

NEW HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Reveal Spiritual Life Survey Summary – 2009

Reveal's Methodology and Key Findings

The *Reveal Spiritual Life Survey* was designed to help churches determine their effectiveness in helping people become more like Christ. The results help church leaders understand their congregation's individual attitudes, motivations, behaviors and satisfaction, as well as view their results compared to the responses of over 500 churches and 150,000 congregants in the *Reveal* database.

Overall, the *Reveal Spiritual Life Survey* (among all churches) revealed two centerpiece findings, which are: 1) the Spiritual Continuum and 2) the catalysts that drive growth along the spiritual continuum.

The Spiritual Continuum:

Exploring Christ – "I believe in God, but I am not sure about Christ. My faith is not a significant part of my life."

Growing in Christ – "I believe in Jesus and am working on what it means to get to know Him."

Close to Christ – "I feel really close to Christ and depend on Him daily for guidance."

Christ Centered – "My relationship with Jesus is the most important relationship in my life. It guides everything I do."

Spiritual Catalysts:

A key finding among the churches who participated, thus far, in the *Spiritual Life Survey* revealed that personal Bible study/reflection, the power of the written Word, is the most influential catalyst for spiritual growth.

A second key finding showed the most active evangelists, volunteers and donors come from the 'Close to Christ' and 'Christ Centered' groups. Church programs lose their effectiveness as believers mature in Christ; these groups need to be creatively engaged in outreach activities and serving those in need for spiritual vitality.

The third key finding concluded that a small church with limited resources can be just as powerful a force in the spiritual development of its people as a large church with significant resources. Good news for small churches!

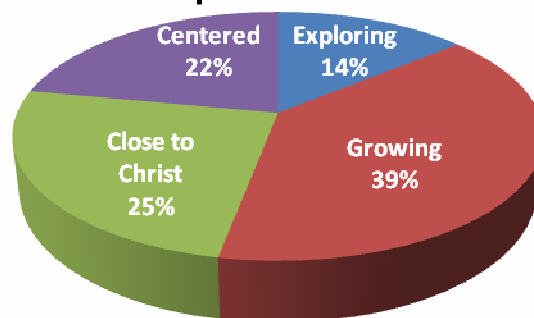
NEW HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH (NHCC) REVEAL SURVEY FINDINGS

Demographics and Spiritual Continuum, Attitudes and Beliefs

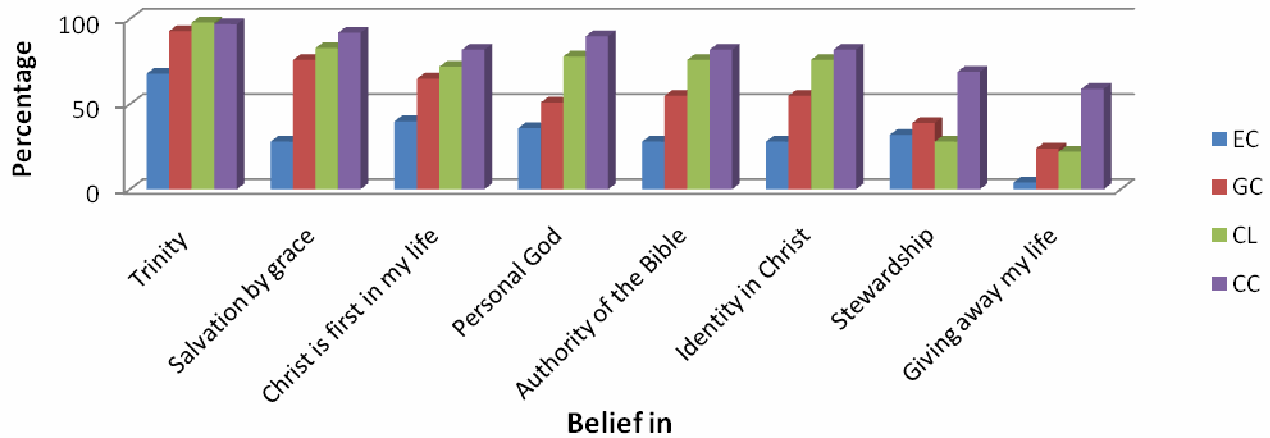
The leadership of NHCC, led by Pastor Paul Bane, embarked on this journey to use the specific facts-revealed about NHCC not only to obtain a snapshot of where the people of New Hope fit within the Spiritual Continuum, but more importantly to use the information as catalysts to put best-practices into action as the church helps others grow in Christ.

Of the 181 congregants who responded, the majority (63%) have attended New Hope for six or more years. Exactly half of the respondents were between the ages of 19 and 49, while the other half represented those 50 and over; 43% of all respondents have children under 18 living at home.

NHCC Spiritual Continuum



The chart below outlines the **spiritual beliefs and attitudes** of the NHCC congregation broken out by the continuum categories: EC-Exploring Christ, GC-Growing in Christ, CL-Close to Christ, and CC-Christ-centered.

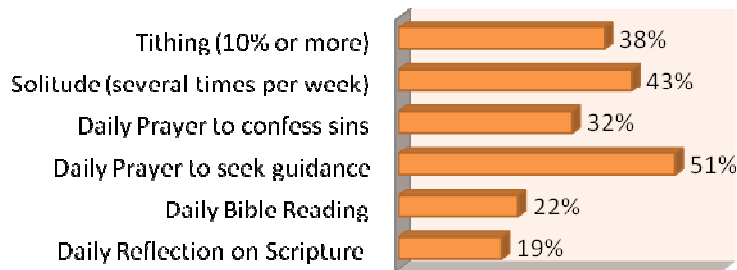


Spiritual Vitality

The spiritual vitality of the NHCC congregation was broken down into three categories: personal spiritual practices, the role of the church, and faith in action. (Results are presented in total.)

Personal Spiritual Practices: NHCC’s personal spiritual practices and disciplines are illustrated below, and are considered average when compared to the *Reveal* cumulative database.

NHCC Personal Spiritual Practices



The Role of the Church: NHCC leadership and programs were evaluated by assessing what criteria were most important to its people and evaluating their satisfaction with each criterion. The top five areas where the assessments of importance and satisfaction most closely matched as relating to the role of NHCC were:

1. Incorporates communion
2. Provides strong programs for children
3. Provides compelling worship
4. Helps me feel like I belong
5. Provides a chance to serve those in need

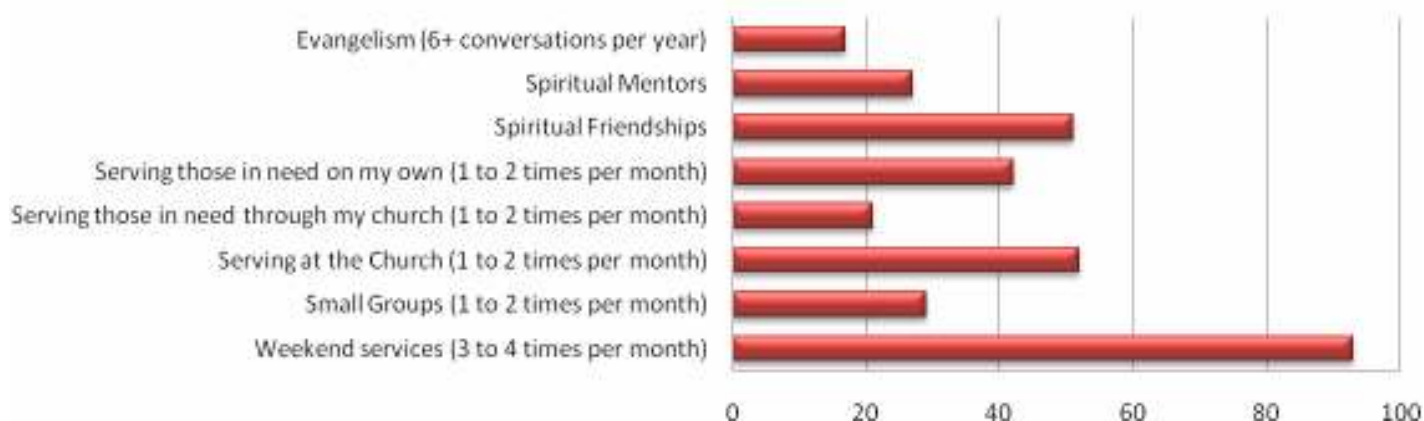
According to the congregation of NHCC, the top five areas with the highest priority for action include:

1. Helping individuals develop a prayer life
2. Helping individuals develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ
3. Helping individuals understand the Bible in depth
4. Challenging individuals to grow
5. Having church leaders model how to grow



Faith in Action: NHCC reports an average level of participation in faith-based activities compared to the total sample of *Reveal* churches. Serving categories were received the highest response from those in the ‘Growing in Christ’ category.

Percentage who Participate in Organized Church Activities



Relating to the weekend services, the top three criterion identified by the congregation as areas with the highest priority for change included:

- Help me apply Scripture to everyday life
- Challenging and thought-provoking messages
- Provide ‘next-steps’ to do in response to the service

The study revealed that six percent of the NHCC congregation states they are ‘stalled spiritually’ and feel like ‘the church has let them down.’ Others who have been in the same place indicate they became ‘un-stalled’ by:

- Coming to grips with their own situation
- Connecting with others through prayer, solitude and/or Scripture
- Sharing struggles with a spiritual mentor or friend
- Attending a small group

Conclusions

“Facts are our Friends” was the phrase reverberated by the dozens of church leaders – from various denominations and sizes – as they shared their *Reveal* results, stories, growth catalysts and next steps at the *Spiritual Life* Conference attended by the NHCC staff last fall in Chicago. The facts revealed about NHCC are a snapshot, yet should be seen as a picture that is constantly changing. NHCC’s investment in the *Reveal Spiritual Life Survey* allows for tracking the movement of the congregation toward Christ, to see if the efforts and resource allocations are making a difference in improving the spiritual growth of the church.

Plain and simple, people are looking for God. Once a person learns the basics of the Christian faith and makes a commitment to Christ, they want to *experience God*, not just learn about God. Programs appear to be most effective for those who are Exploring Christ and Growing in Christ – and have their place within the church. However, as the survey indicated, as people continue to grow, they need to put their faith into action or they become stalled. NHCC’s aim is to use the information to review programs and opportunities for service, as well as design more effective modes and methods for helping individuals grow in Christ through spiritual practices and disciplines — reading and studying the Bible, prayer, and other expressions of personal commitment.

“Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:22-25

