



Survey Results for the Direction and Organization of Staff

In the past three months, three surveys have been conducted to assess the level of support for the direction, organization and resourcing of the conference and to identify questions and concerns. Two of the surveys were sent to the same people – clergy, lay members to annual conference, conference leaders and leaders in congregations. Our data base has the email addresses for almost 5,000 people in these categories. There were 71 respondents to the first survey and 44 respondents to the second. Another survey during this same time period was sent to clergy and lay members totaling almost 1400 individuals and had 548 people respond.

One belief about the low participation concerning organization and staffing is that overall people are less interested in how we organize and carry out the mission. In other words administration and organization are not a high priority. One interpretation is that people are more concerned about things that actually impact them and the ministries they directly participate in rather than things that indirectly affect them.

The first survey conducted in June asked people about direction, focus and resourcing. Those results indicated that:

1. Seventy percent (70%) of the respondents agree with the present direction of the conference.
2. Ninety three percent (93%) of the respondents believe making disciples and growing vital congregations to transform the world is the right focus for the conference.
3. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the respondents believe using circuit elders to supplement superintending is appropriate at this time.
4. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of respondents believe that grouping superintendents and connectional ministries staff in three regions for serving clergy and congregations is appropriate at this time.

The second survey was accompanied with a proposal about organizing staffing to resource our direction – *increase the number of highly vital congregations* and carry out our mission – *equip spiritual leaders to make disciples and grow vital congregations for the transformation of the world*. This survey did not ask people to rate specific areas but to identify what they liked in the proposal, what concerns they had and what they would modify. The following are the responses to these three questions.

What respondents liked:

1. Christ's mission is a top priority
2. Attention is on the mission field
3. Focus is on congregations and growing vitality
4. Attention is on clergy and lay leadership development

5. Focus is on starting new faith communities
6. Budget is not increasing and the potential to save money in the future
7. Team approach and regionalization of resources
8. Shared services better utilize staff time and talents
9. Better results are achieved from trying something different
10. Superintendents' focus is changed from administration to growing mission, congregations and leadership
11. New strategies are developing to work with smaller congregations
12. Connectional ministry staff are deploying to the regions
13. Overhead is being streamlined
14. More responsibility is given to local leadership
15. Connectional relationships are in focus by developing partnerships
16. Other conferences were consulted to learn from them
17. Staff are reassigned and focused to achieve more rather than hiring new staff
18. Circuit elders are used
19. Focus is on growing congregations
20. The conference is being transparent
21. Trying something new is encouraging

Respondents' concerns

1. Potential exists for congregations to lose connection with superintendents because of the use of circuit elders
2. Too much time is spent with underperforming congregations
3. Administrative staff is being cut from superintendents
4. The effect on small congregations is unclear
5. Transition will have onetime costs
6. Restructure is not the answer
7. More layers are being added to a structure that is already burdensome
8. Working in the mission field does not have a clear definition
9. Services are moving away from congregations
10. Discussion about organization should have been had at annual conference
11. Many people are not effective working in roles that have shared responsibilities (matrix management approach)
12. Superintendents will need to transition into the new role
13. Conference duties should not be pushed down to the congregations
14. District offices lose dedicated personnel
15. Potential for personality conflicts exists in the teams
16. Circuit elders may not have time to serve their congregation and in this new role
17. Staff and congregations are resistant to change
18. Congregations are frustrated that they are seeing their superintendent less and less
19. Organization is a top down approach
20. Budget should not stay neutral but be cut back
21. District staff deserve severance pay
22. Congregations are traveling farther to resource events
23. Too much change can slow progress

Respondents suggested modifications

1. Add an office in the northern region and one in the southern region
2. Keep district offices, even at a part-time level
3. Do not spending time assessing underperforming congregations
4. Reduce the number of districts
5. Move the conflict resolution out of the bishop's office
6. Make the changes in smaller steps
7. Identify a way to measure success
8. Better define the mission field
9. Define how staff will be measured for success
10. Keep superintendents involved in all church conferences
11. Give congregations more say in who they would like as a superintendent
12. Have conference staff and resource staff closer to the mission field, not further away
13. Have districts aligned by strategic issues rather than location
14. Add a fourth region to lower the number of churches in a region
15. Decrease the number of regions to two, north and south
16. Accelerate the implementation
17. Eliminate circuit elders
18. Keep clergy remediation with superintendents and bishop