



Northeast/NH-VT Districts Congregational Conversation Results

This fact sheet includes basic information and some of the issues, problems and solutions, which **Northeast/NH-VT Districts** congregations discussed in their congregational conversations.

Do these results match what you would expect from other congregations in your districts? What would you expect to be different?

The Basics

- Three (3) congregations in the **Northeast/NH-VT Districts** returned report forms.
- One is a **small** congregation; two (2) are **mid-size** congregations.
- All three congregations are **Welcoming Congregations**.

Intergenerational Community Relations

Two (2) congregations mentioned **strong bonds among youth** in the youth group as factors contributing to their youth ministry's success. They highlighted "fellowship and commitment," as well as "youth with common experiences and values."

All three (3) congregations identified "**lack of communication**" as a problem for intergenerational community relations. Two congregations decided to improve communication and scheduling of events by:

- "written, emailed, phone calls – give all information three times"
- "**honor confidentiality**"
- "coordination of schedules" and "communicate more through the newsletter"

Two (2) congregations said there was a **lack of consistent structure**:

- "inconsistency in following and enforcing rules/boundaries"
- need "structure to encourage involvement"
- "**age/developmental disconnect** and structural barrier to inclusion/participation"

In order **eliminate bias** and encourage **youth-adult connections**, all three (3) congregations developed strategies:

- "workshops and/or activities on ethics/group dynamics/respect"
- "structure to encourage involvement"
- "**change training of teachers**" and include "liaison to monitor and discuss common problems"



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Mission, Vision and Priorities

- One congregation mentioned the **commitment of adults** to youth ministry and another mentioned the **commitment of youth** to youth ministry as factors promoting success.
- One congregation said their community had a "**willingness to change.**"
- One congregation mentioned that they had a "**lack of focus/interest**" in youth ministry and "lack of balance to win priorities." In order to remedy these problems, they decided to make **better use of their resources** and increase youth-to-youth outreach.
- One congregation decided its youth group members and adult facilitators would "**post covenant** and/or rules" and "begin [youth group] meeting with review of rules or quick ritual to focus folks."

Curriculum, Resources and Transitional Age Youth

- All three (3) congregations have a **youth group**. None of the congregations have a Youth Adult Committee (YAC). Two of these groups have **advisors**, but **none of the advisors are paid**.
- One congregation celebrated an "increasingly **developmentally appropriate** and engaging RE program during worship services."
- Another congregation mentioned that the "**congregational ownership of RE** all the way through" led to "opportunities for self-expression" and contributed to the success of their youth ministry.
- One congregation mentioned that **Our Whole Lives (OWL)** was a successful curriculum in their youth ministry.



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Leadership Development and Opportunities for Practice

One congregation celebrated the “**youth empowerment**, voice and ownership” that made youth ministry into “fun times.”

In two (2) congregations, an individual cannot become a **full member** of their congregation until age 18. Before their conversation, none of the congregations had a youth position on their Board of Trustees. As a result of their conversation, one decided to create a “**youth rep on Board**” position.

One congregation said it did “not [have] enough **healthy youth empowerment**—whole group empowerment, not just individuals making choices for the group.”

One congregation decided to address challenges for leadership development by having “**senior youth mentors**.”

Serving the Spiritual Needs of Youth

One congregation celebrated its “**good multi-generational worship**” and “**deep spiritual explorations**” for youth.

Congregations decided to better serve the spiritual needs of youth by:

- creating “‘youth moments’ in the service”
- “involving youth in regular services and vice-versa” for youth worship
- encouraging “youth involvement in worship” and “**creat[ing] spiritual container in all activities**”
- “provid[ing] more opportunities – chalice lighting, ushering, committees, etc”