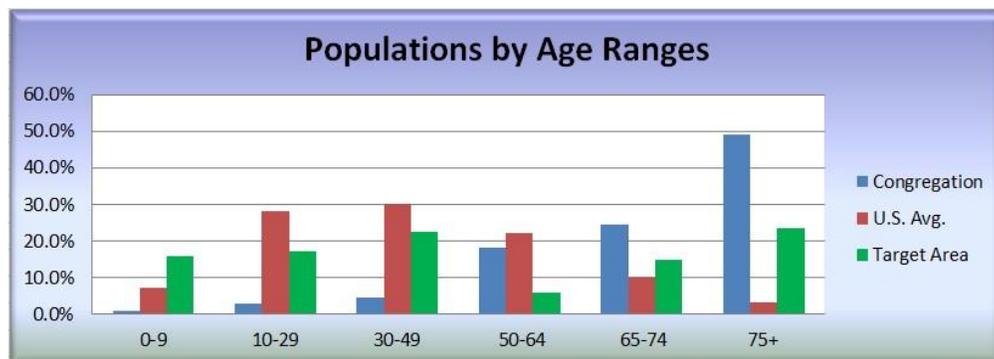


THE CURRENT CONGREGATION

The roster of all who are associated with First Presbyterian Church was reviewed and the Deacons helped gather information on each participant where it was missing from the church data base. The secretary provided attendance information and an initial list of church participants was thus completed. Participants are defined as those who attend four times or more in a 12-month period. Once this list was completed, it was reviewed for further refinement with the assistance of church leaders. This data is used to paint a partial picture of the current congregation so that it may be compared to its immediate neighborhood. The detailed information about the neighborhood is presented later in the report; however, this section will compare the data on the congregation with the U.S. Census data as obtained through the church demographic service provider, MissionInsite.

This section of the report examines how the church participants compare to people in the community as to age and racial/ethnic characteristics, how long participants have been involved in the life of the congregation, where the church participants live in relation to the building, and what kinds of activities church participants are involved in beyond Sunday morning worship. All this information help determine the “match” your church has with the community around you.

The first graph shows the ages of participants in the congregation and the ages of those who live in the community (our study Area). The blue bars show the percentage of participants in the congregation in each category. The red bar is how that compares with the total population of the United States, and the green bar is the breakdown compared to the community (our Study Area) that is called Target Area on the chart below. The data related to the red and green bar comes from the U.S. Census Bureau as gathered and tabulated by MissionInsite.



The chart shows that 73.6 percent of the active participants in this congregation are 65 years old or older while only 38.4 percent of the wider community is in that age category. This represents a very large difference between the profile of the congregation and the profile of the community. This measurement is important to the future of the congregation as it speaks to how well it is connecting with those in the community.

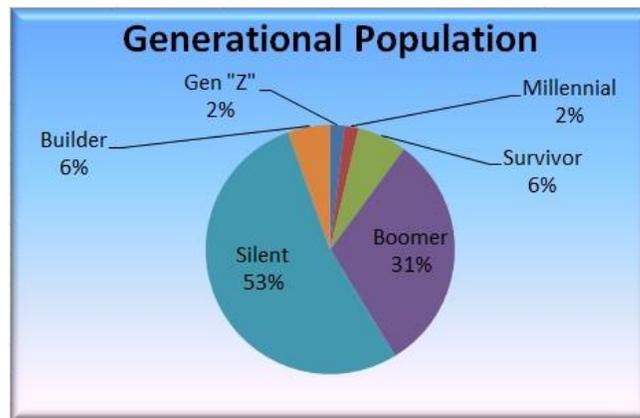
Looking at the split between older and younger generations within the congregation itself is

also helpful. Vital congregations will normally experience a 50/50 split between the younger (under 65) and the older groups (65+). In this congregation the split is significantly skewed in favor of the older age groups at 26/74.

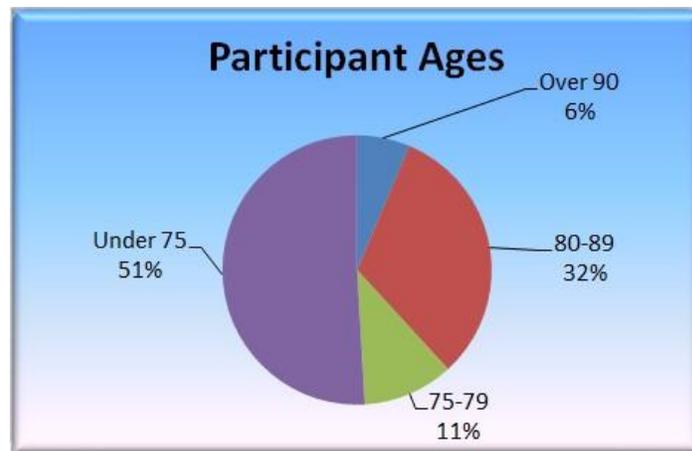
It is important to remember that, for the congregation, these percentages represent only “active” participants in the life of the congregation; they represent members officially on the roll and many active non-members, that is, all the people who participate regularly in the life of the congregation. Members who do not actively participate in the activities of the congregation, like shut-ins, are not included. There can, of course, be other community-based factors at work, like the proximity of Appleridge Senior Living Center, a local retirement community and Bethany Courtyards, an assisted living facility.

This next chart looks at the congregation from the perspective of Generational Theory.

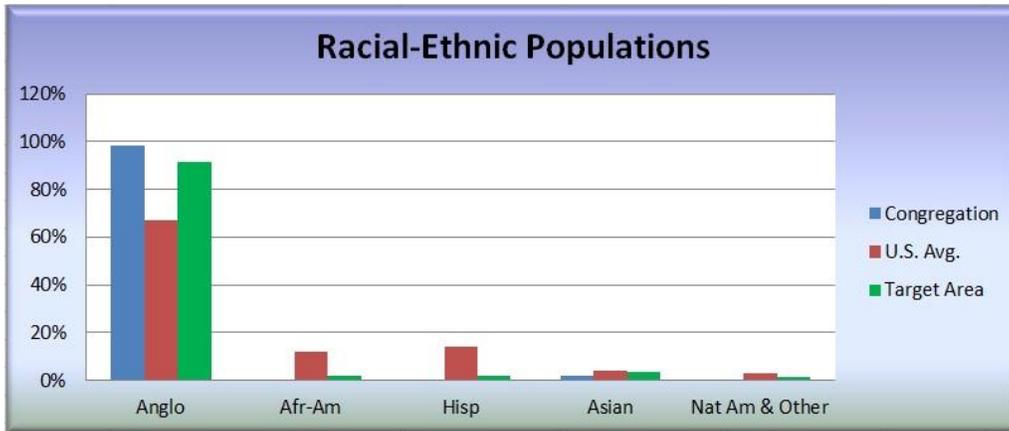
Generation “Z”	2005-
Millennial	1982-2004
Survivor	1961-1981
Boomer	1946-1960
Silent	1925-1945
Builder	1901-1924



In the case of this particular congregation it is also important to take a closer look at the Ages 75+ since almost half (49.1%) of the participants fall into this category. As this chart shows a large majority of the active participants above age 75 are in their 80s and even in their 90s!

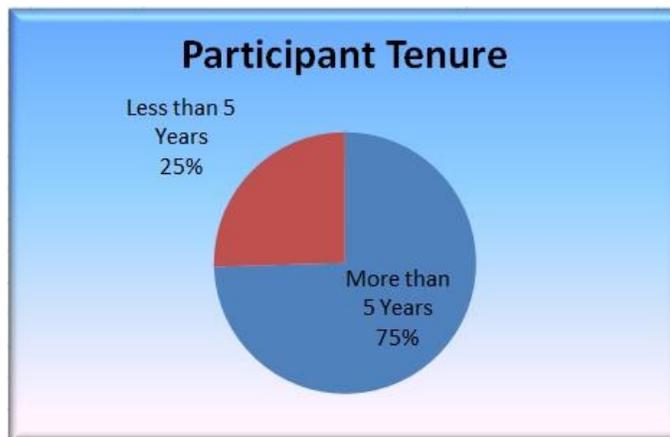


The next chart also based on data from the U. S. Census Bureau compares the racial/ethnic composition of your congregation with the community. NOTE OF CAUTION: The chart may significantly underestimate the Hispanic population of the community.



In this case the active participants in the congregation (blue bar) mirror the local community (green bar) when it comes to racial-ethnic percentages. Both the church and the community are overwhelmingly Anglo. They both differ from U.S. Averages (red bar) that include greater diversity, especially with regard to African-Americans and Hispanics.

Another indication of congregational life is how long active participants have been involved with this particular congregation. Whereas long-term members usually bring stability, new participants may bring enthusiasm and new perspectives. Attracting new participants is also a measure of how effective your efforts are in reaching out into the community.



It is a very good sign of vitality when a congregation demonstrates a 50-50 split between participants who have been part of the congregation for more than five years (the blue slice) and those with five or fewer years (the red slice). **This congregation shows a 75-25 split.**

Another way to look at participant tenure is to group participants into three categories: participants who have been in the church five years or fewer, those who have been there for 5 to 10 years and those who have been involved in the church for more than 10 years.

Here is that chart:



It is obvious from this chart that almost 70 percent of active participants have been involved in this particular congregation for more than 10 years; that relatively few (6 percent) fall into the 5-10 year bracket; and that a little more than a quarter have been participating for fewer than 5 years.

Yet another indication of vitality and relationship with the surrounding community is where the participants live in relationship to the church building. A common criterion is a radius of a seven-to-ten minute drive from home to church. When at least half of participants live within a seven-minute drive, the church usually has a good relationship to the community.

Most participants in this congregation live within the 14845 zip code and most of them are within a 7 to 10 minute drive. Residents of Appleridge Senior Living Community, for instance, live a mere 2 minutes away. Those who live in neighboring communities like Big Flats or Elmira, are within a 15-minute drive from the church. The church's location on busy State Route 14 does not realistically leave anyone within walking distance. Some form of transportation is needed.

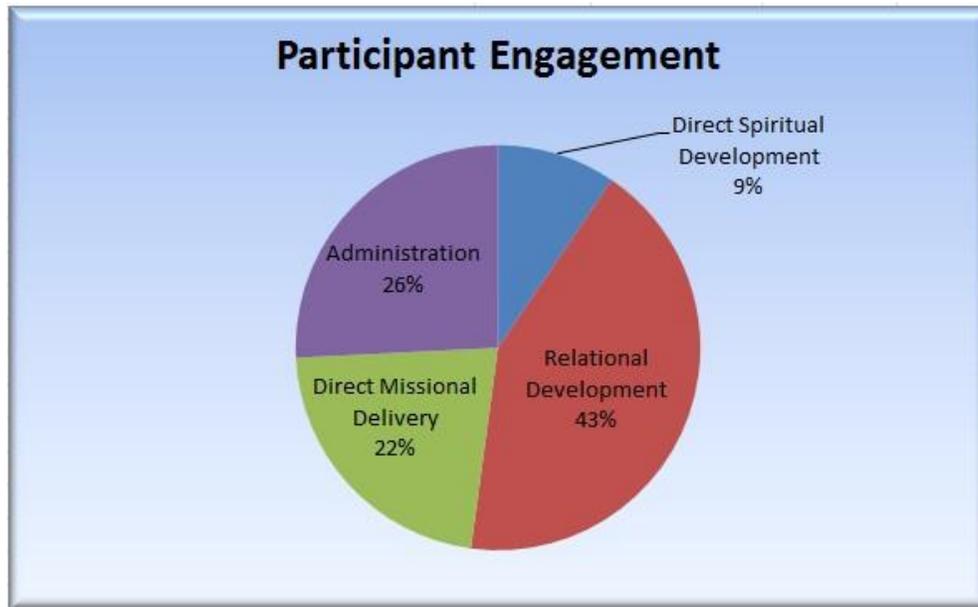
Another way of examining the life of a congregation is to measure how people participate outside of the Sunday morning worship experience. This is called Participant engagement. Reviewing the church calendar and the Annual Reports to the Congregation along with clarifications by participants, we can group activities in four categories:

- **Spiritual Development** encompasses activities designed to provide direct spiritual and discipleship growth. Examples include Bible study, theological and historical study as well as special seasonal worship experiences.
- **Relational Development** encompasses activities that provide opportunities for deepening relationships and includes fellowship times after worship, fundraising activities, choir rehearsals and social events like Men's and Women's Breakfasts.
- **Direct Mission Service** encompasses activities initiated by the congregation to serve the wider community and includes community dinners, volunteering at the Food Pantry and special projects at Christmas.

- **Administration** includes Session and Deacon meetings, committee meetings as well as the volunteers who plan particular activities and who maintain the building and the property.

This breakdown focuses on activities sponsored by the church and does not include any community service work by church participants on their own or any activities of outside organizations that use the church building.

This measurement is based on the number of hours spent on each activity multiplied by the number of church people involved.



In the “ideal church” we would expect to see an equal balance of spiritual, relational and missional activities at, say 30 percent each, with administration coming in around 10%. The idea of balance is important in order to form a group of well-rounded disciples who grow spiritually, who deepen relationships and who minister to the community. Without intentional oversight by the leadership, most churches will drift along a comfortable path and get out of balance.

The pie chart above shows that this congregation is, in fact, OUT OF BALANCE in its patterns of engagement, namely, it is

- **WEAK ON SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES (9% INSTEAD OF 30%):** What sets the church most clearly apart from other non-profit organizations is its emphasis on spiritual matters. It is vital for participants to grow spiritually instead of depending on routine. The church should be poised to offer opportunities for spiritual development.
- **ONLY SLIGHTLY WEAK ON MISSIONAL ACTIVITIES (22% instead of 30%)**
- **HEAVY ON RELATIONAL ACTIVITIES (46% instead of 30%).** Relational activities do usually deepen a sense of community but can exclude newcomers until special attention

is given to welcoming and integrating them. Sometimes raising money for mission takes precedence over doing mission, actual hands-on mission.

- **HEAVY ON ADMINISTRATION** (26% instead of 10%). When too much time is spent on making decisions and carrying them out, people can experience significant burnout. For this congregation the category called “administration” involves a significant amount of time spent by participants who voluntarily provide maintenance and repair for the building, who mow the lawn and keep up with the landscaping of the six acres of land that the church owns, who maintain the church’s technology and so on. This labor of love and this expertise are a remarkable contribution to the life of this congregation. Otherwise the congregation would have to pay for these services, an expense that they could ill afford. This contribution of labor is particularly significant given the age of most of the participants