

Summary of Ideas Expressed by MLC Members in MSP Questionnaires

(The number of people expressing each idea is given in parentheses.)

1. *What are you most excited about at Messiah?*

- a. Outreach, mission, and service: (25)
- b. Fellowship: (18)
- c. Music program: (15)
- d. Return to worship from covid : (12)
- e. Youth: (11)
- f. Worship with Word and Sacraments: (9)
- g. Change: (9)
- h. The loving people at Messiah: (8)
- i. Increasing diversity: (5)
- j. Young families: (4)
- k. Growth: (4)
- l. Interim pastor: (4)
- m. Sunday school and Bible studies: (4)
- n. Streaming services: (2)
- o. Summer camps: 1
- p. Small groups: 1
- q. Contemporary service: 1

2. *What do you cherish most about worship at Messiah? Why?*

- a. Music: (32)
- b. Corporate worship, fellowship, loving family: (24)
- c. Biblically based sermons (the Word): (22)
- d. Traditional Lutheran approach: (20)
- e. Liturgical service: (16)
- f. Communion: (14)
- g. Educational, challenging or scholarly sermons: (14)
- h. Contemporary: (7)
- i. Welcoming: (6)
- j. Children: (5)
- k. Chicago Folk and other settings: (5)
- l. Calmness: (4)
- m. Projection and visual aids: 1
- n. Hymns: 1
- o. Printed service in bulletin: 1
- p. "Reflective" sermons: 1
- q. Sunday school: 1
- r. People helping me: 1
- s. Uplifting: 1
- t. Forgiveness: 1
- u. Serving: 1

3. Why is Messiah here? What is our purpose?

- a. To serve the sick and oppressed: (36)
- b. Preach and teach the Word: (30)
- c. To worship God: (21)
- d. God's People Reaching Out: (19)
- e. To support one another: (10)
- f. Fellowship: (7)
- g. To provide a Lutheran church: (7)
- h. Administer the Sacraments: (6)
- i. To provide an ELCA presence: (2)
- j. Practice what is preached: (2)
- k. Because we built it: (2)
- l. Planted by God: (2)
- m. To be a beacon of hope: (2)
- n. Active evangelizing: (2)
- o. Christian Education for our youth: (2)
- p. Provide wonderful music: 1
- q. Visible social justice warriors: 1

4. What are Messiah's top three resources and assets?

- a. Congregation with many talents: (39)
- b. Strong sense of service: (30)
- c. Music program: (28)
- d. Location: (25)
- e. Generous congregation: (23)
- f. Building: (22)
- g. Strong leadership and staff: (17)
- h. Fellowship and Love of each other: (7)
- i. Preaching of the Word: (6)
- j. Lutheran Faith tradition: (5)
- k. Youth: (5)
- l. Intelligent faith and education: (3)
- m. Very low debt: (3)
- n. Youth director: (2)
- o. Parsonage: (2)
- p. Church activities: (2)
- q. Fellowship: 1
- r. Communion: 1
- s. God's presence and love: 1
- t. Can-do attitude: 1
- u. Craft groups: 1
- v. Builders: 1
- w. Bible: 1

- x. Trust in our leadership and in God: 1
- y. Good communication foundation (tools): 1

5. *What are Messiah's top three mission priorities?*

- a. Lunches for Learning: (30)
- b. Helping our community: (28)
- c. Kit Ministry: (23)
- d. Helping our world neighbors: (16)
- e. Weekend Food Program: (15)
- f. Helping fellow congregation members: (15)
- g. Ramp Builds: (14)
- h. Disaster Relief: (13)
- i. Quilts, comforters: (12)
- j. Owen House: (11)
- k. LWR: (10)
- l. Outreach: (10)
- m. Preaching the Word: (10)
- n. Youth and youth education: (9)
- o. House of the Harvest and HAP: (8)
- p. Inspiritus: (8)
- q. Worship: (5)
- r. Expand local outreach, youth, diversity: (4)
- s. Teaching: (3)
- t. Provide an inviting environment, fellowship: (2)
- u. Provide worship space: (2)
- v. Music Camp: (2)
- w. Music: (2)
- x. Provide opportunities for people to learn: (2)
- y. Post a list of possible outreach activities: 1
- z. Pray for missionaries: 1
- aa. Habitat for Humanity: 1
- bb. Tax support: 1
- cc. Kishwahilli support: 1
- dd. Serve God and man: 1
- ee. Assistance to others: 1
- ff. All our outreach programs, without priorities: 1
- gg. Provide an ELCA presence: 1
- hh. Provide a weekly "revival": 1
- ii. Reach the diversity of our community: 1
- jj. Financial stewardship and eliminating debt: 1
- kk. Stephen ministries: 1
- ll. Downtown Rescue Mission: 1

6. List five areas that you would like our next pastor focus on in his/her first year at Messiah.

- a. Promote youth education and youth programs: (37)
- b. Get to know members, visitation: (31)
- c. Preach and teach the Word: (20)
- d. Increase membership and worship attendance: (19)
- e. Promote adult education: (17)
- f. Community outreach: (16)
- g. Learn church's tradition, routine and activities: (14)
- h. Congregation, heal divisions, bring us together: (12)
- i. Young families: (8)
- j. Reach out to young adults: (7)
- k. Establish rapport with youth: (7)
- l. Promote volunteers in worship and church admin, lay leadership: (6)
- m. Support our mission statement: (6)
- n. Introduce new ideas, ELCA positions, understand needs of young members: (6)
- o. Continue tradition in music: (6)
- p. Fellowship: (6)
- q. Outreach to housebound: (5)
- r. Counseling: (5)
- s. Youth participation in worship and Sunday School: (5)
- t. Inclusion: (4)
- u. Get youth involved in mission trips: (4)
- v. Effective/memorable sermons: (4)
- w. Worship: (4)
- x. Attend and participate in congregation and youth events: (4)
- y. Ecumenical gatherings, diversity, being open-minded: (4)
- z. Scholarly sermons: (4)
- aa. Promote diversity: (3)
- bb. Be Lutheran but welcoming: (3)
- cc. Provide for family needs and fellowship: (3)
- dd. Participate in community outreach: (3)
- ee. Sermons relevant to current events: (3)
- ff. More youth camps: (3)
- gg. Mission work (local, international): (2)
- hh. Update Confirmation curriculum, teach both years: (2)
- ii. Hire a youth pastor: 2
- jj. Creative, contemporary worship services: (2)
- kk. Develop your own style of worship: (2)
- ll. Faith Formation: 2
- mm. Understand, support our evangelism programs: (2)
- nn. Support traditional Lutheran service/liturgy: (2)
- oo. Add Wednesday eve service: (2)
- pp. Make effective use of our staff: (2)

- qq. Address social injustice: (2)
- rr. Multi-generational ministry in Christian Ed: (2)
- ss. Use new hymnal license and red hymnal: (2)
- tt. Expand our missions: 1
- uu. Be an individual: 1
- vv. Implement true contemporary worship with technology: 1
- ww. Update liturgy and customs in worship: 1
- xx. Be available with regular office hours: 1
- yy. Easy sermons: 1
- zz. Entertaining, happy, uplifting, celebration sermons (not Bible studies): 1
- aaa. No "cerebral" sermons: 1
- bbb. Nurture Leadership skills: 1
- ccc. Study the seasons: 1
- ddd. Encourage baptism: 1
- eee. Rebuild the choir: 1
- fff. Update worship services: 1
- ggg. Make a list of things to improve, repair, consider: 1
- hhh. Be involved in local service projects: 1
- iii. Be involved in MLC music: 1
- jjj. Prayer: 1
- kkk. Consistency: 1
- lll. Relinquish the Presidency: 1
- mmm. Don't waste money on building and signs: 1
- nnn. Minister to the whole congregation: 1
- ooo. Consider adding a Saturday eve service: 1
- ppp. Active in prayer chain: 1
- qqq. Collaborate with outside groups using our building: 1
- rrr. Understand the business side of the church: 1
- sss. Become involved with other Lutheran congregations: 1
- ttt. Make church more handicap accessible: 1
- uuu. Share his/her background and beliefs: 1
- vvv. Develop objectives for future missions: 1
- www. Leadership in post-retirement of mortgages: 1
- xxx. Children programming: 1
- yyy. More town hall meetings: 1
- zzz. Small fellowship groups: 1
- aaaa. Align personnel with missions: 1
- bbbb. Music at Messiah and other performances: 1
- cccc. Embrace social media for connecting to the congregation and community: 1
- dddd. Hire Sara full time: 1
- eeee. Have an Oktoberfest and promote our German heritage: 1

7. List five ways you will support our next Pastor in his/her first year.

- a. Volunteer/participate where asked/needed: (47)

- b. Attend worship regularly: (27)
- c. Pray: 1 (25)
- d. Defend and encourage him/her: (22)
- e. Invite him/her for fellowship: (17)
- f. Listen to his/her new ideas: (16)
- g. Provide feedback: (14)
- h. Give monetarily: (10)
- i. Support new outreach events: (5)
- j. Cards: (3)
- k. Answer questions: (2)
- l. Provide/maintain parsonage: (2)
- m. Counsel anyone in need: 1
- n. Support continuation of MLC Lutheran beliefs: 1
- o. Support programs: 1
- p. Get to know their family: 1
- q. Attend adult education programs: 1
- r. Not expect perfection: 1
- s. Repair property at church: 1
- t. Thank the pastor for being here: 1
- u. Participate in choir: 1
- v. Invite others to join us: 1

8. *Would you be in favor of adding additional ordained staff at Messiah in the next few years? Why, or why not?*

- a. Yes: (57)
- b. Yes, if needed and we can afford it and the congregation is large enough: (13)
- c. Not sure: (2)
- d. Yes, but we should hire a rostered youth leader before a senior pastor: 1
- e. Yes, but youth pastor should be truly dedicated to youth.: 1
- f. Yes, but we should also retain Claire, not replace her: 1
- g. Yes, expand outreach: 1
- h. Yes, but wait for a few years to determine the strengths of our new pastor: 1
- i. No: additional staff does not need to be ordained: 1

9. *In what ways do you see Messiah as a member of the ELCA at the national and synod level?*

- a. Send representatives to synod assemblies: (14)
- b. We need more interaction with the ELCA: (14)
- c. Attend national youth gatherings: (11)
- d. Monetary contributions: (10)
- e. We send quilts to LWR: (10)
- f. No interactions: (8)
- g. Our views are often not well represented by the ELCA: (8)
- h. Kit Ministries: (4)

- i. Allissippi and SESLYO: (4)
- j. We do not see a reciprocal relationship: (2)

10. Please add any additional thoughts on areas not covered by the previous questions.

- a. The next pastor must understand the history of the Bible, the languages, cultures, and teach that in sermons and classes: (5)
- b. We need a pastor with a long-term commitment: (2)
- c. Hope ELCA provides us with a qualified and experienced pastor.
- d. We need better facilities for our youth.
- e. We need to get back together.
- f. I do not want someone whose sermons are “religion-lite”.
- g. I am not interested in attending a Bible 101 study given by someone with less knowledge than me.
- h. We need to be centered on teaching and preaching the Word.
- i. The Transition Team needs to slow down and allow the church to be involved in determining where we want to do via active discussions. We don’t need deadlines and schedules.
- j. We need more diversity.
- k. I am concerned with the liberal vs conservative split in the congregation.
- l. We need an endowment fund.
- m. No political discussions – focus on fellowship and worship.
- n. Why change for changes sake?
- o. A good leader is defined in Timothy 3: 1-7
- p. It would be good if our new pastor could serve as a cantor.
- q. The new pastor should not attempt to advance a political or social agenda.
- r. We need to be able to address sensitive issues openly and inclusively.
- s. We need to figure out how to follow our mission statement more fully: God’s People Reaching Out
- t. Streaming services is cutting our in-person attendance significantly. Do we have the funds to pay two pastors given the inflation rate and recession that may be coming? The new pastor must be brought into how we plan for the future. The new pastor must understand the southern culture.
- u. We need an inspiring, upbeat, energetic leader with a sense of humor.
- v. The new pastor should be a role model.
- w. We need to support youth, but don’t forget the older population (the ones supporting the church).
- x. Bring Logos back.
- y. We don’t need drama. We are Lutherans. We are people of the Word. I don’t care about sex, race, gay or straight, as long as the services remain Lutheran without major changes.
- z. We need to remove the old Lutheran church and add back the new Lutheran church that is able to look at issues differently. We need a rostered individual now, a deacon with a track record of bringing about change, a comprehensive Faith Formation approach.

- aa. We need to get through this transition period without delay. Attendance is stagnating or declining. We are going to be greatly weakened by this and will need an exceptional leader to rebuild.
- bb. We need to use the prayer chain.
- cc. I am hoping that our search is not being rushed.
- dd. Focus on God's mission
- ee. We need diversity.
- ff. Pastor Scott provided a model of how to focus the church and keep away from political agendas.
- gg. Pastor needs energy and no agenda. Christ centered. Team building is important, sermons are not. Be welcoming and energetic, excited about the Word, challenge the congregation, energize us.
- hh. Focus on family – the family of God.
- ii. We need a more youthful pastor, female.
- jj. Please keep the liturgy.
- kk. Welcome diversity.
- ll. Listen to the young adults. We have experienced resistance to new ways of doing things. Pay more attention to the ELCA.
- mm. Break Messiah out of it's mold. But get the opposite sides to focus not on what divides us, but unite us as believers.
- nn. Ready to start functioning as a modern ELCA congregation.