

2023 Communications Survey Results

In November, the Communications Team asked our cherished members and friends to complete a survey to gather your insights on the church's communications. Your willingness to participate and share your thoughts has been immensely valuable to us, and we are grateful for your active engagement in this process.

At Forest Hill Church, we understand the importance of effective communication tailored to the diverse needs of our congregation. Your input provides us with the necessary guidance to enhance our communication strategies, ensuring they resonate with each church community member.

We are excited to share that the survey highlighted your appreciation for the flexibility and control over how you receive church communications. Here are some of those highlights:

Demographics

We received 107 responses to our survey, including five paper copies. Most respondents were members (90.5%) and predominantly female (75.0%). By comparison, the Forest Hill active member demographics reported to the Presbyterian Church (USA) for 2022 were also predominantly female (64.8%).

Eighty-seven percent of the survey respondents identified as white and 10.5% identified as Black/African American/African. Eighty-four percent of the Forest Hill active members reported to the PCUSA identified as white and 14.1% as Black/African American/African.

In terms of age, 34.9% of the survey respondents were 75 and older; 38.7% were 65-74; and 15.1% were 51-64. None identified as younger than 31.

In the statistical report, 38.7% of FHC's active members were 70 and older; 27.0% were between 56-70, 17.0% were 41-55; and 7.3% were 40 and under. (Statistical report source: Breeze database)

Quantitative Results

The traditional communication media were the most popular: 78% always or often read The Week Ahead email; 62% always or often read the Tower; and 78% always or often listen to the worship announcements. The majority of respondents rarely or never read Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or Nextdoor.

The traditional media were generally rated as “Extremely” or “Very Effective”: The Week Ahead email (77%), Tower (62%) and worship announcements (79%)..

Qualitative Results

Comments included:

Overall Communication

“Would like [communications] more concise...”

“...The issue now is a high level of activity & events competing for announcement space. Congregants don't always get their info to the office with enough lead time. ...”

“There seems to be too much at times....”

“Very effective, but texts come too often....”

“Mixed. Some things are well publicized, some things are so over publicized that it loses effectiveness, other things seem to get no press.”

“...Greatly appreciate the huge amount of time and effort taken to communicate with us as church members. There is a ton of information and a wide diversity in ages and comfort levels with technology. How to thread this needle is very tough...”

“I find church communication highly useful and effective. Although I don't currently attend in person, with the help of streaming, I still feel quite connected to our church.”

The Tower

“In addition to monthly happenings, include overall financial status of the church and aspirations of each board and progress towards them.”

“Get paper copies to most of the congregation. Many don't read it on email. I know this sounds old fashioned, but I think more would read it if they got it in the mail.”

“Encourage the use of the email version to limit the need for paper copies”

“Items repeated week after week could be shortened”

"Often I have already read the information in the weekly email"

"Make it more concise, table of contents, make it look like a newspaper"

The Week Ahead email

"Make them shorter. Don't have the same thing in every week"

"There is much repetition from week to week. Perhaps put new items first, then mark repeat/recurring items as such?"

"a table of contents up front to let the reader know what The Week Ahead is addressing."

"Maybe group all the repeating events together, at the end, under the heading "On Going Events." And put the news things in the beginning, so the lazy among us can concentrate on what's new."

"I always try to read The Week Ahead, but find the format confusing, as there is no space between the end of one announcement and the start of another. It feels like a lot of information squeezed in, making it difficult to read. I like that it is emailed, but I think a different format should be used to make each announcement distinct and more clear."

Website

"Much easier to follow than the old one; less cluttered. The opening shot of John walking out the front door to say "Hi" is a great intro. Still sorting out whether it has what I'm looking for."

"Mostly good except John walking out the door-scary and don't get it, looks more like chasing people away."

"MUCH improved!! Especially appreciate keeping topics timely and updated. Love seeing photos."

"Just loving it! Would like a live link to the Google calendar there"

"Love, love, love it! Very user friendly. Love the design and all the pictures. The important thing now is to keep it up to date. This will take everyone in every ministry, every program, every event being committed to doing this."

"The calendar available does not really show all of the events happening on a given day which makes planning more difficult."

"A calendar of regular, repeated events at the Calendar link would be helpful. I have to search through the tower to see this currently. Also, for people who are looking for AA-type meetings there is no easy way to find this information on the website."

Conclusion

We are thrilled that you find it "cool" to have the ability to customize the way you connect with us. Did you know that you can choose how you receive our communications? If at any point you wish to make changes or opt out of a specific method, feel free to reach out to the church office. Your preferences matter, and we are here to accommodate your communication needs.

Once again, we extend our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you who took the time to contribute to the survey. Your feedback is instrumental in helping us create an environment where everyone feels connected and informed. Together, we continue to build a more vital and more vibrant community.

Wishing you a season filled with love, joy, and the warmth of fellowship.

With sincere gratitude,

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