

Reflections on the Future of the Synod

Summary of the Florida-Bahamas Synod Survey, conducted June 19 through July 22, 2017

Percentages based on 202 responses, unless noted otherwise.

1. Which of the following descriptions fits you best? (N=202)

%

33.7 I am a rostered leader in the Florida-Bahamas Synod

66.3 I am not a rostered leader in the Florida-Bahamas Synod

2. How do you believe the synod actively lives out its mission: "Boldly sharing Christ, passionately making disciples and faithfully doing justice"?

% Rostered responses (N=49)

28.6 room for improvement

20.4 synod provides leadership, structure and/or oversight

16.3 ministry, collaboration, and initiatives

16.3 worship, service

6.1 systemic change / social justice issues

4.1 companion churches / ecumenical partnerships

4.1 not sure

2.0 Random comment

2.0 synod programs like Diakonia

% Non-rostered responses (N=86)

22.1 room for improvement

18.6 synod provides leadership, structure and/or oversight

14.0 community outreach

10.5 ministry, collaboration, and initiatives

9.3 not sure

8.1 Worship, service

4.7 synod programs, like Diakonia

3.5 systemic change / social justice issues

3.5 random comment

2.3 companion churches / ecumenical partnerships;

2.3 support of congregational programs

1.2 Good start

3. The synod should focus on supporting congregations and leaders in the following five (5) ways? (N=202) (Top five responses reported)

% Rostered responses (N=68)

57.4 Help congregations connect with their communities

55.9 Help congregations increase vitality & sustainability

51.5 Promote spiritual behaviors and discipleship

41.2 Encourage identification & development of leaders

38.2 Provide training for elected congregational leaders

% Non-rostered responses (N=134)

59.0 Help congregations increase vitality & sustainability

59.0 Help congregations connect with their communities

45.5 Identify ways congregations can collaborate

38.1 Encourage identification & development of leaders

37.3 Promote spiritual behaviors and discipleship

4. What challenges lie ahead of us as a synod in the next three (3) years?

% Rostered responses (N=49)		% Non-rostered responses (N=86)	
13.2	small churches, small membership, lack of rostered leaders	14.9	better outreach
11.8	better outreach	9.7	being relevant
10.3	being relevant	7.5	small churches, small membership, lack of rostered leaders
7.4	accommodating an aging population	6.7	growing congregations with synod help maintenance mode
5.9	staff burnout	4.5	reaching people w/ different views of God
4.4	supporting pastors	4.5	replacing members
2.9	primarily a social club	3.7	accommodating an aging population
2.9	replacing members	3.0	leadership crisis
2.9	leadership crisis	2.2	Accepting RIC
2.9	financial burdens	2.2	Financial burdens
2.9	political divide	2.2	Political divide
1.5	growing congregations with synod help	2.2	Staff burnout
1.5	reaching people w/ different views of God	2.2	supporting pastors
1.5	following through on plans or ideas	2.2	working with a new bishop
1.5	maintenance mode		

5. Identify the strengths and gifts you think will be most important for the effectiveness of the new bishop. Please look through the list of gifts first, then choose the five (5) gifts you feel are most important. (Top Five responses reported)

% Rostered (N=68)		% Non-rostered responses (N=134)	
52.9	Pastoral care of pastors	43.3	Pastoral care of pastors
47.1	Innovation and creativity	41.0	Working with congregations during crisis & transition
45.6	Development of leaders	38.1	Development of leaders
33.8	Evangelism and mission	30.6	Innovation and creativity
33.8	Strategic planning	29.9	Evangelism and mission

Finally, in a sentence or two, please share what gifts you or your congregation bring to the synod.

% Rostered (N=27)		% Non-rostered responses (N=82)	
22.0	working with the community	23.2	working with the community
14.6	strong tradition	11.0	gifted clergy and leaders
9.8	small but vibrant	11.0	small but vibrant
9.8	loving and giving	8.5	welcoming and accepting of diversity
9.8	financial security and resources	8.5	loving and giving
9.8	our culture	8.5	strong tradition
7.3	strong programs	7.3	strong programs
7.3	evangelism	4.9	financial security and resources
4.9	welcoming and accepting of diversity	4.9	perseverance
2.4	gifted clergy and leaders	3.7	evangelism
2.4	perseverance	2.4	people provide strong leadership