

Summary of Best Practices

As part of the strategic planning process the team conducted a benchmark analysis of six other large congregations in the Minneapolis Synod of the ELCA by worshipping at each church and conducting an interview with the Senior Pastor. Each person who participated in this effort thought it was extremely worthwhile and has suggested this type of effort continue annually as part of a continuous learning process for our church. We found the following to be the “Best Practices” of this group.

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| Worship Ministry | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Offer at least one evening service weekly.2. Provide at least one weekly contemporary worship opportunity.3. Keep service length to 60 minute maximum even on Communion Sundays. |
| Music Ministry | <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Invest in paid outside musicians frequently to provide a variety of musical experiences. |
| Family and Children’s Ministries | <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Create opportunities for the entire family to participate in fellowship and outreach activities, including the children. |
| Youth Ministries | <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Involve Youth in activities beyond Confirmation throughout their middle and high school years including worship and music as well as fellowship and outreach programs. |
| Adult Ministries | <ol style="list-style-type: none">7. Supply a variety of service, social, spiritual and support programs that are targeted to adults. |
| Outreach Ministry | <ol style="list-style-type: none">8. Actively participate in local outreach organizations and at least one international mission.9. Inform the congregation monthly or quarterly of the results of the ministry programs by providing specific examples of good works. |
| Staffing | <ol style="list-style-type: none">10. Lead programs with staff rather than volunteers for most effective results but involve volunteers as much as possible.11. Utilize a Volunteer Coordinator to integrate new members into the church and to involve existing members. |

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12. Fill paid positions from outside the church membership, when practical, to avoid conflicts of interest.
 13. Pay at competitive market rates to ensure that high quality individuals are attracted and retained.
- Buildings & Grounds**
14. Maintain a clean, fresh, attractive and well lit appearance throughout.
- Marketing**
15. Comprehensively market to the membership and local community.
- Financial**
16. Plan a budget surplus to ensure adequate financial reserves are available to carry through short periods of lower contribution activity.
- Mission statement**
17. Create a brief, easy to remember mission statement for members and publish it everywhere on the property and as well as in all publications.