

Tabernacle Baptist Church  
Listening Groups Feedback  
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Pinnacle Leadership Associates

Listening Groups

June 2-4, 2023

64 Total Participants, Staff Persons and Spouses – 6

Primary Metaphor – Body of Christ, checking the pulse

Question 4 – Current health/well-being/vitality of this church on 0-10 scale

5.14 Average out of 10

### **Recent History of TBC**

- Distinct chapters or seasons of life and ministry
- Season of Vibrant Youth and Young Adult Ministry after calling Sterling
- Season with Internationals and Refugees
- Season with Seminary Students
- Season of Decline, Including Pandemic, with Ongoing Fallout

### **DNA, Strengths of this Body**

- Deep faith of the people
- Valuing theological reflection and exploration
- A refuge for Christians from elsewhere
- Longevity with a proud history
- Creative and Spirit-filled worship, including the arts
- Valuing relational connections
- Hospitality, welcoming, accepting
- Values and encourages serving in the church and community

### **Where Energy and Vitality is Rising**

- Worship – creative spirit
- Community ministry, Abundant Community
- Diversity of people

## **Binds, Stuckness Constraining Blood Flow in Arteries**

- Participation decline, fewer people
- Tired leaders
- Property and facility concerns
- Overwhelmed staff
- Lack of functioning organizational structure
- Menu of activities continues, with fewer people to participate and serve
- Grief dues to losses

## **Needs, Longings, and Visions**

- Faith-based fellowship and relational connection
- Healing within this body of Christ
- Moving from wandering to directed
- Moving from overwhelmed inertia toward peaceful forward movement
- Spiritual nurture for children and youth, including a staff person
- Following the energy of Community Ministry, expanding
  - Homelessness, etc.
- Fear to faith, despair to hope, exhaustion to energized
- Sharing the story of TBC in invitational ways
- Developing the online community
- Become a lay-led church again

## **Notable Quotes**

*You can't minister scared*

*Walk the virtual aisle*

*The imperfection that is Tabernacle is comforting to me*

*Tabernacle is aligned with my heart*

*Something godly magical about Tabernacle*

*No secrets no surprises is only aspirational now*

## **Observations**

- You have a rich history (foundation), attractive values, and love each other dearly
- You have been through waves of thriving and declining, meaning it's part of your DNA to move toward thriving again
- You are a church in distress, unable to continue the current paradigm and approach to being church with the current level of participation and energy

## **Recommendations**

- That you courageously recognize, acknowledge, and accept that the current approach to being church must change
- That you work to stabilize this church in the present and immediate future
- That you identify a short-term vision, along with strategies for moving forward
  - Clarify the relationship between pastor and people
  - Address staffing issues, including staffing for children and youth
  - Invest in relational connecting, with an eye toward healing and strengthening this community of faith
  - Engage in spiritual formation through intentional gatherings and small groups
  - Following the energy in Abundant Communities and Community Ministry, supporting and taking next steps
  - Conduct a building assessment, gathering accurate information
  - Conduct a financial assessment, developing a clear picture of situation

### After Leadership Retreat on August 12

- High Priority – Relationship Repair and Trust Building
- Organizational Stabilization – See above
- Vision Cultivation and Identification
- Spiritual Enrichment and Engagement

### Next Steps

- Meet with leadership team to identify the specific next steps
- Implement those steps
- Consultant returns for the weekend of October 28-29 with Leadership Team and Church for updating and working forward