

## Discernment Process Results

Please identify your role in the life of your congregation or in the presbytery

| Answer Options   | Response Percent                | Response Count |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Pastor of Local Church and/or Session Moderator                  | 28.8%                           | 15             |
| Pastor (Member at Large, Honorably retired, Non-Clerk of Session | 13.5%                           | 7              |
| Church Member  | 23.1%                           | 12             |
| Team / Committee Member  | 11.5%                           | 6              |
| Staff Member   | 19.2%                           | 10             |
|  | 3.8%                            | 2              |
|  | <b><i>answered question</i></b> | <b>52</b>      |
|  | <b><i>skipped question</i></b>  | <b>0</b>       |



## Discernment Process Results

If you are from a local church please identify your congregation. We will provide feedback to the session of your congregation

| Answer Options | Response Percent         | Response Count |
|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Church         | 95.0%                    | 38             |
| City/Town:     | 92.5%                    | 37             |
| State:         | 95.0%                    | 38             |
|                | <b>answered question</b> | <b>40</b>      |
|                | <b>skipped question</b>  | <b>12</b>      |

| Number | Response Date         | Church                            | City/Town:       | State: |
|--------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|--------|
| 1      | Mar 23, 2010 4:15 PM  | First                             | Kirkwood         | MO     |
| 2      | Mar 23, 2010 7:59 PM  |                                   |                  | MO     |
| 3      | Mar 23, 2010 9:19 PM  | Grace Presbyterian church         | Crystal City     | MO     |
| 4      | Mar 24, 2010 12:16 AM | Potosi Presbyterian Church        | Potosi           | MO     |
| 5      | Mar 24, 2010 3:36 PM  |                                   |                  | IL     |
| 6      | Mar 24, 2010 8:24 PM  | Northminster PC                   | Dellwood         | MO     |
| 7      | Mar 25, 2010 7:50 PM  | John Calvin                       | Bridgeton        | MO     |
| 8      | Mar 26, 2010 2:10 PM  | Affton Presbyterian               | St. Louis        | MO     |
| 9      | Mar 26, 2010 6:46 PM  | Second Presbyterian Church        | Saint Louis      | MO     |
| 10     | Mar 26, 2010 7:27 PM  | Second Presbyterian Church        | Saint Louis      | MO     |
| 11     | Mar 27, 2010 7:58 PM  | First                             | Fredericktown    | MO     |
| 12     | Mar 30, 2010 6:41 PM  | Dardenne                          | Dardenne Prairie | MO     |
| 13     | Mar 30, 2010 11:42 PM | First Presbyterian Church, Kirkwo | Kirkwood         | MO     |
| 14     | Mar 31, 2010 7:23 PM  | New Horizons                      | Overland         | MO     |
| 15     | Apr 1, 2010 6:24 PM   | First Presbyterian                | Sullivan         | MO     |
| 16     | Apr 5, 2010 2:49 PM   | Fisk Presbyterian                 | Fisk             | MO     |
| 17     | Apr 5, 2010 3:12 PM   | Calvary                           | Mehlville        | MO     |
| 18     | Apr 6, 2010 6:37 PM   | Ladue Cahpel Presbyterian Church  | St. Louis        | MO     |
| 19     | Apr 6, 2010 7:35 PM   | Bonhomme PC                       | Chesterfield     | MO     |
| 20     | Apr 8, 2010 3:16 PM   | First Presbyterian Church         | Perryville       | MO     |
| 21     | Apr 11, 2010 5:26 PM  | First Presbyterian Church         | Brighton         | IL     |
| 22     | Apr 12, 2010 4:47 PM  | First Presbyterian Church         | Granite City     | IL     |
| 23     | Apr 12, 2010 6:10 PM  | Westminster Presby                | Belleville       | IL     |
| 24     | Apr 12, 2010 10:18 PM | The United Presbyterian Church    | Wood River       | IL     |
| 25     | Apr 13, 2010 3:09 AM  | Glendale Presbyterian Church      | Glendale         | MO     |
| 26     | Apr 13, 2010 4:46 PM  | Westminster                       | Cape Girardeau   | MO     |
| 27     | Apr 13, 2010 7:28 PM  | Dardenne Presbyterian Church      | O'Fallon         | MO     |

|           |                              |                                   |                 |    |
|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|----|
| <b>28</b> | <b>Apr 13, 2010 7:40 PM</b>  | Cote Brilliante                   | StL             |    |
| <b>29</b> | <b>Apr 13, 2010 8:06 PM</b>  | College Ave. Presbyterian         | Alton           | IL |
| <b>30</b> | <b>Apr 14, 2010 6:55 PM</b>  | Trinity Chapel Presbyterian Churc | Cuba            | MO |
| <b>31</b> | <b>Apr 14, 2010 9:30 PM</b>  | CDMT                              |                 |    |
| <b>32</b> | <b>Apr 15, 2010 2:17 AM</b>  | Westminster                       | Belleville      | IL |
| <b>33</b> | <b>Apr 15, 2010 2:51 AM</b>  | Westminster                       | St. Louis       | MO |
| <b>34</b> | <b>Apr 15, 2010 6:15 PM</b>  | St. Mark                          | Ballwin         | MO |
| <b>35</b> | <b>Apr 15, 2010 8:00 PM</b>  | pacfic presbyterian church        | pacific         | MO |
| <b>36</b> | <b>Apr 15, 2010 8:05 PM</b>  | Calvary                           | Mehlville       | MO |
| <b>37</b> | <b>Apr 15, 2010 8:44 PM</b>  | first presbyterian of St. Louis   | University City | MO |
| <b>38</b> | <b>Apr 16, 2010 12:53 AM</b> | Kenyan fellowship                 | Overland        | MO |
| <b>39</b> | <b>Apr 16, 2010 8:03 PM</b>  | Calvary Presbyterian Church       | Mehlville       | MO |
| <b>40</b> | <b>Apr 20, 2010 6:24 PM</b>  | First                             | Alton           | IL |

## Discernment Process Results

What did your study reveal about God?

Answer Options

Response Count

48

answered question  
skipped question

48  
4

| Number | Response Date         | Response Text  |
|--------|-----------------------|--|
| 1      | Mar 23, 2010 5:03 PM  | giver of all things; called the people for a purpose; gives gifts needed for ministry; wants good for God's people, forgiving; love and compassion, extends God's Kingdom through actions of others; God & Jesus are one in power and authority; requires a life of discipleship and rewards those who live it; established a relationship with us through Christ; God wants us to find the good in all situations and to refrain from evil; God wants all God's people to be connected - not isolated; God is with us for eternity; God wants us to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; God wants God's people to be welcoming and accepting - inclusive of all.  |
| 2      | Mar 23, 2010 8:02 PM  | We think God would approve going back to the basics.<br>The 10 Commandments - Deuteronomy 5<br>Sermon on the Mount - Matthew 5<br>Lord's Prayer - Matthew 6<br>When the Church carries these tenets into all its activities (and many already do this), current culture will find a way to adapt to the mission of its people.   |
| 3      | Mar 23, 2010 9:20 PM  | Our Session took part in the 10 Day Discernment Study. We learned that God is indeed speaking to us through the scriptures in many ways. Although we had various interpretations, we left a sense of calling to do more than we have been doing.<br>We need to practice forgiveness because God has forgiven us. It should be a privilege to follow Him. We need to be open to people with different points of view and not be so judgemental.<br>I feel the call to more mission work in my own life and in our congregation. Building relationships is crucial to keeping our denomination alive. Spend less time on the "rule books" and more time in the field.<br>We are reminded that God sacrificed his son for us. |
| 4      | Mar 24, 2010 12:19 AM | Who we are and what we do as the Body of Christ is rooted in and flows from a loving and forgiving God, who seeks us out and works on our behalf (reconciling us to God and to one another) in order that we might have a life full of joy and hope and peace.   |
| 5      | Mar 24, 2010 3:36 PM  | God is loving and just, proactive in reaching out to the whole world. God challenges us to join this endeavor in sharing love, forgiveness, reconciliation and compassion; all based in our knowledge of and security in Jesus Christ.   |
| 6      | Mar 25, 2010 7:58 PM  | Even though we are sinners, we must do God's work on earth.<br>We each have God-given gifts and God should be glorified through our servanthood.<br>God loves peace.<br>God wants the Spirit in us and wants us to listen to the prophets and teachers (past and present) to discern what God's will is for us.<br>God has chosen us to demonstrate love.<br>If all we're concerned with is Book of Order rules and regulations, we'll dry up and no longer be useful to God.<br>If Jesus is our rabbi, we should take up his yoke with authority and follow his example.  |

## Discernment Process Results

What did your study reveal about God?

Answer Options

Response Count

48

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

48

4

Number

Response Date

Response Text

- |    |                      |  |
|----|----------------------|--|
| 7  | Mar 26, 2010 2:15 PM | <p>God is steadfast, God's love/presences is with us forever<br/>                     "Worthiness" was a theme. God is worthy of our best<br/>                     We need to give and God deserves to receive praise<br/>                     God is the source of our blessings which calls for a response of thanksgiving<br/>                     God is the giver of the gifts we need to do what we are called/invited to do as God's people<br/>                     God saves<br/>                     God is a servant<br/>                     God doesn't promise that things will be easy</p>  |
| 8  | Mar 26, 2010 6:48 PM | <p>God calls us and goes with us into a new future.<br/>                     God gives all of us gifts for ministry and calls us to be loving and generous to all, after the example of Christ.<br/>                     God desires us to be humble and obedient to God, actively loving and working for the reconciliation of the world.</p>   |
| 9  | Mar 26, 2010 7:28 PM | <p>God is a God of reconciliation. God desires unity for the community of faith<br/>                     God's diverse gifts reflect abundance, and are given to all<br/>                     God's gifts are given for a common purpose – to build up the body of Christ<br/>                     God call us and goes with us into a new future<br/>                     God is a God of relationships<br/>                     God is patient and compassionate<br/>                     God has expectations. God calls God's people to right living<br/>                     God calls us to respond thankfully</p>   |
| 10 | Mar 27, 2010 8:03 PM | <p>God is a jealous God who wants 100% of ourselves; He is to permeate every aspect of our lives. We must willfully be obedient and actively seek Him.<br/>                     We must use our gifts to tell everyone about the joy, peace, and love of Christ.</p> <p>Our god forgives and works through us in reconciliation. We are to love one another, treating everyone with kindness and even to service at the level of servant. We are to be humble, treating all equally.</p> <p>We are all God's children, united through Christ. We should work toward unity of spirit.</p> <p>We are to show empathy and compassion. We are the light of the world.</p> <p>Above all, we are to let everyone see Christ in us, and through voice tell all.</p> <p>God wants our worship and praise in psalms and song.</p> <p>The importance of searching scriptures to find our path has become real. the need to come together, share our gifts, be in prayer for one another is important to God. We must search for opportunities to serve, never forgetting to be patient and forgiving and showing love to others.</p> |

## Discernment Process Results

What did your study reveal about God?

Answer Options

Response Count

48

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

48  
4

| Number | Response Date          | Response Text  |
|--------|------------------------|--|
| 11     | Mar 30, 2010 6:43 PM   | God is a loving Savior, more interested in transformation than in rehabilitation.<br>God is a righteous, holy God, expecting obedience rather than lip-service.  |
| 12     | Mar 30, 2010 11:52 PM  | I can be an advocate or representative for God, working together with other Christians, lovingly, in the likeness of Jesus, befriending the stranger, spreading the gospel worldwide, doing something concrete to help others truly know Jesus.  |
| 13     | Mar 31, 2010 7:23 PM   | That God calls believers to follow and to sometimes risk their lives in sacrificial actions;   |
| 14     | Apr 1, 2010 6:27 PM    | A) What does this reveal about God (question one):<br><br>1. Desires reconciliation<br>2. Makes things new<br>3. Has a purpose for us  |
| 15     | Apr 4, 2010 3:00 AM xx |  |
| 16     | Apr 5, 2010 2:53 PM    | God wants us to be willing to change if necessary, since the world we live in is changing. God wants us to be ambassadors for Christ in our world and we are going to have to learn to love all of those who God loves. Even if they're not like us. There are so many scriptures about being tolerant of one another and loving toward one another, that God must want us to do it. God calls all to serve and live earnestly, even if we have to re-work our old "laws" we live by to do it. |
| 17     | Apr 5, 2010 3:13 PM    | God shares and entrusts work to his people. He is servant like and wishes the Presbytery and his congregations to be like him. We should share the news about our good works.  |

## Discernment Process Results

What did your study reveal about God?

Answer Options

Response Count

48

48  
4

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text   |
|--------|----------------------|---|
|        |                      | <p>Day 1 - God is in the reconciliation business because conflict is inevitable as one follows God.</p> <p>Day 2 - God calls each of us to lead a certain kind of life (In our ministry) with a certain "style" that befits God/Christ's character and in unity &amp; peace with one another.</p> <p>Day 3 - God is a giver of gifts --&gt; given for a reason, for a purpose (which is not individual, and receiver specific)</p> <p>Day 4 - God is God -- can take those who are empty, humble themselves, are obedient and exalt them in ways unimagined -- even in and through death</p> <p>Day 5 - God is one who expects certain behaviors from us: to rejoice, pray, and give thanks; to listen to the Spirit and the prophets, to test, hold fast, abstain/avoid/let go</p> <p>Day 6 - God is one who chooses, forgives, grants peace, expects our praise and thanks, and wants us to live according to what God has revealed in Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Day 7 - God sends angels in a variety of guises, not all of which are recognizable.</p> <p>Day 8 - God uses life experiences and images to teach. God has Intentions for us - to be salt and light, to be visible, intentional, and explain what and why we are doing what we do.</p> <p>Day 9 - God in Jesus Christ places authority in our minds, hearts, and lives, to be about what God intends in the world, and then does not depart from us</p> <p>Day 10 - God doesn't ask us to take the easy, comfortable, or safe way.</p> |
| 18     | Apr 5, 2010 9:14 PM  |   |
| 19     | Apr 6, 2010 6:39 PM  | <p>•God works through God's people. God works through us and wants us to be in harmony with God. The church is organizational and a representation of God on earth and as long as we're together we represent God in the world. The Presbytery is similar to the church, as a governmental body of the church</p> <p>•God wants us to evangelize and go forward as individuals and as a body to share the Good News and God's love</p>  |
| 20     | Apr 8, 2010 3:17 PM  | God truly wants us to fill our hearts with love and do all for the good of Him. He is a loving God.   |
| 21     | Apr 9, 2010 2:53 PM  | Our lives do not reveal the glory of God, God is all loving but using a human image still has a backbone  |
| 22     | Apr 9, 2010 6:27 PM  | God is about connectedness/community  |
| 23     | Apr 11, 2010 5:31 PM | God is generous, caring, and forgiving. He has blessed us with gifts and wants us to use them for the good of others.   |

## Discernment Process Results

What did your study reveal about God?

Answer Options

Response Count

48

answered question  
skipped question

48

4

| Number | Response Date         | Response Text   |
|--------|-----------------------|---|
| 24     | Apr 11, 2010 5:39 PM  | <p>When we are born again, we become a brand new person and we are to be an ambassador to Christ.<br/>                     God is a God of grace and mercy.<br/>                     God has a call for our lives.<br/>                     God expects all of us to have a part in preading the word, so all may accept Christ.<br/>                     God loves us more than hisself.<br/>                     God wants us to be positive in our worship and actively seach for the truth, to hold fast to what is good .<br/>                     God is prefect and always forgiving.<br/>                     God's love is inclusive. We are not to judge. We should love and welcome everyone. God will be the judge.<br/>                     God is jealous. God wants to be worshlpped and glorified.<br/>                     The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit cannot be divided. We are not to keep the good news to ourselves but are to take it everywhere.<br/>                     God gives us freewill In our lives.</p>                 |
| 25     | Apr 12, 2010 4:50 PM  | <p>Our session discussion revealed mainly obvious positive qualities about God found in the scripture passages. In a nutshell, God is love, as one person put it.</p>   |
| 26     | Apr 12, 2010 6:23 PM  | <p>God has called each of us equally, unconditionally. God's love is without measure. God's forgiveness, love and kindness for all of us is beyond my comprehension. God knows our gifts and capabilities and expects us to use them. Each of us has God's directions on our hearts, including the mission and the goal: for everyone to hear the Word. God wants us to be the best we can be.</p>  |
| 27     | Apr 12, 2010 8:55 PM  | <p>God wants to be connected to us, in active conversation with us.<br/>                     God invites us to rise beyond our individual circumstances to our true callings, even if the barriers are great.<br/>                     All that we have and are capable of are God's gifts, not of our own doing.<br/>                     If Jesus was in the form of God - but not God - why did Jesus need to win God's favor? God is for our humbling ourselves; God wants us to be open to and follow God's call.<br/>                     God wants us to know joy. God's Spirit gives us joy, but we are prone to quench it.<br/>                     God comes to us in the form of others who suffer.<br/>                     God never leaves us; God's love for us never ends. God never ends.<br/>                     In God is life abundant, but in God is also vulnerability to suffering.<br/>                     God wants us to live boldy, without fear. Others will benefit from our living In this way - they will be freed also.</p> |
| 28     | Apr 12, 2010 10:25 PM | <p>God is a forgiving God who expects us to forgive one another as we have been forgiven.<br/>                     Challenging<br/>                     God does not keep a scorecard (nor should we)<br/>                     Trusting<br/>                     Gives particular gifts (our responsibility is to use them for the manifestation of the common good; to seek the good use of the gifts of others in the worship community; to reflect the light, love, healing, and hope of Christ to those around us; to nurture the lights around us, joining ours with theirs.<br/>                     God is about surprises and change.</p>   |

## Discernment Process Results

What did your study reveal about God?

Answer Options

Response Count

48

answered question  
skipped question

48  
4

Number | Response Date | Response Text

29 Apr 13, 2010 3:12 AM God loves the world so much that he gave his only son - there is a humbleness, but also a confidence to be joyful.

God's love is transformative for us and others.  
 God trusts us.  
 God wants to use us all and we must see God's gifts in each other and allow each to be used.  
 The patience of God is like a parent waiting for a young child to take their first step.  
 God had poured out power for us in Jesus' humility and love.  
 God has created us for joy, and together God will help us grow through prayer and service.  
 God chooses, empowers and accepts us as his body the Church.  
 God is with us and continues to be the imago dei in all of us.  
 God calls us to share all things with others and to make a meaningful sacrifice.  
 Christ is present and God is empowering us in all we do.  
 Sacrifice can be a measure of ministry.  
 Who are we trying to please our ego or God?  
 God gave us a new covenant in Jesus Christ and expects (desires) us to live in harmony.  
 God wants the world to be at peace with each other.  
 God is kind and gentle.  
 God values all gifts, even those that might appear insignificant to some.

30 Apr 13, 2010 1:50 PM Live so that all lives reflect that Jesus is Lord.

That God is forgiving, purposeful, all-knowing, and loving. God welcomes all and desires to be in a relationship with all persons, and this desire is passed on to us -- we too are to be welcoming and we too are to be in relationships with people. God has a plan. A part of that plan is to teach us how to live in peace, which means that humankind is to live by God's rules. God is faithful to us. God is the authority. God is the giver of new life. God = Jesus = Holy Spirit.

32 Apr 13, 2010 7:35 PM Thanks to God for saving us. An honor to be part of the family of God. God will be with us in all things.  
 God sends people into our lives and church to help us grow. God desires our unity and harmony.

God loves ~ and expects the church to love  
 God does not ask for volunteers [except maybe Isaiah] so much as God calls  
 God desires that we live a life of gratitude ~ so I wonder what a "presbytery life of gratitude" would look like

33 Apr 13, 2010 8:44 PM God created life to be savored and enjoyed ~ a communal activity

## Discernment Process Results

What did your study reveal about God?

Answer Options

Response Count

48

48

4

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
|        |                      | <p><i>answered question</i></p> <p><i>skipped question</i></p>   |
| 34     | Apr 14, 2010 6:31 PM | <p>God's love in Christ is for everyone. It is at God's initiative. God's love goes full circle - reaching out to us. We in turn are entrusted with the message of reconciliation. God desires a fellowship with each of us that embodies the traits of humility, gentleness, patience, love, with a goal of unity. Since God comes to the other through us, we are called to bear these traits in our relationships with each other. The God of all creation gives different gifts to every one of us. These gifts upbuild the body of Christ. God's desire is for us to have a mind like Christ that is not exploitive but one that is filled with humility and obedience. While I am not sure what cross Christ would have us bear, I am aware that it is one that demands followership. God's love and invitation is to not repay evil, but to seek good for each other and all. Exhibiting joy is essential to all that we do. How do we posture ourselves as open vessels for God?</p> |
| 35     | Apr 14, 2010 6:42 PM | <p>God calls for reconciliation among the races. Unity of the spirit means that we should look beyond those things that divide us, such as large vs. small, urban vs. rural/suburban, and liberal vs. conservative.</p>  |
| 36     | Apr 14, 2010 6:59 PM | <p>God unifies us with bonds of PEACE. God gives us gifts which he expects us to USE. God has FORGIVEN us and expects us to do the same. God expects us to GO and will be with us wherever that may be. God expects us to LOVE no matter what differences we have among the body.</p>  |
| 37     | Apr 14, 2010 9:31 PM | <p>From the conversations with team members congregations: God is not static, but dynamic and always on the move. God is not with us yet. God still has a purpose for us -- the future is not yet clear, but definitely out there ahead of us.</p>   |
| 38     | Apr 15, 2010 2:23 AM | <p>The study revealed that God loves those of us who attend church in the same way that He loves the unchurched. He has given us each different gifts and expects us to use them to be witnesses for Christ by being faithful, obedient, prayerful and by worshipping Him. He expects us to do hard things, but he gives us the Holy Spirit to guide us and He gives us grace and forgiveness to keep trying when we fail.</p>   |
| 39     | Apr 15, 2010 2:51 AM | <p>I am responding for the entire session. The question that we discussed to be recorded here was "What did the study say about God's desire or vision for our Presbytery?"</p>  |
| 40     | Apr 15, 2010 6:47 PM | <p>-G-O-D is BEING, unity, love, grace, justice; ever evolving energy, communion, diversity, uniqueness itself--incarnated in Jesus and calling and equipping humanity and all of creation to embody the same in gratitude and peace as a NEW CREATION.</p>  |
| 41     | Apr 15, 2010 7:34 PM | <p>God's love is transformative for us and others. The patients of God are like a parent waiting for a young child to take their first step. God trusts us. God wants to use us all and we must see God's gifts in each other and allow each to be used.</p> <p>Christ is present and God is empowering us in all we do. God pours out power for us in Jesus' humility and love. God call us to share all things with others and to make a meaningful sacrifice. Sacrifice can be a measure of ministry. Who are we trying to please our ego or God? God chooses, empowers and accepts us as we are for Christ's body the Church. God has created us for joy, and together God will help us grow through prayer and service.</p>   |

**Discernment Process Results**

**What did your study reveal about God?**

**Answer Options**

**Response Count**

48

*answered question  
skipped question*

48  
4

**Number    Response Date    Response Text**

- \*All-powerful yet a personal God to each of us.
  - \*He loves us and has given each of us certain specific expectations to live up to.
  - \*God depends on us to spread his good word.
  - \*God came to us in Jesus.
- 42    Apr 15, 2010 8:05 PM    \*Gos has given each of us gifts and talents different from others.**

God is loving if he wants to associate with us despite all our sins and trusting if he wants us to act on his behalf. The hymn-Love Divine All Loves Excelling came to mind, God gives those he claims a job to do, god is imparital, God will help thoes who seek him--has already given us the gifts we need to follow him, sends us many opportunities and the Spirit helps us distinguish what is meant, God depends on us to do his work on earth, feels our pain and our joys-Golden rules-Reflect god's love for us, God lifts us when we lose our way, Is constant-Jesus and the Holy Spirit intercede wiht men to show them Gods ways, God has high expectations

God calls us to live honest and peaceful lives, everything has been made new, we are all called for different jobs, God sent Jesus in the human form to save us, do good to one antoher-always avold evil, we are to give thanks and be forgiving, we are to be good to strangers and prisoners not just our close friends and family, we are to be a light to the world not hide our good deeds, we are to be leaders and teachers-examples, we need to lead honest worthy lives for God's acceptance

- 43    Apr 15, 2010 8:38 PM    through Christ, God has instilled in us a new way for our falth journey,a road through Charist our Savior, God directs us to lead lives worthy of being Chr**

## Discernment Process Results

What did your study reveal about God?

Answer Options

Response Count

48

answered question  
skipped question

48

4

Number | Response Date | Response Text

1. That God is loving and forgiving; that God is gracious, not counting our trespasses/sins against us and entrusting us to do the same--not to count sins against ourselves or others, but to receive reconciliation from God and pass it on to others.

God wants peace among God's people and sent Jesus Christ (or became God-among-people) to demonstrate what that peace would look like. God is constant. People bumble along, getting it wrong more often than right. But God is constant and still loves us.

2. God wants us to respond to God's love with humility, gentleness and patience--the way God loves us. God loves us and wants us to treat each other with love, maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. God loves peace; God loves unity in the Spirit; God calls us to respond with humility and patience--humility in the presence of our higher power, patience with our fellow humans.

3. That God intends that we have diverse and complementary gifts. That God does not leave us bereft with no way to be or become what God intends.

That God wants us to grow in our ability to be united and in knowledge of Jesus Christ. That Jesus is our model of what God is like and what God wants us

4. God pays no attention to human hierarchy. God, the ultimate judge, does not focus on punishment, but redemption and vindication. God wants us to va

5. That God recognizes there is evil in the world and God's children will suffer evil and wish to repay it. That God does not seek vengeance, but wants us to

It also tells me that God is not going to just remove evil and the temptations away from the path toward the good. That what we may see as suffering -- "

6. God loves us. God bears with us, forgives us. God intends the world to live in harmony. God delights in/expects gratitude and praise. God sent Jesus Ch

7. God loves us. God sometimes sends angels to give us the opportunity to entertain them and learn from them. That God loves those in prison and those

8. God demands much of those to whom God has given much. God wants disciples to be lights of the world, to demonstrate God's love by BEING Jesus's c

9. That God expects us to be God's agents, making disciples, baptizing and teaching. And that God, through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, is always with us th

44 Apr 15, 2010 8:54 PM 10. This is a tough saying. God wants followers to be willing to lose everything in this temporal life, to take up the sentence given out by the earthly power

45 Apr 16, 2010 1:04 AM God is the owner we are stewards. All that we have belongs to God, He has charged us with responsibilities and one day we will give an account of how we used that which was entrusted to us.

God is all-powerful yet a personal God to each of us.

He loves us and has given each of us certain specific expectations to live up to.

God depends on us to spread his good word.

God came to us in Jesus.

46 Apr 16, 2010 8:08 PM God has given each of us gifts and talents different from other people.

## Discernment Process Results

What did your study reveal about God?

Answer Options

Response Count

48

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

48

4

Number

Response Date

Response Text

47 Apr 20, 2010 6:32 PM

Renewal and change are part of God's plan.

48 Apr 22, 2010 7:45 PM

The Committee on Ministry believes its is called together by God, and seeks to work with a spirit of thanksgiving as a context for our work with congregations and ministers.

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

Answer Options

Response Count

answered question  
skipped question

47

47  
5

Number Response Date Response Text

- Help members and congregations to "see" the new Creation - be ambassadors for christ and spread the message of reconciliation; foster and model peace, unity, patience and love; be a equipping body; be a servant - bring glory and attention to God and not the organization; test new ways of doing and being - retain those that are good; reflect God's love in all that is done; be open and inclusive - operate out of another's perspective; be known by acts of ministry - not by the organization; serve the churches in their mission of growing God's Kingdom; operate out of a life of discipleship; be a visible, shining example of God; reach out to the community and the world; expand the relationship with the congregations and the community; ministry done through the churches and not presbytery is relevant for this time; provide checks and balances for ministry; Other comments: what is a presbytery?; hard to determine what these verses say about God's desire for the presbytery; churches minister to the people, does the presbytery minister to the churches?; video spoke about moving into the 21st century - where and how do we find the people to minister to?
- 1 **Mar 23, 2010 5:03 PM** Day four seemed to be the turning point for some people where they were able to slow down and focus on the message and ask what does it mean at a personal, congregation and presbytery level.
  - 2 **Mar 23, 2010 8:07 PM** The Presbytery, through the governance given to it by the Presbyterian Church, can study the successful ministries that meet the basic criteria, and encourage and support possible changes or additional programs within the existing churches and emphasize current Church programs that meet the needs of the congregations. It has never been easy and the emphasis should be on the young in the midst of caring for the old.
  - 3 **Mar 23, 2010 9:20 PM** We struggled with this answer because most of us do not have much contact with Giddings Lovejoy; however, we felt that we desire a closer relationship with Presbytery and would like more communication and resources to be available to us. We also have a need to feel connected to other Presbyterian Churches. Much of what we thought for our church applied in a broader sense to the Presbytery.
  - 4 **Mar 23, 2010 9:20 PM** We conclude that God is asking us to be a larger presence in our region and in our mission work.
  - 4 **Mar 24, 2010 12:22 AM** God's desire for our presbytery is to focus on "making disciples" for Jesus Christ, putting people first not the institution. One elder commented, "As local churches' situations change, so must the governance of the Presbytery change."
  - 5 **Mar 24, 2010 3:37 PM** The Presbytery, made up of congregations gathered to be the body of Christ in this world, is called to encourage and support those congregations in their particular ministries. Such support and encouragement will generate the desire to be open to God's call and direction in a world that often feels threatening. The role of the Presbytery is to model all the qualities we long to observe in our congregations, offering education and encouragement, training and support in discovering and carrying out faithful mission in the name of Jesus Christ.

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

Answer Options

Response Count

answered question  
skipped question

47

47  
5

Number Response Date Response Text

- 6 **Mar 25, 2010 8:28 PM** Our presbytery should keep moving forward -- change happens and must happen to keep things fresh and new, not old and stale like week-old bread. Through any change we must be humble, kind and loving to one another as we use the gifts God gave us to build up the presbytery/Church. The presbytery should be obedient to God and be as one as we decide what God wants us to do. We need opportunities and ways to serve should be available. The correct interpretation of discernment is vital. We must have some education/resources to be able to test interpretation. Prison can mean a lot of things -- not just bars. We need ministries that educate and minister to all who are hurting. We need a strong spiritual direction and places to take time away from the world in order to hear God. We can be a lampstand to light the way to God, but must concentrate efforts to help others learn how to make their spiritual gifts shine, because what good is it to baptize people if you don't follow up with teaching how to use their gifts/skills? Help churches teach and learn how to equip the saints. We must have places and resources from the presbytery to make it happen -- not just pastors, all of us.  
If we don't stop worrying about the constitutional institutional, we will no longer matter.
- Presbytery is to do what it can to support the ministry of churches, so that churches can do what it can to support ministry of each of us
- It is called to support and build up the body of Christ
- Give up the desire of various groups or individuals in the Presbytery to "win"  
We need to get over ourselves
- 7 **Mar 26, 2010 2:18 PM** We spend so much time putting our fires that we don't get around to lighting lamps
- God does not hold our past against us, but expects us to work alongside God to make the world new in Christ. The gifts needed for effective presbytery ministry are scattered over all its congregations and their (potential) members. Giddings-Lovejoy must be prayerful, intentional and discerning to call people into the work of the presbytery. All of the gifts are to be used for God's purpose, not our own (perceived) needs. Presbytery is called to serve and witness to and through all of its congregations and to its geographic ministry area. Giddings-Lovejoy must be willing to risk what it has and what it "knows" to follow Christ.
- 8 **Mar 26, 2010 6:55 PM** There is no room for despair or reluctance, providing hospice care to a dying church.

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

Answer Options

Response Count

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

47

47  
5

| Number | Response Date         | Response Text  |
|--------|-----------------------|--|
| 9      | Mar 26, 2010 7:29 PM  | <p>Be mindful of the bigger picture<br/>                     The presbytery is more than the sum of its separate churches<br/>                     How can presbytery become the servant?<br/>                     The message is Jesus, not the church<br/>                     God calls us to one vocation – having the mind of Christ – giving vs. self-protection<br/>                     The presbytery must be willing to risk what it "knows", what is has<br/>                     Presbytery needs to be working for and with the community</p>   |
| 10     | Mar 27, 2010 8:14 PM  | <p>Roles for Presbytery:<br/>                     promote the value of all its churches<br/>                     do not give up on a church or minister<br/>                     work for reconciliation<br/>                     give support and help with parish formation<br/>                     support immigrant churches<br/>                     train and support lay pastors<br/>                     financially support those wanting to attend seminary<br/>                     uphold one another and work to maintain a spirit of unity amongst its churches<br/>                     facilitate ecumenical activities<br/>                     help churches see when they err and support them in finding a better way<br/>                     work for justice<br/>                     facilitate the movement of the Spirit amongst its churches<br/>                     facilitate teaching, forgiveness, and music within and between churches<br/>                     provide resources and leaders<br/>                     be full of life and light as shining examples for God<br/>                     provide ways for churches to reach those outside the church<br/>                     follow God, even if it is against the "norm" or even the law</p> |
| 11     | Mar 30, 2010 6:44 PM  | <p>God more likely expects us to get on with His Great Commission in lieu of reorganizing every 5-6 years.</p>   |
| 12     | Mar 30, 2010 11:59 PM | <p>God wants our Presbytery to act as an ambassador for Christ, bonded together In the Spirit, using our diversity, the best gifts of each of us, spreading love and admiration for Jesus, reaching out to the world in compassion, interpreting the word of God and God's intentions, supporting mission work at all levels, with our pastors leading the way as strong activists for Jesus and his message of love.</p>  |
| 13     | Mar 31, 2010 7:23 PM  | <p>That we must support pastors and local church leaders as they find ways to share God's reconciling love;</p>  |

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

47  
5

| Number | Response Date       | Response Text   |
|--------|---------------------|---|
| 14     | Apr 1, 2010 6:29 PM | 1. ...Carry out ministries of reconciliation (forgive past discretions, start anew)   |
| 15     | Apr 5, 2010 2:59 PM | <p>All churches fulfill different roles in our spreading of the gospel, just as different people are given different gifts, so are churches as a whole. The work of the Presbytery should be about helping churches discover what their gifts are for the area they live in, and teach them to organize to fulfill those roles.</p> <p>The Presbytery could be helpful to local churches by letting us hear from them all the time and not just when there is a big issue coming up to be voted on.</p> <p>The Presbytery could do what local churches can't. For example: be a church "on-line" and provide forums for discussion on spiritual issues with pastors who have agreed to be part of Bible studies or chat rooms on issues. This way the Presbytery could be an entity that could provide "church" or Bible study for people who won't physically come to church in our computer driven society. This could be provided for all age levels, not just adults.</p>   |
| 16     | Apr 5, 2010 3:17 PM | <p>Perhaps we should be more about telling the story of our work-our mission. We seem to hide our light (reference Day 8) and I do not believe this is what God intended for us. We should also focus our efforts- what is our mission to be and what is our focus for the message. Will we do better as a denomination than as individual churches? not sure of the answer to this question but I believe it merits more study- we do well at hunger- is that what we should be about and take a stand in the community as a leader??</p>  |
| 17     | Apr 5, 2010 9:58 PM | <p>Day 1 - to get into the mud hole and hold on to God in Christ.<br/>           Day 2 - to "hang in" when unity is tenuous or difficult.<br/>           Day 3 - to honor and respect the diversity between and within the churches.<br/>           Day 4 - resist if not rid of the "I/We am/are better or know more" attitude that can convey an "equal to God" stance.<br/>           Day 5 - there needs to be a worship base to our actions - prayer, praise, teaching; needs to happen internally within committees, the assembly, and externally with the churches<br/>           Day 6 - a "check list" of behaviors and attitudes as to how we relate to one another -- the presbytery as one that "models" those as they visibly and proactively relate to the churches and the ministers<br/>           Day 7 - raises the question of how we welcome new clergy into the presbytery and new elders into the structure of the presbytery; raises the question of how we maintain contact with clergy, especially those on the fringes; also raises the question of moving beyond "navel gazing" to the community and world beyond our churches and our boundaries.<br/>           Day 8 - Empower - Enable - Encourage - Enlighten<br/>           Day 9 - Presbytery is to hold the "Great Commission" before itself and the churches, and provide teaching and tools by which the churches and the presbytery as a whole can carry it out.<br/>           Day 10 - Presbytery will be called to make some tough decisions at times. It will have a choice or choices before it. The presbytery needs to be clear about the "why" of its choice. The "bott</p> |

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

### Answer Options

### Response Count

answered question  
skipped question

47

47  
5

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
| 18     | Apr 6, 2010 6:41 PM  | <p>•Choosing God is costly – personally, as a church, and as a Presbytery. Living God's word often conflicts with culture. We are part of different communities, not just church communities, each with different values, and reconciling to God is a big job</p> <p>•We must aim for transparency and churches and the Presbytery should work to do a better job of explaining what they do, why they do it, and how they use their resources.</p> <p>Communication is key to increase understanding and increase engagement</p>  |
| 19     | Apr 8, 2010 3:18 PM  | To work as a whole to uplift and encourage all the churches to continue their mission.   |
| 20     | Apr 9, 2010 2:53 PM  | <p>I am a long term member of presbytery and have seen several revisionings. God wants something new, God is doing new things we need to get on board. God's people and world are hurting, singing, laughing and crying and She wants us to be Christ's incarnation to them. It is time to stop playing church and trying to make everyone happy and follow Jesus into the world.</p> <p>The work of the church is about living in community, about connectiveness and networking; but if you are going to network you need to know with whom and why you are networking. the role of the presbytery is to assess the flow of information, channel the information, fashion identities for the greater church. Is the role that of shepherd, educator, coordinator of the church.</p> <p>The congregations need to be made aware of the work committees, and the presbytery as a whole; God told us not to hide our light under a bushel. We need to share the work we do and generate energy in the pews.</p> |
| 21     | Apr 9, 2010 6:32 PM  | It is currently an error of communication with the presbytery as a clearing house. we need to enlarge the greater church and network. How do we connect and for what end.  |
| 22     | Apr 11, 2010 5:33 PM | <p>The Presbytery holds local congregations and pastors accountable and encourages them to have a larger vision for what they can do to serve God in the world.</p> <p>The work of the presbytery is to maintain the teachings of Christ even in a changing world.</p> <p>The presbytery should support its churches in their work.</p> <p>The presbytery can provide the expertise and resources to support the work of the congregations.</p> <p>The presbytery should support that change which is good and is consistent with Christ's word.</p> <p>It should provide assistance to churches upon their request.</p> <p>It should establish missions/ministeries that congregations can support.</p> <p>It can extend God's word into areas that individual churches cannot.</p>   |
| 23     | Apr 11, 2010 6:21 PM | The presbytery should do Christ's work that is beyond the abilities of the 92 individual congregations   |

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

Answer Options

Response Count

answered question  
skipped question

47

47  
5

Number Response Date Response Text

The session had trouble coming up with a good answer for this question. Most discussion had to do with individual personal opinions about Presbytery. For example, one person said that Presbytery needs to work on developing a more loving reputation with congregations.

There seems to be need for education and clarification about Presbytery in relation to congregations and pastors in the present time.

24 Apr 12, 2010 5:01 PM Some felt that Presbytery should answer this question.

Create a Positive Faith flow. (I stole this from Tom Swartz)  
Build community among the individual churches. Welcome all; unified, focused, directive, productive, result driven.  
Humble servants for God - encourage direct, co-ordinated mission service, community building for the glory of God.  
vs 16 "Rejoice always,"  
vs 17 "pray without ceasing."  
Presbytery offers direction to the local churches through discernment and open hearts.  
(If I set my GPS on God, where would the map take me?  
When I set my GPS on God, where do I go?  
Since I have set my GPS on God where has God sent me?)  
Each congregation has special, individual gifts that can be shared, lifted up. Presbytery can help each share these gifts.

25 Apr 12, 2010 6:42 PM We are all called to share and glorify God. It is God's vision. It is God's church. We must step aside, get out of God's way and follow where God leads.

How do we balance Presbytery time between what is broken/disconnected and dreaming of new ways to connect/think outside the box?  
How do we come to agreement about our common calling? Prayer exercises like Day 2 are a good way to focus on what we share and how it moves us, which is the Spirit's work.  
How does the presbytery invite us - one another - to a common journey vs. "I've got the truth and you don't...or I've got \_\_\_\_\_ and you don't."  
Are we as a church, presbytery, or denomination willing to die if God is calling us to new forms of service?  
Losing what we cling to offers life. God's Invitation is to lose ourselves on behalf of God's children.  
We are to be thankful. We are not to nurse hurts but seek and give pardon What would admonishing in wisdom look like? Do we still admonish?  
The stranger should be one of the first whom we welcome.  
What could we do to become obsolete?

26 Apr 12, 2010 9:11 PM God's desire for the Church and presbytery is to throw some caution away, bust open the doors of the community, use the good china without worrying whether it will get broken.

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

Answer Options

Response Count

answered question  
skipped question

47

47  
5

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
| 18     | Apr 6, 2010 6:41 PM  | <p>•Choosing God is costly – personally, as a church, and as a Presbytery. Living God's word often conflicts with culture. We are part of different communities, not just church communities, each with different values, and reconciling to God is a big job</p> <p>•We must aim for transparency and churches and the Presbytery should work to do a better job of explaining what they do, why they do it, and how they use their resources.</p> <p>Communication is key to increase understanding and increase engagement</p>  |
| 19     | Apr 8, 2010 3:18 PM  | To work as a whole to uplift and encourage all the churches to continue their mission.   |
| 20     | Apr 9, 2010 2:53 PM  | <p>I am a long term member of presbytery and have seen several revisionings. God wants something new, God is doing new things we need to get on board. God's people and world are hurting, singing, laughing and crying and She wants us to be Christ's incarnation to them. It is time to stop playing church and trying to make everyone happy and follow Jesus into the world.</p> <p>The work of the church is about living in community, about connectiveness and networking; but if you are going to network you need to know with whom and why you are networking. the role of the presbytery is to assess the flow of information, channel the information, fashion identities for the greater church. Is the role that of shepherd, educator, coordinator of the church.</p> <p>The congregations need to be made aware of the work committees, and the presbytery as a whole; God told us not to hide our light under a bushel. We need to share the work we do and generate energy in the pews.</p> |
| 21     | Apr 9, 2010 6:32 PM  | It is currently an error of communication with the presbytery as a cleaning house. we need to enlarge the greater church and network. How do we connect and for what end.  |
| 22     | Apr 11, 2010 5:33 PM | <p>The Presbytery holds local congregations and pastors accountable and encourages them to have a larger vision for what they can do to serve God in the world.</p> <p>The work of the presbytery is to maintain the teachings of Christ even in a changing world.</p> <p>The presbytery should support its churches in their work.</p> <p>The presbytery can provide the expertise and resources to support the work of the congregations.</p> <p>The presbytery should support that change which is good and is consistent with Christ's word.</p> <p>It should provide assistance to churches upon their request.</p> <p>It should establish missions/ministeries that congregations can support.</p> <p>It can extend God's word into areas that individual churches cannot.</p>   |
| 23     | Apr 11, 2010 6:21 PM | The presbytery should do Christ's work that is beyond the abilities of the 92 individual congregations   |

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

answered question  
skipped question

47  
5

Number Response Date Response Text

The session had trouble coming up with a good answer for this question. Most discussion had to do with individual personal opinions about Presbytery. For example, one person said that Presbytery needs to work on developing a more loving reputation with congregations.

There seems to be need for education and clarification about Presbytery in relation to congregations and pastors in the present time.

24 Apr 12, 2010 5:01 PM Some felt that Presbytery should answer this question.

Create a Positive Faith flow. (I stole this from Tom Swartz)  
Build community among the Individual churches. Welcome all; unified, focused, directive, productive, result driven.  
Humble servants for God - encourage direct, co-ordinated mission service, community building for the glory of God.  
vs 16 "Rejoice always,"  
vs 17 "pray without ceasing."  
Presbytery offers direction to the local churches through discernment and open hearts.  
(If I set my GPS on God, where would the map take me?  
When I set my GPS on God, where do I go?  
Since I have set my GPS on God where has God sent me?)  
Each congregation has special, individual gifts that can be shared, lifted up. Presbytery can help each share these gifts.

25 Apr 12, 2010 6:42 PM We are all called to share and glorify God. It is God's vision. It is God's church. We must step aside, get out of God's way and follow where God leads.

How do we balance Presbytery time between what is broken/disconnected and dreaming of new ways to connect/think outside the box?  
How do we come to agreement about our common calling? Prayer exercises like Day 2 are a good way to focus on what we share and how it moves us, which is the Spirit's work.  
How does the presbytery invite us - one another - to a common journey vs. "I've got the truth and you don't...or I've got \_\_\_\_\_ and you don't."  
Are we as a church, presbytery, or denomination willing to die if God is calling us to new forms of service?  
Losing what we cling to offers life. God's invitation is to lose ourselves on behalf of God's children.  
We are to be thankful. We are not to nurse hurts but seek and give pardon. What would admonishing in wisdom look like? Do we still admonish?  
The stranger should be one of the first whom we welcome.  
What could we do to become obsolete?

26 Apr 12, 2010 9:11 PM God's desire for the Church and presbytery is to throw some caution away, bust open the doors of the community, use the good china without worrying whether it will get broken.

**Discernment Process Results**

**What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?**

**Answer Options**

**Response Count**

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

47

47  
5

**Number    Response Date    Response Text**

33    **Apr 14, 2010 6:45 PM**    Presbytery should support congregations and encourage them to partner with others for multicultural ministry.  
Work to lessen distrust of higher governing bodies.  
Presbytery should find ways to coordinate the sharing of gifts among all congregations.  
The gifts of clergy and laity should be equatly valued and recognized/  
God expects the Presbytery to support congregations in discerning God's will for them.

How does a presbytery embody reconciliation? It is done by loving acts of presence- bringing the presence of CHrist to broken churches, broken ministers, broken ministries. How a presbytery embodies that way may not be clear, but it is found perhaps in leaving our buildings and being present with the people. Congregations need ot find ways to get close to the brokenness of members, and the presbytery needs to get nrear to the brokenness of its people - its churches and ministers. How does it have that voice? How does it embody that message? God desires for our presbytery to have a climate amoung our churches that embodies humility, gentleness, patience and love. This is something to which we are called. In our worki n COM, and other places, we are called to do this work. How do we live courageously and hold the door open for our churches to do this as well. How do we model that kind of courage. What are the things that hold us captive that keep us from embodying these traits of humility, gentleness, patience, and love.

When I think of the presbytery, I think our focus ought to be on discipleship. What would the presbytery look like if it were an equipping body that built apostle's, evangelists, pastors, and

34    **Apr 14, 2010 6:46 PM**    In the activities of the presbytery is there a movement that frames the right question to test our activities> Can we ever assume that some of what we are doing is not for the common goc  
Finally, what would hospitality look like in our churches? How do we meet the needs of the city that is an ignored part of our ministry? How might the witness of the PCUSA be lived out in  
If the role of the local congregation is doing discipleships, how will we as a presbytery equip our congregations for this work?

**Discernment Process Results**

**What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?**

**Answer Options**

**Response Count**

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

47

47  
5

**Number Response Date Response Text**

35 **Apr 14, 2010 7:09 PM** 1. Is the Presbytery really "humble?" Or, do we assume we have all the answers, vision?  
2. Role of Presbytery needs to be clearer. Is Presbytery supporting and/or guiding? The role of Presbytery needs to be clear and direct. There is not enough clarity of Presbytery's role to many local churches.  
3. Be proactive Instead of reactive. Instead of reacting to a "crisis," establish relationship proactively with churches. Educate/equip small congregations about the Presbytery. Presbytery should not be afraid of/ignore theologically differing congregations and/or ministers. In fact, more time needs to be spent with these churches to avoid schism.  
4. Spend more time/communicate better with churches "on the margins." Small churches, rural churches, churches without ordained ministers/CLPs.  
5. Provide opportunities for mission/ministry for small churches. Help the small church "go." Small churches lack resources to do mission work, but not passion. Organize a "Presbytery wide" mission trip for adults targeting small congregations that cannot coordinate one on their own.

36 **Apr 14, 2010 9:35 PM** a. "I don't know exactly." God is not done, and our challenge is to live together with "holy manners" -- in community with grace, forgiveness and openness to the way that God lives out God's mission and ministry. We need to be in a stance of listening, and learning to live in diverse and challenging times, to create multiple places for people to discover who God is (Creator, Redeemer, Spirit), and to worship and grow in faith. This is a key to future vitality.

*W  
2nd of  
Wisdom*



37 **Apr 15, 2010 2:30 AM** I believe that the more we are immersed in God's work--together as a church, and as a presbytery, the more unified, content and peaceful we will be. With His Word as our source, God desires that we (the clergy, lay leaders and members-at-large) be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us. He asks us to be humble, prayerful and peaceloving. Our job, as a presbytery, is to spread His Word unselfishly, modeling Christlike behavior and servant leadership to all-in particular, the unchurched, the unloved and the unfortunate.

38 **Apr 15, 2010 2:51 AM** •The Presbytery could encourage facilities-use information among congregations of the Presbytery.  
•Money alone is not enough to create successful ministries, as we have learned from new church developments and immigrant ministries. Relationships are important.  
•Corporate memory is very short. Leaders tend not to know the lessons of the past and learn from them.  
•Congregations must take responsibility for reaching out. Presbytery cannot be in one-way partnerships. There is a tendency for congregations to blame the Presbytery unfairly for failures.  
•If God is calling us to make disciples of our members, as the study says, then the Presbytery should be in the business of encouraging that in congregations. Recent staff cuts have left the Resourcing and Equipping Ministry Team without executive staff support.  
•Integrity of the Presbytery, its leaders and staff, is necessary for carrying out God's vision. Standards for non-white congregations should be the same as those for white congregations. Fear of being perceived as "racist" has sometimes allowed different standards to be applied to non-white congregations. The perception of smaller congregations is that large "tall-steeple" congregations are considered more important than small congregations, and have greater influence in the business of the Presbytery. That can raise resentment in small congregations with



**Discernment Process Results**

**What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?**

**Answer Options**

**Response Count**

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

47

47  
5

**Number Response Date Response Text**

We must trust one another to also be God's servants. We must work united and together. We should realize that everyone has gifts and strive for unity and respect of each other. We must be willing to stoop down to the needs of all our church's and ministries. We must not just cater only to the Big 5 or tall steeples, but be the servant to the least of churches. When we listen to all our churches and really hear them, we will better glorify God in our presbytery.

We must strive for harmony not only in church but our world. We must bear each other in prayer and care. Let's share some joy, prayer and mutual mission. Let's get away from all the divisive and stifling issues and go toward the good that unites us even if the greater church continues in a negative divisive course. There must be open avenues of communication at all levels in the presbytery. Paternalism is a leadership model that doesn't work. Member to member, session to session and committee to committee should engage in constructive conversations for the good of the presbytery. Do we realize that God is empowering all our churches, all our people, all our committees? We are not to keep the message, influence or leadership only for an elite few, but God will use many different people, churches and leadership styles to equip the presbytery for our future.

39 **Apr 15, 2010 7:35 PM** Justice and compassion must speak out and push the presbytery to remember mission. Mission outside of ourselves is how the world will meet us. How do us as a presbytery sacrifice for t



- \*The presbytery should "loosen up". Be more quickly responsive in helping struggling congregations.
- \*The presbytery should be more human based rather than structure based.
- \*The presbytery should have more contact with other denominations - be more ecumenical.

40 **Apr 15, 2010 8:06 PM** \*The presbytery must maintain all the congrwegations in unity of the Spirit in spite of theological differences. touch to hekp with concerns and questions.



All the Churches of the Presbytery must be conscious of our God given task of acting out our relationship with God. We all are one in mission but we have to teach thoes who seek.....Open my eyes---illumine me. What unites us is what allows us to move forward in patience and love to overcome conflicts. Reaching others is work--the works experience contributes to our maturity In faith, be open to all. We cannot do everything--we can look outward and seek to find what god would have us do. work for justice--everywhere. To support the needs of member churches and pastors---be constant support to congregations, Lead boldly, Set high goals the Pesbytery must be guided by Christ through the larger fiath journey of the churches in this Presbytery, work on healing and reconciliation wiht in the various churches, guide all churches wihtin its boundaries, to seek to work wihtin their respective communities--work that helps others, that instills in those receiving and giving the unity, iove and peace of the Holy Spirit, we should be more appreciative of the pastors that serve our Presbytery, While Presbytery is there to serve and represent the churches within its boundaries it must serve us by reminding us of the glory of God and teh glory and majesty of the Trinity, support the work of churches in good projects that help others, acknowledge these good world often...Presbytery

41 **Apr 15, 2010 8:55 PM** Creat a resourse bank to help pastors/churches with unemployment issues, relocation, homehealth, medical bills.....pastors are doing social work on top of everything else(people don't have



## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

Answer Options

Response Count

*answered question*

47

*skipped question*

47

5

Number Response Date

Response Text

1. IF anyone is IN Christ--trusting the promise of the resurrection, living and moving and having their being in Christ--then everything is new! Statements that "I trust the process" are swept away. Votes taken that do not support reconciliation--swept away. Rigid thinking about what is proper and what is not--gone. What is new? Everything. Meaning what? That we look at the world and each other as God does, not counting our trespasses against each other and being worthy of the message entrusted to us. God loves us and wants us to love each other (the patient, kind, not self-seeking, not-keeping-a-record-of-wrongs love). And God wants us to spread this message.

2.2. That in deliberations committees, the body, and liaisons with congregations look first for the loving, peaceful, humble course of action, instead of some powerful people using the Book of Order, Book of Confessions or Robert's Rules of Order to get their way. That the presbytery search for and open up a way toward reconciliation for those who have been hurt by presbytery or committee deliberations and decisions. That the desire to control, to be in charge in order to enforce one's assessment of the situation be recognized as a sin of pride and covetousness.

3. God wants us to know it's not all up to us. That our gifts come from God and that they are diverse and complementary. God's desire that we build up the body of Christ is here defined in that God desires that our presbytery come to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ--that we love one another as He loves us. And that one way to come to maturity is to recognize that each member of presbytery--each committee member, each voting member, each staff member, each candidate and inquirer, each clerk of session--be severe on our own faults but gracious to others. How does that play out in a "relational" church in which presbytery is intended to be "us"--all members of Presbyterian churches--and not some ruling hierarchy? I think presbytery has lost its way.

5."Test everything" comes easily to presbytery. Holding fast to good is more difficult. God desires us to nurture the Spirit among us, not to quench it. More of the passage is devoted to doir.

6. That we forgive each other, even if our complaint is valid. That compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience rule our deliberations. That teaching and admonition take place in this way that would negate power plays, rebellions, triangles, judgmentalism, distrust, untrustworthiness, defensiveness and close mindedness as not being worthy of the body of Christ.

7.Let mutual love continue. We should regard the stranger and the outcast as potential angels, that we should jump at the opportunity to show our hospitality and love. That we should identify ourselves with the poor.

8.Taken in the light of Phyllis Tickle's book, The Great Emergence, when a branch of Christianity loses its saltiness, humanity moves on, trampling the unsalty group/movement underfoot. B

9.This Is the fundamental and basic command to a church or a group of churches: GO; MAKE (a somewhat confusing word, being caught up in a connotation of forcing against one's will, with

42

Apr 15, 2010 9:03 PM

10. Quit seeking to find our life in procedure, squabbling and competition for power and money, quit seeking to maintain what we have and follow God, even if it means we lose our "life" as a denomination defined in earthly terms. If we do, we will find our life as a group of congregations and individuals willing to follow God absolutely, even when it threatens our identity as Presbyterians. As Calvin said, "We are not our own."

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?

Answer Options

Response Count

answered question  
skipped question

47

47  
5

Number Response Date

Response Text

In these times of great global, national, denominational transition, the presbytery is called to: be supportive of new approaches to ministry/mission and new understandings of the Bible/theology in light of the twenty-first century cosmological, evolutionary and ecological matrix within which we live, move and have our being.

The presbytery is called to:

1. Help equip the Saints by providing (contextual re-education):

- Creative resourcing
- Effective ongoing training opportunities for clergy/laity
- Facilitating and consulting teams to shepherd congregations

2. Facilitate witnessing and justing love through (structural reformulation):

- Multilevel partnerships
- New church development/evangelism
- Addressing local/global justice issues (racism, poverty, environment, etc.)

3. Engage congregations to embody the NEW CREATION by (spiritual remotivation)

- Embodying new operational/theological/ecclesiastical paradigms
- Recontextualizing spiritual disciplines
- Midwifing worship transformation

other comments:

-Provide ongoing/multiple opportunities for training and equipping individual disciples, congregations and emerging partnerships.

-Provide a vehicle for sharing resources among congregations: curriculum, music, equipment

-Provide regular study opportunities for pastors/laity

-Facilitate congregations to work in partnership, share resources, connecting churches with churches and other groups

-Vehicle for sharing G-O-D's love with larger world through offerings, disaster assistance, work trips, interpretation, mission awareness, addressing regional/national/global issues

-Provide consulting teams to work with congregations.

-Expanding, providing larger context for congregational work.

43 Apr 15, 2010 9:22 PM -Encouraging congregations in their ministry/mission/evangelism.

God will do great and mighty things for us if only we are willing to be obedient and be transformed by his word. As God's agent of change we are called upon to be open and draw closer and pay attention as Moses did when he saw the burning bush -" So Moses thought, I will go over and see this strange sight- why the bush does not burn up." ( Exodus 3:3) It was after God saw that Moses had gone over to look that He called Moses and there after He was given a new charge. God is calling our Presbytery to pay attention to what is happening around and then He will show us what to do from there.

44 Apr 16, 2010 1:15 AM

**Discernment Process Results**

**What did this study say about God's desire (or God's vision) for our presbytery?**

**Answer Options**

**Response Count**

47

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

47  
5

**Number Response Date**

**Response Text**

45

**Apr 16, 2010 8:17 PM**

The presbytery should "loosen up". Be more quickly responsive in helping struggling congregations.  
The presbytery should be more human based rather than structure based.  
The presbytery should have more contact with other denominations - be more ecumenical.  
The presbytery should provide a liaison person for each congregation who would keep in touch with their congregation to help with concerns and questions.  
The presbytery must maintain all the congregations in unity of the Spirit in spite of theological differences.  
We must be ready and willing to accept change as part of the renewal of our church.

That as we address the issues facing our church, we do so in an ultimate sense of unity and patience.

That the presbytery should draw upon and tap the talents of many rather than of a few.

That we should be humble in examining where we are and where we should be going.  
That we need to allow the Spirit to lead us.

That we need to move forward to accept that we are called to be one body, but a new body with a new focus accepting reality.

That we need to be open to others in our community and seek to open ourselves to other ways of thinking and worshipping and serving God.

Likely that we need to be more outgoing in our efforts to share ourselves with others.

That we need to reach out to our community to share the message of faith.

That we need as a denomination to be prepared to "lose our life" and work in new ways as a larger church body.

As a church and a denomination, we need to be more open to change and put less emphasis on "tradition" as the controlling element in everything we do. At the denominational level, I think that we need to make local congregations more autonomous and that the scope of the national and regional bodies needs to be refocused. We have too much regulation and administration. Essentially, in many respects I see our church as I see our denomination. We tinker around the edges of things, but ultimately will not face change in our core being—in our case worship.

46

**Apr 20, 2010 6:39 PM**

We (church) have been called by the Lord; we should always conduct ourselves in a way worthy of this calling. Try to be led together by God, and so be at peace. Show love by being tolerant.

The COM sees value in its own clarity about its call - about what we do, why we do it, how we do it - especially as we are asked to enter situations where tension exists. We work in a context of long-held memories in our congregations - about their own experiences and about their experience of the presbytery. If members of the COM are able to present themselves as humble ambassadors of Christ, it serves as a counterpoint to bad memories. We embrace the ministry of reconciliation, and intend to use the gifts we have been given to understand and to support, to work together toward mutuality of relationship.

47

**Apr 22, 2010 7:48 PM**

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

Number Response Date

Response Text

be ambassadors for Christ - message of reconciliation; minister with humility, patience, peace and unity; equip others for ministry; seek relationships - be caring - give thanks - test and retain what is good - abstain from evil; be joyful and open to the Peace of Christ; think and act outwardly - tell God's story and how it became make it your story; baptize and make disciples for Christ; demonstrate a life of discipleship; create relationships with others; work for spiritual growth and development; treat one another with love; reach out to the community; be visible; let God live through us; doing mission, not just talking an listening; preserve fellowship traditions and add social networking; What does our church provide to other churches?; engage younger people in ministry - how do we do this?;

God's desire for each congregation is to mirror what has been said above.

1 Mar 23, 2010 5:04 PM God's desire for each congregation basically mirrors what we understand is God's desire for us personally.

2 Mar 23, 2010 8:07 PM n/a

This study reminds us that God expects a lot from those whom he has blessed. We are called to reconciliation--both in our own church and the community.

We need to complain less and DO more; if we have a gift, then use it and not be jealous.

Rejoice! Bring joy and caring into our congregation; work together for the larger goal.

As elders, we have responsibilities and we need to uphold those. God has expectations of us.

We need to be more faithful and obedient. The Bible/God gives us clear instructions and we need to follow more closely.

We are reminded that we need to reach out to our community/neighbors--that Sunday mornings are the preparation for the rest of the week, not an end unto itself.

God seeks to have a relationship with us in our own way. Our churches are all unique as well and each congregation may be called to do different types of things.

3 Mar 23, 2010 9:21 PM Commitment!

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

47

5

| Number | Response Date         | Response Text  |
|--------|-----------------------|--|
|        |                       | <p>God's desire for our church is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* to reflect the Spirit of Christ as a fellowship of peace, faith, love and unity</li> <li>* to be bold in our witness and not give up or lose heart</li> <li>* to use our diverse and unique gifts in Christ's ministry of reconciliation.</li> </ul> <p>Specific comments:</p> <p>"We must maintain the spiritual bond of peace with gentleness and patience, loving the fellowship and the stranger."<br/>           "Strive for peace and unity... become new... use our gifts... serve others... share... reachout... reflect God's love... focus on God's will."</p> |
| 4      | Mar 24, 2010 12:29 AM | "Work with the people we have and be glad. Stop dwelling on the church's past."  |
| 5      | Mar 24, 2010 3:39 PM  | The congregation we attend most frequently is called to set aside the fear of survival and become open to God's calling in this present time. That may mean addressing forthrightly the losses of previous years and risking bold new ministries that grow out of mutual study and deepening faith perception. It's about discipleship.  |
| 6      | Mar 25, 2010 8:33 PM  | <p>Listen, teach, learn. Be open to new ideas and not stuck in the way things have always been done.<br/>           Look for something our church stands for in the community. Something that communicates God's love with compassion, humility and hospitality.<br/>           Classes on spiritual formation and discernment as young people struggle in their home and work life.<br/>           Teachers and education in a fun, interesting way.</p> <p>Not candles, but community will light the way.</p>  |

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

Number

Response Date

Response Text

Willingness to do what God desires

To express love: accept, forgive, show kindness, return good for evil, show hospitality

Effort from us for God's sake

To be servants as God is a servant

Move from recruiting members to forming disciples

To be humble and to show courage

It is about following Christ and not surviving as an institution

What would Christ do?

Unity from diversity

Pray without ceasing

We are to be ambassadors, live as an example, to be emissaries of God

Shine!

Image of our spice cabinet. They say to throw them out after a few months because they lose their potency. But my spice cabinet has some that are years old. Yet I continue to use them hoping that they will have the same impact as they did when I first bought them.

We do something similar in the church. When we first began some of our programs, traditions, etc. they were flavorful and shared the spice of God with the world. But over time some have lost their effectiveness, yet we keep using them hoping for the original effect. It is time for some new spices. But what that will look like is still uncertain.

7 Mar 26, 2010 2:26 PM

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text   |
|--------|----------------------|---|
| 8      | Mar 26, 2010 6:57 PM | <p>God is working / reconciling / making new all around us.<br/>                     We need to recognize and embody the gifts of the Spirit among us and use all of the gifts God has given us.<br/>                     We are called to a servant ministry, serving every one with compassion and love.<br/>                     We must be outward-directed in service and witness to our community context.<br/>                     Since all authority belongs to God, who goes with us, we should not fear to follow, even at the risk of our own security and comfort.</p>   |
| 9      | Mar 26, 2010 7:30 PM | <p>Our gifts are measured / find value only as they build up the body of Christ<br/>                     Do as much as possible with and for the "least of these"<br/>                     We are called to a servant ministry – serving everyone with compassion and love<br/>                     We should not fear to follow Christ</p>   |
| 10     | Mar 27, 2010 8:18 PM | <p>We are to be ambassadors of reconciliation in our community<br/>                     Acceptance of all Christians, even those who are different, working in a spirit of unity<br/>                     Discover and use our gifts to help each other and those outside our church<br/>                     Fill ourselves with God's will, not our own ideas<br/>                     Be open to others, serve with humility<br/>                     Listen to the Spirit, be joyful, prayerful, and thankful for God's presence<br/>                     Put Christ first in our lives and show it with a joyful heart<br/>                     Show hospitality, no matter who we encounter<br/>                     Be a beacon of light and truth<br/>                     Be disciples and spread God's truths<br/>                     Give 100% of ourselves to Christ, losing ourselves in Christ</p> |
| 11     | Mar 30, 2010 6:44 PM | <p>How to produce more adult baptisms as part of a constantly, steadily declining denomination.</p>   |

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

**Number    Response Date    Response Text**

**12    Mar 31, 2010 12:04 AM** God wants us to spread the word of reconciliation, bonded together in the Spirit, using our diversity and different gifts for the betterment of our congregation, holding Jesus up as the perfect example and modeling his compassion and humility, helping those in spiritual need and practical need, far and wide and to actively spread the news of God's saving grace.

That we must serve as Christ's ambassadors of reconciliation within our congregation and community;

That we must live at peace and in unity, having patience with one another, forgiving as Christ has forgiven us, being of the same mind as our Lord;

That we respect one another's gifts for ministry and invite and encourage others to live in trust, both of God and one another;

That we seek one another's "good," pray for one another, live with compassion toward our neighbors;

That we reach out to strangers; that we risk ministering to those who are "different" from us;

That we make disciples, reach out to those who have not yet heard and received the gospel of Christ;

**13    Mar 31, 2010 7:23 PM** That we stay faithful through all things.

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

Number

Response Date

Response Text

B) What does this study say about God's desire for this church:

1. We serve as ambassadors for Christ
2. We are called and have a purpose (Unity)
3. Our growth in faith and knowledge continues
4. To live in humility and service
5. To seek truth and bring joy, prayer and thanks
6. To live with compassion, kindness and music
7. To care for the less fortunate and show hospitality
8. Called to serve as light and salt in the world
9. To help fulfill the Great Commission
10. To live for something greater than our own success

14 Apr 1, 2010 6:30 PM

That we need to be more tolerant of people "not like us." We need to find ways of being more personal and down to earth. Just changing the way we dress for church a few years ago, and being more casual about attire changed the attitude of many in the community toward our "uppity" church. We didn't think we were that way, but the community saw us as the church in town that was only for the "rich" and "educated." We need to be looking for more ways to make people feel comfortable here, but we need to find more ways to reach out to the community as well, for those who won't come here unless they meet us "out there." We need to find ways for people to share their faith more openly and also their problems and concerns so their church family can be there for them.

15 Apr 5, 2010 3:04 PM

16 Apr 5, 2010 3:18 PM

Same response as to the previous question- we are made better in strength with the denomination. Or are we???

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

Number

Response Date

Response Text

- Day 1 - called to do and show reconciliation - to work at it in dealing with conflict  
 Day 2 - called to be about the hard work of building community within  
 Day 3 - church is made up of a smorgasbord of people and gifts -- need to identify those gifts within the people; called to grow toward maturity and into the way and measure of Christ.  
 Day 4 - be aware of the formation of "parties" within the church, including the session, that put themselves in the position of "playing" God with others; act in such a way that you acknowledge God is also working in others and through them might be teaching you  
 Day 5 - called to be connected to the past and open to the present and future, where God is still active and speaking - test by means of both -- means a knowledge of what God has done in the past through Scriptural literacy and history  
 Day 6 - actions speak and are more visible than words when it comes to relations in the church between pastor and congregation and within the congregation  
 Day 7 - be aware of the level of hospitality within the congregation and deal with the little and large barriers; at the same time, look outside the congregation to the needs of the community and the marginalized  
 Day 8 - to understand ourselves as salt that is shaken out into the world to add a certain flavor to it and to be a light that is not hid in a s  
 Day 9 - Go out -> bring in -> teach -> send out, knowing that God in Christ is along and within every step  
 Day 10 - a rhythm of losing -> finding -> losing again; it is often in the hard and difficult times within the life of a congregation that the
- 17**     **Apr 5, 2010 9:59 PM**     •We must remain relevant to the people we serve, expand our membership, and serve the community of faith. We lose relevance if we change too much, but we need to change how we address our members and approach our ministry. It is a challenge to communicate in a faithful way to different audiences. While the message is the same, the delivery must be tailored to the audience.
- 18**     **Apr 6, 2010 6:41 PM**     •We must accept the youth of the church as they are and accept the gifts they bring. We must reconcile our differences with how older members are different from younger members. We must find a way to be relevant and be in harmony with young members.
- 19**     **Apr 8, 2010 3:20 PM**     To look around us and search out needs of the community, to reach out and not just be satisfied with what we already have and do.

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

**47**  
**5**

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
| 20     | Apr 9, 2010 2:53 PM  | God wants us to be more invitng to the people around us. To offer them God's healing touch when needed and offer them ourselves when needed.   |
| 21     | Apr 9, 2010 6:33 PM  | The committee discussed that the people in the pews are hearing the notes but not the symphony. There is a need for education in the local church.   |
| 22     | Apr 11, 2010 5:40 PM | The church is a place where individual members are held accountable to fulfill God's calling and find forgiveness.<br><br>The church should bring its work to reconcile the world to Christ.<br>It should actively teach what God expects from us. We are to be led by Holy Spirit and live in harmony<br>The people of the church should provide their talents to minister. Each of us have different gifts to serve God.<br>We should be like Christ.<br>We should not stray from our beliefs. We pray to uplift God and do everything for the glory of God.<br>Church members should learn from each other and keep our church strong. We should worship God fully.<br>The church should reach out to others. We should love our neighbors as ourselves.<br>We are not to be ashamed of God.<br>God is not alone and will never be.<br>We should evangelize whenever and wherever we can. |
| 23     | Apr 11, 2010 6:36 PM | Everybody has a cross to bear.   |
| 24     | Apr 12, 2010 5:08 PM | The session had spirited discussion about our congregation in its present transitional circumstance. But, as far as answering the question specifcally is concerned, we did not come up with much beyond the obvious: Incorporate God's positive qualities and commands into the church.   |

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

Number

Response Date

Response Text

Reconcile differences. God forgives. How can we not?

We don't have to like behaviors but we are called by God to love one another!

Communicate. Be open. Enjoy all the little pieces that make up the whole puzzle.

Serve all and Glorify God. Rejoice always! Pray without ceasing. Expect everyone to be the best they can be. Anticipate joy, abundance and co-operation. And when we all fall short, help one another up, dust each other off and move forward. Unconditional equality. Be bold, wear the nametag! Claim our Christianity. Be responsible and responsive.

Be a church of outreach, mission, teaching, nurturing, compassion, discipline, stewardship.  
To whom much is given, much is expected.

It is God's church

It is God's vision

25 Apr 12, 2010 6:51 PM We must step aside and let God run this show and follow the Leader.

26 Apr 12, 2010 9:11 PM n/a

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

Number

Response Date

Response Text

To trust the Presbytery

Let the old pass and embrace the new

Commitment to spread the Good News

Witness, sacrifice, and live in peace in unity

To have a cheerful heart

To love and forgive one another

To savor peace

Promote knowledge of Christ

Use all of the different talents to grow

Be a leader in the community

Support the membership ~ stop, look, and listen

To reconcile with one another and help others be reconciled to God by teaching and preaching forgiveness, by facilitating reconciliation in families and in the community, and by showing impartiality to all.

Welcome all.

Help members to discern God's call on their lives to do exactly that, and support those who are living their call to ministry in various places and ways by encouraging them in faith, providing times of spiritual restoration, use of spiritual disciplines; and, frame conflicting discussions from a holy perspective

Continue to offer Christian Education; support for individuals and families inquiring about baptism and living out baptismal vows ; and, challenges to baptized believers to live out their call and God's claim on their lives.

27 Apr 12, 2010 10:36 PM Pray and glorify Christ.

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

47  
5

Number    Response Date    Response Text

To serve and do our best...we are called to be active – can't just give lip service - to nurture and love those in our congregation, but also to those in the greater community – we need to be more unified, but we all have our own gifts and those need to be continued, but all need to be done with the same focus...need to be inclusive with peace and patience – don't shy away from the difficult conversations, but go about them with peace and patience... reconciliation with God – help people gain maturity in beliefs  
We are given a new slate – we don't need to be burdened by "we've always done it that way" – we need to be reaching out, we (& the Presbytery) have a lot to offer, how do we reach the greater community?

"We are not our own" – nobody likes to give up their turf...we are given free will – we can choose him or reject him, but if we choose God, we will have a better life

We should all use our gifts, talents, etc. as we serve, but should always remember that we are servants, you are not to speak from your position of your gifts, but from the position as a servant. We have the gifts and the resources – it's all a matter of allocating them based on how God leads us – there is a lot of trust involved – we have to trust the leadership (church and Presbytery levels) –

The Presbytery is not just an institution – they are a church...you get what you put into it, the individual churches get what we put into

28    Apr 13, 2010 3:19 AM    Is church a place to serve yourself, or to serve others? It is not just a place to find peace and comfort for yourself – It is a place for us

29    Apr 13, 2010 1:52 PM    No response.

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text   |
|--------|----------------------|---|
| 30     | Apr 13, 2010 5:01 PM | We are to be ambassadors of the Trinity. We are to be a place of forgiveness and reconciliation. We are to witness to the fact that we are Christians through our good works, peace, and hospitality. We are to be a place of the Word and praise and joy. Each person has a gift of the Spirit to share. We are to be open and accepting and united. We are to train up the apostles, evangelists and teachers of this age. Jesus is to be our focus/guide/inspiration.  |
| 31     | Apr 13, 2010 7:40 PM | We have to grow in Christ. God has given people different gifts in our church for various purposes and blessings. In the Spirit we can find unity. God uses us as vessels of His love. We need to encourage our congregation to pattern their lives after Christ.   |
| 32     | Apr 13, 2010 8:44 PM | [I will not be serving in ministry with a congregation until next month]  |
| 33     | Apr 14, 2010 6:46 PM | Not applicable <i>Don't really know for sure</i>  |
| 34     | Apr 14, 2010 6:48 PM | As a team - Th DRAP is called to listen to the "prophets", people whose ideas are different from the "way we've always done it." If anti-racism work is "salt" then DRAP is called not to tone its efforts to make them less "salty".   |
| 35     | Apr 14, 2010 7:21 PM | 1. We need to do more more "Going Out" into the community. Reaching out and working together, using the gifts God has given us for local mission.<br>2. Quality first, then Quantity. Spiritual growth has to be a priority over membership growth.<br>3. Is the church truly humble? Do we really recognize our own weaknesses/growth areas?<br>4. Higher visibility in the community. "Go" out into the community instead of expecting the community to come to us.<br>5. Use the gifts God has given to us. Recognize what we already do well and enhance it/grow it/use it for ministry/mission. Ex. Habitat-for-Humanity |
| 36     | Apr 14, 2010 9:35 PM | N/A   |

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

47

47  
5

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
| 37     | Apr 15, 2010 2:35 AM | <p>God's desire is that we worship Him, pray constantly, and give thanks. He desires that we serve others and have compassion for all. It is our congregation's responsibility to share both what we know and what we have with those in our community and in our world.</p> <p>Westminster is about doing a "new thing" by becoming a truly multicultural congregation. To accomplish this, it must admit past mistakes and accept God's forgiveness.</p>   |
| 38     | Apr 15, 2010 2:52 AM | <p>Westminster welcomes people of different cultures, races, and economic status.</p> <p>God desires that Westminster act boldly and take risks when necessary to carry out God's mission for the congregation.</p> <p>Mission! Mission! And more Mission! When we reach out to others, God empowers us. How can we better include our membership in the mission, leadership and service of others? How do we help others answer their calls to service? We must care for one another and work toward open and direct communication. Service together is not just an option but is central to who we are.</p> <p>Hospitality shows who we are as a particular body of Christ. We must continue our membership and evangelism work; especially in the welcoming and greeting of visitors. How do we as a church reach out to others? Where does our ministry begin? The parking lot, the door, or the pew? Or does it begin intentionally at all?</p> |
| 39     | Apr 15, 2010 7:35 PM | <p>Together we better discern what God is leading us to be and do. We should realize that our pastors, session and deacons are always working for the good (even when we may be wrong); when they use together the gifts God has given us. God is walking and working with our church, if we will only listen and follow</p> <p>*Our church needs to stay with our foundations and not change for the sake of growth. We are basically satisfied with our present posture of solid membership and worship.</p> <p>*We should look at other churches to pick up ideas for growth although we are not after growth by providing "entertainment".</p>   |
| 40     | Apr 15, 2010 8:07 PM | <p>*We should spread the word about our denomination and our congregation by individual participation.</p> <p>*We should continue to find new ways to serve our members and the community.</p>   |
| 41     | Apr 15, 2010 9:03 PM | (I shared this directly with the session.)   |

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

Number

Response Date

Response Text

- We should work on being more mindful of the work we can do in our community. We can spread the good word by our actions as much as our words. We must sacrifice some of ourselves for the better good---seek leaders who will lead this community of faith to walk the walk
- continue to spread the good news of what we do in our church, give more generously and widely in our community
- We must pray for guidance in doing the good work of our church. We must strive to keep evil from our midst. Good people sometimes do hurtful evil things and we must stop hurtful things in their tracts, During worship times we should sometimes be reminded of the glory of God through Jesus. Jesus is our Lord and Savior, we must worship Jesus as God in human form, We should use the gifts he provides us to bring more people into our church family
- As we proceed with the mission of our Church we are called to help others in peace, with kindness and humility "Dinner on Us" is a great example of a mission project founded on this passage. Those doing this mission work with the Methodist church offer free meals to all who seek them
- We are changed as we come closer to God, changed as we live those changes everyday "I am a part of all that I have met"--through us:
- 42 Apr 15, 2010 9:11 PM** We are entrusted to be ambassadors for Christ, help the church and its people be patient-gentle-loving, Be faithful, feel love and comp:

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*

*skipped question*

47

5

Number

Response Date

Response Text

In this 21st century matrix of global, evolutionary, ecological transition, the church is called to embody in new ways the unity, love, compassion, reconciliation, peace, justice of G-O-D's NEW CREATION.

The local congregation is called to be:

1) The "Academy" (discipleship)(contextual re-education) where the diverse individual/congregational gifts are discovered, developed, encouraged, equipped on behalf of G-O-D and all G-O-D's creation through:

- Intellectual methods
- Decision-making/Planning/Action/Evaluation methods
- Spiritual methods

2) The "Mission" (servanthood/emptying self) (structural reformulation) where diverse gifts and partnerships are effectively focused, engaged, connected and deployed on behalf of all G-O-D's people and creation through:

- Global/regional/local Partnerships and resource sharing
- Local community transformation
- Justice teams

3) The "Renewal" Centering (Spritual Re-motivation) where the Gifts of G-O-D are celebrated and individuals are renewed and recommissioned for service on behalf of G-O-D and all creation through:

- Immersion in new paradlgm (post-modern context)
- Practicing spiritual disciplines

43 Apr 15, 2010 9:22 PM

-Rejuvenating corporate worship

God desires my congregation to be more open and realize that the vision is much much bigger than we can fathom. He is calling us to go and make disciples of all nations. God's desire for us to be a more dynamic congregation that will accommodate God's children from all walks of life.

44 Apr 16, 2010 1:20 AM

## Discernment Process Results

What did this study say about God's desire for your congregation?

Answer Options

Response Count

47

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

**47**  
**5**

**Number    Response Date    Response Text**

- | Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
| 45     | Apr 16, 2010 8:24 PM | Our church needs to stay with our foundations and not change for the sake of growth. We are satisfied with our present posture of solid membership and worship.<br>We should look at other congregations to pick up ideas for growth although we are not after just "entertainment."<br>We should spread the word about our denomination and our congregation by individual participation. |
| 46     | Apr 20, 2010 6:48 PM | That as we address the issues facing our church, we do so in an ultimate sense of unity and patience.<br>That we need to be open to different talents and viewpoints, taking into account the perspective that each person brings.   |
| 47     | Apr 22, 2010 7:48 PM | N/A  |

## Discernment Process Results

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

### Answer Options

### Response Count

44

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

44  
8

| Number | Response Date         | Response Text  |
|--------|-----------------------|--|
| 1      | Mar 23, 2010 5:06 PM  | The comments previously reported are basically a summary of the study. I will not try to summarize them further here.<br>We can't stay in our own Presbytery niches, we need to reach out.   |
| 2      | Mar 23, 2010 8:07 PM  | As a History Team we believe that without memories, then there are no expectations.<br>We would like to devote more time in our session meetings to buiding relationships and less time on committee work.<br>We would like to have more than one retreat time for our elders to bond together, rather than quibble over budgets and procedures.<br>Love one another unconditionally.<br>We are called to make disciples of all nations. |
| 3      | Mar 23, 2010 9:21 PM  | Uf we believe in Christ, all things are possible. We are going through a transition period as we welcome our new pastor.   |
| 4      | Mar 24, 2010 12:43 AM | Answers to the previous questions were our summary response. However, in terms of practical steps, the session is engaged in a church leader's study using Martha Grace Reese's book "Unbinding the Gospel." And, while the church has a long history of reaching out to meet the needs of the community, i.e. a local community food pantry, we are reassessing what we can do to reach out expecially to the "unchurch."               |
| 5      | Mar 24, 2010 3:40 PM  | It is time to celebrate our belonging together in Jesus Christ and to urge our congregations and presbytery to live boldly into the future to which God is calling us. This process causes us to long for opportunities to participate in sharing the faith rather than supporting the structure. Let's give our people the language and energy to practice their faith gladly every day of the world!                                   |

## Discernment Process Results

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

### Answer Options

### Response Count

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

44

44  
8

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
| 6      | Mar 25, 2010 8:36 PM | <p>Every day these words and images came:<br/>           Love<br/>           Compassion<br/>           Humility<br/>           Hospitality<br/>           Learning<br/>           Spirituality<br/>           Teamwork<br/>           Connection</p> <p>These did not:<br/>           Building<br/>           Stewardship<br/>           Rules</p> |
| 7      | Mar 26, 2010 2:27 PM | We did not do this as a group.   |
| 8      | Mar 26, 2010 6:59 PM | There is a consistent message among all of the readings, one that challenges us to let go and to serve in ways that can make us uncomfortable or fearful.  |
| 9      | Mar 26, 2010 7:30 PM | <p>All of the scriptures address the nature of the community of faith<br/>           The community of faith is God's gift – not something that we build -- we choose whether or not to embrace it<br/>           The scriptures present a consistent challenge to let go and to serve in ways that make us uncomfortable.</p>                      |
| 10     | Mar 27, 2010 8:21 PM | Several in our congregation have been nudged to start an after school program for middle school children and to reach out to the Hispanic community in our area. We are also being nudged to become serious about evangelism.<br>I think this discernment activity has nudged us to revisit these new ministry areas.                              |

## Discernment Process Results

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

Answer Options

Response Count

answered question  
skipped question

44

44  
8

Number Response Date Response Text

- Day 1 - We've been so busy getting everybody reconciled to each other (horizontally) that we've neglected to emphasize how "in Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself" (vertically).  
 Day 2 - "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts." We need to seek what sort of unity the Holy Spirit prefers and provides.  
 Day 3 - Let's celebrate all the diversities of ministry without missing the diversity of persons.  
 Day 4 - How often at Presbytery do we hear about the cross and what our Savior did by dying on it? Could we concentrate on that rather than our usual HEAVY emphasis on Genesis 1 and God as Creator? Redemption is the Bible's MAIN message, not creation.  
 Day 5 - What might we need to "test" in our Presbytery, and if something turns out not to jibe with "the will of Christ Jesus," do we dare scrap it, or willfully keep on thwarting His pleasure?  
 Day 6 - Hooray for "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." May their tribe increase!  
 Day 7 - How's our Presbytery's prison ministry doing these days?  
 Day 8 - Some of the saltiness might be restored if we deep-sixed the alternate microphones and debated controversial issues more openly, as amongst fellow-dis  
 Day 9 - All the power is Jesus Christ's. Ours is merely derivative.  
 Day 10 - There's that cross-thing again. Lift it high in a multitude of ways, and watch God honor it, in our Presbytery's life and ministry - and meetings.
- 11 **Mar 30, 2010 6:57 PM** We Presbyterians need to be more ACTIVE and RESOLUTE in our faith. We need to be a strong and real example, in word and deed, of what it is to be a Christian. We need to be true disciples, literally carrying on Jesus' work with the poor and actively spreading the Good News. It's not enough to sit in the sanctuary every Sunday and just listen.
- 12 **Mar 31, 2010 12:11 AM** Our ministry takes place primarily through our local congregations. The presbytery needs to help pastors and congregations understand their calling and equip leaders to live out their mission.
- 13 **Mar 31, 2010 7:23 PM** In committees, actions teams, and presbytery meetings, we need to continue to model "worshipful work" so that we all keep before us our calling in Christ.

**Discernment Process Results**

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

**Answer Options**

**Response Count**

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

44

44  
8

**Number    Response Date    Response Text**

THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS SUMMARIZE ADDITIONAL REFLECTIONS AND REQUESTS:

1. We look to the Presbytery to nurture us in our mission, and help us to maintain order and continuity ~ no matter our size
2. Serve as ambassadors for Christ
3. Pray and let Christ rule in all decisions
4. Maintain a spirit of humbleness, compassion and peaceful unity
5. Listen
6. Respond

THINGS WE WOULD APPRECIATE FROM THE PRESBYTERY:

1. Streamline methods for dealing with churches
2. Help us to show God's love to the world
3. Show equal interest in smaller as well as larger congregations

**14    Apr 1, 2010 6:32 PM** 4. "Benevolence upwards, service downward" (Us / Presbytery)

## Discernment Process Results

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

### Answer Options

### Response Count

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

44

44

8

**Number      Response Date      Response Text**

- 15      **Apr 5, 2010 3:12 PM**      Change is scary and may take a lot of sacrifice on the part of our churches. But we are called to give ourselves completely as Christ gave himself completely for us. We are not alone in the changes that need to be made. We can weather the storm of "change" if we are discerning God's will for us. We need to learn what GOD'S WILL is for our church and go with that! God's vision is always the one we should choose. Excluding one another is not in God's plan for humankind. God wants us ALL gathered in one body. It is only through constant contact with God that we can even come close to doing things that don't come naturally to us (like loving those who are different from us, rejoicing always, giving thanks in all circumstances, etc.), so we need to hold fast to God's vision for the good of all. There were conflicts in the early church that threatened "the body of Christ" even then, and if they had succumbed to those differences, Christianity would have died out long ago. We don't want Christianity to die out in our generation.
- 16      **Apr 5, 2010 3:19 PM**      I had trouble with Day 10 reading. Not sure this one spoke to me. I will also be sharing my responses with committee work.
- 17      **Apr 5, 2010 10:00 PM**      It was probably especially appropriate that this discernment process came during Lent and leading up to Holy Week and Easter. Lent can be, for many people, a very personal journey. Translating that same journey into the life of the local church and the presbytery helps it to take on an expanded and perhaps new meaning. The readings raised the specter of the importance of relationships between people and groups. The "why's" and especially the "how's" come through in many of the passages. They speak to life within congregations. They also speak to life within the presbytery itself and between the presbytery and the churches and clergy. And through virtually all the passages places before congregations and the presbytery the "connectors" and relationship they have, or don't have, and need to maintain with God.
- 18      **Apr 6, 2010 6:42 PM**      •We don't need to reinvent the wheel, but use the fundamental tenets of Christianity to do what the church has always done and do it well for the current place in time. It is an ongoing, continuous process. Stagnation is not an option, because everything evolves and changes. We should continue to do the things that are tried and true, while working to go in the direction of God's word.
- 19      **Apr 8, 2010 3:22 PM**      As individuals and a church we should do everything in love for the good of God, truly forgive each other and spread His word. We should do this not only as individuals but as a whole church. We must also understand that God knows the whole picture so why continue to do everything by ourselves. Let God guide us without question.

## Discernment Process Results

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

### Answer Options

### Response Count

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

44

44  
8

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text   |
|--------|----------------------|---|
| 20     | Apr 9, 2010 2:53 PM  | What in the world have we been doing for the last 20 years as we slowly decline and abandon the urban areas of our presbytery. Maybe several of our large tall steeple churches in our presbytery go send some members to the city to help with ministry and finance and worship.   |
| 21     | Apr 9, 2010 6:34 PM  | did not review each question but looked at the members responses in light of the work of the committee.   |
| 22     | Apr 11, 2010 5:41 PM | God's plan for our Presbytery is to guide people down a path of love, sprinkled with compassion, kindness, humility, patience, forgiveness and wrapped in love.   |
| 23     | Apr 11, 2010 6:37 PM | The session felt that it was beneficial to participate in this activity.  |
| 24     | Apr 12, 2010 5:11 PM | While there is not much to summarize, there is one very positive statement to make. The session did have lively discussion and wants to continue the discussion. Since the session has not been incorporating a biblical study and conversation time in its meetings, this is a very hopeful change.<br><br>Create and maintain a positive faith flow.<br>It is God's vision.<br>It is God's church.<br>Our tool box is full.<br>Our GPS is programmed. |
| 25     | Apr 12, 2010 6:54 PM | The CEO has full confidence in us and our ability to do the job.  |
| 26     | Apr 12, 2010 9:14 PM | I applaud efforts such as Amy Fowler's (on the Presbytery's behalf) to lift up for affirmation those congregations who are daring new things in new forms. New doesn't necessarily mean the most technologically advanced; I mean new in the sense of not always being tried and true. Better to try and fail than not try at   |

## Discernment Process Results

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

### Answer Options

### Response Count

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

44

44  
8

Number    Response Date    Response Text

Through the 10-day process these facts regarding God were reinforced: (1) God is forgiving, challenging, and trusting – expecting each of us to be as forgiving and trustworthy as we have experienced those gifts from God. God’s challenges come in many forms including ‘Love one another’ and ‘to reflect and nurture the light, love, healing, and hope of Christ to those around us.’ God gives particular gifts and challenges us to use them for the common good and to identify and seek the use of gifts of others in the worship community. God does not keep a ‘scorecard,’ but forgives, trusts, and challenges us to follow God’s teachings.

God’s vision for the Presbytery, as gleaned from the study and prayer process, is to be an Ambassador of Christ; to set an example for the churches; to use the talents and gifts available; provide guidance and resources to the churches to help them accomplish their ministries and to develop programs; to interpret and enforce the rules (Book of Order); and, to pray.

God’s vision for our congregation as identified by the study and prayer process is for us to be true to our Vision Statement which states:

**WE ARE COMMITTED TO FULFILLING CHRIST’S VISION OF COMMUNITY BY:**

- Cultivating a community of faithful disciples in which worship, evangelism, education, fellowship, and spiritual practices are vital characteristics.
- Our study summary stated, “God’s vision for our congregation is for us to help members to discern God’s call on their lives to do exactly that, support those who .
- Weicoming all with Christian compassion, joy, hospitality, and respect.
- Our study summary is “to reconcile with one another and help others be reconciled to God by teaching and preaching forgiveness, by facilitating reconciliation in 1
- Celebrating God’s gift of life by practicing stewardship of God’s creation.
- Our study summary listed, “Let the old pass and embrace the new.”
- Seeking and acting on opportunities to becoming better known in the community as good neighbors.
- Our summary listed “Be a leader in the community”. We are eager to accept opportunities to participate in community events (i.e. the Wood River Ice Cream Sox
- Maximizing and energizing established programs and talents of our members with a willingness to evolve as God leads us.
- From our summary: Continue to offer Christian Education; support for Individuais and families Inquiring about baptism and living out baptismal vows; and, to cha

27    **Apr 12, 2010 10:39 PM** To the Discernment Team: It was a challenging study – looking at what we are and what we should be are not always comfortable situations but necessary if we

## Discernment Process Results

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

### Answer Options

### Response Count

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

44

44  
8

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
| 28     | Apr 13, 2010 1:54 PM | The Justice & Compassion ministry team feels concerned that issues of mission service are being marginalized by the presbytery and by the local congregations. The presbytery is being called to recognize that true service comes with sacrifice. What are we willing to sacrifice? What cost are we willing to pay to serve God's children?  |
| 29     | Apr 13, 2010 5:05 PM | The main themes across the board are forgiveness, reconciliation, peace and love. Teaching is important, whether it is God who teaches us, churches that teach or presbyteries that teach. We are a people of diverse unity. Hospitality. Joy. Purpose.  |
| 30     | Apr 13, 2010 7:45 PM | Being faithful as believers and a congregation is hard work. We need to encourage our congregation in their spiritual growth. IF we give of ourselves God will exalt us. Keep our focus on Christ!   |
| 31     | Apr 13, 2010 8:46 PM | Day 3 ~ The church must always be proactive in discerning the gifts of its members so that it may discern its own call and faithfully respond to that call Especially COM, CPM, and the Nominating Committee need to model and teach discernment [see earlier comments about God not asking for volunteers] To hear and respond to God's call takes the participation of the entire community<br>Day 4 ~ Our chief end is to glorify God and enjoy God forever ~ Westminster got it right and it is still what we are called to do and be<br>Day 5 ~ Rejoice                      What would our communal<br>Pray                            life look like if shaped around<br>Give Thanks                    these three continuous actions?<br>Day 10 ~ What are we willing to die for? |
| 32     | Apr 14, 2010 6:46 PM | [responses for the other days have already been included in previous comments]   |
| 33     | Apr 14, 2010 6:49 PM | Done in the previous questions.  |
| 34     | Apr 14, 2010 9:38 PM | God expects the the Presbytery to support congregations in discerning God's will for them. Presbytery should assist congregations in the task of making disciples.   |
|        |                      | For the work of congregational development and transformation in our presbytery, the creation of the Assoc. Exec. position, the use of Church Development Fund monies to help pay for that position, and the work that our team has done with Amy has been very valuable. We hope that this will continue.   |

## Discernment Process Results

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

### Answer Options

### Response Count

44

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

44

8

**Number    Response Date    Response Text**

**35    Apr 15, 2010 2:44 AM** I believe that we should be open minded and Spirit led. God does not want us to be complacent—He wants us to search for opportunities to do His work and serve His people. He wants us to promote peace and share the message of His Word. This may mean creating and equipping new ministries and experiencing and providing new and varied kinds of worship. It will certainly mean loving people who don't look and sound like us. God will continue to provide all we need and we must trust in Him to do this.

**36    Apr 15, 2010 2:52 AM** The response to question 4 is a summary of the Session's reflections.

Christ is present and God is empowering us in all we do. God pours out power for us in Jesus' humility and love. God call us to share all things with others and to make a meaningful sacrifice. Sacrifice can be a measure of ministry. Who are we trying to please our ego or God? God chooses, empowers and accepts us as we are for Christ's body the Church. God has created us for joy, and together God will help us grow through prayer and service.

We must trust one another to also be God's servants. We must work united and together. We should realize that everyone has gifts and strive for unity and respect of each other. We must be willing to stoop down to the needs of all our church's and ministries. We must not just cater only to the Big 5 or tall steeples, but be the servant to the least of churches. When we listen to all our churches and really hear them, we will better glorify God in our presbytery.

Mission! Mission! And more Mission! We must strive for harmony not only in church but our world. We must bear each other in prayer and care. Let's share some joy, prayer and mutual mission. Let's get away from all the divisive and stifling issues and go toward the good that unites us even if the greater church con

God's love is transformative for us and others. God trusts us. God wants to use us all and we must see God's gifts in each other and allow each to be used. Ther

**37    Apr 15, 2010 7:47 PM** Together we better discern what God is leading us to be and do. We should realize that our pastors, session and deacons are always working for the good (even

## Discernment Process Results

In the space below write a summary response to the questions. Please share what may have come to you as a result of your reflection on the questions from each day.

### Answer Options

### Response Count

44

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

44  
8

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text   |
|--------|----------------------|---|
| 38     | Apr 15, 2010 8:07 PM | <p>* Our church is basically satisfied with its membership, staff and worship experience but needs to use our resources in amore effective way toward growth and service.</p> <p>* We would be interested in growth but not just for growth purposes.</p>   |
| 39     | Apr 15, 2010 9:10 PM | <p>"God is love" is the basis for our actions and our relationships between people and congregations. So simple to say, so difficult to live up to! As someone who has been steamrolled by "the process," accompanied by quotes from scripture and even prayer, I find it difficult to trust this discernment process. But if I take my own discernment to heart, I must walk in the others' shoes and treat them with love. If we in presbytery could pull it off -- acting as followers of Christ first and Presbyterians second -- we could be such fabulous witnesses to the power of the Holy Sprit!</p> <p>God is with us. All of us.</p>                 |
| 40     | Apr 15, 2010 9:14 PM | <p>God continues to create, push, and play<br/>our church easily forgets we are called to reach out and embrase others and their pain</p> <p>Our Presbytery is needed to help/support/nuture us in doing what God calls us to do</p>  |
| 41     | Apr 15, 2010 9:22 PM | <p>In the universal, evolutionary, ecological matrix of the twenty-first century in which we live, the G-O-D of grace, love, reconciliation, unity, peace, justice whom we know through Jesus calls us to radical discipleship, creation-wide servanthood and partnership, and profound spiritual depths of consciousness through contextual re-education, structural reformulation, and spiritual re-motivation--at all levels: individual, congregational, presbyery, community, region, national, global--that all might use their incredible gifts together to be in sync with/reveai G-O-D's NEW CREATION of differentiation, diversity and communion.</p> |
| 42     | Apr 16, 2010 1:26 AM | <p>God is the potter we are the clay.( Jeremiah 18) We are called to trust and obey for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey. However , God's love is the propelling factor that will enable us to accomplish our goals.</p>  |
| 43     | Apr 16, 2010 8:28 PM | <p>God came to us through Jesus and depends upon us to spread his Word.<br/>God wants to see change when and where necessary to do his work.<br/>We should put the joy of God and the Spirit Into our worship and prayer.</p> <p>God has plans for us all. We must pray and determine what those plans are.</p>   |
| 44     | Apr 22, 2010 7:50 PM | <p>The themes emerging from the COM conversation included an emphasis on unity, and an acknoweldgement that we live within a tension between hope of the tenuous experience of that presently and of what we are called toward. There is acknowledged importance on the ministry of the Committee on Ministry by its members. We see ourselves as a place that utilizes a diversity of gifts - which is in itself a gift as well as a source of tension from time to time.</p>  |

## Discernment Process Results

Is there anything else you would like to say to the Discernment Team about your experience?

Answer Options

Response Count

41

*answered question*

*skipped question*

**41**

**11**

| Number | Response Date         | Response Text   |
|--------|-----------------------|---|
|        |                       | Most of the elders participated - there was some good small group discussion prior to each group sharing with the whole Session.  |
| 1      | Mar 23, 2010 5:08 PM  | As stated before, many people did not really get into the intent of the study until the fourth day's passage.   |
| 2      | Mar 23, 2010 8:07 PM  | No<br><br>Our Session actually completed the 10-day booklet! We engaged in good discussion and I think it brought us closer together. We enjoyed the experience as individuals and as a body of Christ. We should do this type of examination more often as a session.<br><br>(I attempted to glean the basic reaction to each question. Most people had very similar responses)<br><br>I don't any of this information is revolutionary--we've heard it all before; however, sometimes we hear things differently at certain times in our lives and we respond in a new way when we share it with a different group of people. |
| 3      | Mar 23, 2010 9:21 PM  | Forgive my typing errors--no spell check--  |
| 4      | Mar 24, 2010 12:44 AM | Thanks for the opportunity to participate!  |
| 5      | Mar 24, 2010 3:40 PM  | Restucture is NOT the answer!   |

## Discernment Process Results

Is there anything else you would like to say to the Discernment Team about your experience?

### Answer Options

### Response Count

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

41

41

11

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
|        |                      | Loved the quote by John Calvin on Day 10: We are not our own.  |
| 6      | Mar 25, 2010 8:38 PM | Hopefully, this time of discernment will not be used to justify an agenda, but to advance God's plan.  |
| 7      | Mar 26, 2010 2:29 PM | Though they began the discussion of what they had learned with many apologies: didn't get it done, didn't bring the booklet back with them, started well but didn't keep it up, etc. Overall, however, I think that the elders who participated in this appreciated the exercise.  |
| 8      | Mar 26, 2010 7:00 PM | Thank you for preparing the study materials, for calling us into this exercise and asking us to help in shaping the future of the presbytery.  |
| 9      | Mar 26, 2010 7:30 PM | Thank you for calling us into this experience<br><br>We have seven people on our Session; only four completed the booklet even though it was an "assignment" and we had adequate introduction to its purpose.<br><br>Those who completed the activity benefited personally, and it has helped us think about the purpose of Presbytery and our own church. |
| 10     | Mar 27, 2010 8:23 PM | This process has fed nicely into our evangelism study.   |
| 11     | Mar 30, 2010 6:57 PM | Glad to participate.   |

## Discernment Process Results

Is there anything else you would like to say to the Discernment Team about your experience?

Answer Options

Response Count

41

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

**41**  
**11**

**Number**    **Response Date**    **Response Text**

**12**    **Mar 31, 2010 12:12 AM** It became spiritually exciting for me.

Thank you for providing this resource, and the opportunity to engage in this discernment process, especially during this Lenten season of reflection. Here at First, the members of our Session and the pastor took part in the ten day Bible study discernment process provided in the book.

Some appreciated the process (personally and as a means to help the congregation and Presbytery). Others viewed it as a challenge (positive and negative) which took them outside of their "comfort zone" in terms of the time and mental energy required to complete this exercise of personal study and spiritual reflection. Still others viewed it as "another task" to accomplish and wondered about its value in terms of effecting any real change between congregations and the Presbytery.

**13**    **Apr 1, 2010 7:04 PM** As pastor of the congregation, I found this feedback valuable, in and of itself, as a way to better understand how our members and leaders view Bible study, spiritual discernment and relations with the larger church!

**14**    **Apr 5, 2010 3:14 PM** Because the scriptures were all about the same (or similar) themes, some of the session members experienced the process as a little manipulative. As a pastor, I enjoyed the process and the discussion that followed during our session time together. If nothing else, it really got people thinking about the future of our church and of Christianity.

**15**    **Apr 5, 2010 3:20 PM** Good process- well thought out. Would like to have seen these questions in total before respondiing so I could have prepared a bit better.

**16**    **Apr 5, 2010 10:02 PM** Think that's about it, other than "THANK YOU" and hope/prayer that the sessions and presbytery get your own "summary" and recommendations.

## Discernment Process Results

Is there anything else you would like to say to the Discernment Team about your experience?

### Answer Options

### Response Count

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

41

**41**

**11**

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text   |
|--------|----------------------|---|
| 17     | Apr 6, 2010 6:43 PM  | <p>•Individuals, churches and the Presbytery should practice acceptance. All should embrace differences not as conflict, but opportunities to reconcile and accept diversity with God's grace. Churches should ensure that all are represented. Not all churches in the Presbytery are the same, and they should not want to be. It is our differences that make us better at accepting and using God's grace to resolve our differences and use them for the greater good.</p> |
| 18     | Apr 8, 2010 3:25 PM  | <p>As a group we all agreed that we enjoyed the daily devotion and reflecting on the meaning. However we found the questions of what it means to ourselves, our church and the presbytery redundant. There was not a lot of difference between reflecting on the meaning for the church and the presbytery (the combination of many churches). We did find the study meaningful as a whole.</p>   |
| 19     | Apr 9, 2010 2:54 PM  | <p>Every time we have done this process, we have simply rearranged deck chairs and ended up trying to do more than less.</p>  |
| 20     | Apr 11, 2010 6:38 PM | <p>No</p> <p>Our experience was that we were not prepared to participate in the process as it was designed. Biblical study that is meditative and designed to yield discernment is new for us, especially when it involves sharing in a group.</p> <p>For us, it would have been more helpful to do the whole process together as a session rather than individually. Then, we could have learned along the way and made better responses.</p>                                  |
| 21     | Apr 12, 2010 5:29 PM | <p>Also, we felt that there was not enough time, given that the session meets only monthly. We needed more training time and planning time.</p>   |

## Discernment Process Results

Is there anything else you would like to say to the Discernment Team about your experience?

Answer Options

Response Count

41

*answered question*

*skipped question*

41

11

Number    Response Date

Response Text

- |    |                              |   |
|----|------------------------------|---|
| 22 | <b>Apr 12, 2010 6:59 PM</b>  | <p>I used this study when I took my morning walks and often used parts of the scriptures as a mantra. As you know, Westminster had a pretty rocky last year and now with Shon's illness, Michelle really has her hands full, but this study has helped me realize how blessed we all are and how great our God is. The discernment team is in my prayers as you move forward in discovering God's plan for the future.</p> <p>Be assured, God does have a plan! God is great!</p>   |
| 23 | <b>Apr 12, 2010 9:15 PM</b>  | <p>Thank you for a meaningful Lenten practice.</p>  |
| 24 | <b>Apr 12, 2010 10:40 PM</b> | <p>Since our Session members practice discernment and other spiritual practices regularly, this was fairly easy for most to do. They are glad they have that background. It was an affirmation for this discernment to build and echo on past discernment.</p>  |
| 25 | <b>Apr 13, 2010 1:55 PM</b>  | <p>This was a helpful experience because it allowed our team to place ourselves in the greater context of the presbytery and the other ministry teams. Our prayer is that the discernment team will remember to focus on mission and justice issues as we consider the future of our presbytery.</p>  |
| 26 | <b>Apr 13, 2010 5:14 PM</b>  | <p>Personally the timing was not good. It is understood that a discernment process during a season of discernment makes theological sense, but practically it was difficult. During a season with special studies and special worship services and special activities, additional tasks were a burden for people who were already stretched for time to begin with. Thus, only four persons on our session actually completed all ten days and did summaries.</p> <p>The session hopes that this is an indication of better relations with presbytery. They often feel forgotten and that their voice is not heard. (As a pastor, I will, however, be working with them on forgiveness. Many of their presbytery complaints were intertwined with GA complaints and are decades old.) They greatly appreciate that all the churches of the presbytery were asked to give voice to this undertaking.</p> |

## Discernment Process Results

Is there anything else you would like to say to the Discernment Team about your experience?

### Answer Options

### Response Count

*answered question*

41

*skipped question*

**41**

**11**

| Number | Response Date        | Response Text  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
| 27     | Apr 13, 2010 7:45 PM | Very positive experience. Helped us to look at ourselves through the Lord's eyes.  |
| 28     | Apr 13, 2010 8:46 PM | THANK YOU for this process!!   |
| 29     | Apr 14, 2010 6:47 PM | This was a helpful experience as a staff member to step back from the daily routine and focus on the spiritual life of the presbytery. Thank you.  |
| 30     | Apr 14, 2010 6:49 PM | What does it mean for the Presbytery to lose its life?   |
| 31     | Apr 14, 2010 9:41 PM | Though it took awhile for many of the sessions to get on board, especially if they had not experienced this way of working with scripture, in most places it led to meaningful discussions about faith in God and a sense that God is working with our congregations and our presbytery. |
| 32     | Apr 15, 2010 2:45 AM | Thank you for your hard work!  |
| 33     | Apr 15, 2010 2:54 AM | I hope there will be some feedback to congregations and sessions about the results of the process, and how those results will be used.   |
| 34     | Apr 15, 2010 7:48 PM | It was a fruitful experience with some unexpected results.   |

## Discernment Process Results

Is there anything else you would like to say to the Discernment Team about your experience?

Answer Options

Response Count

41

answered question  
skipped question

41  
11

Number Response Date Response Text

- 35      **Apr 15, 2010 8:07 PM**      \*The discernment process was an interesting and awakening exercise but the main objective was not made completely clear.  
\*These reponses were arrived at by a group discussion and listing of comments by the session.. We found that such a process is a very effective approach.  
\*Our session would appreciate feed back as to the results of this exercise and ensuing actions planned by the presbytery.
- 36      **Apr 15, 2010 9:16 PM**      A Cake may be made with the finest and best ingredients, carefully selected and blended together but a cake is simply raw data unless it is baked to perfection and tasted by all
- 37      **Apr 15, 2010 9:22 PM**      Thanks for your work on this. The booklet was well-done. It's been helpful for us to think through and articulate together. Most folks found it easier to talk about an understanding of G-O-D and the role of the church. Even though a number of people in the congregation have been involved at the presbytery/synod/GA levels, it was more difficult to articulate the role of presbytery or to try to expand consciousness of "presbytery" as the working together of 90+ churches rather than simply the "Presbytery Center, committees, and Staff".  
The journey of discernment continues...
- 38      **Apr 16, 2010 1:31 AM**      Thank you very much for your dauntless efforts to bring us together and share our thoughts. Thank you for being open to God's leading in this decade. We are no longer living in a global village we are now living in a global apartment and the wall is so thin that we can no longer close ourselves from each other.
- 39      **Apr 16, 2010 8:36 PM**      The discernment process was an interesting and awakening exercise but the main objective was not made completely clear. These responses were arrived at by a group discussion and listing of responses by the session. We found that such a process is a very effective approach and draws out thoughts from individuals.  
Our session would appreciate feedback as to the results of the survey and what resulting actions are taken.



**Discernment Process Results**

**Is there anything else you would like to say to the Discernment Team about your experience?**

**Answer Options**

**Response Count**

*answered question*  
*skipped question*

41

**41**  
**11**

**Number    Response Date                    Response Text**

- 40**                    **Apr 20, 2010 6:51 PM**    On a personal note, as a pastor and session moderator, I was somewhat uncomfortable showing a video that repeatedly stated that what we are doing as a church is not working "any more." I did show the video to my session, and kept this criticism to myself, but that kind of rhetoric will undoubtedly be reflected in the answers you receive.
- 41**                    **Apr 22, 2010 7:50 PM**    No  
More positively, I feel that my elders were genuinely interested and engaged (and felt included and invited) to be asked to participate in this kind of large-scale discernment activity.