

Faith

8

Fruit

Faith & Fruit

SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Inside you'll find a Spiritual Assessment Survey everyone within Grace Gathering was asked to complete. While attendance, finances, and programs are the typical measurements of success for the western church, Jesus modeled and taught a different way.

We want to measure success in terms of Faithfulness and Fruitfulness as we become more like Jesus in character and spiritual influence of others. Jesus taught us to do this more and more in community with others.

SEE THE RESULTS! 

who we are.

Which site are you a part of?



- EAST // 65%
- NORTH // 23%
- CENTRAL // 12%
- ONLINE // .5%

What is your age?



HIGH SCHOOL // 08%

18-29 // 38%

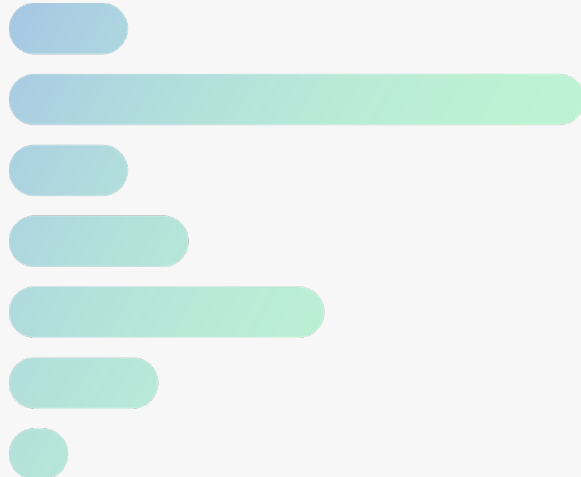
30-39 // 08%

40-49 // 12%

50-59 // 21%

60-69 // 10%

70+ // 04%



How long have you been a follower of Jesus?



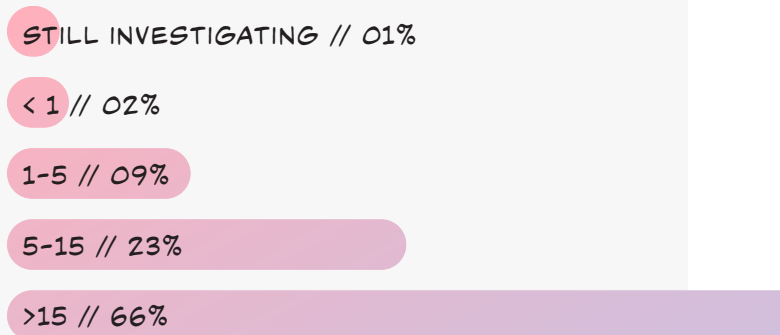
STILL INVESTIGATING // 01%

< 1 // 02%

1-5 // 09%

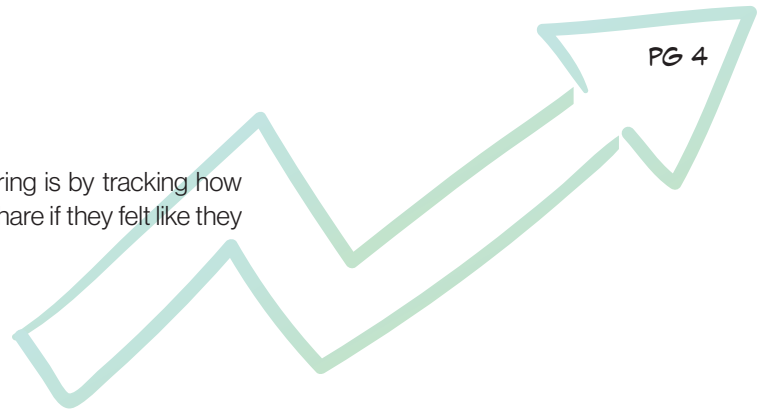
5-15 // 23%

>15 // 66%



are we growing?

One the primary ways we want to measure growth in Grace Gathering is by tracking how people grow in specific areas of discipleship. We asked everyone to share if they felt like they had grown, regressed, or stayed the same in the past year.



Spiritual Character

Over the last 12 months, do you feel you have grown in your spiritual character (e.g. fruit of the Spirit, loving enemies, devotional life, giving, purity, prayer, humility, compassion etc.)?

78%

GREW IN SPIRITUAL CHARACTER

11% STAYED THE SAME

11% REGRESSED IN SPIRITUAL CHARACTER

Spiritual Influence

Over the last 12 months, do you feel you have grown in your spiritual influence of others (spiritual gifts, sharing the gospel, discipling, praying for others, healing the sick, blessing the least, lost, and last, etc.)?

60%

GREW IN SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE

22% STAYED THE SAME

18% REGRESSED IN SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE

Sharing Life

Over the last 12 months, do you feel your walk with God and fulfillment of mission are being pursued more in community with others? In other words, do you feel you are sharing life with other believers consistently, where it feels like family?

56%

GREW IN COMMUNITY

21% STAYED THE SAME

24% REGRESSED IN COMMUNITY

Family Growth

Has your immediate family (spouse and children if applicable) grown spiritually the last 12 months in spiritual character and leadership?

69%

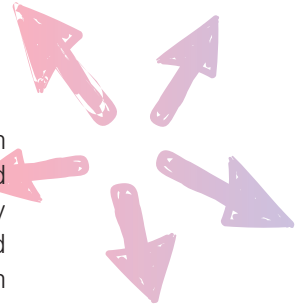
GREW IN SPIRITUALLY AS A FAMILY

20% STAYED THE SAME

11% REGRESSED IN SPIRITUALLY AS A FAMILY

discipleship culture.

Most statistics tell us that 20% of church attenders do 80% of the ministry. While serving in the church within various programs is helpful, the reality is that less than half of church ministry is directly engaged in intentionally discipling people in both the character and skill of Jesus. This means that statistically in the U.S. less than 10% of church goers are either intentionally discipling others or being discipled themselves. Churches that have a plan for discipleship and are seeing more than 10% of their people in these relationships are leading the way out of this discipleship crisis in the western church.



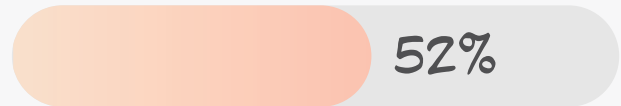
Discipling You

Do you have someone who is intentionally discipling you on a regular basis and helping you grow in your spiritual character and leadership?

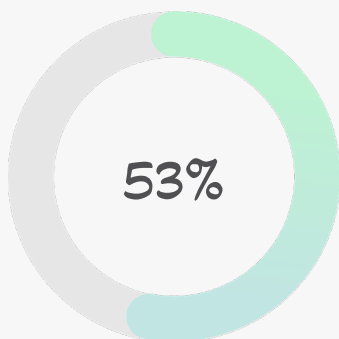


Discipling Others

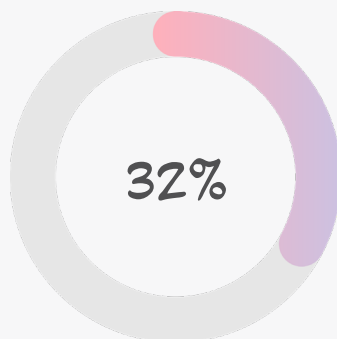
Do you have someone who you are intentionally discipling on a regular basis to help them grow in their spiritual character and leadership?



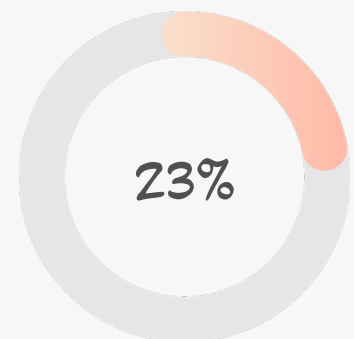
Are you engaged in the Scattered Church?



I'M A PART OF A GROUP OR MISSIONAL COMMUNITY



I'M CLOSE WITH OTHERS IN OUR CHURCH, BUT NOTHING FORMAL



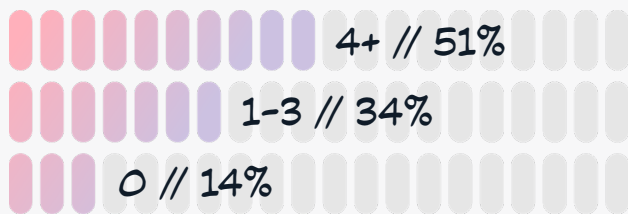
I'M NOT INVOLVED OUTSIDE OF SUNDAY GATHERINGS

churchwide journeys of faith.

Every 18 months or so, we sense God calling us to grow in a specific area of walking with Jesus. It could be sharing our faith, becoming more expressive as worshippers, praying for healing, growing in hunger for God, or other areas. Whatever the call, we want to respond in obedience and faith as we all become more mature followers of Jesus.

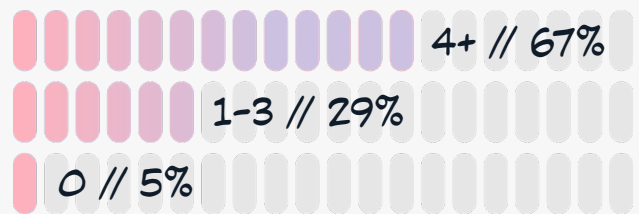
Sharing the Gospel

How many times in the last year have you shared the gospel with someone and encouraged them to surrender their life to Jesus in faith?



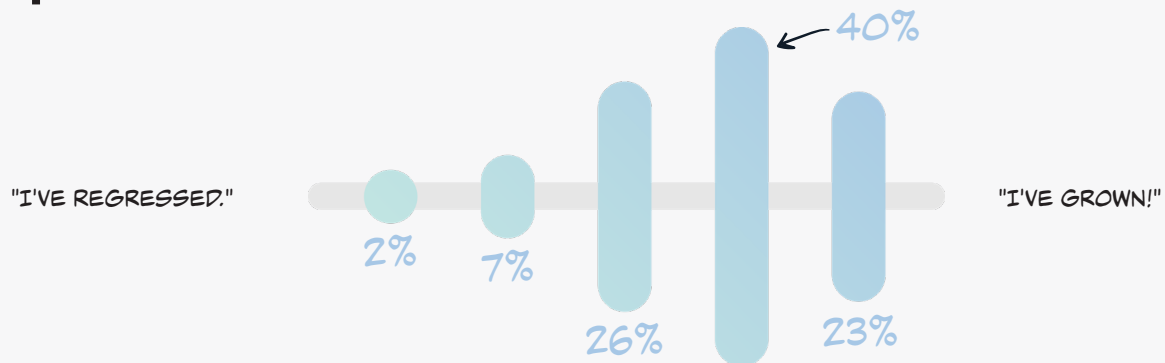
Praying for Healing

How many times in the last year have you prayed for someone (in-person and out loud) for God to bring physical, emotional, or relational healing?



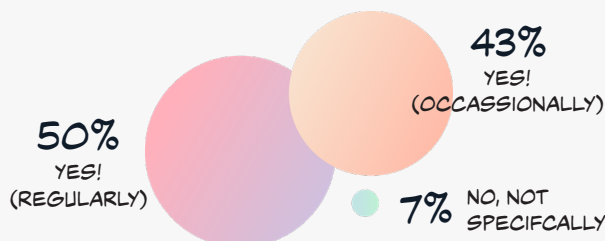
Worship Expression

Over the last 12 months, do you feel you have grown in the outward biblical expressions during worship (i.e. lifting hands, kneeling, dancing, shouts of praise, clapping) as well as the inward biblical expressions of worship in heart and mind?



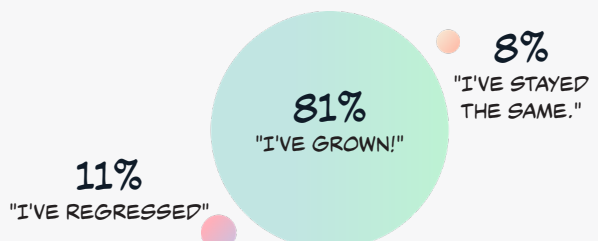
Asking God for Hunger & Thirst

Over the last 12 months, have you been praying and asking God to grow your hunger and thirst for him and his Spirit?



Growing in Our Hunger & Thirst

Over the last 12 months, do you feel you have grown in your hunger and thirst for God and his Spirit?





Introductory Comments

OVERALL RESPONDENTS

We have been conducting the annual Spiritual Assessment Survey every year since 2015 (with the exceptions of 2017 and 2020). We have about 300 family units (consisting of about 7-800 attenders) across all of our locations. In previous years, we have averaged 380 respondents, seeing a high of 422 in 2019. This year, we had 245 which, based on the number of people engaged in our three physical locations and our online service, was very close to what we expected. While we know this isn't every single person, we feel it was a similarly accurate representation of the body as a whole as years past.

TRUE MULTI-SITE

The last time we took the Spiritual Assessment Survey (Spring of 2019), we were about six months away from launching our third location: Grace Gathering Central. That means that in previous years, we have asked the question, "Which service do you usually attend?" with the possible answers being the two morning services at East and the North site service (formerly in the evenings). The Central Site was launched primarily from people that were attending the East. This is an exciting reminder that we are a truly multi-site church now, and we are multiplying congregations!

While we continue to invest in essential ways to maintain unity across the sites (i.e. frequent shared sermon series, three combined services throughout the year, a shared culture of discipleship and mission, staff prayer and worship, and more), we are also constantly asking God how we can be uniquely present in to the needs of own areas. Whether it's neighborhood soccer for Central, praying for the neighborhoods in New Haven for East, or partnering with the Parkview Family Y for North, we want to combine a city-wide vision with local expressions of Jesus' hands and feet.

Opportunities For Growth

SCATTERED CHURCH

As you'll see below, the number of people involved in the life of the scattered church (ministry happening outside of Sunday morning) is very encouraging. At the same time, it shows we have a significant opportunity here as 21% of respondents said they are not involved outside of Sundays. With 49% of people saying they were in either a group or missional community this year, it means we have a lot of people who are able to invite new people into existing groups or who are equipped to lead new groups and communities in the coming year.

Additionally, we have seen a slight decline in the number of people who feel they have grown in experiencing their walk with God and fulfillment of mission **more in community** with others. In 2016 it was 65%, 2018 was 64%, 2019 was 61%, and this year was 56%.

SPIRITUAL CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE

This year we saw a reduction in the number of people who feel they grew in their spiritual character and influence, decreasing 4% and 11% respectively. While there may be many reasons for this, we know for certain that this past year has been a uniquely challenging year for almost everyone. This shows us that we have an opportunity in this coming year to intentionally help one another grow in each of these areas.

Areas of Strength & Breakthrough

HUNGER AND THIRST FOR GOD

Our theme for this year—after a lot of collective prayer asking God what he wanted to do in us during this time—was to grow in our hunger and thirst for God and his Spirit. As a result, we had 93% of people praying either regularly or occasionally to grow in this area, and 81% felt they did grow in their hunger and thirst for God and his Spirit! We know that the foundation for a move of God is people who are hungry and seeking him in prayer. Let's raise our faith and prepare to see God move in even more remarkable ways in the coming year!

PRAYER FOR HEALING

Just a few years ago, praying for healing in-person and out

loud would have been a real stretch for most people in our church. However, with consistent humility and surrender, praying for healing has become a regular rhythm throughout our church. 96% of people prayed for someone for healing at least one time last year, with 67% saying it was more than 4 times. It is absolutely remarkable for a church to grow so significantly in such a short amount of time.

SHARING THE GOSPEL

Another very encouraging strength is that 65% of people shared the gospel with someone at least once last year, with over half sharing multiple times throughout the year. Compare this to a surprising study by the Barna Group in 2019. To the statement, "It is wrong to share one's personal beliefs with someone of a different faith in hopes that they will one day share the same faith," 47% of Millennials agreed, followed by 27% of Gen Xers, 19% of Boomers, and 20% of Elders.¹ And this was asked of practicing Christians! Although nearly all Christian respondents to Barna's study agreed that it was important to "be a witness about Jesus," many feel it's wrong to actually share the gospel in hopes of seeing someone become a Christian. Thank you for being a faithful church who seeks to share the good news in love!

DISCIPLING OTHERS

53% of people in our church have someone discipling them, and 51% are discipling others. Not only are these numbers very encouraging, this year is also one of only two years when these numbers have been over 50%. We know that core to following Jesus is being disciplined and discipling others, and everyone has to participate. This growth is reassuring that we're moving from a delivery culture to a development culture.

SCATTERED CHURCH CONT'D.

Although the amount of people not engaged in the Scattered church is significant, the number of people in intentional community is very high! 49% of respondents said they were involved in a group or missional community, and 30% said they were connected to each other informally. We truly believe the Church has to exist beyond a couple hours on Sunday mornings, and more and more people are prioritizing time with one another. This growth is very promising, and it's something we must continue to pursue with perseverance as we fight against the strongholds of individualism, comfort and convenience, and busyness.

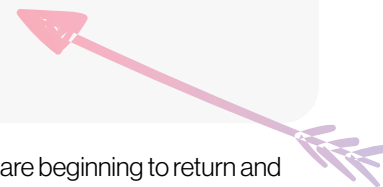
¹ Barna Group, *Reviving Evangelism* (United States, 2019). <https://www.barna.com/research/millennials-oppose-evangelism/>

YOUNG ADULTS

While we account for the fact that young adults are more likely to fill out an online survey than older generations (in

past years printed surveys were available), it is worth noting that 38% of respondents were in between the ages of 18-29. This is reflective of our observations this past year that all three sites have seen considerable growth in the number of young adults engaged. These young adults are eager to be a part of the Scattered Church, serve in ministry teams, and encounter God in worship. We have multiple young adult missional communities engaged with the poor and homeless, and many have helped lead a growing citywide worship movement. This is an important area we plan to give special attention to in this next year.

Concluding Thoughts



Although more and more people are beginning to return and re-engage for the first time since COVID, it has no doubt been a difficult year for lots of us, and many have found it challenging to engage in-person or online. Average attendance has been lower, and even though our finances are still very healthy, our budget has not grown as it has in years past. Considering all of that, one might expect our survey to paint a bleaker picture.

And yet, this survey has revealed just the opposite! More and more people are praying for healing, sharing the gospel and participating in discipleship and the Scattered Church. We're growing in young adults, and almost everyone has grown in their hunger and thirst for God and his Spirit!

Near the beginning of the shutdown, we prayed, "God, don't let us get to the other side of this pandemic without being changed by you." God has certainly been faithful to answering this prayer. ■