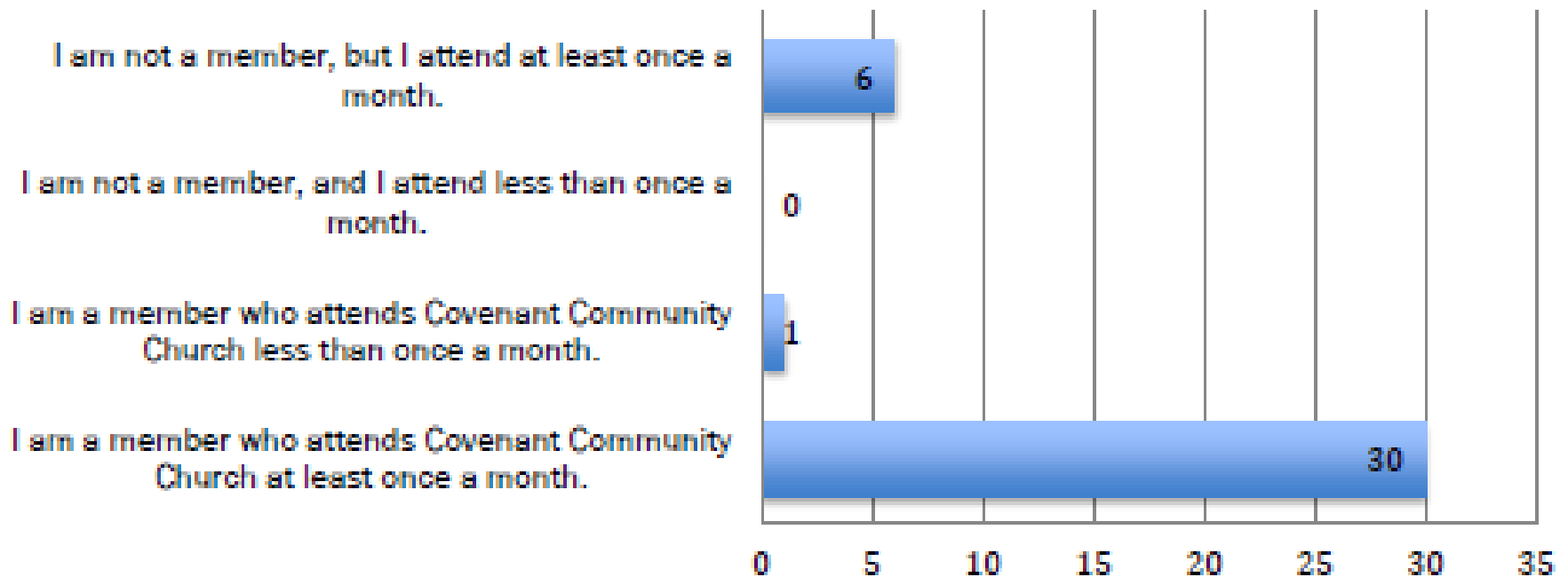
Question 48: I have been attending Covenant Community Church for the following number of years:



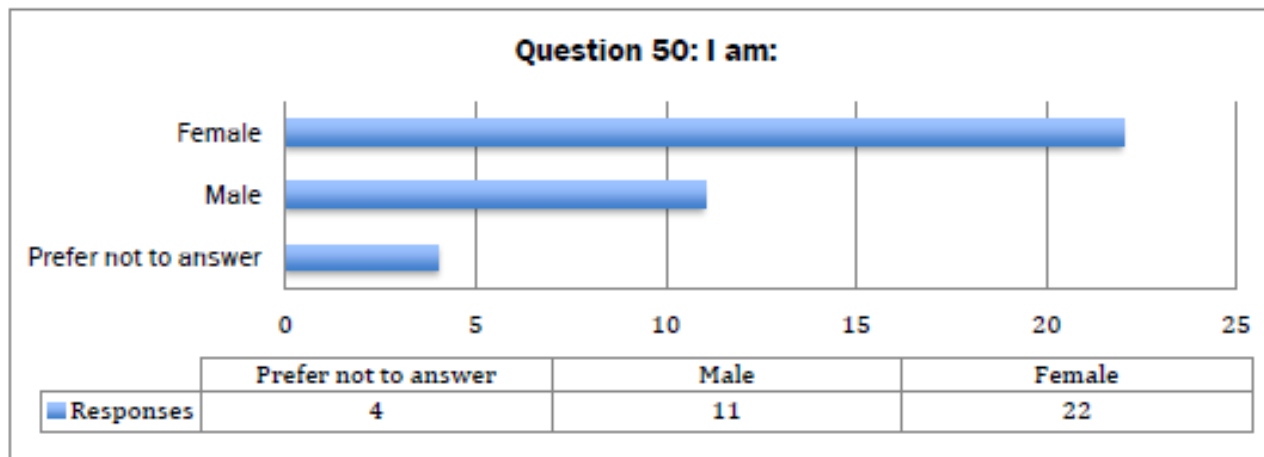
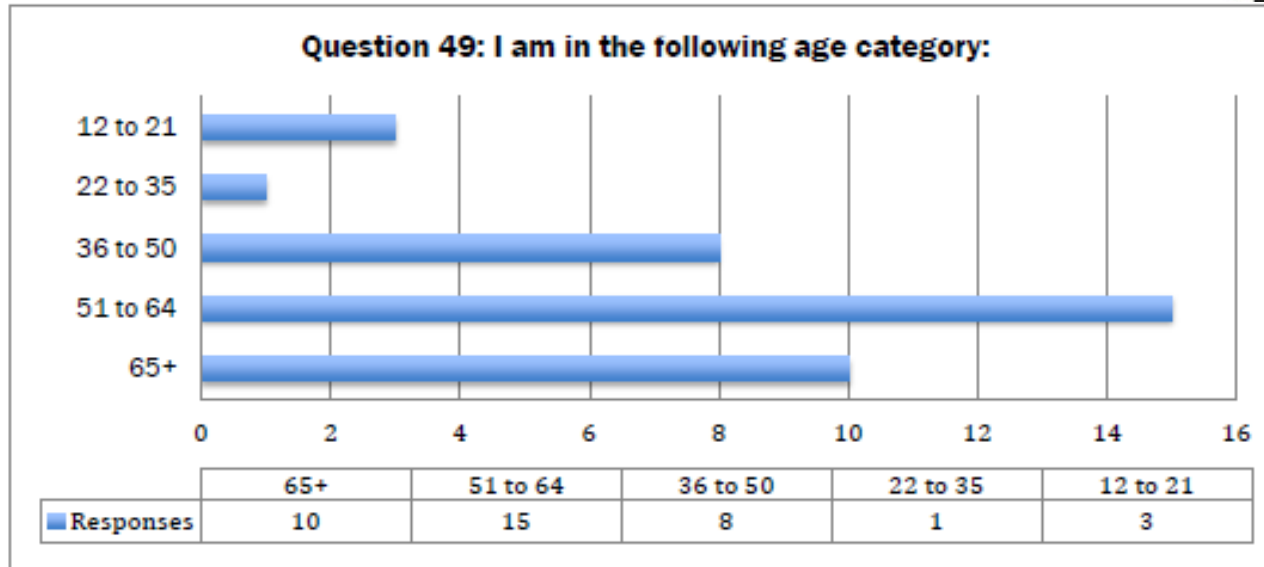
	21+	11 to 20	6 to 10	3 to 5	0 to 2
■ Responses	13	18	4	2	0

Who Took Pulse?

Question 47: Please select the statement that best describes you:

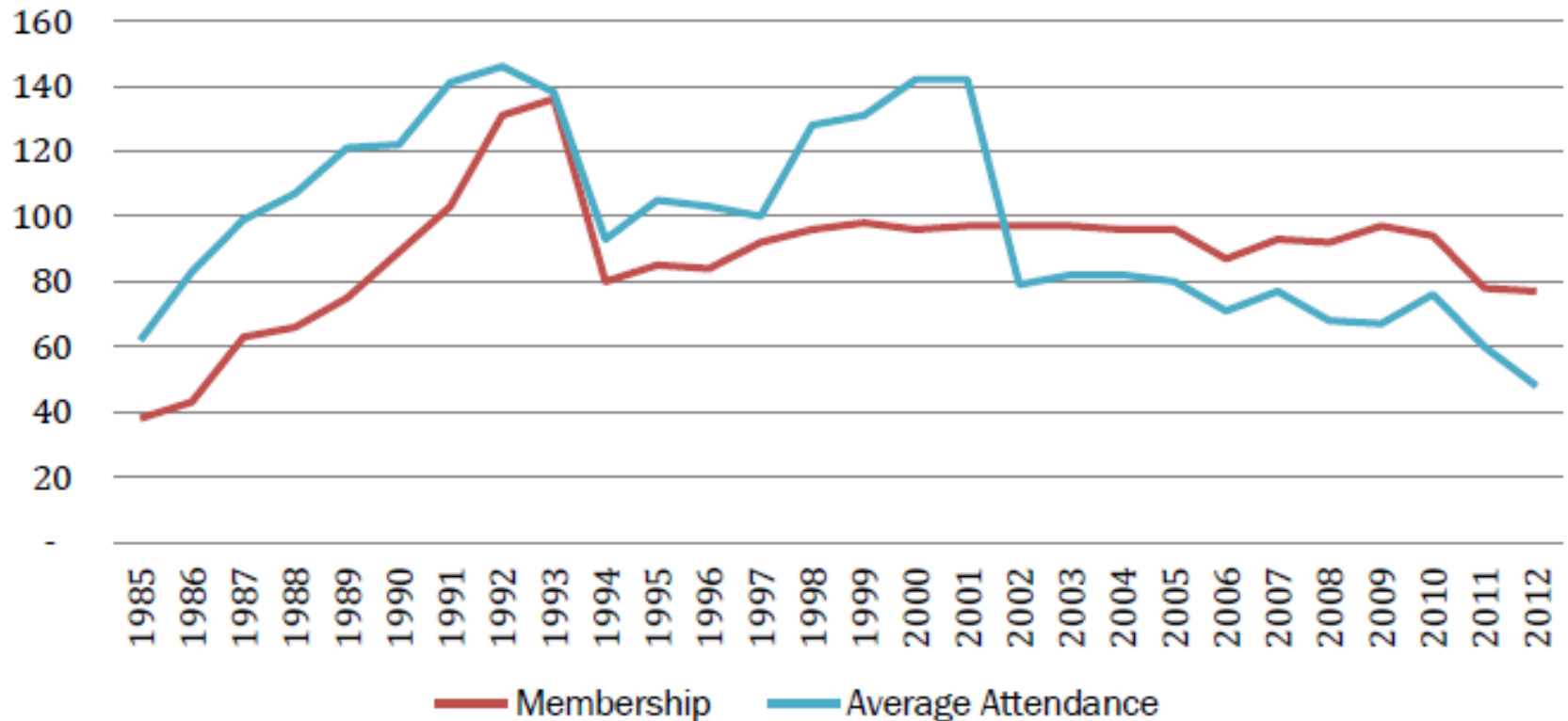


Who Took Pulse?



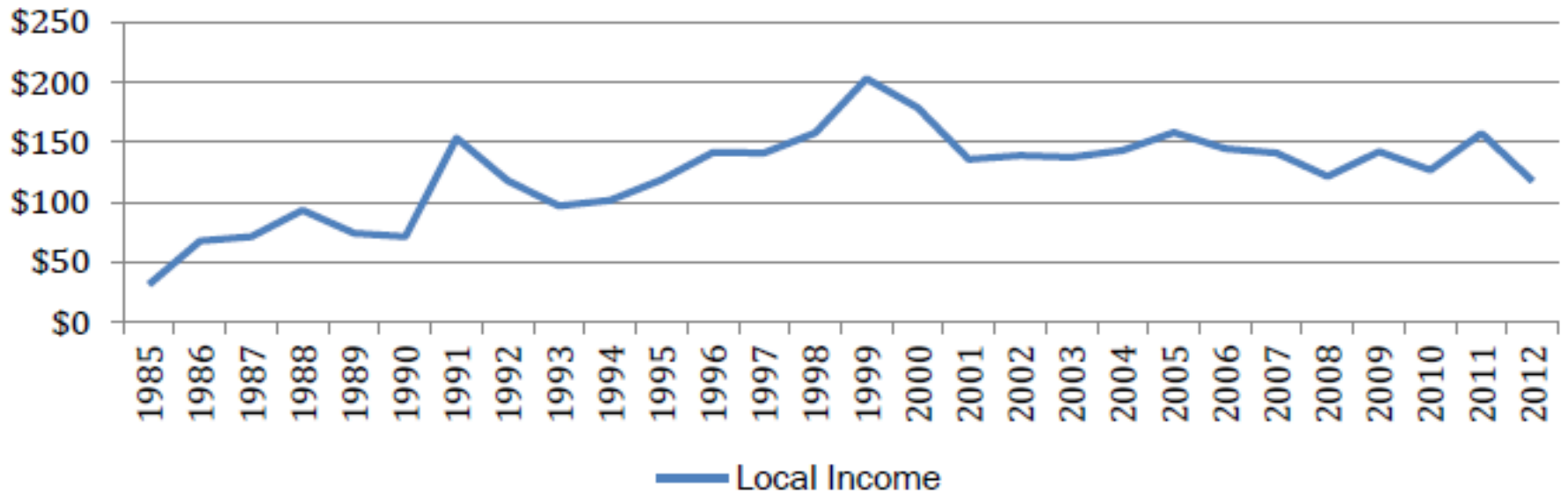
30-Year Attendance Trends

**Covenant Community Church
Average Attendance and Membership: 1985 - 2012**



30-Year Giving Trends

**Covenant Community Church
Local Income (In Thousands): 1985 - 2012**



10 Healthy Missional Markers



- Centrality of the Word of God
(*2 Timothy 3:16*)
- Life transforming walk with Jesus
(*John 3:3,30; Phil. 1:6*)
- Intentional evangelism
(*Matthew 28:18-20*)

Healthy Missional Markers



- Transforming communities through active compassion, mercy and justice ministries
(*Micah 6:8*)
- Global perspective and engagement
(*Acts 1:8*)
- Compelling Christian community
(*Acts 2:42-47*)

Healthy Missional Markers



- Heartfelt worship
(Psalm 138:1a; John 4:23)
- Sacrificial and generous living and giving
(Romans 12:1-8)
- Culture of godly leadership
(Hebrews 13:7)
- Fruitful organizational structures
(Exodus 18:13-26, Acts 6:1-7)

Scale

Healthy Missional	3.50 – 4.00
Stable	3.10 – 3.49
Critical Moment	2.70 – 3.09
At-Risk	0.00 – 2.69

Overall Score



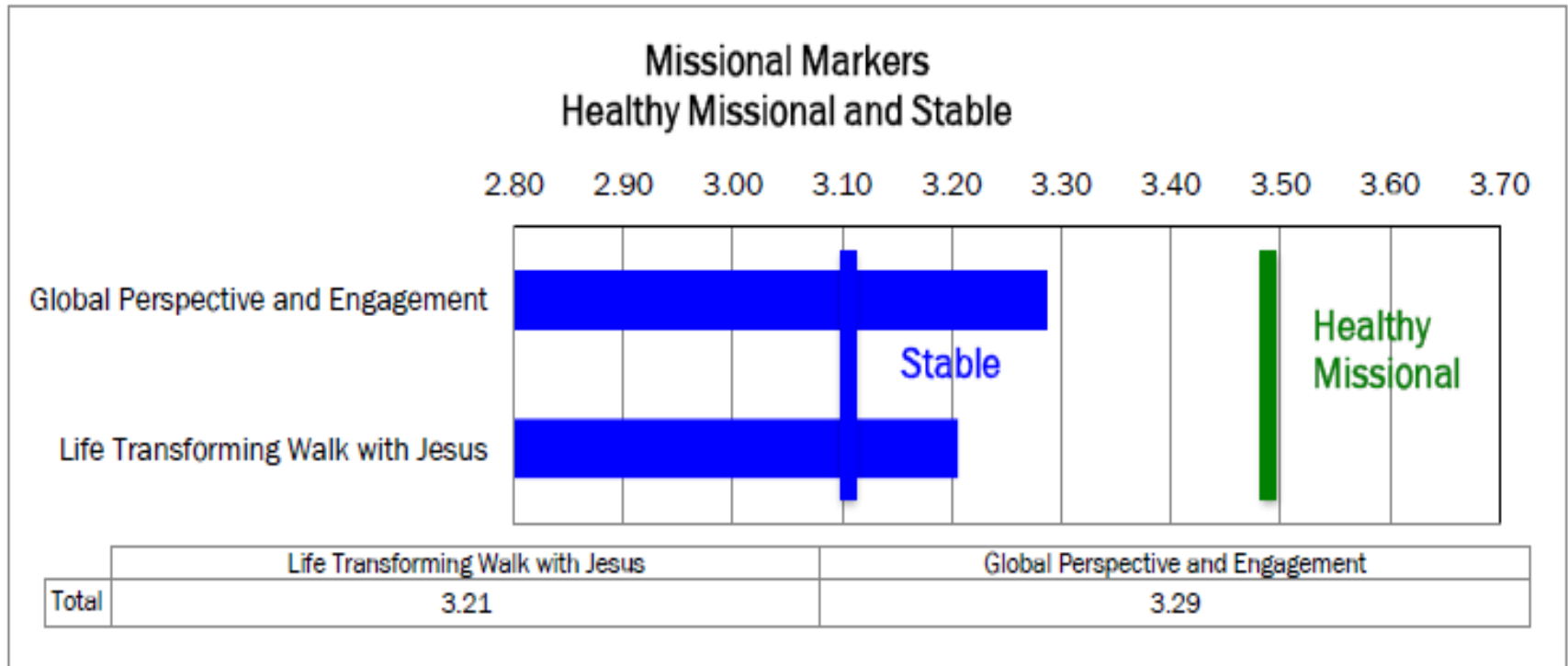
Marker:	4.00 scale
Global Perspective and Engagement	3.29
Life Transforming Walk with Jesus	3.21
Culture of Godly Leadership	3.01
Compelling Christian Community	2.96
Sacrificial & Generous Living and Giving	2.96
Transforming Communities through CMJ	2.89
Fruitful Organizational Structures	2.76
Centrality of the Word	2.71
Engaging God in Worship	2.68
Intentional Evangelism	2.47
Total Percentage	2.89

Church Type and Trajectory

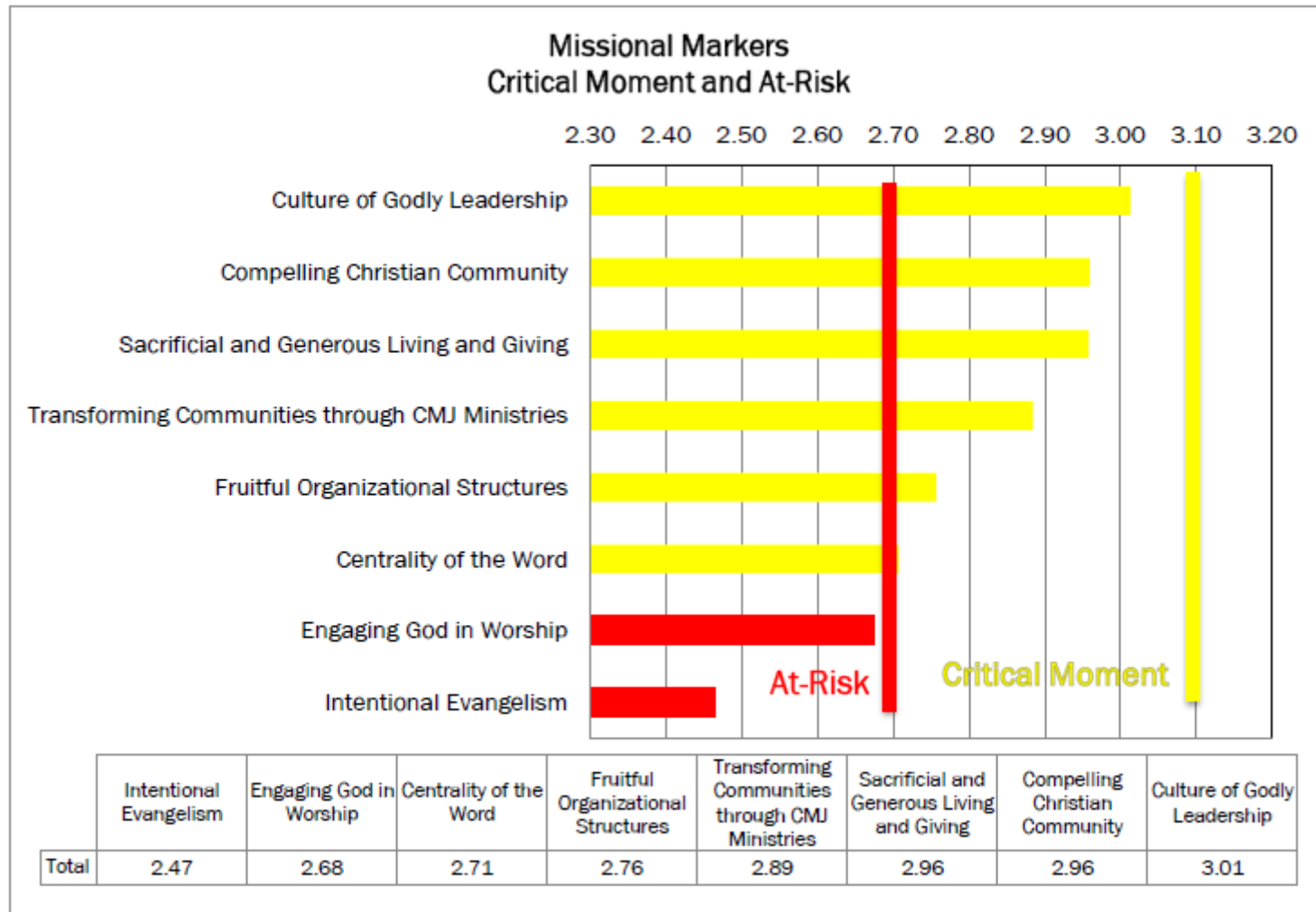


Based on responses from PULSE,
Covenant Covenant Church
is at **Critical Moment**.

Stable Mission Markers



Critical Moment & At Risk



Open-Ended Questions



In your opinion, what is the single greatest strength of Covenant Community Church? (35/37)

- Caring People (21/35, 60%)
- Acceptance of Others (4/35 11%)
- Welcoming/Friendly (4/35, 11%)
- Loyalty (2/35; 6%)

Open-Ended Questions



In your opinion, what is the single greatest area for improvement at Covenant Covenant Church?

- **Outreach and Mission**
 - Grow Membership (6/34, 18%)
 - Common Mission (6/34, 18%)
 - Community Outreach (4/34, 12%)
- **Spiritual**
 - Spiritual Growth (3/34, 9%)
 - Biblical Teaching (2/34, 6%)
 - Children's Program (2/34, 6%)
 - Prayer (2/34, 6%)
- **Stewardship**
 - Finances (2/34, 6%)
 - Equipment/Technology (2/34, 6%)

Open-Ended Questions



In a few sentences, how would you describe the overall health of Covenant Community Church?

- Healthy Missional (3/33, 9%)
- Stable (12/33, 36%)
- Critical Moment (14/33, 42%)
- At Risk (3/33, 9%)

Open-Ended Questions



If you could change one thing about Covenant
Covenant Church, what should it be? (34/37)

- More Active (6/34, 18%)
- Finances (5/34, 15%)
- Common/Clear Mission (4/34, 12%)
- Diversity (2/34, 6%)
- Music (2/34, 6%)
- LGBT Friendly (2/34, 6%)

VIM Assessment



Based on the responses from PULSE and information from other ECC churches, the rate of:

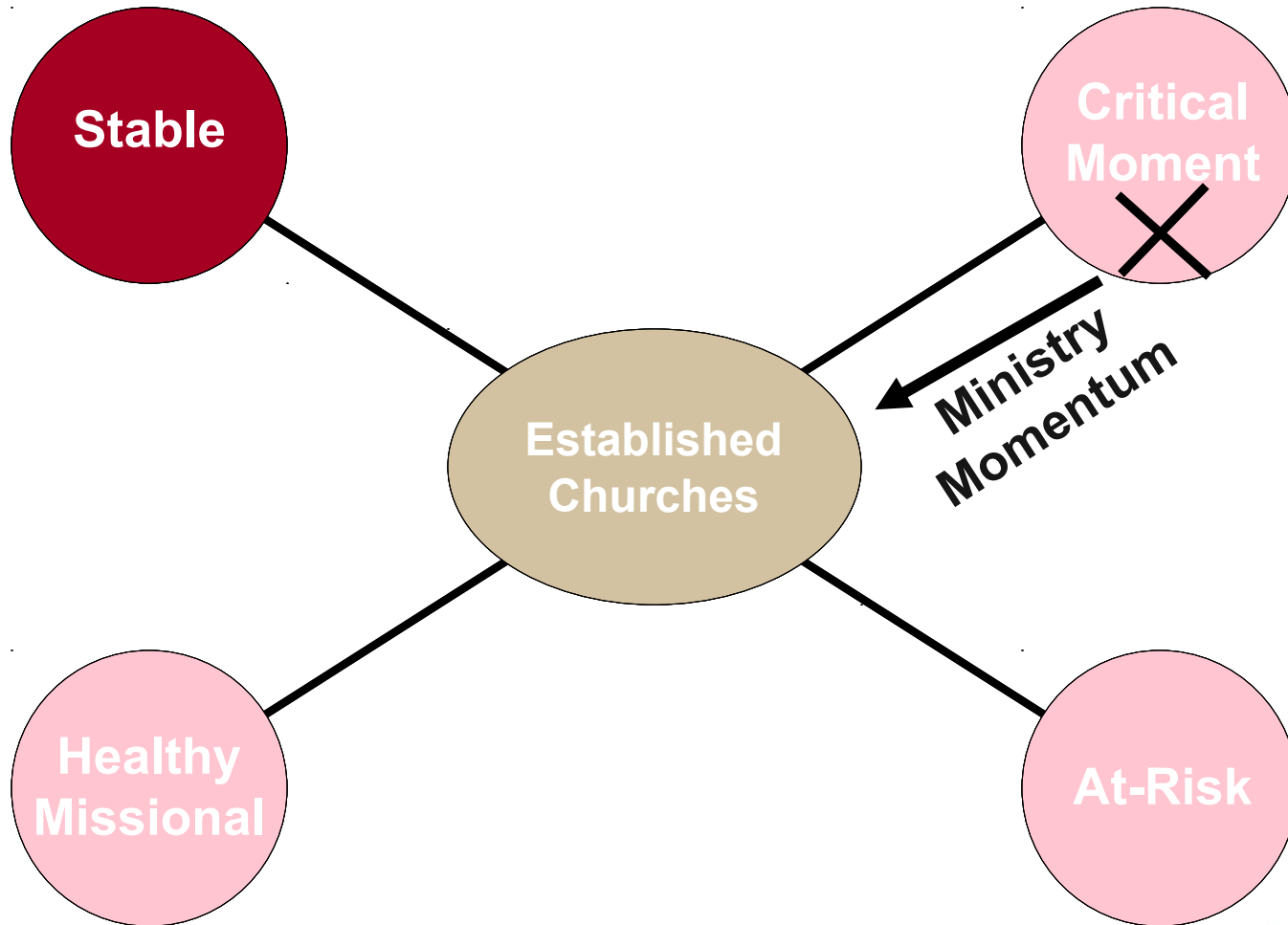
Vision: Low

Intention: Low/Medium

Means: Low

Pattern consistent with other ECC churches that are critical moment.

Church Type and Trajectory



Strengths



1. CARING COMMUNITY

Far and away the “single greatest strength” identified in the Open-Ended Questions (mentioned by 60% of respondents) is the congregation’s sense of mutual love, care and community. Closely related to this, another 22% said the church’s greatest strength is its “acceptance” or “welcome” of others. What’s more, in the Missional Marker questions, members expressed a high degree of confidence that if they made their needs known to the congregation the church would respond in a loving manner (3.57). Most everyone also said they have formed close friendships with others in the church since attending CCC (3.49). We commend you for your genuine, Christ-like love for one another! May you continue to grow in your expression of God’s love!

Strengths



2. Spiritual Growth

“Life Transforming Walk with Jesus” received the second highest Missional Marker score (3.21). Many respondents affirmed that prayer is a significant part of the life of the congregation, that they experience joy in their relationship with God and that their relationship with the Lord is growing. Wonderful! The Spirit of God is at work among you! Share with each other the joys and new discoveries you are experiencing in your individual walks with God. As you reflect upon your recent Service of Consecration, what did God lay on your hearts at that moment? What continued spiritual growth and Kingdom-oriented living is the Holy Spirit calling you to?

Strengths



3. Global Perspective and Engagement

This received your highest Missional Marker ranking (3.29). The congregation as a whole shares a concern for and prays for the broader concerns of the world (e.g., AIDS, human trafficking, world hunger). Over the years, you have been involved in mission projects and have partnered with other ministries and organizations to address pressing needs and to minister to hurting people. How can you translate these global concerns into specific, new and ongoing action steps within your own local community as well?

Growth Areas



1. Intentional Evangelism

Intentional Evangelism was your lowest rated (2.47) Missional Marker. In addition, within the Open-Ended Questions, two of the three most-cited “single greatest area for improvement” responses were growing the membership and community outreach -- two items closely related to intentional evangelism. See this low score and these open-ended responses as a call to prioritize your efforts to share the message and love of Jesus Christ with people in your community who are far from God. Remember: Evangelism is cooperating with the Holy Spirit to bring one person one step closer to Jesus. Nothing fuels church revitalization as evangelism does.

Growth Areas



2. Clear, Catalyzing Vision

A clearly defined vision (or common sense of mission) was one of two issues tied for the most-cited “single greatest need for improvement.” Your theological diversity is in some ways a great strength, but it also presents a challenge when it comes to the church coalescing around a common mission. Prayerfully commit yourselves to defining a clear vision/mission that accurately reflects New Testament teaching, captures people’s hearts and imaginations and calls forth their very best. Such a clear vision/mission is critical for maintaining unity, motivating service and moving the church toward a healthy missional future.

Growth Areas



3. Engaging God in Worship

Your second lowest Missional Marker score was for “Engaging God in Worship” (2.68). Worship is a dynamic encounter between God and God’s people. Both human elements (i.e., planning & preparation, resources, attitudes, customs, leadership & musical gifts) as well as divine elements influence our worship experience. How have you communicated to each other regarding your worship experience? What steps can you take to make your weekly worship a more spiritually uplifting and edifying moment for the congregation?

Recommendations for Congregation



- Covenant Community Church has incredible potential to become a Healthy Missional church. This potential can be realized if the church chooses to break out of comfort zones and intentionally moves forward. This will involve some risk.
- The following recommendations are made in a spirit of humility. We rejoice in the incredible potential that resides in the heart of the church.

Recommendations for Congregation



Spirituality

- “Centrality of the Word” was your third lowest Missional Marker score (2.71). Most concerning were the low scores related to frequency of individual Bible reading and participation in small group Bible study. Deepen your hunger for God’s Word and give more frequent attention to being nourished by it.
- Nurture within yourselves God’s heart for lost people (see Luke 15) and a passion for the harvest (Matt. 9:36-38). The Missional Marker question that received the lowest score of all was, “I am actively praying for my unsaved friends to meet Christ.” And not far from the bottom of the list was, “I am building relationships with people who need to know the Lord.” Making disciples is the Church’s central mission (Matt. 28:18-20). The Covenant was borne out of just such a passion. Be moved by this same passion.
- Your numbers are small yet your financial realities are not. This will require of you nothing less than mutually shared, biblically grounded, Kingdom driven stewardship values and practices.

Recommendations for Congregation



Chemistry

- In the midst of a surrounding community divided by theological, moral, ideological and political differences, find your unity in your devotion to Jesus Christ, to God's Word and your God-given mission.
- There is a need for more transparency about the realities and challenges of church life, including unspoken tension in the church. Have these conversations within a culture of candor and a climate of trust. The journey of revitalization is both adventurous and treacherous. If you decide to move forward as a church, there will be challenging times ahead. Reaffirm your Behavioral Covenant and keep it before you as a guide to being civil, compassionate and Christ-honoring in all that you say and do.

Recommendations for Congregation



Strategy

- Your Vitality Team is doing good work. Pray for them, encourage them, and work together with them.
- Understand that your church is at a crossroads. You can continue with business as usual, and slip more towards At-Risk. Or you can courageously and faithfully move forward to become a healthy missional church. Review the strategies in the VERITAS and EPIC notebooks on how to do this. Make the most of your upcoming (October 2013) “ONE” Strategic Planning Seminar. It will be a great opportunity for you to engage in an important assessment and planning process under the guidance of God’s Holy Spirit.
- Given the congregation’s size, amending your by-laws to create a smaller church council may be wiser than striving unsuccessfully to fill 12 council positions. Attempting to maintain the membership-to-council ratio that you have is likely adding unnecessary discouragement to both leaders and the congregation.

Recommendations: Pastor



Spirituality

- Nourish your own spiritual life on a regular basis through scripture and prayer and Sabbath rest.
- Lead the congregation through a church-wide Bible reading emphasis. Help your people get into God's Word so that God's Word can truly get into your congregation.

Recommendations: Pastor



Chemistry

- You are thoughtful, creative and willing to listen. You are loved and respected by your congregation. Continue to care for and build up your people, pointing them toward the future God desires for them.
- Create more opportunities for people to get connected and to grow spiritually through Bible study-focused small groups. Ensure that leaders of these small groups are adequately trained and equipped.

Recommendations: Pastor



Strategy

- A significant congregational turnaround/movement in the right direction will take several months if not a few years, so be realistic as to what you, and the congregation, have to bring to the table. Be realistic with your planning timeline.

What's Next?



The answers are not in PULSE.

The answers are found *in the conversations* we have about PULSE, as the Holy Spirit leads and guides.

Discussion today:

- What did we find affirming?
- What did we find surprising?
- What did we find challenging?

Coffee Talks

Sunday Mornings, 8:30, all October

What's Next?



Strategic Ministry Planning

Conclusion



“... Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work”

Ephesians 4:15-16



Covenant Community Church

September 2013