

Constant Contact Survey Results

Survey Name: April 2017 Life Together at 9 feedback

Response Status: Partial & Completed

Filter: None

May 11, 2017 1:43:41 PM

1. For nearly two years, St. Paul's has offered an all-parish monthly service at 9:00 am on the first Sunday of every month, October - June. Have you ever attended this service?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	57	83.8%
No	9	13.2%
No Responses	2	2.9%
Total	68	100%

2. If "Yes" please mark all that apply for you.

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
I interact with people I normally wouldn't see.	36	61.0%
I enjoy worshipping with families of all ages.	44	74.5%
I enjoy the different forms of music.	35	59.3%
Sermon is more interactive.	26	44.0%
The beanbag chairs.	9	15.2%
Reserved seating.	8	13.5%
Fellowship hour activity afterwards.	16	27.1%
I attended once and won't attend again.	3	5.0%
Other	9	15.2%
Total	59	100%

3. If "No" please mark all reasons

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Time is too early for my family.	7	33.3%
Service is too long.	6	28.5%
Worship space is too formal.	1	4.7%
Worship space is too casual with rug and beanbag chairs.	8	38.0%
Music is too informal.	3	14.2%
Music is too formal.	2	9.5%
Too difficult to remember "first Sunday" each month.	0	0.0%
Other	4	19.0%
Total	21	100%

4. What would you like to see improved for "First Sundays, Life Together at 9am?" (mark as many as you wish)

	number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Change starting time to 10:00 am.	10	16.1%
Change starting time to 10:30 am.	1	1.6%
Change starting time to 8:00 am.	1	1.6%
Change starting time to 9:30 am.	14	22.5%
Create a more casual and interactive atmosphere.	6	9.6%
Schedule all-parish worship less often.	9	14.5%
Nothing, the time and frequency are just right as it is.	23	37.0%
Don't offer it at all.	5	8.0%
Other	8	12.9%
Total	62	100%

5. How important do you think it is to have an "all-parish" worship service?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Extremely important.	13	19.1%
Very important.	24	35.2%
Moderately important.	9	13.2%
Somewhat important.	11	16.1%
Not important.	7	10.2%
No Responses	4	5.8%
Total	68	100%

6. Will you attend the brief "Town Hall" conversation on May 7 to discuss this unique all-parish worship?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
No	25	36.7%
No Responses	10	14.7%
Total	68	100%

Constant Contact Survey Results

Survey Name: April 2017 Life Together at 9 feedback

Response Status: Partial & Completed

Filter: None

May 11, 2017 1:43:41 PM

1. For nearly two years, St. Paul's has offered an all-parish monthly service at 9:00 am on the first Sunday of every month, October - June. Have you ever attended this service? - Comments

Answer

Love seeing everyone

My spouse and I have attended occasionally, every 3 months or so, but not regularly.

Good service, children active, reserved pews sparsely used, 70 minute service, parking lot filled but handicap available, distant street parking available, attendance 80%, some 8 o'clockers there. Attended only 2-3 9 o'clock services, decided not to attend on those Sundays we could have attended, health and family obligations permitting. Please also see response to question 7.

Some times can seem confusing

Almost always attend.

I attended the first one in the Great Hall.

Left each service we attended with joyous, full and loving hearts.

I feel it is a uniting factor in the life of the Parish.

Love the slightly relaxed nature of the service compared with the usual 10:30. Wonderful to have more people together from all services. Wish more 9:30 people would attend.

We find the service an easy way to meet the other members of the parish with children and those we do not see at the 8am service.

I'm not sure why we are even discussing this. As the first Sunday is well attended. I do think there are some parishioners who don't like it and continue to complain. According to Canon/Diocesan rules - the Rector is the only one with the responsibility for the services: what time, where, what style, etc. Although it is positive to have parishioner opinions in this decision. Once this survey over, let's just move on. The complainers just need to be quiet.

The liturgy of this service does not meet my needs or desires.

For years I took my children to a 9:30 service; now I prefer the 8:00. It fits our lifestyle better.

I DO WISH WE COULD HAVE 1 HYMN ONCE IN A WHILE AT 8.

We always attend, but change is difficult. I don't like the earlier time, but once I am in attendance, I enjoy it!

I sing in the choir

2. If "Yes" please mark all that apply for you. - Other responses

Answer

See below

prefer previous early service

Not for me

Different kinds of prayers

can be hard on families with young children.

I prefer attending the 10:30 service

Only time is the problem for us.

I wanted to try to support the leadership

I have no other choice for the early service.

2. If "Yes" please mark all that apply for you. - Comments

Answer

When it's an hour, it's perfect! I think exposing the kids to the traditional service is important. I think many parents are nervous about their kids making noise or disrupting the service and there are certainly adults who do mind. If there were something to be done to mitigate the fear and judgment simultaneously that would be the best of all worlds. I don't have a solution, just observation.

Although I am most comfortable with a traditional service, I feel that it's incumbent on all of us to make concessions to the needs and desires of others, especially the children and younger families in the parish. And it's also fun! But our occasional, rather than constant, attendance is due to the earlier hour.

It wasn't for me.

I have really enjoyed First Sunday Services..

I attend the 9 o'clock service only when I'm "on," or when Mary Lee is preaching. Otherwise, I prefer to stay home and observe silence.

Think to have it family oriented is good

Sometimes I find the "different" music repetitive. That is, too often the same hymns from WLP hymnal are used. Greater variety from old and new hymnals would be better.

We MUST let parent's know that small exploding children really are welcomed. Parental comfort needs to be well supported by the church family. What we were able to offer on Easter could be a model that would be easier for families & still support a more inclusive gathering.

We definitely enjoy having music and the children interaction with those attending.

I love seeing families with young children worshiping at St Paul's

We know it is hard to come up with a time which is convenient for everyone. We will certainly peacefully accept what the Rector and the Wardens and Vestry persons decide after listening to everyone's comments and answers.

This service is the only one offered on those Sundays, so if you are going to go to church; this is the one; one goes to. But I do like the service at it is (I would even prefer the 8AM service to be this formate.)

Love seeing the little kids, Carolyn is so good & quick on her feet with the kids. That is wonderful. (Not all priests have this skill/talent. - So if we keep this foremate - any visiting or supply priests needs to also have this talent.)

The service is not for me. I want to be in and to enjoy the beauty of the building. I come because the choir sings (which I enjoy) but it is not my style.

I like the interactive stuff and hope for more simple easy to sing music

Having checked most of the above, I should add that my "enjoyment" of these things is due more to my assumption that these are features that today's young people seem to need to feel at home in church. Beanbags do lighten things.

I do "interact" with folks I normally wouldn't see, but it's pretty much limited to exchanging the peace. Not much interaction after that because the kids are either busy with activities or the families seem to disappear. So coffee hour is pretty much the same.

Prefer having the 8:00 service each Sunday. At this point I prefer the quieter service.

We do not normally attend the fellowship hour afterward. However, I have great appreciation for the Rector and her "team" who put these monthly First Sundays together.

Beanbag chairs make little difference to us but kids enjoy them.

Reserved seating applies to most services.

3. If "No" please mark all reasons - Other responses

Answer

I prefer the more traditional service

see below

hard to follow service

Doesn't fit current schedule

3. If "No" please mark all reasons - Comments

Answer

As someone who prefers to worship as much as possible in silence, I find the 9 o'clock frenetic. I'd rather have no music at all.

For us older members, 9:00 in the winter months is often difficult.

I'm not groovy enough to catch on to the music and worship style - but I like watching it.

The early time may be good for young children, but for our "family" of two, weekends are a time to sleep a bit later (after rising early all week to go to work). I think early (9 AM included) is also difficult for teenagers.....

The music doesn't work for me, and I'm addicted to the quiet early communion service.

Too long for kids

4. What would you like to see improved for "First Sundays, Life Together at 9am?" (mark as many as you wish) - Other responses

Answer

No comment

Less liturgy, more lively music

not for me

Keep the service length to one hour

how about asking for volunteers to "adopt" a child or family???

I only attended the first one and don't feel qualified to answer this.

see comments

not sure

4. What would you like to see improved for "First Sundays, Life Together at 9am?" (mark as many as you wish) - Comments

Answer

Just for consistency sake, but not an issue one way or another.

I like the earlier service. 9:00 is OK, but I don't think I would come if 10 or 10:30

The only time it feels like "too much" is around the Annual Meeting date and we have two or more First Sundays in a row.

Also we do have "all parish" worship all summer.

A later start time would be helpful for us. Also, maybe putting out multiple calls during the year to invite people to participate. The rotation for lectors, eucharistic ministers, etc. seems to be set at some point (when??), making it hard for new people to "break in."

For the parish as a whole, I think once a month is fine, and 9 am is perfect. But I won't be attending; I really don't like services geared toward children.

I'd suggest focusing on the 9:30 service, if you want more "casual interaction."

Please see response to question 7.

I would like to see some of the older youth being a part of the music program on these Sundays.

I'm torn on this. It should be encouraged, but perhaps fewer times than monthly might be welcomed by others. Time of day seems about right to capture most parishioners. I am disappointed when I see the pews only partially filled on a First Sunday, especially if the absences include our new members.

Too many words-- use shorter liturgical forms. Don't sing hymns with more than four verses. Don't do the Nicene Creed.

Use a simpler, shorter form of the eucharistic prayer.

Leave out non-essential parts of the service, e.g., the birthdays and anniversaries.

Get folks interested in becoming Grandfriends..

Make sure the service really is structured for a shorter time.

Invite non- Family Service folks to join in the Family Service "just to see what is actually happening every week".

Introduce visitors from within the church family to children & their parents so they actually know each other on First Sundays and are comfortable .

Asking ourselves: how do we honor the Baptismal Vow that we commit to when we stand at the time of Baptism?

I only attended the first one and don't feel qualified to answer this.

Enjoy having that extra hour of sleep once a month, plus you still have your entire day ahead of you to relish in your uplifted spirit from the service to enjoy and admire all God has provided us.

The 9AM or the 9:30 AM time isn't difficult, what is difficult is the frequent changes. More than 4 times I have seen someone come to the side church entrance, see the service in progress and leave - yup just leave. Solution? Change this 9AM service and the 9:30 Family Service and the Summer 9:AM service to the same time -- 9:15 AM time -- Therefore there would always, always be a service at 9:15 AM.

I would be happy with any change that would encourage more people especially the young people.

Re-establish the 10:30 worship service for those of us who prefer it. However, do NOT discontinue the 9:00 since it clearly serves the needs of others, particularly younger members.

I have heard (somewhat to my amazement) that 9:00 is just too early for families -- the very group that I believe we're trying to attract.

I feel the ones who attend should answer this.

I do not attend church regularly, so it would be presumptuous to make any suggestion. But if the numbers are low, then perhaps a change is warranted.

I think it's an important addition to our worship and hope that it continues to evolve.

Ironically, I don't necessarily think I see the congregation that normally attends the 9:30 service. I feel more that I am worshipping with the 8 o'clockers and a small number of younger children. I could be very wrong!

As a choir member, having to come @ 8:15 for warm-up is VERY difficult so a 10 AM service start would be kinder to the voice AND body. I would love to hear from the young families part of the congregation because I feel as though they have not really "bought into" the concept. I do see more involvement from those with really young kids but NOT on the part of the folks with grades 1-9 children. I hope we get enough feedback from this group so that we can create a service that will draw them in.

5. How important do you think it is to have an "all-parish" worship service? - Comments

Answer

Important, maybe not, but very nice!

I think it's very important in the sense that, if we succeed in creating a single service with very strong attendance, that would be a strong sign of a vital parish with a strong sense of its identity as a single body of Christ.

But it's also not very important in the sense that it is very difficult to come up with a single form of worship that speaks meaningfully to everyone in the parish, and if the single service isn't as broadly attended as we'd hope, it's not the end of the world.

The future of the church is INTERGENERATIONAL! And, more than any other church I've attended, St Paul's people live the belief that we ARE the Body of Christ. So yes, this is extremely important and I know I should honor it with more than lip service (or by making excuses about convenience ;-)).

Summer seems a good time for "all-parish" worship.

Please see response to question 7.

Intergenerational worship is extremely important for all of us!

It IS important. I get lost in the adverbs of moderately to extremely. We are a religious community (emphasis on community); having worship together is important, if only to appreciate and understand others in our community. Unfortunately, too many either don't understand this or don't care to and just don't attend. Perhaps more emphasis needed on explaining the purpose of this service.

Probably important but I do not wish to attend

We speak of "outreach" to our (greater)community but we must also "inreach" to our church community.

From time to time (not on a regular basis) and in the summer

It brings young, middle-aged and old together. Makes you sort of feel you are in a Coke commercial (haha)!

It shows that we are one congregation even though we may worship at different times

I think it is very important that the church family have a reunion on a regular basis - if the family is separated continuously then it becomes dysfunctional. I also think that it is a good thing to allow our families with children to worship in the main sanctuary without fear of judgment because their child laughs or colors or walks around. We are all responsible for modeling Christ's examples of love and acceptance - and our children learn by watching us. And they do watch.

Important for us to all be together at least sometimes if we are the body of Christ at St. Paul's.

The concept of seeing (and possibly getting to know) other parishioners is a good concept. But a better way to get to know each other is to have: social encounters, study groups, work groups, etc. One gets to KNOW each other only in small groups.

I enjoy being with all ages and this one service is great for accomplishing this. I do wish more would attend. The results of this survey will be interesting.

Worship is just one of the things we do as a parish. I do think we need to find other ways to bring everyone together -- admittedly not easy given the crazy schedules of today's families and the preponderance of older people in the parish who have transportation issues or who don't care about mingling w/ younger families.

It is not personally important, but when I was parenting it was so helpful to have other adults around to welcome my children in church. So it is important for the future of the church, to connect the children with the whole parish (or at least those who like children)

I recognize that we "elders" need to welcome the younger crowd by adapting worship style. I think that St. Paul's is doing that quite well. I also believe that there are members who hold tightly to their worship traditions, who are unable to be fed spiritually in an atmosphere of "activity" and that's OK too. I also believe that it is important for young people to experience the awe and holiness of more traditional worship. For me, First Sundays is a time to feel that with looser structure.

Is the 9:00 service capturing the congregation as a whole? Are the 9:00 attendance numbers comparable to the combined 8:00, 9:30, and 10:30 services?

6. Will you attend the brief "Town Hall" conversation on May 7 to discuss this unique all-parish

Answer

Maybe!

Will not be attending St. Paul's that Sunday. Otherwise, I would attend.

I am planning on it, but may have family here.

Unsure

Sorry, no: I will be out of town.

As far as I know now, I'll be there.

Great grandchildren activity may prevent attending, but will try to work around that obligation.

Out of town that weekend...

I would, but will be out of town.

Not sure

Leading adults to examine their practice of the faith without either surrender to hollow beliefs or rejection of what makes no sense. Is there a middle ground that sustains integrity and nurtures an openness to new understanding?

Probably not but undecided

Will be traveling to attend son and daughter-in-law's baby shower/new house warming party.

attendance is planned but due to family issues I never know until moments before I am to leave.

We are not sure.

Uncertain at this time

I won't only because have to go to work

maybe

May be out of town, but will attend if here.

I would love to see some numbers on attendance at the Life Together services: e.g., how many young people / families are actually there; how the different regular worship times are represented.

when will that be?

Not sure I will be here.

I will be out of town.

We will be away

Maybe

7. As in any faith community, we recognize that there are multiple opinions and concerns.

Answer

I would love to have more opportunities for parent Bible study! Not sure what time would work, but I would love to be able to participate. The mid-day work-week meetings don't work for our family/work schedule.

Divisive qualities of society

Decline of Christianity and the casual way so many Christians practice their beliefs . Lack of emphasis on why we are Christians, our history and why we believe as we do.

I appreciate the support and community I find at St. Paul's's.

Wow. This is a tough question in today's context! Again, I think St Paul's does an exceptional job of sharing the burden (and joy) of living our faith, as lay people accept this task and don't lay it all on the shoulders of our excellent clergy. I can appreciate that some people might think that the church should do less ("no banners welcoming refugees!") while others might think we should do more ("more banners, let's march!"), and the clergy may feel torn. I hope that lay leadership and participation in our life together -- and Life Together -- will keep growing, in part so that Carolyn, Chick, and Mary Lee can continue to serve as pastors for all the people, and not be unduly / unfairly identified with factions or political positions.

Feel free to follow up with me if necessary since I can't come to the meeting and won't be back at church until June: Deborah Goodwin (dgoodwin@gac.edu). Thanks for doing this work!

I think things are going well at St. Paul's, and my concerns are minimal. Most have to do with keeping those of us who prefer silence in the conversation.

I realize that bringing new families into St. Paul's is a top priority, but the Brunswick demographics are such that many of our visitors are retired. We need to keep thinking of them, too.

Summarizing our response to the subject being addressed: A 9am service alters normal Sunday routine for 8 o'clockers. Family activities and other occasional Sunday events are affected. 9am full congregation services are fairly large in size and longer compared to the smaller less hectic and quiet 8am service. Some 8 o'clockers skip the First Sunday 9am services for the foregoing reasons. Increased socializing or togetherness really is not being achieved by the 9am service. Coffee hour is also skipped by many 8 o'clockers when attending. We love our Rector, so let's return to 8 o'clock services every Sunday. We will continue to be faithful Episcopalians!

I am very happy that the little children are getting to experience the beauty and be part of the adult worship every month. Thank you for this.

Would like to encourage more young families to attend

Don't get political

My question is "has this service been successful?" And in my opinion, it has not. I go to the service regularly but don't see many of the young families at this service. It's as if it's a "day off" for them. The service is a good idea that hasn't worked out the way we wish.

See # 6

I have noted that many of the 8 o'clock members attend the 9 am service, but there are not as many of those who regularly attend the 9:30 in attendance. I wonder if that is because with young children 9:30 is as early as they can get everyone there.

Moving the service ahead to 9:30 might help.

Just about every thing covered in above answers.

I would hope that we all might go into this conversation with open minds and not follow patterns/solutions/traditions simply because that's what we have experienced in the past.

I miss the comfort and "I" (not "we") focus of Rite I. Also, I think 3 services on Sunday is too many for 1 priest even though Carolyn+ seems to handle it well.

The state of this country and its leaders; hungry souls; drug epidemic and poverty. lack of spiritual development.

That the parish does all it can to encourage all families to attend church and find ways for them to take an active role in the life of the church.

I'm quite happy with current trends and movements at St. Paul's church.

What concerns me most as I try to live as a faithful, hopeful follower of Christ is that some of us will not be able to live up to our promise made at the Baptism of some of the younger people. I am 84 and I will not forget the caring of the people as I grew up in the Lutheran Church. Most of the people were at least twenty or thirty years younger than I am now. The teachers taught for years. We were followers of Christ according to our age, and I always felt that I was in church to follow Christ no matter which church it was: Methodist Episcopal, Episcopal or Congregational. We will try to get to some of the First Sundays.

Not a lot of young adults in our congregation. Mostly older adults and/or seniors.

I do know parishioners who prefer a more contemplatory/monk/quiet service. They don't attend any ALL parish or big productions service.

Regardless of any of the changes made, those parishioners won't be there. So what to do? Have a monthly (opposite Sunday of the all parish Sunday) quiet service. Maybe an evensong service? 5PM - 7PM. Once we can afford another minister - an associate rector, but don't have the budget and Carolyn already works many, many hours.

The political divide that has consumed our every day life is my greatest concern. It is difficult to have a discussion without getting into divisiveness.

Thanks for doing this survey!

It would be nice if everyone felt comfortable in the Church

I hope to see more all parish events maybe after or between services. Brunch/ potlucks

I fear that we have a generation of young people / families that not only are "unchurched" or have no connection to a church community, but they don't care; "church" is something that doesn't even cross their minds or is irrelevant. Very sad. So while I strongly support our efforts the engage families in our worship, I think we may be a step or two ahead of where American families are "at." Maybe our efforts -- and those of churches everywhere in America -- need to be directed at the more fundamental issue of the relevancy of organized spiritual life and the relevancy and value of a spiritual community. "Church" is just what you do on Sunday when you already believe that it might be a good idea to participate.

Maybe we need to find out what, if anything, a church community can offer that Facebook and Twitter don't.

We need more young families and adults. Our Parish is aging and soon there will not be enough people to carry on the wonderful programs currently in place.

This could be a treatise! Although raised in the Episcopal Church, I find that I am less and less a "faithful, hopeful follower of Christ." I do appreciate the enthusiasm and faith of our rector which is certainly infectious. I also appreciate the good work that St. Paul's does in the community. But Christianity has so many fractured denominations, many of which seem to claim "superiority" and many of which are lead by people who shame and exclude the "other", and/or even harm their own flocks. It makes it very hard to identify myself as a Christian. This is not the "fault" of St. Paul's, nor am I seeking an alternative church/spiritual community. I would like to think that Martin Luther King, Jr. was correct in saying that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice. However, the sweep of history, including [ongoing] vicious religious wars (including on behalf of Christianity) is certainly not promising.

I worry about being an open and welcoming enough church, that we encourage and embrace diversity.

Also, that we continually challenge ourselves to follow Jesus, and I am thankful that Carolyn is great in that regard.

I am extremely satisfied and impressed with the current leadership (rector, wardens, vestry, numerous committees, etc.) and feeling of shared communion with members of the St. Paul's community. I am sometimes discouraged when I see a slim attendance at certain services during the church year (Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, specifically).

I think this last question is much too broad to be fairly discussed in the same forum as the focus of this survey. I also think the questions relating to "First Sundays" could have been more detailed, more specific to the practice itself.

My main concern is caused by my difficult hearing. The music is loud due to hearing aids. Yet I cannot hear the sermon over the microphone in the ministers pocket. Using the lectern, as with the lessons, I can hear what is said.

Our concern is that St. Paul's will become a one-service worship for all Sunday mornings.

We prefer the 8:00 service; however, for the good of the Church, we can adjust to a one Sunday a month Family service at 9:00.
