

Cottage Meeting Summary

What has kept you at Church of the Resurrection?

- There are lots of programs--lots for kids to get involved in such as handbells, confirmation, Sunday school.
- There are young families at our church.
- There are extensive music, children's and youth program at COR.
- Close to home.
- Comfortable, feels like family. Warm feeling.
- The building is a comfortable place to be, with lighter coloring.
- Worship style is a nice combo of contemporary with traditional mixed in. Children are included in many parts of worship, and there is variety in the liturgy.
- Have a personal connection with the church.
- It's a pleasure to go to church.
- We truly believe the sign: All are welcome.
- I wish we had more relationship building.
- Music program
- Family feel, relationships and having an extended church family
- Started by feeling welcomed by Pastor Stein. Coming from different faith and it is the same God.
- Started as Pastor Stein welcoming us. Then it became relationships with other people. Spiritual anchor.
- Came for youth program. Music program.
- Came from another denomination. Stay because of shared history. Grow with the congregation. Friends and family are here.
- Foyer group helped bring people together: four couples got together over a series of times.
- This is my family
- Music program
- Daughters confirmed here
- Like content of service
- Very invested; some members have been here since the beginning
- When we were looking for churches, COR made us feel welcome
- It's the way I want to worship; it's casual, observes change of seasons, lay ministry opportunities
- Youth group is great for teen daughters
- We came specifically for the children's programs
- Feel a sense of loyalty—it's a great location
- Great staff

- Music program
- People/relationships
- Family focus, kids' programs (focus being that kids are a part of the family)
- Sense of community and family
- Platform of choices for children to become involved
- Church has always been able to solve its problems
- When we were looking for churches, it meant a lot to get a call in a matter of days from COR—good follow-up system
- We stay because there's life here and we're very involved
- A huge deal to have women in ministry as pastors
- People and friends
- Music
- Children's activities
- Openness to participate
- Pastors
- Bible study and ministry
- Being involved/being a part of something
- The core of who we are
- Common beliefs
- Pastor Stein made it easy to fit in
- The church was welcoming
- The open-mindedness
- The church is a place to have your faith challenged

How do you fit in here?

- I need my kids to be in an environment that's supportive of gay people, and I've found that here.
- It's my duty to be part of a good thing at church, to provide a comfortable spot for everyone.
- You know you can walk in the building, and if the kids disappear, they'll turn up eventually.
- We spend so much time serving in leadership positions, we don't have as much time to work on faith-building.
- Weekly worship is important to our family.
- While we have made some close friendships over the past couple of years, we still feel a disconnect between the "new members" and those that have been here from the beginning and/or 10-plus years. This group of people has raised their children together and there are close bonds there. While wonderful for them, it does feel that

we will never be in the “in” crowd. They are friendly people who seem to not need or want “new” friends.

- Reach out to people we don't recognize
- Served in past/present in council, meetings, committees, music
- Things changed when you could have one-on-one conversations with other people. Felt like I fit in more. Made more connections. (Was especially easier when you don't have children or they are grown. Less time chasing around and then we can hang around after service and talk)
- It's changed as our children have grown. Now that daughter is older, we can sit and truly listen to the sermon.
- It's important to be involved and invest in the things you're involved in.
- I try to support everyone
- There are a lot of people who like being here but really don't know how they fit in.
- The people made me stay—a sense of belonging. It's the community that makes people feel like they belong.
- When I got here, I realized that people needed someone to be compassionate, someone to help those who are having a hard time, so I support those programs.
- Changing times as kids get older and we need to find places again after children grow
- Finding new places where you can share skills
- Changes in life – now make choices for self and can do what we want to do.

What is one important thing that our new senior pastor needs to know about our church?

- All are welcome—no exceptions.
- I'd like someone to help me develop confidence in my faith. I need the tools to do it on my own.
- We want to be equipped to comfortably talk about our faith.
- We work collaboratively—not a top-down model.
- We are not a traditional congregation. Some examples: While we enjoy the classic hymns, we are a congregation that likes new liturgy and songs. Children are involved in worship, and hearing their presence is a blessing--not looked down upon.
- Supportive of the diakonia program
- Need encouragement of activities outside of worship. Hard to get people to do things outside of work
- Start service on time
- Needs to be intuitive and learn about who people are. Draw out friendliness
- COR is a welcoming place and warm.
- Music program is a big part of the church

- Outreach programs are important part of church. SOPHIA, Hope Center, Serenity Inn
- Youth programs are very important. Especially bringing kids that aren't members to go on trips or participate in other youth events
- Open to new ideas
- Relaxed services. Comfortable. Easy to fit in.
- These are great people who are great at getting out of the church and into the community.
- We aren't judgmental. It's OK if you stumble in a sermon; we understand.
- Don't make us dress up
- There's a fine line between "open to change" and "this should stay the same."
- We're relatively open to change. Know us before you start making change, though.
- We have so many things that make us great that are essential to our church.
- Our associate pastors have been distinct, different people with different strengths.
- Need to keep family focus.
- Older members who have invested their time cannot be forgotten.
- Music is key to retain.
- Intergeneration involvement has been meaningful.
- Adult Bible study has been a struggle to keep up.
- Mid-week services have been great, nice to extend that and can we leverage this to get Bible study increased participation.
- Different mission of the month every month means it's multi-focused – may not like all but some may spark interest of some sort.
- Outreach – wide focus – it is important in many different areas but in total a big focus.
- Youth programs have grown and are very strong. Would want to sustain and build on this.
- The energy of our youth
- Diversity of opportunities and passions
- The music program and its importance
- Former stability
- Our declining membership
- RIC and our openness to diversity
- We need to make opportunities aware to all not just to some

How does our church help you grow in your faith?

- We don't have enough opportunities for adult faith formation. We need more finite adult Bible studies.
- The Wednesday confirmation worship service was a nice addition this year.
- Opportunities to serve—Serenity Inns, Family Promise.
- Many opportunities to grow in faith. Friends, members and God has led us there.
- Faith building experience to be on council and lots of fundraising, Sophia, Serenity Inn. Pastors coming in with sermons at different viewpoints.
- Serenity Inn. Gift of God to go and serve. Took family that wasn't a member. Loved it. Lots of good conversation about Serenity Inn.
- Being in music department
- Sometimes hard to get up and find time to go to church, but afterwards, so happy I came. Music and the place. Having an hour to think and not worry about life.
- Being assisting minister, serving. Leading parts of service and really thinking about it versus going through the motions.
- Music shares themes with readings.
- Together with co-believers
- Sparks curiosity to hear sermons, programs, the work that a program can do
- Knowledge of social justice programs
- Teaching confirmation, new meaning as an adult
- Question: How do we reach out to those who do not participate?
- Question: How do we get them to be social?
- Music and Susan
- Challenges to grow in our faith
- Mission trip program
- Our service program
- Confirmation program
- Serenity Inn and food packing
- So many opportunities, yet sometimes it's a challenge to find those opportunities
- The most obvious answer for me is that people here really care. My roots have been in the ELCA since I was baptized. I have been at five Milwaukee churches since then and none have shown the love of God more than our congregation. My faith has always been strong, but our people have reinforced it. I have had some issues with the marriage part of the RIC issue but I am 81 years old and will not abandon my church and those who love me here. Please know that I welcome all who enter our doors.

If we had all the money and members we wanted, what would our church be doing?

- We would be committing ourselves to diversity education and reaching out to those less fortunate—literally doing God’s work. We need to work to better our world, sharing our faith with others.
- We would build more community through service.
- We would have a full-time administrator so the pastor can focus on ministering.
- We would contribute more to missions. We would like to build more community through service.
- I believe highly successful congregations have paid staff in leadership roles--directors of Sunday school, confirmation, music groups, youth leadership and anyone in programming roles. This is not to say that empowering our volunteers and lay people isn’t welcome or important, but at some point the volunteer gets burned out.
- We would be able to play a bigger role in supporting Jesus Is Love congregation by bringing members here and helping where they need it.
- Tackling homelessness and poverty in the Milwaukee area.
- Programming of more multi-generational events, for example, game days, picnics, etc.
- More outreach and social justice. Not only in wide community but in local community and being more visible
- Lots of activities that are competing. When you are in affluent society, feel you don’t need church as much, but when you feel you don’t need God, is exactly when you need to be in front of people. Then when life happens that is when you look to God and you need to have a place to go.
- Do more work with people coming out of jail/prison
- Work more with homelessness. Finding housing and getting folks set up.
- If someone loses their job, help them out financially
- Worship in bandshell in Hartland. Market church better, get word out. Beer snobs hymn night is a good example.
- We used to do cookies to new people in the community and got info from Hartland area greeting committee
- Community fest, children’s fest...participating in those.
- Get brochure and magnet in packet that the Hartland area greeting committee gives out to new residents.
- Hartland Food Pantry is only open twice a week. Have it open more often as hunger exists more than two days a week.
- More support for drug and alcohol treatment program
- A lot outside these walls
- We’re fortunate that few people in our congregation need substantial help

- This church was influential in starting the Hartland Food Pantry
- Evangelism—there are a lot of people who aren't seeking a church
- Need to be creative with outreach
- More missions that include adults as well as youth—possibly local missions
- Taking care of more people
- Take on additional ministries
- Develop programs to help find passions, bring in ideas, empower more (increase outreach)
- Add utility room – all-purpose – instead of the current fellowship hall to support activities that can be easily done in our building.
- Supporting more missions
- Supporting the youths to find faith after church
- Expanding our scholarship program
- Sponsor campus ministry
- Transition from youth to adult to grow in faith
- Do podcast/ tailor our church to more of the college children
- Local mission expansion
- Reach out or have events for people who are struggling/ in crisis/ in grief
- Organizing care
- New groups to tap into the people we have in our church.

One group had extra time and was able to ask this question:

What would it take for you to remain a member?

- A way to stay connected to the church as a college member
- Podcast the service
- Keep the music program
- All the people we know would need to stay
- Keep the family feel