



# **Strategic Planning Survey Analysis Executive Summary**

**Ben Hill United Methodist Church**

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Member, Strategic Planning Committee

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# Executive Summary

## Ben Hill United Methodist Church Strategic Planning Survey Analysis

Date: April 23, 2025

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### History

Located at 2099 Fairburn Road SW in Atlanta, Ben Hill UMC has a legacy of faith and community dating back to 1853. Originally founded as Wesley Chapel Methodist Church in a log cabin in the Niskey Lake area, its early members—like David Waits, a noted song leader—were a devoted group committed to serving God.

After the Civil War, the area near Campbellton and Fairburn Roads became known as Ben Hill, named after U.S. Senator Benjamin Harvey Hill. As the population shifted in 1875, church members relocated the church to Fairburn Road in 1876 under Rev. Thrower, building a new facility on the historic Mt. Gilead Camp Ground.

In 1918, Wesley Chapel joined three other churches to form the Ben Hill Circuit. A parsonage was built, and in 1928, the church officially changed its name to Ben Hill Methodist Church under Rev. A.E. Silvey.

The 1960s and 70s brought demographic shifts to southwest Fulton County, prompting another period of change. Membership declined, but under the leadership of Rev. Paul Wolgomuth—affectionately known as "Brother Paul"—the church welcomed new African American residents and grew again, including hiring its first Black student minister, Richard D. Winn.

Ben Hill UMC is known for its vibrant worship rooted in African call-and-response traditions and a neo-Pentecostal style. Over the years, the church has been led by dynamic pastors including Rev. Cornelius L. Henderson, Rev. Walter L. Kimbrough, Rev. McCallister Hollins, Rev. Richard D. Winn Sr., Rev. Byron E. Thomas, and Rev. Dr. Derrick R. Rhodes.

Today, Ben Hill remains a pillar in Atlanta, committed to spiritual growth, community engagement, and service.

### Overview

The Ben Hill United Methodist Church Strategic Planning Survey was conducted to gather input from members and stakeholders to guide the church's future direction in ministry, facility improvements, and community engagement. With 248 responses, the data revealed a congregation deeply rooted in tradition, highly engaged in worship, and eager to revitalize

youth and young adult ministries. Key priorities identified include sanctuary upgrades, enhanced ADA accessibility, the development of a Family Life Center, and reconnection with former members. The results reflect a strong desire to balance legacy and innovation, with a renewed commitment to spiritual growth, intergenerational fellowship, and purposeful leadership. This Executive Summary highlights the most significant findings and offers professional recommendations to support the church in aligning its strategic goals with the evolving needs of its congregation and surrounding community.

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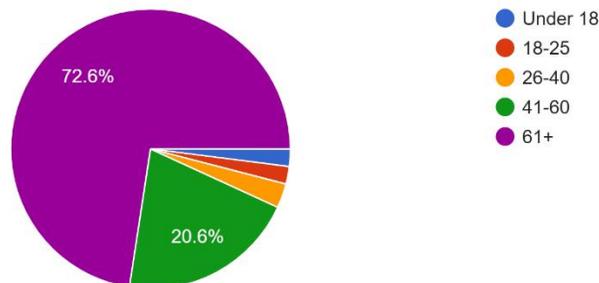
## Key Findings

### Congregational Profile

- **Age Distribution:** 72.6% of respondents are 61 years or older, and another 20.6% are between 41–60. Less than 7% are under 40, signaling an urgent opportunity to grow younger demographic participation.
- **Tenure at BHUMC:** 88.7% have been members for more than 10 years, affirming the congregation's depth of commitment.

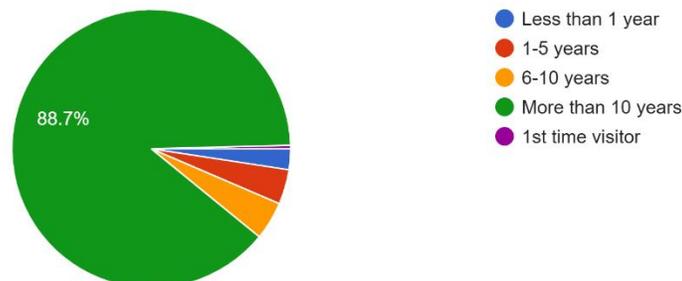
1. What is your age group?

248 responses



2. How long have you attended BHUMC?

248 responses

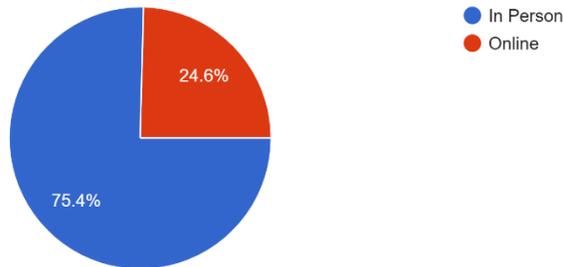


## Worship Engagement

- **Preferred Worship Style:** 75.4% prefer in-person worship, while 24.6% prefer online.
- **Virtual Attendance Drivers:** Leading reasons include personal obligations (25.7%), medical conditions (18.6%), and reduced desire to return in person (16.8%). (See Appendix for raw data.)

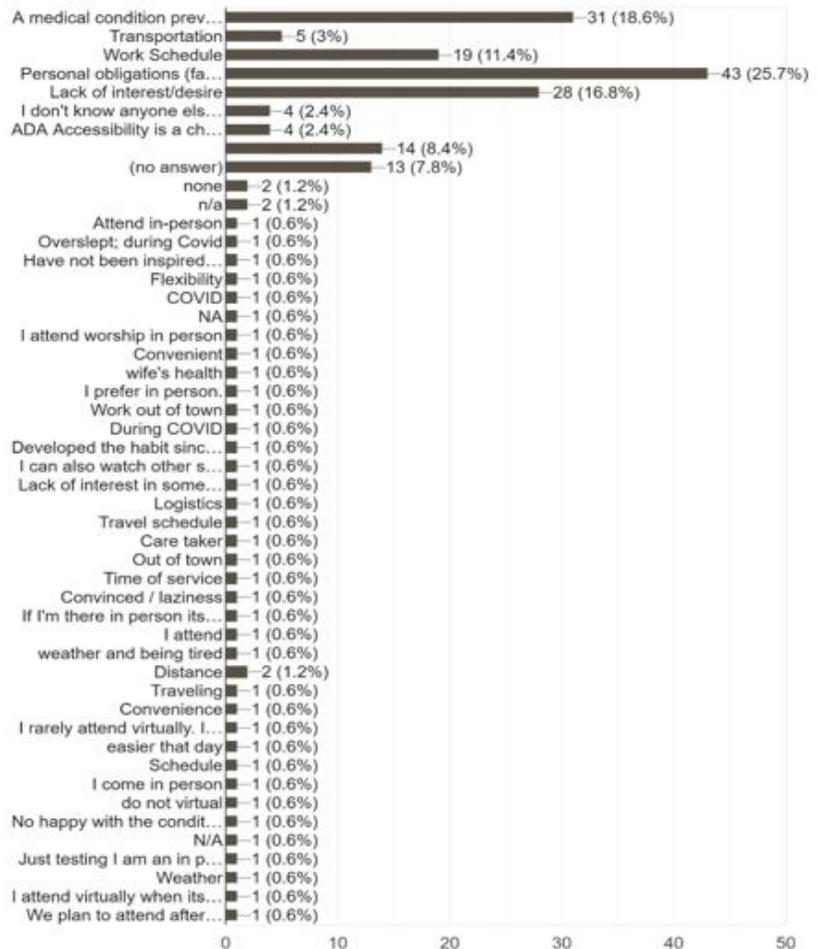
3. Are you more likely to attend worship services in person or online?

248 responses



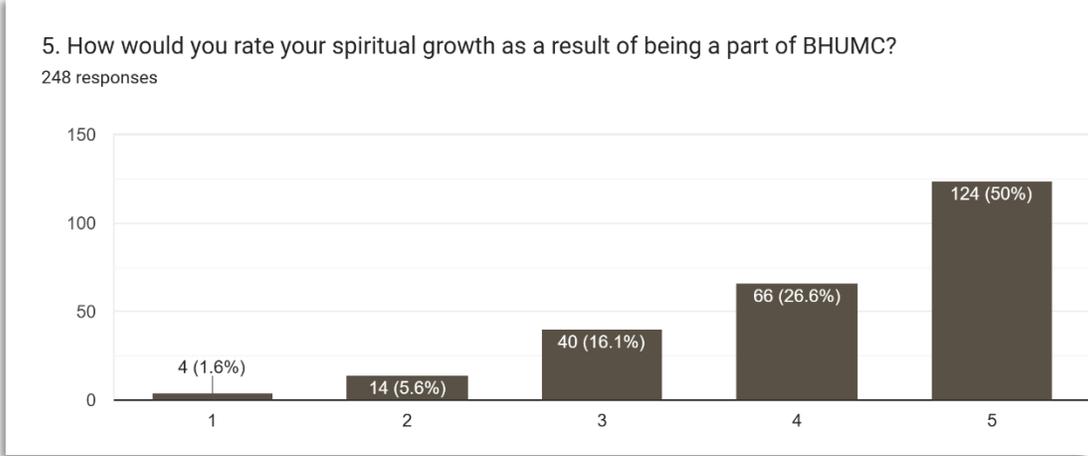
4. If you have attended service virtually on a regular basis, what factors influence your decision? (Check all that apply.)

167 responses

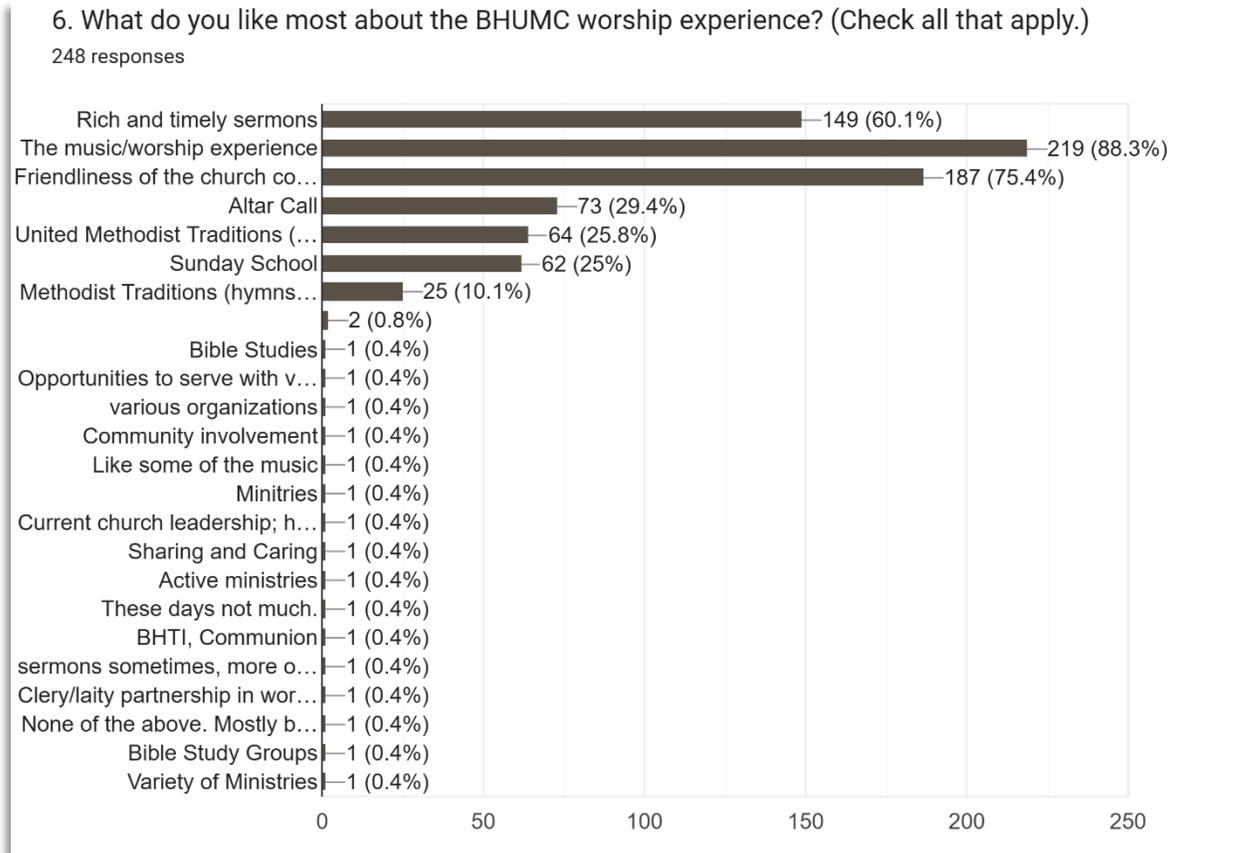


**Spiritual Growth & Worship Strengths**

- **76.6% of respondents rated their spiritual growth at a 4 or 5 out of 5**, indicating that BHUMC is spiritually nourishing its congregation. (1= no growth at all; 5=strong growth)



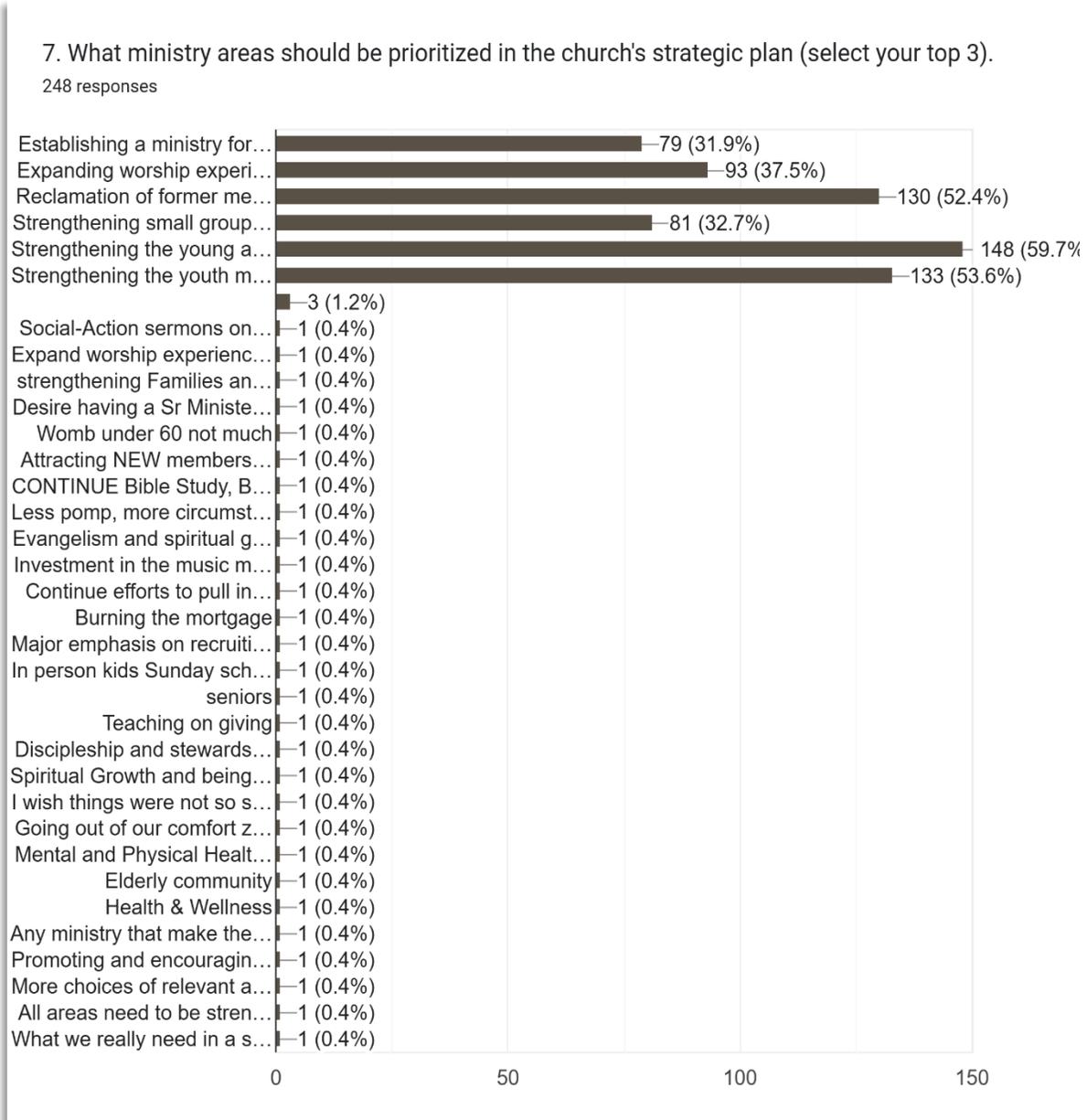
- **Top valued elements of the worship experience:**
  - Music and worship experience (88.3%)
  - Friendliness of the church community (75.4%)
  - Rich and timely sermons (60.1%)



**Strategic Ministry Priorities (Top 3 Areas Selected):**

1. **Strengthening young adult ministries** – 59.7%
2. **Strengthening youth ministries** – 53.6%
3. **Reclamation of former members** – 52.4%

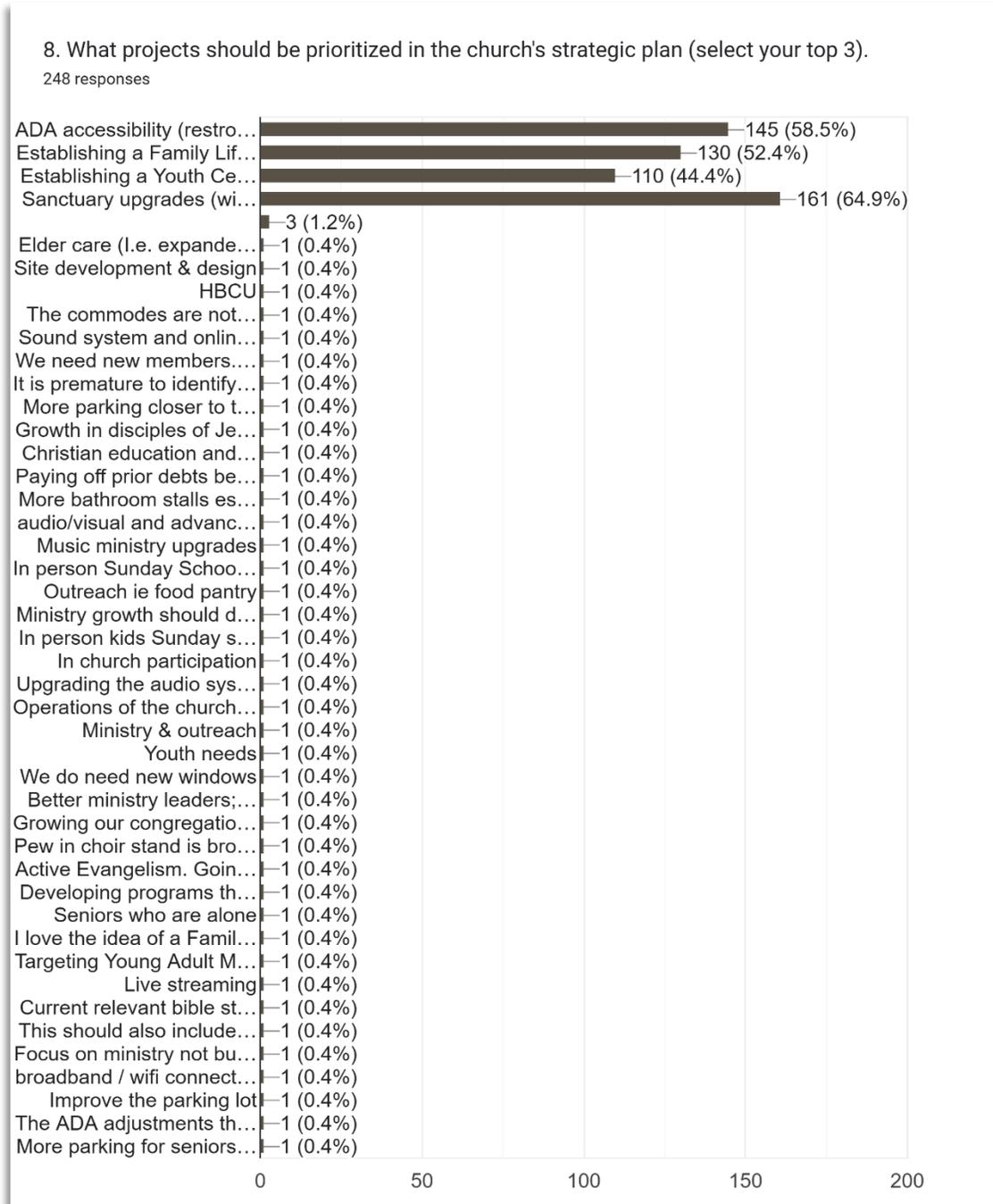
Other notable areas: Small group ministry (32.7%) and expanding worship experiences (37.5%).



## Strategic Project Priorities

Top projects prioritized by respondents:

1. **Sanctuary upgrades** (carpet, seating, tech, aesthetics) – 64.9%
2. **ADA accessibility improvements** (restrooms, entrances) – 58.5%
3. **Establishing a Family Life Center** – 52.4%
4. **Creating a Youth Center** – 44.4%



**Capital Improvement Priority Synthesis (Q9: Open-Ended Responses)** (See Appendix for raw data responses.)

From over 140 qualitative comments, the most commonly identified top capital improvement priorities include:

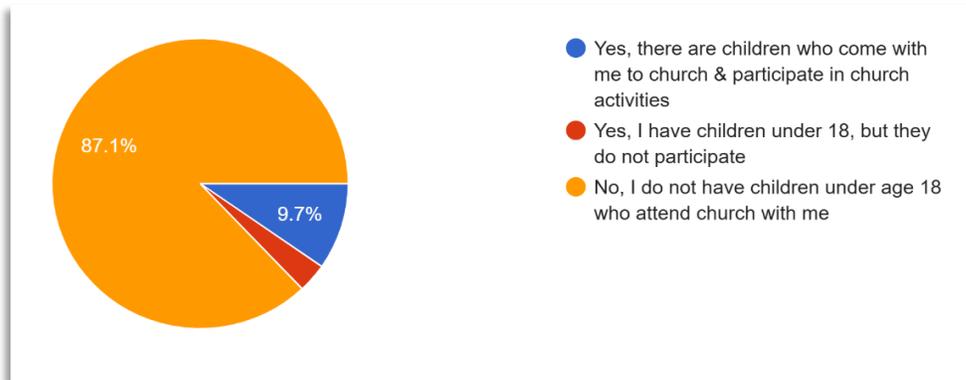
- **Sanctuary Enhancements:**
  - Replacing carpet, refurbishing pews, improving aesthetics, and expanding restroom facilities
  - Installing audio/visual screens and upgrading livestream capabilities to enhance in-person and online worship
- **Youth and Family Facilities:**
  - Strong interest in creating a Family Life Center or Youth Center as hubs for ministry, outreach, and generational engagement
- **ADA and Accessibility Improvements:**
  - Widening doorways, updating elevators and ramps, and increasing accessible parking
- **Technology Infrastructure:**
  - Upgrades to livestream, sound, internet, and communication systems, ensuring broader reach and ministry efficiency
- **Parking and Entryway Safety:**
  - More clearly marked senior parking, a second Austin Road entrance/exit, and improved signage

**Implication:** Congregants want to see tangible improvements to the worship environment and believe that strategic investments in infrastructure should support ministry expansion, youth retention, and modern worship delivery.

**Children and Youth Engagement**

- **87.1% of respondents do not attend church with children under 18.**
- **Only 9.7% report that children both attend and participate in activities.**

**Implication:** While youth and young adult ministry is a stated priority, active engagement is currently low. A targeted strategy to attract and retain families with children is essential to the church's long-term vitality.



## **Congregational Commentary (Q11: Open Comments)** (See Appendix for raw data.)

149 respondents shared additional thoughts that reveal deep spiritual concern, organizational insight, and heartfelt hope for BHUMC’s future. 30% of the responses were either N/A or “No” or “Nothing at this time”, which is an indicator that congregants felt satisfied with the opportunity to express their opinions/concerns/desires for the church.

Additional themes include:

- **Desire for Deeper Worship:** Members called for less rigid worship structures and greater openness to the movement of the Holy Spirit.
  - **Support for Young Families:** Many expressed a strong desire to see better accommodation and programming for children, youth, and young adults—along with their parents.
  - **Balance Between Tradition & Progress:** There is a tension between preserving meaningful traditions (e.g., music, communion rituals) and evolving to meet the needs of a modern congregation.
  - **Concern Over Building vs. Ministry Focus:** Some members raised concerns that capital improvement plans must not outweigh spiritual mission, evangelism, and reclaiming lost members.
  - **Leadership and Communication:** Feedback highlighted opportunities for clearer communication, increased pastoral engagement, and a more visible leadership pipeline.
  - **Inclusivity and Outreach:** A number of responses called for greater attention to underrepresented voices, outreach to absent/former members, and active ministry to surrounding communities.
  - **Positive Remarks:** A number of responses provided positive remarks such as, “The church is doing very well – love it”, “We are on our way!”, “Great survey”, “Let the spirit fly”, “I enjoy the worship experience at Ben Hill” or “I enjoy service each Sunday!”
-

## **Conclusion & Recommendations for Ben Hill United Methodist Church**

The Strategic Planning Survey has provided a clear window into the hearts and hopes of BHUMC members. The responses affirm a deep love for the church and a desire to see it thrive for generations to come. Congregants envision a church that is spiritually vibrant, technologically current, multigenerational, inclusive, and ready to serve inside and outside its walls.

The path forward must balance legacy with innovation, capital improvement with ministry impact, and community care with spiritual formation. With clear planning, responsive leadership, and prayerful implementation, BHUMC is poised to move boldly into its next chapter. Bearing this information in mind, please consider the following recommendations (Some of these action steps may have already been completed, but are included as action steps to ensure all steps are included toward the accomplishment of each recommended goal):

### **1. Develop a Multigenerational Engagement Strategy**

**Rationale:** The majority of current attendees are 61+, while participation among young adults, youth, and families with children is minimal.

#### **Action Steps:**

- Expand targeted outreach and discipleship pathways for young adults, families, and youth.
- Form a multigenerational leadership council to advise on programming and cultural shifts.
- Offer worship elements, service projects, and fellowship experiences that intentionally bridge generational gaps.

### **2. Prioritize Sanctuary Renovation and Accessibility**

**Rationale:** Sanctuary upgrades, ADA compliance, and restroom improvements were top priorities for members.

#### **Action Steps:**

- Conduct a professional facilities audit to assess ADA compliance and sanctuary modernization needs.
- Develop a phased renovation plan tied to a capital campaign, focusing first on accessibility, audio/visual tech, and restrooms.
- Communicate progress transparently to build trust and financial support.

### **3. Fortify a Strategic Youth & Family Ministry Infrastructure**

**Rationale:** There is both a stated desire and an urgent need to engage the next generation meaningfully.

**Action Steps:**

- Appoint or hire a dedicated Youth & Family Ministries Director.
- Launch a youth-focused space (or repurpose existing classrooms) and increase visibility of youth in worship and ministry.
- Offer parent education workshops and intergenerational events to support faith formation at home.

### **4. Strengthen Internal & External Communications**

**Rationale:** Members expressed concerns about inconsistent communication and limited use of modern technology.

**Action Steps:**

- Audit and revamp current communication tools: website, newsletter, social media, app.
- Create a Communications Team or hire a part-time coordinator.
- Implement a standardized system for ministry updates, event promotion, and storytelling across platforms.

### **5. Rebuild Stewardship Culture with a Missional Focus**

**Rationale:** Some members voiced concern about overemphasis on buildings vs. ministry impact.

**Action Steps:**

- Develop a year-round stewardship plan that includes testimonies, mission highlights, and legacy giving.
- Reinforce the connection between giving and real ministry impact (i.e., “giving transforms lives”).
- Offer small group studies and sermons around biblical stewardship and sacrificial generosity.

### **6. Reconnect With Former and Inactive Members**

**Rationale:** Reclamation of former members was one of the top three ministry priorities.

**Action Steps:**

- Create a “We Miss You” campaign with phone calls, personal notes, and invitations to upcoming events.
- Survey or conduct focus groups with those who have disengaged to better understand their needs.
- Offer a welcome-back event, fellowship meal, or targeted Bible study for returning members.

**7. Clarify Vision, Align Mission, and Build Accountability**

**Rationale:** Several comments questioned the connection between strategic direction, ministry goals, and long-term sustainability.

**Action Steps:**

- Facilitate a vision/mission clarity retreat with church leadership and key ministry leaders.
- Use the clarified vision to align programming, facilities planning, and staff assignments.
- Implement SMART goals for strategic priorities and provide quarterly progress updates to the congregation.

On behalf of the Strategic Planning Committee, I extend my sincere gratitude to the Ben Hill United Methodist Church community for the opportunity to compile and present this Executive Summary. It has been a privilege to listen, reflect, and synthesize the collective voice of our congregation as we prayerfully discern our next steps. May this summary serve as a foundation for meaningful dialogue, spirit-led decision-making, and bold action that honors our legacy while embracing the future God is calling us to build—together.

With gratitude,

Mari Early  
Member, Strategic Planning Committee  
Ben Hill United Methodist Church

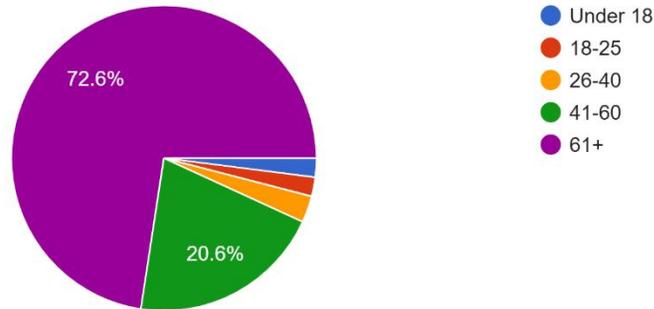
# Appendix:

## 2025 Ben Hill UMC Strategic Planning Survey

### Responses (total 248)

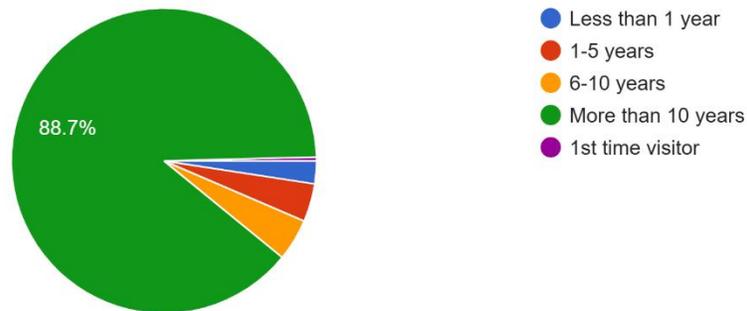
1. What is your age group?

248 responses



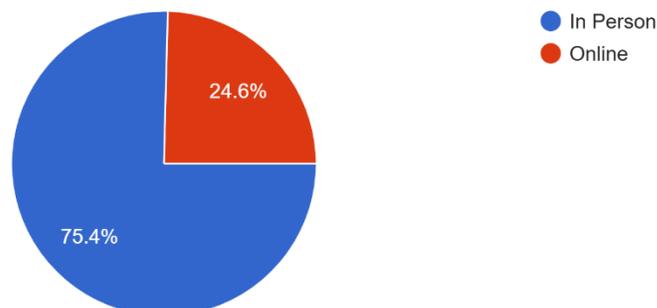
2. How long have you attended BHUMC?

248 responses



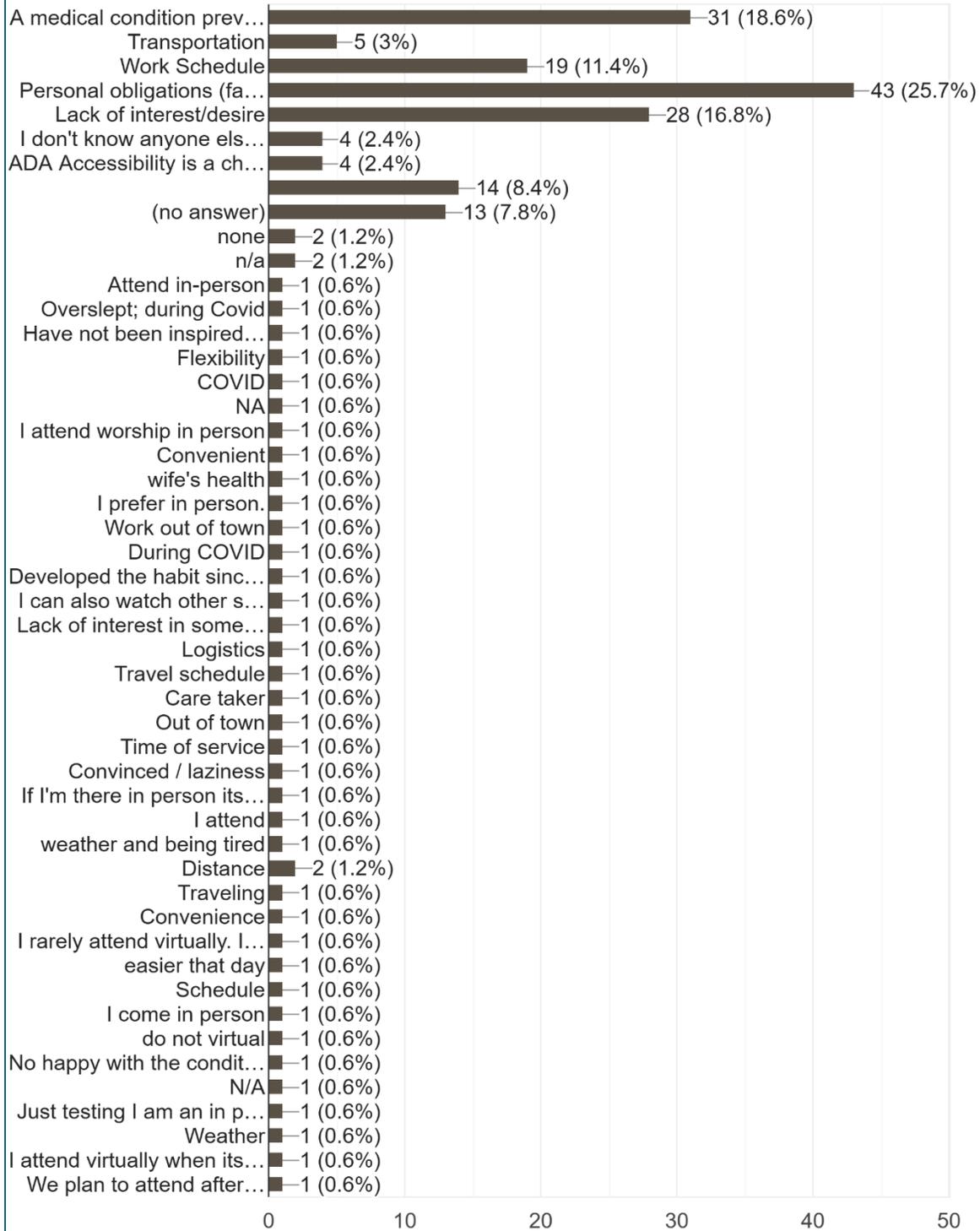
3. Are you more likely to attend worship services in person or online?

248 responses



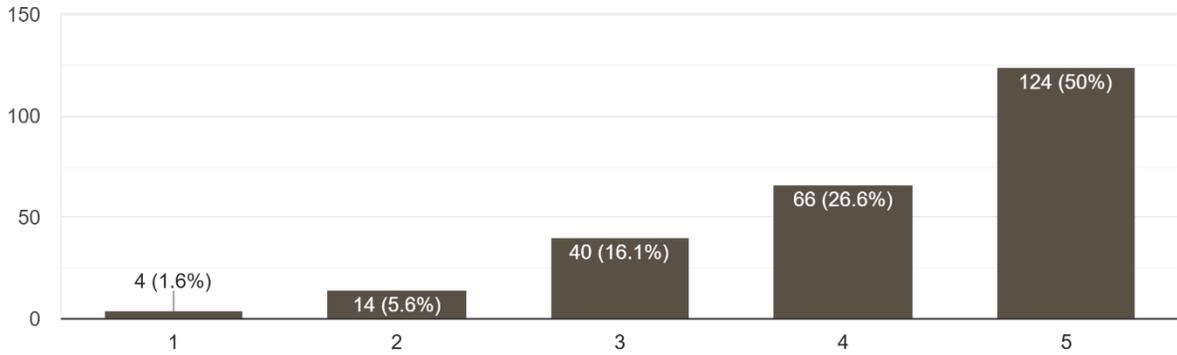
4. If you have attended service virtually on a regular basis, what factors influence your decision?  
(Check all that apply.)

167 responses



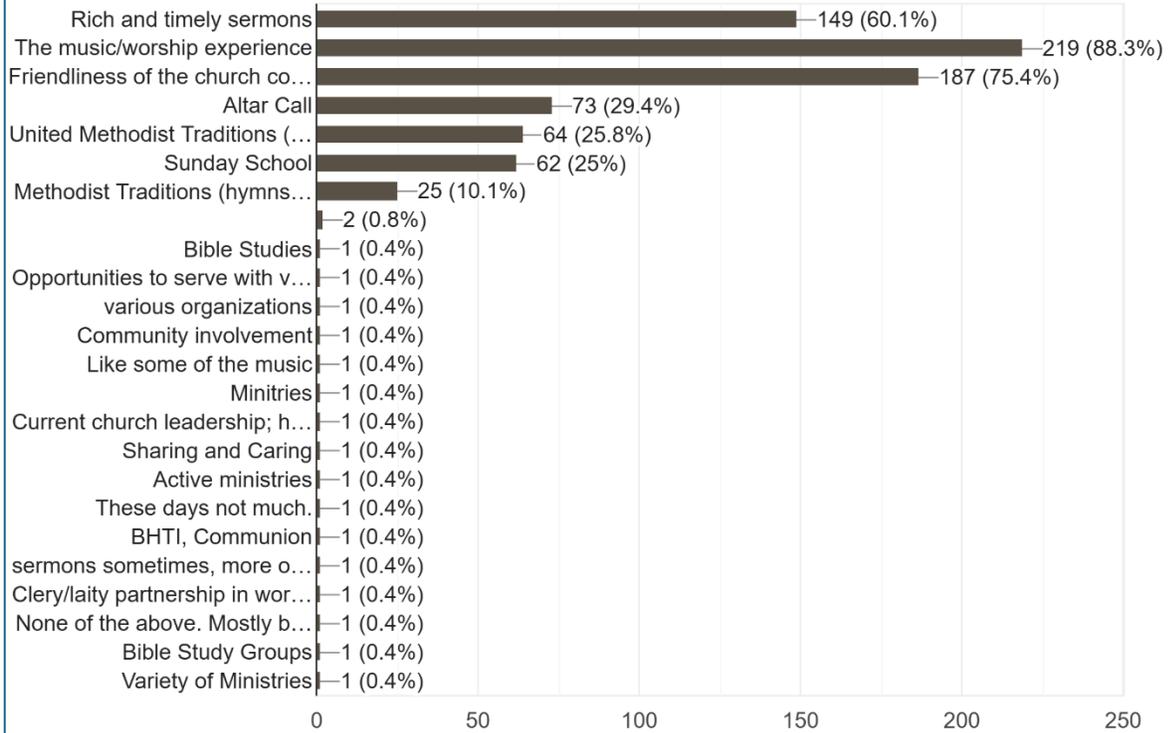
5. How would you rate your spiritual growth as a result of being a part of BHUMC?

248 responses



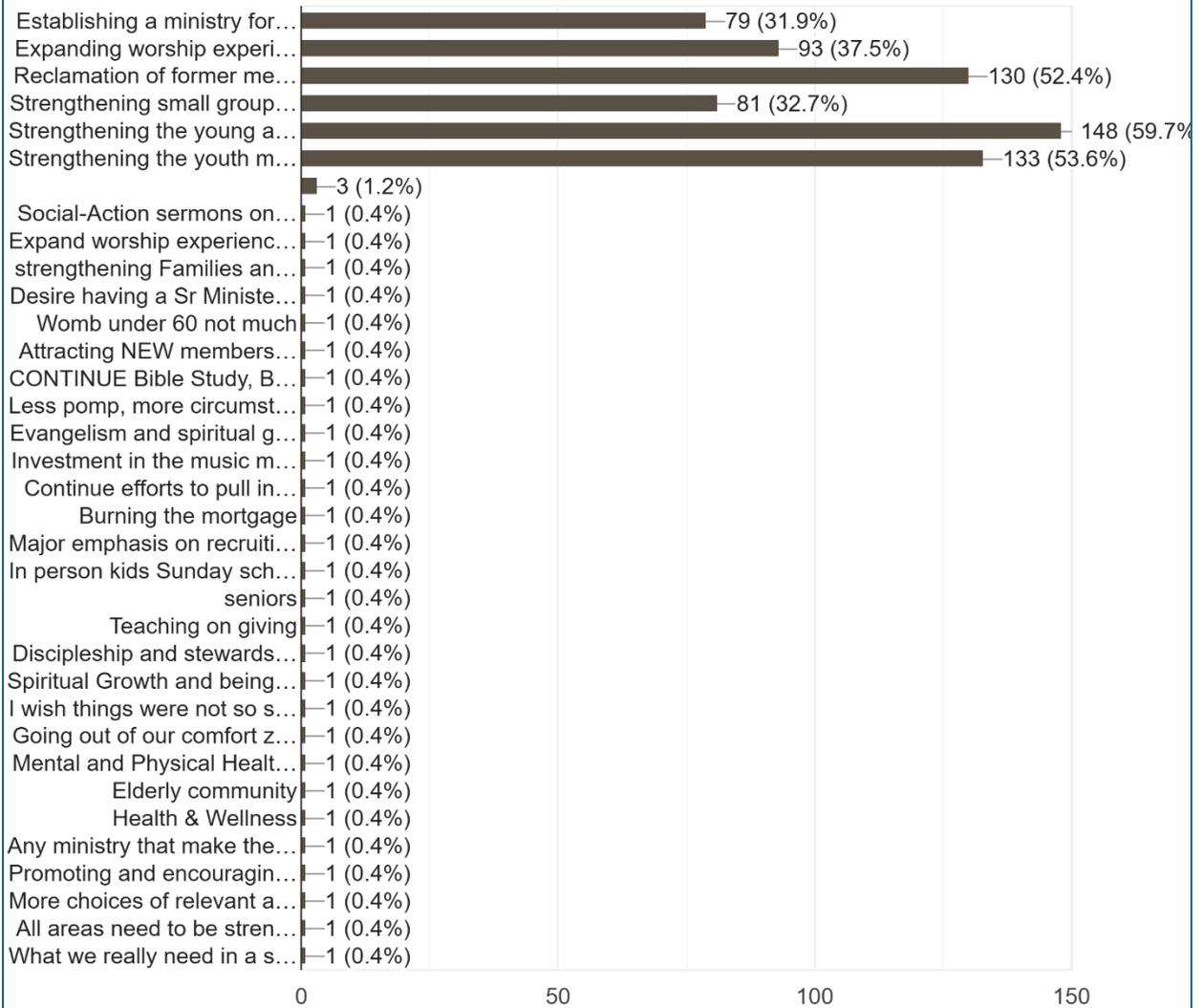
6. What do you like most about the BHUMC worship experience? (Check all that apply.)

248 responses



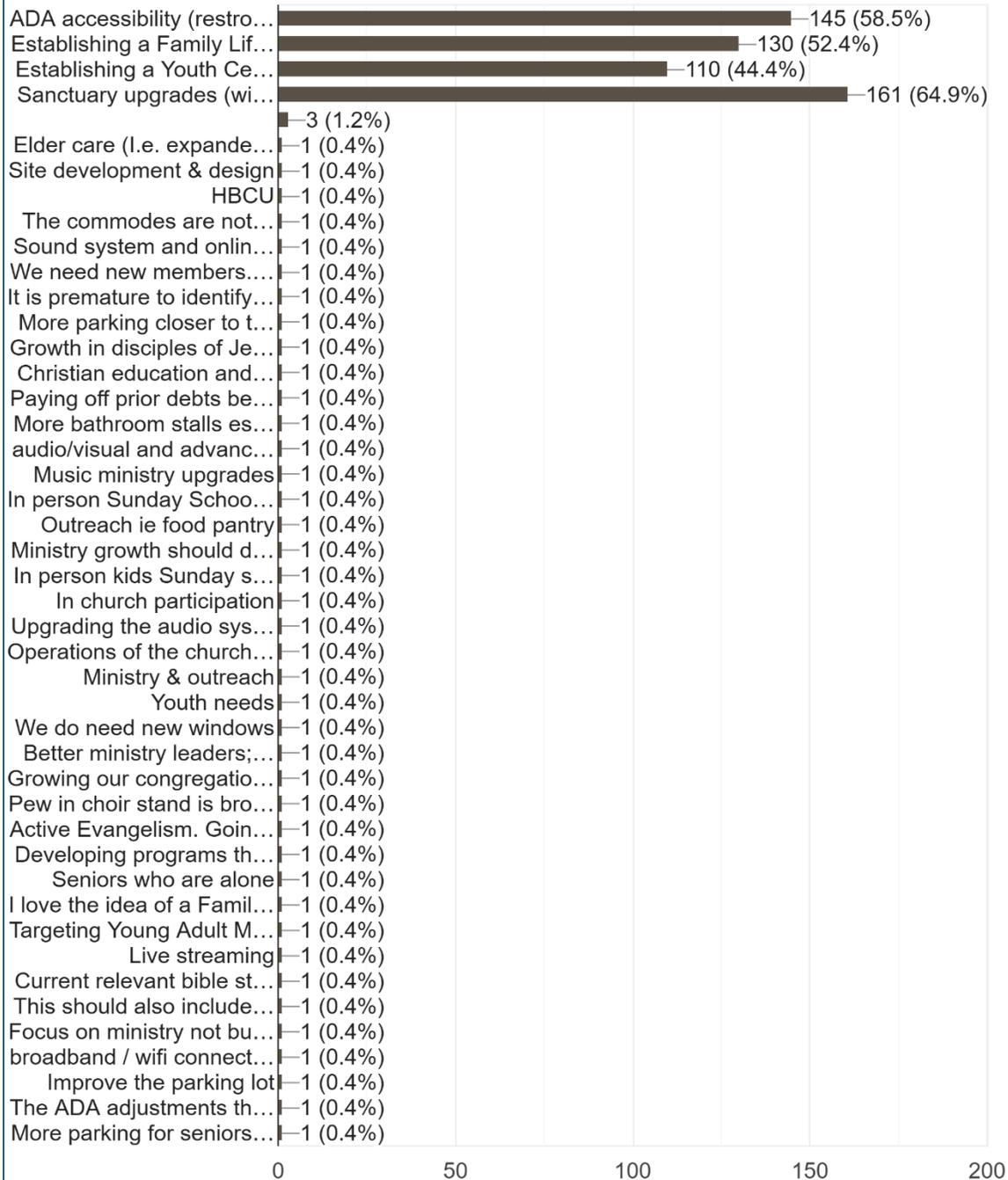
7. What ministry areas should be prioritized in the church's strategic plan (select your top 3).

248 responses



8. What projects should be prioritized in the church's strategic plan (select your top 3).

248 responses



9. What should be our number one capital improvement priority in the next 5 years?<sup>248</sup> responses

Improve sound quality for online worship
Family life center
Screens in the sanctuary.
Parking lot upgrades
Family life/youth center
Improve communications to have modern updates to the service
The move of God should be most important
More youths
Audio
Sanctuary improvements
Include visual aides like big screens so everyone may be able to visually see everything & follow the Bible
The youth center
Not sure
Sound system and quality of online experience.
Renovation of sanctuary
Upgrading the sound system
2nd entrance/exit to Austin Road parking lot
Sanctuary / building
Sustaining and maintaining the needs of the sanctuary.
Improving all parking lots with more handicap spaces
Investment in Updated, Culturally Relevant Young Adult Ministry
The Church renovation
Music ministry
Maintenance and good stewardship of what God has already blessed us with
Community center - Life Center
Renovation
Not sure, I'm new
Youth
Sanctuary repairs

Sanctuary safety
Sanctuary
youth
Improving sanctuary
Add more rest rooms and enlarge them to accommodate more users at one time
Defined Sunday School area, in once centralized location/floor
Family Life Center and Sanctuary Improvements
updating the choir room
SANCTUARY PAINTING, PEWS AND CUSHIONS.
The Family Life Center
Maintenance and repairs
Family life center for more meeting and training space
Building accessibility
Life Center
Not sure
Not sure?? Financially or impact outcomes??
I think youth involvement should be intensified.
I think we should make sure our facilities are kept safe and updated, adding new additions when needed.
Installing screens for all scriptures, etc.
Keeping the unity of the members
Ladies restroom expansion: 2 stalls per restroom isn't sufficient.
(no answer)
Youth Center
Sanctuary Upgrade
(no answer)
ADA Accessibility
Installing screens for the Sanctuary
Handicap needs for easy access to the sanctuary
Youth Center
How are we defining capital improvements, ie., dollar ceiling and the distinction between normal operating/repair expenses?
Paying mortgage off
Audio visual, sound, technology

Outreach the community
Outreach Community
sanctuary upgrades
(no answer)
sanctuary upgrades
(no answer)
(no answer)
Family Life Center
(no answer)
(no answer)
yes
sanctuary upgrade
family center
Growth i membership & creating disciples of Jesus Christ
Youth focused center
Burn mortgage
Youth center
Family Life Center 5-7 years
More technology upgrades, Screens, sound system and reorganize pulpit
Continue to update the church building
Repairs
Making sanctuary accessible and technology upgrades
Carpet, pews, windows, wheelchair accessibility
Major Improvements of the Sanctuary, bathrooms, better accessibility for wheelchairs, addition of TV monitors, removal of carpet
Youth
Life center
ADA compliance
Accessibility only.
Upgrading the sanctuary
Upgrade of the church marquee, we need a digital sign.
Word screen for front viewing on the wall
Worship and community building facilities, whether sanctuary or external. We must service both, member and our surrounding communities.

Sanctuary upgrades
Replace sanctuary carpet, improve audio visual reception for on-line viewers
Capital Improvements should NOT be our number one Improvement!
Something that will attract and minister to young adults and youth.
Senior parking
ADA accessibility.
Updating the sanctuary.
Improvements to the sanctuary and increase the amount of stall in the ladies' room.
Updating the church
Youth and young adult involvement (in all
Upgrading the Sanctuary and creating a center that family, youth, young adult & etc can use for spaces.
Church and youth center renovations
Restore the sanctuary, ADA and youth
Community Outreach, Going Beyond the Walls
Improve the zones for A/C and Heat
Expand the sanctuary
I am not sure
Upgrading the sanctuary.
Improve/ upgrade sanctuary.
Young adults and college students' mentors
Fixing the Sanctuary
The one that receives the most recommendations from our congregation.
Younger charismatic and friendly pastor, better preaching
Renovating the sanctuary and expanding the men and women's restrooms
The family life center
Screens carpet
Upgrade sanctuary and build a FL Center
Life Center
Roof
Wide screen monitors where we can see Bible scriptures
More upgrades
Getting young members with children
Sanctuary

Addressing existing operational opportunities: staffing and fixing anything that is broken
Maintenance of the facilities
Youth center
Family life center
Parking lot giving greater access to the elevator
upgrading sanctuary
Upgrading the sanctuary should be our priority.
Window replacements
Renovation of sanctuary
Clean and reorganize the areas that have been neglected for an extended period of time.
Family canter
Sanctuary and classroom restoration
N/A
Ensuring the building is up to code and maintenance of the interior and exterior of the property. Also beautification of the church grounds.
Bringing souls to Christ and treating them respectfully.
To properly address this question a complete analysis of our physical campus should be conducted and recommendations for the area(s) of greatest need developed. With that said we it is critical that technology be given strong consideration. From the internet to the systems we use as ministries and church administration, are in great need of technology upgrades to create more efficiency, greater functionality and greater relevance to how ministry and the business of the church is conducted.
Carpeting in the sanctuary.
Increase membership oo
Upgrade the sanctuary
ADA accessibility
Family Life Center
Spiritual Education
Increasing activities outside of Sunday
Small group and online platform expansion
Family Center
Sound and video equipment
Interior upgrades
Outreach ministry
Upgrades

ADA
Sanctuary upgrade
Keep pouring money in this facility and build/renovate another
recruit, reclaim maintain membership, structure programs and activities that are of interest or needed by that population.
Church improvements and youth facilities
Family life center
Can't think of anything at this time
youth center
AV upgrades to improve the live as well as online sound experience
Unknown
n a
Carpet; narthex renovation
All sanctuary upgrades and improvements.
All sanctuary upgrades and improvements.
Repairs on the carpet
Community Outreach
Any church repairs on the building
Church improvement
Sanctuary renovation/ repairs
Sanctuary
Replacing carpet
Your center
Reclaiming our youth should be a priority.
Big Screen Monitors in the Sanctuary
Refurbishing the pews
Not sure.
N/a
Family Life Center
Upgrade to the sanctuary, restrooms, outreach ministry
Establishing a Youth Center
Establishing the Life Center
Building maintenance/ technology upgrades

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## Updating church

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Meet the next generation where they are and provide a safe haven for them...

1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s)/Young Adult(s) and their children must feel loved, wanted, safe enough to be vulnerable/not to feel alone, appreciated, and that they have a true voice within the church community. For the body of Christ to learn, stretch, & grow in demonstrating the willingness to be humble, vulnerable, and stretch beyond your own expectations.

2. Meet the next generation and their needs holistically (spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially, mentally, financially-if possible) wherever they are. Let them through The Holy Spirit find their own voice and own way in how to glorify God and the body of Christ.

3. Do not pre-judge or judge we all have past sins and current sins. And we all fall short of His grace. It is only by His goodness of mercy and grace we are saved. But, in Christ's love, grace, and mercy embrace them show them by actions what it means to be Christ-like and what it means to one of God's children.

4. No Gossiping: Do not crush, break, downtrodden, be condescending, back-biting, or hinder anyone's spiritual journey no matter where they are within that journey.

5. Be Christ-like and visible in and out and all around the community for the lost souls young and seasoned. Remember you might be the only person they see or know that represents Jesus in their life.

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## The sanctuary

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### Wiring- Cable

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Sanctuary improvements - new carpet, audio visual, etc.

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I'm unsure at this time.

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### Internet and streaming equipment

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### Family Life Center

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No idea

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Redesign the front lobby and install restrooms that will accommodate several people at a time and enlarge the other existing restrooms.

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Redesign the area in front of the church to be more inviting. Move the car park on the left side some place where it will not dominate the church front. Landscape the area between the parking lot on the right and the church so the church is the dominant feature at this corner.

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Creating a family life center for attracting young adults and families.

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Doing all we can to strengthen the presence of youth and young adults because they are instrumental to the church's future. Older adults like me (a senior) need to be more open to what our young people's spiritual needs are while maintaining some of our traditions and explaining to them why those traditions are still important and relevant.

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### Sound system.

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Audio visual upgrade, including Wi-Fi to reduce wiring.

---

Investing in our youth and young adults-some Gen X, Millennials and beyond. Nursery upgrades. A changing station for babies.

---

Audio/visual improvements
Invest in establishing the youth, young adult, and singles ministry.
Being more involved in sharing our spiritual service to the surrounding community(the homeless, the neighborhood etc.)
Youth engagement
Not sure
Bring more youth in.
Something to focus on younger generation
Gathering more youth members and reaching out to the youth more.
ADA-widening doorway for the restroom.
Handicap accessibility
ADA upgrades and sanctuary upgrades and youth center
Screen installation, family life center
To maybe get the youths more into the church
Strengthen the youth community
Youth Center
Sanctuary and a family life center
Community Center
Family life center
Upgrade sanctuary
Development of a family life center and repurpose the current use of church space.
I would like to see a greater focus on maintaining the integrity of the exterior buildings.
See answer to number 8.
The sanctuary
Expanding the worship and outreach ministries
New windows
infrastructure improvements (roof, site drainage, re-purpose playground, etc.)
Screens for the sanctuary
No answer
Youth Venter
Fellowship Hall
Sanctuary makeover (modernization)
(no answer)

establishing a family life center

Carpet, restrooms

Extra bathrooms with more stalls - Sunday traffic

(no answer)

establishing more exercise planning

need more handicap restrooms

stop the water from entering the church

Tech - more interactive

(no answer)

(no answer)

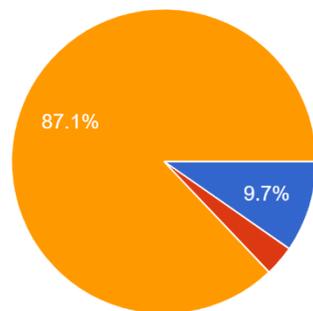
(no answer)

Life center w/ gym and cafe

Upgrading the quality of the livestream ministry

10. Are there children who attend church with you and participate in church activities?

248 responses



- Yes, there are children who come with me to church & participate in church activities
- Yes, I have children under 18, but they do not participate
- No, I do not have children under age 18 who attend church with me

11. Is there anything else you would like for us to know? 149 responses

We need to establish a relationship with/minister to the business community.

No.

Nope

Not at this Time

Worship time needs to be later to accommodate families with children

N/A

No

Any more services or focus that you can do for young families - with kids under 13 - please do. Such as how you all added changing tables in the bathroom. Thank you.

I believe that the church needs to really begin to seek God corporately. We have strict time allotments. We should allow God to move and we seek His face. Then all these questions will be answered.

No thank you for an opportunity to be heard

The screens are second

Training for teachers to handle students with Autism.

Allow God to move when the spirit moves. Don't be so structured. Good to have order but we do not want to miss God. Focus on the church you want to come. Prepare now for them spiritually. We don't need family life centers. We would like to have a church full then get to the center. We don't need all these new things with no one in them.

N/A

I would like the flow of worship to be allowed to happen and all of the clergy to be comfortable with allowing the Spirit to move freely. And, perhaps being ok with not preaching because worship has gone forth.

Great survey

No.

It would be great to get back to Consistency in the flow of Worship.

It's my belief that if we take care and pay attention to our music ministry (reaffirming a standard that promotes growth) Our media presence, is lackluster compared to other churches in the city. In order to get the young adults back you have to provide at least what they easily find else where, a great production.

If the church establishes a Capitol campaign, I will NOT support and will direct my tithes to the church's current ministry work. Karlise Y. Grier

no nothing else

Improve shorten handicap ramp to front entry and side entry. Promote use of elevator

N/A

The sermons are powerful please continue teaching the word of the Lord (the Bible). Include online classes.

I really appreciate the many ministries, bible study opportunities, volunteer activities in the church. I would focus on encouraging more members to become active in one or more of these areas. This would enhance spiritual growth, active service and enable members to become connected to each other.

The church is at a critical time where an infusion of youth is needed to support the survival and longevity of the church while also holding space for the aging members who have been faithfully committed to this church. This balance while difficult must be navigated to capture the current and future potential

Not sure I totally agree that a Life Center is needed - I would like to understand more about it. Anything that attracts more people to the church is a great idea. I would just like to understand more.

I believe that we can do more for unmarried young adults with children with the intent to create long lasting families

I think the surveys are a good idea.

A member of the church should visit or contact home bound members.

Ben Hill needs much more focus on health & wellness, especially for elder ministry

Visit members who are home bound and administer prayer

I love the community that my church provides, and I am willing to invest in its future.

I applaud the Committee's desire to get input from congregants and other stakeholders. However, some of the questions may be leading and may not reveal the needs or the way forward for Ben Hill. Are we developing a strategy around the current vision statement? If so, having a statement of intent around the vision might be helpful in drilling down to develop strategy and ultimately, actions to carry out the mission.

Determine how much in debt already...need age groups divided up more from young adults to seniors

I'm a vision of God work.

I'm a vision god work

(no answer)

spiritual growth for members

Let's do better at promoting children & youth that we currently have. Children's moment. highlight musicians monthly - they are young

(no answer)

(no answer)

I work in all areas needed wherever needed

(no answer)

(no answer)

Let the spirit fly

(no answer)

(no answer)

(no answer)

Strategic plans should be based on ministry needs not capital improvements
No
Promoting stewardship and expansion plans from the pulpit is an excellent way to garner interest and support from the congregation.
Sermons need to be more relevant to today's issues. Use of technology to aid in sermons.
None
All choirs need musicians during their choir rehearsals!!!!!!!!!!!!
I enjoy service each Sunday!
Reclaim membership as priority versus focusing on building improvements. Saving souls for Christ is highest priority.
Would like to see a digital display of the day's scripture reading. Also the senior parking signs are in need of restoration.
No
Continue moving Ben Hill UMC forward.... don't forget tradition, both old and new.
1. Emphasis on missions
Sitting and waiting for folks to join us is a sure way for the church to die and eventually have to close its doors.
BHUMC is still an amazing church, but like a lot of churches, it needs an infusion of younger members. How can we make that happen?
Nothing at this time.
Bringing back girl scouts and Boy Scouts would be helpful...I personally would be happy to be a Girl Scout troop leader
I wish that the staff would stop asking for our opinions if nothing is going to change because it's considered too "Drastic." How do you know? Yall won't try it. Also to look into a space for us to use to own all together for bigger events. Lastly, upgrade the classrooms for children and youth that will be more appealing. New tables and chairs would just remind them of school on a Monday.
Teachings on tithing and sacrificial service, using your gifts and talents in God's house
Turning in the A/C to the blasting level is a major distraction during service. When the A/C comes on your attention is drawn to trying to get warm and less in the sermon.
Stop running members away. You have ministry areas that do a lot to lift the spirit and acknowledge members along with ministries. Instead of supporting them, you find a way to tear them down and run them away. We Must do better as a Church.

The  
Priority should be on the word and not on a building

A family life center should also be a top priority for the church and community

I enjoy the worship experience at Ben Hill

Ben Hill school Academy

No

No

It feels as though there is an oversized concentration on building a life center before fixing existing operational challenges, modernizing our approach to evangelism, stewardship and discipleship. Where does the community fit into the plan? Not mentioned in survey? How do we think about staffing needs including appropriate clergy to effectively support existing church and building? How do we think about technology which was only touched on in sanctuary upgrades, but is more significant in the survey? How do we think about strategic partnerships – corporate and community or with other churches? If we pursue more property, will we consider buying vs building?

How have we reached out to former members who have left Ben Hill and are actively supporting other churches and who have gifts, including spiritual gifts from which we would benefit?

How have we reached out to members who are choosing not to attend Ben Hill beyond the survey which is likely not to reach them, to better understand why. How are we currently proposing to increase our giving units? How do we currently engage and continue to cultivate and appreciate existing giving units to generate more giving potentially from people who may have the ability to give more?

Wondering if some of these approaches will help to inform and bolster a strategic plan beyond the focus on capital?

Pastor family engagement is poor

Give more attention to the elderly home who cannot attend church

The church needs to be cleaned and we need to hire 2 custodians.

Ben hill is now a wool socks church and no longer silk stockings. Work on inclusivity not favoritism

No

Church wide meeting are usually very productive, and information honest and forthright.

Focus on increasing membership, tithes and offering

No

There's too much concentration on the elderly members of our church simply because they are who's attending. If we want children, young adult and youth to be a part of our church, then we have to make

it so that they feel welcome by offering them something that is relevant to what's going on in their lives.

There are members of our church who are really concerned about what's going on politically in our world right now. Some of them are federal workers, some are working in the school system and are not very concerned about whether or not they're even going to be employed in the near future. We must begin to speak about that and be concerned about that.

We cannot in one sentence, speak about the difficulties that people are experiencing in this political environment and then in the next sentence, ask them to make a huge contribution to a new project. we need to show compassion. We must be a church who is aware of what's going on around us. We must be concerned about the needs of the members and their families. If those in leadership are too old to be able to provide or understand what younger people need then we may need to get younger members of leadership.

We need to return to the way we used to manage communion service. Many other churches have returned to distributing communion the traditional way, and we need to return to reading from the hymnal the version of the communion service that Ben Hill members are familiar with.

I am grateful that we are considering developing a strategic plan that will take us into the future, however I have concerns that it appears what is taking place is a construction project that is being positioned as a strategic plan. The strategic plan needs to outline a direction to transform us from where we are to where we need to be. The first step is to understand where we are and I'm not sure that this survey will accurately identify where we are, and from there where we need to go. There is a question about reclaiming absent members, but what's the mechanism to know why they're absent? While we have flashes of exuberant worship, many members express some level of spiritual lethargy. How do we identify the causes and solutions? Sharing God's love to make disciples of Jesus Christ when we determine our strategic plan to do that, that plan will point us to what buildings, staffing, ministries and more that we need to get there.

There should be more reserved parking for senior adults.

Increase in person ATTENDANCE

Second capital improvement - Screens!

Just want everyone to remember to treat everyone as they would treat themselves

No

no

Lets get the parking spots re-painted. Thank you for this opportunity.

Need stronger ministerial staff.

Thank for keeping the Hill alive and well lit.

Not at this time. I do think this survey is a good way to give membership a way to have a say without feeling threatened or intimidated or inadequate,

Seek ways to attract youth and young adults.

I would like to have screens in the sanctuary  
No paper program, scanner on back of seats

Church does not need to get heavily in debt

NA

na

Parking lot lights

Engagement of young adult ministry

We are on our way!

Great survey

This Church is doing very well - Love it

N/A

Emphasize giving/tithing as a spiritual matter

Musical concerts

N/a

I used to look forward to the musical experience. It appears now all choirs are singing the same songs. I love the traditional signature songs, but the music department is lacking in delivery of new music. The worship leader tends to lead many songs. We have talent in the choirs. I would like to see more diverse music and a distinction of music by choirs. I would also like to see more diversity in the sermons. They should relate more to worldly events to attract the younger adults and to keep the current membership engaged.

Some of the older traditions should probably be retired, but in the same breath, some should be resurrected. Personally, notwithstanding that it falls into the "pomp" category, I liked the old days when we recited the Apostles' Creed at the start of each service. It was a constant reminder of who we are and/or striving to become. It was a good, Christ centered pledge of allegiance that is now rarely heard. So, when I said "less pomp and more circumstances" in an earlier response, I would be thoughtful in considering what to eliminate. For sure, some traditions go with the territory.

Ben Hill UMC is the best church in town but our membership is aging. Anything we do that will attach younger members and children will help.

The pastor does an awesome job, please keep him in your prayers.

This questionnaire should be made available on a quarterly basis. That way, we can assess where we are spiritually and how we connect and relate to each other as a church family whether it be youth, young adults or seniors.

Front land scape needs a redesign

We want to be more involved and excited for the new things

I appreciate the spiritual enrichment I receive at Ben Hill!

I would just like to see more young people involved.

The church is in need of golf carts to get our older generation from main parking lot and lower parking lot near church nursery because some are not coming because of mobility. This would be an inexpensive fix. We need all handicapped areas brought up to code.

Thank you for all you do. I love my church

More ways to connect with people on Sunday for less outgoing individuals would be helpful.

For the longevity for BHUMC, the church much create ministries and youthful praise and worship experiences to retain, engage, and grow our youth and young adults.

No

Improve communications technologies and services

no

Leadership is t as strong as it used to be

Focus on prayer and evangelism and members understanding UMC.

Having grown up in a Baptist environment, where female pastors were not seen in the pulpit or encouraged take a clergy path, that today I would become worn of consistently seeing females in the pulpit, Sunday after Sunday. I would extremely appreciate consistently experiencing diversity in the pulpit with the addition of male assistant pastor.

No

None at this time.

I don't agree with spending money on an electronic sign.This will not help with any ministry. I am very appreciative of the improvements that have been made at the church but now we need to work at

discipling people. We need to have more services like we did on Sunday March 30th. I think the couples ministry, youth ministry and children's ministry should be more supported by the church. If we are able to bring couples to the church then we will bring children and youth. If our youth and young adults ministries do not grow our CHURCH WILL DIE!

Develop a Master Facilities plan that supports the Church's ministries.

See #8. First things first. We need to work on membership so we. An expand. New expansion & few members, what's the purpose?

I love you.

(no answer)

(no answer)

no

(no answer)

(no answer)

(no answer)

(no answer)

We could be so much more welcoming with new leaders in the different ministries Members do not want to lead because they are blocked by old members that won't sit down.

Maybe make the APP more interactive. We can follow along with the sermon. Maybe a sermon notes with the scripture references already printed and space for notes.

(no answer)

God bless our church

(no answer)

(no answer)

An appeal for choir members is needed