

DUMC Faith Formation Congregational Survey July 2010

1-Are you a member of DUMC?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	87.6%	304
no	12.4%	43
<i>answered question</i>		347
<i>skipped question</i>		0

2-If YOU ARE A MEMBER, how long have you been a member?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1 year or less	8.5%	26
1-3 years	15.4%	47
3-5 years	11.8%	36
5-10 years	25.8%	79
10+ years	38.6%	118
<i>answered question</i>		306
<i>skipped question</i>		41

3-If YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER, how long have you been attending DUMC?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1 year or less	26.0%	13
1-3 years	36.0%	18
3-5 years	10.0%	5
5-10 years	12.0%	6
10+ years	16.0%	8
<i>answered question</i>		50
<i>skipped question</i>		297

4-How often do you attend worship service?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Almost every Sunday	60.2%	206
More than 50% of the time	22.5%	77
Occasionally	14.6%	50
Rarely	2.6%	9
<i>answered question</i>		342
<i>skipped question</i>		5

5-What is your approximate age range?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
20-30	4.6%	16
30-40	15.9%	55
40-50	29.7%	103
50-60	23.1%	80
60+	26.8%	93
<i>answered question</i>		347
<i>skipped question</i>		0

6-What are the ages of children in your home?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
0-4 years	14.0%	48
elementary school	22.2%	76
middle school/junior high	13.4%	46
senior high	12.2%	42
college	12.0%	41
no children in our home	49.9%	171
<i>answered question</i>		343
<i>skipped question</i>		4

7-What attracts you to attend this church? (select all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Sunday worship service	75.9%	258
The ministers	77.6%	264
Children's activities	27.9%	95
Youth activities	14.4%	49
Adult activities	27.1%	92
Convenience (location, worship times, etc.)	38.8%	132
Friendly, welcoming atmosphere	53.5%	182
Opportunities to participate in small groups with other adults	48.5%	165
Opportunities to serve	57.4%	195
My friends attend DUMC	31.8%	108
A place to be with other people with values similar to mine.	55.9%	190
Opportunities to learn and grow in my faith	71.5%	243
Other (please specify)		50
<i>answered question</i>		340
<i>skipped question</i>		7

Music

- Chancel and Compline Choirs
- The music is amazing...
- Also participate in the Chancel Choir
- That wonderful choir and music program that helps lead the worship services
- Music Program
- The MUSIC
- Adult choir
- The choir!!!

Ministers/Staff

- The senior pastor is the main reason I come to this church. Jody Seymour is the best pastor I have ever known.
- Would like to get more involved. Attend services because I really enjoy listening to Jody Seymour
- Pastor Jody is a big reason why we go to church
- Straightforward approach of Pastors
- Stimulation of the sermons delivered by all of the pastors
- Dr. Seymour's messages
- We like Jody's style
- Ann Starrette is a true jewel
- great staff

Sunday worship

- When I enter the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, I feel a powerful sense of being at home.
- Progressive outlook and depth of sermon content
- I always feel as though the messages are intended for me.
- Issues with a bulging disk make sitting through the worship service painful and as such I seldom attend. I miss it, but what can you do?

Mission/Service

Serving in many capacities helping others with their Christian journey
 Our mission statement
 We are very "mission" oriented
 Helping poor people
 This church is "alive" and active in the community
 Several outreach programs
 Thank you for supporting Solace for the Children!

Inclusion

Openness to people of all faiths and walks of life
 umc stance on inclusion

Faith Formation Groups

The friendship and freedom to express my doubts/concerns in the small SS group.
 In the past I have been much more involved. I would like to, once again, participate in a Bible study at night. I need to reconnect--feel a part of the church.
 I love participating in Beth Moore bible study. I meet new women of many ages and the bible study is nourishing.
 It is a gift that you offer Spiritual Formation programs
 Well organized Sunday School
 spiritual formation program
 Generous Orthodoxy
 External classes such as Spiritual Gifts class and Bible Study.

Youth/children

Wonderful nursery and children's programs
 Sunday School for children during worship service.

Convenience/fit

Close to home
 Wife is happy there
 [There is] good and bad to attending such a large church - we have done both extremes and there are pros and cons to each. physical building is definitely not an attraction but location is for our family
 good communications - knowing what is going on in the church is easy with the website
 I was raised Presbyterian----but after retirement found DUMC a good fit for me.
 My husband goes to St. Therese.
 My wife no longer thinks we're Presbyterian!

Other

It was a very good church, and I hope it will be again.
 I am actually visiting other churches at this time.
 Do not attend, nor ever have

All of the above!

8-Are you now attending or participating in an adult small group or class at DUMC?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	47.8%	166
no	52.2%	181
<i>answered question</i>		347
<i>skipped question</i>		0

9-If yes, what group or groups do you participate in?

Answer Options	Response Count
	162
<i>answered question</i>	162
<i>skipped question</i>	185

1	AA
1	Adoption Support
11	Adult Bible Study

9	Beth Moore
2	Bill Hight
3	Boomer/Sunday Shorts
10	Born in the 40s
6	Career Women
11	Choirs
4	Christian Believer
8	Christian Mothers united
5	Covenant
12	Disciple
5	Ditto Bible Study
8	DUMC Diners
2	Emmaus
2	Faith Book Club
6	Faith in Action
3	Grand Sweep – 365 days through the Bible
4	Journey.com
10	Life Applications
4	Living the Questions
2	Marsha Brodsky class
5	Men in Balance class
8	Men's Ministry
14	Navigators
3	New Faith Community
8	Pairs in Partnership
4	Prayer Band
6	Prayer shawl
2	Prime Timers
5	Seekers
3	Shalom
3	Sisters
2	Social Justice team
3	Spiritual Gifts
11	Stephen Ministers
2	Trek
6	Trust Circles
14	UMW Circles
6	Young Adult Bible Study

10-Is your attendance in this group or groups...

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Steady, consistent (almost always attending)	75.2%	124
Attend more than half the time	18.2%	30
Attend only occasionally	6.7%	11
<i>answered question</i>		165
<i>skipped question</i>		182

11-If you are currently involved in a group, what attracts you to participate in this group?

Answer Options	Response Count
	153
<i>answered question</i>	153
<i>skipped question</i>	194

Faith Development

strengthening my faith, discipline, getting to know others in a small group

growing in faith, daily Bible study, meeting others

The opportunity to deepen my faith & share fellowship with like-minded individuals

grow in faith

Learn and grow in my faith

I participated in small groups to deepen my faith, meet new people and keep focused on what is important in life.

quality of study, quality of program

The community of believers and a chance to share and grow with people I've come to know and love.

Open discussion of spiritual, faith and life questions.

spiritual learning

Studies to enrich spiritual development

I am just beginning with the Trust Circles. Being part of a circle will deepen my faith and I hope to help others along their path.

Discussing relevant faith and growth issues

I have a great interest in Spiritual Formation

God pushing me to join the group

increase my own faith

Spiritual development with wonderful people

Opportunity to grow in my faith

Learning more about my faith journey through Bible study, discussion groups, reading and discussing other books, praying with others.

The purpose of the group is something that will help me further my faith journey and to establish relationships that are always important to nurture.

the focus on spiritual direction and growth

Growing in faith

opportunity to learn about Bible & strengthen faith

opportunity to learn more about how the bible applies to our life today

Good thought provoking discussions and study

I need group interaction in order to stimulate my thinking, challenge my faith, and grow.

Opportunities to learn and grow

Joan Bondi is a very effective facilitator. Class members are supportive, caring ladies who are willing to share life experiences and faith journeys.

SS Class - opportunity to grow in understanding as well as connect with others

An opportunity to share and absorb.

Connecting with others and to God.

Fellowship - People - Relationships

closeness of the group

the fellowship with friends that make up the class

Being able to share my faith journey with people who I care about and who care about me.

Connection to others in the group

Fellowship and sharing the spiritual journey

Great fellowship! Attendance scattered because of other commitments

Group members/ curriculum

We've built real relationships based on growing our faith and deepening our understanding of Christ's role in our lives.

The Dinners give us an opportunity to meet new people and just develop friendships.

New Friendships

discussions, friendship, people with same values and goals

Most are couples with children, similar values, studies are very topical, discussion based, and we have opportunities to serve, learn, and socialize together.

Friends with similar values and with children about the same age as ours.

I have developed life long friendships. We stay in touch even when we don't meet as a class.

Good adult study group. We have made good friends and found people in similar life situations
The fellowship and friendship of this group
Friendship
Fellowship with Christian friends
to support and be supported by Christian friends
Getting to know, support, and be supported with fellow believers
friends
I like the small group setting and the women in the group are wonderful
Christian friendship and support
Friendship and love abounds!
Similarities to others in groups
Friends encouraged me to join.
Meeting others my age with similar beliefs and values.
bonding with others in the process
Fellowship
The group focuses on activities and the interaction with the other group members
Similar values and interests
meeting others
Small group...getting to know a group of people well. Nurturing those friendships.
Sharing the word with people who share the same values and Christian beliefs
Long time friendships
Members in similar circumstances as myself.
being with other church women, and the services this group does
Both the study & the fellowship of women with similar values.
The people in it.
Provides a small community in a large church
The people, it is the most age appropriate group for me at the church
Meet Christian friends and study
Opportunity to meet new Christian friends
getting an opportunity to worship with, learn from, and share experiences with other young moms
The people, service opportunities and fellowship.
Fellowship with other mothers and women who have common experiences.
The other women in this group and the activities.
Fellowship with people that I did not previously know.
I like the members. Invited to join by a friend.
communication with other like families in similar place in life
the people
Same interest and values
The participants are in similar stage in their lives.
the opportunity for fellowship
the chance to be with other women/moms and serve our community
a group of friendly people
Christians friends
Connections with other members my age and stage of life.
Nice people to know and be with on Sunday morning.
Friendships,
Fellowship
Friendliness of those in the class
Wife likes it
growing friendships
meeting and sharing thoughts with others
fellowship
members
Ways to bond with people my own age
The people in it and their depth of experience in life and faith.
established very good friends, meeting new people

fellowship, camaraderie with other moms, dads
growth and connections made w/others
the openness, the atmosphere that we are there to help, support and learn from each other
Like-minded , similar age, belief in the group objectives
fellowship fellowship
Being with other people with values similar to mine

Diversity/Inclusion/Openness

Really feel free to express my doubts even to the point of "how does one KNOW there is a God?"
Participation in multiple groups provide various forums for education and fellowship with diverse people
The deep discussions in the Ditto class, the willingness of everyone in the group to listen to divergent opinions and not get upset with each other.
Open-mindedness to accept variety of viewpoints
The people in both groups are kind, supportive, and open-minded. The LTQ group shares my theology, and the Navigators group supports many different views, but mostly each other.
Freedom to question and explore faith/beliefs
the non judgmental long standing group I have been involved with for almost 15 years
the diverse group of people in the group
there is a sense of trust
chance to discuss faith and questions openly; everyone is accepting, Ashley is a great facilitator
voices of seekers that are often shunned in traditional religious settings
The diversity of members, the format of study and the fellowship
Ability to freely share thoughts/feelings without being judged
Ability to be open, honest without feeling judged

Service

Service to the community
Prayer Shawl ministry is a great way for me to extend to others who are suffering in some way that there are others who are thinking of them continually and care for them.
The ability to contribute to someone being able to still live independently as long as they can, learning from others, the commitment level this group requires, making a difference in someone's life as they are older, taking care of an elderly person who has contributed greatly to the church. LoveInc.
service to others
Enjoy helping the older members of our church
Service to others
mission opportunities
I enjoy serving with my gifts and being involved for my children
Organized, small mission projects that would be difficult to do alone; Supporting UMW
It also allows me to give back to others as a way of saying "Thanks" to God.
My experience and knowledge can be applied in helpful ways to those in need of assistance or comfort.
The chance to make music
Habitat for Humanity allows me to feel my faith as well as practice construction activities that I truly enjoy.
pleasure of making music, sense of being of service
Like serving others with the mission trips.
joy of interacting with children and their parents
Opportunity to serve God and His people
Community service and fellowship provided by UMW
enjoy serving
opportunities for service
UMW for opportunities to serve
Opportunities for service in the Mooresville community; fellowship with circle members and UMW members; meetings are in Mooresville; good programs
Stephen Ministry - opportunity to share God's healing strength and comfort to those who are in need feeling Him reaching out to others

Content/Study topics/Learning

Wanted a mainstream approach to the course material.
The knowledge gained through studying the bible and various other sources
discussion of what we are learning
Group study , social justice issues, fellowship
Learning opportunities
Very interested in the examination of church doctrine, and also drawn by the other participants in the group.
Sharing and studying God's word with other women
Opportunities to be a church within a larger church where sharing opportunities exist
Actual Bible study and discussion.
The topics covered in the sessions
The speakers, mission opportunities and the great group of women.
Exchange of ideas, good discussions
I value the Christian atmosphere, ideas, education of the Bible, and intelligent discussions for all to
participate with their peers.
The educational experience
the learning experience
Learning
small group bible study time
The topic and the people
This group focuses on studying books in the bible
Enjoy the topics for the men's group functions
Men in Balance
Reunion group
Speakers, common interest with other women
the opportunity to learn and serve
A very knowledgeable teacher
Learning more about the Bible. I grew up with no Biblical influences
Study
The focus on Bible Study
opportunity to learn more about the bible
Men's Breakfast
content of discussion
Bible Study, Great small group support, wonderful sharing w/ seasoned Christians
SS classes for opportunities for fellowship and weekly study of Christian topics (not just Bible study)
Quality of the music program
sharing ideas & learning historical background to interpret the bible
Continuing to learn about the Bible and the Methodist Church
Variety of topics discussed
The facilitator, Harry Delk
biblical & theological study
leaders,
program
Discussions
open discussion; shared learning
The challenges of learning new music
learning

12-Give an example of something your group did in the last 12 months that really helped deepen your faith.	
Answer Options	Response Count
	141
<i>answered question</i>	141
<i>skipped question</i>	206

Study Topic

Discussed many issues throughout the Bible
read and discussed "The Shack"

A book study

Book study on Sabbath

Challenged my ideas in very candid discussions

Studied Gospels, Emmaus programs

FireProof Marriage Study

The Cost of Discipleship by Dietrich Bonhoeffer serving at the Mooresville Soup Kitchen

Discuss Mere Christianity, Ortberg's The Me I Want to Be

Participated in Disciple 3 bible class and teacher/facilitator for several bible based classes.

book study

Studying and group discussions of scripture help strengthen my understanding and how to better put it into practice
in my life by understanding others interpretations and how they incorporate into their lives.

Different short-term studies.

various lessons on faith in SS Mission work in Circle and SS

Book study

The studies that we have done have made me think more about my faith which has deepened it.

The Stephen Ministry training alone deepened my faith.

Understanding the Bible meaning then and now in my life

Several Bible studies

Watched some of the Rob Bell series

Like the format of Mickey Efir studies.

read several books and discussed bi-weekly, providing Christmas and Thanksgiving meals/ presents for families
in need

A Bible Study Group

Going Thru the Bible With Kalias.

Course touches on all of the key doctrinal issues, and allows for open discussion and questions.

Attended several events at Ann's Farm - prior to moving overseas

Discussion on forgiveness

Reading and discussing the book, "The Me I Want to Be"

We read "The Shack" and the discussion was very enriching to me.

Study the book of Esther

Study of Josuha

bible study

Studied several good books together.

Studying Henri Nouwen

Several Bible Studies have really spoken to me.

Very much enjoyed the DUMC counselor coming to speak to us on strengthening our marriages

Bible study

Participating in discussions of John Ortberg's book The Me I Want to Be - helped me to connect my individual
growth to God and to the others who are sharing my journey with me.

Learned most from John Ortberg's books

study book of Romans

A book study.

CMU--Our devotional book, The Power of a Positive Mother, and the discussions that took place.

Attended the Stephen Ministry Leadership program with two other Stephen Ministers.

Study of Mark now.

Susan HH advent series she did via phone in - I don't know that it strengthened faith per se but I really enjoyed it.
I enjoy her enthusiasm and spirit and the topic was good.

In depth study of the book of Genesis

information through films, discussions of past experiences.

Continued Bible Study using Mickey Efir

Bible Study

Beth Moore Study

Reading bible in a year small group thru navigators,
Every study I take in Covenant Women!
Read/discussed the book Cost of Discipleship
Study of Job
when the scholar did a bible study (not sure if within last 12 mos.)
study of biblical history- how the church started
good topics, speakers
Went to Wednesday night classes given by Jody and Harry Delk.

Group fellowship/discussion/support

Listening and didn't cast me off due to my doubts.
Each discussion deepens my faith. Each session I leave with something that I ponder for the weeks ahead.
Foot washing, prayer and sharing among members
openness in discussions
Living the Questions has allowed me to share some serious spiritual questions without fear of judgment.
End of study weekend getaway. Faith with fellowship.
Discussions that led to deepening faith
The way everyone is willing to share faith struggles and ah-ha moments
It happens nearly every Sunday
My husband and I attended the marriage communication course, which lasted 6 weeks, and we loved it. The class had a great mix of ages, which was really nice. I enjoyed having Nancy and Doug Young as leaders because they are so strong in faith and set a good example for our marriage. As a young adult, I enjoy spending time with older adults who can offer advice and set a good example.
I was in a Trust Circle group, but my attendance was poor due to conflict with work schedule. It was most beneficial, though, and I hope to try again
Disciple group discussions have deepened my faith more than anything.
One couple in [our class] struggled through a crisis, and several individuals in the class gave so much time and energy to both of them. No one judged and everyone welcomed them with open arms.
[specific identifying references omitted]
Small table groups & shared prayer requests.
Being with like minded people in the ancient discipline of C.P.
Just the process of going through identifying spiritual gifts did this.
Our bi-weekly meetings and mountain retreat.
Young Adult Group discussions
the process is what deepens faith not a particular something
sharing marriage experiences
Take faith trips together and reunion meetings
Beth Moore bible study is an in-depth personal and group learning experience & sharing as well as prayer
Not currently in a group like this with our church. Have a Reunion group meeting with a couple of guys from Via de Christo every Tuesday for my faith.
Sharing faith journeys and hearing how other members have persisted in searching for answers but remaining faithful during hard times in their lives.
Weekly discussion of book--relating content to our own lives in open, honest dialogue
Both of my Sunday classes help me w/my faith, the UMW helps me act on my desire to be of service in the community and beyond.
Special support to me during my wife's breast cancer
My small group supported me through a very serious illness w/cards, prayers, food and visits
My groups provide a continuing growth, nothing dramatic so far
Nothing outstanding, just a simple faith expressed in all that they do.
Men's Breakfasts
attended two bible classes, social gatherings to meet & greet
ongoing, regular study and discussion
open discussion of our varied beliefs at our spring retreat in the mountains
share faith and our walk
talked and listened to each other

Service projects

I worked at Room In The Inn. Before I went, I prayed that I would find a special connection with one of the neighbors, and I was not disappointed. It has been my experience that God almost always grants me that request, but I still find it very moving.

My Sunday School class works each year for Solace for the children.

Singing in local nursing homes with the Outreach Singers gives me a real lift when I see the impact it has on lonely, isolated older folks.

Serving quarterly meals at the homeless shelter, participating in Great Day of Service together, biblical studies on finances and parenting.

Helped with the Mooresville Christian mission and with Operation Christmas Child.

Collect items for Ada Jenkins, give to family at Christmas

Help our neighbors.

The service projects associated with our Disciple group put faith into action.

Mission work with Room In The Inn

We have a spring and fall gathering that helps all of us tell of an experience we have had with this outreach. It helps me know that we are doing something to help others.

We served a meal to Room At The Inn

Room In The Inn; Great Day of Service

Serving others

Mission opportunities

Sponsored a family at Christmas

Serve at the men's shelter, host Room in the Inn.

Just returned from mission trip to Nashville. Even after two months the area we worked in had severe damage. The people were so appreciative.

I really enjoy the Habitat for Humanity builds. I feel that everyone is there for the betterment of our society and motivated by their faith. The discussions we have in Bible Study are very interesting. I like that the DUMC members are open-minded about religion and aren't 100% certain that there is a God or a Jesus Christ. I feel threatened when people are 100% certain about something that is unprove-able. I also feel that 100% certainty has lead to more deaths and heart-ache in this world's history than the open-minded believers.

learned about Rafiki organization and as a group, decided to sponsor an child in the village.

Each year we have a Christmas auction in Born In the Forties. The proceeds go to help provide Christmas gifts for families who need help. Each year, I am amazed at how much our members give to enable others to have a better Christmas.

Room in the Inn,

Served lunch for the Habitat for Humanity crew

Every time I sing with Louise and the Outreach Singers and see the joy and a spark of involvement in those we sing to and with!

Helped a homeless man find a job...celebration!

homeless, prayer

singing in nursing homes and assisted living centers

Collected money and donations for a family from Ada Jenkins Center for the holidays

Earned money for a family in dire need. Saw huge support for a member battling cancer.

Prayer/worship/personal growth experience

Prayed like I have never before--turned to God with issues that I was totally unprepared for and did not know how to deal with.

Created a prayer list and prayed for the people on the list

The way the group prays for each other

pray for needs of group members,

compline service. life is so fast and loud.... this is quiet and peaceful. I listen better.

Occasionally we sing an anthem or hymn that makes me think about my faith more deeply

go to church every Sunday.

Learning to journal

Apply specifics from Sermon. Put Faith into practice.

every week--joy of praising thru music, sharing each others journey in faith, being part of the spiritual growth of children

Pray for the staff and the volunteer groups

Spiritual gifts journey
 attending Compline Service
 The UMW Spiritual Growth Retreat at Lake Junaluska.
 Spiritual retreat brought us all closer together and we learned so much about our spiritual values.
 Connecting a piece of music performed with the service and message - it's not every Sunday but when it happens it does impact my faith
 The session right before Easter.

Other comments

My faith has not been deepened much in the last 12 months.
 not sure

13-Of all the groups you have participated in, what were the things you liked the most about them?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	172
<i>answered question</i>	172
<i>skipped question</i>	175

People/Fellowship

People in Disciple are seekers. We encourage one another the people
 Openness, friendship, stimulating conversation
 Chance to get to know church members, similar values
 Real people...minimal "façade" is found in my Sunday school class. Participated in a dinner group and didn't feel that way at all. Stopped going...everything seemed more about show.
 Fellowship.
 Bond and friendships formed with group. Very much a part of that is a real understanding of our collective "human" weakness and our desire, struggle, and ultimate failure in being true disciples. By getting deep with people like this, it helps me keep striving to be better as I know I am not alone in my struggle and failure.
 New friendships.
 friendship, feeling part of a big church like ours, common values
 Getting to know the members of DUMC in a more intimate way.
 The common bond of love that evolves
 Our Ditto group started as Disciple I five years ago and never disbanded. The group is diverse, yet supportive. I think we evolved into a "Life Group" a few years ago.
 The variety. The feedback from those being helped. The impact on my own spiritual journey. The fellowship.
 The small group setting.
 The people, and the friendly atmosphere. I also loved the social opportunities within that (getting to know people better).
 All female group (comfortable, able to form friendships).
 Getting to know other members on a deeper, more personal level... gaining a beginning understanding of the Bible and making it applicable to my life...
 connecting with other Christian women
 Sense of fellowship, common purpose.
 Friendships
 Fellowship
 The people--some are going through some very difficult times but their faith is strong and their attitude is very good. I have enjoyed getting to know other couples and watch God strengthen all of our marriages through marriage classes. Seeing people share their true feelings is uplifting. We have made some wonderful friends through marriage classes.
 The interaction of the group and the spiritual information of Harry Delk
 Fellowship.
 The friendliness and caring of most of the other group members
 Apart from the education and deepening of my faith, I made great friends and began to feel connected to the church. It also helped me to move into other areas of service.

Forming friendships, being challenged to think about and act on my faith.

I often enjoy getting to know people out of church, actually, although the Sunday times are great...the other times enrich the Sunday experiences.

Small groups and really getting to know people.

The people.

The friendships that come from participating in small groups. Learning the Bible in a relaxed, informal, loving, open forum.

get to know the lord and make friends

Fellowship

Discussions. Community Garden: getting to know new people in an outdoor setting

Meeting others in a more relaxed setting.

Similar interests and values

Friendly people, no pressure

It was a chance to meet other women my age with the same Christian beliefs! I was part of the "Blessing Your Husband" group. I found it comforting to meet with a group and share ideas on a weekly basis.

The people

The fellowship.

The friendly, smiling faces of the participates and the genuine feeling of love and acceptance.

The people, the sharing of each person's story and faith

Fellowship and Service

fellowship and support

Great opportunity for growth, learning and fellowship with other adults. Nice mix of ages / experience.

The closeness that you feel in the group as you work toward the common purpose and goals that you share.

Fellowship with faith friends

Welcoming people

Friendly open atmosphere, getting to meet people

fellowship

when they looked happy to see me

Fellowship

friendship, since I'm new- within 4 yrs

The people, the service and the fact that I had a chance to participate.

The people

The good people...an honest feeling of being cared for and loved.

The friendships which were started in the group are so strong.

Meeting new members

social, strengthening the faith

fellowship, long term friends made, spiritual growth

small groups that met for 6+months together- support for each other and growing in our faiths

small group, more intimate setting

Learning/education

I like educational opportunities where the other participants actively participate in discussion about the topic or lesson. I also like opportunities for service to people with whom I would otherwise not be likely to be in contact.

Strong leader with information to share and then time for comments, questions and discussion

The depth of people in the group, the ability to learn from great people - Ann Starrette, Jody Seymour, John Drayer and others

The study/learning/sharing/people

Focused small group discussions on bible books...the story, interpretation, history, context and relevance to today's life with comparison to other world religions.

Growth of friendship and Bible knowledge

The study of the Bible and meeting new people who are also searching.

Disciple I was the best class I have participated in

I have enjoyed the bible studies the most. I learn so much, stay focused on the bible, get to know more women in the church of varying ages, and enjoy the discussion groups.

I really enjoyed learning more about God, faith and the bible

Christian bible study and fellowship. Committed friends and prayer partners.

Gaining a deeper understanding of God's word, participating in service activities together.

Study and fellowship

Variety of leaders. Harry Delk is great bible study leader

The materials are excellent as well as the teachers

I participated in Disciple Groups 1 & 2; enjoyed studying with others in the group.

The Bible study groups I have participated in have been outstanding due to the expertise of the leaders.

I have done several bible study classes and liked learning more about the bible as well as getting closer to many other people in the classes

focusing on actual scripture

I loved Disciple 1. I learned so much more about the Bible and it all came together.

The information, time to reflect. time to listen to other's understanding of the bible and new friendships

The solid curriculum to guide us and the group discussion. The trust that was developed.

Christian based

I did one Bible study with Jody that was a real learning experience. Also, the SS classes I have gone to in the past have been thought provoking--lots of good discussion.

small group, Bible study

opportunity to increase my knowledge and deepen my faith Christian fellowship

Study...makes me read the Bible

Engaging topics, skilled facilitator

content, organized, consistent, meaningful

Deep intense study and the people you meet.

learning, fellowship

Disciple Bible Study-it challenged me to "own" my beliefs and faith, rather than others like the church believed

topics discussed; individual assessment

excellent teachers with deep knowledge of historical content

Hearing how other Christians handle both everyday and serious problems.

Relating the Bible to present-day life.

Free and open discussion/inclusiveness

Talking deeply about faith issues.

The independence of the group. The feeling of trust and confidentiality shared by the members who feel free to open up about their lives and faith journeys. The lack of judgementalism shown by members and the acceptance and grace given to all in the group

An atmosphere that didn't have an agenda but which encouraged people to ask questions, dig deep, and love each other

Free and open discussions.

Everyone being accepting of each others opinions and understanding that we all don't think the same and don't have to. Our group is a close knit group and we don't exclude. We value differences.

I enjoy the discussion.

Being able to attend groups that discuss issues that are important to both me and my husband; I enjoy attending classes with my husband, and my husband's faith is not as strong as mine, so attending together gets him more involved in church activities.

Good leadership.

No one was "made to feel as if" they must share or lead.

Open discussion, sharing opinions/interpretations

Everyone's opinion does count and support is always given.

Asking faith questions of others who have struggles with the same questions.

Honest, open conversations about faith, questions we have about faith

Accepting

You can discuss your faith, learn from others and grow spiritually

The feeling of being accepted

New ideas on faith were expressed. Getting to know others in a supportive environment

Having open and honest discussions with others who want to grow spiritually in a deliberate and thoughtful manner

open and honest discussions; acceptance no matter your feelings

small group discussions

groups are relaxed and you can answer if you choose-no pressure

Commitment by members and inclusiveness of the group to others
the sharing and learning
well organized-participation of members- enthusiasm
Disciple, Christian Believers, they are all led by folks who are eager to share their faith, which is nice. This church allows room for questioning and using our own experiences to come to know Christ, I need that.
Open discussion and sharing of different opinions and views. Non-judgmental attitude of other group members.
Trust in other group members that I could share concerns and views, that these would be held confidential.
The real discussions where others truly opened up and had many "Aha!" moments
Sharing time with others who seek to improve their relationship with God. Small group discussions.

Spiritual growth - community of faith

Spiritual growth and renewal, building community of believers, consistent leadership
Being with seekers. Seeking the Holy Spirit in my life.
God speaks to us through other people in these groups. This is John Wesley's "method". It works. It creates a faith community.
A chance to be with and learn from adults that are in similar circumstances.
shared experiences
Journeying together in a long term Bible study
When I have been involved in any outreach or class all of the other members are concerned with what is going on with our fellow members or what is going on in the lives of the people we are interacting with.
fellowship; safe place to try new things; spiritual nourishment
Developing a sense of community
sharing our faith
Sharing of ideas, encouragement
Felt like a part of something within the church
Feeling like I was part of something. Felt a sense of belonging.
opportunity to share personal examples of faith and growing in my faith and hearing others talk about their journeys.
Learning more about my relationship with God through sharing and listening to others. The ability to really get to know other members to be able to share with them and have fun laugh together
The feeling of belonging to a group with shared beliefs/values
communion of saints
A strong feeling that all the members are very motivated to be in them. The conversations I have with people in the groups are always uplifting due to their sincerity.
Fellowship and challenge to live life closer to god
The fellowship with other Christians and sharing our faith with each other and those in our community.
Friendship & support, learning about myself and growing spiritually
Growing in my faith and getting to know fellow members better.
Active participation, commitment; Development of trusting/supportive atmosphere; Sharing of life experiences
genuine caring, a feeling of fitting in, genuine gratitude on the part of the members.
Sharing my faith journey with other Christians

Service

mission projects
Reaching out to the community
Most missions projects have good people involved that are nice to be associated with.
Habitat, LoveInc, Bereavement, Great Day of Service.....ability to see different parts of the community we live in.
Missions. Serving others.
Opportunities to serve.Chance to grow in my faith.
service to others, fellowship, Bible study
helping others

Other comments

I only participated in 1 group ... a couples session with Jody and Betsy at the Farm ... it was nice because it was offsite , a change of scenery .
Youth , Sunday school, Bells, Choirs, VBS, Music Camps. they all are wonderful. The leadership is great and very organized. Always leave the activity wanting to come back

size and focus

Quality and organization of everything done at DUMC

The church is supportive of the activities that we do and I appreciate being asked to care for children.

14-Of all the groups you have participated in, what suggestion can you offer for improving and strengthening these groups?

Answer Options	Response Count
	95
<i>answered question</i>	95
<i>skipped question</i>	252

Openness/inclusion

Some small groups feel elitist. In [one class] people have been meeting together for a long time. It is understandable that they are close knit, but even though they seem to welcome new people into the class, those long termers really just hang out with themselves. I'm sure other groups must end up like that, too. We need to be careful to CONSTANTLY show inclusiveness to others. [specific identifying references omitted]

Cliques form within groups. Group dynamics and politics also come into play. This does not apply to my current SS class

[Specific Group].....not be so clicky [specific identifying references omitted]

Be open to new people

Be more welcoming to new members of a group ...clickish groups in the church (as in most social groups)

Many groups feel "closed" and cliquish to new people.

It is very difficult to get into established groups and feel welcome.

More diversity

Attempted to join a life small group. Were left off the list. We called and were told maybe next year.

Facilitation/Leadership

I need structure so favor classes with strong leaders

More training and support for growing small group leaders.

quality leadership

Turnover of leaders regularly to gain fresh ideas

Start on time! Communicate.

Develop and support of leaders/facilitators for small groups; first the process and structure; and second the topic content and material.

Overall would like to see more small group teaching as opposed to round-robin

We need more leadership from church members in Men's Ministry. Jerry Hancock is trying to do things all by himself.

Good leaders are key

Making sure there is good leadership for additional groups.

An open format, with less lecturing and more honest discussion.

Leave all egos at home.

I wish there had been exercises to do at home given to us - exercises to help us communicate and encourage intimacy

People need to stop using the groups as a way to spread their personal agendas.

Make sure that the leaders are trained. If simultaneous groups are meeting, make sure that the leaders "lead" in a similar manner. (I realize that personality is going to affect this a little.)

better use of time

Stay focused on what you set out to accomplish.

Skilled facilitators and leaders are greatly needed.

Encourage people to interact with each other and emphasize all that is similar and cohesive, not what is divisive and difficult.

Facilitation skill training; Emphasis of need to be active/attend; Development of clear objectives, rules, etc.-at the beginning

Stay on task and keep one person from dominating the group.

Small groups will either fly or fail based on the chemistry of the group's members. I think it must be impossible to predict a group's success until after they start meeting. Critical to their success is a calm, supportive facilitator who sets the tone for everyone else.

I have been in several groups ;through the years and all have been very good, with the exception of one which was

led by an individual who seemed to have the view that there was nothing of value in the old testament and pushed his views, rather than respecting the material we were studying
more support from church leaders; small groups have a tendency of falling apart
Continuity I have yet to find a group outside of the choir that has been able to survive beyond its initial mission. We were members of the Bill Hight SS class and eventually left because of the age gap and relevance of discussion to where we were. I can honestly say that SS class is one of the few I've participated in that followed up had regular social outings sent cards on birthdays called when other members were sick. If not for the age gap and lecture style teaching we would still be there - we felt valued and loved
More honest and open sharing...
more reason to having a meeting
This church has lots of good talent that isn't being used effectively.
wish I knew how to keep people interested once a sign up--how stimulate young parents the importance of attending SS regularly
better facilitation ideas when things go wrong
strong leadership, guidance from ministers, support from church administration (Ashley has been a gift)

Curriculum

More assistance from the ministers to find curriculum and to come in occasionally for instruction/answer questions/
get to know the group
variety in study is important in keeping the interest.
I think most groups need a good study guide.
Follow the bible more
Regarding Sunday School...it would be helpful to have help regarding teaching classes. We are a families with young parents and pressed for time and it is hard to prepare lessons.
I would like to see the LTQ group expand its curriculum and plan to suggest that.
Subjects that offer some theological depth of understanding
Guidance from the church pastoral staff
Groups need guidance and a structured approach to selecting curriculum.
I've done most of the Disciple group stuff. I'm looking for something else to get into, but the church hasn't really latched onto another program.
Adult Sunday schools could use more guidance with curriculum suggestions
the group has to reach agreement on what is going to be studied
more prayer

Time/Day/Length

convenient time offerings,
Offer more opportunities at times other than evenings and Sunday mornings.
Making Disciple study program classes shorter might attract more people. Some are intimidated by the time commitment. I have found the most demographically diverse groups the most interesting.
For Stephen Ministers, meeting twice a month for training became too much for me when you were also meeting with your care receiver. Once a month would have been better. As a result, I had to stop participating in this ministry
Continue to have shorter sessions throughout the year, too. Nice to coordinate on Wed nights with the dinners. Need childcare to participate
Slightly shorter duration
I like the shorter 4 to 6 wk classes
more flexibility in the times of meetings
has to be done at a time that works for the group
sharing circle - did not end up attending when competing time demands happened

Fellowship

Have more functions where the members can meet more socially to get to know each other better outside of a meeting setting.
Have part of the group meeting time set aside for socializing...
doing more together outside Sunday school
Nametags....
Small Group "Open House" once a quarter.

Give a little more time for fun activities. We go to work and serve, but it would be nice to relax and have some fun too. having other activities scheduled away from church, more mission projects to do together, more social time away from Sunday so we can become "closer" as a community
 has to connect people
 Projects that benefit the community. It has lots of needs.
 Sunday school group...keep being real people.

Group size/More participation

Small groups (<10) are better for more participation by members.
 a group can be too small. I think you need at least 10 members in attendance, thus you need adequate membership in the group.

Keep the groups small enough that individuals feel free to open up and not be intimidated

Calling others and inviting them to a group..

Leave the Navigators as is. They're doing just fine.

people need to make DUMC activities a priority and put other activities second

Try it until you find your niche

Encouraging more participation - it is very difficult to get many people to do more than attend (how do you do that?????..if I knew, I certainly would do it)

GET INVOLVED!!!

Personal invitations to new members from small groups that might be of interest to them.

more participation

active, faithful attendance

Other Comments

I have only participated in one group, and it was wonderful! I have had a hard time finding a group that is a good fit for both me and my husband in our age range.

I think DUMC does an excellent job of providing an amazing variety of classes/seminars. There appears to be something for everyone! Thank you!

At this time I do not think there have to be any strengthening of what we are doing. Most who are involved in any outreach, bible class or Sunday school I feel are already working to strengthen their beliefs and help me also.

The children and youth activities could be stronger in several ways. Communication between the ministers and kids by email work better with less use of paper. The Jesus the Rock program is not designed for children above the age of 7. This program needs less singing and less puppets with more activity. The programs could be strengthened with more high school or college age kids involved. Use the Davidson College religion majors which helps them with their degree requirements and gives the program more youthful ideas.

Continue to inform congregation of Disciple Bible Study benefits

I think we need more room for the Bible Study class.

youth group - poor organizational qualities for volunteers, program still needs developing. Sunday school program is already being re-developed.

The groups are strong. I just need to participate more.

I think the groups are great--I just need to take advantage of what is offered.

if you get a volunteer to do something tell them what is involved up front- don't spring something on them after they've signed in blood-this practice is common but not ethical

15-If you are not currently attending a small group, why not?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Topics offered do not "grab" my interest	24.3%	36
Do not feel I get much from these groups.	4.1%	6
Difficult for me to allocate 1-2 hours per week	26.4%	39
Groups do not meet at a day or time that is convenient for me	40.5%	60
Don't know what is offered	11.5%	17
Too many other demands on my time	53.4%	79
Other (please specify)		67
<i>answered question</i>		148
<i>skipped question</i>		199

Schedule

I don't participate outside of Sunday School as most everything (the last time I looked) was Monday-Friday. I am a consultant and one can count me being out of town 90 percent of the Mon-Thursdays. There didn't appear to be much outside of those dates.

There are often other groups I would like to participate in, but cannot because I work during the weekday & that is when they meet.

I have a husband that travels a lot, so attending in the evening is difficult.

Waiting till fall to do more classes. Summer is not the best scheduling time for us. I do classes in fall, winter, and spring.

A lot of groups/studies are not geared to work around people that work during the day. There have been things that I was interested in but not able to attend.

Summer. . . plan to sign up for a small group again in the fall.

I typically do groups during the "school year" and may do another bible study starting in the fall

Summer vacation- unable to commit during these months

It would be very nice to have some UMW circles that meet in the evening or Bible Study groups that meet in the evening or on Sunday afternoons?

Timing, I work in retail on a rotating shift.

Have found a Bible study group closer to my home at another church Time works better there also

Summer is a tough time to have regular attendance in a group study

My Bible study group does not meet in the summer.

Many of the groups meet during the day- ie Bible studies- Not many offered in the evening for working people

Difficult to commit to regularly attend group meetings over a 9 month period...

Other demands on time

I would LOVE to participate in a small group throughout the year, but simply can't fit it in among other family responsibilities.

Our young daughter keeps us pretty occupied - plus, my wife and I both work full time - hope to have more time for more group activities as our little girl gets older.

My business requires significant travel that cannot be planned more than 2 weeks in advance.

I am working two jobs, as is my husband, and with two small children, we are juggling drop-off/pick up times for school, homework, childcare. I very much want to participate and do on Sundays. More "online" interaction would be great. I am up at 3 am working and can participate but I know no one wants to meet at DUMC at 3 am.

Have retired and travel more

We have been traveling a great deal since joining the Church and been unable to participate in a few groups we hope to join in the fall

At this time we can not commit to attending on a regular basis due to weekends away with children events. again more challenging with a small child's schedule, especially when one spouse travels a lot with work.

Did not have time due to Marnie's illness this year. I intend to join a group this fall.

Need childcare. Only want to leave baby for ~ 1 hour.

feel guilty spending a night away from my daughter since I work full time and travel 7-10X per year for 2-5 days at a time.

Bible study- 1/2 year ??????I often travel for business (can't read writing)

3 young children at home all summer. (CMU and Beth Moore study are on break for the summer)

I have attended some of the various small groups - loved The Shack classes last year. I often travel out of town on weekends and have work obligations out of town as well.

I do a lot of service based work, but am doing it primarily outside of the church. I have often felt that my service is related to God, but not required to be through the church. My passion is a little known childhood disorder, and working to develop education with parents & physicians, raising money for fundraising is my passion.

I prefer to participate in other activities offered by church, choir, teaching children's choir

Distance

The distance that I work / live from Church

We live out of town so it is not convenient for us to attend a small group.

we live in Denver, N.C. fairly new to the area--It seems like a long distance to travel each Sunday and then getting involved with a community that lives so far from us.

I am a member of another Methodist church where my primary home is located.

Location is a little far for evening/Sunday meetings since we work in Charlotte and with two kids allocating the time too.

On Sundays to go back is time consuming. Sometimes the group times are not convenient.

our distance from the church is 20+ miles limiting our participation
church is in neighboring county, so gas cost factors in
Temporarily living elsewhere
Living in a different city.

Health

Health Issues

Uncomfortable

Just do not feel connected to the church right now--feel rather out on a limb with no one to connect to.
I'm not comfortable in religious groups
One of the reasons that I probably don't participate in more classes is that my religious leaning seem to be more liberal than many of the classes seem to accommodate.
I don't feel comfortable with most members of DUMC anymore -- many are so materialistic and "success oriented"
I find it a turn off.
Feel uncomfortable verbally interacting during lesson-Are my ideas/feelings important enough?

Lack of good fit

I guess that may just be an excuse but lots of the groups I would be interested in are more for stay at home Moms than working Moms.
Would like a singles group or activities for 40 to 55 year old singles.
Hard to find one
Continuity and community- I am not looking for an 8 week connection

Don't know how to get started

Not sure how to join one. They seem to be attended by the same people for long periods of time. Would be "behind" in the study.
New to becoming a member

Have participated, will again

Usually participate but am between groups at this time - Have participated in Disciple classes, long term and short term SS, bible studies, other one time and short term studies.
In transition with the "empty nest." I will start back.
Just finished 32 week program and taking a break.
Just finished a group around Memorial Day--Disciple

Haven't gotten around to it

I really would like to and have looked into what is offered, but just never get around to following through!
I'm still trying to figure out why I have not signed up for a group in awhile.
I probably have been remiss in investigating more the opportunities. Perhaps if there was a continual space in the church that groups posted information about themselves...that they are seeking people to help them, or be a part of their team, or join them....I'd feel more comfortable. Typically feel many of these groups are "established" none, just haven't followed through
Don't know
just have not committed myself
I plan to soon
Hoping to join a small group soon.

Other

do not attend this church

16-Have you participated in any groups at DUMC in the past?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	76.2%	234
no	23.8%	73
<i>answered question</i>		307
<i>skipped question</i>		40

17-Have you participated in groups in other churches in the past?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	65.9%	211
no	34.1%	109
<i>answered question</i>		320
<i>skipped question</i>		27

18-If you are not now participating in a small group, what would attract you to start participating?

Answer Options	Response Count
	98
<i>answered question</i>	98
<i>skipped question</i>	249

Schedule

Something, outside of Sunday School, that takes place on a Friday or Saturday night. See above.

If offerings would be in several "optional" time slots...like, the same class would be offered during the day as well as in the evening. I'd also like to see more Saturday classes offered.

Day and time offered (my availability would depend on - and change seasonally - based on kids' school and sports) and childcare provided.

A group that is offered at a time when there is also an activity for elementary school-age children.

Monday evening meetings...

Convenient time.

Convenient time, appealing topics

Making online. I have wanted to do Disciple for years but cannot commit to 9 months. Would love to do "smaller" certificates; for example, the first five books of the Bible, then move to Paul's letters; then do the Gospels, and etc and eventually, I would get the whole Bible done... can you make that Disciple Group- 3 weeks to do Gospels (or online)... and I could maybe participate. I know me and I won't sign up for 9 months Disciples knowing I will miss some classes. I want "perfect attendance" so online or smaller sections would help.

timing

My ideal group would meet on Sunday evenings during the same time as Faith Friends. On Sunday morning, attending both a small group and worship means that I'm leaving my children in their 'groups' for 2 or more hours.

Saturday or Sunday afternoon or evening time. My work has heavy demands on me during the week.

After work meeting times would be great. I would like a group that combined study with volunteer opportunities in the community

Many small groups meet on Wednesday nights and my husband and I cannot attend a service on this night.

Short enough session (~8 weeks) and short enough session (~1 hour or 1.5 max) so baby could tolerate childcare that long.

Different times.

Would be interested in other small groups if meet on Tues or Fridays (my days off) or in evening.

need morning times between 9 am 1pm

Honestly, the YAG group keeps me on their invite list, but it seems every time they get together, I have other commitments. I would love to and am planning to get involved with this group SOON.

Consistent work schedule.

Short sessions

A fairly short term block of sessions. No more than 6 weeks one time per week.

Having them in the evenings

groups don't meet at a day or time that is convenient for me

I would like to explore Stephen Ministers - the first drawback is that it meets on Tuesday nights, and I have a permanent Tuesday commitment. Beyond that, I am unsure of whether or not I would be able to follow-through with a time commitment after becoming active. I am free more during the day than at night - and occasionally am gone weekends - Would I be able to be effective with that schedule?

[when I] Retirement.

We are raising a grandchild and we need to get a better handle on our schedule. Our lives are so hectic right now. Your offerings seem varied and we would like to meet people in a smaller group.

It's not topics, size of group, or "teacher" but the fact I work 2 jobs. The one job is on the weekends (this job provides insurance/benefits) so I miss Church MOST Sundays and my sales job has me traveling during the week and doesn't have a set schedule.

[when] kids [go] off to college

there are some that attract me and it is more a issue of time. I am looking forward to hearing more about the book club. And even if I cannot do the meetings would like to know what the books are so I can read them on my own.

1) meeting on Saturdays; 2) meeting quarterly; 3) having a component that was online to complement the face to face time; 4) meeting closer to home - Huntersville vs. at DUMC

Hopefully in the fall...just the time of year

Not sure. The demands on my time will need to change.

Time of day....10am to 12:00 noon; weekdays; book club group; serving the elderly; literacy tutor

Convenient meeting time and a subject that is of interest

Having more time to do so.

Meeting on Sunday at a time that doesn't conflict with 11 am worship.

convenient time & interesting content; drop-in format that does not require attendance at every class

nighttime dinner get together

Just finding the right one at the best time. I need to put it on my "to do list."

Topics

Topic pertinent to my faith journey or life circumstances

interesting subjects/topics

The church does not offer much for small group study beyond the Disciple study.

Appealing topics

Something I liked

Something new and different that was on a shorter study basis

Interesting topics. Welcoming new members or forming new group.

Interesting topics of discussion, as well as bible study.

Not sure - I guess it would have to be something of interest to me.

A group about improving marriage/Family with God

More real applications, less just be nice to everyone

another couples "therapy" session

Interesting topic and friendly, interesting people

Groups on the following topics- parenting middle schoolers, married couples groups, another blessing your husband part 2 group!!!

A topical study that I have not had before.

Controversial current topics that connect faith to current world events and societal challenges of everyday life.

interest in topic and format

Bible study led by experts; online avenues of study

Some new exciting faith based offering. Tried to do the bible reading that Susan offered, but was too disciplined for me. I didn't have the pressure to stay on it and dropped out.

Topic or activity of interest to me specifically

More topics, Various locations outside of Davidson

studies of other religions differences & similarities to Methodism

Subject/topic of interest. Group small enough to encourage discussion and dialogue. Group that would educate me and stimulate me to learn more about a particular subject.

Group with a common interest

Being part of a Christian support group dealing with daily issues of living a Christian life in a very secular world.

a group with other doubters who have been away from church for a while

fellowship opportunities around a common interest.

Would love to attend a small group that meets monthly w/same people, maybe by neighborhoods, (life group)

Something that would apply to my situation. I'm a single, professional woman in my 30's. I have no children. I would like to be in a group with other people MY age and with similar life situation. Most groups are not geared toward us.

The one or two I've seen that might be somewhat interesting for me are too time demanding. What about doing a coffee connections type of group where others my age/situation can talk about what is going on in their lives, or do a book club on a book that would apply to this type of life situation.

One that has participants that are interested in the subject and may make a difference.

woman's group

Relevance and longevity - the choir satisfies my need here

The quality of the discussion with quality people

people and content

Family related groups

Offer a family small group where parents and students are studying the same curriculum.

Something we could participate in as a family - we have a small child and weekends are the only time that we have together. Otherwise, it's just me and our child during the week nights and finding a sitter is not an option for us.

if my husband would attend with me

If I could get my children active in activities that coincide with a small group, maybe other parents, that would help.

Often programs do not coincide with adult activities or groups and I do not want to put them in child care. My kids are older and feel like childcare is directed toward small children.

Would love a group of parents with teenagers to share thoughts, ideas, and just give support.

It partly depends on the topic the group is addressing and how immediate it is in my life at the time. Between weekly volunteer commitment, employment and home responsibilities, it is hard to make the time. However, issues relating to parenting teens is most relevant to me right now, so I think I would try to make it more of a priority to participate.

Other Moms with children similar ages.

Topics for the stay at home mom (with older children) in the afternoon time instead of the morning//or a weight loss group that is faith based

Openness/inclusion/welcome/comfort

Feeling like it was a group that my values fit in to

Atmosphere where I feel comfortable and topics that grab my interest. I'm not entirely comfortable speaking about personal matters with other people.

No pressure to participate verbally unless I feel led to do so

I need to make the decision to do this. Also, personal contact to encourage me.

perhaps if I already knew a few of the people who were participating, and it was a topic that interested me.

Better communication about group opportunities

Good communication

More my fault than the churches....but see note below....maybe a ongoing list of "open" groups, or teams where you could serve etc.

Other comments

There is nothing stopping me except my own procrastination.

I plan to look into Adult Sunday school classed for me and my husband to attend this fall. I just need to do it.

Just need to make the commitment.. I work in Charlotte, so it's hard to come home during the week and then leave home again.

I plan to attend the August session to learn about the Circle groups.

Assuming not too many from the Denver community travel over to Davidson UMC.

Not a priority at this time

not sure

19-Have you ever stopped attending a group because you didn't feel it was meeting your needs?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	38.6%	105
no	61.4%	167
If yes, please explain		89
	<i>answered question</i>	272
	<i>skipped question</i>	75

Not enough substance, depth

too much chatter, too little learning opportunity

Programming too "light". Too much social time, not enough learning time.

I attended [specific] circle and felt there was not enough meat to the meetings.[specific identifying references omitted]

At a previous church. The leader did not stick to the subject and it was too far to drive to listen to his college experiences

Messages were not thought-provoking or teaching-oriented

Not a good fit for me; Nor meeting my needs/expectations

I simply misunderstood what the group was about so not what I was expecting or looking for. No other issue than that.

I was with the Stay at Home mom group. I felt it became more for moms with younger kids and was geared towards

that. This is why I moved onto UMW which fit my needs better and I felt I had more in common with those women.

I attended the Boomers class once and felt it was more of a traditional, lecture-driven class. I attended a woman's

Bible study and felt it was too large to be personal.

I just felt like I wasn't "on the same page" as the other members of the group. It wasn't a bad experience at all and the

leader was sympathetic to the reasons why I left the group.

We attended 3 or 4 groups for a bit of time before deciding on another.

Shalom S.S. has evolved into something I no longer feel meets my needs.

Stay at home moms,,,,we aged out

Sometimes the people in the group are either at a different place in their life and/or have different lifestyles

Study not what expected.

A Sunday School class that was too large for me.

Composition of the group- I had nothing in common w/ the people in it.

Did not feel like there was a Sunday school class for us. not a good transition between new member class and getting involved.

See above - didn't apply to my life situation and I didn't enjoy it.

Just didn't feel connected to the leader or people in the group at the time.

Class discussion was based on current life situations and philosophical opinions. I want and need Bible Study.

Group grew to be VERY political. (another church)

Sometimes you find that you are just not the right fit for a group, or your age may not be appropriate for what they are doing.

I have outgrown certain groups, and felt a need to find a new niche. I have still retained friends from those groups, and just felt it was time to move on.

My wife and I have attended a few small study groups that were not very fulfilling so we only went to a few sessions

Class on "loss."

Disciple discussion was very shallow and rushed. Seemed to be geared toward new Christians.

Just didn't share common goals with the group members. Had different expectations. Also - if the group was not a fit for me due to external situations or personal issues that arose, I would explain in a general way my reason for leaving -- so that others would not take it personally.

The Journey.com class. I was searching for the Bible Study class and was directed to the Journey.com class by accident. I am now attending the Bible Study class quite regularly because the Journey.com class was not was I was originally looking for.

As far as "circles" are concerned, I would be more interested in a "project" rather than meeting for an hour every month to hear a speaker.

We felt we were not hearing or offering anything new or inspiring.

Prime Timers - older age group than I am

I think I outgrew the need for the group

I joined DUMC diners after I joined the church. Because I am single, I figured I needed to join the diners group for

singles rather than the group for my town. The folks in the group were all very nice, but the group was together for five hours, and I don't have the time to devote to that length of activity. Plus, the group was all women older than myself, so there wasn't much diversity of thought, age, or gender in the group.

The men's group seemed to only focus on the older men and not men between the ages of 25-45ish

Age gap and relevance
material was too difficult

Not friendly/welcoming

I felt like an outsider and didn't want to keep explaining myself.

Sunday school class. Some of the strongest members in the class seemed to be the most exclusive...indifferent to me being there.

There are some Sunday school classes at DUMC that have become "clicks" that seem to welcome new members, but are so set in their ways that change is not something they are ready to accept - but I don't think they realize this

It seemed to be an exclusive group

Not feeling helpful or part of the group.

Large groups are harder for me to feel comfortable in, it's easy to feel like an outsider..there should be more time for getting to know each other

Lack of open discussion/acceptance of different views

Poor or ineffective leadership; wandering or multiple agendas; irrelevant discussions; and dominate prejudice or pious atmosphere.

some too insistent or closing down discussion if it wavers from groups thoughts on matters

Others' views were too strong and out of line with what I had come to believe was the Methodist traditional/modern way of thinking.

It became too exclusive and judgmental.

The other members didn't seem very welcoming to new joiners.

was afraid to question the validity or value of religion

Took a break from career women when I was going through a tough time at work...and make-up of group made me feel more judged than supported; was more my frame of mind than the group.

In another church, there was no room for questioning and open discussion of ideas that were dismissed as "maybe not even Christian"

didn't feel that group was willing to discuss different viewpoints

Poor Leadership/Facilitation

stale group, poor leadership

Poor facilitation

I stopped attending Sunday School due to lack of class leadership and lack of people attending. Often I was only the only one who showed up or in some cases there were only 2 of us.

Born in the forties would take on study subjects that people weren't interested in participating for or willing to discuss.

There was a need for facilitators, which takes work and not rewarding when it was on a subject that one wasn't interested in and group members weren't prepared to participate in discussions.

Some groups have not had enough interpersonal interaction. I did not feel comfortable with them.

poor planning

Mainly poor facilitators. A good facilitator can take almost any curriculum and make it meaningful. Poor facilitators allow some people to dominate, or they themselves dominate, and they do not know how to ask questions that make people think and ponder their faith and engage with their classmates.

First-time moms...conversation wasn't structured.

if the time was not well-used or the content was not compelling

The leader did not seem to be prepared.

Lack of consistent attention to objectives of the class

Our Disciple group lost our leader and decided to branch off and study other material (What's so Amazing About Grace, The Lord's Prayer, book club). It just got to the point that I was leading it and that was not my choice. We all sort of lost interest.

Sometimes the person leading the small group does not seem to be able to lead it effectively.

Group dynamics

Too many of the groups felt like they were formed by committee or were trial balloons that never took flight. Groups that flourish form organically - not through focus groups or surveys. Want things to flourish - find a group that is already formed and watch them - you will see what works. Copy it and you'll succeed. Also - nourish the non-traditional - that is where the best ideas form and take flight.

Not many engaged in group or topic, same topic over and over, women had secondary roles, larger group seemed to have planned agenda against a few, too much pressure to do more and more, performance criticism of members, condescension to members as lesser Christians, did not want various opinions or interpretations, members looked down on whoever tried to defend themselves from criticism

Group dynamics changed. Scheduling conflicts.

It has been difficult to find a group to grow with in the church. It seems the groups last one or two years and then disintegrate. Many of the individuals in groups from the past have left the church.

After participating in Circles of Trust (which was very meaningful) for 4 years or so, I was ready for a change. I was faithful each year to finish the entire block of sessions. It took away from the group when others only came once in a while.

At our previous church, I wanted to attend with my husband, but he didn't feel a connection to the class so we stopped attending.

There is a lack of commitment that takes away from the growth of classes. After a while, it is simply not worth the time. the dynamics of the group and the actual time spent on bible study.

The personality of the group changed and it went away from its original charter.

1-had become petty and insular, less open to new people and thoughts. 2-Another-no one seemed very engaged with the meeting or purpose. 3-Another- more people seemed to mercilessly gang up on a few. 4- Treatment of women as secondary

the Boomer class which started strong and has disbanded into a quick hit Sunday by Sunday SS class

20-When would you prefer to attend a small group?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Sunday morning	21.6%	61
Sunday evening	13.8%	39
Wednesday evening	11.0%	31
Weekday morning	25.4%	72
Weekday evening	28.3%	80
Other (please specify)		55
<i>answered question</i>		283
<i>skipped question</i>		64

Weekdays

weekday mornings in the summer...

Monday, Wednesday or Friday am

after lunch time //or lunch meeting--

Weekday a.m. as well

lunch time

early weekday morning

weekday afternoon

Please no night classes for parents with school age children...

weekdays.

Mid afternoon

Weekday morning

Evenings

Monday evenings...

Tues. evening

Weekday evenings

Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday evenings work best for me.

weekday evening,

Any weekday evening

Wednesday evenings ; week day evenings when things are already going on that my children can attend so the whole family cant attend something and I don't have to worry about a sitter but not later than 8:30. Any later is hard to get the kids home and into bed before it's too late.

Any of the above as long as my daughter also had a group to attend. I love Wednesday night dinners and classes any evening

weekday evening

I also liked the Monday evening Spiritual Gifts class meeting time. My travels with work sometimes made it hard to attend, but I'm usually able to adjust my schedule accordingly.

Friday or Saturday night. Sunday night I am usually preparing to go out of town. Mon-Thursday nights I am usually out of town. I am curious as to why one would provide only the response options above as opposed to each week day.

weekday evening

bi-monthly or quarterly on a weekday evening

We enjoy DUMC Diners on the weekend.

I already attend Sunday morning and Wednesday evening.

Weekday eve-7:30pm- too many start @5pm and is a difficult time for those who work in Charlotte

Saturday

Saturday morning.

or Saturday morning

Saturday morning (but not every week)

Saturday evening

One sat evening a month

Or weekends

Sunday

Most Sunday morning classes begin @ 9:30am. I think a class @ 11:00 might work.

Sunday Disciple classes

Sunday morning

Sunday morning is the only time my husband and I can do a small group study together. I do other women studies during the week when I can

Sunday morning would be a good option as well.

I already attend Sunday morning and Wednesday evening.

My husband and I have a lot going on during weeknights. Maybe a Sunday night program would be best for us.

Sunday evenings

Sunday afternoon

Sunday morning

Or Sunday morning

Sunday morning

Sunday eve-7pm

Online

Online

Online access

Other comments

Flexible...various schedules are attractable.

We commute to the church from a distance, so weeknights don't work, and we both are employed, which wipes out daytime

Depends on my schedule.

open to any and all times

my schedule varies - I adjust accordingly. weeknights can still be hard with sports and school commitments.

Right now it's hard to specify a time.

I would like to have more choices in circle meeting times.;

I work full time, and have a child at home - so unless meetings are early am or really late or on weekends, my time is

not my own.

Groups that have a focus and an "end point" would work better for me with childcare

21-Would you prefer to be in a class or group...		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
with ages similar to yours	19.3%	64
with mixed ages	16.6%	55
topic is more important than age	64.0%	212
<i>answered question</i>		331
<i>skipped question</i>		16

22-What topics or focus would you most enjoy in a faith formation group?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Bible study	64.3%	209
Book study	44.9%	146
Current issues	44.9%	146
Practical approaches to living your faith every day	76.0%	247
Principles of religion, theology	41.5%	135
Social justice	25.8%	84
Other (please specify)		25
<i>answered question</i>		325
<i>skipped question</i>		22

Parenting

Practical approaches to raising godly children

Feel like others need parenting help. I teach Sunday school and young children, and behavior is a big problem.

Not sure why my generation seems to drop the ball with discipline. It impacts many aspects of the church -- including recruiting SS teachers.

Raising children in a Christian environment.

Blended family issues....children and divorce issues....spouse relationship issues

Parenting teenagers

I am interested in forming a monthly Sunday school class for parents of middle school students and one for high school parents. This would provide an opportunity for sharing & connecting as well as linking as closer as volunteers for the various youth programs - updates on what they are studying, etc.

Parenting boys

Parenting

Other suggestions

A neat study idea; Walk through the Bible with the great music written for Bible passages. Class members would read scripture each week and then come to class and listen to music that was written from the passages.

A "doubters" class would be of interest.

Science & Religion; Scholarship-Heavy; Opportunities for informal, more intimate worship

Marriage

There is a book out called "Thirty Days To Live"

Dinner and discussion

Weight loss Faith Based Program

Interfaith spirituality, God speaking through all religions

Local issues and opportunities

all of the above

Most any of these categories would have intriguing options for me.

spiritual formation and direction

Current issues as they relate to the Biblical moral code.

Open discussion

What to do when other Christians lie about you?

Judging and not judging

How to recruit and keep volunteers through guilt, shame and manipulation

Education vs. indoctrination

I would also like to be a part of a regular group doing outreach - a soup kitchen, Lydia's loft, tutoring children, visiting shut-ins

Other comments

But I fear that opinions would be very one-sided. Asking some questions would probably offend some participants.

Not sure if I'll participate in Revelation Bible study because people may be preachy about who gets to Heaven and who doesn't.

well , I guess I am not in a frame of mind for any of these at his time

Would prefer that social justice and current issues not be offered during the Sunday School hour.

23-What class format appeals to you the most?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Lecture by a leader	6.9%	22
Leader-led discussion	51.7%	165
Open group discussion	23.5%	75
Video with leader-led discussion	17.9%	57
Other (please specify)		44
<i>answered question</i>		319
<i>skipped question</i>		28

Combination

Wish you could choose all that apply (instead of just one)...leader and open group combination

A mix of video/book study with a Facilitator but not a "teacher" unless that teacher is an expert in the field. This leads to dialogue rather than lecture.

All above are good. It's the class participation or lack of it that can make or break a class.

Combination of all the above...not just one format. It all depends upon the topic presented!

I like a mix of Leader Lecture & Leader led Discussion

Combination of lecture by a leader and then open up for group discussion to digest, assimilate, and discuss.

Video with leader and group discussion in the same class and enough time for both

I always enjoy the classes that have a video and are led by a leader but we also have open discussion & sharing

All that I have done is video based with some discussion. I would love to try a lecture type with discussion but usually there are not many of those

leader-led discussion combined with open discussion

Leader-led with open group discussion.

a combination of the first three; almost never a lecture

Video w/ leader-led discussion

with time for discussion at the end

A video starts discussions.

Open discussion

Open group discussion with very definite curriculum to read ahead of time. I don't want to just "shoot the breeze" with a group of people.

trust circle process

open group discussion

open group discussion

open group discussion

open group discussion

Videos

Videos only if well done (too many poorly done or "cheesy" video curricula out there...)

Any, depending on topic

any of the above

I guess it depends on the subject and the leader
 any, depends on the topic
 I don't really have a preference, but think sometimes all these methods could be used.
 depends on what we are covering - all groups do seem to need a designated "organizer(s)".
 I'm open to any format.
 Depending on complexity of subject, all of the above.
 Actually any format would be of interest, it matters more about the topic than the class type.
 like all at times
 Much depends on the leader and participants; any of these formats can be appealing
 Any of the above depending on the topic
 like all
 I'm open to any format
 No sure; depends

Importance of having a good leader

To actually learn something (as opposed to learning what everyone else thinks), at some point there needs to be lecture to impart new information. After that, discuss all you want.
 Knowledgeable leaders
 Leading is a large responsibility and we find it necessary to share that commitment.
 I like to feel that there is a leader who is "a couple of pages ahead" of the others in the group
 If the leader is a skilled facilitator. Most classes using video-based material stick too closely to the prescribed discussion guides, and these are poor at best. A good topic, good material, and a good facilitator = success.
 do NOT want to be pressured into verbal participation

Other Comments

Clear outside expectations of participants (such as in Disciple)

24-How much time would you be willing to commit to an adult faith formation small group?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1-2 hours per week	51.5%	167
No more than one hour per week	24.4%	79
1-2 hours per month	13.6%	44
Cannot participate at this time	10.5%	34
<i>answered question</i>		324
<i>skipped question</i>		23

25-Of the small group facilitators you have seen at DUMC, how would you assess their effectiveness?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Extremely effective	51.2%	128
Somewhat effective	26.0%	65
Need improvement	3.2%	8
Some were effective, others need improvement	19.6%	49
Other (please specify)		22
<i>answered question</i>		250
<i>skipped question</i>		97

Effective Facilitators

I only saw Jody and Betsy and they were very good and honest and supportive
 Marsha is wonderful as a leader.
 Leslie was fantastic!
 Beth Moore has always been extremely well done. Our journey.com has shriveled to nothing. we are now trying to restart/restructure it. this would be easier with some pastoral guidance instead of a group of couples figuring it out.
 We all want more knowledge and stronger faith in our families but none of us is qualified to take the lead completely,

so we look to whatever DVD we can find. Definitely needs help!
 Have not had lots of experience, but Michael Ditto is an excellent facilitator who "leads" in such a gentle way that everyone feels welcome to be themselves. (At least that is my experience.)
 Again, based on Sunday School only.
 Most are very effective.
 However, . . . I think we have several that are excellent.
 Some are, but most are not.
 Most people have been pretty good but some others have not.

Teaching vs Facilitating

Most were extremely effective, a few were not as good at encouraging or facilitating group discussion
 I was a facilitator.....it would be nice to have help reiterating that a facilitator is not a teacher.
 Ranges from excellent to not so good. many want to be "teachers" and over prepare content for a 45-60 minute format - which is good for a lecture style class - not what I want or need - but true facilitators - with an outline of what to cover, but flexible enough to have the conversation and interests drive the dialogue are not as prevalent
 Too much "well what do you think" without a foundation of information for informed thought. If there's no new input of actual fact, then it's just swapping opinions!

Biased facilitators

Need to be more open minded and less rigid and rule bound
 Same lay leaders with a conservative viewpoint have taken over our church's teaching

26-If facilitators need improvement, in what areas do they need to improve?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Better preparation	11.0%	15
Engage the group more	41.2%	56
Keep few members from dominating	41.9%	57
Staying on track and keeping the group on track	36.0%	49
Asking thought-provoking questions to stimulate a deeper level	51.5%	70
Other (please specify)		28
	<i>answered question</i>	136
	<i>skipped question</i>	211

Facilitating group discussion

Encourage dialogue versus simply lecturing or "teaching". In the over 40 age range there is a lot to be learned from hearing people's perceptions and ideas as a group and this encourages deeper discussion.
 Learning facilitation skills, such as 'boomeranging' a question for example
 Some facilitators (Disciples) seem to fear not exactly following the leader's guide and discussions getting 'off topic.'
 Small group leadership training . Willow Creek's "Regroup" is excellent

Ensuring group safety, openness

Minimize participants judgment, accusations, nazi-approach, allow disagreement, model and lead group in allowing members to defend themselves
 Knowing how to tone down the group Nazis, or visitor nazis (participants need help on this too), what to do when discussion rules are broken
 Don't use the group as a launch pad for their own personal agendas!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Knowledge of the subject

relevant topic leadership training
 Have more respect for the bible
 constant awareness of new material
 Keen awareness of the most recent curriculum.
 The most important thing to me is knowledge of subject and preparation. In my experience both of these have been excellent. Harry Delk is great in both of these areas!
 variety of topics

Preparation and organization

Prepare an infusion of new information and make sure it gets presented before opening for discussion.

Organization

Preparation

Other suggestions

It would be nice to have more formal "evaluations" conducted by group members after a class is over. That would provide some good feedback I believe.

A deeper level of engagement usually occurs when a group member becomes vulnerable and honest...It's very seldom in the facilitator's realm.

Happy with facilitators

I have had Thad Chesson for 2 different bible study classes and I thought he did a great job

Every group I've been in has been awesome.

The facilitators I've had were great but wanted to point out I thought these were great choices for the survey

I honestly haven't been in a group where the facilitator wasn't wonderful- we have a lot of talent at DUMC- each group is different, but I always enjoy the groups.

27-Please suggest a book or topic you'd like to see addressed in a small group in the future:

Answer Options	Response Count
	97
<i>answered question</i>	97
<i>skipped question</i>	250

Marriage

Marriage enrichment.

Monthly marriage enrichment meetings

Continued marriage classes - which we are working on!

The five Love Languages

Five Love Languages (Gary Chapman); Making Love Last Forever (Gary Smallley)

Ones dealing w/marriage and/or parenthood

Parenting

How to talk with your teens about sexuality in a spiritual context.

Topic: Ways to raise children in Christian environment.

Fathers and sons in spiritual journey together

I would like to see more geared towards raising children and "family" related topics in general.

Parenting adolescent children.

raising teens

Incorporating God into your daily life, into your marriage, into your relationship with your children.

Parenting / Family

Raising children

Raising teenagers

raising teenager and college kids

Support for parents of teens/parenting, support, sharing of ideas, education of issues teens face, etc. Participation of parents with grown children would be helpful - they could share their experience and insight.

Topic- how to raise children/teens in a Christian home/environment

parenting concerns

Raising a family in Christian beliefs in a world full of unchristian messages.

Keeping the whole family strong while raising a special needs teen.

more parenting /family topics

Ones dealing w/marriage and/or parenthood

Parenting

Men/Fathers

Men's spiritual retreat (weekend)
Men being the leader of their families and households
Fathers and sons in spiritual journey together

Books, Authors

The Me I Want to Be; Swimming in the Sun
"Who Wrote the Bible" by Richard Friedman (HarperOne)
The Ragamuffin Gospel - Brennan Manning; Tuesdays with Morrie, The Five People You Meet in Heaven - Mitch Albom; The Reason for God - Timothy Keller
John Eldredge's books and programs
To Kill a Mockingbird
The Shack.
The Blank Slate by Steven Pinker
I missed the group discussion of The Shack and would love to see that done again
Same Kind Of Different As Me
Borg or Buechner
Discipleship -- There is a book that I have been interested in reading related to this topic: The Great Omission. Also Henri Nouwen's books are excellent
The Fountainhead. Other faith books that come out which inspire people to talk about them. I would have loved to join a group to discuss the book The Shack upon reading it.
What Jesus Meant by Garry Wills (and other books by Wills)Anything by Brian McLaren
How to Read the Bible by James Kugel
Experiencing God, The Purpose-Driven Life
If Grace is True; If God is Love (both by Gulley and Muhlolland); books by Esther and Jerry Hicks
The evolution of God; when bad things happen to good people
Living the Questions 2.0, 21 video and discussions on 21 themes
Brian McLaren's The Future of Christianity (???) (his newest book) I'd love to see more classes talking about where how and where Christianity is relevant in the world- like that "World Series" program that Craig led a number of years ago. It would be great to have a whole church lecture that splintered off into a number of small groups to talk about related topics....

Bible

learning the bible for beginners
Maybe a Bible study or biblical-based discussion about living out your faith that was more low-key than Disciple Class.
how to read & study the bible
Judas
women of the Bible
Old Testament
the bible - really - old or new testament, different chapters, keep offering the bible in a year, etc.
Am interested in Disciple 1, enjoy the classes Jody does occasionally. No special interest I can think of at the moment. May be interested in covenant group in the fall?
Gospels, Jesus' teachings, OT summary short course
Lost Books of the Bible
I would like a study on the Apocrypha
History of the Bible as a religious and historical text.
Revelations
series of classes dedicated to each book of the Bible
At one point we started a film series on archaeology and Jesus. It was really fascinating. I'd love to see more of finding the "historical Jesus". I think that it might have been called "From Jesus to Christ".

Theology

process theology
Introduction to Methodism (I missed Susan's sessions earlier this summer and would like to learn more about what it means to be a Methodist since I was raised a Catholic);
I'm open to most anything that fits United Methodist theology.

A fair discussion about who goes to Heaven. I can't accept that other religious people who aren't Christian don't get in. Come on.

World Religions

violence in the world and understanding the Muslim beliefs and their hatred of other religions.

Other religions

Study of other religions and how they compare to ours.

Understanding of other religions

Christianity, Judaism and Islam

Exploring other religions and what they have in common with and in contrast to Christianity

Muslim faith in today's world

Doubt and Faith

As noted above...doubting. How does one get beyond a demand for knowledge and accept faith?

for the person who is on a journey and is questioning the real TRUTH... a class or discussion group that brings

relevance to biblical stories. I guess it would be a group for those who have lots of questions about religion in general.

Spiritual doubt

Christian Life/Application

Beth Moore study

Prayer

dealing with loss of love one/moving on with life

Jesus syllabus for life

Prayer & meditation for today's challenges; How would Jesus respond to today's challenges; John Wesley and his quest for a spiritual life as it relates to me; Help me find my gifts.

living your faith in the work environment

how to reconcile the teachings of Jesus with a modern lifestyle especially for young singles

How to get more people involved in the workings of the church

Spiritual Gifts class for all members

Assertive Christians-Is this an Oxymoron?

Work/Life Balance,

Christianity and the environment

The Christian's responsibility with ecological concerns...

Christian responsibility to live at home and run our businesses in a "green" manner. Ways that we can reduce/reuse/recycle to reduce negative impact on the environment.

Topical issues/Social issues

Homosexuality; Need for diverse congregation - outreach to community to join Dead Aid

Current issues and how to interpret the bible.

I really like the idea of social justice and current issues.

Social principals of the Meth. Church; It would be fun to get some mixed groups to discuss social justice not just "D's"

There must be some middle of the road "R's" in the church.

Methodist position on homosexual couples within the church

responding to current events with our faith

religion's cause and effect in peace and wars

Religion and science

Scientific Explanations to biblical stories

religion & science differences in thought on God

Religion and politics

the interplay of politics and religion; the moral traits we should seek and encourage in our political and community leaders

Other suggestions

Aerobic exercise group in fellowship hall in am weekday
 Conspiracy theories ... Dan Brown
 A reading group other than bible study. It could be a monthly or every other month book which may be either spiritual, Christian, or non-spiritual but have a human message.
 Mel Gibson's The Passion of the Christ;
 Leadership Development for Laity
 12 step education, history and knowledge
 Meditation, yoga, volunteering opportunities
 how to recruit and manage volunteers through guilt,shame,control and manipulation

28-If you could change one thing about faith formation groups at DUMC to make them more appealing or relevant to you, what would that be?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	78
<i>answered question</i>	78
<i>skipped question</i>	269

Short Series

Like shorter sessions offered at different times throughout the year in addition to long sessions.
 Short series (4 - 6 weeks) with varied topics. Would enjoy that more than joining a regular SS class. I feel that I would meet more church members.
 Shorter time commitment.
 Offer more short-term groups that meet regularly (e.g., once a week for 8 weeks)... maybe meet in people's homes or in private dining rooms at restaurants instead of the education building...
 Would be great if Disciple could be split to shorter commitment timeframes 1/4 yr vs. 1/2 yr?
 Shorter, with childcare

Scheduling

Their timing.
 Morning time slots.
 A variety of offerings throughout the week, instead of so many on Wed and Sun
 Not have them on Wednesdays, but this is only me. I know this day works best for a lot of people.
 scheduling
 Option of more times offered maybe?
 Time of day to participate- see above
 Meet at 11:00
 Change the times to Saturday or Sunday afternoon or evenings.
 Timing
 We have a lot of good offerings. I can't complain. My only caution would be not to offer a group back to back with something else that is important church wide.
 none - it's really a timing thing

Clergy/staff involvement

make them current issues where Christians need to speak up and led by our ministers
 Definitely we need more connection with our ministers.
 I appreciate the experience, thoughts and knowledge of clergy
 see staff leading some of the opportunities throughout the week and on Sunday morning
 Would love to have more clergy presence.
 Have the ministers teach classes periodically

Diversity/openness

Be more accepting to questions that challenge traditional Christian Theology.
 Make them more eclectic....get outside the box....address issues of exclusivity, prejudice and challenge better communication among those who differ in their views without calling each other names.
 A concerted effort to bring diversity to the groups.
 I would like a group that deals with theology in a very open minded way so that questions and doubts that I have

about the main premises of my faith could be addressed. I am probably too liberal for the Methodist Church and too uncomfortable to express my religious doubts openly.

More diversity and openness.

both sexes treated more equally, both equally recruited for all volunteer positions

group including self knowing how to handle very narrow-minded visitors

Hospitality to visitors/outreach to new members

This doesn't truly answer this, just a comment that I feel and hear. DUMC tends to still have those that are "in" and those that are "out".

Make sure some one responds to everyone that shows interest, even when a class is canceled.

Actively recruit new members as they join the church to join a study group.

Ensure that every group welcomes visitors and follows up with them.

DUMC does a good job. Maybe more outreach to members.

I would like to be a part of a group that lasts longer than the typical six weeks. It's hard to leave the group once we get comfortable and make connections. We have not found a good Sunday School group, so I suppose that is part of the issue as well.

Small groups that REALLY support their members

Think I have stated above - a small group is the only connection that completes my faith experience. As a large church, it is difficult for me to have the experiences I have had in smaller bodies. My sons have elected to attend elsewhere due to the size of our church. I know the only way for me to have the experience I need is through connection with a smaller body - my lifeline and reason to still be here is through my DUMC Choir family and faith community.

My wife & I were very excited to join "life groups" with people of our age & who live near by. We were excited because the church highly publicized this. We signed up. We were contacted about leading a group. We couldn't because we were expecting our 2nd child. We never heard from those organizing life groups again. I emailed to ask the status. I was told there were none in my area available. (Huntersville???) Very disappointing.

I have signed up for groups and volunteered for some things and they never came to be.

Strong leadership

Attract, develop and support leaders/facilitators for small groups.

I think Sunday school classes for adults need some guidance as to materials, information, and structuring....just like children's classes are guided by pastoral pics of curriculum. I know some adults that only come for SS class and then go home. So if they are not getting a strong guidance in SS and not making it to worship, then they are still looking for their faith foundation with no support.

Dynamic challenging discussion leader on faith and current world events

Offer leadership/facilitation training every year and encourage/urge small group leaders to participate. Teach how to use good discussion questions to get people to challenge their beliefs and go deeper in their faith.

Have experienced teachers who can rotate among classes.

Get small group leaders together periodically to share ideas and concerns and to provide them with guidance.

We need leaders who have some kind of formal training whether in divinity school or by DUMC as "lay leaders". The last time I tried to lead a class ended with no one signing up because everyone else signed up for other classes led by respected members of DUMC. The biggest disappointment to me was that people were choosing a class to attend based on the leader rather than the content of the class. This is not a sustainable model to encourage large numbers of participants as they are only so many Harry Delks that will lead our classes. We need to find a way to have our members feel comfortable choosing other classes led by new leaders.

More sharing among group leaders about what has worked-techniques and content

Keeping on task would save time

Marketing, Communication

I think Disciple 1 should be "sold" more as the foundation for spiritual growth and creating depth.

Periodically highlight some topics/classes/books like the mission activities are highlighted. This could include some insight to subject matter or discussions which may provide interest in participating.

Better marketing. I'm unsure what is available.

more information about what is available and when - need to look for time that is convenient need childcare!

more emphasis on need for personal invitation to get others to come

more individual testimony from present/former faith formation group participants

It seems like a few people in the church do all of the work and volunteering and they burn out after a while. Find ways to get new people to participate.

Using technology

Make them online

Less emphasis on physical presence. It would be nice to meet group members once a month for coffee or dinner.

And communicate via email or blog each week.

Topics

More classes/groups on growing as a family, teaching your children the Bible, to pray, etc. or learning the Bible with your children.

Keeping things current and allowing for family fellowship as well as adult.

Less "counseling"

More activities addressed toward singles. Everything seems to be family centered.

More based on Jesus teaching and behavior.

Keep focus on how the Methodist Church responds theologically.

We need something new for those that have been doing this awhile.

Other Comments

Consistent attendance by members of the group. Some groups I have participated in have different people attending each time. I know life happens, but it would be nice to have same people attending.

Have the members of the group be committed to attending on a regular basis.

Unlock the resource closet (:

Teen groups need to be much deeper in content and less games based. My kids refuse to go because they say the programs are too shallow. Program has really lost its quality content since Rush left.

Would love the Sunday school/ group formation for parents of middle and high school age (preferably not run solely by Kristen - she has enough on her plate and actually needs assistance with organizing the youth program better).

I think DUMC does a fine job

Love our Ditto group! Hope it doesn't change!

29-What other comments would you like to add?

Answer Options	Response Count
	82
<i>answered question</i>	82
<i>skipped question</i>	265

Thanks

Thank you for striving to improve the programming of DUMC. Is there any way to increase readership of Dove and bulletin?

I think that following through like this is great. I love to see that the church is working to reach people and figure out how to help lead the flock! Thanks so much!

I hope that the results of this survey are published for public consumption.

Good format for completing this survey! Thanks!!

Thank you for offering this opportunity to anonymously allowing us to share our opinions.

Thank you for putting together this survey!

Thanks for asking....

Thanks for making DUMC a great place to explore and strengthen my faith. My journey has lead me to places I never dreamed possible. What a great Church!

I think this questionnaire is a great idea and I hope you get a lot of responses.

I love being a part of this church. I found it 12 years ago when I moved here and it has provided me with inspiration, a better sense of myself and broadened and deepened my faith. The fact that this survey is offered confirms that you care and I have felt a part of this community from the very beginning. Thank you.

LOVE OUR CHURCH and all it has to offer!!!

Thank you for the survey. Especially thank you for the inclusive nature of this church that allows for a wide range of beliefs with love and acceptance.

thank you. great church

Wonderful church - open, caring and service oriented.

Thank you for all that you offer.

thank you. great church, many great opportunities, impressive staff

I have enjoyed the DUMC groups I have been in. I've made some wonderful friends.

I have enjoyed attending a variety of meetings, presentations, programs, etc. that DUMC offers, such as Micky Efirid lecturing on Revelation, Katie Ann's organ program, Ed Kilbourne, labyrinth walks, advent services in the chapel, personal stories of endurance or triumph on Sunday afternoons, etc. as well as Disciple study groups. Thanks for offering something for everyone.

A very comprehensive survey.

I know my survey will not be of much help because of job issues, however, there are so many of the groups and . classes I would love to sign up for but I know I will miss about 50% of the classes. I feel this could be detrimental to the group and once I miss several sessions, how do I participate? All that said to mean, Davidson has so much to offer in addition to Sunday Worship so stay the course

Best wishes to drive the new folks to get involved and go deep rather than just show up or drop their kids off and go to church for an hour.

We have a great church and the ministers and sermons are wonderful.

Wonderful Church keep up the great work!

I love my small groups! I was led to these groups through a strange set of circumstances, and I will always be grateful for that. They are what keep me coming to DUMC even though I am not quite ready for membership. The only problem I see with small groups is that there are more groups and classes than my schedule can accommodate!

Keep up the good work.

Thank you for the survey.

Our family loves DUMC!!

Thank you for asking my opinion. I will pray for an outcome that strengthens the church. I will also endeavor to make more time to commit to my church.

nope- thanks for doing this survey!

GREAT survey....kudos to the team who designed it.

Thank you for making this survey and looking into supporting small groups.

Thanks for this opportunity.

I love my church!

Appreciate the opportunity to provide input. Thank you to Jerry Hancock and Men in Balance for the programs offered and the opportunities to connect and engage with other men in DUMC.

Thanks to an excellent set of pastors & staff

Thank you for asking and caring

We love the small groups at DUMC. Please keep up the great work!

Thanks DUMC for this!

I was not very religious in my past and DUMC has really changed this. I look forward to the Sunday morning Bible studies, Habitat for Humanity builds and continued connection with my Spiritual Gifts classmates. I feel DUMC has added a religious side to my life that was not present before. Thank you DUMC.

Too often life just gets in the way of doing what I need to do. I appreciate that groups are available and plan to make it a priority in my life this fall.

I find that DUMC has a lot to offer. Often times there are several topics I am interested in and I can't seem to get to all of them. In my opinion, you are doing a great job in this area. I would say that I am completely satisfied. Keep up the good work.

Looking forward to the fall schedule of Discipleship classes beginning again.

It is a great church with excellent pastors. The only problem is parking for 11:00 service. It a sign of a great church when parking is hard to find.

Suggestions/Requests

Wish worship services offered more variety and that the congregation had a way to pay more attention to visitors during the service

I believe a large portion of the DUMC community and the local community at large want to talk about religion...for it, against it, don't know much, have serious questions and issues, find it irrelevant, or just want to learn more. These various opinions or motivations provide the opportunity for small group discussions.

The critical success factor to getting people into a small group forum of some kind is the leader/facilitator who will personally attract people and conduct meaningful, open minded group discussions on relevant topics with

appropriate support materials.

Many activities, light coverage to gain interest in others to participate. It appears there is good interest by well established groups but may not be strong in new ways of learning or attracting many others. Overall seems like good programming but not utilized very well for a large audience.

I believe we would have more people interested in small groups (i.e. Disciple classes) if maybe during sign up time there were testimonials during church services. This was done in the past, and we seemed to have a lot more involvement. People really need to hear it from others. Maybe have testimonials a couple Sundays in a row.

I would like for the church to take more of an interest in promoting faith in our children. I feel like many of the kids programs are disorganized and uninteresting to children over age 10 and in middle school. I believe our adolescent (middle school) programs are extremely weak. I think it is unfortunate to turn children away for VBS and to charge members. This is a great opportunity to spread the word of God to children in our community and I believe it just makes our church look snobby.

It is great that our church funds so many outside projects but many departments (i.e. kids Sunday School, VBS) are clearly under funded.

The majority of families we know want to attend a church that encourages the faith of all the members in a family and unfortunately the older my children get it seems that DUMC is missing the mark. We talk to friends who attend other churches and when their kids talk about the youth programs you sense their excitement. We want the same for our kids and hope that DUMC can turn this around.

Maybe we need some curriculum training for adults who teach youth Sunday school. I know it is hard to get volunteers and even harder to get good volunteers. I also know that youth bible study is very important to most parents. Catch 22. I think we could start by offering some training around a chosen curriculum that teachers could go through. If they don't go through it, they are the same as before but if they go through it, perhaps that will become better teachers to the children. It doesn't have to cost much, just planning/time for the train the trainer session.

I would like to see a group with the topic of something like Spiritual Mothering where young women and older women can get together and help each other.

I would like to see more long term groups like Disciple. I have signed up for Disciple 4, I think that is the last one, and it has been canceled for lack of interest. We used to have many Disciple groups going on.

I've witnessed participation in small study groups, particularly Disciple, drop considerably over the last several years. As our church continues to grow and add members, I think we need a clear message from the pulpit that not only makes folks aware, but establishes an expectation that they participate in Bible study. I think Disciple 1 is the most important program we offer, and my recommendation would be to really focus on D1 and lay that expectation that if we're serious about our faith, we need to take the next step into small group Bible Study. I believe our congregation will respond.

I would love to see this church really kick into gear when it came to families. We do so much for just men or women and the older generation but I feel that those of us with younger families are out there just looking for help and don't know how to ask. Life moves so fast now a days and preparing long lessons is definitely not something we have time to do opportunities where we can show up and learn and fellowship would be great.

I'm concerned about the future of DUMC after Jody retires. I don't think we have the "bench strength" that is needed for a church this size. I was disappointed that changes were not made this year in assistant ministers assigned to our church.

I am currently overcommitted but look forward to participating in small groups again in the future now that child is away college, at 2nd home a lot of Sundays or visiting away from home because we now have the opportunity and have aging parents and friends that are really ill.

If I could sing I would love to be part of the choir.

I guess my only comment would be that 2 and a half hours is a bit long for class on a Sunday night for bible study.

Would prefer a 2 hour maximum and an hour and a half might be better. Sunday nights are tough although I may end up signing up again for then because I know Thad and Lisa Lawrence are planning to lead a class together which should be great.

I would like to see our pastors teaching more classes. I have attended too many classes led by laity that are trying to explain what our Methodist religion teaches and sometimes they have no idea themselves. This class should be taught at least once a year at our church by our pastors. Yes there are some fundamental beliefs that we ascribe to as Methodists and maybe we all should know what they are. If we do not believe in them we should start to work to change them and our church should be very open about discussing them. We are the church and often times I think the membership forgets that.

As someone who used to travel 75% + of the time for work....I would like to have had a small group that knew people in the group had these types of roles, and thus understood we could not be present each week, but knew that did

not correlate to our interest in being involved with a group. Many of the groups have specific comments of "if you feel you will miss more than 2 sessions please be considerate of others who would like to" etc. I just can't predict how many I will miss...but if that is criteria, I opt out. Would love something that realizes there are those of us that due to jobs we will miss "classes".

there is an awful lot of work done at DUMC and it seems to go unappreciated ... but even if not well attended I think people appreciate that there is such a wide variety of things offered and available . Perhaps I feel too private about my faith and beliefs and don't care to share in a group setting or I don't feel I need one ... ?!

I am one of the current co-chairs of CMU and it takes up most of my "free" time. I am very interested in a bible study and other small groups in the future when my young children are a little older. I'm very impressed with our church's efforts to reach out to all members and non-members to create a sense of belonging in such a large church.

I believe that surveys like this are a waste of time. The problem with this church is that we spend too much time formulating plans & ideas and not enough time in action. There is enough leadership in the clergy of this church to know what needs to be done. Instead of clamoring on about Jimmy Buffet & social justice, why doesn't someone start challenging the members to realize it is not about us & IS about God. We don't need another survey, we need folks to hold us accountable and challenge us for not getting off our duffs & getting more involved. We've made it so member friendly that we are losing sight of the real picture.

We need to have someone with a United Methodist degree in theology to lead [specific group].

We also need to urge [group members] to diversify. I love some of those who attend, but they have too steady a diet of that stuff!! [specific identifying references omitted]

We have a wonderful church but would love to see more people really committed to caring for each other at home, and globally. It is easy enough to give money but what about self?

The church offers so many ways to grow in our faith and our fellowship. What about more service groups as well - groups that meet and go to Ada Jenkins once/month or to other services/organizations that we support. Similar to Mission Day - but throughout the year.

When our son was younger he was always at Sunday School. As he's grown older, there hasn't been a good fit for him at church or anywhere. For 2 years our family didn't come to church. I know there are other families raising special needs children who don't come to church and would like to. Recently, we visited a church who had a psychologist who volunteered to make a church plan (similar to a school's IEP (Individualized Education Plan) for special kids/youth. This plan would outline the kids needs and offer support plan while at church. Not sure how this is working out there. I'm happy to see more churches including disabled population and their families. With Autism Spectrum Disorders on the rise, we all need to think about how to include them and their families.

I participate in GDOS, donation of foodstuffs, etc. and other very short commitment activities. I know that participating in small group is important for my spiritual development but it is very hard to overcome the time/driving component to turn it into a healthy habit.

I believe DUMC needs a person whose sole focus is adult faith formation groups. This person should visit all adult classes on a rotating basis in order to learn what they are doing, what is going well, what they need.... and then this person can recommend study material, or fellowship-building activities, or service projects, or new facilitators, or ways to attract new members, or whatever is needed.

I think a singles group or activities for 40 to 55 year old singles is needed and would be well attended.

I would love to share my thoughts on the possible formation of adult group for middle and high school age parents - I am also willing to share my ideas and concerns about the youth programs. I just haven't taken the initiative to do that yet. I believe that DUMC offers lots of programs I haven't tried yet.

We need more emphasis from pulpit on: 1. why we are here? use DUMC Mission Statement; 2. The importance of attending worship every Sunday; 3. The expectation that members should actually live out the mission statement

I tried to do Susan's read the bible in a year, but the reading commitment was just too much. There are many interesting things going on at church, personally, I don't feel there's anything lacking. It's more about my time and what commitments I'm willing to make....

would like to see the following: 9/12 project - operates through churches in other states; support group for parents of ADHD children - to discuss particular needs and how to apply Christian parenting

I love this church. This may not be true but it seems like the ministers are the most open-minded people at the church. True open discussion may help overcome this assumption.

If not already, could DUMC contribute part of the budget to the Billy Graham station 106.9. I wake up listening to it and find it adds a lot to my life.