



Christian Reformed Church of North America

The Sustaining Pastoral Excellence (SPE) Initiative Survey of Participants in Groups for Ministers and Other Pastoral Leaders

Statistics Report #3.

Following are the summary survey results from 208 participants in SPE groups for ministers and other pastoral leaders. Surveys were distributed in the spring and summer of 2008. The survey provides a comprehensive picture of SPE participants in your program including their SPE group participation; characteristics of their congregations or ministry organizations; their job satisfaction, health and well-being; their approach to faith and life; and their personal and faith backgrounds. Statistics Report #1 summarized the survey results from 31 SPE Project Directors who oversee these peer group programs. Report #2 summarized findings from 2,101 participants in SPE peer group programs. Following reports will include: analysis of the results of all surveys including comparisons of group outcomes by denomination, group focus and structure, group composition, group leadership, and program cost, among other indicators; summary survey results from questions on small clergy peer group involvement in the 2008 Faith Communities Today and the 2008 U.S. Congregational Life surveys; reports from qualitative studies of 5 representative pastoral leader groups; and a summary report and analysis.

Section One: SPE Group Participation

1. Median number of years respondents participated in an SPE-initiated minister or pastoral leader group:

2 years

Length of participation in years: (% response)

One year or less	: 42
2 years	: 25
3 years	: 17
4 years	: 9
5 or more years	: 7

2. The groups met a median # of 8 times a year for a median # of 4 hours per meeting.

Meetings per year: (% response)

1 – 2	: 6
3 - 4	: 23
5 - 12	: 62
12 or more	: 9

Hours per meeting: (% response)

2 or less	: 22
2.25 – 4	: 40
4.25 – 12	: 22
More than 12	: 16

3. Does/did the group have the following characteristics? (% response)

	<u>NO</u>	<u>YES</u>
Members make decisions about who belongs	9	91
Members make decisions about what the group does	2	98
A sponsoring organization (denomination, seminary, etc.) provides curriculum	87	13
Spouses or families are involved	66	34
The group includes persons of different races or ethnicities	71	29
The group includes persons of different denominations or faith traditions	89	11
The churches or ministry organizations of group members have worked together since the group began	39	61

4. Attendance of face-to-face meetings in the last year the group met: (% response)

I attended less than half of meetings	: 1
I attended a majority of meetings	: 28
I attended all meetings	: 71

5. Participated in conference calls or email discussions as a part of the group process: (% response)

No	: 57
Yes	: 43

5a. In the last year that each group met they participated in intentional conference calls or email discussions a median # of 4 times.

6. Does/did your SPE group have a designated leader or facilitator? (% response)

No	: 22
Yes	: 78

6a. Descriptions that best fit that person's preparation and role: (possible to check multiple answers, % response per item, does not sum to 100)

A trained group facilitator	: 3
A minister "peer" with special training for group leadership	: 15
A denominational minister with responsibility for group leadership	: 7
A credentialed professional such as a pastoral counselor or a spiritual director	: 3
A member who was selected by the group as its leader	: 58

6b. Does/did your facilitator or leader do an effective job: (% response)

No	: 3
Yes	: 97

7. Tell us whether each of the issues below was a reason to join and/or a reason to stay. (% response)

	Reason to Join			Reason to Stay		
	NO	YES	NOT SURE	NO	YES	NOT SURE
A. A close friend influenced me	44	53	3	45	49	6
B. There is denominational encouragement/pressure	37	62	1	51	47	2
C. I am energized by being with people	14	83	3	11	85	4
D. I was isolated in my ministry position	45	53	2	42	54	4
E. I enjoy an intellectual challenge	12	84	4	15	83	2
F. I need an accountability group	27	69	4	25	71	4
G. The travel opportunities are appealing	61	34	5	58	38	4
H. I felt “stuck” in my ministry	76	18	6	71	22	7
I. I was impressed by the group leader or facilitator	55	31	14	57	30	13
J. My “spiritual batteries” need recharging	24	72	4	18	77	5
K. The subject matter is important to me	13	83	4	13	83	4
L. I am always looking to improve my ministry	4	95	1	4	85	1
M. I need a break from my day-to-day routine	36	59	5	33	63	4
N. I know and trust the sponsor organization	30	57	13	30	56	14
O. Other	7	8	2	7	8	2

Other reasons to join: (% of “Other” response)

- Having relationships for enhancing ministry : 57
- Starting and developing friendships : 17
- All other reasons : 26

8. Does/did your group have a formal covenant or written group guidelines? (% response)

- No : 44
- Yes, our covenant/guidelines keep us “on track” or help handle disagreements : 32
- Yes, but our covenant/guidelines have rarely, if ever, been referred to : 24

9. Listed below are several alternatives touching upon important dimensions of experience in an SPE group. Using the seven point scale between each set of alternatives, please check the number which best describes where your group falls, “1” means most like the characteristic on the left, “7” means most like the characteristic on the right, “4” means an equal mix of both.

(✓ one on each line)

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>A. My group is made up of people who are very similar to each other Average = 3.1</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 | <p>My group is made up of people who are very different from each other</p> |
| <p>B. My group meetings are structured and predictable Average = 3.4</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 | <p>My group meetings are unstructured and spontaneous</p> |
| <p>C. My group feels like a family Average = 2.9</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 | <p>My group feels like a loosely knit association of individuals</p> |
| <p>D. Leadership in my group is shared Average = 3.0</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 | <p>There is a clearly recognized leader in my group</p> |

10. The total number of persons in each SPE group: (**% response**)

Less than 6 : **16**
 6 - 7 : **38**
 8 - 9 : **22**
 10 or more : **24**

A median # of 7 persons participated in each SPE group.

11. Out of a median # of 7, how many persons in your SPE group

Were original members of your group (**median #**) : **6**
 Knew you before this group (**median #**) : **5**
 Socialize with you outside of group meetings (**median #**) : **1**
 Agree with you on most things (**median #**) : **5**
 Live an hour or less by car from you (**median #**) : **4**
 Dropped out of the group (**median #**) : **0**

12. Does/did your SPE group engage in any of the following? *If yes, is it a relatively minor emphasis or a key practice of your group?* (**% response**)

	NO	YES...	
		MINOR EMPHASIS	KEY PRACTICE
(✓ one on each line)			
A. Discussing a common reading or topic	3	14	83
B. Participating in a discipline of silence or guided meditation	65	24	11
C. Praying for each other	4	25	71
D. Sharing and getting feedback on ministry problems or challenges	2	22	76
E. Engaging in community service or mission activities	84	13	3
F. Sharing ideas and resources for more effective ministry	1	37	62
G. Expressing spirituality through art, music, literature, or drama	74	21	5
H. Sharing personal concerns or struggles	2	25	73
I. Enjoying fellowship (eating, drinking, laughing, talking casually)	1	17	82
J. Traveling together	40	38	22
K. Engaging in intentional Biblical or theological reflection	9	30	61
L. Meeting with experts in fields of common interest	30	37	33
M. Studying issues related to worship, including preaching	24	38	38
N. Seeking spiritual direction together	26	34	40
O. Exploring an interesting subject or new approach to ministry together	8	40	52
P. Teaching others how to start similar groups	72	25	3
Q. Utilizing case studies to improve pastoral skills	60	27	13
R. Other: (retreats, exploring social justice issues, etc.)	81	0	19

13. To what extent do you disagree or agree that your SPE group . . . (% response)

(✓ one on each line)	STRONGLY	SOMEWHAT	NEUTRAL/	SOMEWHAT	STRONGLY
	<u>DISAGREE</u>	<u>DISAGREE</u>	<u>UNSURE</u>	<u>AGREE</u>	<u>AGREE</u>
A. Helps you see the world in different ways	1	6	20	54	19
B. Makes you a better pastor or minister	1	2	2	36	59
C. Provides spiritual refreshment	1	2	6	32	59
D. Allows for frank disagreement	1	5	13	46	35
E. Is different than anything you've done before	5	24	20	31	20
F. Helps you feel closer to God	3	7	19	43	28
G. Is cliquish	42	31	15	11	1
H. Exposes you to fresh ideas	1	3	7	56	33
I. Makes you a better listener	1	6	18	54	21
J. Is a lot of fun	1	3	7	46	43
K. Has given you new energy for ministry	1	3	11	41	44
L. Provides balance in your life	2	4	21	46	27
M. Helps you wrestle with doubt	7	23	32	28	10
N. Helps energize your congregation/ministry	3	8	20	50	19
O. Holds you accountable	2	11	19	49	19
P. Stretches you	1	2	10	63	24
Q. Is a safe place	1	3	3	35	58
R. Has renewed your commitment to ministry	2	4	22	44	28
S. Encourages complaint or self-pity	46	37	9	5	3
T. Helps deepen your understanding of God	1	6	19	53	21
U. Is something you'll need for years to come	1	7	17	45	30
V. Makes an impact on the larger community	3	15	30	38	14
W. Fosters openness and empathy towards people who are different	1	9	34	42	14

14. Dynamics in small groups tend to change over time. Please indicate which of the following characteristics were present in your group only at the start, more so later than in the beginning, or were present throughout the life of your group. (% response)

(✓ one on each line)	NOT A	ONLY AT	MORE SO	PRESENT
	<u>CHARACTERISTIC</u>	<u>THE START</u>	<u>LATER</u>	<u>THROUGHOUT</u>
A. People "put on their best face"	51	40	3	6
B. One or two strong personalities dominate	65	20	10	5
C. Some group members show up late or leave early	67	3	11	19
D. You can say anything without fear of harsh judgment	13	3	19	65
E. People talk to the leader rather than to each other	95	2	2	1
F. You check your ego "at the door"	21	3	19	57
G. You get the feeling that you are really being heard	2	2	18	78
H. People need to "dump" a lot of stuff	42	8	20	30
I. There is an undercurrent of discomfort	84	12	2	2
J. Working together for community change is important	48	1	14	37
K. Our agenda is abandoned for prayer or deeper discussion	35	2	22	41
L. The group "gelled"	5	4	30	61
M. The leader or facilitator is a "good fit" for the group	16	5	6	73
N. Constructive criticism is welcome	6	1	22	71
O. There is a hunger for Scriptural study	38	2	8	52
P. There is significant conflict	95	1	3	1
Q. The group is a model of what it means to be "community"	7	1	27	65
R. There is competition for leadership	94	2	1	3

15. Not including your SPE group, have you met regularly with any other small group of ministers or pastoral leaders for continuing education and support *in the past ten years?* (**% response**)

No : 27
 Yes : 73

15a. Number of additional small groups within the past ten years: (**% response**)

1 : 70
 2 : 21
 3 : 7
 More than 3 : 2

15b. When you compare that other group to your SPE group, would you say that the SPE group or the other group provided a better experience in the following areas: (If more than one group was listed above, compare your SPE group to the group that you participated in most recently) (**% response**)

(✓ one on each line)	SPE <u>MUCH BETTER</u>	SPE <u>BETTER</u>	ABOUT <u>THE SAME</u>	OTHER GROUP <u>BETTER</u>	OTHER GROUP <u>MUCH BETTER</u>
A. Positive ministry impact	23	30	31	12	4
B. Spiritual growth	21	30	25	19	5
C. Creativity	19	37	31	9	4
D. Intellectual challenge	30	35	24	7	4
E. Personal guidance and support	17	35	26	13	9
F. Group leadership	12	29	47	9	3

16. To what extent have the following persons or groups been affected by your involvement in a SPE group? (**% response**)

(✓ one on each line)	LITTLE OR NO <u>EFFECT</u>	VERY <u>NEGATIVELY</u>	SOMEWHAT <u>NEGATIVELY</u>	SOMEWHAT <u>POSITIVELY</u>	VERY <u>POSITIVELY</u>
A. Your work colleagues or staff	24	0	1	60	15
B. Your intimate friends	41	0	1	49	9
C. Those you minister to on a day-to-day basis	10	0	1	66	23
D. <i>If married, your spouse</i>	15	0	2	57	26
E. <i>If a parent, your child or children</i>	44	1	1	44	10

17. Overall, how would you rate your level of satisfaction with your SPE group *in the last year that you met?* (**% response**)

Very dissatisfied : 3
 Dissatisfied : 0
 Somewhat dissatisfied : 2
 Somewhat satisfied : 9
 Satisfied : 34
 Very satisfied : 52

18. Compared to your level of satisfaction with your SPE group at the beginning of your involvement, would you say that your satisfaction has . . . (**% response**)

Decreased a great deal	: 1
Decreased somewhat	: 9
Stayed about the same	: 26
Increased somewhat	: 41
Increased a great deal	: 23

19. What is the official status of your SPE-initiated minister or pastoral leader group? (**% response**)

a. The group no longer meets	: 26
b. The group officially ended but continues to meet	: 20
c. The group continues to meet with the support of its sponsor organization	: 38
d. The group continues to meet but I am unsure of its official status	: 16

19a. The group no longer meets. The last gathering was: (**% response of "a"**)

This year	: 2
Last year	: 30
Two years ago	: 36
More than two years ago	: 32

20. What is/was the average *annual* contribution from the following sources toward your SPE group participation? If there was no "out of pocket" or congregation/ministry organization expenditure, simply write "0" in the space provided. (**% response**)

A. Personal, "out of pocket" annual contribution:

\$0	: 58
\$1 - \$100	: 19
\$101 - \$500	: 18
\$501 - \$1000	: 3
More than \$1000	: 2

B. Your congregation's or ministry organization's annual contribution:

\$0	: 58
\$1 - \$100	: 5
\$101 - \$500	: 18
\$501 - \$1000	: 4
More than \$1000	: 15

21. Do you consider your participation in an SPE group an important part of your ongoing education in ministry? (**% response**)

No	: 9
Yes	: 91

22. Are you the designated leader of your SPE group? (% response)

No : 78
Yes : 22

Section Two: Your Work in Ministry

1. How would you describe your current position in ministry? (✓ one option only) (% response)

Senior pastor, priest, or minister : 32
Solo pastor, priest, or minister : 41
Chaplain, Pastoral Counselor, or spiritual director : 1
Associate pastor or minister : 7
Lay minister : 2
Denominational minister, working for an association,
conference, diocese, synod or other regional body : 1
Other : 16

2. Is your current position paid or volunteer? (% response)

Volunteer : 1
Paid : 99

3. How many years ago did you begin your current ministerial or pastoral position? (% response)

2 or less : 18
3 – 10 : 59
11 – 20 : 16
More than 20 : 7

4. Approximately how many hours in a typical week do you spend in work related to your position in this congregation or ministry organization? (% response)

20 or less : 6
21 – 40 : 6
41 – 50 : 39
More than 50 : 49

5. How much time and attention do you spend on the areas listed below? (% response)

(✓ one on each line)	VERY		QUITE	A GREAT
	<u>LITTLE</u>	<u>SOME</u>	<u>A BIT</u>	<u>DEAL</u>
A. Planning and leading worship	5	15	42	38
B. Developing and promoting a vision & purpose	10	42	33	15
C. Evangelism or recruitment	28	46	19	7
D. Recruiting and training leaders	21	55	19	5
E. Pastoral care, such as visiting the sick and counseling people	6	30	46	18
F. Teaching people about the faith and Scripture	2	21	45	32
G. Contacting inactive persons	46	43	8	3
H. Organizing/leading small groups for sharing, support and spiritual growth	25	43	26	6
I. Representing the congregation/ministry organization in the community	21	51	18	10
J. Administration, supervision and committee meetings	3	31	49	17
K. Dealing with conflict and disagreements	25	59	11	5

6. Do you currently serve as a paid professional minister in more than one congregation or other setting? (% response)

No : 97
 Yes : 3

6a. If yes, how many? (% response)

1 : 75
 2 : 25

7. Do you work at any other job outside of your ministry position(s)? (% response)

No : 90
 Yes : 10

7a. If yes, what is your other job? (% response)

Social service, public service, & healthcare : 8
 Education : 23
 Farming, labor, and trades : 15
 Technological : 8
 Other church-related jobs : 46

8. How many **paid** program or ministerial staff positions and **paid** support positions do you have in your congregation or ministry organization? Count all positions, whether currently filled or not. If you have a school, don't count school employees.

Average of 1 full-time program or ministerial staff.
 Average of 1 full-time support staff.
 Average of 2 part-time program or ministerial staff.
 Average of 2 part-time support staff.

9. Not including your SPE group, how often during the past year did you take part in some form of ongoing education in ministry lasting at least a full day? (✓ one option only) (**% response**)

Never	: 11
Once or twice	: 54
Three to five times	: 26
More than five times	: 9

10. Does your congregation or ministry organization provide financial support for you to participate in continuing education or training? (**% response**)

No	: 10
Yes	: 90

11. Does your congregation, ministry organization, or denomination require you to participate in continuing education or training on an annual basis? (**% response**)

No	: 80
Yes	: 20

12. Do you regularly take a day off each week? (**% response**)

No	: 16
Yes	: 84

13. Have you taken a sabbatical leave from a congregation or ministry organization *in the past ten years*, and if so, for how long? (**% response**)

Yes	: 35
No	: 65

13.a. Yes, I took my most recent sabbatical leave for _____ weeks: (**% of “yes” responses**)

4 weeks or less	: 18
5 - 12 weeks	: 51
More than 12 weeks	: 31

Median length of sabbatical was 12 weeks.

14. In the past two years, how many persons have you personally encouraged to consider becoming a pastor, priest, or minister? (**% response**)

0	: 15
1	: 23
2	: 30
3	: 13
More than 3	: 19

Median # of persons encouraged to consider ministry was 2 per respondent.

15. How well does each of the following describe your congregation's or ministry organization's approach to ministry and mission? (% response)

(✓ one on each line)	<u>NOT AT ALL</u>	<u>SLIGHTLY</u>	<u>SOME- WHAT</u>	<u>QUITE WELL</u>	<u>VERY WELL</u>
A. This is an exciting place where people can get involved in a variety of meaningful activities	1	7	28	46	18
B. We encourage and foster intense, intimate experiences with God	2	13	46	30	9
C. We are engaged in and energized by the serious study and discussion of scripture and theology	1	13	41	38	7
D. We hold and teach strong beliefs and moral values	0	4	18	51	27

16. To what extent do you agree or disagree that your congregation or ministry organization . . . (% response)

(✓ one on each line)	<u>STRONGLY DISAGREE</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT DISAGREE</u>	<u>NEUTRAL/ UNSURE</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT AGREE</u>	<u>STRONGLY AGREE</u>
A. Is like a close-knit family	2	10	8	56	24
B. Is spiritually vital and alive	1	9	8	65	17
C. Has a clear mission or purpose	4	14	20	42	20
D. Is a force for positive change in our community	4	8	19	50	19
E. Welcomes change and is always ready to try something new	7	21	19	42	11
F. Is not that different from other congregations/ ministry organizations in our community	11	34	21	30	4

17. Compared to other congregations or ministry organizations in your denomination or faith tradition, how would you describe the *theological outlook* of the *majority* of your organization's active participants? (% response)

Considerably more conservative than most other congregations or ministry organizations	: 8
Somewhat more conservative	: 26
Right in the middle	: 41
Somewhat more liberal	: 22
Considerably more liberal than most other congregations or ministry organizations	: 3

18. *During the last five years*, has your congregation or ministry organization experienced any disagreements or conflicts in the following areas? (possible to check multiple answers, % response per item, does not sum to 100)

(✓ all boxes that apply on each line)	<u>NO</u>	<u>YES, BUT THE CONFLICT WAS NOT SERIOUS</u>	<u>YES, AND SOME PEOPLE LEFT</u>	<u>YES, AND SOME PEOPLE WITHHELD FUNDS</u>	<u>YES, AND A STAFF MEMBER WAS DISMISSED OR REASSIGNED</u>
A. Money/finances/budget	46	36	5	7	2
B. How worship is conducted	27	41	22	5	1
C. Minister's leadership style	47	26	15	4	2
D. Program priorities of the congregation or organization	42	38	11	3	1
E. Actions of the denomination or other supervisory body	56	24	9	4	0
F. Other (e.g. leader behavior, staff conflict, political / theological issues)	8	1	3	1	1

19. How old is your congregation or ministry organization? (**% response**)

10 years or younger : **11**
 11 – 50 years : **45**
 51 – 100 years : **33**
 101 – 150 years : **10**
 Older than 150 years : **1**

20. How would you describe the place where your congregation or ministry organization is located? (**% response**)

Rural area or open country : **11**
Village or a town of less than 10,000 persons : **15**
Larger town or a small city with a population between 10,000 and 50,000 : **16**
A newer suburb around a city with a population of 50,000 or more : **15**
An older suburb around a city with a population of 50,000 or more : **14**
An older residential area in a city with a population of 50,000 or more : **19**
A downtown or central area of a city with a population of 50,000 or more : **10**

21. For each of the last 6 years, what is your best estimate of the average attendance at your congregation's or ministry organization's weekend worship services? *If you have more than one weekend worship service, use the average attendance for all worship services combined.*

Total average worship attendance for all respondents' congregations or ministry organizations:

2007 : **51,449**
 2006 : **50,835**
 2005 : **49,163**
 2004 : **46,517**
 2003 : **47,153**
 2002 : **46,364**

22. *During the last 12 months, did your congregation or ministry organization conduct any of the following programs or activities? If yes, how much emphasis or attention is given to the activity? Was it some emphasis, a lot of emphasis, or is the activity a specialty of your congregation (something you are known for)?* (**% response**)

(✓ one on each line)	<u>DO NOT HAVE</u>	<u>SOME EMPHASIS</u>	<u>A LOT OF EMPHASIS</u>	<u>SPECIALTY OF CONGREGATION</u>
A. Church school or Sunday School classes	5	23	65	7
B. Scripture study groups (in addition to Sunday School)	3	41	50	6
C. Support groups (such as bereavement, divorce, 12-step, etc.)	66	28	5	1
D. Evangelism or recruitment activities	14	57	23	6
E. Community ministry & mission	9	44	37	10
F. Student activities (for school-aged children & youth)	10	24	51	15
G. Prayer, meditation, or spiritual development activities	9	58	26	7

Section Three: Ministry Roles and Experiences

1. Listed below are 12 images or dominant roles to which pastoral leaders may orient their ministry. To what extent do you emphasize or embody these roles? Does your current congregation or ministry organization expect or encourage these particular roles? (% response)

	<u>I Emphasize or Embody</u>			<u>Congregation Expects</u>		
	<u>NOT REALLY</u>	<u>TO SOME EXTENT</u>	<u>A GREAT EXTENT</u>	<u>NOT REALLY</u>	<u>TO SOME EXTENT</u>	<u>A GREAT EXTENT</u>
A. Preacher	2	15	83	2	12	86
B. Teacher	1	49	50	1	52	47
C. Prophet	38	53	9	51	44	5
D. Administrator	17	58	25	14	52	34
E. Team-Builder	8	55	37	15	55	30
F. Celebrant/Worship Leader	10	43	47	12	36	52
G. Spiritual Mentor and Guide	4	57	39	9	59	32
H. Witness/Evangelist	22	55	23	26	52	22
I. Counselor/Healer	17	64	19	18	63	19
J. Visionary Leader and Motivator	11	57	32	14	49	37
K. Community Organizer	53	41	6	63	30	7
L. Friend/Fellow Traveler	13	45	42	17	58	25
M. Other	5	1	3	5	2	1

2. *In the past three years*, how often have people in your congregation or ministry organization . . . (% response)

(✓ one on each line)

	<u>NEVER</u>	<u>SOMETIMES</u>	<u>FAIRLY OFTEN</u>	<u>VERY OFTEN</u>
A. Made you feel loved and cared for	0	21	47	32
B. Listened to you talk about your private problems or concerns	11	62	19	8
C. Told you that they prayed for you	1	26	42	31
D. Publicly praised some aspect of your ministry	6	38	34	22
E. Expressed concern about new directions or changes	8	67	19	6
F. Took notice of or affirmed your involvement in an SPE group	37	48	14	1

3. When you think of your current job in ministry, how satisfied are you with . . . (% response)

(✓ one on each line)

	<u>VERY DISSATISFIED</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT SATISFIED</u>	<u>VERY SATISFIED</u>
A. Your overall effectiveness as a pastoral leader in this congregation or organization	1	13	53	33
B. Your spiritual life	2	22	57	19
C. Opportunities for continuing theological education	4	18	50	28
D. Support from your denomination or other supervisory body	5	21	50	24
E. Relations with clergy and staff members in your congregation or organization	1	11	48	40
F. <i>If you work in a church or church-related setting</i> , your relations with lay leaders	1	9	55	35
G. Your salary and benefits	2	12	43	43
H. <i>If married</i> , your family life	1	5	33	61
I. <i>If unmarried</i> , your personal life	20	30	20	30

4. Looking back over *the past year*, how often have you . . . (% response)

(✓ one on each line)	<u>NEVER</u>	<u>SOMETIMES</u>	<u>FAIRLY OFTEN</u>	<u>VERY OFTEN</u>
A. Doubted that you are called by God to the ministry	70	26	4	0
B. Thought of leaving pastoral ministry to enter a 'secular' occupation	51	44	4	1
C. Experienced stress because of the challenges you face in your current position	2	46	40	12
D. Experienced stress as a result of dealing with people who are critical of your work	21	55	16	8
E. Felt lonely or isolated in your work	14	54	20	12

Section Four: Your Beliefs, Attitudes, and Approach to Faith

1. How would you describe your personal *theological* outlook? (✓ one option only) (% response)

Predominantly conservative	: 21
Somewhat on the conservative side	: 46
Right in the middle	: 20
Somewhat on the liberal side	: 12
Predominantly liberal	: 1

2. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: *An individual should arrive at his or her own religious beliefs independent of any church.* (✓ one option only) (% response)

Strongly disagree	: 44
Somewhat disagree	: 37
Neutral/unsure	: 6
Somewhat agree	: 11
Strongly agree	: 2

3. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: *Only followers of Jesus Christ can be saved.* (✓ one option only) (% response)

Strongly disagree	: 7
Somewhat disagree	: 4
Neutral/unsure	: 5
Somewhat agree	: 20
Strongly agree	: 64

4. The following items explore your approach to faith and life. Please choose the response which best reflects your own beliefs and experience. *It is important that you choose only one response and that you complete all items if possible.* (% response)

A. At social gatherings are you more inclined to interact with. . .

Many people including those you know less well	: 65
OR	
A few people you know well	: 35

- B. Do you tend to be more attracted to . . .
- | | |
|--------------------|------|
| Sensible people | : 45 |
| OR | |
| Imaginative people | : 55 |
- C. In decision-making situations are you most likely to . . .
- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| “Stick to your guns,” especially if you feel strongly | : 50 |
| OR | |
| Sacrifice your own desires or opinions
to keep from “rocking the boat” | : 50 |
- D. Which image of God is more attractive to you?
- | | |
|-----------|------|
| Judge | : 10 |
| OR | |
| Servant | : 90 |
- E. As a leader, are you more likely to . . .
- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|
| Welcome new approaches and ideas | : 91 |
| OR | |
| Do things as they have always been done | : 9 |
- F. When conflict or disagreement arises, do you. . .
- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Discuss how everyone has contributed to
the situation, including you | : 84 |
| OR | |
| Sympathize with the difficulties of others
without taking responsibility | : 16 |
- G. In your relationships with others, are you more likely to. . .
- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Avoid taking positions that would create
unpleasantness | : 81 |
| OR | |
| Withdraw when you don’t get your way | : 19 |
- H. Do you tend to be . . .
- | | |
|--------------|------|
| Cool-headed | : 27 |
| OR | |
| Warm-hearted | : 73 |
- I. Among your friends and relatives, do you tend to . . .
- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Keep up with what’s happening | : 63 |
| OR | |
| Get behind on the news | : 37 |

- J. When problem-solving with others, is it more important to . . .
- | | |
|------------------------------------------|------|
| Support the position you think is right | : 44 |
| OR | |
| Empathize with the other's point of view | : 56 |
- K. Do you tend to prefer things . . .
- | | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Settled and decided | : 83 |
| OR | |
| Unsettled and undecided | : 17 |
- L. Which image of God resonates best with your own theology?
- | | |
|-----------|------|
| Prophet | : 27 |
| OR | |
| King | : 73 |
- M. In general, do you tend to have . . .
- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| A relaxed interpersonal style | : 89 |
| OR | |
| A formal interpersonal style | : 11 |
- N. When you sense conflict with another, do you tend to . . .
- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Accept that there is a problem and invite him or her to solve it with you | : 88 |
| OR | |
| Not argue very much either way; just state your opinion and stand firm | : 12 |
- O. Generally, are you more interested in . . .
- | | |
|------------------|------|
| What is actual | : 27 |
| OR | |
| What is possible | : 73 |
- P. When you are made aware of conflict or disagreement, do you . . .
- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Let someone else take responsibility for handling it | : 18 |
| OR | |
| Enlist others in finding a solution | : 82 |
- Q. In your opinion, is it worse to be . . .
- | | |
|---------------|------|
| Unjust | : 16 |
| OR | |
| Without mercy | : 84 |

R. Is the mystery of God or certainty about God more important for your faith?

Mystery : 52
OR
 Certainty : 48

Section Five: Your Health and Well-Being

1. In general, would you say your health is . . . (% response)

Poor : 1
 Fair : 5
 Good : 29
 Very good : 46
 Excellent : 19

2. Compared to one year ago, how would you rate your health in general now? (% response)

Much worse now than one year ago : 1
 Somewhat worse now than one year ago : 9
 About the same as one year ago : 61
 Somewhat better now than one year ago : 23
 Much better now than one year ago : 6

3. How much of the time during the past four weeks have you. . . (% response)

(✓ one on each line)	<u>NONE OF THE TIME</u>	<u>A LITTLE OF THE TIME</u>	<u>SOME OF THE TIME</u>	<u>MOST OF THE TIME</u>	<u>ALL OF THE TIME</u>
A. Felt calm and peaceful	0	13	37	36	14
B. Had a lot of energy	1	13	42	29	15
C. Felt downhearted and depressed	22	51	19	1	7
D. Felt worn out	16	53	20	3	8
E. Been happy	1	5	32	45	17

4. Within the last week, how much time did you spend in the following activities? **Average # of hours spent...**

A. Using the internet (including the web and email) : 9.5
 B. Family life (family activities including meals) : 16
 C. Household chores (cleaning, errands, shopping, etc.) : 5.5
 D. Physical exercise for your health : 4
 E. Recreation and hobbies : 2.5
 F. Prayer, meditation, Bible reading, and other spiritual disciplines : 5.5
 G. Commuting to work : 1.5
 H. Socializing with friends : 3
 I. Watching television : 6
 J. Reading for pleasure : 4

Hours spent in above categories. (% response)

A. Using the internet (including the web and email)

Less than 4	: 15
4 – 7	: 34
7.5 – 14	: 30
More than 14	: 21

B. Family life (family activities including meals)

Less than 4	: 3
4 – 7	: 10
7.5 – 14	: 36
More than 14	: 51

C. Household chores (cleaning, errands, shopping, etc.)

Less than 4	: 35
4 – 7	: 44
7.5 – 14	: 17
More than 14	: 4

D. Physical exercise for your health

None	: 12
Some, but less than 4	: 38
4 – 7	: 41
More than 7	: 9

E. Recreation and hobbies

None	: 23
Some, but less than 4	: 47
4 – 7	: 25
More than 7	: 5

F. Prayer, meditation, Bible reading, and other spiritual disciplines

Less than 4	: 32
4 – 7	: 51
7.5 – 14	: 13
More than 14	: 4

G. Commuting to work

None	: 38
Some, but less than 4	: 48
4 – 7	: 10
More than 7	: 4

H. Socializing with friends

None	: 13
Some, but less than 4	: 51
4 – 7	: 28
More than 7	: 8

I. Watching television

Less than 4	: 38
4 – 7	: 33
7.5 – 14	: 24
More than 14	: 5

J. Reading for pleasure

None	: 7
Some, but less than 4	: 49
4 – 7	: 31
More than 7	: 13

Section Six: Your Faith and Ministry Background

1. What was the denomination you were most involved in while you were growing up? **3 most frequent responses: (% response)**

Christian Reformed Church in North America	: 81
Other Conservative Protestant	: 4
Other Presbyterian	: 3
Presbyterian Church, USA	: 2
Roman Catholic Church	: 2
Other Baptist	: 2
Other Moderate or Liberal Protestant	: 2
Reformed Church in America	: 1
American Baptist Association	: 1
United Methodist Church	: 1
Other (Judaism, Eastern Orthodox, Bahai, etc.)	: 1

2. How would you best describe your church attendance during your teenage years? **(% response)**

Did not attend	: 3
Occasional (a few times a year)	: 3
About once a month	: 2
Weekly attendance	: 92

- 2a. If you attended during your teenage years, how well did the congregation you were most involved in... **(% response)**

	<u>NOT AT ALL</u>	<u>SLIGHTLY</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT</u>	<u>VERY WELL</u>	<u>DON'T RECALL</u>
A. Encourage a call to ministry	24	22	25	27	2
B. Invite serious questions	19	25	36	16	4
C. Confront issues of injustice	27	39	21	8	5
D. Include others who are different	28	42	21	6	3

3. Were you involved in youth activities sponsored by a congregation during your teenage years? (% response)

No, I did not attend : 8
 Yes, occasionally (a few times a year) : 9
 Yes, about once a month : 19
 Yes, weekly attendance : 64

3a. If you were involved in church-based youth activities during your teenage years, did you have a leadership role? (% response)

No : 41
 Yes : 59

4. Have you ever seriously considered that you were called to the ministry? (% response)

No : 3
 Yes : 97

4a. At what age did you first seriously consider that you were called to the ministry? (% response)

Younger than 16 : 26
 16 – 20 : 41
 21 – 30 : 24
 31 – 40 : 6
 Older than 40 : 3

4b. If you seriously considered you were called to the ministry, how much influence did each of the following have in your discernment process? (% response)

(✓ ONE ON EACH LINE)

	<u>NOT AT ALL</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT</u>	<u>QUITE A BIT</u>	<u>A GREAT DEAL</u>
A. Positive experiences in church leadership	22	23	39	16
B. Counsel from your pastor or other minister	22	32	28	18
C. The example of a parent or other family member	38	20	26	16
D. Encouragement from lay person(s) in your church	19	40	32	9
E. The support of family	11	31	38	20
F. A clear sign or message from God	15	26	30	29
G. A group or class for those considering ministry	79	15	5	1
H. Other: (e.g. friends, camps & retreats, "slow process")	6	0	1	5

5. Are you ordained? (% response)

No : 3
 Yes : 97

5a. How old were you when you received full ordination as a pastor/minister? (% response)

Younger than 25 : 4
 25 – 30 : 56
 31 – 40 : 28
 41 – 50 : 10
 Older than 50 : 2

6. What is the highest level of theological training you have obtained? (% response)

None	: 0
Certificate from denominational training program, Bible college, or seminary	: 2
Bible college degree or a degree in religion from a Christian college or university	: 3
Master of Divinity or Bachelor of Divinity	: 62
M.A., S.T.M, Th.M. or other Masters degree	: 16
Doctor of Ministry degree	: 12
Ph.D. or Th.D.	: 2
Other	: 3

7. What is your present religious denomination, if any? 10 most frequent responses: (% response)

Christian Reformed Church in North America	: 96
Disciples of Christ	: 1
Community Churches, International Council Reformed	: 1
Roman Catholic Church	: 1

Section Seven: Your Personal Background

1. What is your gender? (% response)

Female	: 2
Male	: 98

2. How old are you? (% response)

20 – 39	: 14
40 – 49	: 30
50 – 59	: 36
60 or older	: 20

3. Which of the following racial categories best describes you? (% response)

White	: 89
African-American or Black	: 3
Asian American	: 7
Other	: 1

4. Would you categorize yourself as Hispanic or Latino/a? (% response)

Yes	0
No	100

5. Which of the following best describes your current marital status? (**% response**)

Never married	: 2
In first marriage	: 94
Widowed	: 1
Remarried after divorce	: 2
Remarried after death of spouse	: 1

6. How many children age 18 or under do you have living at home? (**% response**)

No children at home	: 54
Children living at home	: 46

Of those with children living at home, the # of children: (**% response**)

1	: 18
2	: 33
3	: 32
More than 3	: 17

7. What is the highest educational qualification you have completed? (**% response**)

High school diploma or equivalent	: 2
Bachelor degree from a four year college or equivalent institution	: 8
Masters degree	: 77
Earned doctorate	: 13

Participating Organizations in the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence (SPE) Group Survey

- Akron Area Association of Churches: Pastor Parish Peer Study Groups of Northeast Ohio
- American Baptist Assembly: Green Lake Conference Center
- American Baptist Churches USA Ministers Council: Together in Ministry
- Ashland Theological Seminary: Sustaining Pastoral Excellence
- Asociacion para la Educacion Teologica Hispana: Tertulias Pastorals
- Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary: College of Pastoral Leaders
- Bethany Theological Seminary: Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership
- Christian Reformed Church in North America: Creating a Culture of Pastoral Excellence
- Church of God Ministries: Sustaining Health and Pastoral Excellence (SHAPE)
- Church of God Theological Seminary: Walking in the Spirit
- Columbia Theological Seminary: S3 (Sabbath, Study and Service)
- Cooperative Baptist Fellowship: Initiative for Ministerial Excellence
- Dominican House of Studies: Sustaining Excellent Pastors-Promoting Pastoral Excellence
- Ecumenical Theological Seminary: Sustaining Pastoral Excellence
- Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention: Building Networks, Broadening Visions
- Loyola University: INSPIRE
- MACUCC: Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Project
- Memphis Theological Seminary: Sustaining Pastoral Excellence through Scholarship, Piety, and Justice
- Millsaps College Center for Ministry: Center for Ministry Pastoral Excellence Project
- Nebraska Conference United Church of Christ: Transforming Covenants
- North Alabama Conference of the UMC: The Institute for Clergy Excellence
- Presbytery of San Francisco: Healthy Pastors for Healthy Congregations
- Reformed Church in America: A Revitalized Leadership for a Renewed Church
- Samaritan Counseling Center of Albuquerque Inc.: Called Back to the Well
- Samford University: Resource Center for Pastoral Excellence
- Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry: Pastoral Leadership Program
- St. John's School of Theology Seminary: Conversatio—Cultivating a Pastoral Conversation
- Texas Methodist Foundation: Clergy Leadership Initiative
- Triangle Pastoral Counseling: Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Project
- Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Educators: Rehoboth Project
- Western Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in America: Journey Groups