

## **Congregational Session 2 Report**

Session Date: September 10, 2017

Focus on the Present State of Ox Hill Baptist Church

The respondents to the polarities, life cycle, and Kool-Aid exercise provided a great deal of feedback on our current state, ministries, and programs. 71 individuals attended the session in person and 104 Keep, Improve, Add, Drop Papers were submitted. Below is the Transition Team's interpretation of the data. All qualitative "themes" are reflective of statements that were repeated throughout the feedback. No statement was overlooked, but not all statements were thematic.

In addition to this report, all compiled data will be sent to the Pastoral Search team.

### **MINISTRY FOCUS**

Each of the 9 ministries had the following quantity of respondents:

- Outreach: 25
- Worship: 15
- Music: 15
- Missions: 12
- Adults: 11
- Inreach: 10
- Children/Youth: 9
- Misc: 5
- Pastoral Care: 1

Thematic statements for each of the ministries are listed below. Note: many music related feedback was specifically related to worship, so it was incorporated into that section.

#### **Outreach Themes**

- Better understand and reach the culturally diverse community around us.
- Spread the word about OHBC to our community, neighbors, friends, & family. Be inviting and welcoming to those who visit us.
- Increase the level of engagement in ministry and missions, and be more inclusive of attendees from other countries.
- Improve outreach and worship opportunities to individuals unable to attend church in person.
- Adopt technology to reach other groups and at the same time improve conventional methods of outreach.
- Engage with our community partners to build relationships and share God's word, while ensuring our existing programs and ministries do the same.
- Assess our community needs and work to meet their needs.

#### **Worship Themes**

- Our current traditional style of worship meets the needs for many congregants. There are opportunities for additional dynamic elements to improve the vitality and energy of our existing service.

- There is overwhelming support for the existing worship music programs. Worship opportunities should be expanded to include other groups more frequently (Senior Adults, Youth, Children, Internationals, etc).
- Worship should be balanced, but should not exceed one hour total in duration.
- We should investigate adding non-traditional worship opportunities to our worship offerings; specifically, a contemporary/progressive service potentially held at non-traditional Sunday times.
- We need to standardize our A/V approach to find a format that is comfortable within our traditional style. Better A/V systems and support, more standardized and tuned graphics, and the addition of hymn lyrics to the slides should be considered.
- We should consider the "high church" nature of our traditional service and determine if there is some relaxation or other changes that should occur to allow us to better reach our children and community.

### **Music Themes**

- The quality of our existing music programs and leadership is unmatched.
- We need additional music performance opportunities, both inside the church and outside it, for non-choir members, special groups, and instrumentalists.
- We should better publicize our music programs to increase participation and event attendance.

### **Missions Themes**

- Desire for church membership as a whole to be aware of missionary needs in our immediate community and beyond.
- Increase our support to missions in all ways, including personal involvement and financial support.
- Consider opportunities for families to participate together in missions.
- As seen in other church ministries, congregants would like to keep all existing programs and drop none. The church membership's current focus is between these two extremes
- Improve mission leadership, increase mission opportunities, look more closely at nearby need, consider more distant mission trips, and undertake disaster assistance as an emerging, new mission field.
- Some congregants may be unaware that distant mission trips (e.g., Guatemala) are self-funded. Such trips occur outside the established church budget.

### **Adult Themes**

*Of those that spoke about adult ministry, many focused their comments on either young adults or senior adults. This indicates that these two groups necessitate some additional focus.*

- Overall assessment of emerging trends and existing adult ministry offerings should be undertaken. Researching how we can be more innovative and reach adults of all age groups and cultural differences.
- Interest in assessing current senior adult activities, but keeping Silver Thread Thanksgiving Luncheon & Senior Adult Choir
- Provide a broad range of classes (including non-traditional class offerings based on needs and spiritual growth and small groups), while assessing our existing offerings. Being mindful that we are currently challenged in resources for adult Sunday School/Bible Study leadership.
- Mind the gaps: Creating ministry opportunities for those groups where a gap is currently identified: Adults post-child-rearing age (but not yet Silver Threads yet), Men's ministry, Young adults
- Address the challenge of our aging congregation and consider our worship style, leadership, and program offerings for young adults. Suggestions ranged from modifying our sanctuary physically to

modifying music/presentation/formality in the service, and adding an additional contemporary service, etc.)

### **In-Reach Themes**

- Improve methods for communicating and coordinating inreach needs, such as: deacon-family assignments, using technology or applications (i.e. SignUpGenius or similar for coordination)
- Refresh and improve existing in-reach programs, such as: pastor/deacon visits or calls during illness/crisis/grief; committee of greeters to welcome visitors
- Increase in-reach programs for young families and women
- Improve and standardize follow-up procedures for visitors, prospects and absentees (drop-outs) across programs.
- Prayerfully seek God's purpose for our church.

### **Children/Youth Themes**

- The children and youth programs have dynamic leadership.
- Strive to maintain youth diversity, Mission trips, and community involvement.
- OHBC Music and Missions are enjoyed by the children, parents and congregation, and should be continued, but schedule adapted to accommodate commute and schedules. Current schedule for Wednesday activities limits participation for children and volunteers.
- OHBC should maintain Sunday school, Mission activities, VBS, summer programs (camps etc) for children & youth.
- OHBC needs to focus on attendance on Sunday morning.
- Childrens missions programs should consider additional mixed-gender programs/activities.
- Focus on increased family involvement with programs such as VBS and CBS.
- Childrens and Youth wings need updating with murals and color.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Need to update and improve our technology, particularly relating to internet access and broadcasting ability, to allow our teachers and members to better connect with others within the church building and to share more information quicker.

### **Pastoral Care**

- Senior care needs more help, focus, and attention

## **OVERALL THEMES**

These themes were reflected consistently across all ministries.

- In order to sustain everything and drop nothing, we need to increase participation
- Desire for greater focus, mission/vision at all levels and all programs
- Be in the community and address needs
- The international community spanned all ministry areas
- Focus on and define our relationship with Rio Poderoso Iglesia and its pastor
- Innovate and be open to change

## **IDENTITY STATEMENTS**

Respondents were asked to state what makes OHBC unique.

- OHBC accepts multiple translations of the bible.
- OHBC is outreach and community service-oriented.
- OHBC participates with other community churches.
- OHBC has a high quality, outstanding music program.
- OHBC is mildly diverse, but is surrounded by a large, multi-cultural population for which it has a strong ESL ministry.
- OHBC has a multi-generational congregation.
- OHBC teaches and preaches God's word.
- OHBC is traditional in worship, but more moderate theologically
- OHBC supports women in leadership.

## CHALLENGES TO OUR MISSION & VISION

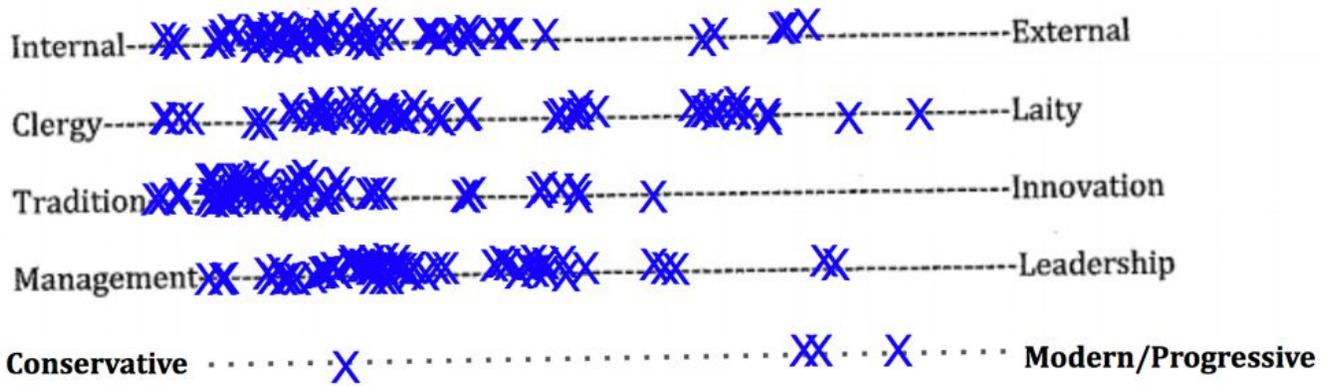
Respondents were asked to state what items may challenge our mission and vision.

- Our church lacks an entrepreneurial spirit that would give laity the agility to foster new ideas.
- Our church structure hinders our ability to make decisions and is evident in lack of participation at business meetings.
- Knowing what we should do vs. doing everything we can do.
- Training and generating excitement within leadership.
- Ambiguity of mission, vision, and identity.
- Perception that a contemporary service will resolve the aging congregation problem.
- Resource scarcity
  - Active membership size and congregational participation ("80/20" rule).
  - Aligning expectations with the level of giving.
  - Storage space.
- Changing demographics, transient area, and lacking integration with the multi-cultural community.
- Meeting the needs of both our aging congregation, young families, and adults.
- Growing competition between external secular activities and church participation.

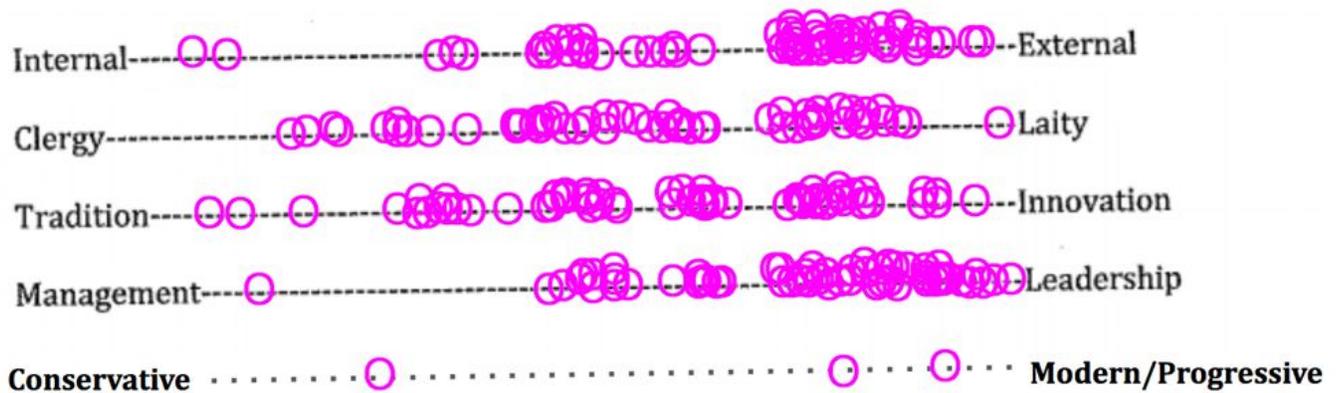
## POLARITIES

This chart represents the current state of OHBC. Major groupings are consistent on the left side of the scale, with some grouping toward Laity and Leadership on those two spectrums. As a reminder the polarities and their focus are:

- Internal - External (church focus)
- Clergy-Laity (leadership emphasis)
- Traditional-Innovation (worship style)
- Management-Leadership (leadership style)
- Conservative-Modern (church culture)



This chart represents what congregants thought the future state of OHBC should be. Major groupings moved further right on the scale, but there are more clusters, indicating differences regarding where on the right side of the spectrum OHBC should be.



## LIFECYCLE OF CONGREGATIONS

This chart represents the common points in the lifecycle of a church. While it is pictured as a one-directional curve, think of this more as a circle with arrows in all directions. OHBC can go to any point in the life cycle at any time. Currently, the major grouping is clustered around Nostalgia and trending toward Decline & Conflict.

