

A New Journey Lutheran Parish: Ministry Site Profile Survey Responses

What one challenge or change during the past three years caught your attention?

- The energy has shifted to a more positive direction!
- Going to difference churches to worship
- Merging of different congregations.
- Gathering as one church, one parish
- Less people in church. Difference pastors.
- Change in liturgy
- Covid
- Covid- people couldn't attend. Too easy to watch at home!
- Lack of attendance
- Continuity of church services and Sunday School
- Declining attendance
- Lack of attendance
- Needing to be around people
- Worship attendance and it's seemingly lower priority for members, especially those under retirement age
- COVID put into perspective the necessity of being around others.
- Lower attendance. Financial issues. No Sunday School. No Ladies Aid Group Bible Study.
- Less attendance, less revenue.
- Covid and people still come to church
- Going to other churches, distance.
- Loss of feeling like a church family. It seems as though we are just showing up same place and putting in the time. No feeling of community anymore.
- Not being heard or validated.
- Loss of members because of ELCA political stance
- Tried many things, most went great.
- It seemed we were loosing our identity as a church when we formed as a parish. It felt as if we were being told what to do. We have been told for years that we need to change with the times. When we had the Wednesday Nite service in July we wanted to change up the type of service, we got a lot of resistance when we were planning it, this was hard to deal with, but we did what we thought we should.
- We have been fairly successful in new adventures, but all congregations are not participating.
- The biggest challenge I feel has been getting more people involved in the church as we haven't had much leadership in the church the last few years, until recently.
- Less people church
- No consistent services
- No one wanting to step up to help or be the leader.
- Getting people to church
- Members attending church.

- Attendance has been down in some situations. It seems like it's been harder to get back in the "groove" of regular worship services and traditions.
- Covid-Getting members back to church after Covid scare and the difficulty in having services due to restrictions placed on us.
- Less attendance in church
- Not sure. Only attended services a few times.
- Video ministry is good to have available now
- Low attendance-Covid. Having church on TV good for those homebound- but not good good-makes poor attendance.
- Attendance is down
- Decisions and changes that weren't always known by everyone as far as the budget and other things
- The need for a full time minister, and lack of attendance due to changes in lives
- Attendance is down
- Amount of people going to church
- Not feeling like our congregation was being heard. I don't feel like the 4 point parish works. The towns are so far apart. I feel like it loses a sense of one and community.
- Calling a pastor together as one parish

What motivates or inspires your participation in church?

- Sharing music and seeing others be excited about church.
- People: to hear the Lord's Word
- My reading ability
- Love and compassion
- The loving care of God and the people in church
- Fellowship
- The pastor
- Jesus and people
- Good sermon and friendliness
- Personal strength. Fellowship with others
- Continuation of practiced faith in this area
- Enjoying the word of God
- Seeing others
- Caring and loving members
- Relatable messages. Debating the Bible to extract its true message and hearing new takes on what it means to be a christian
- My motivation is low at this time and the reason why is not being acknowledged or respected during and after the parish vote. A different opinion was not valued.
- Faith in God, and a desire to be with those who share Faith.
- People. Working together.
- Enjoy service. Katie does good job. Rachel is great. So thankful!
- I feed on others giving encouragement and inviting participation.

- Music. Others participating
- I like the personal interaction of the pastor and the SAM. I also enjoy visiting with our congregational members that come down for coffee before church. I enjoy the fact that we get to have in person worship and that we also can access worship online when I'm not able to be there.
- I want a place to worship and I don't want our church to close.
- Feeling like part of a "family"
- I enjoy the music and entire worship service and miss everyone when I don't go.
- Volunteering to help with services in some way. Reading, ushering etc.
- Home church. Wouldn't want it closed.
- Other people who participate. Building friendships with other people participating in church.
- worshipping and fellowship
- Meeting new people and sermons
- Music, participation from congregation, sermons that I can understand
- Having a duty/responsibility in your congregation (being part of group)
- Organist- try to keep church clean and welcome
- Hope that it will help carry me through the week
- a great minister who is community involved
- Seeing other folks who participate in Worship and reaching out beyond the building- being part of God's family
- I have lost my motivation. I feel our church is divided and the same ones are doing everything.
- Unfortunately I am not very motivated or inspired right now. Normally though I am motivated by the belief that the things I do help the church.
- My faith in God and the hope that the excitement felt by a few members can ignite again.
- To get politics out of church, religion back in. I believe (members that left) have been misinformed.
- My trust in God and the excitement created by a few.
- Wanting to feel excited about going to church again. Hoping to have some input with some modern services.
- The fellowship and friendships

What one ministry do you imagine or dream about happening?

- A full Sunday School
- To keep us together for worship
- One service a month
- Being one with each other and God
- Eternal life
- Inspiring young people
- Keeping our faith strong in our church
- Youth summer trip (wilderness or houseboat) with great musician and leaders that can reach kids

- Do not understand the question
- Our youth ministry will become a vibrant program. Sunday School and Youth Group. Having an adult Bible Study. New ways in how we worship.
- A more Contemporary service, attracting younger members to attend regularly.
- Attendance. Having a Sunday School
- Community involvement. Confirmation alumni events? Confirmation retreats
- Dreaming would be the opportunity to have more technology like smart tv's facing the challenges in our church with guidance nobody fighting or disliking something because they didn't get their way and help getting others involved.
- Getting more people involved in church activities and worship services.
- Dont know
- Getting more people back in our doors and more involved in planning different events and activities for our church.
- Getting young people involved and wanting to be at church.
- More growth.
- "Parents Night Out" or some type of regular after school activity for elementary age kids to go after school if they don't have daycare. More community activities to reach out to our Ukrainian neighbors in Gary and new families coming in with the new dairy.
- regular church service with good attendance
- Bible Study
- Young members and family attending services, Sunday School, music (choir), fellowship
- Something to involve the shut-ins. Maybe call on phone to connect/catch up
- Next 3 years goes well- Churches do not have to close or drop out
- more communication and listening
- More face to face for the (shut in) believers in addition to the service they find on TV and social media. Also something for middle age crowd to draw them back.
- That our church would have more of an "open door." Everyone is welcome with no bias.
- One that embraces the past but also moves forward with the excitement of what "could be" in the way of worship.
- That church will be a church of excitement and will move forward with some new ideas. Our church needs happiness again.
- Get our Lutheran membership back. These past members are going to church, but NOT OURS.
- That our church services once again become something people want to be at with their family and friends.
- More modern services sometimes. I understand we can't have them all the time, but a mixture would be nice. Also having a congregation that works together.
- Building up the Sunday school and youth again

Name one or two hopes for the future:

- Pastors to continue to the Word of Lord
- Continue with at least 1 service per month. More members.

- To TRY to remain open. To TRY to bring others into our sanctuary.
- Being free
- That more younger folks step up and become leaders within and for the church and its mission.
- Consuming spiritual content other than once a week on sundays for an hour
- More young families in our church. To have an outreach program for those less fortunate. Contemporary church services.
- Hope we can continue as a church and not be forced to close because of financial reasons.
- That churches survive and youngsters see the importance of religion.
- Our church remaining open/active.
- Cooperation and involvement
- Cooperation
- My hope for the future would be to get more people involved either new members or inactive members to become more active.. I would like help with the healing of the church and having people let go of the past and move onto the future.
- Set goals and plans for the future. Teamwork.
- Consistent services at a consistent time. Too hard keeping track IF there is church and if so, at what time?
- That people put their differences aside even if they are unsure about this journey we are on and give it a try and time to grow.
- More people coming on a regular basis.
- More young people coming to church and ones that used to come return.
- That we can build on relationships with others in our churches. That our churches find ways to schedule activities so that younger families and couples can more easily attend and be able to make "church friends" like the older generations used to.
- People would become more God fearing, increase Christianity
- Unity and growth among congregations
- Become united parish that cares about ALL members and churches (not just the one they belong to)
- More people coming to church
- Church stays open. Get people to attend
- that the children will continue to be to be brought upon the faith
- to find a minister
- To welcome young and older families and singles to our services. Make all feel welcome and part of God's family
- Keep the TV service going. Make it more clear to here. Try to get the number up in church
- Adding contemporary services. Become more VISIBLE to our community through OUTREACH programs
- Maybe by going on with modern thinking, young families will want to come.
- Get members to believe in "our old religion ways." Keep politics away from making our decisions of which Lutheran way we should go.
- To live in heaven
- Increased attendance at church services/functions

- More people to attend
- More children to come to church and Sunday School
- We bring back more of the community
- Call committee finding us a Pastor
- That our members want to be more involved
- Trust and listen to each other.
- That Sundahl will be able to "survive" and continue as a church and it's building

What potential roadblock may be encountered on this journey?

- Not everyone is willing to step out of their comfort zone.
- Less people
- Lack of able bodies
- Finances
- To follow the Lord
- Distance between churches in the parish
- Covid!
- Participation
- Society acceptance of neg. feeling of Christians
- Lack of ASKING the community for participation
- Sickness
- Less attendance.
- Our churches might not have the same ideas on how churches survive.
- Too much for a pastor to handle to many churches. Distance for pastor to travel.
- Other churches not participating
- Non participation from other churches
- The resistance to change when it's not their idea.
- Limited budget. Poor communication.
- Having pastoral staff available
- Getting people to go to different events or services at the other churches as they think it's too far away.
- Changing people's attitude
- Just getting people to walk through the door again.
- Lack of time for the majority of our members. It's hard to find time to plan things that work with varied work and school schedules.
- competition with too many scheduling conflicts that people have let take away from their church attendance
- Busy schedules
- Weather, lack of time, health issues
- Travel
- to many other distractions

- financial budget problems for the entire parish. I know Ness is OK for now but have concerns for all churches
- Time available for participation. People are busy with so much
- I believe the distance between the churches IS a big deal.
- Having the focus be a "one size fits all" approach. New ideas might not be welcome if they don't fit in with the ideas at the other churches.
- Our members of this church do not want to change or those in the joint parishes don't want the modern changes.
- ELCA belief or Free Lutheran belief.
- Resetting some priorities..... being willing to try different approaches
- Location prevents me from attending service in person consistently
- Being respectful to the fact of living within our means. Understanding there is limit to our funds.
- Members and parish not willing to change
- Not being heard of what we would like at our church services. I feel like there has been push back when planning the services, or really not being heard with our ideas. It feels like a battle sometimes.
- Resistance from some individuals within the congregations

List two important tasks for the pastor developer to pursue:

- Visitation schedules
- Bringing the congregations together.
- To hold service of the church and prayers
- Leadership skills
- Go out and meet people individually
- 1) Stay true to the Bible's Word. 2) Communicate Bible beliefs
- Create a place that invites participation
- Visit the sick and needy
- Keeping the interest
- Connecting with people. Becoming part of the communities being served. Includes things outside of "the church"
- Increasing reach via platforms
- Help heal the division in our church. Being respectful and mindful of all church members as we go through this change to one parish.
- Attract young people, young adults with children, and consider a contemporary service.
- Encouraging people to attend. Being available.
- Encourage young families
- Keeping all involved
- I would say to get people interested in coming to church either new or inactive members. To become interested in each congregation and each community to get to know everyone and bring joy to others.
- Work with congregations on their spiritual life. Be loyal to the Lutheran Church and their community.

- Community involvement and getting to know families. Be LOCAL and available.
- Visitations and help with youth development
- Getting young people involved. Keeping people engaged in the church and the new road it's on
- How do we move forward with all the churches involved and to feel like one parish. How do we get new families wanting to come to church.
- Regain our belief in Lutheran faith and Lutheran mission.
- Get to know community especially younger people and their children
- Being open to new ideas and being a good listener.
- Continued team building that we are all one but embrace our differences
- Reaching out to members and getting children involved.
- "1. Help us develop more clearly our sense of purpose in the community. 2. Help congregations and members have a clearer sense of their gifts and how they can be utilized."
- visibility and building a positive relationship in the community, and be a strong leader
- Youth Involvement and Shut-in visits
- Shut in ministry, stimulate the youth and middle age to attend as much as can
- Traditional service- Favorite hymns
- participation and youth involvement
- Help people feel welcome no matter the building and location. Lead an interesting service to keep members returning. Sometimes increase focus with props- note: Pr. Erickson FLC Mahnomon
- Contemporary Music! Being part of the communities
- "1) ACKNOWLEDGE that this has divided our church and help us try to become one congregation again. We have members that are frustrated because they don't feel as though the synod addressed the no voters to find out why they voted no, or what it has done to their morale/involvement. 2) Help us to move forward and offer ideas if they (the minister) have any."

List two essential gifts and abilities needed from the pastor developer:

- Listening and showing care for the people
- To be involved
- Visits
- Be open to new ideas. Be open to invite other faiths.
- Good services and wonderful blessings
- Communications skills
- We have to give support
- Make
- 1) Friendliness 2) Truthfulness of Bible World of God
- Gregarious
- Self assured (knowing that God is in control - yet understanding his or her role within that plan). Determined / not easily dejected.
- Communication. Invoking new ideas and excitement.
- Excitement for the future ministry. Work well with all ages in our church.

- Ability to connect with people of all ages, but especially young people.
- Understanding small communities
- Energetic (ambitious) Open minded (but strong leader)
- Ambition. Willing to try new things
- To get people interested in coming to church either new or inactive members. The ability to relate to the congregation either older, younger or middle aged. Also the ability to reach the shut ins either at home or in a nursing home.
- Visit with church and community members, therefore getting to know them. Leadership ability and teamwork in the congregations.
- Be available and approachable
- Being a people person and spending time getting to know not only the members but also the communities. Also spending one day a week in each churches offices.
- Friendly and passionate
- Able to reach young and old alike.
- "1. Ability to bring people together and see their gifts. 2. Ability to relate these gifts to the larger community and world."
- Good communication skills and be a people person
- Involvement in the youth and active in the communities
- Musical-lead services. Have good relatable sermons
- Be relatable, outgoing and involved
- Willing to visit- interact with older members. A strong voice
- open minded and willing to work with many churches
- Patience and charisma to attract all types to God's house
- Available and approachable
- Treat each church as their own.
- Open to new ideas. Excitement for the journey.
- The ability to communicate and to listen.
- Delivery of sermon and develop active children programs.
- I hope we get a young pastor. The pastor is going to need a lot of energy to serve 4 congregations.
- Be compassionate, be able to roll with changes, or be able to listen to members of the congregation.
- flexibility and time to make changes - not abruptly - get buy in

What support & encouragement should the pastor developer count on from you?

- In all things, a listening ear and willing hands to do all the tasks
- Reading scripture. Prayer.
- Visits, prayers, worship services.
- Good service and prayers to all people in church
- Our support
- 1) Participation and attendance in church. 2) Financial support 3) Encouragement of others to come to God.

- My time and willingness.
- I promise to use my gifts to serve God and the church (Gods people - not the building) with joy and gladness
- Continued support. Feedback. And commitment
- Prayer for him/her. Participation in the church activities. Open to new ideas.
- Prayers, continued regular attendance.
- Presence at services, continue to be willing to help where and when needed.
- Participation and open to change
- Willing to do most things
- I'll help and support him?her in any way I can such as having a meal for them, introducing them to the community, and keeping them in prayer through this journey.
- I will pray for them and help out in church with activities.
- Volunteering
- I will be there to support them anyway they need it
- Will help were we can for any type of support.
- To help where needed.
- Walking alongside whoever is chosen as the pastor and helping in whatever way needed.
- Full support
- Involvement in volunteer position
- Whatever is needed
- Organist
- will try and do our best
- Whatever we are capable to do to help
- Participation in our church activities. Using my talents to help the church
- Suggest ideas, pray, and may help in some areas of the worship if asked and if I am able to.
- Attendance and if possible, try to get non-attending members belief back and get back to our original mission, God and the Bible!
- Prayer and willingness to listen and share thoughts.
- Suggest ideas, listen to new ones a pastor may bring. Help with worship when needed and my schedule allows.
- Positive attitude towards change

Congregations

Individuals could choose to self-identify their home congregation.

- Immanuel Lutheran Church~ 5 responses
- Sundal Lutheran Church~ 3 responses
- Gary Lutheran Church~ 9 responses
- Our Savior's Lutheran Church~ 5 responses
- Ness Lutheran Church~ 6 responses
- Guests / Blank~ 18 responses