

Executive Summary of the Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT) Results
Broadway United Methodist Church
Bowling Green, KY.
September 17, 2022
Rev. Dr. Jaye Johnson, Interpreter

According to the Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT) results, Broadway is a very healthy congregation. The health you affirm in the CAT is especially remarkable given the difficulties experienced, including the tragic loss of staff members, the tornado, COVID, and the denominational struggles. You should be very proud to call Broadway your church home! Broadway completed the CAT at the request of your staff & Church Council to get a glimpse into the congregation's health, culture, and priorities. The Church Council received an in-depth interpretation of the results on September 17, and the congregation heard an overview on September 18, 2022. This summary attempts to share the central insights of the report.

The church had an excellent response rate of 385 people, or 52% of your average (pre-covid) worship attendance, which gives us very high confidence in the results. Just as a doctor does not need to draw all your blood to determine what is happening in your body, we do not need every church member to take the survey to get accurate results. Your results represent a +/-2% margin of error, meaning IF every person who attends did take the survey, we would only expect to see these results change about 2% one way or the other.

Who answered the survey?	Tenure at Broadway	
36% of respondents were over the age of 65.	Over 20yrs	25%
20% of respondents were aged 55-64.	16-20	11%
19% of respondents were aged 45-54	11-15	15%
17% - of respondents under the age of 35-44	5-10	21%
8% - under the age of 35	3-4	13%
65% female and 35% male	2 yrs or less	15%

Satisfaction and Energy - We look at three aspects of a CAT to determine congregational health. We look at the levels of satisfaction, energy, and adaptability (i.e., flexibility), with flexibility being the most essential for your church's vitality. **Satisfaction** is a sense of being at peace with things. It is a sense of shalom, completeness, wholeness, health, safety, tranquility, and absence of discord. **Energy** is an indicator of the importance of purpose and the willingness to put forth the necessary effort and engage actively to achieve it. **Adaptability** indicates how willing you are to make necessary changes. You report high satisfaction, average energy, and extraordinarily high adaptability in the CAT. These scores mean you have both the health and flexibility to make any necessary changes. Without flexibility making changes is nearly impossible. Your flexibility score is among the highest I have personally seen. This adaptability is excellent news for Broadway and your future.

Theology – The CAT measures the theology of your congregation. It is important to note that by theology, the CAT means how your congregation feels about the Bible, Jesus, and the church's ancient traditions. It does not point to social or political leanings. You are theologically moderate, almost precisely in the middle, compared to 3,000 other congregations most recently taking the CAT.

Clergy-Focused System – You also indicate in the CAT that how you feel about your church is directly tied to how you feel about your lead pastor. Four of your five drivers of satisfaction, the pieces of the church people look at to determine if they are satisfied with the church, are focused on your pastor. We call this a clergy-focused system. Being a clergy-focused system does not mean you do not value the rest of your staff or that you should seek to change that culture, only that Broadway feels good about itself when it feels favorable toward the lead pastor as you currently do. Essentially you are saying that the lead pastor sets the tone, and how you feel about the church is connected to how that tone resonates with you. The reality that you feel good about yourself when you feel good about your lead pastor is true in the clergy-focused system even when, like Pastor Adam, leadership and credit are shared, and your staff works well as a team. There are some advantages of a clergy-focused culture. Changes can happen quickly, and the mood and morale tend to be strong when the relationship between the church and the lead pastor is strong. Conversely, conflict in Clergy-Focused systems will almost always be focused on the lead pastor, deserved or not. Once the relationship between the lead pastor and the congregation begins to decline, it is tough to recover. Therefore Broadway will need to work very hard to maintain the positive, helpful relationship you now enjoy.

Conflict and Governance – The assessment indicates the level of conflict in your congregation. It also suggests how much trust you have in your leadership to assist the community in navigating that conflict. Compared to 3,000 other churches that have taken the CAT most recently, you scored 36 of 100. In other words, 64% of those 3,000 churches believe they handle conflict better than you think you handle conflict at Broadway.

It is important to note that while the issue of human sexuality in the UMC is a factor in these numbers, it is not the primary source of these lower conflict scores. In other words, we would not expect these numbers to be substantially different, even if the struggles around human sexuality did not exist. Some other factors or issues would be the focus of conflict. You scored 64 of 100 compared to the 3,000 other churches on Governance. This means 36% of the other church churches have more confidence in their Governance, while 64% have less trust in their leaders, indicating an area where Broadway can go from good to great.

In this survey, you indicate that you have recently experienced high conflict. While not fully resolved, these numbers suggest the situation is improving. The CAT demonstrates that when it comes to confrontation, there are a lot of "fence-sitters," meaning many people have not made up their minds, so, with intentional action, these numbers can improve quickly. A plan is needed to convince the fence-sitters.

Recommendations

These recommendations connect to one, or more, of the CAT measurements. The staff and church council will plan the best way to implement these suggestions. You will hear more about how that will happen over the next several months. These suggestions should help you go from good to great.

Celebrate Your Health (keep morale high) - You have said in the CAT that you believe you are in an excellent place as a church. You scored well in satisfaction, energy, and flexibility, which means you are a healthy church. This level of health is spectacular, especially coming through a pandemic! It is essential that the average person in the pews knows that and celebrates that along with your leadership.

Listening Sessions (to address the conflict score) - Engage listening sessions by location/worship service with attention to age and tenure. Listen to concerns, make accommodations when possible, but hold fast to who you are as a church and what you're doing to reach new people because those things work according to what you said in the CAT results. I suggest Pastor Adam conduct these as the lead pastor. As a clergy-focused congregation, the people need to hear from him. Consider doing this "tour" a couple of times a year. Be sure to share findings from the listening session with the whole church, potentially in a state of the church type address/sermon series.

Monitoring Teams (to address the governance score) - Following the listening sessions, establish monitoring teams who purposefully give feedback, advice, and input on decisions facing the church. It must be clear that they are not a decision-making body but exist to provide constructive feedback allowing leadership to keep a finger on the pulse of the congregation and create a two-way communication pathway. Create a team for each worship service and have each group led by a member of the council – not staff. It is best if no staff or clergy are present for those meetings. The teams should meet monthly (moving to quarterly eventually). Celebrate good things, share progress, and collect feedback on upcoming decisions.

Revisit your Guiding Principles (to increase energy) – Guiding principles include the mission, vision, values, strategies, and measurements. You do not need to redo all this work, but you are encouraged to review it, make sure it is still valid, and add anything missing. Said another way, what is Broadway's playbook? Do you have a written document that contains those items? If so, when was the last time you reviewed it? How does the playbook relate to each campus/service? You have done an admirable job of seeking to treat each campus equally. Now, to go to the next level, it is time to consider what needs to be the same at each campus and what can be unique. Consider running the info through the monitoring teams to collect feedback.

Academy for Ministry (to act on your high readiness for Ministry) - Broadway is off the chart regarding your readiness for ministry scores. I have not encountered scores this high with previous churches. This means your people are ready and itching to be in Ministry. You must ensure you are intentional about helping them do that before losing their passion for doing so. Consider an Academy for Ministry. You might think of it as a mini-seminary, or a training program, designed to help people learn about The Church, leadership, Bible, etc., and identify and use their gifts for Ministry so that you can become a "Yes" culture. Your congregation has talented people who could teach one or more of those classes.

Plan to Retake the CAT (Governance) – Consider repeating the CAT every 3-5 years. This will allow you to compare results, track progress, and be able to see how you have grown, and plan the next steps.

Finally, with an assessment or time of self-learning, one can quickly become critical. Instead, I encourage the church to adopt a posture of curiosity—listening to God, each other, and yourself. This time of reflection is an opportunity for discernment that your love may deepen in knowledge and depth of insight—to the glory and praise of God. Lastly, let me express a heartfelt "Thank you" to you, the people of Broadway United Methodist Church leaders. You are doing critical work during a difficult season for our society and church. I appreciate your faithful, dedicated service to God, each other, and your community! "Let's run the race that is laid out in

front of us since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us. Let's throw off any extra baggage, get rid of the sin that trips us up, and fix our eyes on Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith." – Hebrews 12:1-2a.