Final Report: Worshiping Community Leaders Survey

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1001 New Worshiping Communities

Worshiping Community Leaders Executive Summary

Worshiping Community Leaders

- Worshiping community leaders* are ***more racially diverse*** than the overall population of PC(USA) pastors.
- Additionally, about half are ***not*** teaching elders in the PC(USA).
- More than half of leaders are ***paid for their work*** leading their community.
- The most common form of leadership training for church planting cited by leaders is ***seminary***.
- Methods of discipleship tend to focus on ***small scale interactions***, including Bible study, small groups, and one-on-one mentoring.

Getting to Know the Worshiping Community

- The majority of communities (57%) meet ***outside traditional church spaces***. The top three alternative spaces are homes (18%), bars or pubs (11%), and coffee shops (9%).
- Twelve of the communities (9%) ***run a business*** as part of their mission.
- Most communities (84%) are meeting at least ***once per week.***
- The median community size is ***33 regular participants***.
- Leaders of new worshiping communities and other expressions of church identify ***building relationships*** as the most important activity for their community, whereas new immigrant fellowships, new church developments, and congregations rate ***worship*** as the most important activity.
- Leaders of non-English speaking communities think their community should engage in ***education***, whereas English-speaking community leaders think it is important for their community to ***build relationships***.
- The people in these worshiping communities are ***younger*** than the typical Presbyterian, and ***more racially diverse***: 68% of the communities have more than 20% racial-ethnic participation.
- Up to 77% of new community participants are also ***new to the denomination***.

Connections with PC(USA) and the Community

- Most of the communities (72%) have ***one or more partner congregations***.
- Community leaders are ***generally satisfied*** with the level of support, accountability, and oversight they are receiving from the denomination.
- The most common way that worshiping communities work together with other community organizations and agencies is to ***provide food and shelter*** for members of the community at large.

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* Because terms used in this summary are defined in the full report, please do not separate and distribute the executive summary separately. Also please note that all findings are reported for those who participated in the study and may not be generalizable to communities who did not participate in the survey.

Worshiping Community Leaders Full Report

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Overview of Study

At the 2012 General Assembly (GA), PC(USA) leaders encouraged Presbyterians to create 1,001 new worshiping communities (NWCs) between 2012 and 2022. The Presbyterian Mission Agency recommended to the 2012 GA that:

> *The GA, in gratitude and response to God for the movement of the Holy Spirit in this time and place: Declare a church wide commitment to ignite a movement that results in the creation of 1001 new worshiping communities in the next ten years; Encourage each GA agency to join in fulfilling this movement; and Encourage each session and mid-council to pray for the fulfillment of God's purpose within this movement and discern and pursue ways to participate in this movement.*

Across the PC(USA), new and varied forms of church are being raised up by leaders seeking to ignite discipleship and transformation. These new worshiping communities have the potential to help the PC(USA) shift from an inward-focused, membership-maintenance model of church to a more outward-focused, creative, and disciple-making model.

Objectives

The main objective of this study is to determine the level of success of the new worshiping communities – are they thriving, what is working for them, and what do they still need in order to better grow in their mission?

Additional objectives include:
- better understanding such existing groups as new immigrant fellowships, new church developments that had previously been started but not yet organized as congregations, and other expressions of church for which little information is available at present
- using findings from this survey to build and maintain a database of these various types of communities (for the sake of brevity, hereafter referred to in this report as either "worshiping communities" or simply "communities")

Study Design and Implementation

Deb Coe, PhD, designed the study in collaboration with other Research Services staff and the clients. Angie Andriot, PhD, implemented the study as the Co-Investigator. A web-based survey was developed, and an invitation and two reminders to take this survey were emailed to the population selected to participate (see below). Additionally, an invitation to complete the survey was posted to the 1001 New Worshiping Communities (1001 NWC) Facebook page. Responses were collected from January 12, 2015 to February 18, 2015.

The Sample

This survey was completed by leaders of new worshiping communities, immigrant fellowships, new church developments, and other expressions of church within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that are either: 1) not fully organized congregations, or 2) recently organized congregations.

Attempts were made to send this survey to the entire known population of worshiping community leaders for whom email addresses were available, via two main channels:

1. Invitations were emailed to a database of all known worshiping community leaders with email addresses (n=457).
2. An invitation to the survey was posted on the 1001 NWC Facebook page on February 10th. At the time of the post, there were 2,699 "likes" to the page; however, it is not known how many of these individuals are leaders of new worshiping communities.

Response Rate: Of the 457 community leaders who were sent the survey, 18 had invalid email addresses, so there were a total of 439 successful email deliveries of the survey link for this group. A total of 143 people from this population completed the survey. The response rate is 31% including the invalid emails, and 33% excluding the invalid emails. Five responses came from the invitation posted to the 1001 NWC Facebook page, but the response rate for this group is unknown (as it is not known how many leaders "like" the page, or how many leaders visited the page while the invitation was posted). All responses were combined for this report (*n*=148).

Methodology

This is a quantitative study supported with qualitative responses. That is, the survey included mostly closed-ended questions which were assigned numeric values, but also included a few open-ended questions to which respondents provided answers in their own words. Data were gathered over a period of four weeks using a web-based survey.

Data Analysis

Survey results have been analyzed for demographic differences to help identify whether there are patterns in worshiping communities or their leaders by the leaders' race, gender, age, and role within the PC(USA). Results are presented as descriptive statistics, and are at times accompanied by respondents' remarks. Where appropriate, quantitative data are analyzed using statistical tests for significance, including chi-square and ANOVA. When differences between groups of respondents are noted in results, significance tests have indicated that these differences are statistically significant at the $p \leq .05$-level. Qualitative data are analyzed using content analysis.

Areas of Investigation

Worshiping Community Leaders
1. Who are leading the communities?
2. What sort of training do community leaders have, and want to have?

Getting to Know the Community
1. What are the various types of communities?
2. What are the communities doing?
3. How are the communities reaching people?
4. In what ways are the communities developing?
5. What are the demographics of the people involved in the communities?

Connections with PC(USA) and the Community
1. How is the PC(USA) helping the communities, and how integrated are the communities into the PC(USA)?

2. In what ways, and to what extent, are the communities engaging in and involved with others beyond their own participants?

Worshiping Community Leaders

In addition to being asked questions about their community, leaders were also asked a series of questions about themselves.

Demographics:

Overall, worshiping community leaders are more racially diverse than the overall population of PC(USA) pastors.[*]

- **Race**: Half the leaders (51%) identify as White. The second largest group of leaders identifies as Hispanic or Latino-a (20%), followed by Asian(13%), Black or African American (11%), Middle Eastern (3%), and "other" race (4%). In comparison, 86% of active PC(USA) pastors identify as White.
- **Gender**: Twenty-nine percent of the leaders are female. In comparison, 35% of active PC(USA) pastors are women.
- **Status**: Worshiping community leaders were asked which status(es) they have in the PC(USA), and were able to select more than one (see Figure 1). Half of the respondents (55%) are teaching elders, and 43% of these teaching elders (24% of total respondents) are in their first call. About one in five are ruling elders (19%).

Figure 1: Status in PC(USA)

■ Leader □ Co-leader

	Leader	Co-leader
Previously Ordained	31%	13%
First Call	24%	15%
Ordained in Another Denomination	14%	13%
Not Ordained	12%	38%
Commissioned by Presbytery	12%	2%
Not Commissioned by Presbytery	7%	21%

PC(USA) Teaching Elder   PC(USA) Ruling Elder
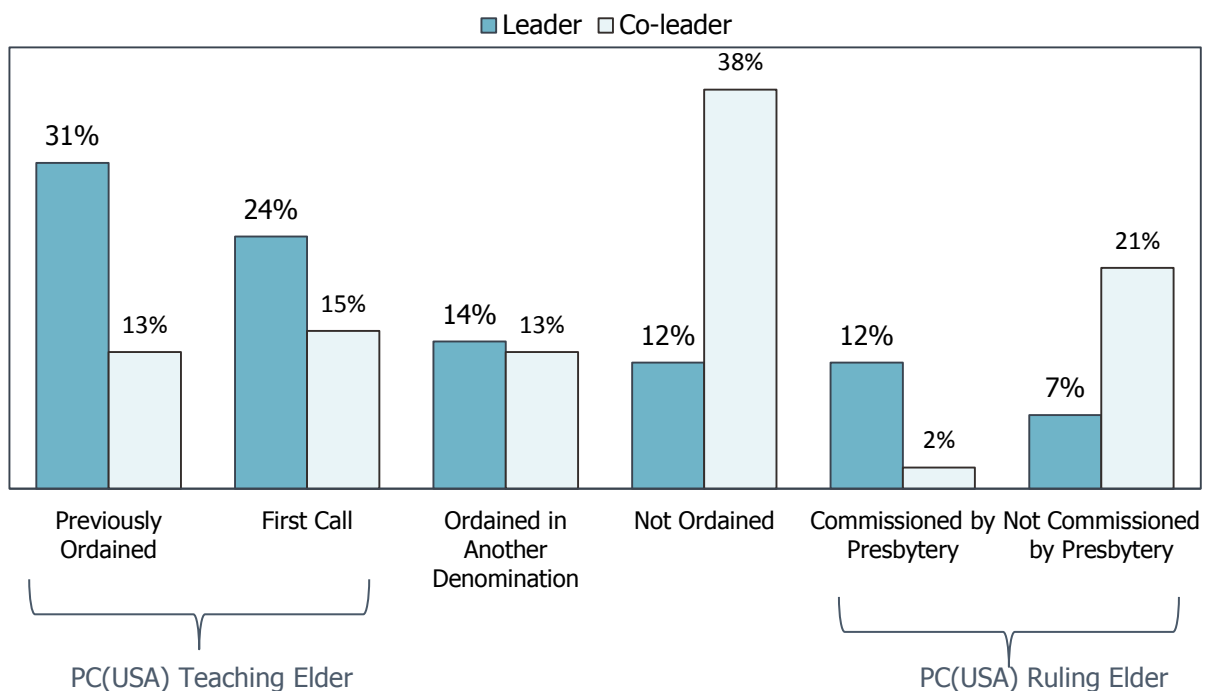
Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

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[*] All data on the overall Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) come from *2013 Comparative Statistics*, based on data from the Office of the General Assembly.

Forty-one percent of the leaders have a co-leader. Figure 1 shows which PC(USA) status(es) co-leaders of worshiping communities ho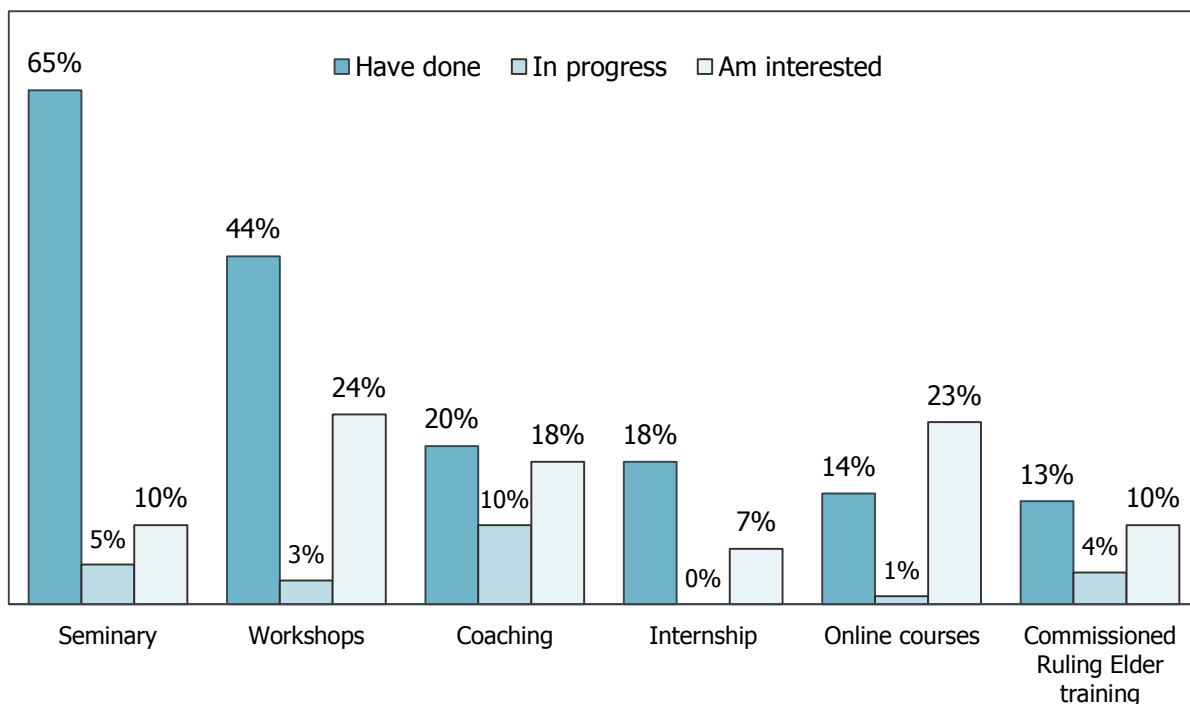ld. The most common status is "not ordained" (38%), followed by "ruling elder not commissioned by a presbytery" (21%). This differs from leaders, who are more frequently ordained and have experience serving a church. However, 45% of community leaders are **not** PC(USA) teaching elders.

More than half of leaders are paid for their work leading their community. Of these, 32% are paid for full-time work and 36% are paid for part-time work. Additionally, 32% are on the staff of another congregation in addition to their worshiping community. There is, however, no significant correlation between being unpaid for work as a worshiping community leader and being on the staff of another congregation.

Leadership Training

The most common form of leadership training for church planting cited by leaders is seminary (65%), followed by workshops (44%) (Figure 2). The least common are online courses (14%) and commissioned ruling elder training (13%). Leaders are most interested in attending workshops (24%) and online courses (23%). It may not be a coincidence that these two options require the least amount of time and travel.

Figure 2: Leadership Training

Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages may add up to more than 100%

Additionally, 47% of respondents have had some form of cultural proficiency training (Figure 3). The most common form of training is cultural sensitivity (76%). About half have had anti-racism training and about half have had training specific to racial-ethnic and/or new immigrant leadership development. Many have participated in more than one of these types of training. Of those who wrote in other options, three have degrees in

fields that specifically teach cultural proficiency (sociology, anthropology, and social work), and one has training in LGBTQ sensitivity.

Figure 3: Cultural Proficiency Training
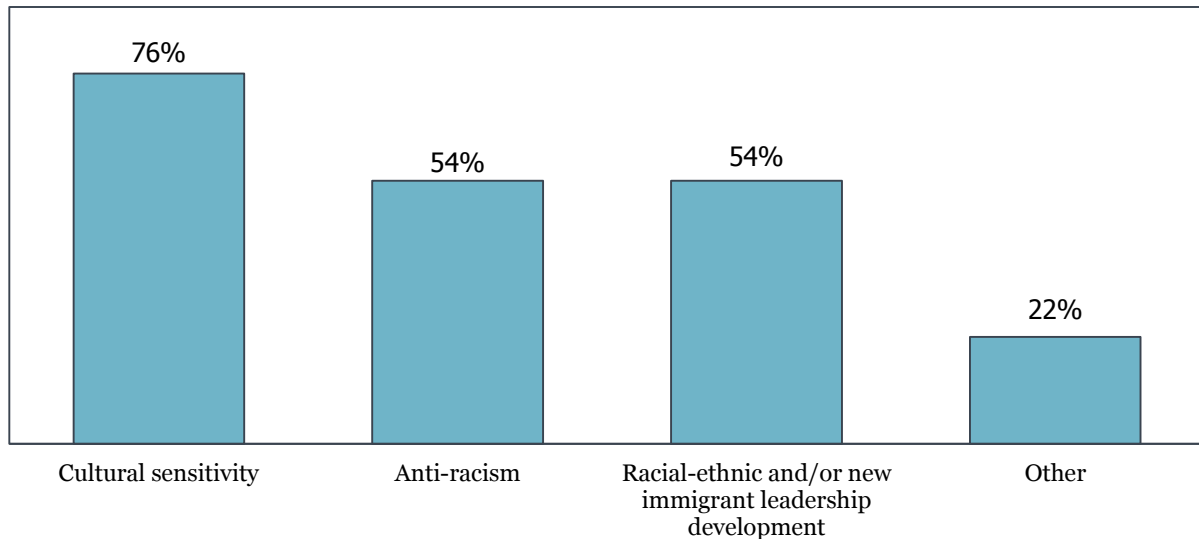
Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages may add up to more than 100%

Leaders were also asked if they would be interested in any of five types of education on church planting if offered by PC(USA) seminaries: D.Min., M.Div., online courses, face-to-face courses, and a certificate (Figure 4). Seventy-one percent express interest in at least one option (or in hearing more). The most commonly selected option is a D.Min. program (26%), whereas the least-selected option is the M.Div. (9%).

Figure 4: Interest in PC(USA) Seminary Offerings
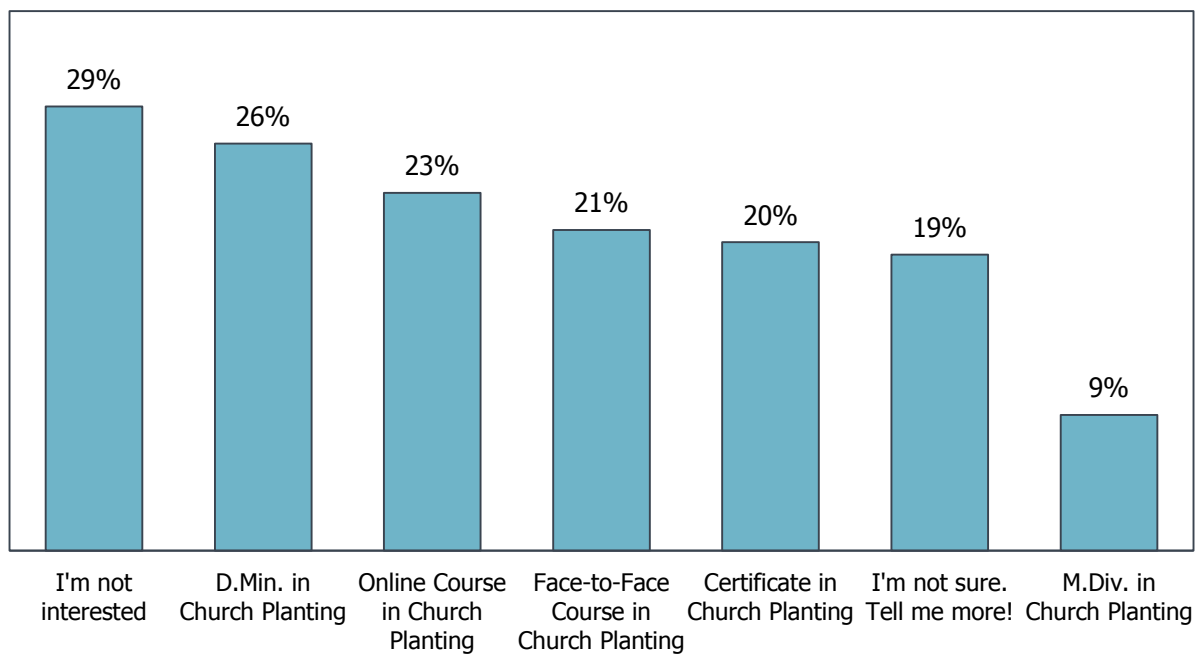
Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages may add up to more than 100%

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Finally, respondents were asked how they disciple people in their worshiping community and offer spiritual growth opportunities (Figure 5). ***The responses indicate a favoring of the use of small groups and individual interactions***; the most common methods of discipleship include Bible study, small groups, and one-on-one mentoring.

Figure 5: Discipleship and Spiritual Opportunities Offered by the Worshiping Community
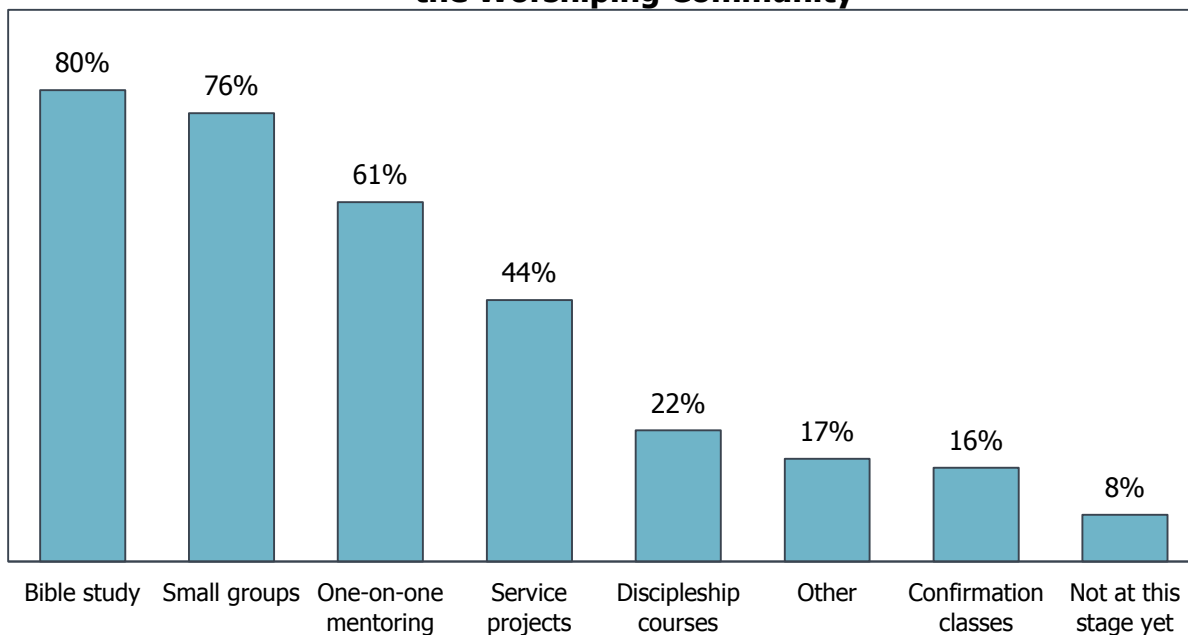
*Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages add up to more than 100%

Of those worshiping communities that provide methods of discipleship or spiritual opportunities not listed in the survey, two main categories of written-in responses emerge: **arts** and **community**. Five leaders write about their use of the arts to provide discipleship and spiritual opportunities. One leader calls this "collaborative artistic engagement in worship." Additionally, three leaders disciple through community building and fostering togetherness. As one leader explains, "we hang out… it's simple, that's why it works."

Getting to Know the Worshiping Communities

Respondents were asked a series of questions about their community's identity, location, activities, and members.

Types of Communities

Of the 148 survey respondents, slightly over half (53%) are leaders of new worshiping communities. The rest lead new church developments (18%), new immigrant fellowships (9%), congregations (8%), and other expressions of church (12%). (See Figure 6.)

Figure 6: Type of Worshiping Community

- New worshiping community
- New church development
- New immigrant fellowship
- Congregation
- Other expression of church

53%
18%
9%
8%
12%
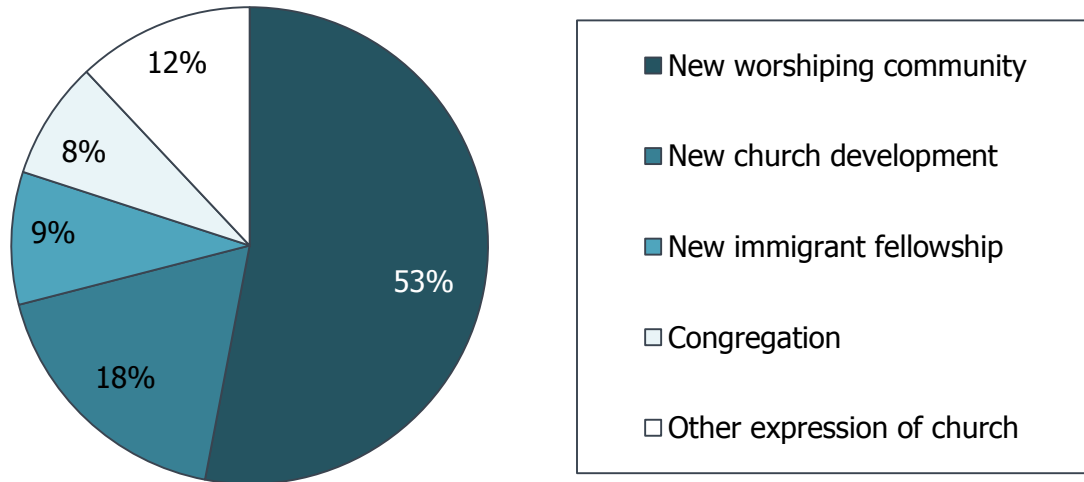
Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

Sixteen of the 17 people who selected "other expressions of church" wrote in a description of their community. Of these, four use the term "mission" or "missional" in their description, indicating that their community is primarily defined by its mission work. Six describe their community in terms of its participants – these include communities dedicated to students (*n*=3), artists, immigrants in prison, and "former patients and their families, psychiatric social workers or ordinary persons."

Worshiping community leaders were asked two separate survey questions about their self-identities. The first question asks whether their community has been formally organized as a PC(USA) congregation, and the second question asks what term *best* describes how their community identifies itself. Fifteen percent of leaders (n=21) report that their worshiping community has been formally organized as a PC(USA) congregation. However, only 10 leaders claim that the term "congregation" best describes their worshiping community (Figure 7). Only four communities that are formally organized as PC(USA) congregations actually self-identify as such. This indicates that a community's self-identification as a congregation is not dependent upon formal organization by PC(USA).

Figure 7: Communities in Which Leaders Report Being Formally Organized as a Congregation Versus Those Claiming "Congregation" Best Describes How Their Community Self-Identifies

Formally Organized as PC(USA) Congregation (*n*=21)

n=4

Self-Identifies as Congregation (*n*=10)
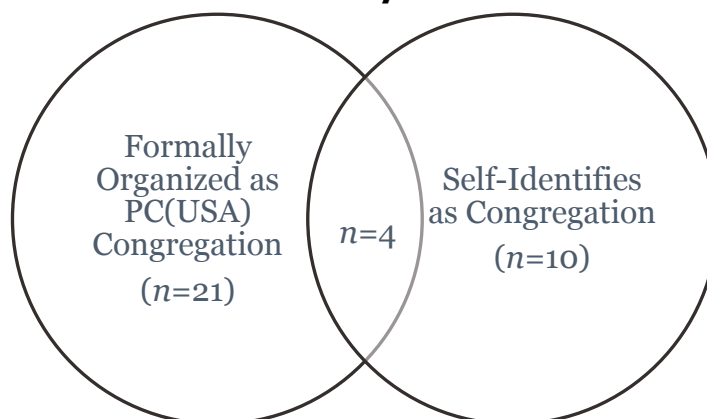
Where Worshiping Communities Meet

Close to half of the communities are located in urban areas (48%), followed by suburban communities (22%). Figure 8 shows a breakdown of the locations.

Figure 8: Where Worshiping Communities are Located
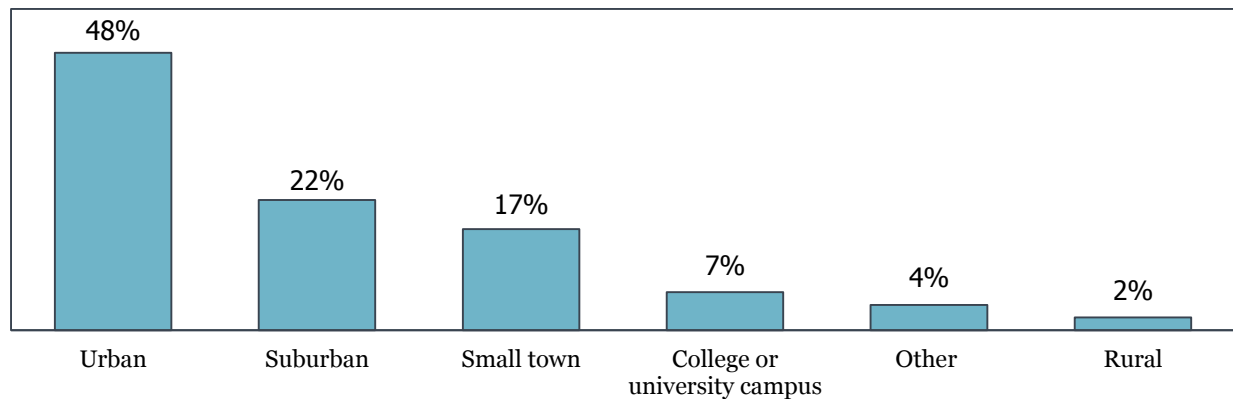
Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

The majority (80%) of the communities surveyed have a regular gathering space (see Figure 9). Of the ten types of spaces asked about in the survey, the most common gathering space is one provided by a PC(USA) congregation (43%). This is followed by a person's home (18%) a bar or pub (11%), and a coffee shop (9%). The least common gathering spaces from those listed in the survey are movie theaters (2%), community centers or libraries (4%), and restaurants (5%).

However, 34% of respondents state that they gather in another type of space not listed in the survey. Of these respondents, 19% meet in commercial spaces, and 11% meet outdoors in parks.

Figure 9: Types of Locations in Which Worshiping Communities Meet
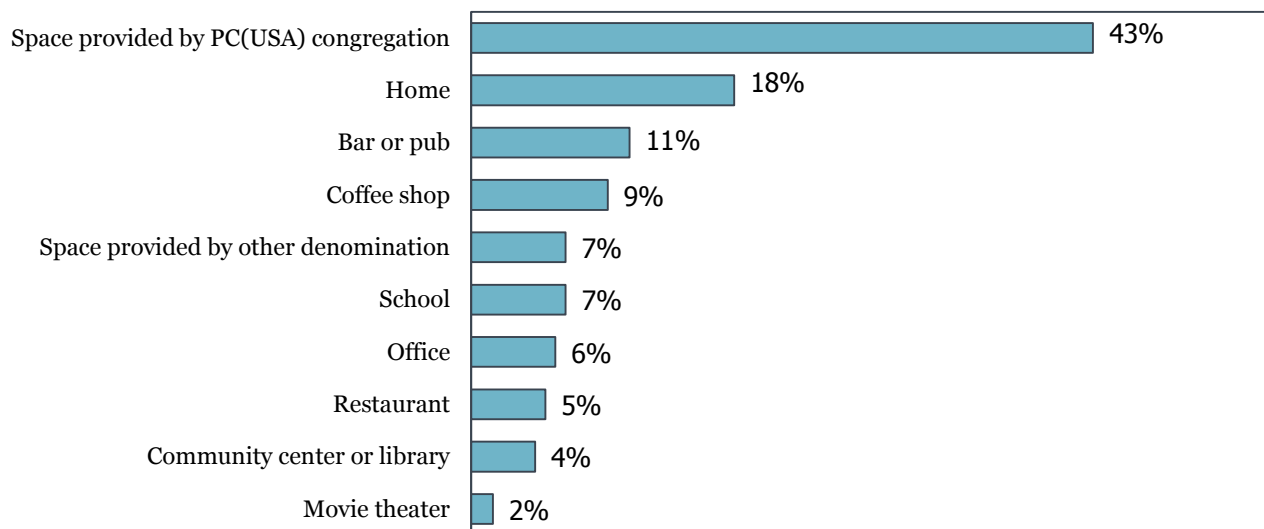
* *Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages add up to more than 100%*

Twelve of the communities in the sample (9%) run a business as part of their mission:

- coffee shop (*n*=3)
- gym
- fair trade shop/bookstore
- foundation
- food pantry
- food pantry/community closet/community center
- Korean language school
- nonprofit training group
- tea bar
- non-profit brewery (in the works)

What Communities Do

Most communities (84%) meet at least once per week (Figure 10), and the number of participants ranges from 4-900. The median community size is 33 regular participants.

Figure 10: How Frequently the Community Meets

Pie chart segments: 9%, 75%, 7%, 5%, 4%

Legend:
- More than once a week
- Weekly
- Biweekly or twice a month
- Monthly
- Other
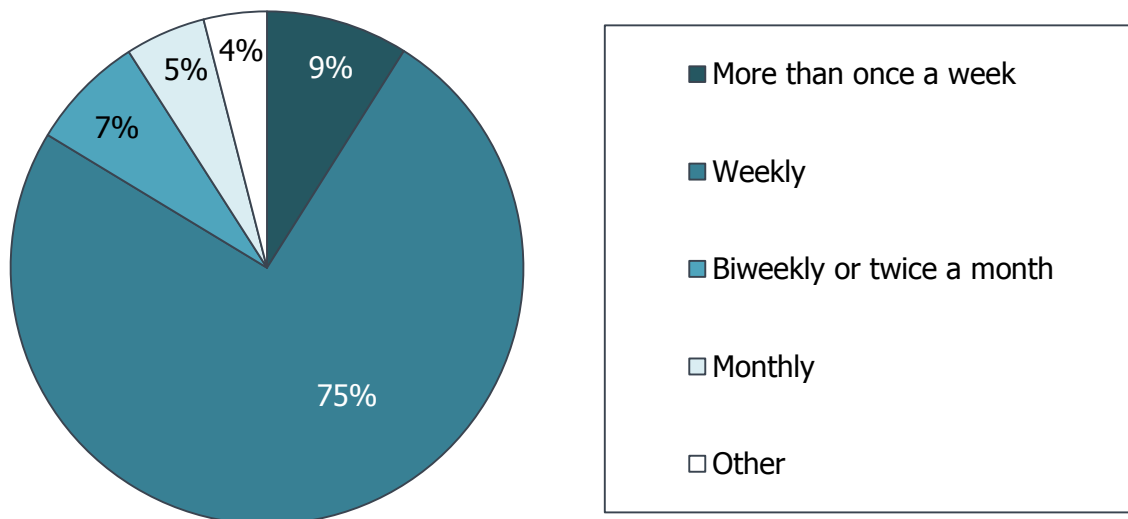
Gatherings are typically smaller than the community size, with a median typical gathering of 26. Typical gatherings range from 1-250 people, and the largest reported gathering is 550 participants.

The three largest communities, measured by number of regular participants and typical gathering size, are *Big Table*, *Level Ground*, and *We Collide*. These communities share some things in common:

- ***Website*** – All three communities have attractive, detailed, and up-to-date websites. In comparison, 54% of the communities in the sample have websites.
- ***Distributed community*** — Two of the three communities have a community that is not geographically bound; instead they are bound by a shared commitment to a concept. In the case of *Big Table*, it is "to see the lives of those working in the restaurant and hospitality industry transformed by building community around shared meals and caring for those in crisis, transition, or falling through the cracks." In the case of *Level Ground*, it is to "use art to create safe space for dialogue about faith, gender, and sexuality." Although *We Collide* is not a distributed community, they have an active blog with readers from across the country.
- ***Mission orientation*** — All three communities have clear mission statements, and the foundation of their community is to engage in missional work, be it to create elaborate dinners in order to learn the needs of the community and provide follow-up care, to organize film festivals as a means of dialogue, or to organize conferences for women seeking to "collide" with Jesus.

Respondents were asked to rate how important seven specific activities are to their community, on a scale of 1-7, with greater numbers equaling greater importance. Figure 11 shows the average score for each activity.

Figure 11: Importance of Activity to Worshiping Community
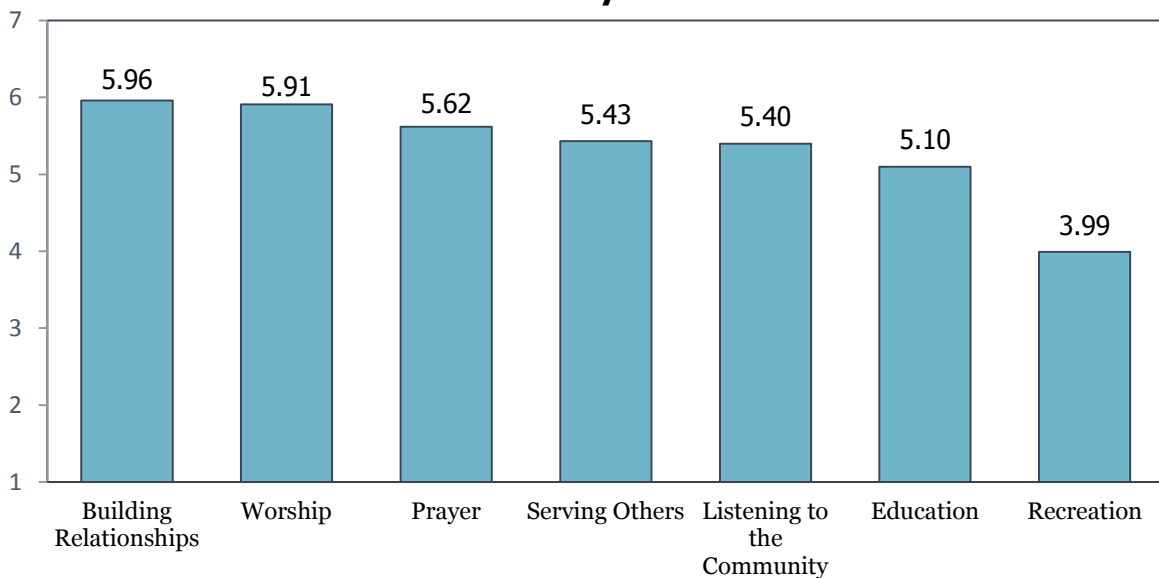
Overall, respondents rate building relationships and worshiping as the most important activities, and education and recreation as the least important activities, for their community. Recreation is significantly less important to respondents than the other activities. These results do not differ by community size or age; however, they do differ by type of community.

New worshiping communities and other expressions of church rate ***building relationships*** as the most important activity, whereas new immigrant fellowships, new church developments, and congregations rate ***worship*** as the most important activity.

Responses also differ by the primary language of the community. Leaders of non-English speaking communities state that it is important that their community engage in **education**, whereas leaders of English-speaking communities feel that it is important that their community **build relationships**. Additionally, new worshiping communities and new expressions of church, which most value **building relationships**, have more English-speaking communities than the other types of worshiping communities surveyed.

Respondents were also asked about whether their community offers the Lord's Supper (Figure 12). Overall, 80% of these communities are offering the Lord's Supper.

Figure 12: How Frequently Communities Offer the Lord's Supper
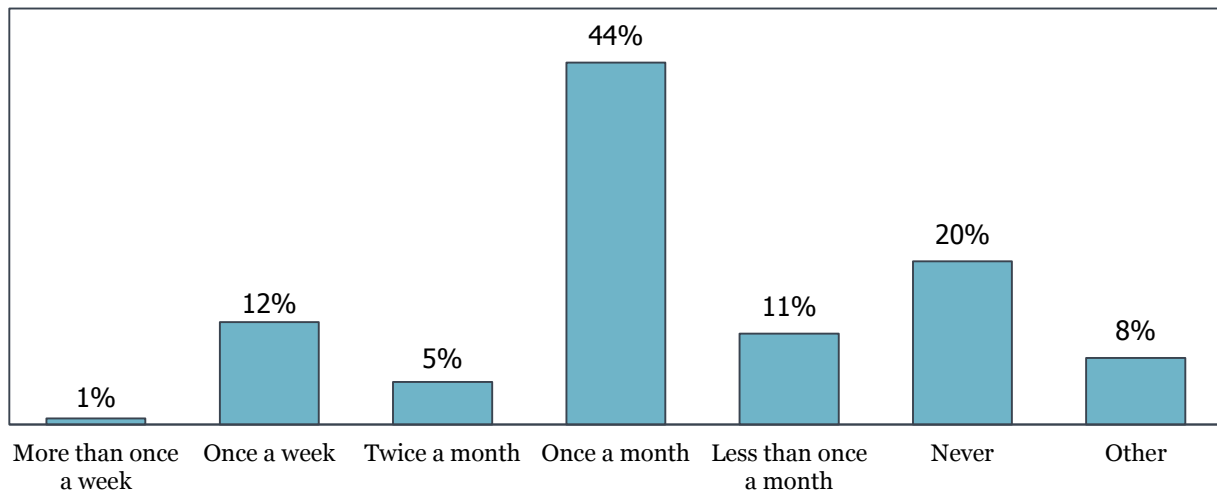
Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

The Lord's Supper is most frequently offered once a month and only one congregation offers it more than once a week. Of the 11 respondents who selected "other," four communities offer the Lord's Supper quarterly. The Lord's Supper is most commonly administered by a teaching elder affiliated with the community (see Figure 13).

Figure 13: Who Administers the Lord's Supper

Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

RESEARCH SERVICES
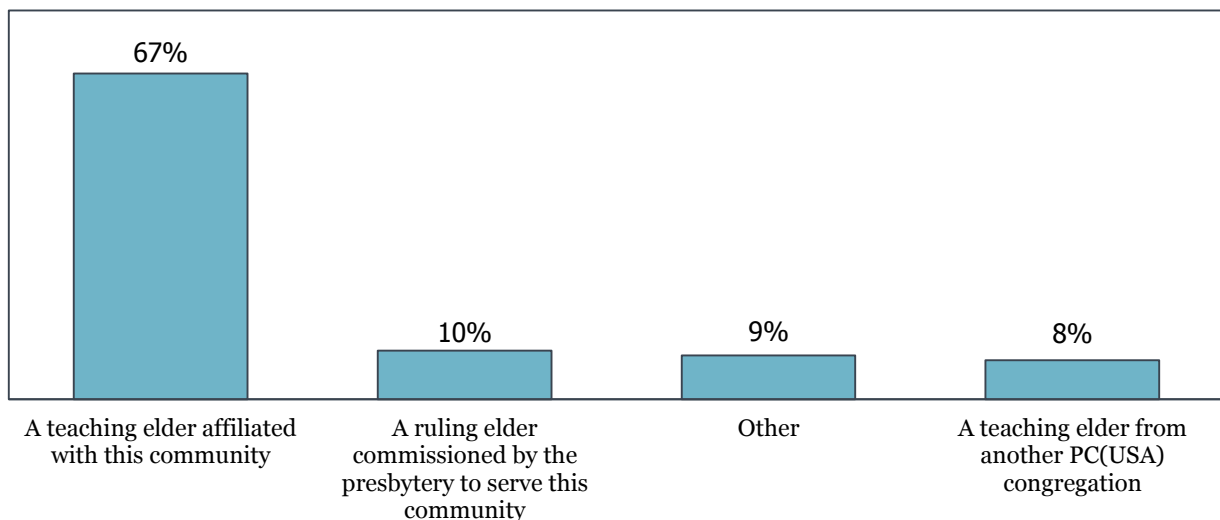
Leaders who report that their community does not offer the Lord's Supper were asked why not.Fifteen of these 27 leaders(56%) answer that their community is not at this stage yet; eight say their communities do not have anyone qualified to administer the sacraments; three report their communities receive communion at nearby churches; and one says their community does not see a need to offer the Lord's Supper.

When asked to describe how they administer the Lord's Supper, 103 respondents wrote answers. The vast majority of respondents mention "intinction," "traditional," or otherwise describe standard methods of either passing the wine/juice and bread/wafers, or having congregants come to the communion table. However, one leader stated that their community administers communion "always in a mason jar, Appalachian style." Five communities administer communion as part of a larger shared meal, around a table. One group calls this "Dinner Church."

Respondents were also asked whether their community offers the sacrament of baptism. More communities are offering the Lord's Supper than baptism. Overall, 54% of communities are offering baptisms, and 84% of those communities have performed a baptism within the last year. The median number of overall baptisms performed in the last year is four total; within this total, there is a median of two adults and two children age 12 and younger.

Baptisms are most commonly administered by a teaching elder affiliated with the community (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Who Administers Baptisms
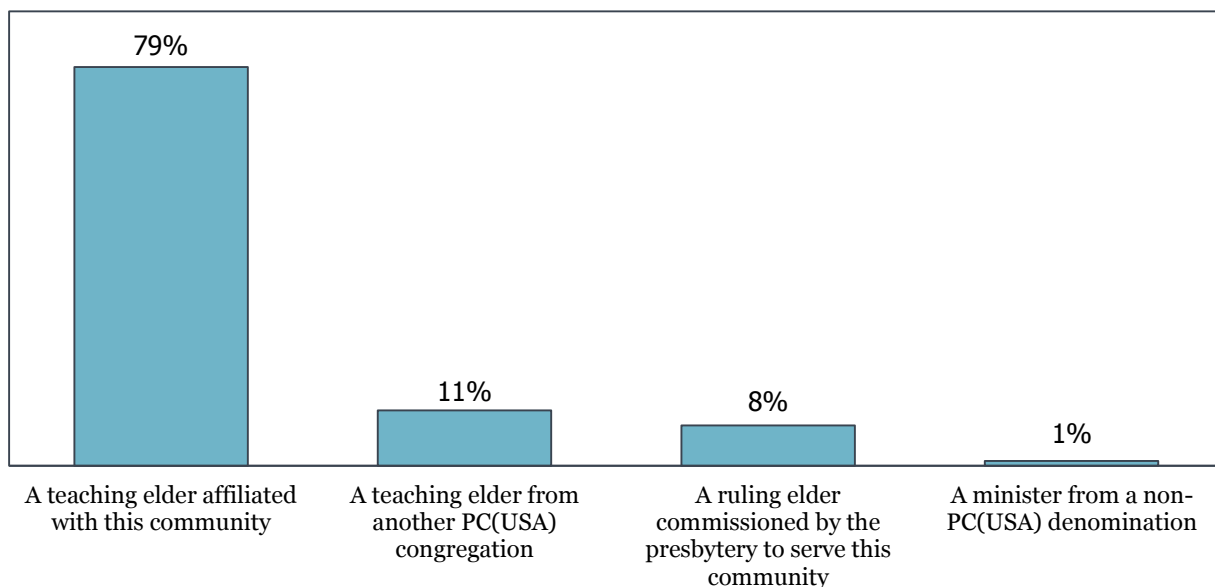
*Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

When asked why a community does not offer baptism, 36 of the 63 communities who do not (57%) answered that they are not at this stage yet, and in 11 of the communities (18%), all participants to date have been baptized. Additionally, seven do not have anyone qualified to administer (11%), and one does not see a need.

The People in the Worshiping Community

Leaders were asked to provide information on what percentage of their community fell into certain age ranges: 12 and under*, 13-18, 19-39, 40-64, and 65+. ***The people in these worshiping communities are younger than the typical Presbyterian.***

Figure 15 presents the median age distribution of community participants. The largest age group is 19-39 years old, with 43% of participants falling into this age range. In comparison, the largest age group for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is over 65 years old, with 32% of members falling within this age range.[†] Half (50%) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is over the age of 55, whereas nearly two-thirds (64%) of worshiping community participants are under the age of 40.

Figure 15: Age Distribution of Participants in Worshiping Communities Versus Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
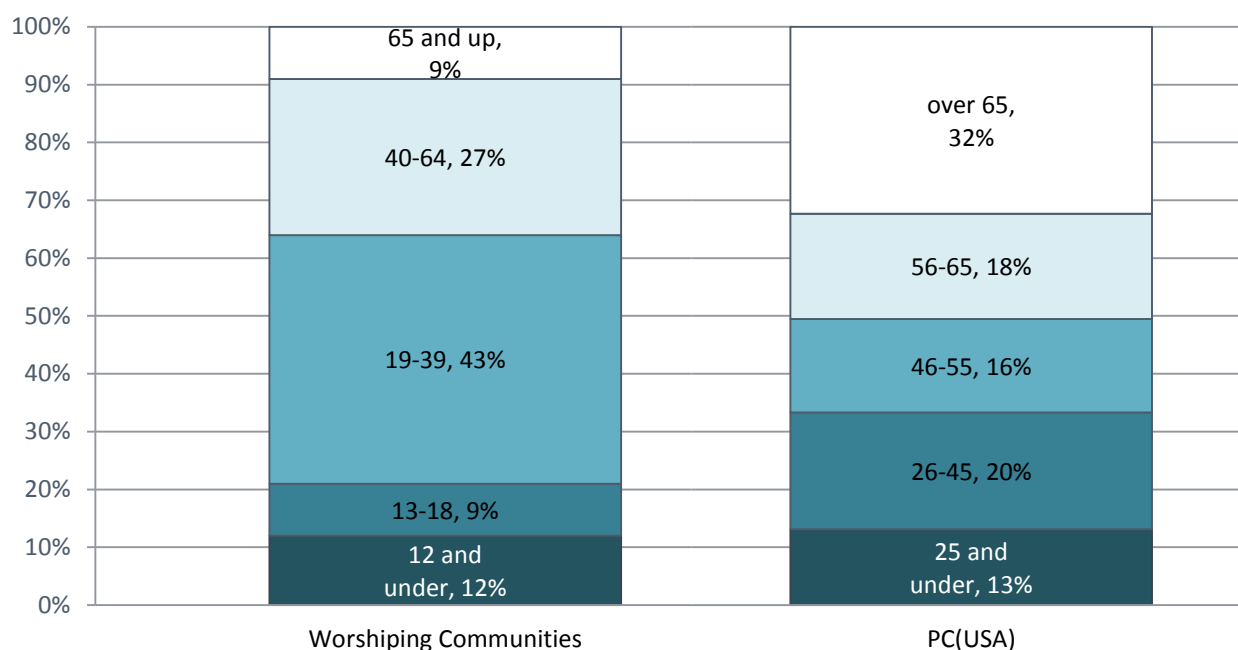
*Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

Leaders were also asked to provide information on what percentage of their community falls into certain racial-ethnic categories. Figure 16 presents the racial-ethnic distribution of community participants. The population of these worshiping communities is much more diverse than the PC(USA) as a whole. ***Fifty-three percent of the members in these communities are racial-ethnic, compared to only 8% of the PC(USA).***

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* The survey question actually asks about participants "under 12," thus not giving an option for submitting information about 12-year-old participants. This category has been recoded to "ages 12 and under," with the assumption that people would have included 12-year-old participants in this category rather than the next one up: "13-18." This problem with the survey instrument has been fixed for future respondents.
† The Office of the General Assembly gathers age information about members using the following age ranges: 25 and under, 26-45, 46-55, 56-65 and over 65.

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Figure 16: Percentage of Participants in Each Racial-Ethnic Group

Racial-Ethnic Group	Percentage
White	47%
Hispanic/Latino-a	18%
Asian**	12%
Black or African American	10%
African Immigrant	7%
Middle Eastern	4%
Multiracial	2%
Other	1%
Native American	0%
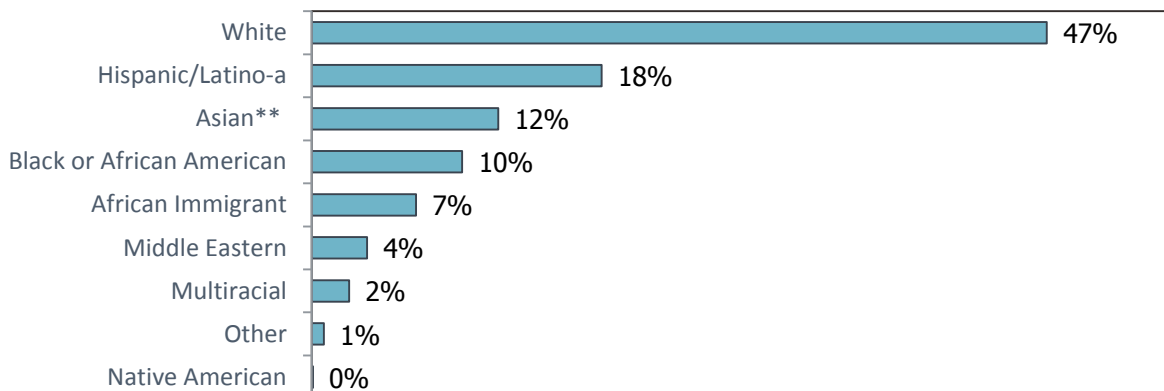
Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%
*** About half (of Asian community participants (6%) are Korean.*

Figure 17 shows the percentage of worshiping communities vs PC(USA) congregations that have 80% or more participants or members in each race-ethnicity. Worshiping communities are more diverse than PC(USA) congregations. Although the overall racial distribution of these communities is more diverse than the PC(USA) as a whole, there is still some racial segregation; 34% of leaders report that their community has **no racial diversity** *(i.e., they are comprised entirely of participants from a single race-ethnicity).*

Figure 17: Percentage of Communities with 80% or More Participants in Each Race-Ethnicity

□ Worshiping Communities   ■ PC(USA) Congregations

Race-Ethnicity	Worshiping Communities	PC(USA) Congregations
White	32%	87%
Hispanic/Latino-a	17%	3%
Asian	11%	2%
African Immigrant	7%	0%
Black or African American	3%	4%
Middle Eastern	2%	0%
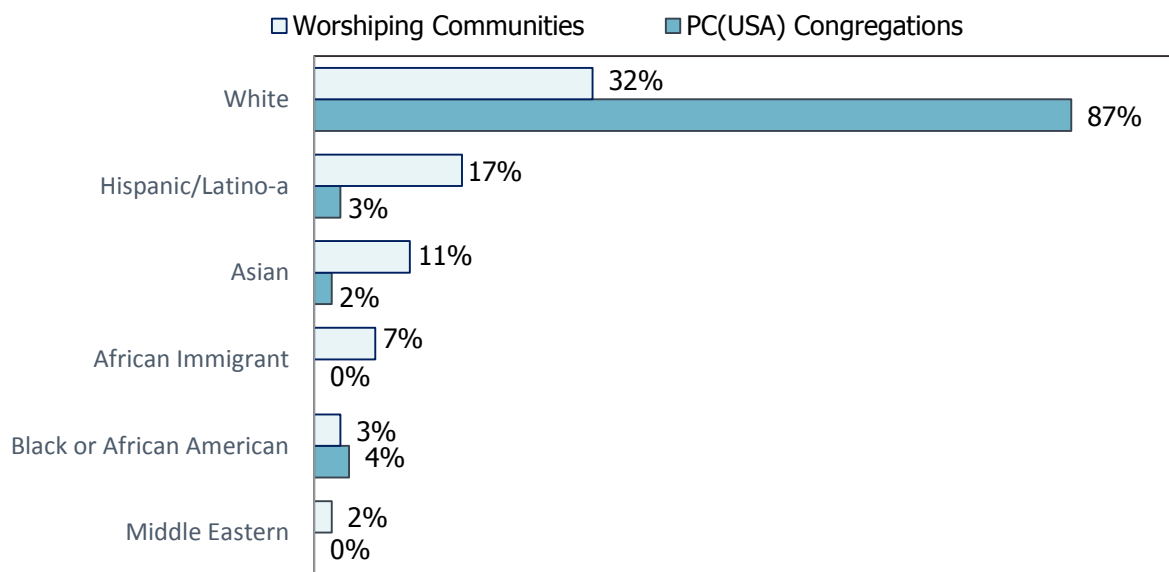
Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%
*** PC(USA) data does not include information on multiracial members or members of "other" race-ethnicities. These two categories, combined with American Indian, make up less than 2% of worshiping communities and are not shown in the chart.*

Sixty-eight percent of the worshiping communities have more than 20% racial-ethnic participation. In comparison, only 13% of Presbyterian congregations that reported racial-ethnic data in 2013 had more than 20% racial-ethnic membership. These communities are bringing greater diversity to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Community leaders have also seen the Holy Spirit at work in this increasingly diverse environment. For example, one leader saw the Holy Spirit "healing divisions and bringing unity between people, races, sexual orientations, genders, and denominations." Another saw it "in bringing more than 12 nations together in worship."

The majority of the communities are English-speaking (Figure 18). However, **the three most common languages spoken within PC(USA) congregations (English, Spanish, and Korean) are the primary language in only 86% of the communities represented in this sample**.

Figure 18: Primary Language of the Majority of Participants in Community
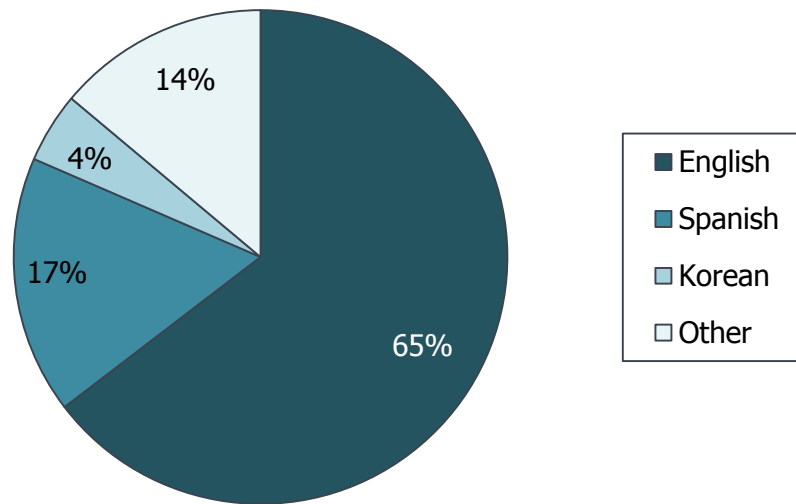
Of the 14% of respondents who selected an "other" language spoken by the majority of community participants, two stated that their communities are bilingual (English and Korean) and one stated they are an international community speaking many languages. The rest of the respondents reported the following as their other languages (listed here as they were written by the respondent:

- Anuak (1)
- Arabic (3)
- Chin/Burmese
- French
- Indian
- Mizo
- Nuer
- Portuguese (2)
- Indian
- Swahili
- Tagalog
- Twi (2)
- Vietnamese

Figure 19 shows the overall previous church involvement of participants in these worshiping communities. Previous church involvement varies widely among participants in these communities; however the most common category is participants who previously participated in a church of another denomination. Leaders were asked what percentage of their community falls into the following categories (see Figure 19).

Figure 19: Previous Church Involvement among Community Participants

Category	Percentage
Participated in a church of another denomination	33%
Dechurched**	20%
Unchurched**	17%
Moved from another PC(USA) congregation	15%
Currently attending another PC(USA) congregation	8%
Were of a non-Christian faith	7%
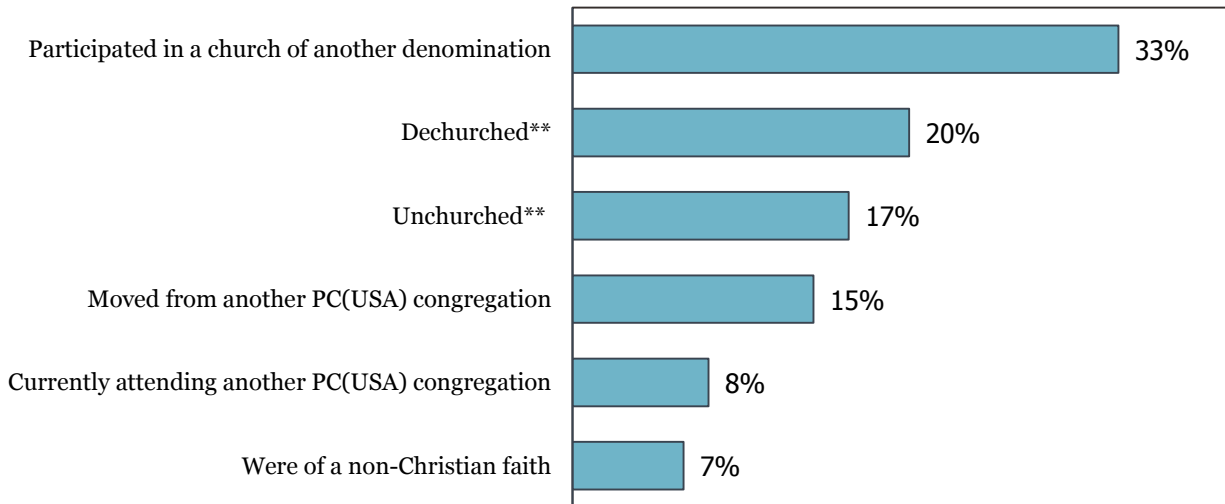
*** Dechurched refers to individuals who have not attended church within the last 5 years, and unchurched refers to individuals who did not previously have a faith affiliation.*

Twenty-three percent of community participants were already attending a PC(USA) congregation before joining their community. This means that up to ***seventy-seven percent of new community participants are also new to the denomination.*** This indicates that the 1001 New Worshiping Communities movement is potentially bringing more people into the Presbyterian fold, and not just moving members around.

In fact, when leaders were asked where they have seen the Holy Spirit at work in their community, many noted their community's ability to bring the unchurched and de-churched into their community–and that this process sometimes requires healing work, as many de-churched are hurt by past church experiences:

> *"Many in our community have been quite wounded by their experiences with churches, so one of the biggest things is that the Spirit has brought this group together and many of them (including myself!) are working towards healing those wounds…"*

> *"People who have completely given up on church and mostly given up on God are discovering a renewed passion for their relationship with God and growing in their faith."*

> *"People are getting connected with us and participating in worship and mission after many years of giving up on the church."*

> *"I've seen people who didn't want anything to do with 'God' spend time talking about God and coming back over and over again to the worshiping community."*

Although half of the communities have 10% or fewer participants currently attending another PC(USA) congregation, many leaders report that their participants do not consider the worshiping community to be their primary expression of church (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Participants Who Consider This Community Their Primary Expression of Church

- All: 39%
- Most: 32%
- Many: 12%
- Some: 14%
- None: 3%
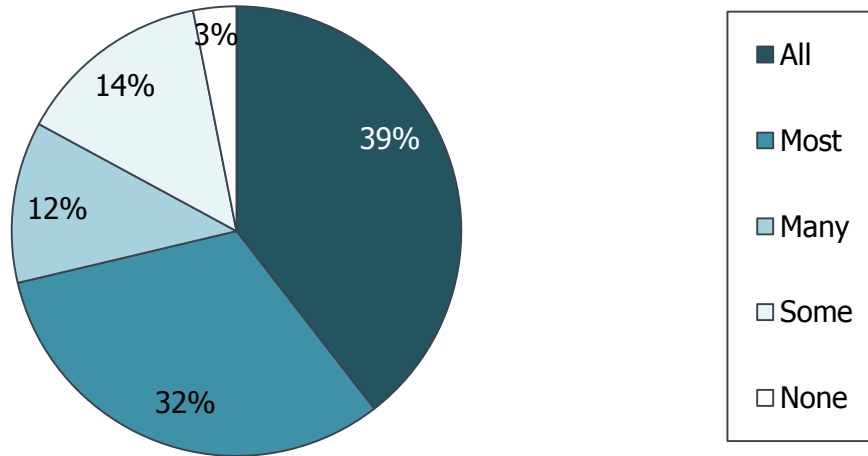
Connections with PC(USA) and Others

Respondents were asked questions regarding their community's connections with the PC(USA), with other communities and organizations, and with the general public.

Connections with PC(USA)

New worshiping communities are generally operating with at least some support; *72% of the communities have one or more partner congregations*. They also receive support from various other sources (Figure 21). It is worth noting that not every leader who has a partner congregation identifies it as a source of support. This could be because they were only considering financial support when answering the question, but it could also indicate that some partner congregations are not supporting their worshiping communities to the leader's satisfaction.

Figure 21: Sources of Support for Communities
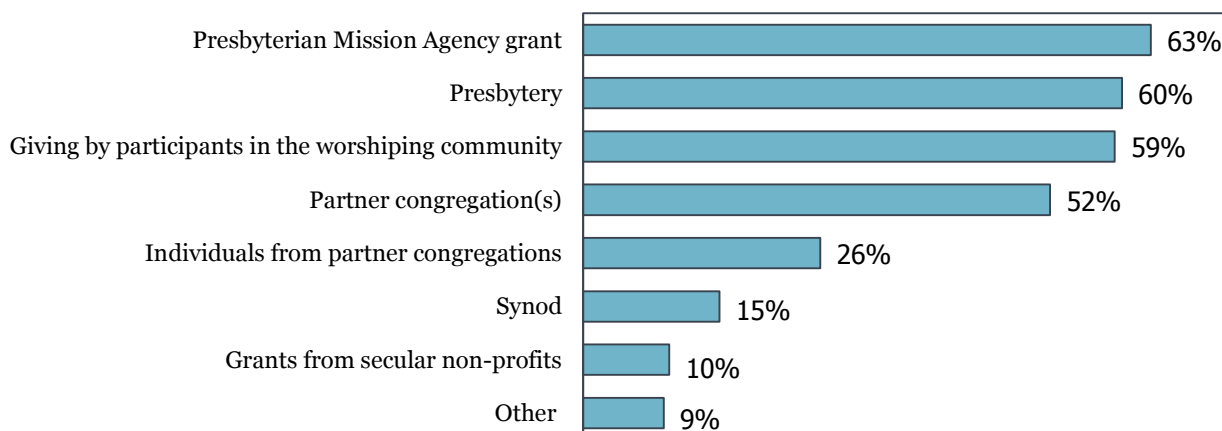
- Presbyterian Mission Agency grant: 63%
- Presbytery: 60%
- Giving by participants in the worshiping community: 59%
- Partner congregation(s): 52%
- Individuals from partner congregations: 26%
- Synod: 15%
- Grants from secular non-profits: 10%
- Other: 9%

*Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages add up to more than 100%

Those who received grants are generally satisfied with the experience. Respondents are also generally satisfied with the level of acceptance their community receives from their presbytery.

In addition to being supported, communities have sources of oversight or accountability; only 8% of communities have no one to provide oversight or accountability. The most common source of accountability is a designated committee of a presbytery or a session of a partner congregation (Figure 22).
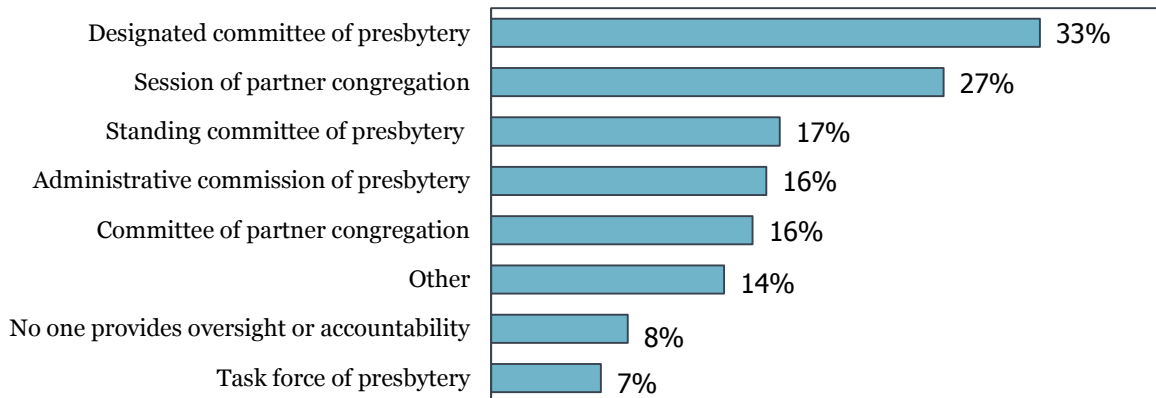
Figure 22: Sources of Oversight or Accountability for Worshiping Communities

Source	Percentage
Designated committee of presbytery	33%
Session of partner congregation	27%
Standing committee of presbytery	17%
Administrative commission of presbytery	16%
Committee of partner congregation	16%
Other	14%
No one provides oversight or accountability	8%
Task force of presbytery	7%

Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages add up to more than 100%

The most common 1001 NWC resource used by the community leaders is the 1001 NWC website; 82% of leaders have used this resource (Figure 23). In comparison, just over half have used *Starting New Worshiping Communities,* 46% have used coaching, 43% have used the 1001 NWC Facebook page, and 28% have attended an Evangelism and Church Growth (ECG) conference. One-fourth or fewer have used each of the other resources.

Figure 23: 1001 NWC Resources Used by Worshiping Community Leaders
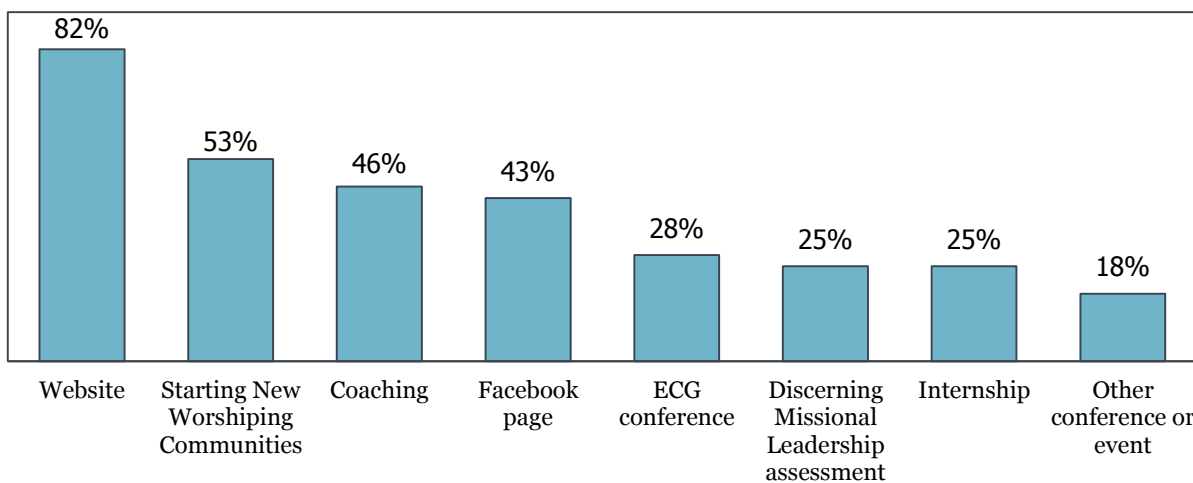
Resource	Percentage
Website	82%
Starting New Worshiping Communities	53%
Coaching	46%
Facebook page	43%
ECG conference	28%
Discerning Missional Leadership assessment	25%
Internship	25%
Other conference or event	18%

Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages add up to more than 100%

RESEARCH SERVICES

When asked what other forms of support community leaders would like to see from the Presbyterian Mission Agency, 35% mention greater financial assistance. The second most common request is for pr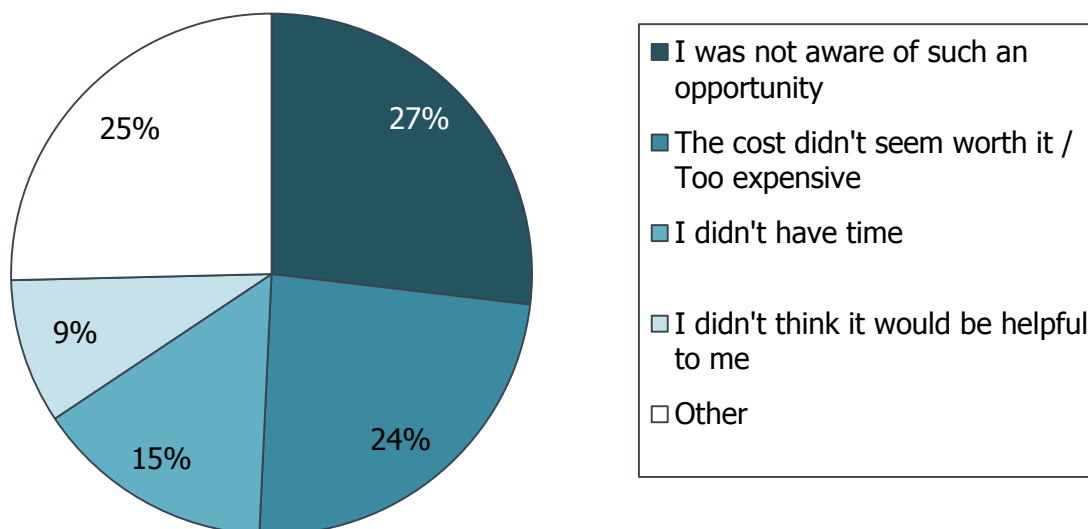ayer, followed closely by more informational resources (and in other languages – specifically Spanish). Leaders also mention emotional support, as well as shows of support on social media. For example, one leader says:

> *I loved that recipe book thing!!!! Those are great. Honestly, grants. I hate to say it but help = money. Listen to my stories, like my stuff on Facebook, keep doing videos!!! And for goodness sake, let's move on from the hullabaloo that happened. Forgive them and let's move on.*

Of the 46% of respondents who have had a coach, 84% were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their experience. Of those who have not had a coach, reasons are varied. (See Figure 24 for more details.)

Figure 24: Reasons for Not Having a Coach

Legend:
- I was not aware of such an opportunity
- The cost didn't seem worth it / Too expensive
- I didn't have time
- I didn't think it would be helpful to me
- Other

Of the respondents who wrote in reasons for not having a coach, one leader says they were offered one, but were never contacted. Another states, "I began the process but it never materialized." And finally: "My limited experiences of the coaches was that they were less far along than our leadership team in understanding how to proceed."

Of the 25% of respondents who have participated in a Discerning Missional Leadership assessment, 80% were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the assessment experience. Of those who have not had an assessment, over half were not aware of such an opportunity (Figure 25).

Figure 25: Reasons for Not Participating in a Discerning Missional Leadership Assessment

Legend:
- I was not aware of such an opportunity
- I didn't think it would be helpful to me
- The cost didn't seem worth it / Too expensive
- I didn't have time
- I participated in an assessment through another organization
- Other

(Pie chart values: 61%, 8%, 8%, 7%, 4%, 12%)
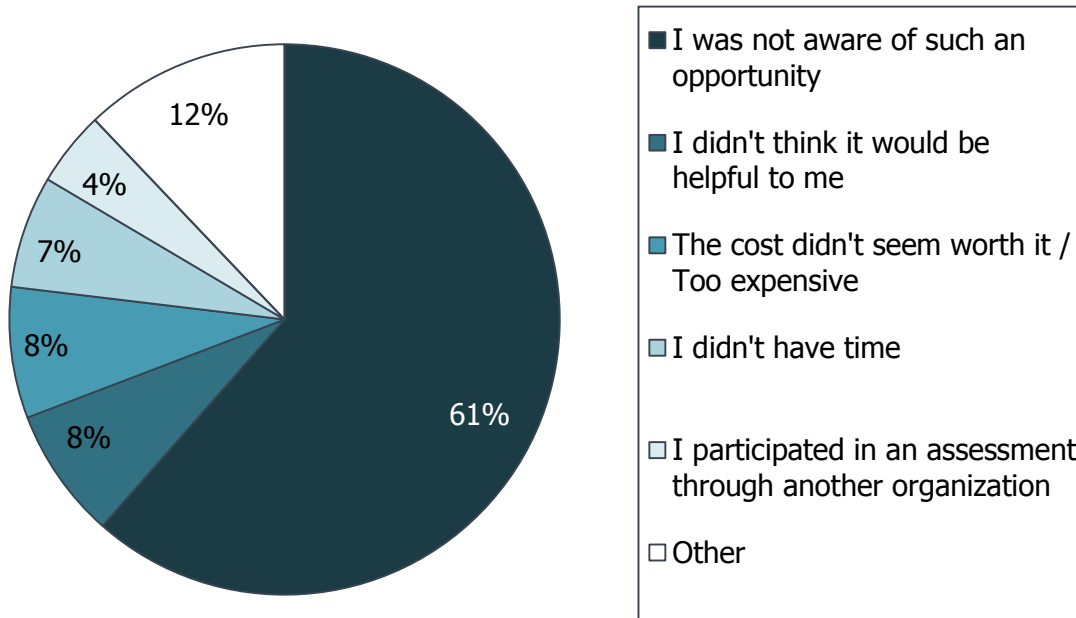
Of the 25% of respondents who have had an internship for their work in leading their community, 87% were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the internship experience. Of 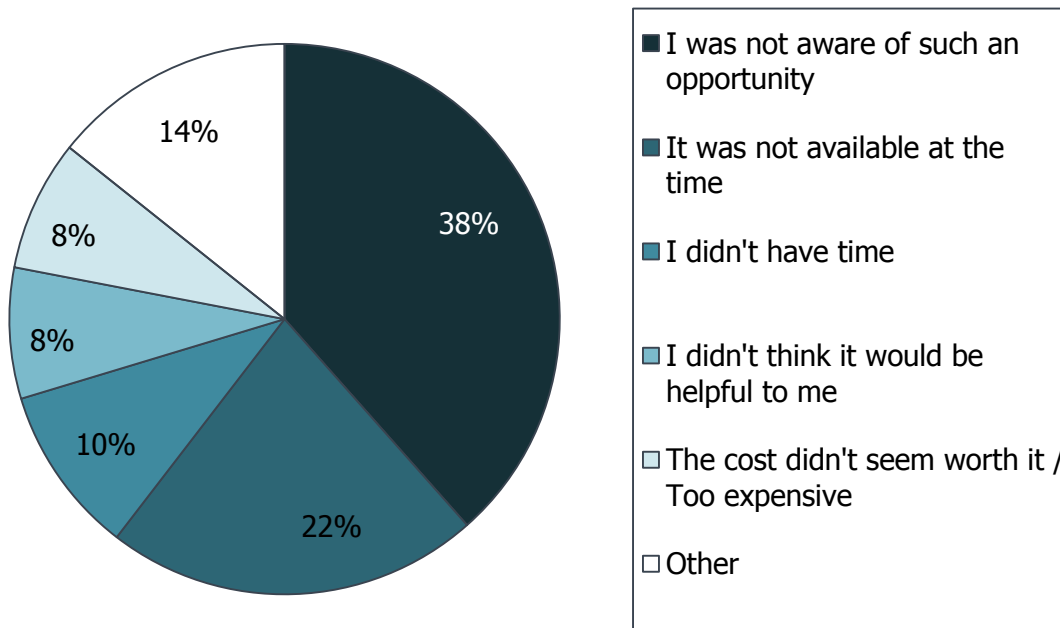those who have not had an internship, most were either not aware of such an opportunity (38%), or such an opportunity was not available at the time (22%) (Figure 26).

Figure 26: Reasons for Not Having an Internship

Legend:
- I was not aware of such an opportunity
- It was not available at the time
- I didn't have time
- I didn't think it would be helpful to me
- The cost didn't seem worth it / Too expensive
- Other

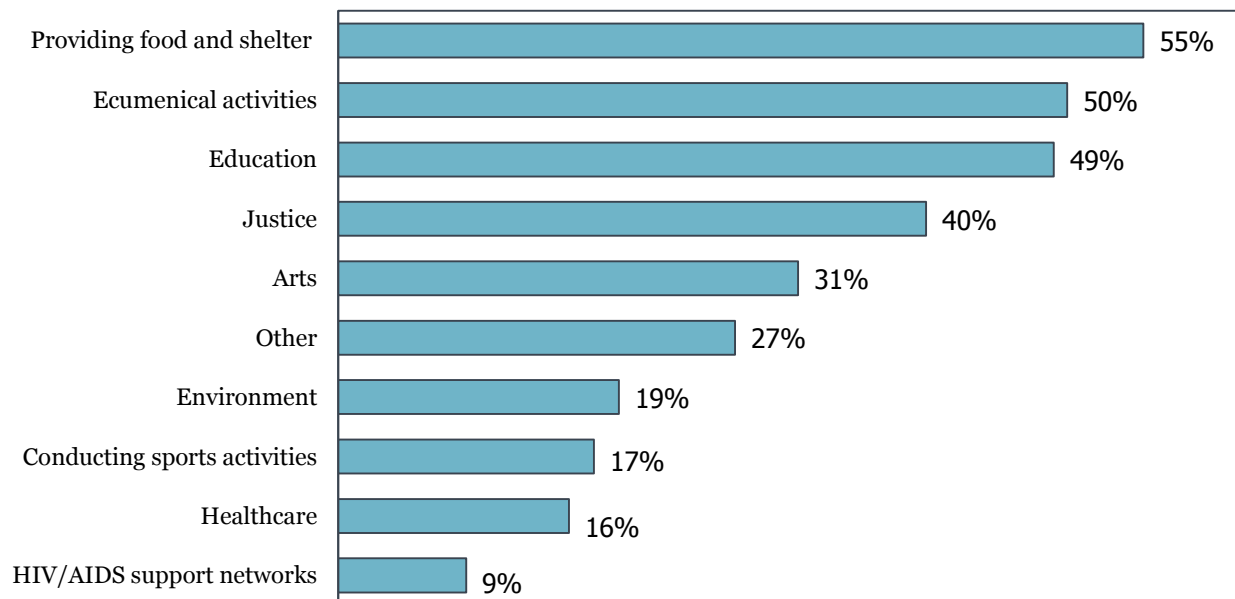(Pie chart values: 38%, 22%, 10%, 8%, 8%, 14%)

Connections with Others

Worshiping communities tend to have participants who volunteer in their neighborhood; 87% of the community leaders surveyed state that at least some of their participants have volunteered. In 10% of the communities, **all** the participants have volunteered.

This mission focus shows up in leader reports of where they have seen the Holy Spirit at work in their community, as well. For example, one leader states they have seen the Holy Spirit at work "in the active participants' renewed understanding that the community exists for the benefit of others who surround us."

The most common ways that worshiping communities work together with other community organizations and agencies are to provide food and shelter for members of the community at large (55%), engage in ecumenical activities (50%), and provide education (49%). About half of the communities do at least one of these three things (Figure 27).

Figure 27: Ways Communities Work with Other Organizations and Agencies

Category	Percentage
Providing food and shelter	55%
Ecumenical activities	50%
Education	49%
Justice	40%
Arts	31%
Other	27%
Environment	19%
Conducting sports activities	17%
Healthcare	16%
HIV/AIDS support networks	9%

Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages add up to more than 100%

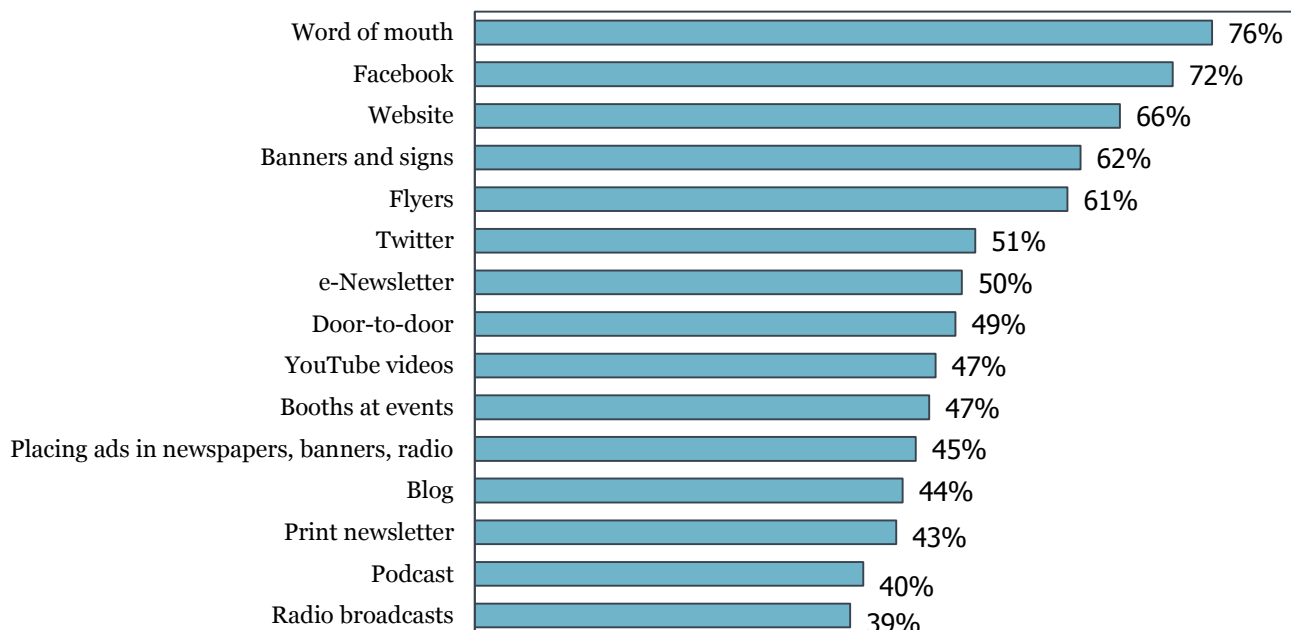Although English is the most common language used among these communities to relay information to the general public, 13% use Spanish and 3% use Korean.

Methods of relaying information vary, and no one way of relaying information stands out among the sixteen options provided in the survey (Figure 28).

Of the "other" methods respondents wrote in, two appeared more than once: Instagram and text messaging.

**Figure 28: Methods Worshiping Communities Use to Relay
Information to the General Public**

Method	Percentage
Word of mouth	76%
Facebook	72%
Website	66%
Banners and signs	62%
Flyers	61%
Twitter	51%
e-Newsletter	50%
Door-to-door	49%
YouTube videos	47%
Booths at events	47%
Placing ads in newspapers, banners, radio	45%
Blog	44%
Print newsletter	43%
Podcast	40%
Radio broadcasts	39%

Because respondents could select more than one option, percentages add up to more than 100%

Conclusion

Worshiping communities are, by definition, not congregations. However, the way a community self-identifies does not always match the official definition. In fact, among the few congregations in this sample, there is no correlation between being officially organized as a congregation and self-identifying as such. This indicates that there is something inherently different in how worshiping communities define themselves.

These communities differ from typical PC(USA) congregations in other ways, too. Although most have a regular gathering space, 57% do not gather in a church or other space provided by a congregation. The communities are small—the median size is 33—but active; 84% meet at least once per week. Methods of discipleship tend to focus on small-scale interactions, including Bible study, small groups, and one-on-one mentoring.

Nine percent of these communities run a business as part of their mission. In fact, mission is heavily emphasized in many of the communities. Most of the participants volunteer in their broader community, and many worshiping communities include a mission focus as a key component of their community's purpose. The most common method of outreach is to provide food and shelter for members of the community at large.

The specific nature of a worshiping community's focus differs based on type of community. New worshiping communities and other expressions of church focus more

on building relationships; conversely, new immigrant fellowships, new church developments, and congregations focus more on worship. Also, leaders of non-English speaking communities more frequently report that it is important that their community engage in education, whereas leaders of English-speaking communities are more likely to state that it is important that their community build relationships.

It is in this emphasis on community, education, and outreach that these communities are really seeing the Holy Spirit at work. When asked where they have seen the Holy Spirit at work, these same three themes emerge in their responses.

Although more than half of the leaders are paid for their work leading their community, many cite a need for greater funding in order for the worshiping community to succeed. Also, although they state that they are generally satisfied with the level of support, accountability, and oversight they receive, they would like more educational opportunities and materials.

New worshiping communities are succeeding in bringing new people into the fold – 77% of the participants in new worshiping communities are potentially new to the denomination, and 17% have no religious affiliation.

The demographics of the communities and their leaders differ from those of the overall Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The people in these communities are younger than the typical Presbyterian, and more racially diverse: 68% of the communities have more than 20% racial-ethnic participation. These new participants and leaders bring greater diversity to the denomination, as well as the potential to help grow PC(USA).