



First Thai Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

2010 Mission Study

PASTORAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

FIRST THAI PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE USA
1047 N. BARRANCA AVE. COVINA, CALIFORNIA 91722
TEL. (626) 858-5288
FAX. (626) 858-5291

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
I. INTRODUCTION	2
II. OUR BELIEF	2
III. VISION STATEMENT	3
IV. MISSION STATEMENT	3
V. OUR CHURCH HISTORY	4
VI. OUR MINISTRY AND OUTREACH.....	6
VII. DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS FOR THAIS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY	7
VIII. RECORDS OF FIRST THAI PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE USA.....	8
IX. FINANCE.....	11
X. OUR CONGREGATION (SURVEY RESULTS)	13
XI. OUR PASTOR PROFILE (SURVEY RESULTS).....	16
XII. APPENDIX - OUR PASTOR OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS (SURVEY RESULTS).....	21

MISSION STUDY

April 2010

I. INTRODUCTION

The Mission Study Committee/Pastoral Nominating Committee presents its report to the Session with the purpose of providing a current picture and vision of who we are as a church body, and with the hope that we would see how God is working amongst us. We have sought God's guidance as we met with, surveyed, and listened to, our Thai/English congregation during the absence of our full time pastor. We pray that God is leading us towards the road less traveled, the path He had prepared for us, not the path and timeline we have placed before Him. Although it is a crucial time in our church history to find the right leader in a timely manner, God's timing is unpredictable. Thus, we ask the Session and congregation to pray diligently for the Lord's guidance in this mission.

II. OUR BELIEF

Our beliefs are summarized in the Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed:

a. Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

b. The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one

Being with the Father; through Him all things were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven, was incarnated of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly man. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried. On the third day He rose again to accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

III. VISION STATEMENT

First Thai Presbyterian Church in the USA (FTPC) is called to proclaim the Gospel of Christ and the beliefs of the evangelical Christian faith, to maintain the worship of God, and to inspire in all persons a love for Christ, a passion for righteousness, and a consciousness of their duties to God and mankind. We pledge our lives to Christ and covenant to demonstrate His Spirit through worshipping, witnessing, and ministering to the needs of the people of this church and the community. We strive to grow in spirituality and enlighten the world around us with our faith in God.

IV. MISSION STATEMENT

In order to achieve this vision we will:

- Strive to be an “open door” church, actively reaching out to, and welcoming all persons.
- Give our best efforts towards our weekly communal worship services.
- Provide opportunities for service, outreach, and improvement in our community as well as in the global community.
- Model the body of Christ in our inclusiveness of the gifts of all persons and in our relationship with one another as a covenant community, as well as in our daily living.

V. OUR CHURCH HISTORY

In 1968, the United States government passed a new law allowing people from other countries to come to the USA to work and establish residency. As a result, a major migration of immigrants occurred. By 1973, there were an estimated 7,500 Thais living in Los Angeles County, a small portion of which were Christian. As a result, the Thai Community Church of Hollywood was established for three main reasons:

1. To give Thai Christians and non Christians alike the opportunity to worship God in their own language;
2. To aid the Thai living abroad with physical and psychological needs; and
3. To bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to the Thais living in Los Angeles County and in other parts of the United States.

Consequently, on Easter Sunday in April 1973, the first service of the Thai Community Church in Hollywood was held in the chapel of the Mount Hollywood Congregational Church in Los Angeles with 40 attendees, 15 of which were Thai.

The Rev. Soon Il Kim was a senior pastor and Rev. Prachuab Dechawan an associate pastor. The regular worship was held at 2:00 pm every Sunday; followed by Sunday school and dinner.

A majority of the original Thai Christian members that founded our church were originally members of the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT). In essence, the church became a member of Pakh 6 Bangkok (6th.Presbytery, Bangkok) of the CCT. The relationship lasted for a couple of years. The long distance and lack of constant communication proved to be difficult for this relationship. On November 30, 1981 when the Rev. Dr. Prachuab Dechawan (then Rev. Prachuab) was installed as a full-time pastor, the church moved its membership to the Presbytery of the Pacific.

There were times of struggle; times that the church's destiny was uncertain. However, with God's help, the faithfulness of our members and leadership of Rev. Dr. Prachuab Dechawan, our church persevered. The membership had increased in number and our faith deepened. With an increase in the congregation's membership, the church had outgrown the chapel at the Mount Hollywood Congregational Church. In September of 1986, we moved to a shared facility as "Partnership in Mission" with the First Presbyterian Church, El Monte, under the jurisdiction of

the Presbytery of San Gabriel. The church changed its name to “The First Thai Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.”

Ever since 1973, our dream has been to have our own property. With the Lord's guidance, we purchased an existing church in Covina, California for the amount of \$900,000.00 and in February of 1995, we relocated to the current location at 1047 N. Barranca Avenue, Covina, CA 91722. It is situated on approximately 1.86 acre site with one sanctuary and 4 interconnected one story accessory buildings. We thank God continually for our “current home”. Currently, the outstanding balance is approximately \$185,000.00. We are confident God will provide us with the necessary funds for the loan payment and continuous upkeep of the buildings.

With increased membership and the need for a younger generation, one of our members took a leap of faith and pursued a study in the ministry. With hard work and perseverance, Rev. Thanit Osiripaibul was installed as co-pastor on July 31, 2004. It was one of the joyous moments in our church history indeed.

On September 1, 2005, the Rev. Dr. Prachuab Dechawan stepped down from the full-time pastor position to pursue a pastoral care for the youth and young adult group within our church. While working as a part-time pastor for our church, he also spent his time assisting the congregations in Las Vegas and San Jose. The Rev. Thanit Osiripaibul became full-time pastor.

On December 4, 2005, members of the youth group were concerned with the lack of a youth director. Part of the youth group did not agree with PCUSA doctrines and left the congregation. Several of the youth members decided to broaden their thirst for Christ at different churches in the area. Most of the youth returned a year later with a new found strength. Currently, most of the youth members play a big part in Sunday school teaching to the pre-school age. They also lead Sunday worship with their talent without a youth director.

On Sunday, April 19, 2009 the Session called a congregational meeting to act upon the 3rd request of Rev. Thanit Osiripaibul to dissolve pastoral relationship. The congregation voted to concur with the request and on May 1, 2009 the dissolution took effect.

Currently, the church is under a temporary care of the session and the Session Moderator, Rev. Thomas Duggan, who was appointed by the Presbytery of San Gabriel. Our Sunday worship begins at 10:00 am. Head phones are readily available for simultaneous translation in English for those who do not understand Thai. Prayer meetings are held every Wednesday at noon in the Chapel. Small groups meet in homes of church members on Saturday evenings throughout the Los Angeles and San Bernardino area. A typical Sunday morning begins with a

worship service and is followed by Bible study classes for all age groups in both Thai and English. As we move into the new decade, we look forward to witnessing to both the Thai and English speaking communities residing in Southern California as well as in other cities across the United States. We ask for your prayers for the continued growth and mission of the First Thai Presbyterian Church in the USA as we look forward to the future.

VI. OUR MINISTRY AND OUTREACH

In 1981, we started to minister to refugees of the Vietnam War residing in the Long Beach region of the County of Los Angeles. Many Laotians and Cambodians became Christian through this outreach. The Lao-Cambodian Presbyterian Church of Long Beach was founded through this ministry.

Throughout the years we have also reached out to Thai Christians in other parts of the United States and have helped establish the following churches:

1. The Thai Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth with Elder Arom Nataneti as lay leader.
2. The Thai Presbyterian Church of Chicago with Elder Dr. Chach Thaochalee as lay leader.
3. The Thai Presbyterian, New York, with Elder Keneth Suwatanasan as lay leader.
4. Thai Community Church in New York City with Elder Pracha Gold as lay leader.
5. First Thai Presbyterian Church, San Jose, California with Rev. Dr. Prachuab Dechawan as an organizing pastor.
6. The First Thai-Laotian Presbyterian Church, Las Vegas, Nevada with Rev. Dr. Prachuab Dechawan as an organizing pastor.

To encourage the leadership trainings, evangelical outreach, and spiritual growth, the seven (7) churches formed the National Thai Presbyterian Council (NThPC). An annual retreat is held through various parts of the country over the July 4th weekend.

VII. DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS FOR THAIS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Census information from the year 2000 indicates the overall population of Los Angeles County to be approximately 11 million. There are approximately 150,000 Thais in Los Angeles County.

- 7.1. Thai median age in LA County=35 years
- 7.2. Never married=35.2%, Married=53.0%, Separated=1.7%, Widowed=2.6%, Divorced=7.4%
- 7.3. Native=22.2%, Foreign born, naturalized citizen=32.7, Foreign born, not a citizen=45.1%
- 7.4. Median Family Income: 1999=\$49,635
- 7.5. Median Earning by Sex: 1999, Men=\$32,879; Woman=\$25,403
- 7.6. Housing Tenure: 2000, Owner=48.1%; Rent=59.1%
- 7.7. Education Attainment: 2000, Less than high school graduate=20.9%; High school graduate=17.5%; Some college or associate's degree=23.1%; Bachelor's degree or more=38.6%
- 7.8. Household Type and Average Household Size: 2000 Average household=2.64; Married couple=44.3%; Female householder, no spouse present=12.7%; Male house holder, no spouse present=5.3; No family household=37.7%

VIII. RECORDS OF FIRST THAI PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE USA

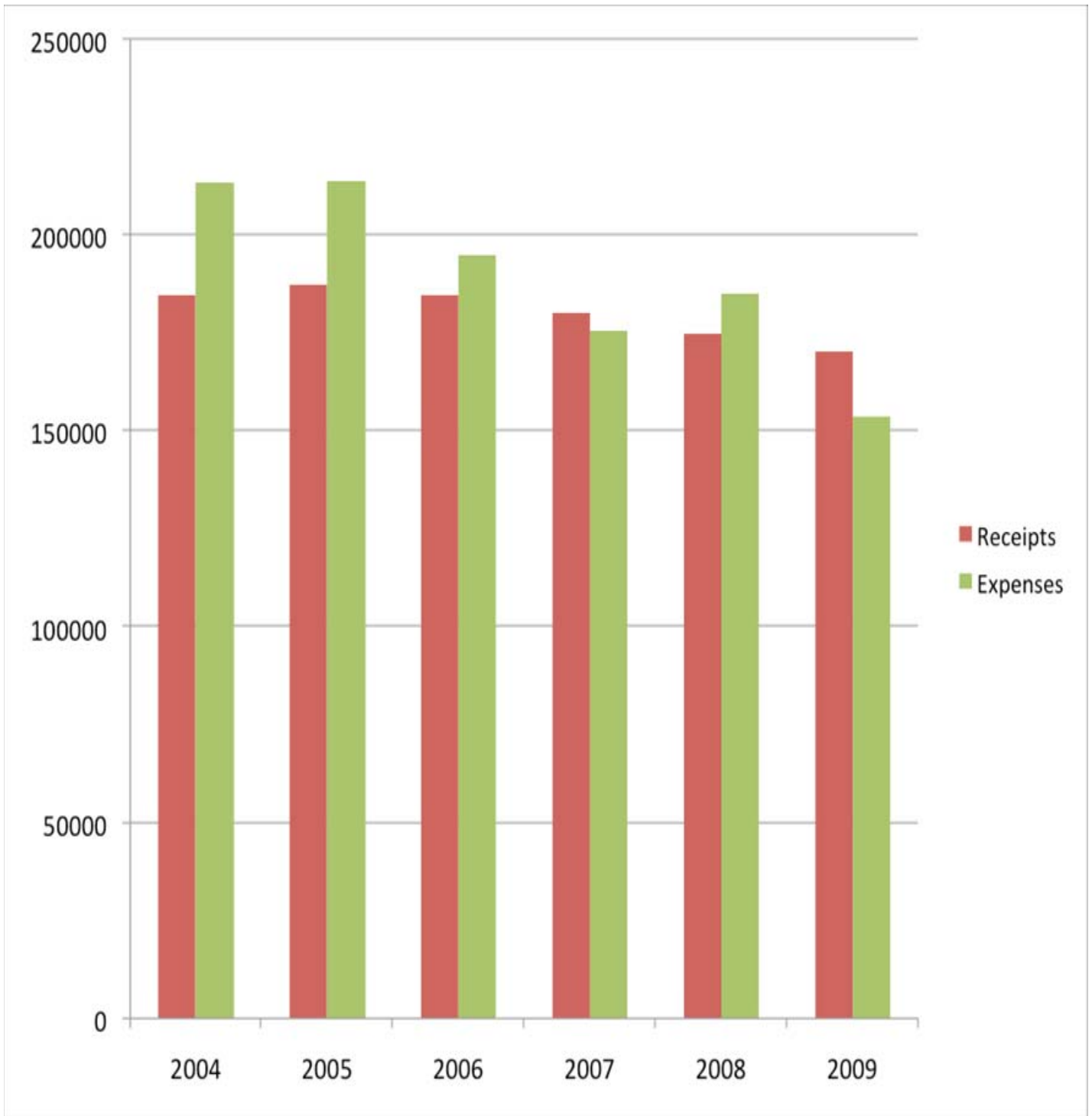
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Prior Year Active Members	133	137	130	127	114	94	91
Gains							
17 and Under	5	9	0	0	0	0	0
18 and Over	2	5	1	2	0	0	0
Certified	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Gains	7	14	2	2	1	0	0
Loses							
Certified	0	10	3	7	5	2	0
Deaths	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
Others	2	10	1	8	15	0	0
Total Loses	3	21	5	15	21	3	1
Total Active Members	137	130	127	114	94	91	90
Female Members	91	80	78	71	63	61	61
Inactive	34	44	45	53	64	64	66
Baptized	19	22	25	3	8	0	0
Total Adherents	190	196	197	170	166	155	156
Average Attendance	77	72	68	54	57	59	55
Affiliate members	0	0	0	0	0		0
Child Baptisms	0	2	2	3	7		3
Adult Baptisms	2	0	1	0	2		0
Officers							
Male Elders	3	2	2	3	3	4	4
Female Elders	3	4	3	3	3	2	2
Male Deacons	4	4	3	2	1	1	1
Female Deacons	3	3	3	5	6	6	6

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Age Distribution							
25 and Under	30	31	27	27	16	15	15
26-45	28	28	29	22	20	19	18
46-55	40	24	23	19	13	13	11
56-65	26	32	32	33	31	31	28
Over 65	13	15	16	13	14	13	18
Total	137	130	127	114	94	91	90
People with Disabilities							
Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mobility	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Christian Education							
Age 3 and Under	0	2	3	6	10	6	5
Age 4	1	0	0	0	2	3	4
Kindergarten	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Grade 2	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
Grade 3	3	1	2	1	1	0	0
Grade 4	1	2	1	2	1	1	0
Grade 5	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Grade 6	2	1	2	2	2	2	1
Grade 7	4	2	2	1	1	2	2
Grade 8	1	4	3	1	1	1	2
Grade 9	3	2	4	2	2	1	1
Grade 10	3	3	2	1	3	1	1
Grade 11	1	3	3	1	2	1	1
Grade 12	5	2	2	4	2	1	1
Young Adults	19	24	26	0	11	13	14
Over 25	32	34	34	32	20	20	21
Teacher/Officer	8	8	8	5	5	7	7
Total Church School	89	93	95	61	65	60	61

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Racial Ethnic Breakdown							
Asian	130	122	117	105	89	87	86
Black	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	2	1	3	3	1	1	1
Native American	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	5	7	7	6	4	3	3
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	137	130	127	114	94	91	90
Potential Giving Units	46	63	65	62	51	51	50

IX. FINANCE

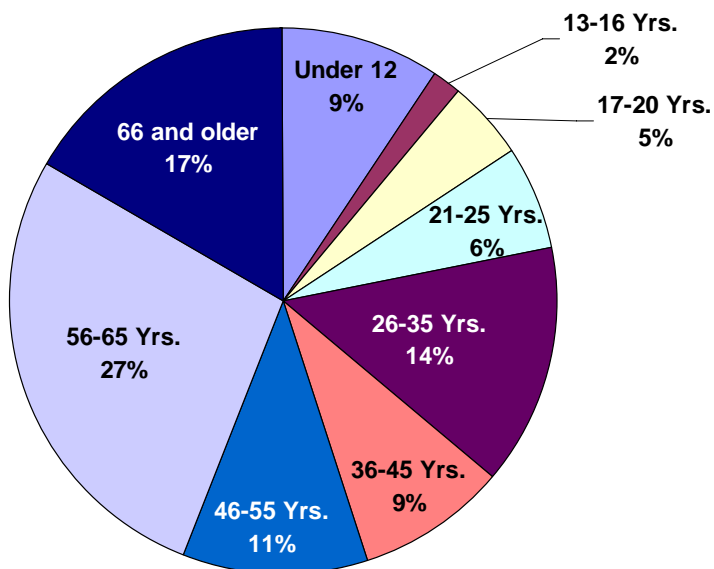
Line Item #		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
1	Pledges	\$99,955.10	\$95,509.50	\$95,544.00	\$100,136.76	\$99,813.46	\$104,095.40
2	Loose Offering	\$3,378.75	\$2,430.31	\$2,803.35	\$2,392.90	\$2,255.52	\$3,260.27
3	Sunday School	\$521.00	\$10.00	\$24.00	\$146.00	\$145.00	\$601.00
4	Non-member and Special Offering	\$5,072.00	\$3,146.50	\$2,905.00	\$4,834.00	\$9,303.00	\$5,957.00
5	Building Fund Offering	\$33,548.70	\$29,901.00	\$26,393.00	\$30,337.60	\$23,124.00	\$22,163.00
6	Rent	\$18,000.00	\$18,300.00	\$30,300.00	\$33,900.00	\$28,250.00	\$23,400.00
7	Fund Raising	\$4,893.00	\$3,050.00	\$913.25	\$2,890.75	\$6,171.72	\$4,583.58
8	Grants and Specialized Ministry Offering	\$16,260.00	\$30,541.80	\$21,231.27	\$2,200.00	\$2,400.00	\$3,270.00
9	Other Incomes (Garage Sale, Interest, Secretarial Support from LV Church)	\$974.91	\$2,460.50	\$2,581.50	\$3,150.00	\$3,279.00	\$2,901.00
10	<i>Total Income</i>	<i>\$184,607.46</i>	<i>\$187,354.61</i>	<i>\$184,701.37</i>	<i>\$179,988.01</i>	<i>\$174,741.70</i>	<i>\$170,231.25</i>
11	Pastorial Service	\$60,899.00	\$53,730.38	\$29,318.79	\$59,575.16	\$62,124.53	\$45,605.49
12	Associate Pastoral Service	\$17,637.49	\$43,529.60	\$58,446.78	\$-	\$-	\$-
13	Secretary Service	\$16,089.22	\$16,332.32	\$18,045.04	\$20,972.88	\$22,111.86	\$22,691.23
14	<i>Total Pastorial and Secretary Services</i>	<i>\$94,625.71</i>	<i>\$113,592.30</i>	<i>\$105,810.61</i>	<i>\$80,548.04</i>	<i>\$84,236.39</i>	<i>\$68,296.72</i>
15	Administration and Technology	\$8,592.10	\$7,262.56	\$8,066.04	\$8,015.04	\$6,154.69	\$10,458.08
16	Music	\$4,036.64	\$3,479.00	\$3,812.79	\$3,705.38	\$3,884.73	\$3,380.00
17	Asian-American Ministry/Christian Education	\$15,465.61	\$11,046.17	\$2,874.35	\$5,337.45	\$8,180.45	\$9,334.87
18	General Mission and Outreach	\$17,631.43	\$11,721.59	\$9,740.90	\$10,318.92	\$5,952.26	\$4,152.68
19	Facility Maintenance	\$24,868.30	\$23,948.50	\$23,244.09	\$25,247.19	\$26,716.86	\$31,076.42
20	Mortgage	\$37,958.04	\$37,960.00	\$37,958.04	\$37,958.04	\$37,958.04	\$22,733.17
21	Leadership Development	\$5,146.44	\$960.00	\$613.86	\$255.00	\$8,194.00	\$65.00
22	Fellowship & Miscellaneous	\$4,947.81	\$3,851.00	\$2,746.88	\$4,104.26	\$3,746.88	\$4,054.97
23	<i>Total Expenses</i>	<i>\$213,272.08</i>	<i>\$213,821.12</i>	<i>\$194,867.56</i>	<i>\$175,489.32</i>	<i>\$185,024.30</i>	<i>\$153,551.91</i>
24	<i>Surplus (Deficit)</i>	<i>\$(28,664.62)</i>	<i>\$(26,466.51)</i>	<i>\$(10,166.19)</i>	<i>\$4,498.69</i>	<i>\$(10,282.60)</i>	<i>\$16,679.34</i>



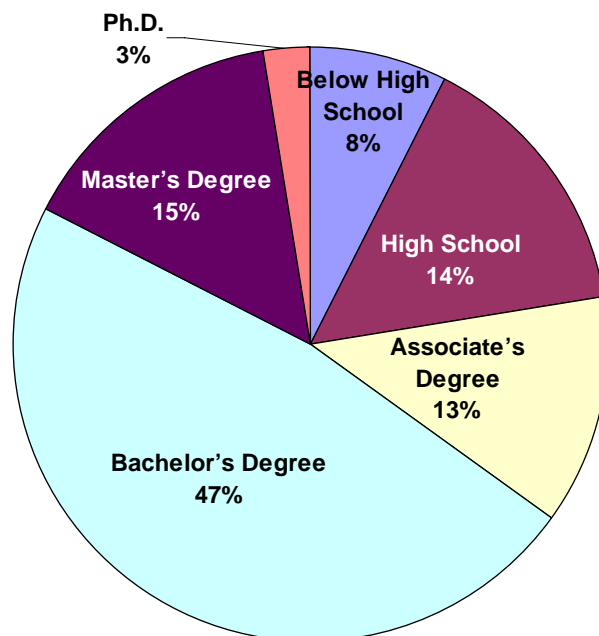
GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATIVE OF FINANCE

X. OUR CONGREGATION PROFILE (SURVEY RESULTS)

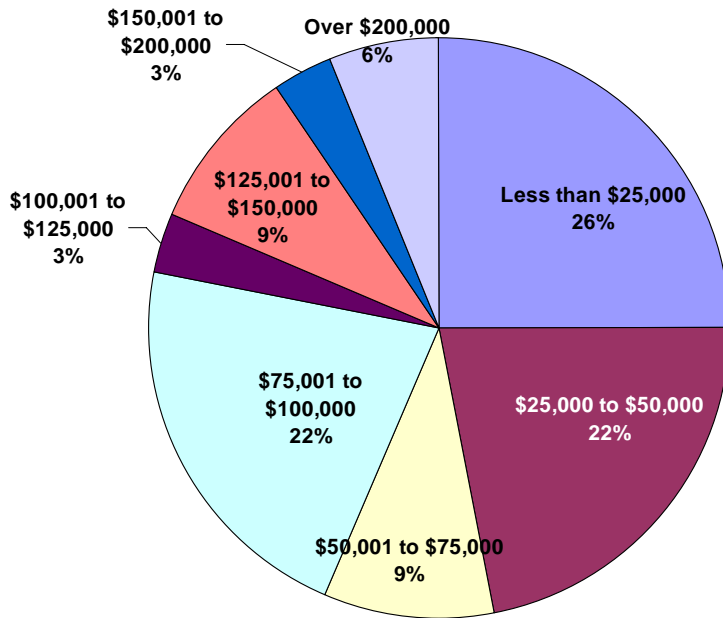
FTPC Age Distribution



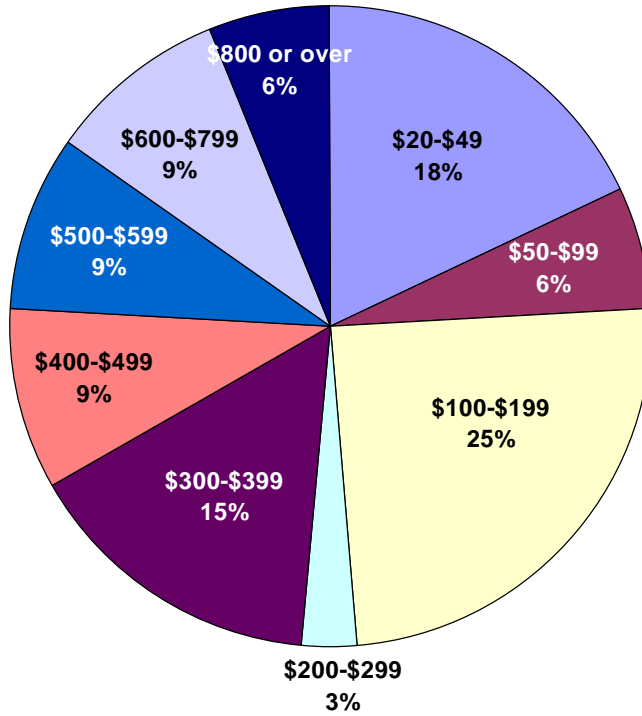
FTPC Education Level



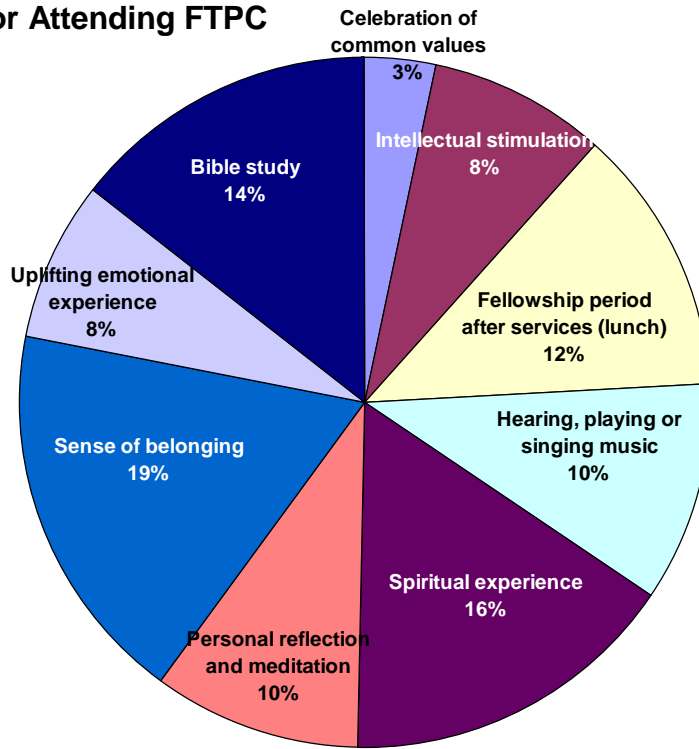
Annual Household/Family Income



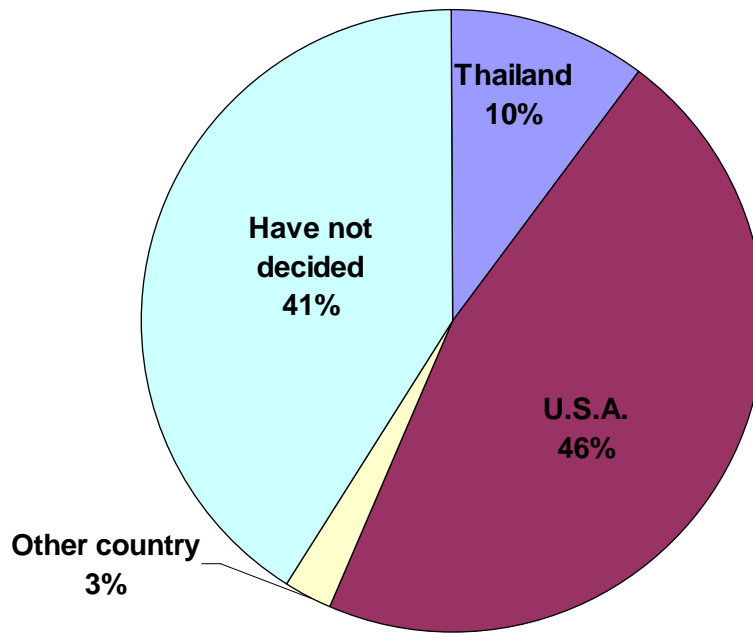
Monthly Family/Household Pledge



Reasons For Attending FTPC

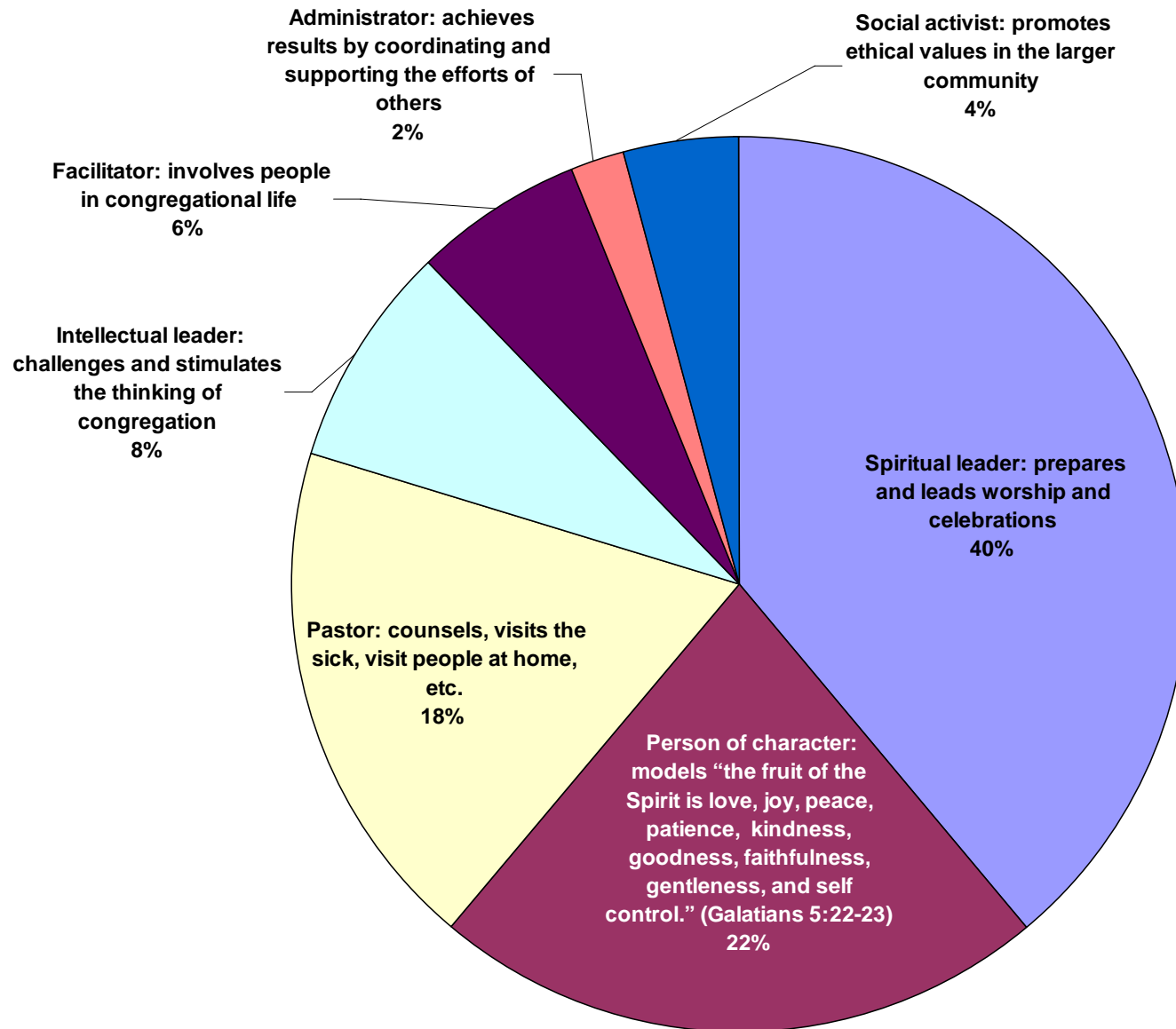


Place To Live After Retirement

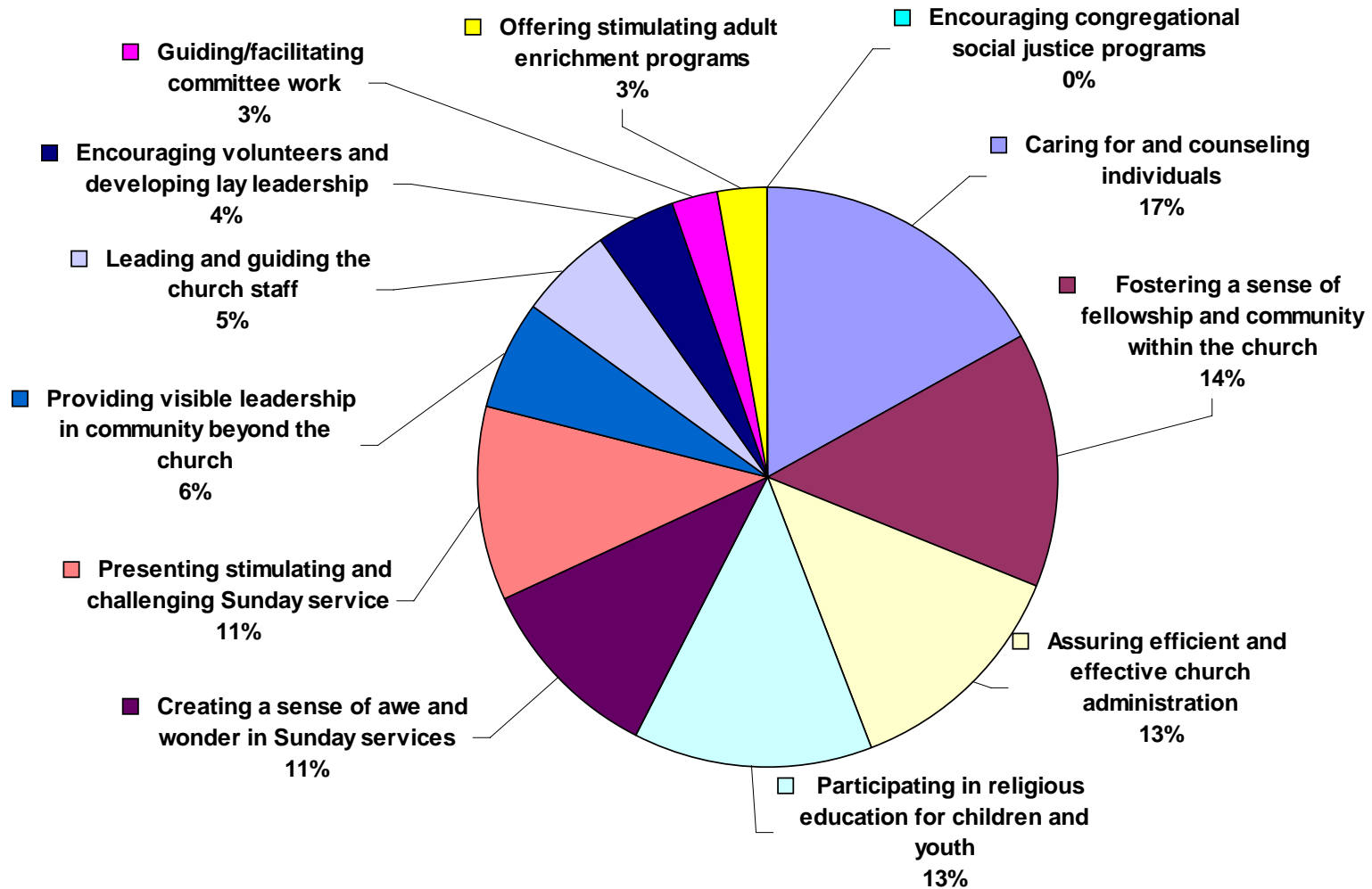


VIII. OUR PASTOR PROFILE (SURVEY RESULTS)

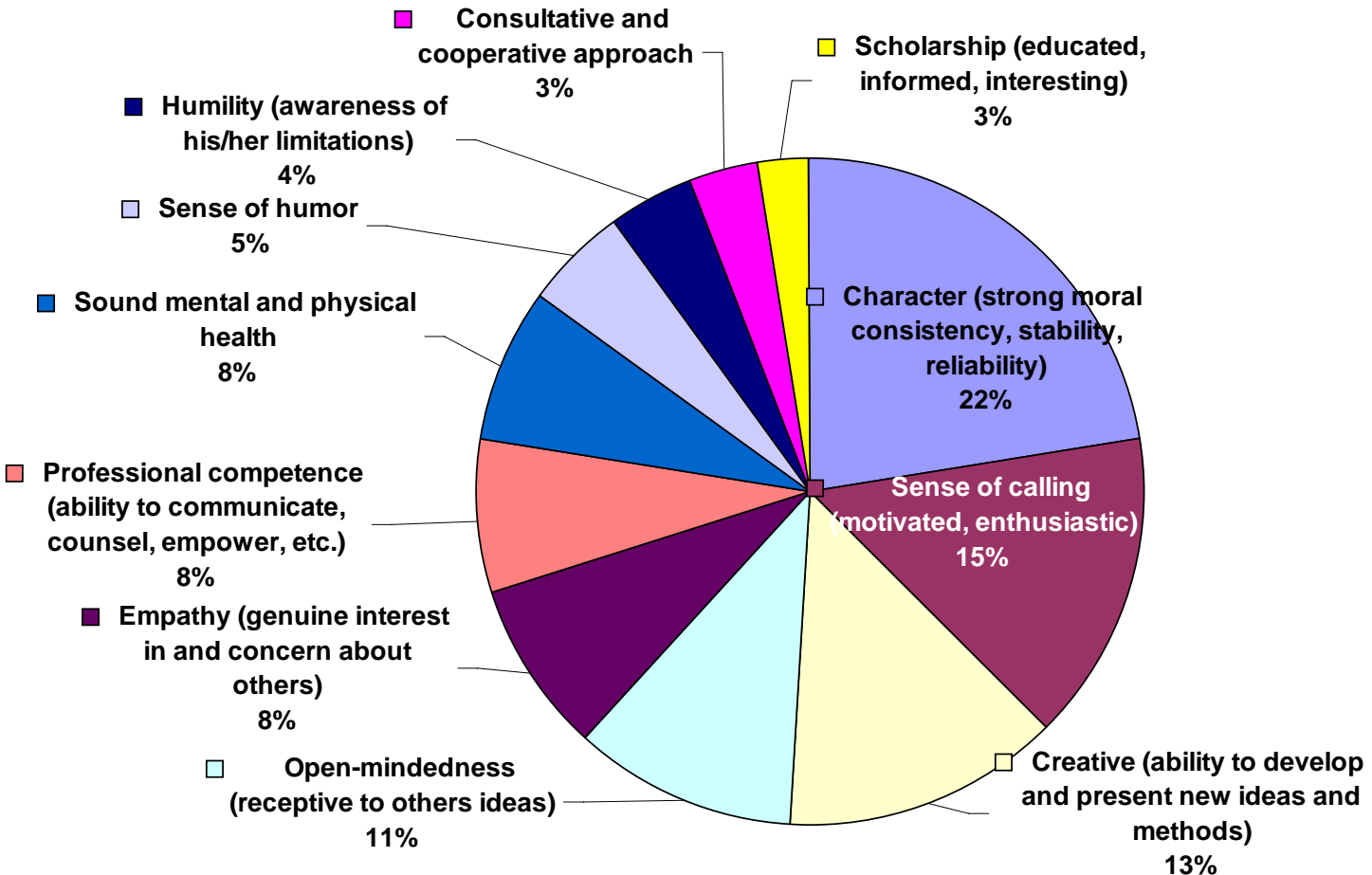
Desired Leadership Style of Pastor



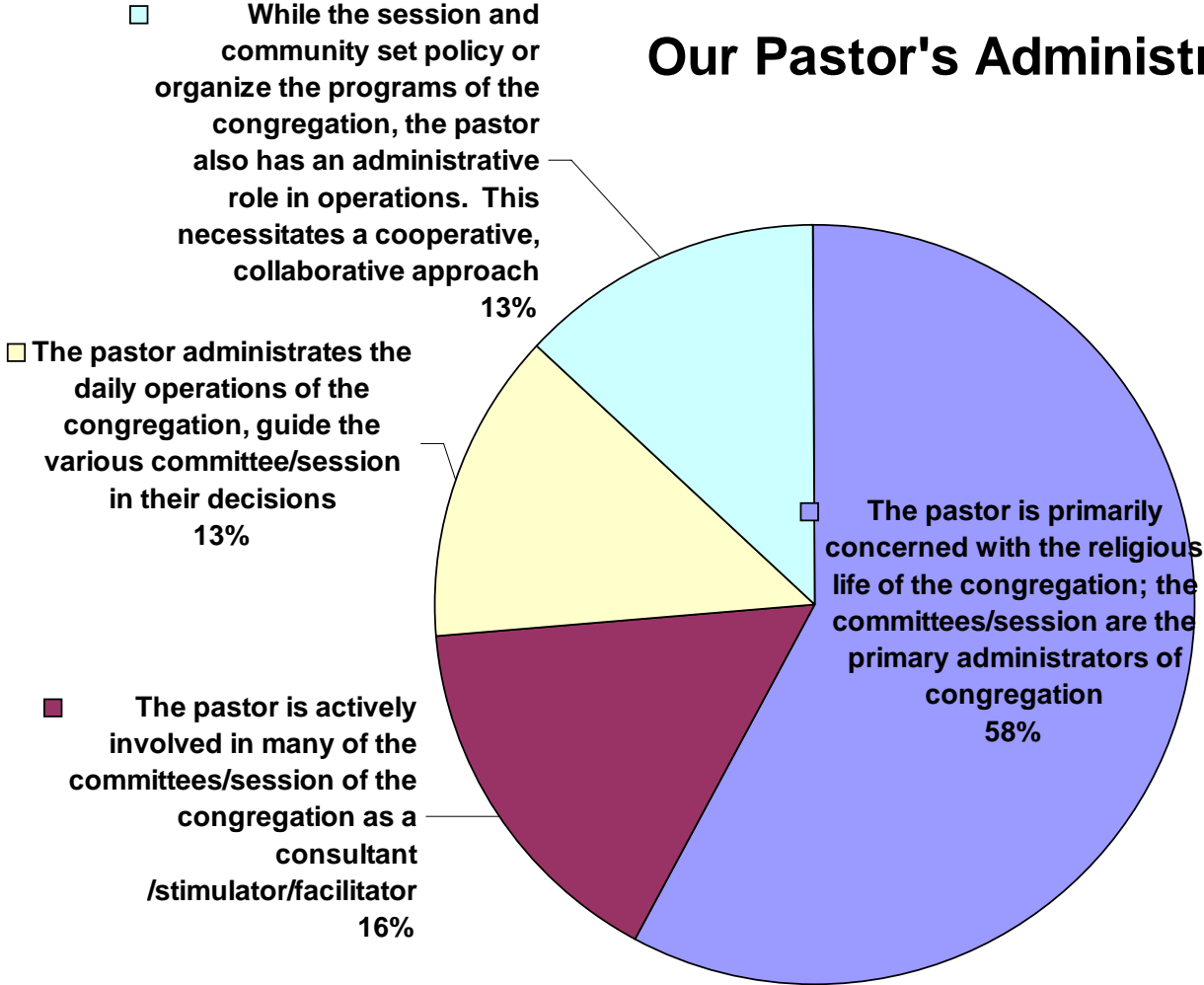
Priorities For Next Pastor



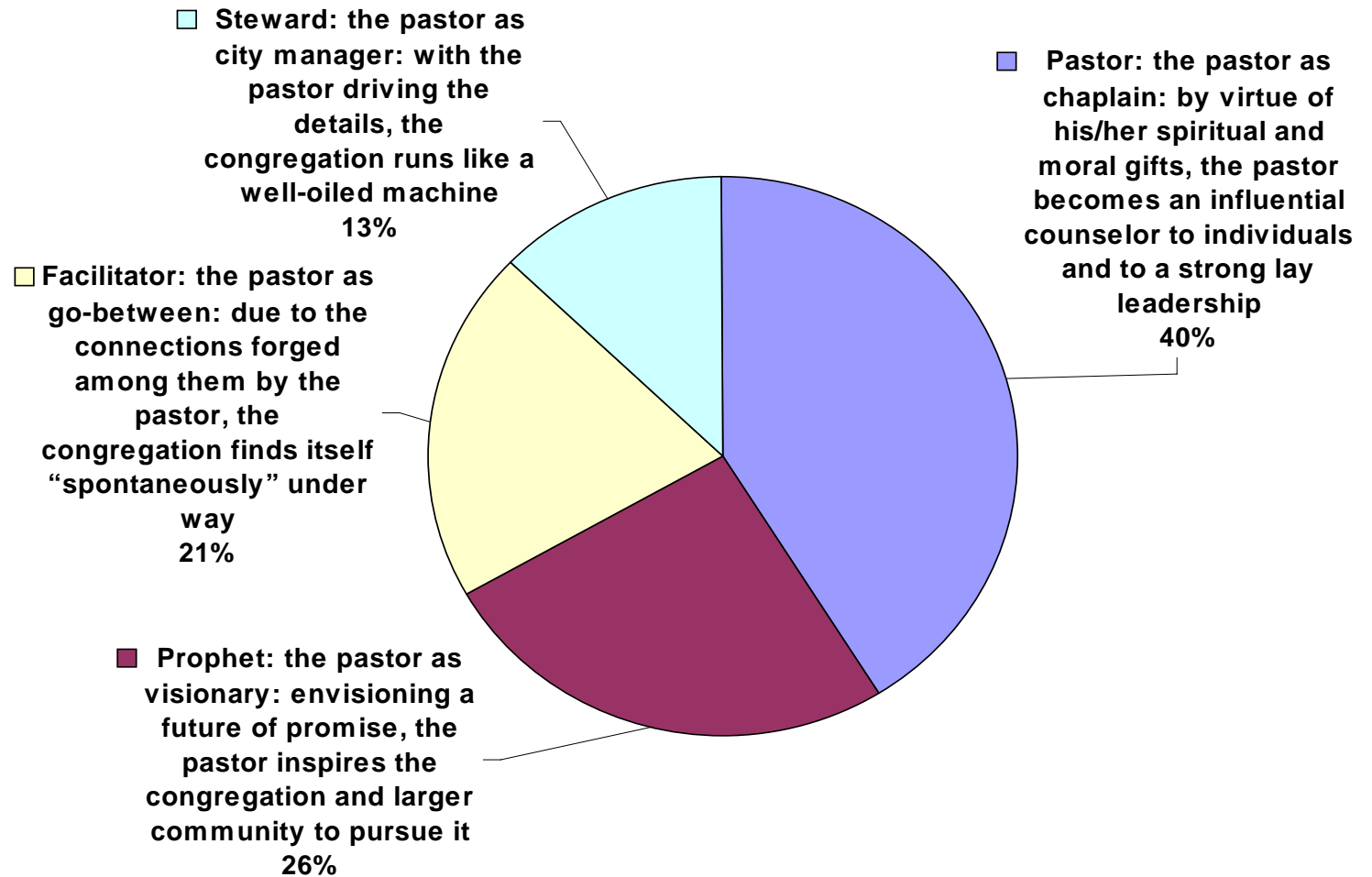
What Qualities Do We Want from Our Pastor?



Our Pastor's Administrative Role



Predominant Style of Ministry



IX. APPENDIX

OUR PASTOR: Open-Ended Questions From Survey Results

62. What current strengths does our congregation possess that you would like to either see maintained or strengthened in the immediate future?

Sunday lunch, fellowship

Cooperative, Supportive

1st Organized Thai Congregation in USA

Caring, Willing to serve and help out

Open-minded, no Gossiping

Prayer Meeting outside the church

Spiritual leadership, dedication and good examples of elders and deacons, through thick & thin.

Translation from Thai to English

Special music

Leading and introducing friends and family to know and accept Jesus Christ

63. What single thing do you value most about our congregation?

Sunday Lunch

Fellowship

Friendly, giving & loving spirit

Being Thai Church and maintain Thai Cultural Values

Family environment, extended family kinship

Northern Thai Language

Nice Facility

Great hospitality

Unity among members to carry out the ministry

64. What would make our congregation of more value to you?

Increase of worship attendance weekly

Working together, more commitments and dedication

Listen to others' opinions

Speak English more

More visitation

Youth/young adult pastor/leadership

Full time dedicated pastor.

Sermons that meet needs of all age groups, in English would be good.

Unity

Adult Sunday Bilingual

Young adult choir
More contemporary music
More programs & activities for elementary/pre-school kids
Plan and gather the policy with members
Support our pastor by encouraging, prayer, cooperation, loving and caring.

65. What are the main things you would like the congregation accomplish or get involved in within the next three to five years?

Increase number of members, maintain and bring back old members
Evangelism, out reach to non Christian
Spiritual Growth comes FIRST
Work with other churches
Bible Study Attendance
Program for youth & young adult
Good examples of our elders & deacons as lay elders - spiritual, financial, faith etc.
Reach out to other groups - homeless shelter & other activities
Become more organized
Become Lean Mean Praying Machine members
Support orphanage and needy

66. What current church problems/issues concern you? What problems/issues are likely to be pressing in five years?

Number of members decreased
Division among members
Not strong congregation, weak in evangelism
Spiritual growth
Injustice
Walk the walk
Financial support and lack of
Not welcoming new people, stay in their own groups
No Program for youth & young adult, loss of next generation
Poor attendance

67. What can you do to serve the church?

Bible Teaching, preaching, prayer meeting and visitation
Supportive & Pray for each other
Lead the worship, join women group and other duties
Person of Character
Anything just ask to volunteer

Do all my might
Relief Administrative work from elders & deacons
More activities, not just Sunday worship
Encourage our children to love and join our ministry

68. What qualities (professional skills/expertise and personal) should our pastor possess? What is your profile of our hoped-for pastor?

Having Sense of calling (motivated, enthusiastic) to serve this congregation
Love God and God First, be a good counselor
People skills, Good communicator, hard working, sacrifice, family person
Honest, self-control, charismatic, creative, positive thinking, humble
Spiritual, inspirations
Fluent in English
Be able to preach as well as lead
Enthusiastic, patient, strong determination, heart of winner, extrovert
Good sense of humor
Relatable to any age group
Healthy - Spiritual, physical and strong & steady mind
Facilitator and activities driven person
Knowledgeable and capable in pastoral care

69. What achievements will make you say, “I am glad the pastor is among us”?

Visitation, be a good steward
Increase in number of members
Care for the congregation, give good sermons
Good counselor, encourager & friends
More inspirations
New people from the reach out results
Lead congregation through tough times
Listen and value youth & young adult opinions.
Be the center of ideas, engaging fruitful activities and good participation from members.
Strong faith and spirituality of members

70. Describe the worst mistake our new pastor could make?

Adultery
Dishonesty, cheating, unreasonable
Financial failure, Focus on money

Injustice

Not leading or misleading his people, no leadership quality

Waver in faith & leadership

Offend Thai culture

Dictator - one person opinions

Contradicting beliefs

Blame members that they don't work hard enough

Careless, heartless

Not working but get pay regularly

Bad choice of wording, quick to judge

71. What do you expect from our new pastor in the next 5 to 10 years?

Increase number of members

Good people skills to win and influence others

Love to work with congregation

Good encourager, boost morale, dedication

Bible study class grow in number of attendance

Care for his/her congregation

Love thy neighbors

Attract more young people

Bi-Lingual

Inspire his church, bring back the fire in the members' hearts

Renew church's spirituality, make members want to come to church

Strong spiritual leader - Prayer and Bible Study

Build leaders

Focus on Spiritual Urgency of the members

72. Are there any special issues that you would like our Pastor Nominating Committee to consider and on which you would like to express your views?

Five years Term limit

Empathy

Find pastor who has high people skills, hard working and selfless

Pastor who values the youth & small children spiritual growth

Thai Culture events for children to participate in, within Christian doctrines

Annual Evaluation - Pastor, secretary, elders, deacons, Sunday school teachers.

Select or nominate those who have commitment and dedication to work, not to please some families.

Unceasingly prayer for guidance