

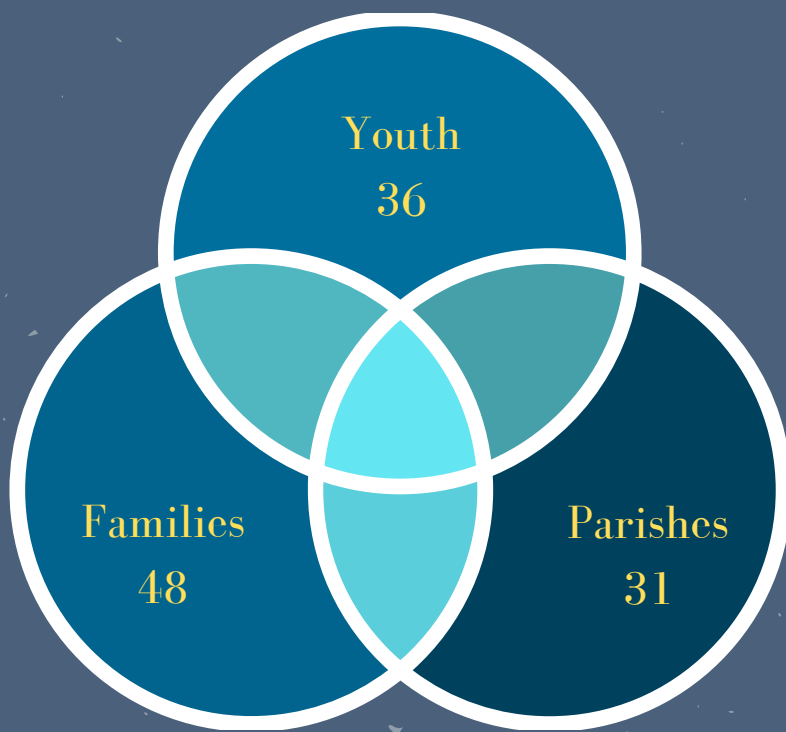


2018 SURVEY REPORT

HEAR OUR YOUTH'S VOICES

SURVEY RESULTS

This past Spring, the Youth and Intergenerational Committee of the Diocese circulated a general survey for parishes, youth and families to respond to. These surveys were to aid us in getting a sense of the climate of youth ministry in the Diocese and to hear from a variety of voices.



We received 114 individual responses to the survey. The breakdown of those were 31 responses from Parishes/Clergy, 48 responses from Families and 36 responses from Youth. Within each of those three categories, there is representation from every Archdeaconry. The surveys had both multiple choice and narrative questions that provided insight into possible ways for our Diocese to move forward in youth ministry as well as insight into where there may be disconnect between our leadership, youth and current programs.

ENCOURAGING HIGHLIGHTS

94%

of family and youth respondents said that the adults in their church community love youth.

74%

of youth respondents said that they have someone in their life who they consider to be their spiritual mentor.

77%

of youth respondents said that they look forward to attending Sunday worship in their church

85%

of family respondents are regularly involved with their church community through Sunday worship.

INTRIGUING HIGHLIGHTS

LITURGICAL STYLE

There was no definite preference for any one liturgical style from the family respondents (BAS-30%, BCP-28%, Doesn't Matter-37%)

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Family respondents indicated that boredom, not feeling welcome and other commitments were the top three (in that order) reasons they don't attend church on a Sunday morning.

ANGLICAN IDENTITY

There was no unified sense of what "Anglican Identity" meant or looked like from the Parish respondents. The responses varied greatly.

CONNECTION TO GOD

Youth respondents indicated that the top two ways that they connect with God are through Camp and Music.

MORE THAN SUNDAY

Through the narrative answers from both the family and youth respondents, we saw a strong desire for faith development opportunities other than Sunday morning. Many respondents pointed to deep discussion and community and relationship development as ways to help grow their faith.

TAKEAWAY #1

CHURCH AND CAMP

Camp and Church are different experiences and that is okay! However, we saw a disconnect between the Parish and Youth surveys when it came to the camping experience. While youth pointed to Camp as the number one way they connect with God, and continually mentioned the impact of Camp on their own life, the parish respondents held a more negative view of the camping experience. It was mentioned in different ways that our camps weren't doing enough to promote the Anglican church specifically as a place for children and youth. There is a huge opportunity here for our parishes and camps to work together. Camp serves as quite possibly the best place for children to be introduced to God (very few campers would identify as Christians let alone Anglicans), be introduced to the fact that God loves them, and be introduced to the stories about a man named Jesus who did and said amazing things. When children and youth aren't aware of a God who loves them and cares for them, camp gives them the first experience of the reality of God in their lives. Our camps introduce children to God and to the person of Jesus and after they leave parishes are in a position to build on that experience.

TAKEAWAY #1 ctd.

CHURCH AND CAMP

Many of the youth and family respondents wrote that they were looking for experiences of faith development that helped to build community and relationships. Community and relationship are core values of camping ministry. These values are being lived out at our own camps and could serve as a model for parishes on how to better foster community and relationships in their own churches.

In sum, there is a greater partnership yet to be built between our camps and our parishes. However, this partnership is not about forming Anglicans, but how best we can build disciples of Jesus together. Also, Camp cannot be responsible for filling Sunday schools and youth groups in parishes. Camp is a tool we use to introduce children and youth to God and God found in community. After camp is over the parishes are in a great position to say to children and youth in their community “We are a church that supports Camp. What did you learn there? What are you looking for? How can we help you? There is a place for you here.” An interplay between parishes and camps will be important as we move forward as a Diocese together.

TAKEAWAY #2

BEYOND SUNDAY MORNING

The family and youth respondents taught us that Sunday morning worship alone isn't enough. As one youth respondent said "Church on Sundays doesn't help my faith grow". Our youth and families are looking for a deeper connection to the community within the parish, and are looking for ways to grow their faith through relationship, discussion, shared meals, etc. Surely these experiences would only aid in Sunday morning worship becoming a more meaningful part of their life. It should also be noted that these experiences aren't necessarily found in a specific program or curriculum, but are found in the leadership of our churches prioritizing community and relationships. The good news is that parish/clergy respondents showed a strong desire to discover and find new ways of "being church" together. This is great! However, the onus is on the leadership of the church to direct and cast vision for this. Leaders should equip encourage and support others within the parish to live out the vision in practical, real ways. Take risks as a community, and prioritize building community and relationships in all aspects of parish life.

TAKEAWAY #3

CONTEMPORARY VS. TRADITIONAL

In both the youth and family responses, whenever asked about preference for contemporary or traditional worship there was no clear preference. It was split evenly between BAS or BCP and more people were interested in a combination of Contemporary and Traditional elements rather than one or the other. This tells us that the liturgical style one parish uses isn't what draws people to God and worship. "Traditional" worship when done with sincerity, joy, energy and thoughtfulness is meaningful. "Contemporary" worship when done in an insincere, try-hard, awkward way is not meaningful. Also, for both families and youth, music was one of the top ways they connected with God. This should make us reconsider how music is used in worship and what music is used in worship. Is the language accessible or dated? Is the music easy to learn and sing for everyone? Is it theologically expansive? Is the language inclusive? These are some questions for worshipping communities to ask themselves.

ADVICE FROM OUR YOUTH FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP

"Camps

SUCH AS MEDLEY AND BROOKWOOD
ARE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.....THEY
CHANGE LIVES"

"Be willing to

SIT DOWN AND TALK

with youth"

"Be patient with youth

THEY'RE FIGURING THEIR LIVES
OUT"

"PICK SONGS THAT ARE

Newer

AND MORE ENJOYABLE"

"LISTEN TO THE YOUNGER

GENERATION!"

"Stop trying so hard

TO ATTRACT YOUNG PEOPLE

WHEN YOU TRY TOO HARD IT COMES OFF AS
INSINCERE"

"Support us

IN THINGS THAT AREN'T
NECESSARILY RELEVANT TO
CHURCH."

"ENERGY!"

"ALWAYS BE OPEN AND
REAL

"DON'T

give up on kids"

WE RESPOND TO
OPENNESS AND
HONESTY"

"MAKE CHURCH

not like the 18th century"