

# Trinity Lutheran Church

## Saline, MI

Comprehensive Congregation Assessment  
*Report and Recommendations*

April 12, 2026



Grace in Action

# PRESENTATION AGENDA

- Opening comments (5 min)
- Summary of survey input (30 min)
- Key themes and takeaways (5 min)
- Recommendations for next steps (10 min)
- Questions about the recommendations (10 min)



# PRESENTATION AGENDA

- Opening comments (5 min)



# PURPOSE OF THIS ASSESSMENT

- Take a step back and listen
- Allow all members an opportunity to provide input
- Determine current status of ministry at Trinity so that the congregation can determine the best ways to move forward



# GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Many wonderful people in the Trinity church family
- Outstanding love for the Lord
- Tremendous love for the ministry at Trinity
- Strong financial support for Trinity and missions
- Recent challenges have had an impact



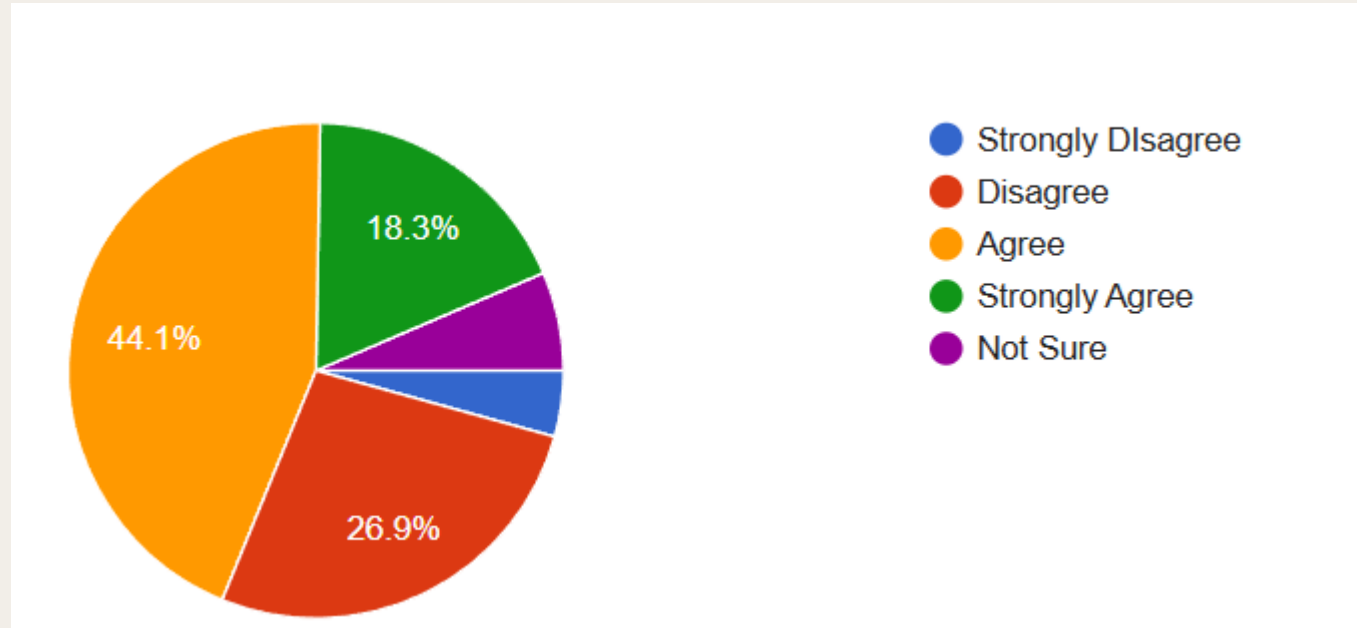
# PRESENTATION AGENDA

- Opening comments (5 min)
- Summary of survey input (30 min)



## TRINITY'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

**Trinity has a clear and well-communicated mission statement.**

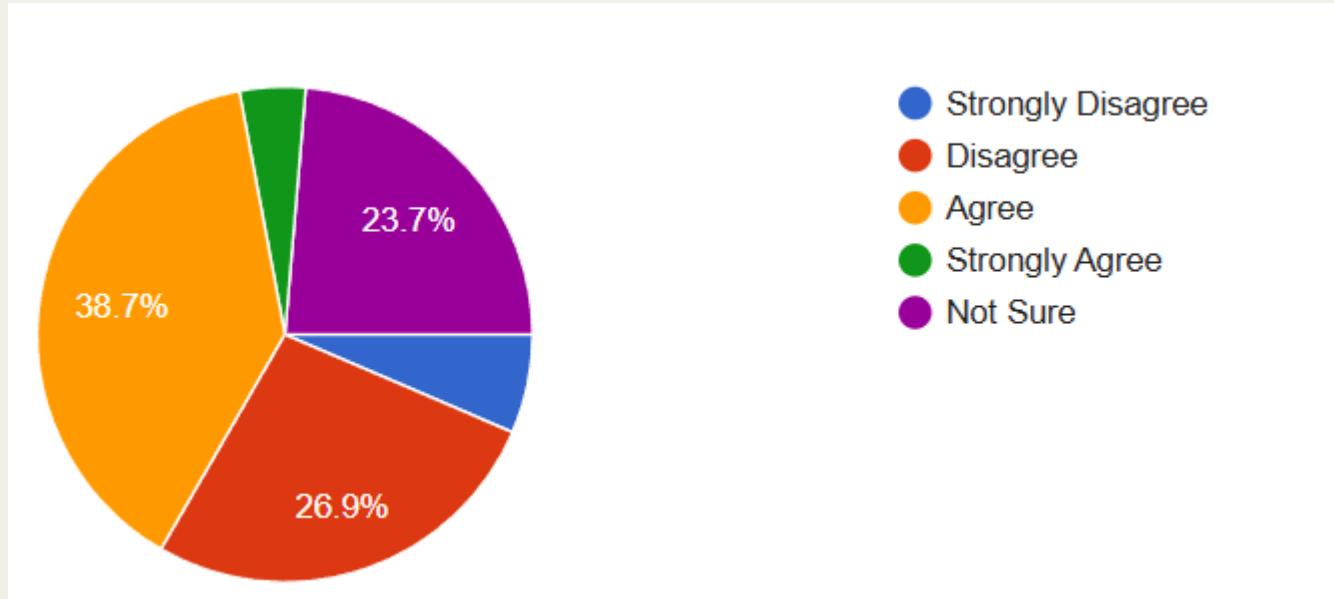


**Leans Agree/Strongly Agree**



## TRINITY'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

**Church members understand and embrace our mission.**

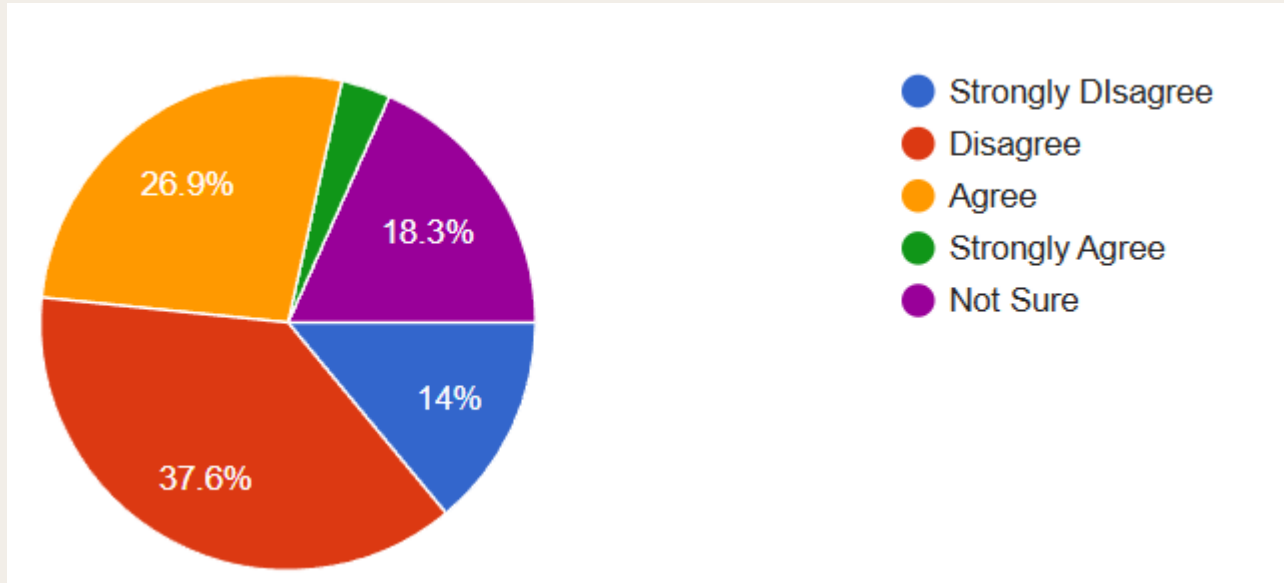


**Leans Agree/Strongly Agree**



## TRINITY'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Trinity has articulated a clear vision on how to carry out our mission.

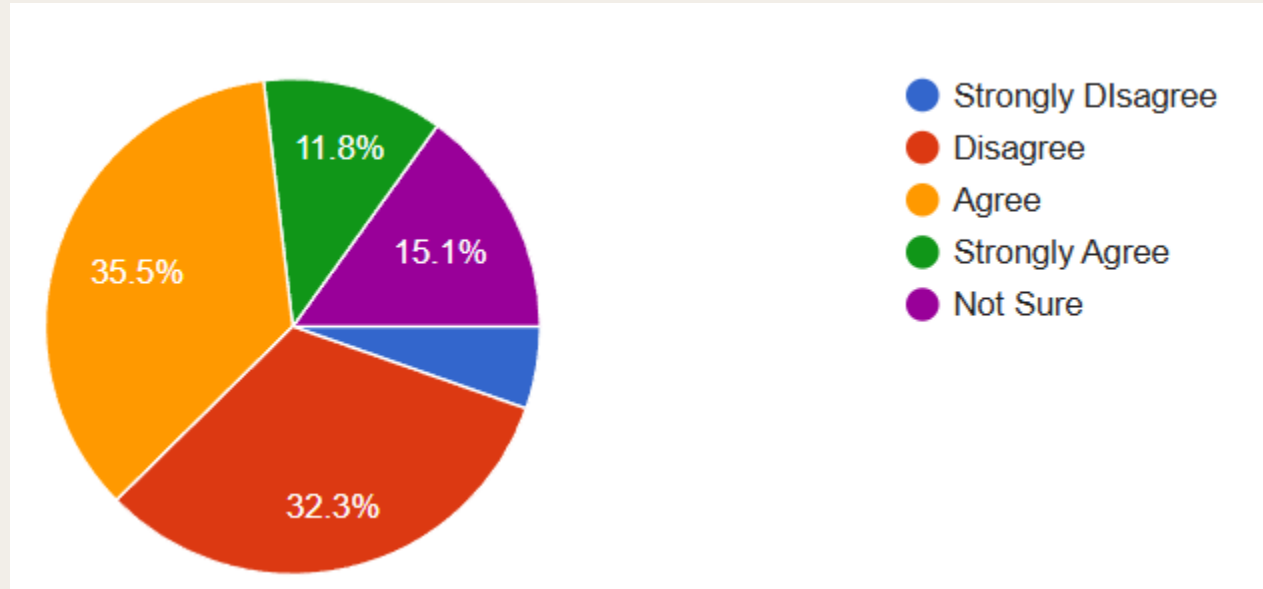


Leans Disagree/Strongly Disagree



## TRINITY'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Trinity has well-communicated set of core values.

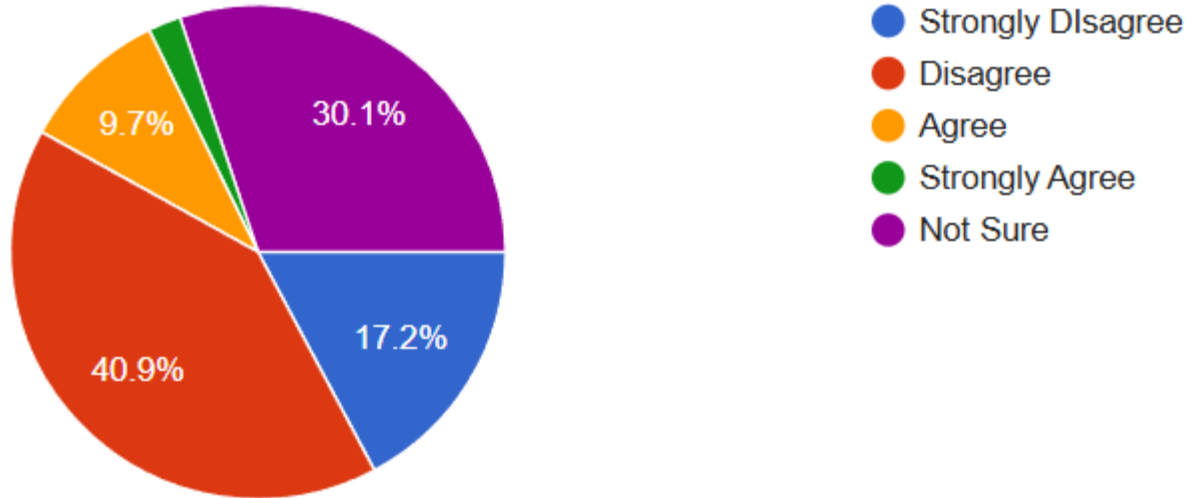


Toss Up



## TRINITY'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Trinity has a long-range strategic plan.



**Solidly Disagree/Strongly Disagree**



## TRINITY'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES - Narrative Summary

**Congregational feedback consistently reflects a lack of shared clarity, ownership, and engagement around mission, vision, and long-term direction.**



## TRINITY'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES - Narrative Summary

**While a mission statement exists, it is widely perceived as underutilized, under communicated, and not embraced by the entire membership.**



## TRINITY'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES - Narrative Summary

Many respondents noted the absence of a clearly defined or communicated vision and strategic plan, contributing to a sense of operating reactively rather than with intentional direction.



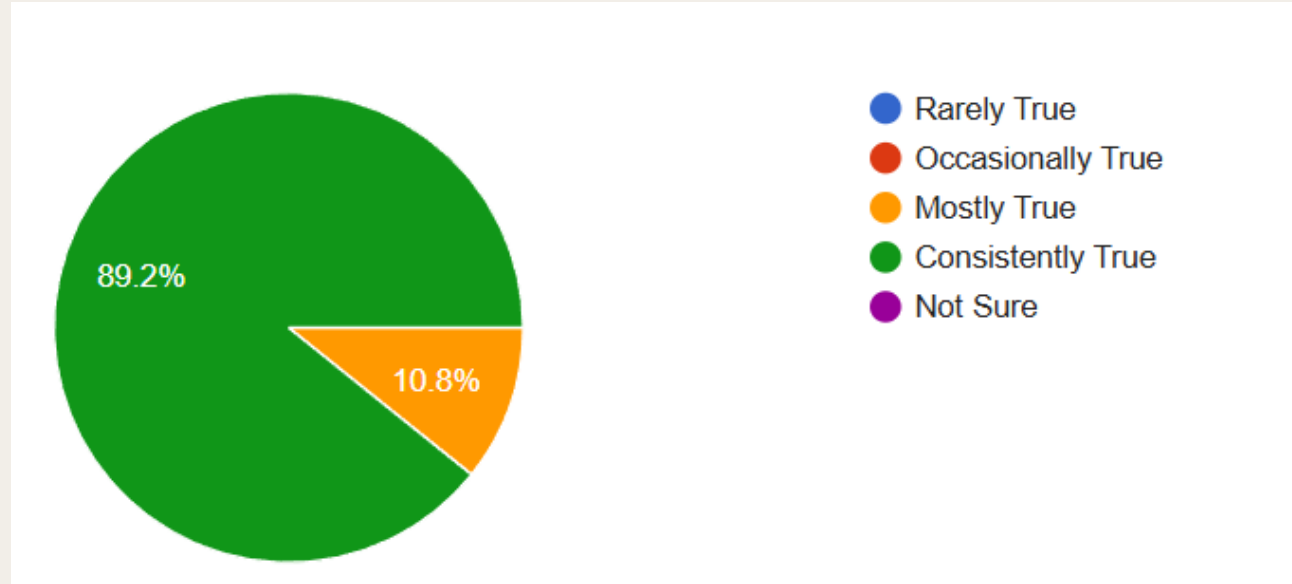
## TRINITY'S MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES - Narrative Summary

At the same time, there is an underlying recognition of Trinity's strong heritage and the desire for clearer alignment and renewed focus on engaging members—especially younger families—in a more forward-looking, actionable, and unified approach to ministry.



## SPIRITUAL GROWTH

**Our worship services clearly proclaim Law and Gospel in accordance with Scripture.**

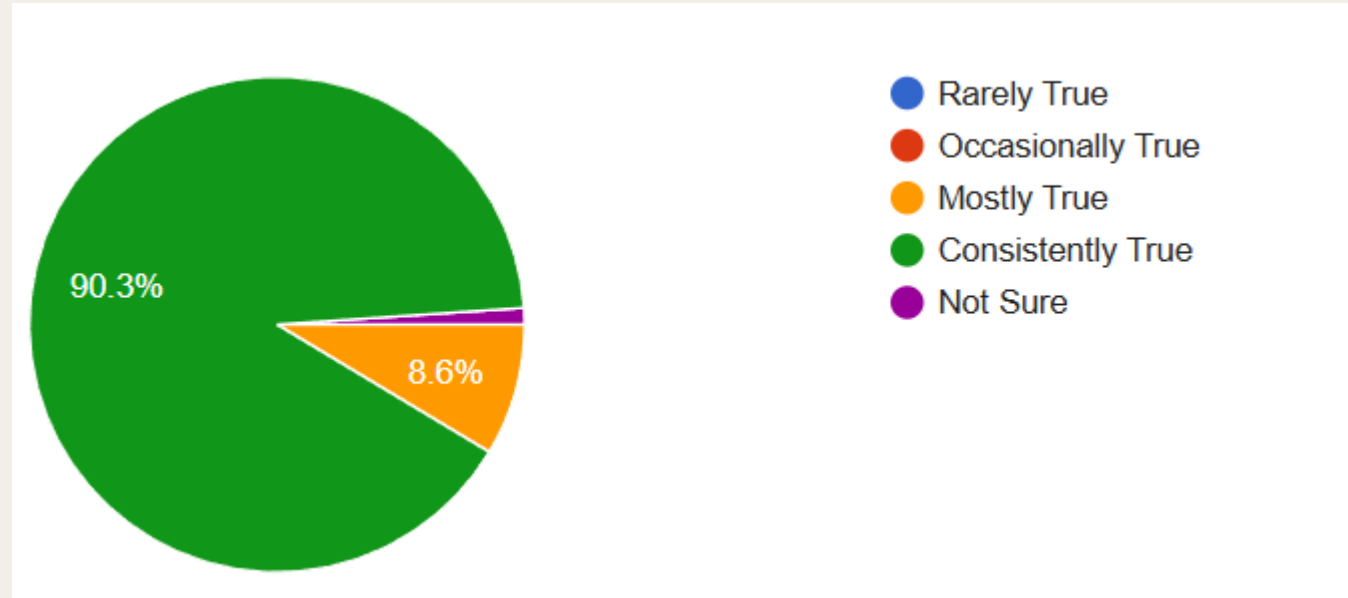


**Solidly Consistently True**



## SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The sermons are faithful to God's Word and centered on Christ's work of salvation.

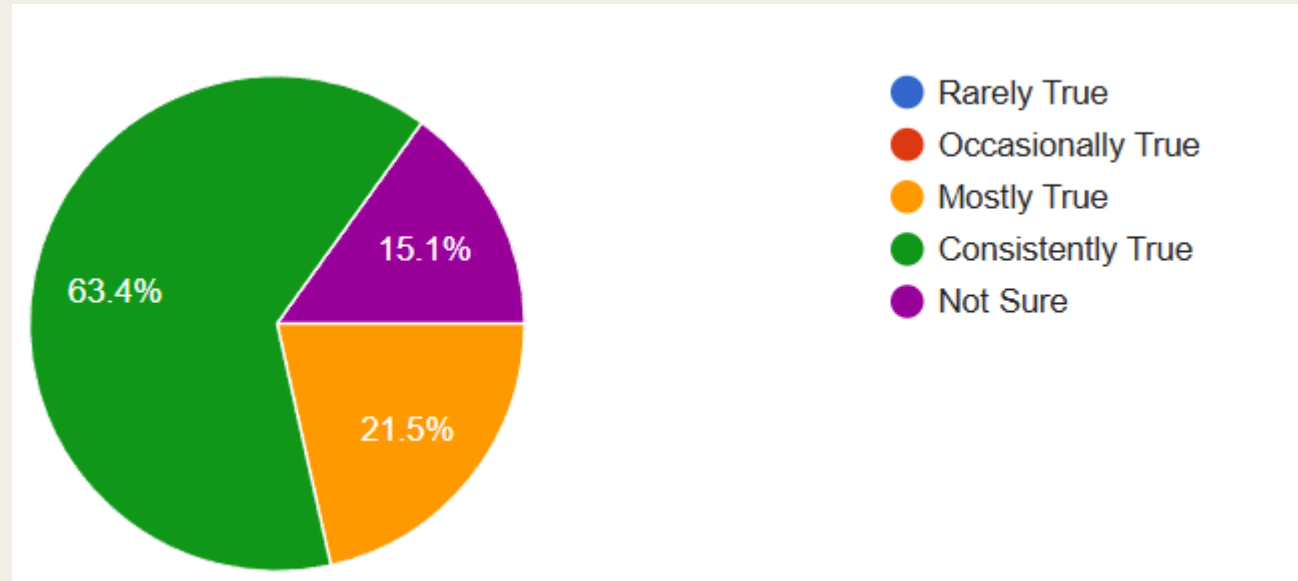


**Solidly Consistently True**



## SPIRITUAL GROWTH

**Bible studies help strengthen members' understanding of God's Word.**



**Solidly Consistently True**



**Feedback reflects a congregation with a strong foundation in worship and teaching—particularly an appreciation for faithful preaching of Law and Gospel.**



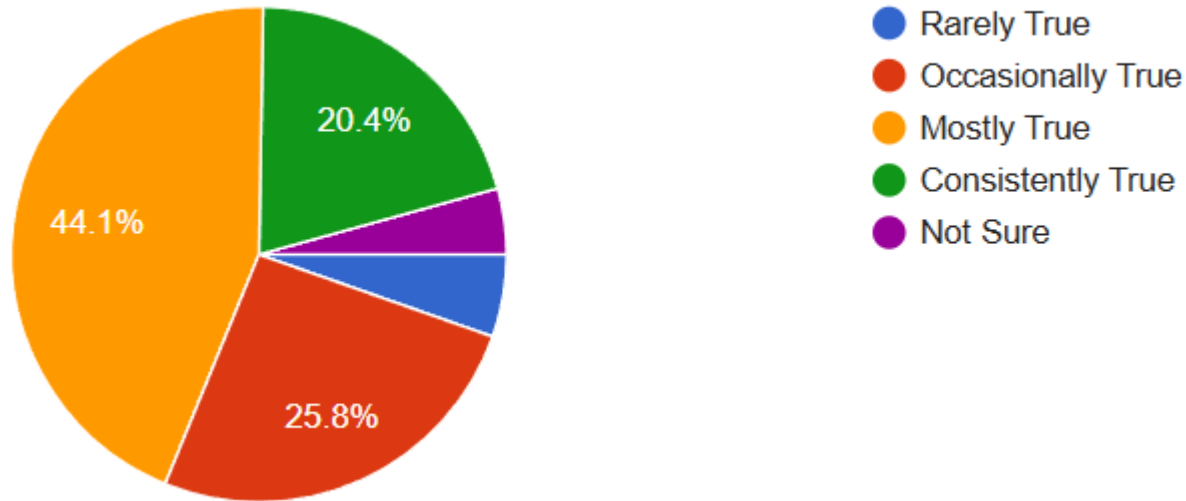
## SPIRITUAL GROWTH - Narrative Summary

**Quality opportunities exist for Bible study and spiritual growth but strong participation and promotion remain a challenge.**



## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Members are encouraged and equipped to share their faith with others.

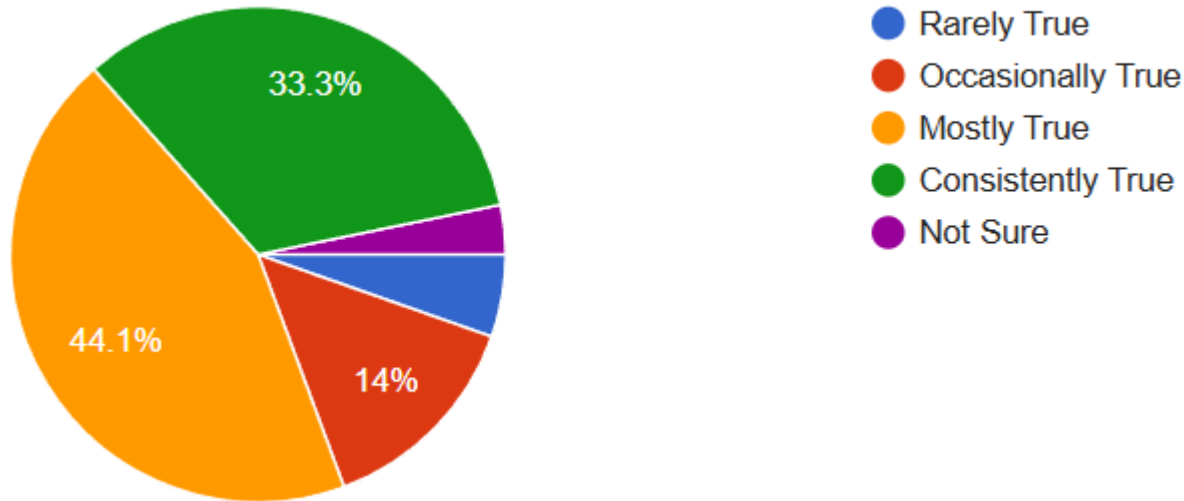


**Solidly Consistently True/Mostly True**



## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

**Members are encouraged and equipped to use their time and talents in service to the Lord.**

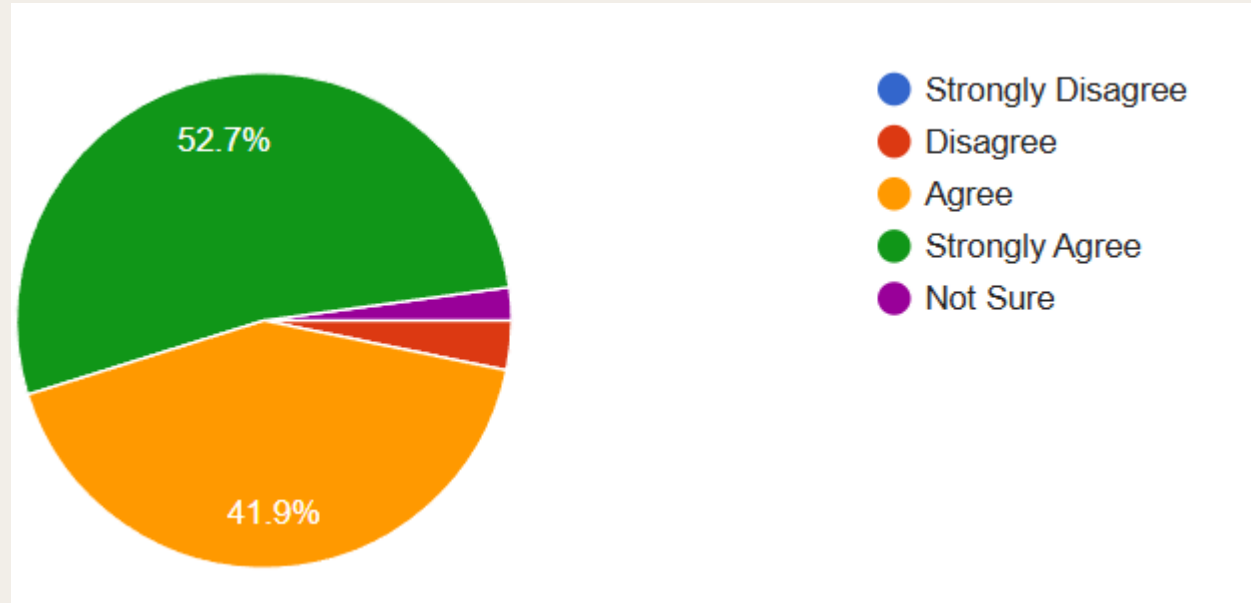


**Solidly Consistently True/Mostly True**



## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Trinity's property and facilities are in very good condition and cared for well.



**Solidly Strongly Agree/Agree**



**Feedback related to outreach and evangelism indicates that while individual members sometimes share their faith, the congregation lacks a clear, coordinated strategy for reaching people in the community.**

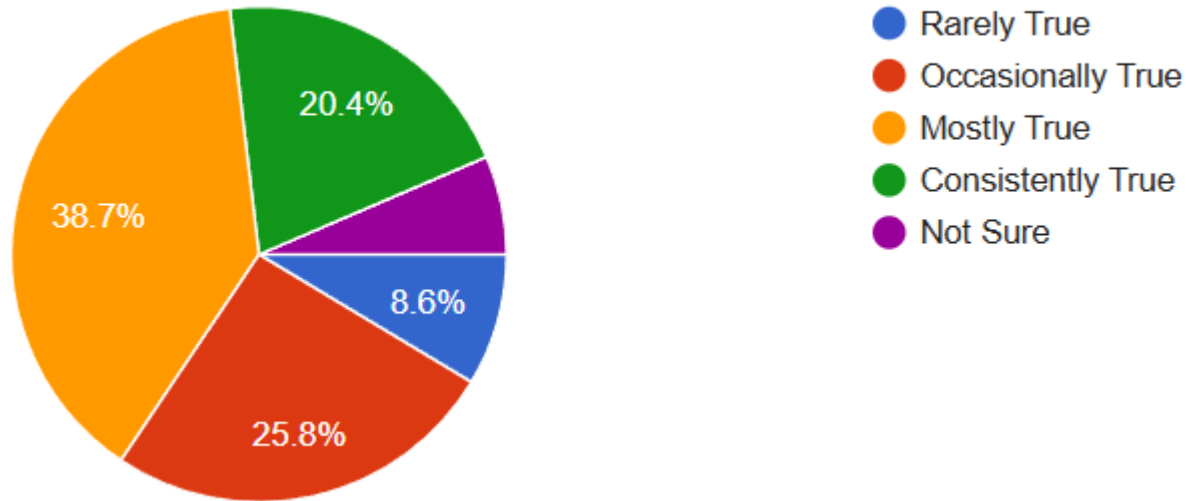


Many respondents noted an inward focus, with Trinity primarily serving its current members with limited focus on connecting with the broader community.



## CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE

Visitors and new members are warmly welcomed and encouraged to get involved.

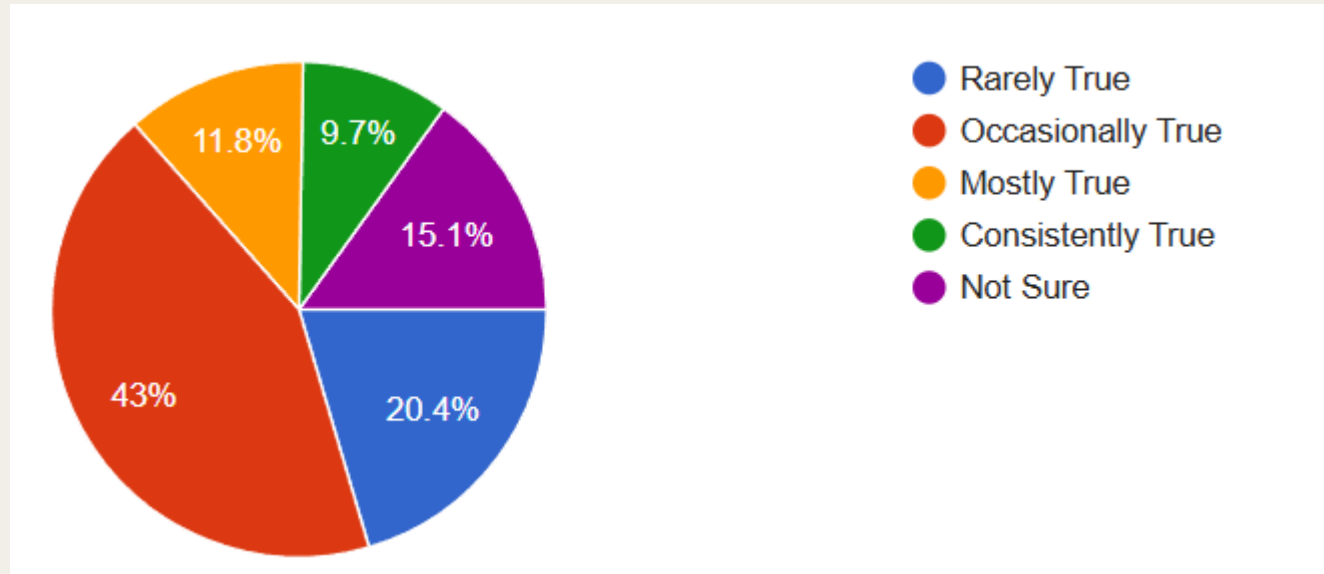


Leans Consistently True/Mostly True



## CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE

Trinity is actively sharing the Gospel with people in our community.

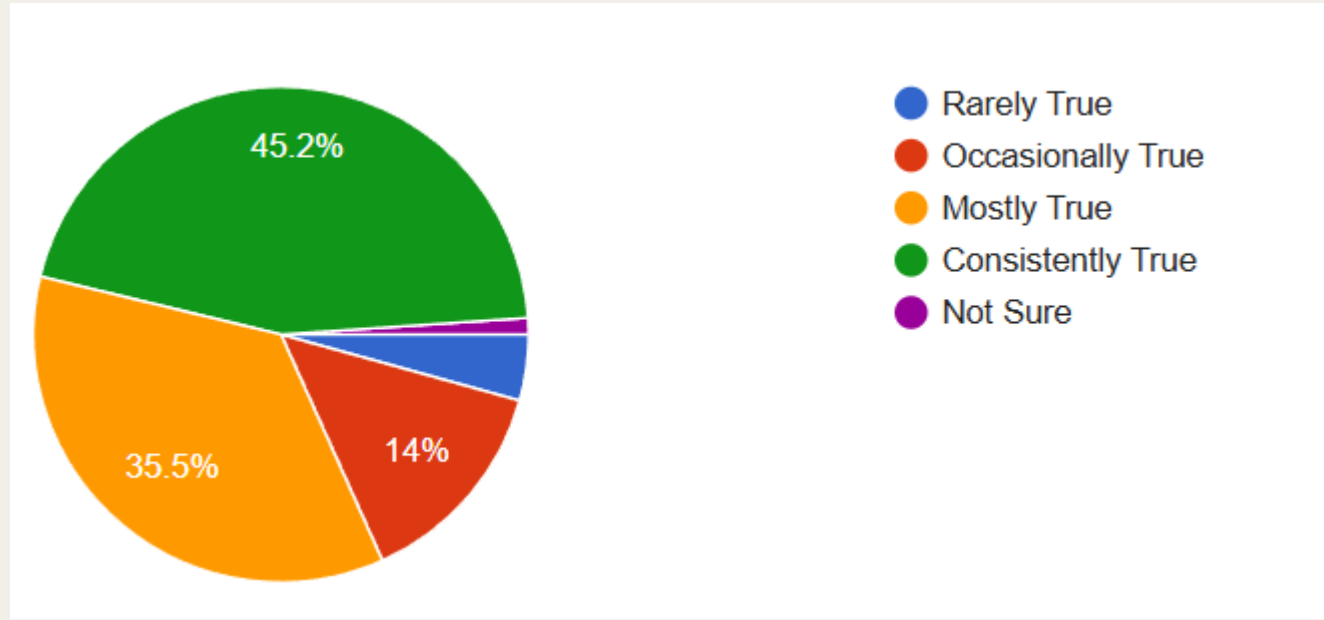


Solidly Occasionally True/Rarely True



## CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE

I feel welcomed and valued as a member of our congregation.

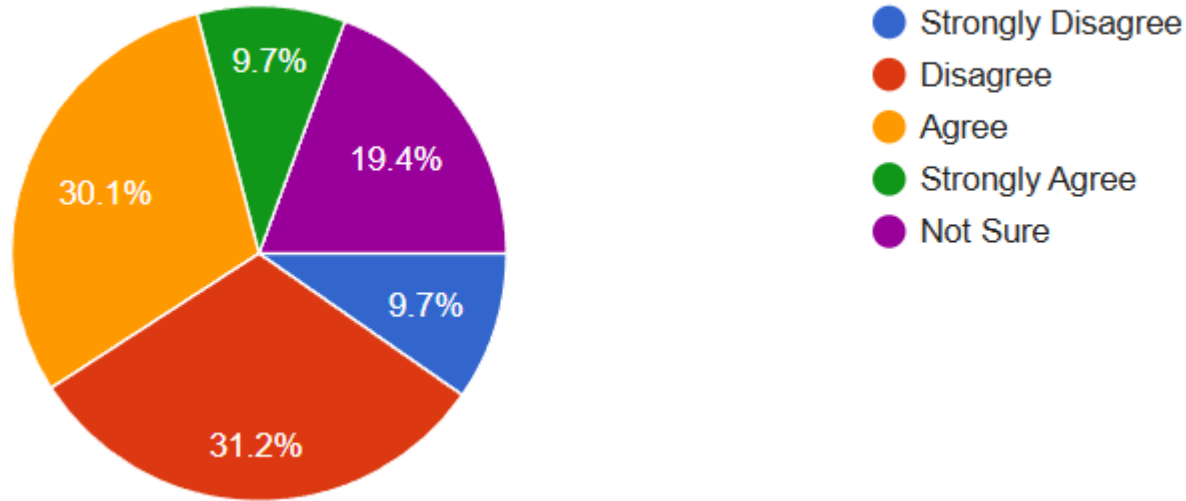


**Solidly Consistently True/Mostly True**



## CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE

A climate of trust is evident in our congregation.



Toss Up



**Congregational responses reveal a divided community and a fractured sense of unity.**

**At the same time, there are signs of healing and cautious optimism, with a desire to move forward with a spirit of collaboration.**



## CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE - Narrative Summary

**Respondents generally describe Trinity as having a solid Scriptural base, a long-standing presence in Saline, but with an overall resistance to change.**

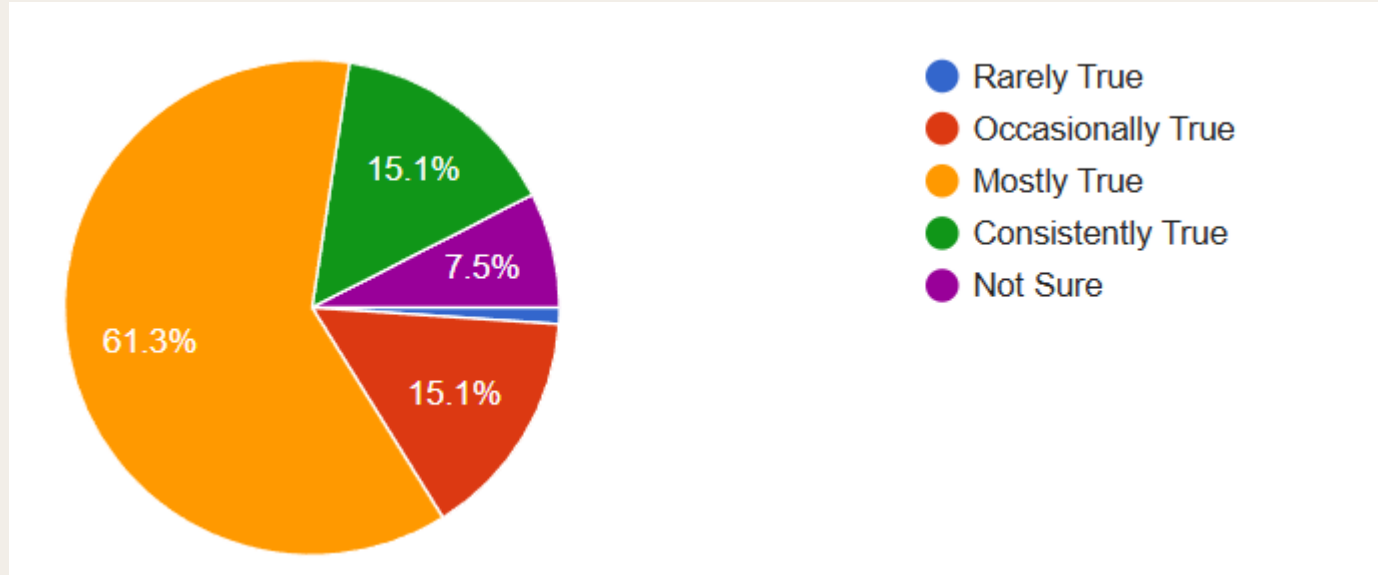


**Numerous members expressed concerns over breakdowns in communication, effectively hearing all the voices in the congregation, and finding ways to Scripturally leverage the gifts and input of all members.**



## MINISTRY PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Trinity ministry programs and activities meet the needs of our members.

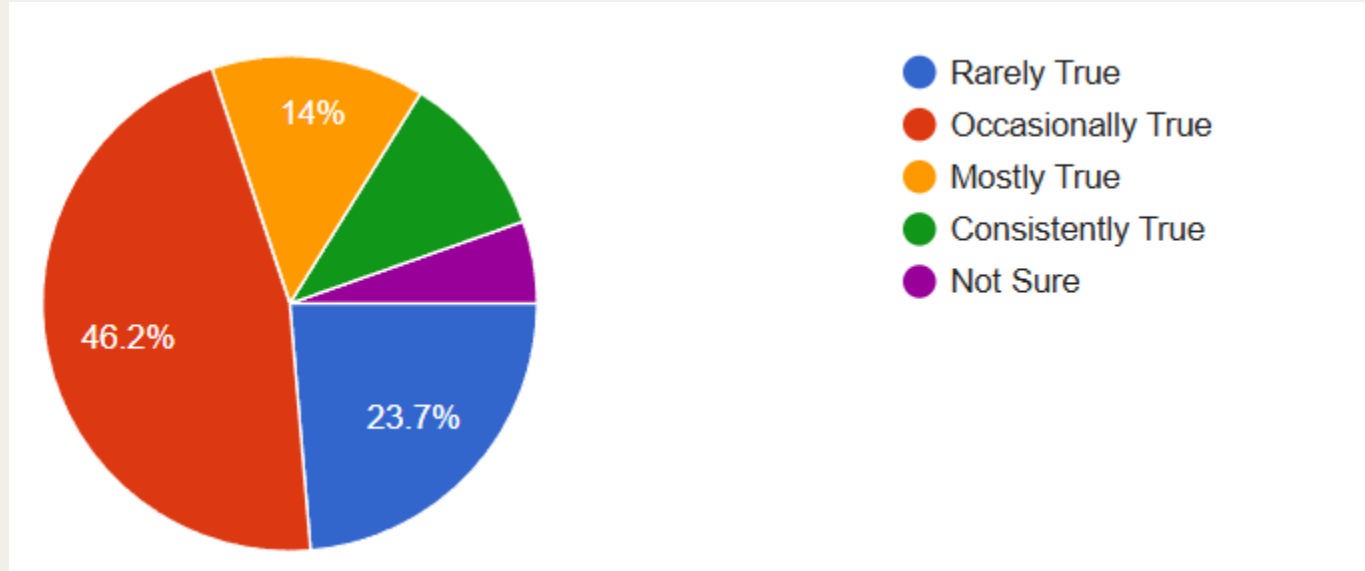


**Solidly Consistently True/Mostly True**



## MINISTRY PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Trinity has programs and activities that connect with people in our community.



Solidly Occasionally True/Rarely True



**There is a strong perception that ministries are primarily inward-focused, serving current Trinity members well but not focused on reaching the Saline community or younger generations.**



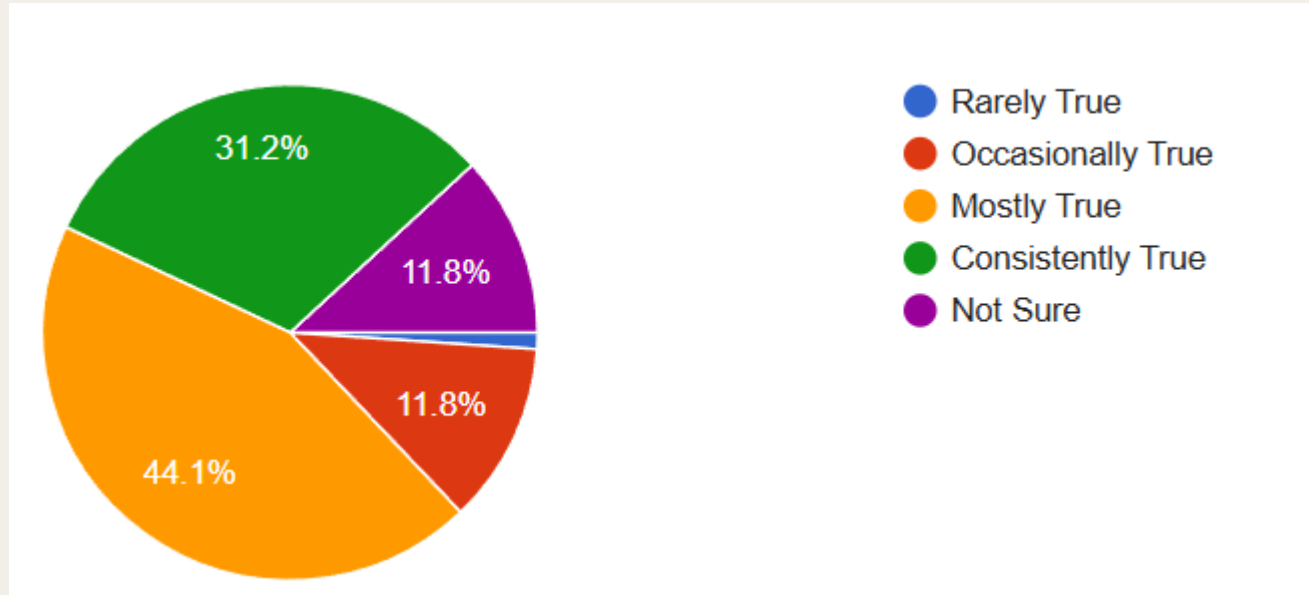
Concerns were noted about a perceived resistance to change and overreliance on the status quo.

At the same time, there is a clear desire for expanded opportunities to engage young adults, families, and the surrounding community.



## CHURCH LEADERSHIP

**Our Church Council members are actively engaged in Trinity's ministry.**

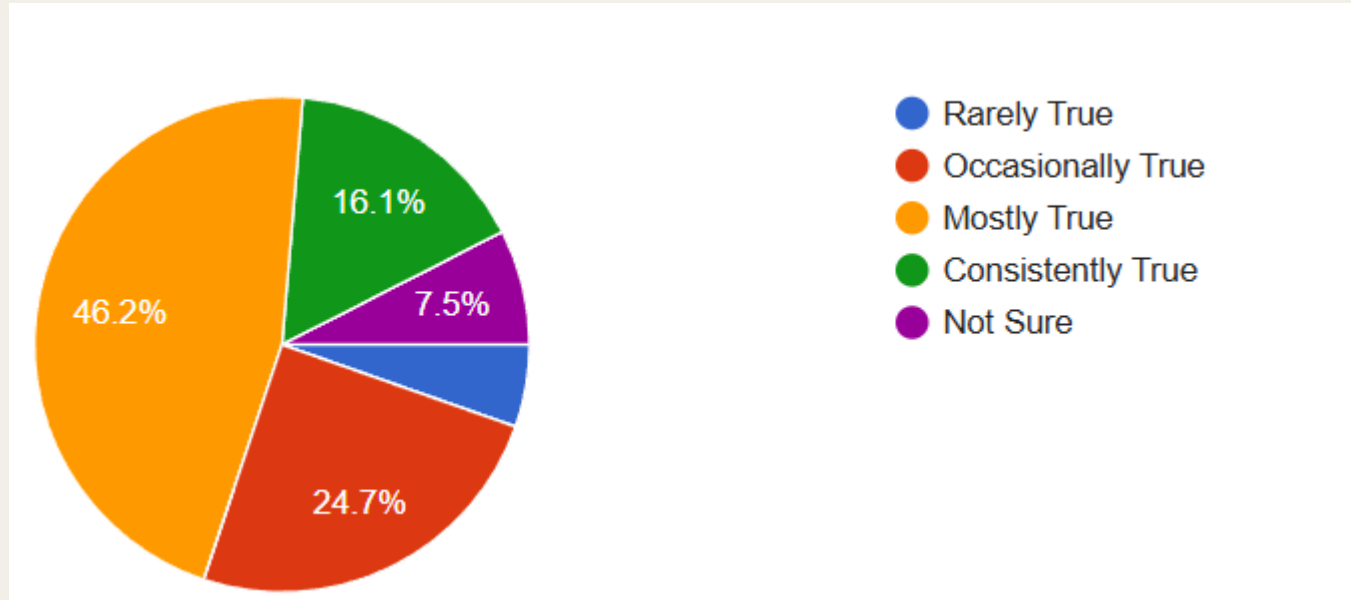


**Solidly Consistently True/Mostly True**



## CHURCH LEADERSHIP

**Church Council clearly and effectively communicates with the congregation.**

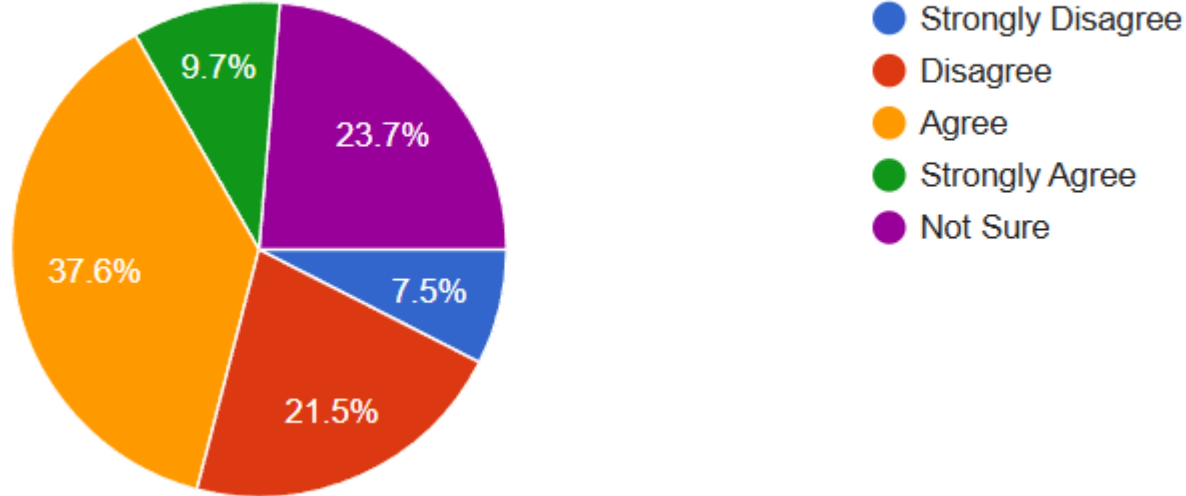


**Leans Consistently True/Mostly True**



## CHURCH LEADERSHIP

**Our church organizational structure is efficient and effective.**



**Toss Up**



**Feedback on church leadership and governance structure highlights the perception of an increasingly unsustainable model for the current size and engagement level of the congregation.**



## CHURCH LEADERSHIP - Narrative Summary

Many respondents expressed concern about limited participation, with a small group of men repeatedly cycling through leadership roles, leading to burnout, lack of continuity, and difficulty filling positions.



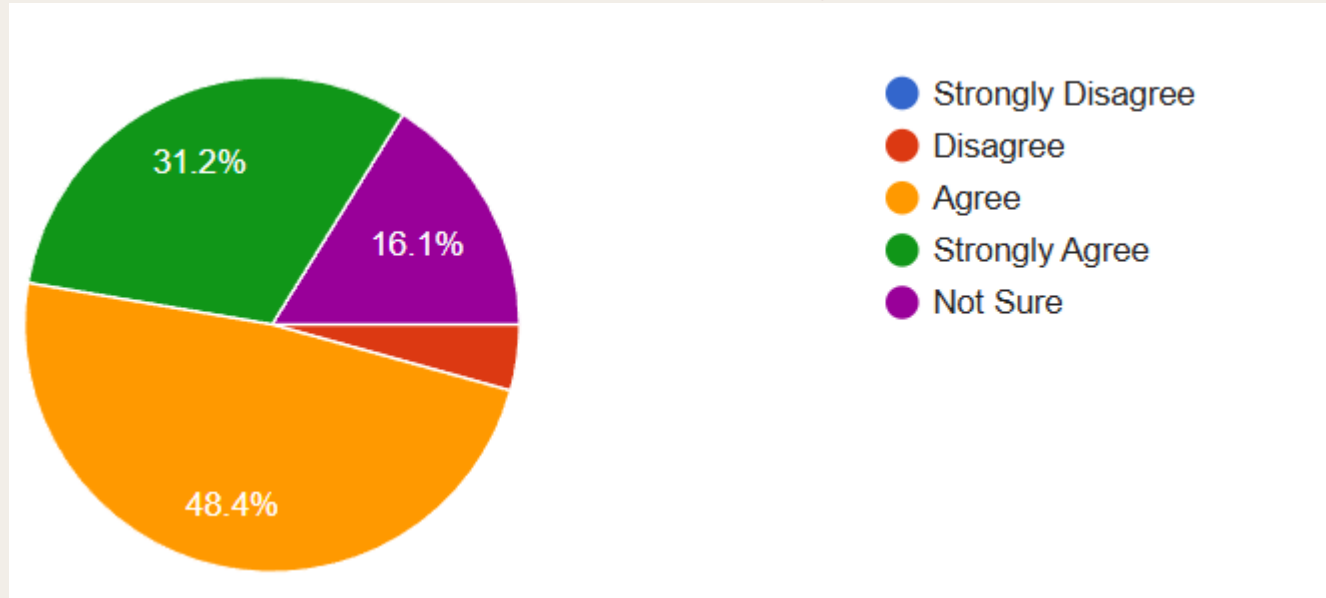
## CHURCH LEADERSHIP - Narrative Summary

**There was significant input for studying the organizational structure of Trinity with the goal of streamlining leadership and better equipping the congregation to move forward collaboratively.**



## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

**Trinity has a strong culture of Gospel-motivated financial ministry support.**

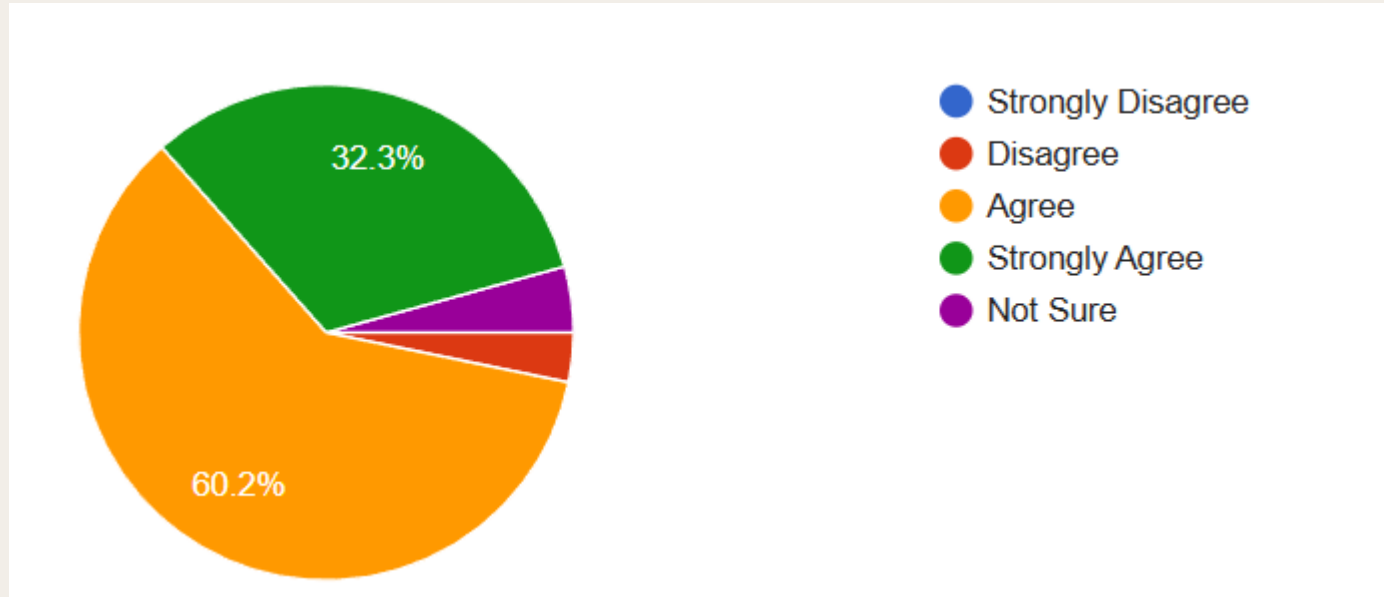


**Solidly Agree/Strongly Agree**



## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

**Trinity has a clear and effective method of communicating our financial status.**



**Solidly Agree/Strongly Agree**



## Financial Stewardship - Narrative Summary

**Comments reflects that the church is strongly and consistently blessed with financial resources, supported by a history of generous giving and overall fiscal stability.**



**A common theme is the tension related to how to utilize and allocate funds — some emphasize caution and the importance of keeping funds in reserve while other promote how they should be more actively invested in local ministry, community outreach, staffing support, and mission work.**

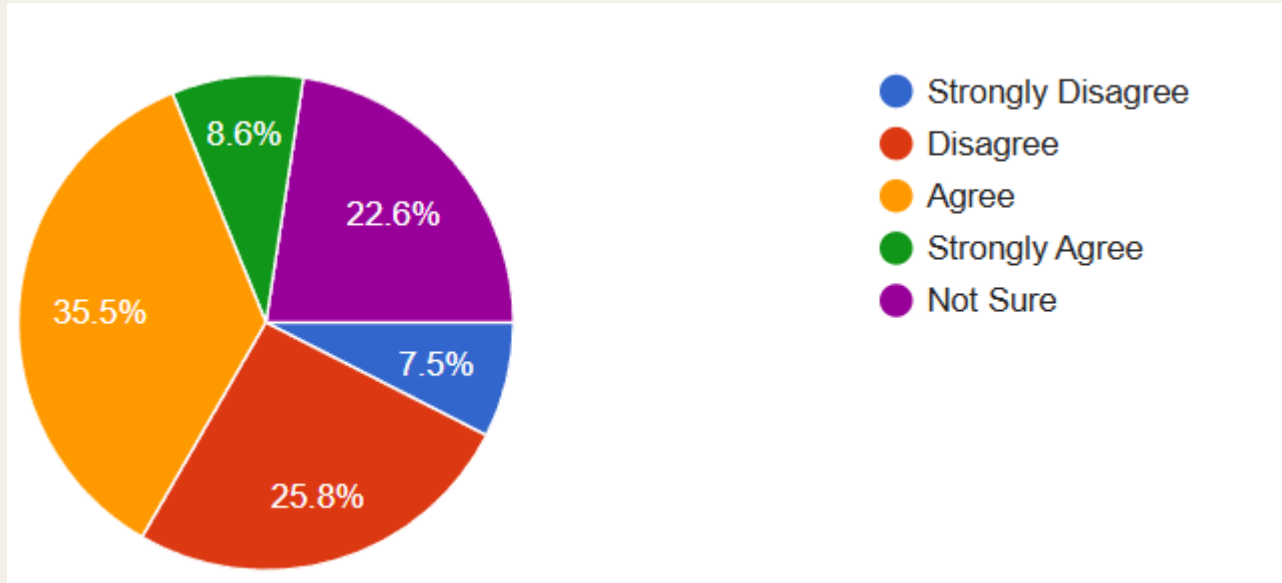


There are also concerns about transparency, communication, and decision-making around finances.



## TRINITY'S FUTURE

I am optimistic about Trinity's direction and future ministry.



Toss Up



## TOP CHALLENGES AT TRINITY

involvement  
sustainability retention outreach  
change leadership  
cohesion pastor  
tradition decline healing trust  
engagement membership  
direction unity division  
culture aging youth growth  
visibility resistance  
communication conflict



## TOP OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRINITY

relationships mission future opportunity  
engagement  
revival community growth unity  
involvement pastor stability outreach  
service healing evangelism expansion  
connection vision leadership  
participation renewal  
resources



## TRINITY'S NEXT PASTOR - Areas of focus

community  
reconnection  
communication  
families  
leadership  
renewal  
planning  
growth  
evangelism  
healing  
spirituality  
service  
engagement  
retention  
change  
involvement  
unity  
relationships  
worship  
outreach  
vision  
balance  
youth  
tradition  
accountability



# PRESENTATION AGENDA

- Opening comments (5 min)
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# KEY THEMES AND TAKEAWAYS

- Continue to unify as a congregation - “build from within”
- Clarify, articulate, communicate, and promote your mission, vision, and core values
- Embrace your strong heritage and be a beacon of the Gospel in your community



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# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

(1) Be intentional about ways to bring the Trinity church family together. Consider incorporating the following:

- Worship and Spiritual Growth
- Fellowship Opportunities
- Service Events
- Community Outreach



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

- (2) Evaluate current mission statement.
  - Update and refine as desired.
  - Communicate and promote it.



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

(3) Create first draft of Trinity's Core Values (words that describe who we are as a ministry)

- Communicate them and seek input from Trinity membership
- Samples on the next slide



# SAMPLE CORE VALUES

- Christ-Centered Worship
- Faithful Discipleship
- Gospel Proclamation
- Compassionate Service
- Community and Fellowship



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

(4) Create draft of a vision statement for Trinity's future ministry (how we plan to carry out our mission statement)

(Sample on the next slide)



# SAMPLE VISION STATEMENT

“Rooted in the love of Christ, we are committed to boldly sharing the Gospel and making disciples of all nations by spiritually building up the Trinity family and by extending God’s grace through ministry, outreach, and compassionate service to our community and the world.”



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

(5) Articulate an actionable strategic plan for ministry moving forward

- Comprehensive/Overarching Trinity plan
- Or starting with specific areas of ministry (e.g. Outreach)



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

(6) Evaluate current congregational structure as outlined in the constitution and bylaws

- Articulate the pros and cons of current structure
- Make a decision about launching a formal process to revise and/or update



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

(7) Work with District President Sims to articulate the specifics of the Call for your next Pastor

- Characteristics and Strengths
- Focus (Nurture? Outreach? Both? Other?)
- Be realistic - no pastor can do everything alone



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

(8) Equip and empower your leaders and leadership teams to continue their faithful service especially during the vacancy

- Team building opportunities
- Professional development



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