



## First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee Highlights from the 2022 Congregational Survey

by Ben LeFort, Board of Trustees  
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Thank you to all who participated in First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee's 2022 congregational survey! Your responses help the Board of Trustees and staff measure progress towards meeting our Ends statements (or goals) that guide our congregational commitments and actions, and also help identify areas that may need additional time and resources. As you read the highlights below, please keep in mind that any conclusions are limited to those who answered the survey; thus, the survey may not fully represent the entire congregation.

Please also see the complete survey results, with easy-to-read [visual charts and data here](#).

### INSIGHTS

- 1) We had **159 total respondents** (163 at last survey in 2020). Respondents again showed a significant increasing trend toward members over the age of 66 years and in the categories of membership length from 10-20 and 20+ years.
- 2) Over **26% of respondents said they are "very" or "extremely" familiar with FUSM's Ends statements**, while 33% of respondents were "not so" or "not at all" familiar with the Ends, and 42% were "somewhat" familiar with them. These reported levels of familiarity with the Ends showed little change compared to 2020 and 2018 surveys.
- 3) Compared to the 2020 survey, the results of this survey showed a **decline in all categories for how well respondents believe we currently reflect our Ends**, although the scores are generally higher than those for the 2018 survey. This may reflect some discouragement with meeting our Ends within the challenges of the pandemic and our inability to meet in person – keep in mind that the survey was completed during the peak of the omicron surge in January/February 2022 when pandemic fatigue was very high. Ends 4 (giving and receiving support) and 6 (opening ourselves to wonder) received the highest scores for reflecting Ends in the 2022 survey.
- 4) **Respondents rated Ends 4 (giving and receiving support), 7 (creating communal experiences) and 8 (creating accessible, courageous, and innovative welcome) as most important in the 2022 survey**, reflecting similar priorities for importance in the 2018 and 2020 surveys.
- 5) **The only End that showed an increase in importance was End 7 (creating communal experiences)**. Showing a decline in measurement of importance from 2020 to 2022 were End 1 (connecting across differences), End 2 (recognizing power differences), and End 3 (following the leadership of people most affected by injustice).
- 6) In 2022, **Ends 3, 4, 7 and 8 show the largest gaps between respondents' perception of the importance of these Ends and their assessment of how well these Ends are achieved by the congregation**. This continues perceptions evident in the 2020 survey.
- 7) In response to the question asking respondents to gauge the impact of their participation in various church activities on their spiritual well-being, the largest response was in the 0 N/A category for each of the nine activity categories. **The impact of participation declined across all activities compared to 2020 and 2018**, with the highest levels of impact on spiritual well-being occurring with participation in contemplative and worship activities. The greatest drop in impact on spiritual well-

being from participation can be seen in current levels (2022) compared to pre-pandemic levels (2018) in the categories of fellowship, fundraising, religious education, and social justice.

- 8) Attendance at Sunday worship in 2022 is almost evenly split between those who report attending from ½ to nearly all the services (n=77) and those who say they attended rarely or less than ½ (n=78). This shows a **dramatic drop compared to attendance reported in the 2020 survey** when 114 reported attending from ½ to nearly all and 38 reported attending rarely or < ½ . In the 2018 survey, 116 reported attending ½ to nearly all the services, while 35 reported attending rarely or less than ½ of the services.
- 9) **Responses regarding talking with non-members about FUSM and inviting them to attend worship services have remained stable** compared to the previous survey (2020). People are more likely to talk about FUSM than invite someone they know. Reports of talking with non-members and welcoming someone “at church” are understandably low considering the pandemic suspension of in-person services. 2022 results for these questions are consistent with the 2020 survey.
- 10) In response to a new question on the 2022 survey, **128 respondents answered that they either agreed or strongly agreed that they can describe how major patterns of power and/or privilege are at work in their lives**. 26 respondents replied they are neutral on this question, and one person strongly disagreed.
- 11) **Scores have again declined in response to the question of how likely respondents are to recommend First Church to a friend or relative**. This standard question is known in marketing parlance as the Net Promoter Score, or NPS, and is measured on a scale from 1 to 10 with 10 being the most likely to recommend. Composite scores have dropped from 8.67 (2018) to 8.44 (2020) to 8.23 (2022).

## DEMOGRAPHICS

All look similar to 2020 with the following exceptions:

- 1) **A significant decrease in the number of respondents below the age of 56.**
- 2) **Fewer families with infants, elementary, middle and high school kids but a notable increase in families with kids age 19+ living at home.** This may reflect families with college kids unable to return to campus during the pandemic.
- 3) Response to the question “Are you a person of color?” was very similar to the 2020 survey, but the new question, “Is there a person of color in your immediate family?” elicited a 16% affirmative response.

## ENDS BY DEMOGRAPHICS

- 1) **The following groups gave First Church a higher Net Promoter Score than average:** People of Color, LGBTQ, People with Disabilities, Incomes Less Than \$75K, People Who Have Attended Less Than 3 Years, and Board of Trustees / Executive Committee. **The following groups reported a lower NPS than average:** Over Age 66, Families With Children, and People Who Have Attended More Than 10 Years. Most of these rankings are different from the 2020 survey.

- 2) Compared to 2020, the **biggest changes in NPS were among People of Color** (increased from 8.20 in 2020 to 9.50 in 2022) **and LGBQO** (increased from 8.29 in 2020 to 9.63 in 2022).
- 3) **People of Color reported the biggest gaps between importance and performance for all Ends**, while People Who Have Attended Less Than 3 Years perceive the smallest gaps between importance and performance for most Ends.
- 4) In 2022, **LGBQO respondents, Families With Children, People Who Have Attended Less Than 3 Years, and the Board of Trustees / Executive Team identified larger gaps between importance and performance on End 3** (Follow the leadership of people most affected by injustice) – more groups than in 2020.
- 5) In 2022, **all groups except for People of Color rated FUSM highly for Ends 5 (Promote Unitarian Universalism) and 6 (Open ourselves to wonder) compared to other Ends.**

For more details on the congregational survey, contact Board members Ben LeFort, Pat Geenen or George Bledsoe.