

1 Congregational Vitality Committee Report  
2 Written by Committee Chair – Chris Lenshyn  
3  
4

5 **Introductory Comments:**

6 The task given to the Congregational Vitality working group was vast and a bit nebulous in nature. It  
7 took time for the group to identify significant threads that would help us accomplish the task before us.  
8 As we discerned, we intentionally did not seek giant steps forward that required us to completely  
9 reinvent the wheel. Rather, we sought to identify life giving values that could help root and nurture vital  
10 congregations as central places living out God’s ministry of healing, both individually, and as part of the  
11 broader Mennonite church.  
12

13 In many ways, the values we name are already present in the lives of our congregations and Area  
14 Churches but might be animated differently. We also recognize that there are many other values that  
15 we have not named, but could also be important to congregational vitality. I would encourage that  
16 congregational vitality remain on the radar of all future directions conversations and discernment, since  
17 it is an ongoing aspect of discerning how to live into the Kingdom of God.  
18

19 This report has been separated into three sections which articulate themes and potential next steps for  
20 animating the local congregation as central and vital to the national church body. As you will see, there  
21 is significant crossover between these values.  
22

23 **Equipping the Saints:** To vitalize the local congregation is to be intentional about equipping the people  
24 in the pews.  
25

26 *Comment:* To focus on the local congregation is to focus on the people who are the local congregation.  
27 Equipping quickly became part of the ongoing conversation of our committee.  
28

29 *Potential Actionable Items:*

- 30
- 31 • Directly support congregational leaders to equip in terms of both leadership development and  
32 spiritual formation. This is a potentially expansive avenue for support.
    - 33 ○ MLI’s, a list of resource people who are accessible for leaders, coaching, mentorship,  
34 personality assessment tools (eg, Myers Briggs, Birkman, Enneagram). This list could go  
35 on.
  - 36 • Explore resourcing to and from our local congregations.
    - 37 ○ This is a specific exploration of the mediums MC Canada has that serve as a platform for  
38 resource sharing. For example, our working group considers “CommonWord” to be a  
39 valuable platform and sees tremendous opportunity to explore further development of  
40 this platform for more extensive resource sharing.
    - 41 ○ Please see attached notes from a conversation with Arlyn Friesen Epp
  - 42 • Explore resource sharing between our congregations. This is also explored in the following  
43 section.
  - 44 • Approach our supporting organizations about how they are keeping the people in the pews of  
45 the local congregation in mind as they go about their work.
    - 46 ○ Focus on organizations with whom our national conference already has formal  
47 relationships, our schools for example.
      - 48 ■ Ask: How do you gauge the heartbeat of the local congregation? In what ways  
do you prioritize the local congregation? What is your organization’s view on

1 formation? Or, more robustly, what do you offer our congregations, and how do  
2 you offer it?

- 3 ○ Focus on making sure good resources are made widely available, rather than producing  
4 a vast amount of resources that aren't accessed well.

5  
6  
7 **Sharing our story/Networking:** To vitalize the local congregation is to share resources and stories of  
8 faith being animated in a particular time and particular place by a particular people – in short,  
9 testimony.

10  
11 *Comment:* A theme that developed in our conversations was the importance of connectivity both in  
12 terms of sharing what is happening in local congregations all across Canada, but also in terms of sharing  
13 resources.

14  
15 *Potential Actionable Items:*

- 16 ● Ask the question: what is it that connects us? How do we share our stories of vital and local  
17 congregational life?
  - 18 ○ Print resources such as, Canadian Mennonite magazine and Intotemak are engaged in  
19 this already. Intotemak seems to be a good example of a dynamic resource in both  
20 storytelling and resourcing.
- 21 ● Explore technological platforms.
  - 22 ○ What are the possibilities of using a platform like CommonWord to share stories among  
23 congregations?
  - 24 ○ What other platforms might already be working at story sharing or could be used in that  
25 way?

26  
27 **Vital Practices:** To vitalize the local congregation is to understand what vital practices are already  
28 present and bringing life to our local congregations. In order to know where and how the Spirit is  
29 already at work, we need to listen directly to local congregations.

30  
31 *Comment:* We created a subcommittee of Josh Wallace, Jonas Cornelsen and Carrie Martens to create a  
32 survey that explored “vital practices” of our local congregations. The survey was distributed to all  
33 regional bodies, to be distributed to local congregations. This survey was important to our work as a  
34 committee and the findings have been offered here for the further discernment of the Future Directions  
35 Task Force Transition Team. We felt that listening to the local congregation was essential.

36  
37 Though the survey is no longer active, the link to it is preserved here for archival purposes:

38 [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScseS5ntT4nWVxZRVtRGL-  
39 3Yvv3fHvMYQTW9dsCfQwE4wC91A/viewform?c=0&w=1](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScseS5ntT4nWVxZRVtRGL-3Yvv3fHvMYQTW9dsCfQwE4wC91A/viewform?c=0&w=1)

40  
41  
42 *Potential Actionable Items:*

- 43 ● Construct consistent and persistent ways to listen to congregations.
  - 44 ○ What is the local congregation doing? What practices are giving/bringing life and energy  
45 as they seek to follow Jesus? What is a struggle? What resources or equipping is needed  
46 to help congregations live out their calling?
- 47 ● Connect churches that share similar “vital practices.”

- 1           ○ We tend to think regionally, but it's quite possible that a rural church in one Area
- 2           Church could benefit greatly from conversation with a rural church in another Area
- 3           Church, more than from a church in the same geographical area.
- 4       • Craft specific resources that can "equip the saints" in ways that speak directly to the vital
- 5       practices of local congregations.
- 6           ○ Pay attention to both practices that are life-giving and resources for areas of growth.
- 7           ○ Consider creative ways to use CommonWord.
- 8           ○ Develop other mediums for connecting congregations.

9

10 **Concluding Comments:**

11 Equipping the saints, sharing our story/ networking, and vital practices (discerned by listening to the

12 local congregation) are values which can animate the vitality of local congregations. These actionable

13 items are being put forth by this working group as our processed response to the task that we were

14 given. We acknowledge that these are not large movements forward. Rather, what we hope is that

15 consideration in these areas will help inform how we might move forward in a focused way in a new

16 structure. I hope that this report has offered the Future Directions Task Force Transition Team a creative

17 tension with which to discern faithful congregationally focused expression of Anabaptist faith in the 21<sup>st</sup>

18 century.

19

20 Chris Lenshyn, Chair on behalf of

21 Alex Neufeldt

22 Kim Rempel

23 Jonas Cornelsen

24 Carrie Martens

25 Irma Fast Dueck

26 Kyle Penner

27 Josh Wallace

28 Brian Bauman

29

30

## Congregational Life & Vitality Survey - Initial Observations

There are many ways to analyze the responses we've collected. I've coded up to ninety-eight elements within the responses to each questions.<sup>1</sup> While many of these elements occur in only a single respondent (e.g., 40 of the elements in Q1), there are elements that reappear in many responses.

It's these repeated elements that speak strongly about the current centers of energy in congregations' lives, about their sense of the Spirit's movement, and about the resources that are being widely used. While every instance of the Spirit's life offers a chance for thanksgiving and joy (and likewise with moments of the Spirit moving or congregations finding resources), the task of the CLV working group mandates our focus privilege breadth over depth. So I'll highlight those elements most heavily reported.

Our survey data allows us to analyze the responses to each question in at least three ways. First, we can track the distribution of elements across the Area Churches. Which elements are live in Canada-wide? Which elements are more regionally-specific?

Here I need to note that our data is limited to only those congregations that responded. The higher percentage of congregations which responded from a region, the more we can feel justified in placing confidence that the responses offer an helpfully broad view of the Spirit's life in that regional church. So, for instance, because more than 50% of congregations in MC Manitoba responded, we can feel confident that we're hearing a large and somewhat representative part of how the Spirit is alive there. The single (as of the collation of data) congregation which has responded form MC British Columbia doesn't offer a reliable view into the Spirit's life in that area church.

Of the five area churches, four-fifths had greater than 20% of congregations respond. As a national church, more than one-quarter of our 227 congregations responded.

Table 1

Area Church	Responses	Total Congregations	Percentage Responding
MC Eastern Canada	22	108	20.4%
MC Manitoba	23	45	51.1%
MC Saskatchewan	7	28	25.0%
MC Alberta	4	15	26.7%
MC British Columbia	1	31	3.2%
Mennonite Church Canada	57	227	25.1%

<sup>1</sup> Q1 (98); Q2 (71); Q3 (69)

The survey data can be analyzed, secondly, according to size of congregation. Are there ways small congregations report the Spirit’s work or utilize resources that are unique? What about very large congregations? Those in between?

Finally, survey data can be examined according to what I’m calling “setting.” Is the congregation in a small town? rural? Is its location urban? suburban? Does the Spirit seem to work or lead in certain ways in certain kinds of places, and in other ways in others?

I examine the survey responses in to each question in each of these three ways.

***Question 1: Where is your congregation currently experiencing life-giving energy in relation to God’s call to live as followers of Jesus, embodying healing and hope?***

**By Area Church**

The two overwhelmingly most-reported ways in which congregations experience God’s life are *work with refugees* (and other new immigrants) and in *worship services*. Each was mentioned in eighteen different responses. However, while congregations in 4 out of 5 Area Churches spoke of find life and energy in worship services, work with refugees is the sole element that appeared in responses from all five area churches.

This difference between frequency and distribution is worth reflecting on. The most frequently reported elements may be clumped together in one or two area churches, or, on the other hand, a wide distribution may represent only one or two congregations in each region finding life in a particular area.

Arranged by distribution across Area Churches, we find Table 2.

Table 2

<b>Element</b>	<b>Number of Area Churches Reporting</b>
Work with refugees (or new immigrants)	5
Worship services	4
Children & children’s ministry	4
Local/neighborhood engagement	4
Youth & youth ministry	4
Multigenerational (e.g., in worship, fellowship)	4
Food security (e.g., food pantry)	4

Three Area Churches mentioned finding life in the following elements: mutual support & care; new members & attendees; personal relationships; Sunday School; partnership with other congregations; young adults; Bible study; acceptance; and study more generally.

Some of the same elements appear when the responses are arranged by distribution, as seen in the Table 3. Some new elements appear. Others are rearranged or, like *food security*, drop off the map.

Table 3

Element	Number of Responses Reporting
Work with refugees	18
Worship services	18
Children & children's ministry	11
Local/neighborhood engagement	11
Mutual support & care	10
Youth & youth ministry	9
New members & attendees	9
Personal relationships	9
Multigernational	7
Sunday School	7
Partnership with other congregations	6
Young adults	6
Engagement with First Nations & Indigenous Peoples	6

Finally, it's helpful to see the most frequently reported elements in each Area Church. See Table 4 (the number of responses reporting follows each element in parentheses).

Table 4

MC EC (N=22)	MC Manitoba (N=23)	MC Sask (N=7)	MC Alberta (N=4)	MC BC (N=1)
Work with refugees (7)	Worship services (8)	Local/neighborhood engagement (3)	Children & children's ministry (2)	Work with refugees (1)

MC EC (N=22)	MC Manitoba (N=23)	MC Sask (N=7)	MC Alberta (N=4)	MC BC (N=1)
Worship services (7)	Work with refugees (7)	Worship services (2)	Youth & youth ministry (2)	Local/ neighborhood engagement (1)
Personal relationships (7)	Children & children's ministry (6)	Work with refugees (2)	New members & attendees (2)	Food security (1)
Mutual support & care (5)	New members & attendees (6)	Young leaders (2)	Sunday School (2) [~children's ministry?]	Partnership with other congregations (1)
	Youth & youth ministry (5)		Adult Christian Education (2)	Small groups (1)
			Grappling with tough issues (2)	Festivals & celebrations (1)
				Work with addictions (1)

It is critical, however, to bear in mind the vast difference in the percentage respondents within their respective Area Churches. While 100% of respondents from MC BC mentioned, i.e., *small groups*, this response represents only 3% of MC BC's thirty-one congregations. Likewise Alternatively, while only two responses from MC Alberta listed *youth ministry* as a site of energy, this represents a more-than-equivalent percentage of their congregations in comparison the five who mentioned *youth ministry* in MC Manitoba.

Simply put, the relative statistical significance of the survey's results deserves a close examination. Nevertheless, the data we have is fairly strong, as survey go.

Overall, *work with refugees*, *worship services*, *local engagement*, *children* and *youth* ministries, *mutual care*, and *new attendees* stand out as widespread and frequent places in which we sense the life of God.

### By Congregational Size

The survey asked respondents to indicate the size range of their congregations.<sup>2</sup> This data allows us to examine if congregations of different sizes receive God's life in different ways. Again, distribution and frequency offer slightly different pictures. See Table 5 for a breakdown of the size of congregations which responded.

<sup>2</sup> The survey presented 7 size ranges: 2-20; 21-45; 46-70; 71-100; 101-150; 151-250; and 251+.

Table 5

Size Range	Number of Responses
2-20	1
21-45	7
46-70	10
71-100	9
101-150	7
151-250	13
251+	10

Examining the seven standout elements found in examining responses by Area Church, we find the following pattern (see Table 6):

Table 6

	2-20	21-45	46-70	71-100	101-150	151-250	251+
<b>Work with refugees</b>		1	4	2	3	4	4
<b>Worship services</b>	1	2	1	1	1	4	8
<b>Local/ neighborhood engagement</b>		1	1	3	2	1	3
<b>Children &amp; children's ministry</b>		1	1	1	3	3	2
<b>Youth &amp; youth ministry</b>		2	1	1	2	3	
<b>Mutual support &amp; care</b>		1	3			5	1
<b>New members &amp; attendees</b>		1	1	2	1	3	1

As when examined by Area Church, congregational size underlines the wide distribution across variously sized congregations of the felt value of *worship services* and *work with refugees*. In fact, *worship services* is the only element to show up in the responses of every size of congregation. The seven standout elements show wide distribution, with *mutual care* being the only one to hit on less than 5 of the 7 size ranges. Other widely-distributed elements are *personal relationships*, *Sunday School*, *engagement with First Nations*, and more general *study*.

When examined within slightly wider size ranges, we find a more textured picture. Four of eighteen smaller congregations (2-70 participants) report finding life in *mutual care* shown in their congregations, as do six of twenty-three larger congregations (151+ participants). But



*mutual care* does not show up among the responses of any of the sixteen medium-sized congregations (71-150 participants).

More than 30% of medium-sized congregations (5 of 16) list *local engagement* as a site of life, a much higher percentage than smaller (11%) or larger (17%) congregations. Likewise, medium-sized congregations account for nearly half of congregations reports of finding life in *young adults* or *youth ministry* (7 of 15 responses), much more frequent than either small or larger congregations on their own.

Finally, larger congregations, alongside emphasizing *mutual care*, account for more than 70% (5 of 7) of those finding life in *multigenerational* aspects of their corporate life (the remaining 2 responses come from medium-sized congregations). Larger congregations also comprise four of the five responses mentioning *LGBTQ welcome* (an element which may include a move to being open and affirming or simply making hospitable space without marking an official position).

### By Congregational Setting

Respondents were given the options Rural, Small Town, Urban, and Suburban to describe the setting of their congregations. While some respondents opted to describe their setting in their own words (e.g., “Rurban”; “Winkler”), it was usually easy to classify these opt-outs in one of the four categories. The methodology here is not perfect. Members’ terms offer the best view on their reality. But this interpretive work offers more usable data for the sake of our working group.

The breakdown of respondents by setting is in Table 7. Note that urban congregations make up more than one-third of respondents. Also, lacking data on the setting of every MC Canada congregation, I’m unable to tell if these distribution is representative or quite skewed.

Table 7

Setting	Number of Responses
Rural	16
Small Town	12
Urban	21
Suburban	8

In terms of distribution, the seven standout elements all but *local engagement* appear in the most widely distributed elements. *Sunday School*, *young adults*, and *story sharing* are the other elements that appear in responses from all four settings.

Table 8

	Rural	Small Town	Urban	Suburban
<b>Work with refugees</b>	2	4	7	5

<b>Worship services</b>	3	5	8	2
<b>Local/neighborhood engagement</b>		2	8	1
<b>Children &amp; children's ministry</b>	1	2	4	4
<b>Youth &amp; youth ministry</b>	1	3	2	3
<b>Mutual support &amp; care</b>	1	4	4	1
<b>New members &amp; attendees</b>	2	1	3	3

When each setting individually is examined for frequency some other elements rise to the top. Rural congregations' most-reported element is *personal relationships* (4 of 16 responses). *Worship services* and *healing* (usually referring to congregational healing and not physical healing) both follow closely at 3 of 16 responses.

Small Town congregations' top-reported elements follow closely on the standout seven, with the addition of *study*. Likewise, Suburban congregations' most-reported elements are also among the standout seven: *work with refugees*, *children's ministry*, *new attendees*, and *youth ministry*.

While *worship services*, *local engagement*, and *work with refugees* lead Urban congregations' responses, each with at least a 33% response rate, *LGBTQ welcome* follows closely, with 24% mentioning this element as a current source of life.

***Question 2: Where do you think the Spirit might be leading your congregation to grow, experience healing, or try something different?***

**By Area Church**

Respondents' sense of how the Spirit is leading is much more dispersed than their sense of current sources of life and God-given energy. Respondents included more elements in responding to Questions 1, a total of 97 in comparison to Questions 2's 70; however, there was far less overlap in respondents' answers across Area Churches. Question 1 saw 7 elements reported by at least four Area Churches; Question 2 can claim only two such areas of wide agreement (one of these being simply being a call to *change*). One element represented in three Area Churches is being *unsure*, that we're still trying to figure out how the Spirit is leading us.

Table 9

<b>Element</b>	<b>Number of Area Churches Reporting</b>
Change	4

New leadership	4
Local/neighborhood engagement	3
Deeper relationships	3
Children & children’s ministry	3
Hospitality	3
Engagement with First Nations & Indigenous Peoples	3
Discernment practices	3
Worship practices	3
Being “Spirit-led”	3
Young adults	3
Building use/projects	3
Unsure (e.g., “trying to figure this out”)	3

When examined by which elements appear most frequently in responses, *change* again tops the list. But new items also work their way forward: *spirituality* (e.g., spiritual disciplines, spiritual directions), *LGBTQ welcome*, *healing*, and *new models* and ways of practicing church. See Table 10.

Table 10

Element	Number of Responses Reporting
Change	10
Local/neighborhood engagement	8
Spirituality	8
LGBTQ welcome	8
Healing	8
Deeper relationships	7
New leadership	6
Children & children’s ministry	6
Hospitality	6
New church models & habits	6

Engagement with First Nations & Indigenous Peoples	5
Discernment practices	5

Some of these are strongly reported in some Area Church while being largely absent in others. *LGBTQ welcome*, for example, shows up very strongly in MC Manitoba and also in MC EC, but this element is absent in the responses of Area Churches further west. See Table 11.

Table 11

MC EC (N=22)	MC Manitoba (N=23)	MC Sask (N=7)	MC Alberta (N=4)	MC BC (N=1)
New church models & habits (6)	LGBTQ welcome (5)	Children & children’s ministry (2)	Healing (3)	New leaders (1)
Local/ neighborhood engagement (5)	Healing (5)	Local/ neighborhood engagement (2)		Visioning process (1)
Spirituality (5)	Change (4)	Young leaders (2)		Interim leadership (1)
Change (4)	Deeper relationships (4)			
LGBTQ welcome (3)	New identity story (4)			
Hospitality (3)	Spirituality (3)			
Work around mental health (3)	Stewardship (3)			
	Outreach (3)			

More closely examining the frequency of elements across the Area Churches reveals significant variety in where congregations in each hears the Spirit calling. There are few areas of overlap in the elements most-reported by each.

Overall, *change* (especially if we group *new models* as another expressions for change), *local engagement*, *deeper relationships*, *LGBTQ welcome*, *healing*, and *children’s ministry* stand at the forefront. These forefront six show some ways we here the Spirit calling that overlap to some degree across regions.

**By Congregational Size**

Examining these forefront six elements from our Area Church analysis, we find a narrower distribution of everyone but *change* (see Table 12). But due to the greater dispersion of

responses, this is somewhat expected. Other elements that appear in at least four of the congregational settings include *spirituality*, *discernment practices*, and *new identity story*.

Table 12

	2-20	21-45	46-70	71-100	101-150	151-250	251+
<b>Change + New church models &amp; habits</b>	1	2	2	2	2	4	2
<b>Local/ neighborhood engagement</b>		1	1	1	2	3	
<b>Deeper relationships</b>				2	2	2	1
<b>LGBTQ welcome</b>		1				4	3
<b>Healing</b>		1	1	2		1	3
<b>Children &amp; children's ministry</b>					1	2	3

Examining smaller congregations (2-70 participants) together, I'm immediately struck that all reports of being *unsure* appear here. A sense of the Spirit's call to *pastoral training* is also unique to these congregations. Finally, half of the reports of a leading toward *work with refugees* appear among small congregations, with the other half appearing among larger (151+ participants) congregations.

More than 30% of medium-sized congregations (71-150 participants) report a call to *spirituality*, making up more than half of congregations that mention this element. They share with larger congregations a leading toward *deeper relationships* and *hospitality*.

Larger congregations make up all but one mention of *LGBTQ welcome* as well as *children's ministry* and *engagement with First Nations*. They include half of the mentions of a calling to congregational or personal *healing*.

*Healing* joins *local engagement* and *change* as the only three of the forefront six elements to appear in smaller, medium-sized, and larger congregations. These three movements—*healing*, *change*, and *becoming locally involved*—express an important way we hear the Spirit calling us.

### By Congregational Setting

When examined by setting, *healing*, *local engagement*, and *deeper relationships* are elements from the forefront six that appear in Rural, Small Town, Urban, and Suburban congregations.

These elements are joined by *hospitality*, *work with refugees*, and *worship practices*. The forefront six exhibit the following distribution across these settings (see Table 13).

Table 13

	Rural	Small Town	Urban	Suburban
<b>Change + New church models &amp; habits</b>		2	4	3
<b>Local/neighborhood engagement</b>	3	2	1	2
<b>Deeper relationships</b>	2	1	1	3
<b>LGBTQ welcome</b>		1	5	2
<b>Healing</b>	2	2	3	1
<b>Children &amp; children's ministry</b>		1	3	2

Taken specifically by setting, other elements emerge as significant. Nearly one-third of Rural congregations mentions *spirituality* as a location of calling, comprising more than 60% of responses mentioning this element. *Local engagement* and *hospitality* also both appear as common areas of calling among Rural congregations.

Small Town congregations did not exhibit any significant overlap in their responses.

Urban respondents made up five of eight responses feeling led toward *LGBTQ welcome*. They also comprised 60% of those mentioning *engagement with First Nations* and *discernment practices*, as well as all of those mentioning *stewardship* (focusing primarily on schedule and congregational energy, not finances).

Of eight Suburban respondents, 25% mention *deeper relationships* and *LGBTQ welcome*. These responses also make up both mentions of *young adults* as a locus of the Spirit's calling.

***Question 3: What resources from Mennonite Church Canada or from your Area Church have you found useful or life-giving in the past?***

**By Area Church**

When naming useful, life-giving resources, respondents exhibit more commonality across Area Churches. While only two elements showed up in at least four Area Churches in response to Questions 2, seven do so for Question 3. See Table 14. A further nine resources appear in at least three Area Churches.

Table 14

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Number of Area Churches Reporting</b>
CommonWord	4
<i>Leader</i>	4
Worship resources	4
Curriculum & faith formation resources	4
Speakers	4
Pastoral search	4
Pastoral support	4

Significant overlap occurs between the most widely distributed and most frequently mentioned resources. *CommonWord* and *Leader* appear at the top of both lists. *Worship resources*, *curriculum*, and *speakers* also appear in relatively the same positions in each list, followed closely by *pastoral search* and *pastoral support resources*.

Table 15

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Number of Responses Reporting</b>
CommonWord	18
<i>Leader</i>	13
Conference staff	13
Worship resources	12
Curriculum & faith formation resources	11
Speakers	11
Youth ministry (e.g., retreats)	8
“Issue” resources (e.g., sexual abuse, BFC)	8
Pastoral search	7
Pastoral support	7
Conference minister	7
Partnerships with other congregations or Area Church	6

Resources regarding First Nations & Indigenous Peoples	6
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Table # adds staff persons (e.g., *conference minister*) and more-area-specific resources (e.g., *youth ministry*, *resources regarding First Nations*) to the more widely distributed resources. Of these only “*issue*” resources appears in less than three Area Churches (grouping *conference minister* with *conference staff*).

Looking at each Area Church, MC EC most often reports *conference staff* as a life-giving resource. This is followed closely by *youth ministry*. MC EC also uniquely values *training events* and programs (e.g., Anabaptist Learning Workshop, ReLearning Community) and its relationship with *Conrad Grebel University College*.

*CommonWord* and *curriculum* feature uniquely highly in responses from MC Manitoba, each appearing in 30%-40% of responses. MC Manitoba joins MC EC in utilizing “*issue*” resources, such as the Being a Faithful Church documents or resources around sexual abuse. MC Manitoba also makes up two-thirds (4 of 6) responses valuing *resources regarding First Nations*.

Four of seven MC Sask respondents named *worship resources* as valued, with three of seven naming *Leader* as well. MC Sask alone names *Area Church gatherings* (e.g., Refresh Refocus Renew) as life-giving.

Three-quarters of MC Alberta respondents also named *worship resources* as an important resource, as well as *CommonWord*. Two of four responses mentioned *camp*s and *Hymanl: A Worship Book* (and supplements) as life-giving resources. See Table 16.

Table 16

MC EC (N=22)	MC Manitoba (N=23)	MC Sask (N=7)	MC Alberta (N=4)	MC BC (N=1)
Conference staff (7)	CommonWord (9)	Worship resources (4)	Worship resources (3)	Pastoral search (1)
Youth ministry (6)	Curriculum & faith formation resources (8)	<i>Leader</i> (3)	CommonWord (3)	
Conrad Grebel University College (5)	Conference staff (6)	CommonWord (2)	Camps (2)	
Training & education events (5)	<i>Leader</i> (6)	Area Church gatherings & processes (2)	Hymnal (2)	
	Speakers (5)			
	“Issue” resources (5)			



MC EC (N=22)	MC Manitoba (N=23)	MC Sask (N=7)	MC Alberta (N=4)	MC BC (N=1)
	Resources regarding First Nations & Indigenous Peoples (4)			

Overall, *CommonWord*, *worship resources* (especially *Leader*—though this publication offers more than just this), *curriculum*, *speakers*, *pastoral search* support, and *youth ministry* (especially taken together with *camps*) emerge as an outstanding six resources.

### By Congregational Size

*CommonWord* and *Leader* again top the chart when we examine the distribution of life-giving resources across congregations of different sizes. They are joined by *conference staff* and *partnerships* in appearing in six of the seven size ranges. Other resources from the outstanding six comprise all of those reported in at least five size ranges: *worship resources*, *speakers*, *youth ministry*, and *pastoral search*.

Table 17 displays the size distribution of the outstanding six.

Table 17

	2-20	21-45	46-70	71-100	101-150	151-250	251+
<b>CommonWord</b>		2	4	3	1	2	5
<b>Worship resources + <i>Leader</i></b>		4	6	3	3	5	4
<b>Curriculum &amp; faith formation resources</b>			4	2		4	1
<b>Speakers</b>			2	3	3	2	1
<b>Pastoral search</b>		1		1	1	2	2
<b>Youth ministry &amp; camps</b>		1	2	1	2	5	2

When examined by wider size ranges, smaller congregations (2-70 participants) and medium-sized congregations (71-150 participants) follow closely on those outstanding six and the most-widely distributed resources mentioned.

Larger congregations (151+ participants) bear interesting parallels to smaller congregations in their frequent mentions of *curriculum* and *worship resources* as valued, while medium-sized

congregations rarely mention these. Larger congregations account for all but one or two of the references to “*issue*” resources, *pastoral gatherings*, and *camps*.

Overall, the outstanding six are reinforced in their significance when examined by congregational size.

### By Congregational Setting

All but *pastoral search* of the outstanding six appear in all four congregational settings (see Table 18). Other resources mentioned by respondents from all four include *conference staff*, *MennoMedia*, and *pastoral gatherings*.

Table 18

	Rural	Small Town	Urban	Suburban
<b>CommonWord</b>	5	3	9	1
<b>Worship resources + Leader</b>	5	6	8	6
<b>Curriculum &amp; faith formation resources</b>	2	3	4	2
<b>Speakers</b>	5	2	2	2
<b>Pastoral search</b>	2		4	1
<b>Youth ministry &amp; camps</b>	3	1	6	3

While responses from every setting frequently mention resources from the outstanding six, some diversity emerges when examining each setting individually. Rural respondents account for three of five naming *Annual Delegate Sessions* and *training events* as valued resources. No distinctive trends stand out from the responses of Small Town congregations.

Urban and Suburban respondents name similar resources as life-giving. Urban respondents account for 4 of 8 mentions if “*issues*” resources, while Suburban respondents make up another three. Similarly, Urban and Suburban responses each make up two of the five mentions of *camps*. Four of seven mentions of *pastoral support* emerge from Urban congregations. And half of six mentions of *resources regarding First Nations* came from Suburban congregations.

Overall, the outstanding six resources continue to show their significance. To them we might add *conference staff* as a recurring resource named in response to Question 3.