



Report for:
Lake Harbor UMC
4861 S. Henry St.
Norton Shores, MI 49441

1/15/2014

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About the Mystery Guest Program:

The Mystery Guest Program helps church leaders better understand what a first-time guest thinks and feels when attending a church service. A person who returns is usually willing to tell you why they returned. Visitors who do not return deny church leaders the opportunity to learn why they didn't come back and if by chance they are asked, they might not be as forthcoming with the answer for fear of offending. Using our program is essential to getting an honest answer as to why someone would or (would not) come back to your church. The Mystery Guest Program will help you craft a better experience for future guests resulting in growth and retention.

Faith Perceptions sends the contracted number of mystery guests - a different person each time - to attend and experience worship services as a first-time guest. Our mystery guests are typically "unchurched" - a term we use to describe people who do not have a home church that they attend regularly. Each mystery guest attends a service by themselves or with their friends or family. After attending the service, they complete an online survey providing feedback in 16 different categories with both numerical (quantitative) scores and written (qualitative) comments. Numerical ratings tell you precisely whether someone had a favorable or unfavorable experience. It does not; however, explain *why* their experience was positive or negative. The written commentary provides the details of the experience which is invaluable in placing a numerical rating in the proper context.

Findings for Lake Harbor UMC:

Faith Perceptions was retained to conduct 12 mystery visits at Lake Harbor UMC to better understand the first-time guest experience. To date, 12 visits have been realized. Each unique visit was performed by a separate mystery guest from September 1, 2013 – January 12, 2014. Mystery guests were all pre-screened by Faith Perceptions; 8 stated that they were "unchurched", meaning that they do not attend church on a regular basis. There were 6 male mystery guests and 6 females who contributed to this report. The average age of mystery guests in this report is 37.

Faith Perceptions has been measuring the visitor experience since early 2008. As of June 1, 2013, we have measured 2,538 worship services using identical questions and criteria, allowing us to create the Faith Perceptions Church Index. We have incorporated the relevant data from the Index in this report so that you can benchmark your numbers against the Consolidated Index (all churches measured to date) and against churches of similar size. You will likely find that the numbers in this report compare favorably in some categories and unfavorably in others. All numbers are on a 10-point scale with 10 being the most favorable score possible.

It is recommended that the church perform an additional survey if changes are made as a result of these findings to measure improvement or any unintended consequences of the changes made.

Areas of Relative Strength (3 Highest Categories):

In order for a category to be considered an area of relative strength in a church, it must *at least* be rated a 7.51 or above, which is considered to be “good” or “very good” on the Index Scale (see legend below).

Category	Lake Harbor UMC Rating	Index: Churches of Like Size - 2013 Medium	Index: Consolidated - All Churches Included
Greeting Upon Arrival	8.58	7.78	7.80
Friendliness	8.08	7.75	7.69
Information	7.92	7.41	7.52

Areas for Improvement (3 Lowest Categories)

For a category to be considered an area for improvement in a church it must be rated a 7.50 or below, which would be “fair” or below on the Index Scale (see legend below).

Category	Lake Harbor UMC Rating	Index: Churches of Like Size - 2013 Medium	Index: Consolidated - All Churches Included
Return	5.58	7.00	6.85
Diversity and Outreach	5.50	6.36	6.29
Community Awareness	4.33	6.75	6.65

Overall Rating By Service(s) (highest to lowest)

11:30 AM	Sunday	CONT	LM	Rating: 6.80
9:30 AM	Sunday	TRAD	MM	Rating: 6.67
11:00 AM	Sunday	CONT	LM	Rating: 5.00

Legend

<6.50	6.50 - 7.00	7.01 - 7.50	7.51 - 8.00	>8.00
Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good

Lake Harbor UMC

Mystery Guest Raw Data

Guest Identifier	28821	28760	29661	29402
Age	49	16	44	33
Gender	F	F	F	M
Title of Service	Eternal Work	Celebration Service	Combined Service	Entering God's Promised Land
Date of Visit	9/1/2013	9/1/2013	9/29/2013	10/13/2013
Time of Visit	9:30 AM	11:00 AM	9:30 AM	9:30 AM
Type of Service	Traditional	Contemporary	Combined Service	Traditional
First time visiting?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are you actively participating in church somewhere else?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Have you been to any church in the last 6 months?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If yes, number of times you've been to church in the last 6 months	100	20	20	30
Do you believe in God or a higher power?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If yes, what denomination do you identify most with?	Nondenominational	Nondenominational	current membership in PCA church in Maryland	Interdenominational - Protestant
Did you grow up in a family that was associated with a particular denomination?	No	No	Yes	Yes
If yes, which denomination?	0	None	Wesleyan, then Christian Reformed, then Evangelical Free	Congregational and Methodist
Did you have any pre-conceived ideas about the before you visited?	I was married in a United Methodist church in Turk Lake, Michigan, so I did have some idea of what to expect. I did not hear anything positive or negative when I asked several neighbors if they new anything about this church.	No, I had no preconceived ideas before visiting.	I perceive United Methodist churches to vary greatly one from another depending on their pastoral staff emphasis; I also somewhat perceive UM churches to be more like social clubs than the vibrant body of Christ.	I knew of the church, but had not heard any comments about it, even from members I know that I found out attend once I went there.
Community Awareness	10	5	1	1
Signage	6	10	5	6
Greeting Upon Arrival	8	10	7	10
Pre-Service Atmosphere	8	10	5	10
Seating	9	3	10	9
Music	7	6	2	9
In Service Greeting	9	7	5	9
Message	9	2	5	8
Speaker	9	2	5	8
Post-Service Atmosphere	8	8	2	10
Information	9	10	5	6
Friendliness	9	10	3	10
Children's/Youth Ministry	3	9	5	8
Diversity and Outreach	5	4	1	3
Return	5	1	2	8
Overall Experience	7	5	4	8
AVERAGE	7.56	6.38	4.19	7.69

Lake Harbor UMC

Mystery Guest Raw Data

Guest Identifier	29407	30911	30737	31907
Age	28	42	21	64
Gender	F	M	M	M
Title of Service	Change...It Is Time!	Honest Humility	Honest Humility	Aligned with God's Purposes
Date of Visit	10/20/2013	10/27/2013	10/27/2013	11/17/2013
Time of Visit	11:30 AM	9:30 AM	11:30 AM	11:30 AM
Type of Service	Celebration Service	Traditional Service	Celebration Service	Celebration
First time visiting?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are you actively participating in church somewhere else?	No	No	No	No
Have you been to any church in the last 6 months?	No	Yes	No	No
If yes, number of times you've been to church in the last 6 months	0	4	0	0
Do you believe in God or a higher power?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If yes, what denomination do you identify most with?	0	Non-Denominational	Spiritual	Baptist or 7th Day Adventist
Did you grow up in a family that was associated with a particular denomination?	No	Yes	No	Yes
If yes, which denomination?	0	Christian Reformed	0	7th Day Adventist
Did you have any pre-conceived ideas about the before you visited?	No, I did not have any pre-conceived ideas about the church I visited.	Yes, I had a pre-conceived idea about this type of church. I did expect a denominational church to be rigid and formal. I was expecting to feel uncomfortable because of my previous experiences in traditional denominational churches. I had not heard anything positive or negative about Lake Harbor UMC specifically.	I had no prior knowledge about this church.	I have no preconceived ideas about this specific church or of the Methodist faith in general. I know nothing about either of them.
Community Awareness	5	1	5	4
Signage	8	10	6	2
Greeting Upon Arrival	10	10	8	7
Pre-Service Atmosphere	10	7	9	4
Seating	7	8	8	7
Music	9	7	7	4
In Service Greeting	9	8	10	2
Message	10	10	8	9
Speaker	10	9	7	9
Post-Service Atmosphere	10	10	8	2
Information	8	9	10	5
Friendliness	10	10	10	3
Children's/Youth Ministry	10	5	4	5
Diversity and Outreach	9	5	2	8
Return	8	7	8	3
Overall Experience	8	8	7	5
AVERAGE	8.81	7.75	7.31	4.94

Lake Harbor UMC

Mystery Guest Raw Data

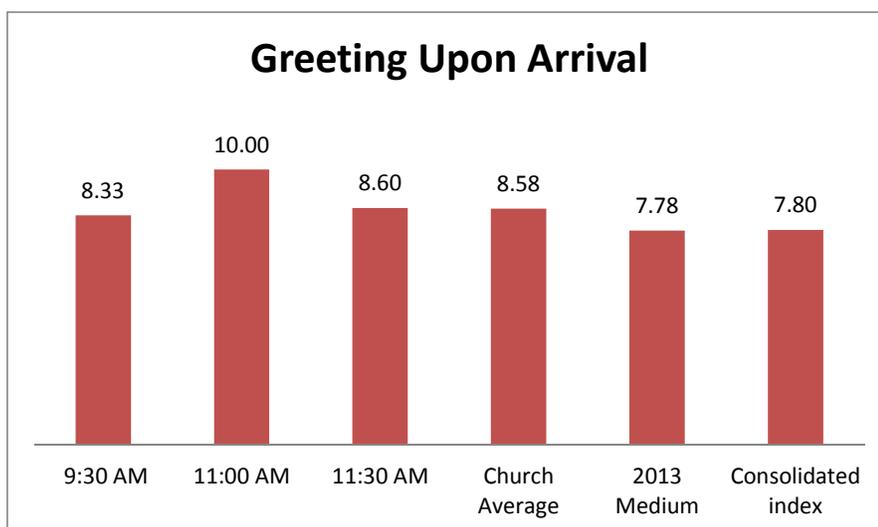
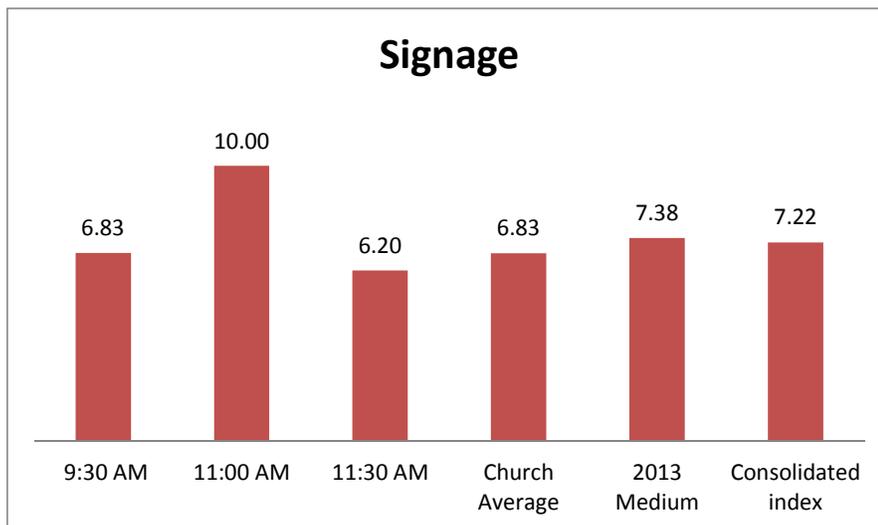
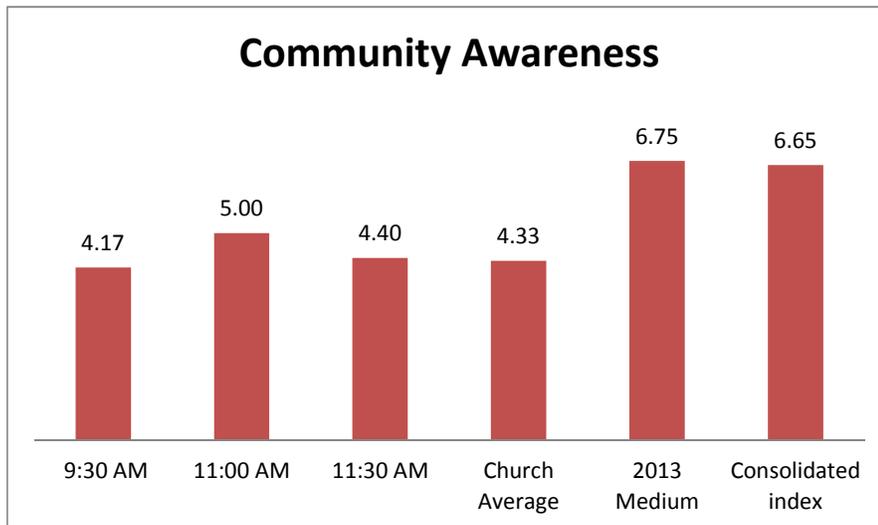
Guest Identifier	30344	31259	33774	33888
Age	59	19	27	33
Gender	F	F	M	M
Title of Service	The Power of Pruning	Traditional Service	The Road to Egypt: Escape	Baptism- An Act of Submission
Date of Visit	11/24/2013	12/8/2013	1/5/2014	1/12/2014
Time of Visit	11:30 AM	9:30 AM	11:30 AM	9:30 AM
Type of Service	Contemporary	Traditional	contemporary	Traditional
First time visiting?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are you actively participating in church somewhere else?	No	No	No	No
Have you been to any church in the last 6 months?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
If yes, number of times you've been to church in the last 6 months	0	16	1	3
Do you believe in God or a higher power?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If yes, what denomination do you identify most with?	Lutheran LCMS	0	Christian	Non-denominational
Did you grow up in a family that was associated with a particular denomination?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If yes, which denomination?	Congregationalist	apostolic Lutheran	Christian	Catholic and Evangelical Lutheran
Did you have any pre-conceived ideas about the before you visited?	I attended a United Methodist Church in Kansas between the ages of 15 and 31, so I had an idea of what to expect.	I have visited UMC churches before so I kind of had a general idea of what it was going to be like. I've never heard anything about this particular church before, though.	I did not have any pre-conceived ideas about this church nor had I heard anything about this church prior to my visit.	I had no previous knowledge about this church, nor have ever known someone who was a member or visitor. I had no preconceived notions about this church or its denomination.
Community Awareness	4	9	4	3
Signage	6	7	9	7
Greeting Upon Arrival	9	8	9	7
Pre-Service Atmosphere	5	10	9	7
Seating	6	9	9	7
Music	5	9	9	5
In Service Greeting	8	8	9	5
Message	8	5	9	4
Speaker	8	7	9	5
Post-Service Atmosphere	5	9	9	6
Information	7	9	10	7
Friendliness	5	10	10	7
Children's/Youth Ministry	4	8	9	5
Diversity and Outreach	8	7	9	5
Return	3	7	10	5
Overall Experience	5	8	9	5
AVERAGE	6.00	8.13	8.88	5.63

Lake Harbor UMC
Mystery Guest Average Data

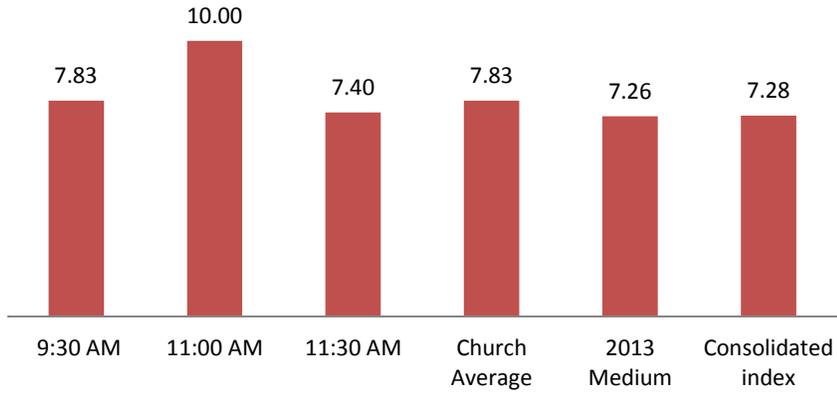
	9:30 AM	11:00 AM	11:30 AM	Church Average	2013 Medium	Consolidated index
Community Awareness	4.17	5.00	4.40	4.33	6.75	6.65
Signage	6.83	10.00	6.20	6.83	7.38	7.22
Greeting Upon Arrival	8.33	10.00	8.60	8.58	7.78	7.80
Pre-Service Atmosphere	7.83	10.00	7.40	7.83	7.26	7.28
Seating	8.67	3.00	7.40	7.67	7.79	7.82
Music	6.50	6.00	6.80	6.58	7.03	7.02
In Service Greeting	7.33	7.00	7.60	7.42	7.34	7.29
Message	6.83	2.00	8.80	7.25	7.52	7.45
Speaker	7.17	2.00	8.60	7.33	7.57	7.60
Post-Service Atmosphere	7.50	8.00	6.80	7.25	7.17	6.99
Information	7.50	10.00	8.00	7.92	7.41	7.52
Friendliness	8.17	10.00	7.60	8.08	7.75	7.69
Children's/Youth Ministry	5.67	9.00	6.40	6.25	6.48	6.51
Diversity and Outreach	4.33	4.00	7.20	5.50	6.36	6.29
Return	5.67	1.00	6.40	5.58	7.00	6.85
Overall Experience	6.67	5.00	6.80	6.58	7.15	7.15

<6.50	6.50 - 7.00	7.01 - 7.50	7.51 - 8.00	>8.00
Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good

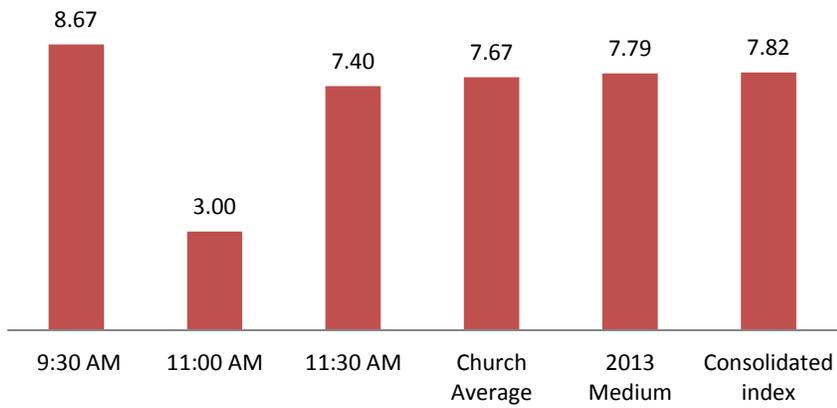
Graphs/Averages



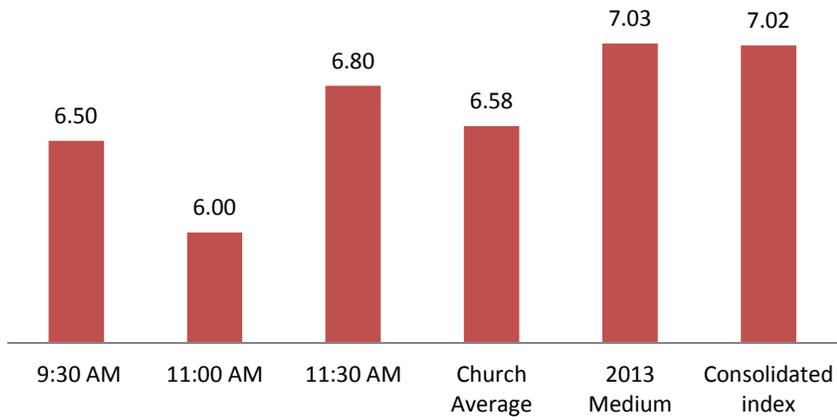
Pre-Service Atmosphere



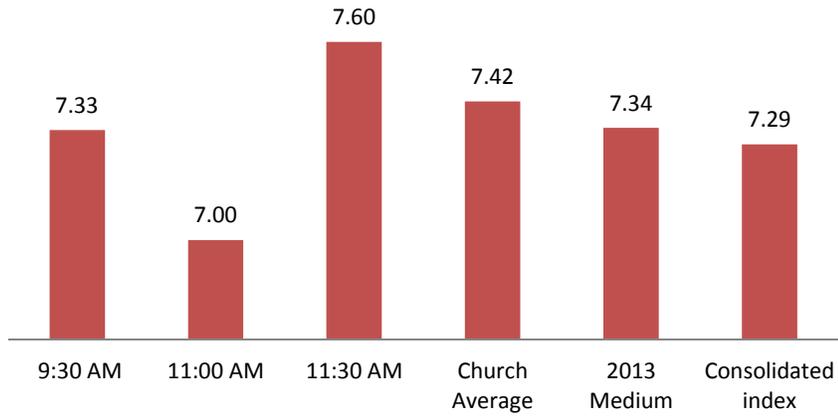
Seating



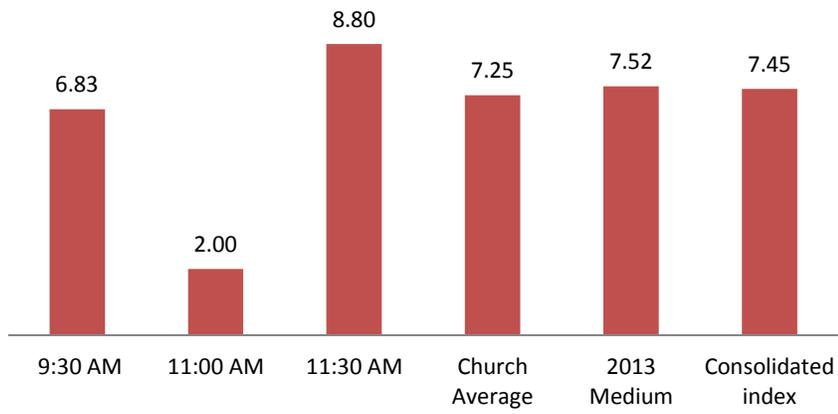
Music



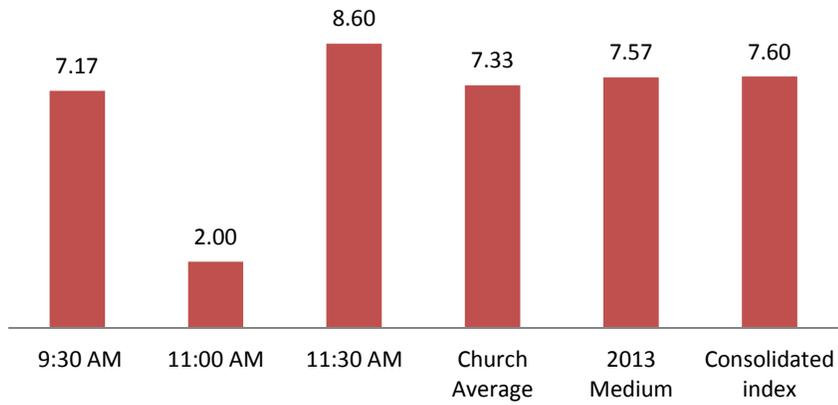
In-Service Greeting

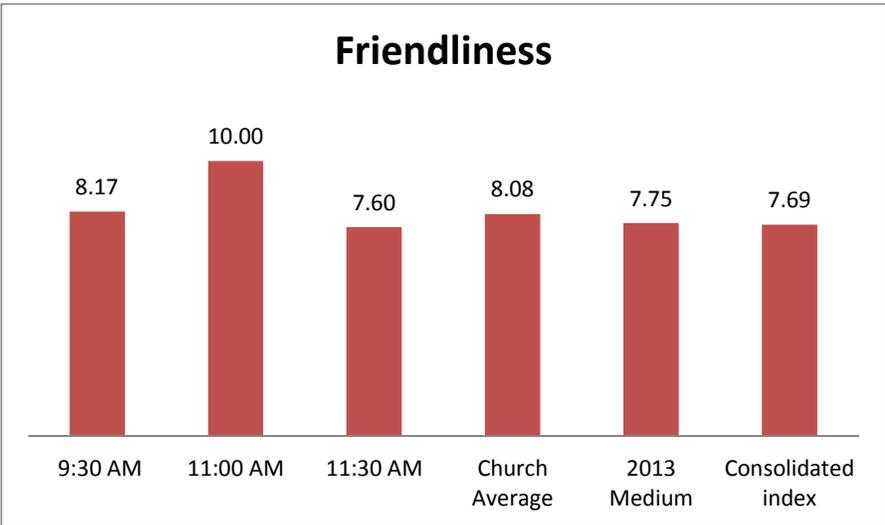
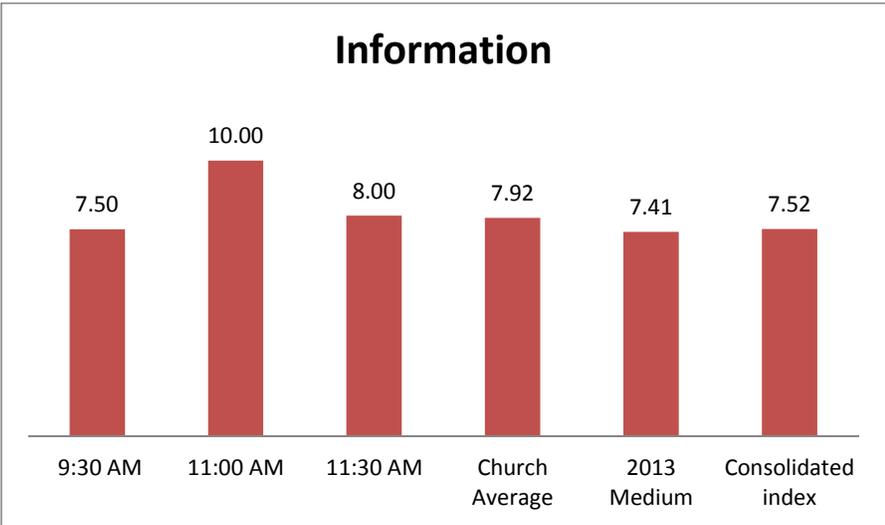
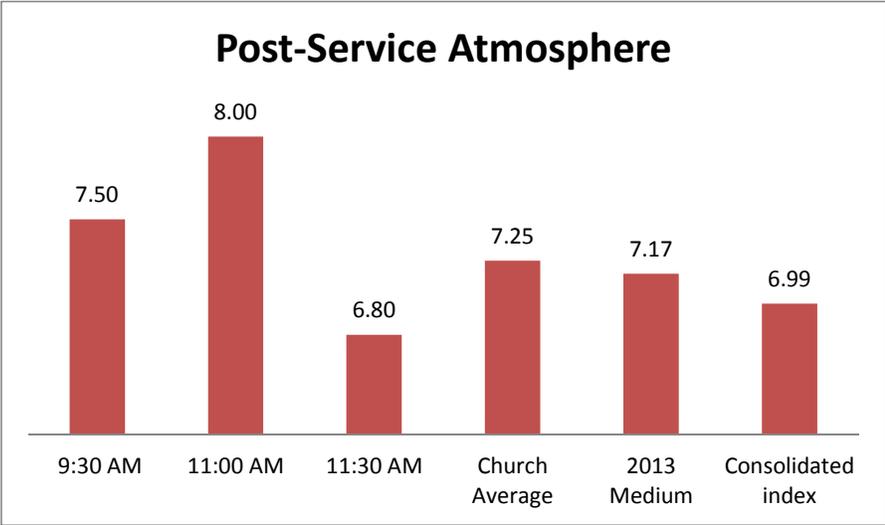


Message

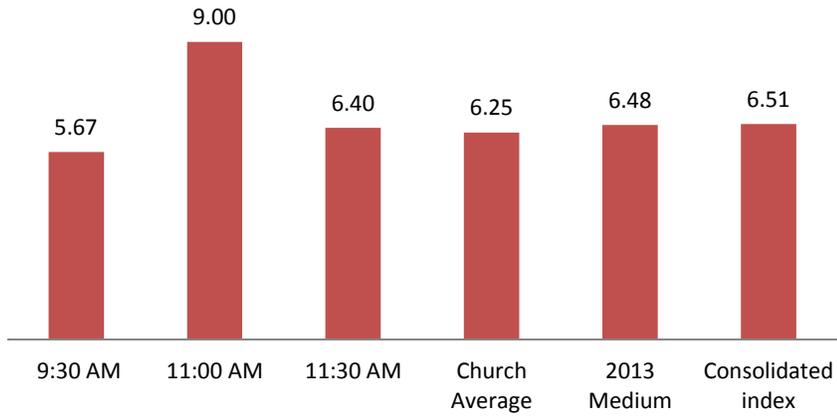


Speaker

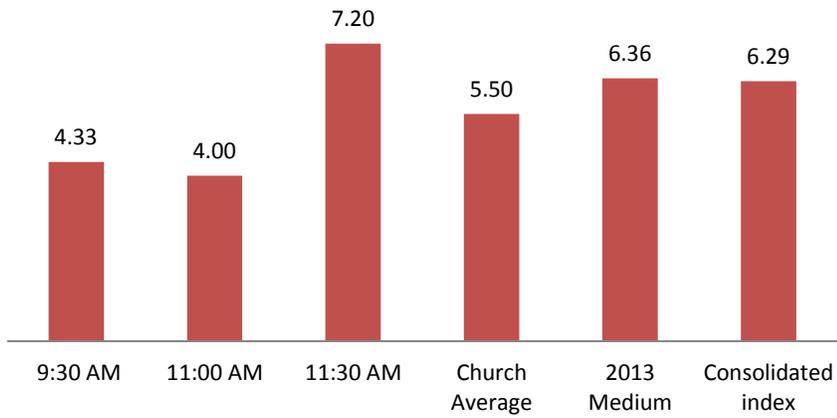




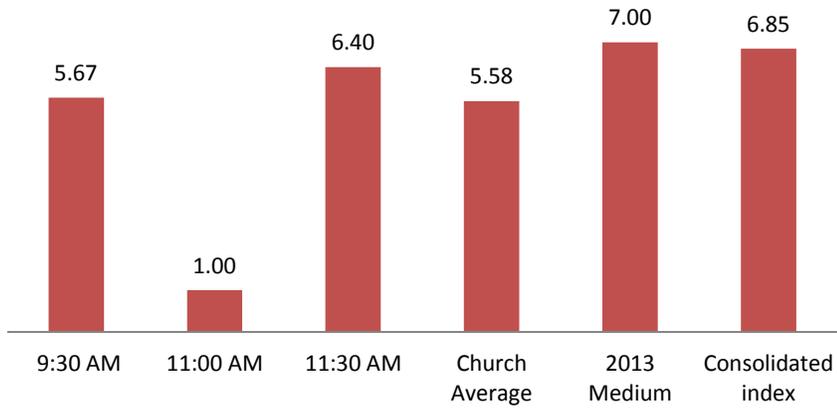
Children's/Youth Ministry



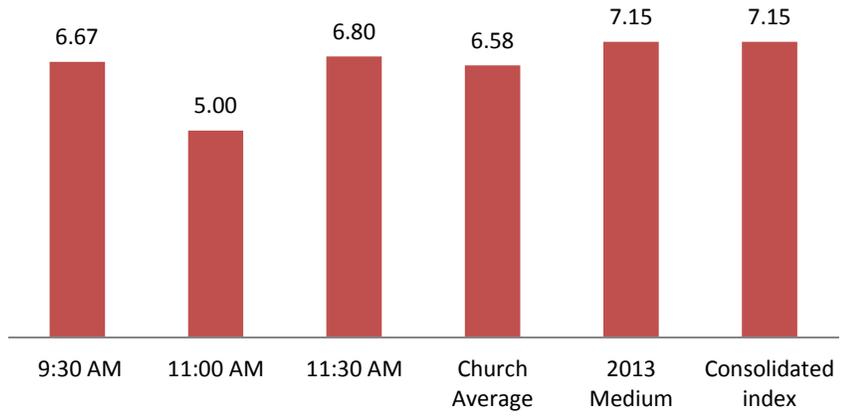
Diversity and Outreach



Return



Overall Experience



Lake Harbor UMC
Commentary by Question

This section of the report groups the comments by category and service. It allows you to review the collective feedback from each mystery guest by question.

Community Awareness

Question: *Churches want to know how well-known they are in their community. Please stop at a local business before or after your visit to ask for directions to the church. Of the people you spoke with, rate how well they were able to tell you of the church’s location. What sort of information were they able to give you? How aware were they of the church’s existence/location?*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	4.17
11:00 AM	5.00
11:30 AM	4.40
Total	4.33

Time of Visit Community Awareness Comments

9:30 AM	I stopped at a Mobile gas station on the corner of Henry and Norton. The clerk working there said she knew where it was but then sent me out to Seaway and said I would see the church on my right. I told her the church was on Henry Street, and she then replied that she wasn't sure where the church was.
9:30 AM	I stopped at a gas station after the service that was 1/2 mile south of the church on the same main road and the gas station attendant who was a younger female had no idea where it was located.
9:30 AM	I stopped at Burger King about 1 mile down the road. The customer service representative had not heard of the church and referred me to the computer in the dining area to search for it.
9:30 AM	We stopped at a local gas station less than a mile from the church and asked if the attendant knew where Lake Harbor UMC was located. The attendant was in her early 20's. She sent us to a different church nearby and told us that she thought that was the one we were looking for.
9:30 AM	I stopped at the Pic-n-Pac gas station on the corner of Henry Street, just down the road from the church, and asked the cashier. I was assuming since it was so close to the church they would know about it and where it was and they did. They told me that it was just down the street on the left.

9:30 AM	I stopped at the Mobil station about a mile north down the road from Lake Harbor after my visit. A man there had no recollection of Lake Harbor or it's location but was aware that there were a few churches in that direction.
11:00 AM	They were aware of the location, but that's all they were able to tell me.
11:30 AM	I stopped at a Speedway gas station prior to arriving at the church. The gas station resides on the same street as the church, just a few miles north. I asked the two women behind the counter if they knew where the Lake Harbor church was. One woman pointed and replied, "That way, further down." The other woman confirmed by nodding. I asked them if they knew exactly where and both shook their heads.
11:30 AM	I stopped at a gas station a little down the road from the church and I spoke with the cashier. She knew of the church's existence but was a little confused as to its actual location and told me it was the opposite way of where it really was. I also talked with a cashier at a convenient store down the road the other way from the church. He also knew about the church but his directions would have had me turning a road too early!
11:30 AM	I first stopped at a Speedway on Henry and Broadway. A young lady working there knew nothing about the church and had no idea where it was. I then stopped at Pic and Pac on the corner of Henry and Porter. A young lady there knew of the church and she gave me directions which included landmarks.
11:30 AM	I stopped at a Shell gas station approximately 2 miles from the church before the service because I was lost. The woman behind the counter called for another employee to help me because she said she was unable to give directions "even to my own house." The male employee who came out to speak to me did not know of the church, however, a customer who overheard our conversation told me she thought there was a UMC church on Henry. I told her that was the one I was looking for and she was able to give me directions to the church, even though she was not certain what the name of it was.
11:30 AM	I stopped by a gas station that is about 2 miles down the road from this church and the gas station employee did not know where which church was located. She knew where Lake Harbor was, but did not know where the church was located.

Signage

Question: *Rate how well the church's signage led you where you needed to go. Please comment on the church's exterior and interior signage. When you arrived, was there a sign outside? Were worship times listed and easy to read? Were there signs indicating where to park and which door you should use to enter? Upon entering the building, was there signage directing you to the service, restrooms, children's area, etc.?*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	6.83
11:00 AM	10.00
11:30 AM	6.20
Total	6.83

Time of Visit Signage Comments

9:30 AM The church itself is beautiful. The cross and the words "Are you ready?" were beautiful, along with the stained glass of Jesus. As far as signage, this could use some work. When I walked in I did not see where the children would go without asking. I went to the nursery and the young girl was on her phone while I was asking her questions. There were no children in the room yet, but it seemed very dark. She said the nursery went up to age 7, but she was not really sure. The signs were very small for the nursery. As far as parking and signs on service times, there was a sign in front of church for the 11 a.m. service but no sign for the 9:30 service. They really could use a permanent sign that shows the times of service out by the road. I did drive by Friday and there were no signs at all for service times.

9:30 AM The church was obvious from the road. It recognizable by its shape and the sign that had worship times listed. Apparently they are adding a new sign (which I didn't see), that is soon to be up-and-running. It was obvious where to park and there were plenty of parking spaces. I was greeted at the door on the way in and it was obvious where to go (the sanctuary was immediately in front of me). There were signs for restrooms, children's ministry, office area, etc. and they were easy to read.

9:30 AM The sign by the road is large and clear. Signs were not needed to know where to park, but one could see visitor parking spaces easily. Upon entry, activity was hustling and plenty of people were eager to greet, so one could not focus on signs. There was no noticeable signage directing to coffee hour, classrooms, or restrooms from the sanctuary, but people directed me to the coffee.

9:30 AM	The main sign on the street was very attractive and caught our attention. It gave the name of the church, and the name and date of the message. It was a fancy sign that lit up electronically. When entering the parking lot, there was a parking lot sign that said "Visitor Parking." I couldn't tell if it was in front of one parking spot or marked the entire row. It was a little confusing. Doors did not have signs indicating which ones to use, but greeters were holding the doors open so they may have been blocked. Upon entering the building, the service area was directly in front of the main doors. No signs were used or necessary as there were plenty of people to greet us and answer our questions. Restrooms were well labeled. I did not see any signs for the children's area.
9:30 AM	Outside of the church is a big, bulletin board type sign with the name and times of each service they have. It was easy to read. There were not parking signs but they did have a parking lot alongside the church so I assumed that's where I should park. There wasn't a sign for the door to go in but it did look like a main door. When I went inside, I didn't see any restroom signs or children signs, but when I was meeting the secretary (I think it was the secretary) she explained to me where everything was. The service area was immediately inside the door so no sign for it was needed.
9:30 AM	Externally this church is present with its architectural layout catching one's eye. Signage out front was visible and easy to read. Parking felt natural and easy to understand. Signage was not present to direct into building but the building layout and carport to entrance was self explanatory. I did not see signs to the restroom from the entrance nor for the children's area. I had to ask a member and was directed.
11:00 AM	There was a sign outside (visible from the main road) announcing the 11 a.m. service. The worship times were listed and easy to read. There were signs indicating where to enter and where to park. There were signs directing me to the service, restrooms and children's area.
11:30 AM	It was easy to locate the church thanks to the sign out front by the road. The sign has a digital display with times and dates and other announcements. It was very easy to read. There were signs indicating where to park, but the main entrance was not marked. It did look somewhat obvious on where to enter, fortunately. Upon entering I had to ask where the service was being held because the main room looked empty. There were no signs. It turned out that the service was taking place in a small area off the main room. I also learned that the service was taking place at 11:30am, not 11:00am as I was assigned. Restrooms were easy to locate, but I did not notice a children's area. There was a small area that pertained to children, though, with name tags and activity bags.

11:30 AM	The primary sign for the church was an illuminated board with the church name with service times. The parking area was clear and didn't need any signs. The entrance was a little confusing to me at first because there was no sign to direct me. Upon entering, the only signage I could see was a wooden welcome sign nailed to the upper door from of the entrance way past the front door.
11:30 AM	There was an electronic sign outside but so many messages were included that I never knew that service times were on the sign until I left and it flashed across the screen. There were no other signs outside and I had to guess where the front door was. When I stepped inside I saw no signage at all. The doors were open and I could see the main auditorium but it was dark and quiet. Later I discovered there were signs on the back of the open doors for the restroom and kitchen but they could not be seen until the doors were closed.
11:30 AM	I saw the church as I approached because there were signs out on the lawn, but there was no indication as to where to pull in. I quickly determined I needed to enter by the drive before the church building as there did not appear to be another drive on the other side of the building. I pulled in and drove to the back of the church, where I found 10-12 vehicles parked. I noticed a woman walking in a door, so I followed her lead, as I didn't see any signs to enter the church at that location. Once inside, I was greeted by a man who directed me into a room off the sanctuary, where he said the Celebration Service was to take place. After the service, I had time to look around and saw signage for the nursery up the stairs, and the restrooms across from the stairs.
11:30 AM	There was a very large sign out front of the church that stated the date and the time of the service. There weren't any directions to the parking lot, although there were two entrances to it. There were two different doors that we could go in, one had a sign on it welcoming people. There were signs in the building directing people to the restrooms, as well as people to help direct you to where you needed to go.

Greeting Upon Arrival

Question: *Rate how satisfied you were with the pre-service greetings. Please comment on whether there was a designated greeter to welcome you as you entered the building or when you entered the sanctuary/service/room in which the service was held. How did they welcome you and did it feel sincere?*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	8.33
11:00 AM	10.00
11:30 AM	8.60
Total	8.58

Time of Visit	Greeting Upon Arrival Comments
9:30 AM	The greeters were very welcoming. They showed me where the bathrooms were as I entered the sanctuary.
9:30 AM	The door greeter who held open the door did his job well, but was not especially friendly. Of the three greeters inside, one (an older man) seemed genuinely happy to meet me. I was asked to sign a guest registry at the door. I felt the older gentleman's greeting was truly sincere.
9:30 AM	I have never been greeted so enthusiastically by so many people. There were greeters at the door, but members approached from all directions. Even, after sitting, several people came over to introduce themselves and say how glad they were for my visit. After the service, the greetings continued and many said they hoped I would return.
9:30 AM	The pre-service greetings were fantastic! They had individuals holding the outer doors open, greeters just inside the door, and they had individuals passing out bulletins. All were very friendly, eager to ask who we were, and gave us their names. They also were able to answer any questions we had about children's services or child service expectations. All were friendly, welcoming, and sincere.
9:30 AM	My first greeting was when I went up to an older couple in the parking lot to ask them which door to go in and I introduced myself. They were so nice and asked me about myself and where I lived. I walked with them inside and they introduced me to the secretary. She greeted me very kindly and said welcome to the church. Then I asked the couple that I had met if they minded if I sat next to them and they were so happy to let me do that.

9:30 AM	There was a greeter on the exterior to greet me and he was welcoming but he didn't seem to be the greeter type. On the interior, after I hung up my coat, I was handed a bulletin by a team of two smiling gentlemen. They were helpful and their position in the aisle were natural points into the open sanctuary. Everyone was helpful but no one seemed excited.
11:00 AM	There were greeters right outside the door and inside the church. They welcomed me with a small gift and everyone was very sincere and welcoming.
11:30 AM	I was very satisfied with the pre-service greetings! Everyone was extremely friendly. I believe I was welcomed by the designated greeter (unsure if they were just an attendee or not). Guest speaker Jimmy Epplert, who was filling in for the pastor, warmly shook my hand and welcomed me.
11:30 AM	There was no designated greeter, although there was a podium up front that led me to believe that on ordinary service may have a greeter. I was greeted however by one of the leaders of the church. He welcomed me warmly and it seemed sincere enough. I was also give a Welcome Mug that had a pen, a little bulletin with service times and days, and a little bag with some candy in it.
11:30 AM	I stood in the lobby for a couple of minutes before the service. Three people passed me by without saying anything to me. Finally, I stopped a lady and asked if there was an 11:30 service that day. She said yes and that I could follow her. She was very friendly. There was no designated greeter present. When we arrived at the service area, a young man introduced himself to me. He was very friendly and welcoming. He explained all three services to me and offered me a tour of the facility.
11:30 AM	I was greeted by a man who asked me if I was there for the Celebration Service. I told him I was, and he introduced himself before asking my name. He then told me he was glad that I had come to the service, and showed me by pointing where I should go to sit down. On my way to the gathering room, I was greeted by two other people who introduced themselves and welcomed me to the church.
11:30 AM	The pre-service greeting consisted of multiple people welcoming me to the church and directing me where I should go for the service. Everyone was very nice and welcoming. Everyone that I spoke with seemed very sincere.

Pre-Service Atmosphere

Question: *Rate the overall hospitality of the church before the service began. Please comment on the atmosphere/mood/vibe and whether it would make guests feel like a part of the group. Explain how this affected your expectations for the service to come.*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	7.83
11:00 AM	10.00
11:30 AM	7.40
Total	7.83

Time of Visit	Pre Service Atmosphere Comments
9:30 AM	Everyone was very friendly at the church. There was one usher who went above and beyond to get me info for the youth programs. She also gave me a welcome gift of a coffee cup with some goodies in it. This did put a smile on my face and made me feel welcome. The people of the church itself really did not go out of their way to say hi or be friendly, but the ushers and greeters were very warm and friendly.
9:30 AM	A few people sitting near me said hello, but nothing further. There was a feeling(mood)of warmth between people who knew each other (lots of chatting before the service), but not towards me. I was not feeling very welcome and a little uneasy.
9:30 AM	They were happy and upbeat. A couple people told me about special things going on that day, so I would understand what was going on.
9:30 AM	While coming into the church, we felt welcomed by the greeters and other volunteers near the door. Once we sat down, we did receive many curious looks, and there were many people talking to one another or in small groups, but no one approached us while waiting for the service to begin. The conversations we overheard were friendly and people were catching up on their week. Although no one approached us, we could hear many conversations where the congregation had obviously known each other for some time and enjoyed each others company. We expected a traditional service because we were able to review the bulletin during this time and the bulletin gave the impression that the service to come would be traditional.

9:30 AM	Before the service started and I was sitting next to the couple, they were explaining to me the different services the church offers. There's one at 11:30 too that I could try out that has a younger group because the 9:30 service was mostly older people. Also, while we were waiting, people would come up to me and introduce themselves and the couple would tell them that I was visiting and they were very happy to hear that. There was a man sitting on the other side of me and when he found out that I was a visitor, he told me that they give the visitors a little gift so he went and brought me one. It was nice and had a coffee mug with some candy, a pen, notepad, and a brochure with more information. I thought that was really unexpected and so nice of them.
9:30 AM	The overall hospitality was warm and welcoming. It was a standard sanctuary with minimal extras on the walls and quite simple and plain, which is completely appropriate. It felt like the atmosphere matched the members well. No one seemed bummed or unhappy to be there and they were excited to see someone under 40 I think. There was no sort of expectations in any sense on behalf of the vibe or members in my opinion.
11:00 AM	Everybody was very friendly and welcoming. I can't think of anything they could have done to make it more friendly. It elevated my mood and made me feel like the service would be uplifting and energetic.
11:30 AM	The atmosphere was very warm and welcoming. I was immediately offered coffee and cookies prior to the service starting. At least 3 attendees introduced themselves to me and stated their gratitude for my attendance. Though it was obvious that many of the attendees knew each other well, I felt they were all open to my being there.
11:30 AM	Everyone was very nice and it set a good tone for the service. Everyone welcomed me with a handshake and seemed pleased that a new face was there in the group. The group made me feel right at home.
11:30 AM	Besides the young man and the woman who showed me in, nobody else said a word to me. The attendees were very happy and animated but stayed to themselves. I was on the outside looking in and definitely did not feel like a part of the group.
11:30 AM	The initial greeting of the members of the church was nice and I felt welcomed. I asked one of them if there was a certain place I should sit, as the seating was limited and several chairs were "taken" with coats and bulletins. I was told to sit anywhere. Once I sat, I felt very much alone and out of place, as the other members were milling around and talking to each other. They all seemed to know what was going to happen, but I felt very alone. It did not seem "churchy" to me, but more like a social gathering. I did not feel connected, and I did not feel that anyone was mentally preparing for the service but was instead socializing.

11:30 AM

The hospitality of the church was very welcoming. There was coffee, cookies, and candies available. Everyone was very laid back talking with each other and made me feel very welcome and as part of the group. The atmosphere of this church made me very excited for the service.

Seating

Question: *Rate the overall seating experience. Please describe how comfortable the seats were and whether there were plenty of seats to choose from or whether there were too few. How closely did the congregation sit to each other (e.g., was everyone spread out or did they sit close together)?*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	8.67
11:00 AM	3.00
11:30 AM	7.40
Total	7.67

Time of Visit	Seating Comments
9:30 AM	The pews were very comfortable. The people were spread out so you could really choose wherever you felt comfortable. They had plenty of seating at the 9:30 service. Again, the church itself was a beautiful, clean church.
9:30 AM	There was plenty of comfortable seating and I was not directed toward a particular spot (my preference). People were quite spread out and as usual avoided the front few rows.
9:30 AM	People spread out among the pews. They did not favor one section to another. People filled in around me, leaving me comfortable. The pews were standard and padded. There was room to sit in the back, front, side, or wherever one prefers.
9:30 AM	There were four sections of cushioned bench seating available. Seats were comfortable for the duration of the service. There were plenty of seats available for the early service. The middle sections of the seating were more filled than the outer ones. The congregation did spread out through each section, but concentrated a bit more in the center.
9:30 AM	I thought the seating was awesome. They had a really big area and you could spread out, but it was in a shape where everyone was the same distance away because it wrapped around the front where the pastor stood. The seats were cushioned and comfortable. Everyone was spread out due to there being so much room, and I noticed that most of the people sat more towards the back of the room, including us.
9:30 AM	Seating was fine regarding comfort. The members were spaced out and I did not get a head count but I would guess 70-100 people were present at most. People were seated randomly.
11:00 AM	There were plenty of seats to choose from, but they were very uncomfortable folding chairs. Everybody sat close together.

11:30 AM	Because the service took place off of the main room, fold out chairs were used for seating. It wasn't the most comfortable, but I did not mind personally. There was plenty of seats to choose from. Everyone was fairly spread out, but with the small space being used, it felt like we sat fairly close to one another.
11:30 AM	The seating was a bunch of padded folding chairs lined up, which seemed appropriate for a small service, and they were comfortable as well. In the front two rows, almost all of the seats were occupied leaving the last three rows with plenty of empty seats.
11:30 AM	This happened to be a rather small service of about 30 people. They had folding chairs set up in a corner of the main auditorium and there were plenty for everyone. They also had pews from the main auditorium that could be used. Everyone was sitting rather close together. I sat on the end of one of the main pews by myself but it was by choice. Both the folding chairs and the pews were comfortable.
11:30 AM	The seats were padded folding chairs that were comfortable. They were placed very close together in rows, with a center aisle. Many of the regular members sat close together, but I sat alone in the second to last row with only a few people near me.
11:30 AM	The 11:30 session is a more contemporary service so the seating is more personal in folding chairs. The congregation sat close to everyone else and it was a very personal setting. There was a decent amount of people there but not too over crowded. The seats that were available during the 11:30 session were folding chairs with padding. They were very comfortable and easy to sit in during the service.

Music

Question: *Rate how well the music appealed to you. Please comment on the following: Was the style of music contemporary, traditional, or blended? If the music was live, did the musicians/vocalists/choir seem sincere about their part of the service? Were the people in attendance engaged/paying attention? What age group(s) do you think would most enjoy the music?*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	6.50
11:00 AM	6.00
11:30 AM	6.80
Total	6.58

Time of Visit	Music Comments
9:30 AM	The style of the music was traditional. There were a trumpet and a trombone along with organ. It was not my style, but it did keep the attention of the congregation. This music would reach more of the older generation, people over their 60s. There were very few young people in the church. If you're looking to grow the church, you may need to explore music options to reach the younger generation.
9:30 AM	The music was not excellent. The pianist/organists made a lot of mistakes, which I found distracting. I couldn't say if she was feeling sincere about her performance or not. There was an organ, piano, traditional choir, a praise song with guitar and the postlude was a jazzy piano/drum number. There was a little of something for everyone. I did not feel that people particularly connected with the music based on their response (no clapping, or amens, or the like). I am not sure who would enjoy the music.
9:30 AM	The music was a mix of hymns sung by a choir or congregation and accompanied by piano. The choir did not have facial expressions that reflected what they were singing. A bell choir played 1 song. The congregation was engaged, as they knew the traditional music. The music appeals to all ages who like familiarity.
9:30 AM	The music was very traditional hymnal music. It was very well played on the organ, piano, and drum accompaniment at times. Worship singing was led by a choir and the choir also did a very nice job, and were sincere about their part. Being solely hymnal based without any contemporary blend did not appeal to me on a musical level, but the hymns chosen were very relevant to the sermon, were well played and sung, and did fully engage the more senior members of the congregation.

9:30 AM I believe that the music was blended because it was traditional church songs but they were sung in a faster, more upbeat way. They had a choir of about 13 people that only sang one song on their own; the rest of the songs everyone sang. They were all older ladies with a couple of older men and they seemed to really enjoy singing and had smiles on their faces. When they sang, everyone was engaged, including me, and I thought they were really talented. I think middle-aged people would enjoy it the most because of how fast it was at times, but the people singing in the choir were a little older and enjoying it, so anyone middle-aged or a little older would love it, I think.

9:30 AM The music was traditional and seemed to be what everyone was used to. No one seemed bored but no one seemed engaged either. The percussionist was out of rhythm on multiple occasions and I would be very surprised if they had more than a 30 minute practice throughout the week. The choir seemed to be sincere in the opportunity to be a part of the social event but honestly I did not sense any conviction or intimacy in any of the music, although I enjoyed the words and songs themselves. It was very formal and to the point and no one seemed to mind, so I imagine this is what the members are looking for and seem to find value in. People were paying attention to the flow of instruction and seemed to be pleased. The crowd of 50 and older were the ones who seemed to most enjoy the music selections and performances.

11:00 AM The music was contemporary. It was live music and the vocalists seemed sincere about their part of the service. Most of the people were engaged in the music. I feel the age groups that the music would most appeal to are anywhere from 8 to 40.

11:30 AM The music was provided by three musicians. It sounded great and they seemed to have enjoyed their part of the service. The main vocalist was very talented and sang well. The style was acoustic and somewhat modern, which I think would appeal to more of a younger generation. The majority of those attending sang along with the band. Lyrics were provided on a projected screen. I gave the music a ranking of 9 only because I would have welcomed a bit of variety in musical style.

11:30 AM The music was very contemporary with a live vocalist playing a guitar. The music was very nice and everybody was engaged and singing, but they weren't sing very loudly. It almost seemed to me like everyone except the vocalist was just going through the motions. The guitarist/vocalist seemed sincere and his lyrics were pretty good as well. The music really kept my attention. Any age group could enjoy this music, with maybe young adults being the most likely to enjoy it.

11:30 AM	This was a "celebration" service and though the musicians seemed to play well enough, I definitely did not like the music. I would call it "entertainment music" because it was too loud and more like rock and roll music, but this was a contemporary service so it fits. It just wasn't my personal preference. I also felt that the music didn't really lend itself to participation from the congregation so everyone was just standing and listening. Some of them mouthed the words as they read the video words but they were not into the singing part. I think they enjoyed the music they just didn't want to try to sing it.
11:30 AM	The music was contemporary. It did not really appeal to me because I like the more traditional music with an organ and a cantor. The music was live with four men at the front leading the singing and three with guitars. The words to the songs were displayed on a projector instead of being in a hymnal. They seemed sincere, but some of the audience members were dancing and playing around while the singing was going on. It made it difficult to feel a holy vibe in the room, something I was looking for. I think this kind of music and service would attract teens or young adults.
11:30 AM	The music was very modern and upbeat. There was even a song played that I had heard on the radio. I was told there is normally a live band, but they were ill today. Everyone in the group seemed very engaged and paid attention to the music and joined in on singing. This music would attract a young crowd, but others would enjoy it as well.

In-Service Greeting

Question: *Please rate the in-service greeting. This can include a formal greeting from the pulpit, a recognition of visitors, shaking hands with one another, etc. Comment on the sincerity of the greeting and whether it felt like too little, too much, or just right. If there wasn't any form of greeting, please offer your thoughts on this.*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	7.33
11:00 AM	7.00
11:30 AM	7.60
Total	7.42

Time of Visit	In Service Greeting Comments
9:30 AM	The greeting during the service was perfect. They welcomed any visitors and asked them to sign the attendance book, and then we meet with the people around us. Everyone was very friendly and sincere.
9:30 AM	The service began with a time to greet, but like most of the churches I've been to this year, it was very perfunctory. A few people introduced themselves. Some said hello or asked my name or asked if I was a guest. The amount of time seemed just about right. One woman with dark wavy hair who had given an announcement at the beginning of service also seemed genuinely warm in her greeting.
9:30 AM	Before the start of worship the pastor recognized guests and visitors and a gift was presented to each. Following was a time of greeting each other. People around me were very engaging and moved around to shake hands.
9:30 AM	The greeting from the pulpit welcomed everyone, and encouraged visitors to sign their guest book. Also from the pulpit, the Pastor asked the congregation to take a few moments to greet one another and shake hands. During this time we were approached, asked if we were new to the area, if it was our first time to the church. We were also given a welcome coffee mug with a "treat baggie" inside. Everyone we met was friendly and sincere with just the right amount of curiosity, and all said they hoped to see us again in the future.
9:30 AM	Everyone was greeted by the pastor at the beginning and welcomed, and he started off by asking about visitors so I was recognized and everyone greeted me, which was cool. Then everyone greeted each other and I met all of the people sitting around me who were very friendly. I thought that everyone greeting each other was nice, but I don't know if I would really like the idea of doing that every time.

9:30 AM	The in-service greeting was too much and too forced. It just felt like they were trying too hard unfortunately. I didn't sense a genuine interest from the majority of the members. A couple members were full of spirit and youth which I found to be very kind.
11:00 AM	Everyone in attendance shook hands with one another and it felt sincere. I don't feel like it was overdone. It felt like just enough.
11:30 AM	The guest speaker prompted everyone to greet one another before the service started. By the tone, it seemed like this was normal to do. A few attendees seemed very sincere in meeting me when shaking my hand, a few others seemed to be more interested in the conversation they were having with one another. The guest speaker was very interactive with everyone. I personally did not feel it was too little, but I could understand if someone else felt cheated in meeting everyone who was there.
11:30 AM	The in-service greeting started with the preacher saying the church announcements, then he broke off to let everyone say good morning and shake hands. It was very pleasant and everyone was smiling and shaking hands. Overall it was very warm and inviting.
11:30 AM	There was no in-service greeting, recognition from the pastor, or greetings among the congregation. The service was small enough that I must have stood out as the visitor but no one acknowledged that fact. The closest the service came to "mingling" was at the end during the prayer request time. All attendees stood and clasped hands as the pastor said the closing prayer. I liked that a lot. In addition, two men made a gap and invited me into the circle; that was the most welcome I felt during the entire service, other than the young man before the service.
11:30 AM	There was a welcome portion to the service where each person was to greet others sitting around them. Several people came up to me and offered their hand, asked my name, and told me theirs. This continued for about four minutes, which seemed to be just the right amount of time, before the service continued.
11:30 AM	The in-service greeting was formal and informal. Everyone walked around to everyone else shaking hands and introducing themselves to me. It was a very sincere greeting and seemed to be just right. Everyone was very nice and welcoming.

Message

Question: *Rate how appealing the message (sermon/homily, etc.) was to you. What was the message about? Please note approximately how long the message was (in minutes). How easy was the concept to grasp? How relevant was it to you? How interesting/enjoyable was the message?*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	6.83
11:00 AM	2.00
11:30 AM	8.80
Total	7.25

Time of Visit	Message Comments
9:30 AM	The message was very good. Pastor Mark Erbes talked about how when we work, if we look at it like we are working for God, our attitudes will change. We sometimes feel like we are just digging a hole and going nowhere, but we can choose to get out of that hole when we change our attitude and in everything we do. Do it for God! It lasted about 15 minutes and then he played a short video that really tied it all together - the video was of a guy digging in the sand going nowhere and then he decided to make a change and climbed out of the hole and was on top of the mountain. This helped me for right now. I'm in a place in my life where I have lost my job, but whatever I'm doing, if I do it for God, I will have a better attitude knowing I'm doing it for God. I can be a blessing anywhere I go if I have the right attitude.
9:30 AM	The message was well given and I came away with some good thoughts to chew on about humility, but I didn't resonate with his reference to right and wrong questions. I understood the concept and felt parts of the sermon were relevant to me. I have been known to tell my children that the only bad question is the only one they already know the answer to. And I'm afraid some people would come away from that sermon being afraid to ask God (and each other), difficult questions. I don't know how long the sermon lasted but the entire service lasted exactly one hour. The message was more interesting than enjoyable.

9:30 AM	The message was part of a series that tied with a book/lesson the church has been working on. It was relevant and easy to follow. I would have liked the title of the book referenced to better understand the overall picture. I did not time the message, but it seemed short. Time was given for members to complete a survey of response. I did not like the text being read from the Message Bible. This version loses meaning. Besides, if members cannot understand the NRSV, or similar versions, they will also not be able to understand the texts of the hymns.
9:30 AM	The message was very appealing to me and was about "Honest Humility." The example used for the message was Luke 18:9-14. The message was only 20 minutes in length but filled with Biblical examples, every day examples, and how to apply it to our daily lives. The message also mixed in a video clip for attention-getting purposes at the beginning of the message. The concept was very easy to grasp and very relevant. I found the message to be a "friendly reminder" to look inward and assure that we do not put ourselves before God or others.
9:30 AM	I felt like the sermon was like a history or a geography class. Because of Christmas, they are talking about Nazareth and other places from around the time when Jesus was born, so the pastor was talking about what had happened and about where on the map it was and what cities were around it. Also he was trying to be funny and he wasn't; no one laughed at him. The sermon was actually very short, probably only ten minutes long, which I think is too short. I understood what he was talking about because I've heard about stories from around Christmas, but it wasn't something I was expecting when he was talking about the geography. I don't think it was that great of a sermon. It seemed like more of something you would teach the younger kids in Sunday school.
9:30 AM	The message was 20 minutes tops and was about the upcoming next few weeks of baptism study that they will be focusing on. The concept was very basic and I was not engaged by the passion nor the timing of the sermon. I imagine that this is a part of the yearly calendar cycle of sermons to be preached, unfortunately I picked up very minimal conviction, honesty, or passion on the subject. It wasn't horrible, just dry, uninspired, and didn't seem relevant to the congregation. In my walk, it added nothing to me. However, the pastor is a nice guy and seems to be a good fit for the style of ministry the members are accustomed to.

11:00 AM The message was not appealing to me. The message was about what the Bible has to say about working. It was comparing working for rewards and how working is like toiling in the wind. The sermon was about 15 minutes long. I felt the message was over-simplified and the comparisons seemed obvious. The concept was easy to grasp. It was relevant, but I already understood this concept. The message was not interesting or enjoyable for me.

11:30 AM The message was about change. The guest speaker spoke of his own life and how it was when he first arrived to the Lake Harbor Church years ago. He was looking for change. He then referred to a biblical story about a man who, for 30-something years, waited to receive help in getting into the healing pool. Jesus eventually came to him, healed him, and told him to get up and walk. The guest speaker then related the story to people in the public who were looking for help, for change, and then encouraged attendees to spread the word of the church. The guest speaker was great in using humor and today's language to help me fully understand the concept. I found it sincere and easy to relate to. I would guess that this portion of the service took close to half an hour.

11:30 AM The message was approximately 40 minutes long and was about honest humility, with the core of it being if our hearts are full of pride, like if we are full of ourselves, then there is no God. If we are not prideful in our hearts, then there will always be room for God and we can listen to what he has to say to us. The concept was relatively easy to grasp, although some people may need it explained another way. It was a very interesting message, and rather enjoyable as I have never really thought about humility and how it affects our relationship with God.

11:30 AM The message was about 20 minutes long. The pastor used video and stills to supplement his presentation. This was the part I was waiting for. I like the message portion of a church service and the pastor did not disappoint. The message was about making sure we were in line with what God expects of us and to "make sure our ducks are in a row." The pastor represented this well with the example of a string of dominoes. If one of them is out of place, the toppling effect simply won't work. The concept was very simple to understand. What I personally like about the sermon portion of church is I get to learn something about the Bible I didn't know before. That was true for this service as well.

11:30 AM The message was entitled "Aligned with God's Purposes" and it lasted about 20 minutes. It centered around how God wished for His people to allow Him to "prune" them in His ways, not let them grow unruly according to their whims. The minister used the example of pruning raspberry bushes to bear the best fruit for the best nourishment of people, instead of letting the bushes grow wild and only sprouting greenery that would not benefit anyone. The concept was easy to grasp. The minister used some Biblical quotes to back up his sermon, specifically John 15 "Apart from me, you have nothing." The message was relevant and not exceptionally preachy, but delivered so that any age group could learn something from it.

11:30 AM The message was about the dark road that Jesus took as a young baby with his family fleeing to Egypt. This message really hit home as there have been many dark roads in my life. The concept was very easy to grasp and there was even a map on a projector screen that showed what the journey would have looked like. It was a very interesting and enjoyable service that I think could get the attention of various ages. Everyone in the group was paying attention and very aware of the message. It was a very personal service, which I enjoyed. The entire message and service was almost 2 hours in length. It didn't seem this long though because it was very easy to understand and very interesting.

Speaker

Question: *Rate how well the speaker communicated the message. How well prepared and comfortable was the speaker? Who was giving the message (list names if known) and were they easy to listen to and understand? Describe any visual aids used to support the message such as videos, drama, scripture, or props.*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	7.17
11:00 AM	2.00
11:30 AM	8.60
Total	7.33

Time of Visit	Speaker Comments
9:30 AM	Pastor Mark Erbes was very prepared, comfortable and easy to follow. I loved how he used the short video to tie it all together in the end.
9:30 AM	The speaker was prepared, comfortable and I assume the head pastor,(Pastor Mark). He was easy to listen to and spoke clearly. He used some PowerPoint slides, but I didn't find that they added very much to the presentation.
9:30 AM	Pastor Mark Erbes delivered the message. He was comfortable with the topic, knew his content enough to not have to read and flowed well. Props, like a door and word signs were used as part of the series.
9:30 AM	The Pastor communicated the message very well. Pastor Mark Erbes gave the message. First there was a video clip, then Pastor Mark gave a children's message. During the children's message, Pastor Mark used props to demonstrate ways that we may sometimes come to God--too full of ourselves or completely empty. Pastor Mark read from Luke 18:9-14 and gave both the Biblical and everyday example of how to apply how God wants us to come to him. The message was very easy to listen to and understand.
9:30 AM	The pastor seemed prepared and was good at communicating, he just wasn't all that funny. While he was talking he was holding papers that probably had what he was going to say on them, which I think is unusual because I feel like they usually just talk from the heart.

9:30 AM	The speaker was prepared and knew what he was going to do and stuck to it. That could be why it felt so fixed and uninspired. It was technically sound and he had some basic insights but no one was going to be led towards conviction or praise. There was just no sense of revelation in his message and there just lacked a fire or sense of life that it was real to him. This introductory sermon did have a 5 minute video that went over some basic concepts of baptism as the pastor narrated. This was a helpful aid and probably a step in the right direction of incorporating technology into his presentations.
11:00 AM	Pastor Mark was giving the sermon. The speaker lacked enthusiasm, which made it hard to stay focused and listen intently. He seemed prepared and comfortable, but not engaging enough with the congregation. The video, however, was excellent. That was the only prop used by Pastor Mark during the sermon.
11:30 AM	Guest speaker Jimmy Epplert seemed very comfortable, energetic, and prepared. I enjoyed his views on the story he read especially. The video projector displayed images behind him, but they were not used as visual aids per se. He was easy to listen to and understand because of his casual demeanor.
11:30 AM	The preacher giving the message seemed prepared, but he seemed a little tired and was not very energetic about the message. He was easy to listen to and understand, but he kind of dragged on a little in the beginning. A video was used to help prove his point that it is hard to define humility. It was about one minute long and was just a couple kids trying to define humility and not being able to do so.
11:30 AM	The pastor was not dynamic but he kept my interest and presented the message very effectively. I think the pastor's name was Steve but we were never introduced. He was very easy to listen to, engaging, and interesting. He used video as necessary and even passed out dominoes at the end to remind people to get in alignment with God.
11:30 AM	The speaker was the minister, Pastor Mark Erbes. He seemed very at ease in speaking, and while he had notes with him, he did not seem to read directly from them, but use them to keep his message on track. Before his sermon, there was a skit put on by two members that had God and man talking about God pruning man to His expectations. The person playing God had brought a pair of pruning shears with him to the service to use as a prop.

11:30 AM

The speaker communicated the message very well. He seemed very comfortable with the message especially since he said he hadn't preached about this journey ever in his 20 years of preaching. Pastor Mark was very easy to understand and it was great that there was a projector screen to show the actual journey that was taken by Jesus and his family. It shows that this was not just a one day journey that it was a long hard road to Egypt.

Post-Service Atmosphere

Question: *Rate the overall hospitality of the church after the service ended. Wait around a few minutes to see if anyone interacts with you. Please comment on the atmosphere/mood/vibe and whether it would make guests feel like a part of the group. Explain how this affected your overall impression of the church.*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	7.50
11:00 AM	8.00
11:30 AM	6.80
Total	7.25

Time of Visit	Post Service Atmosphere Comments
9:30 AM	They had fellowship after the service with coffee. This was very nice. No one approached me as I left. I did shake hands with the pastor and told him to have a blessed day, but he did not really say anything to me. As far as overall impressions, it was a nice experience.
9:30 AM	Some people in my row were very anxious to get out quickly, so I moved to the aisle quickly and then meandered to the back of the church. Then, I walked to the water fountain and then I left because several people were speaking with the pastor. No one said anything to me before I left. I felt pretty invisible which confirmed my sense that there are people who belong there (and do lots of good things), and then there's everyone else. Perhaps this was because there were several events happening right after the service. This did not make a good impression on me, but didn't surprise me either.
9:30 AM	As stated, several approached me afterwards and told me they hoped I would come again, or reiterated how glad they were that I was there. A gentleman began a conversation with me during coffee time. I was not invited to Sunday school or any adult education that morning or for anything in the future.
9:30 AM	Once the service was done, many members sitting near us approached us. We were asked who we were, if we lived nearby, and if we wanted to go to the Bible study groups held after the sermon. We were asked to join them for coffee and cookies. We met many more people while drinking coffee and enjoying a few cookies. Everyone was very friendly and informative. We were very impressed by the welcoming feel of the church and their desire to have us engaged and coming back in the future.

9:30 AM	After church was over, I talked with the couple that I had been sitting with about the service and she explained to me about the other service that I could go to. Also people told me that they were serving bakery and juice or coffee in a different room and that I could have some if I wanted to, which made me feel very welcomed. I chose not to and said goodbye to the couple and they invited me to come again.
9:30 AM	I was able to spend some time in the sanctuary by myself for a moment and feel the sense of the room and read a few passages. I was greeted again by a wonderful woman brought me a visitor's packet with a coffee cup, a pen, and 2 peppermint candies. She also invited me to a study group at the church. I felt sort of comfortable with her but a little pressured as I got a coffee and met a couple who had been at the church for 30 plus years. We had some small conversation and they were glad to give me a tour of the church. We had a decent surface conversation and then we said goodbye. Overall, post service was decent but slight pushy.
11:00 AM	A few members of the church staff interacted with me after the service. They gave off a very friendly vibe that made me feel welcomed and they invited me to come back.
11:30 AM	The service ended with everyone holding hands and singing. Afterward, as I was preparing to leave, the guest speaker came to me and thanked me for attending. Two other attendees approached me with their thanks as well. It seemed many of the guests were open to hanging out and having conversation. It was very nice and I left with a smile on my face. My overall impression of this church was very positive.
11:30 AM	After the service ended, a few people came up and thanked me for being there, and a women stopped to talk to me for a little bit. She asked if I was from around there and what I did with my life, such as school and work. She was a really nice lady and invited me to join them for Thursday night Young Adult services. It made me feel like I could come back and feel like part of the group.
11:30 AM	Following the prayer requests, the pastor dismissed everyone. I took my time getting my coat on, gathering my things, and preparing to leave. I could hear and see all the camaraderie but nobody approached me at all, not even the pastor. Nobody interacted with me in any fashion. I slowly made my way to the exit and a couple of people even passed me by without acknowledging me. The atmosphere was very happy and warm amongst themselves. It was clear they all knew and enjoyed each other but it seemed as though there was no room for outsiders. This made me sad about the church because they were such a happy church but they didn't seem to be willing to share that happiness.

11:30 AM After the service, most of the people went into their own little groups or out the door. I had the feeling that many of the group were just waiting to bolt out of their seats, to be on to the next thing in their day. I did not have a peaceful feeling at the end of the service. I walked to the door where I had entered, and was briefly spoken to by Pastor Erbes, who thanked me for coming and left me with the hope that I would come again. I did not feel very involved with the group overall after the service.

11:30 AM Everyone was very laid back and welcoming. We were offered cookies, coffee, and candies multiple times prior to and after the service. The atmosphere was very welcoming and laid back. I felt like part of the group and was very pleased with the message, service, music and people.

Information

Question: *Rate your overall impression of the connect resources. These can include, but may not be limited to: the bulletin, brochures, gifts, website, social media, information table, welcome/visitor center, calendar of events, etc. Take time to look around. What types of information did they have? Comment on the resources the church uses to connect with people including whether, at any point, there was an opportunity for you to leave your contact information. If there is a website, browse through it, and comment on your overall impression. What information was available on the website to help first time guests? What else would you like to see on the website?*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	7.50
11:00 AM	10.00
11:30 AM	8.00
Total	7.92

Time of Visit Information Comments

9:30 AM The bulletin was very informative and it looks like they are very connected to the neighborhood. The welcome gift was very cute - a coffee cup with candy, pencil, coffee and tea. I was very excited when it was handed to me. I did leave my information in the attendance book. They do have a newsletter for the month. The information was all correct on the website and I found it easy to use. They had a signup for the exercise classes that they are starting in September. It also looks like they are having a block party in September.

9:30 AM The bulletins (three papers) were packed full of information. I had two opportunities to leave my contact information. The website does not seem to have nearly as much particular information. The website could use more information for guests and needs to be updated. I also found a Facebook page with daily devotionals and upcoming events listed. I saw there was a table near the door with several sign-up sheets but I didn't stop to look and see what they were, I was ready to leave.

9:30 AM All sorts of information was posted on bulletin boards and down the halls, highlighting ministries, events and resources. There was not a central area, but it was available and easy to see. The bulletin has both services printed on it, which was a bit much. PowerPoint was well used before and during the service. An attendance book in each pew allowed one to connect further, as well as a guest book in the hall. Nobody invited me to sign it though. Prayer request cards in the pew were available and explained. The web site looks professional. Basic information is available, such as address and service times. I would suggest having an outside person review it as they sat with a congregational member. The coffee mug gift included a list of ministries, which is nice.

9:30 AM The connection resources were very useful and informative. The bulletin provided information about the congregation members working in different positions (greeters, ushers, attendants, etc.) as well as the bulletin (agenda) of service and Pastor information. The bulletin also had announcements, activities, a weekly schedule of events, upcoming events, devotional information and a place for sermon notes. The welcome gifts had the mug with the name of the church, a welcome brochure that gave good basic information about the church services, how to connect on Facebook or the web, as well as an e-mail address and phone number for contact. The brochure also listed "ministry opportunities" and had basic information about each opportunity listed. The website gave all of the information that was found on the bulletin and welcome brochure and much more. Full information on the ministry opportunities, pictures, archives of old messages, and more was found on their webpage. Their Facebook page has contact information, a daily verse, pictures and reminders. All information, either in the church bulletins or on their social media sites, were well put-together and very informative. We did not see an information table or welcome center, but the church was having a baked goods sale so that may have been blocking the information.

9:30 AM The sign outside of the church was helpful for knowing about when you could attend the services. They handed out a brochure at the door which had tons of information like happenings, important dates, and announcements, along with what we would be doing during the service. There was an opportunity to get more information when we signed the attendance book and you could put your address as well. On their website, they have a very welcoming paragraph addressing potential members, or just people that want to check the church out. They also have the times of the different services offered and events that are going on. They have a very good page for contact information with hours, numbers, and the church's address with a map. They do a very good job of describing all of the parts of the church and everything going on. I was pleased with everything they had on there and I don't think there's anything they're missing.

9:30 AM The bulletin and calendar suggests that they have some sort of event or meeting on a daily basis. I imagine there is a core group of 20 people who facilitate and contribute to these events and see them through. I was recommended to fill out the visitor's information log located in the back of every pew by a few people. The website's homepage had comments from July of 2012 and zero activity since. I saw a link to their Facebook page but could not access it through the website along with other departments. I think it's probably under construction. I saw a long list of committees and boards with many names wearing multiple hats which would be crucial and necessary for a church of this size to function and maintain events and ministries. The website and bulletin are basic and yet communicate well enough the information.

11:00 AM First, they passed around the attendance record. They had leaflets in their bulletins which explained the happenings. They had a corner near the entryway with a table filled with information and outreach programs. There was a bulletin board in the vestibule with the fall schedule and it was very nicely done. I visited their website and it did not seem to have been updated since June, other than an upcoming party. I would like to see what each week's sermon is going to be about in advance. The street address on the website was not prominent and it needs more pictures.

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- 11:30 AM There were two large standing fixtures upon entering the building that included announcements, brochures, upcoming events, and pictures. There was a guest book near the front doors for attendees to leave their contact information. A table was set out for a bake sale (though it was not 'active' at the time) and another station was set that included newsletters, volunteer sign up sheets, and other information. Their website is simple and clean, though somewhat dull and takes time to load certain pages (possible server issues?). Their Facebook link is also broken. I would have ranked them a 10 here but their website is poor.
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- 11:30 AM When I walked into the church, there was a container of weekly newsletters standing on a table that contained all kinds of information dealing with recent events and activities, recent news inside and outside the church, upcoming activities and events, and a calendar showing the months major activities and events. A sign-in sheet was passed around, although somehow it bypassed me completely, to take the names of everyone in attendance. There is also a website showing service times, what the church is about, all of the ministries of the church and a link to their Facebook page. The website was very well put together with just about any information one might need about the church.
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- 11:30 AM There were minimal connect resources in the main lobby. The young man I met before the service gave me a very nice visitor gift though. It had a cup with a coffee packet, a tea bag, a few pieces of candy, a pen, and a few other things. I didn't notice a visitor center but I didn't ask for one either. There was a sign-in pulpit but I didn't partake. I went to the website and it is very nice. It is very simple to use and full of information. If I were to research the church online before visiting, this website would have provided me with all the information I would need. In addition, they are listed on a Bing search with a Google map.
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- 11:30 AM This church did have a website that I perused before going to the service. It described the church as a family-centered church with open arms to everyone. The website had information on services, classes, and contact information that a first-time guest would be interested in learning about. The bulletin that I was given had an insert called, "Harbor Happenings" which described all the various activities coming up in the church. It was very detailed and interesting. During the service, there was an announcement time where several of the activities were discussed, and also an attendance pad for each person to sign in.

11:30 AM

The bulletin was full of all kinds of information including an extra insert about what all is going on with the church family. There were signs up around the church depicting the different services that had been talked about over the past weeks in the church as well. There was a place that talked about a university in Africa and different mission trips the church had been a part of. I was able to leave my contact information in the guest registry. The website of the church is also very easy to follow. They are doing a survey of all of their church members, allowing them to come into the church to use their computers if they do not have access from home. Mission, meeting and youth information was also posted on the website and around the church. The website has a wealth of information ranging from events to information about the church and youth service, missionary projects, Facebook link, and happenings of the church. It would be really neat to see this church have a Twitter account to be able to reach more of their service members. I think that this church would be able to handle have a Twitter account.

Friendliness

Question: Overall, rate how friendly the church was to you during your visit. Comment on how welcome you felt.

Average Score:

9:30 AM	8.17
11:00 AM	10.00
11:30 AM	7.60
Total	8.08

Time of Visit	Friendliness Comments
9:30 AM	I felt very welcomed. I feel this service was geared to the older generation, but overall it was a very nice experience.
9:30 AM	Even though I looked basically like everyone else in the church (white, middle-class, well-dressed), I did not feel particularly welcomed. I can only surmise how someone who looked different would feel.
9:30 AM	One cannot enter these doors without feeling overwhelmingly welcomed. The lacking was the invitation to attend other events, studies, etc.
9:30 AM	The congregation was very friendly and we felt very welcome and received many invitation so return soon.
9:30 AM	This church was very friendly. I was immediately greeted by anybody that saw me and they wanted to know who I was, especially the couple that I had met in the beginning and ended up sitting by. They were more than happy to answer any questions I had and tell me about what they do there and about the church.
9:30 AM	I wouldn't say that there couldn't be improvement but by no means were people rude. They were nice members and the pastor himself was friendly and greeted my and thanked me for coming.
11:00 AM	They were extremely friendly. They couldn't have been nicer. I felt very welcomed.
11:30 AM	The church and those who attended were very friendly! I felt very welcomed and warm from the whole experience.
11:30 AM	Everyone was extremely friendly and very inviting. I felt right at home with this group of people.
11:30 AM	The congregation themselves are clearly happy people and had a good time but they just didn't share any of their energy with me. I didn't feel welcome at all, almost to the point of leaving early. I actually felt like I wasn't even there, as far as they were concerned, except for the young man who welcomed me first.

11:30 AM I was welcomed in a friendly manner before the service, but after the service, little was said to me. I did not feel a part of the congregation. There was more opportunity for members of the group to continue the friendly atmosphere after the service by encouraging me to return, but this was not done except by the pastor.

11:30 AM This church was very friendly and welcoming. I felt like part of the group and would recommend it to others and would be willing to return.

Children's/Youth Ministry

Question: *Rate your impression of the children's/youth ministry at this church. Even if you don't have children, consider the issues (safety, cleanliness, easy to locate, staffing, etc.) from a parent's point of view. Based on your experience at the church, would you feel comfortable leaving a child in their care? What information (e.g. website, bulletin, signage, etc.) was available to help you make this decision? Do you think children/youth would enjoy their time there? Why? If this church does not appear to offer anything for children, how does that impact your impression of this church?*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	5.67
11:00 AM	9.00
11:30 AM	6.40
Total	6.25

Time of Visit	Children's/Youth Ministry Comments
9:30 AM	I asked where the youth classes are. I was told they won't have classes until the children are back in school. I did not see any classrooms for the children, just the nursery, so I am unable to comment on the appearance of them. This is a concern. We need to have our young people in church, so I was a little disappointed by this.
9:30 AM	The facility was clean and welcoming. I saw in the bulletin that they have youth groups for Jr. High, a staffed nursery for infants and toddlers etc., but I saw very, very few children or young families. I would feel comfortable enough to leave my child in their care. The children's ministry looked to be well staffed and secure.
9:30 AM	It is clear that the congregation understands that children's ministries are important. More needs to be done to include children in the worship (as readers, ushers, etc.). I did not see anything that would inform parents where the nursery is, where classrooms are, or if there is Children's church (in the bulletin, or signage).

9:30 AM	<p>The church only had a place for the infants and toddlers to go during the service. All other elementary-age children were expected to attend the regular church service. Safety, cleanliness, and ease of location were all good, and if our children were younger I would have no issues with having them attending the nursery. We did wish that there was a separate activity time for the children during the regular service to get them more engaged at their level, even though there was a children's message built into the service. I believe that the non-service activities for the junior high and high school aged children were active and well-organized based on information found on their web page, Facebook, and bulletin information.</p>
9:30 AM	<p>I thought that it was very safe for children. There were no stairs that I saw; it appeared to be all one floor. I didn't see any signs directing where the kids go during the service, but I was told where they go. It was a very big room that seemed to be safe so I would definitely leave my kids there. There was not much information about it that was visible in the church, though, so any decision a parent makes here would have to be based off the information people tell you. I think the kids really enjoyed it; from what I saw they were coloring. They also had a little talk with a lady in the front of the church which was kind of like a mini Sunday school. She had props and talked so that the kids understood clearly what she was talking about. On the website they have a page with explanations of the nursery and how there is a supervised nursery for infants through age 6.</p>
9:30 AM	<p>I have no reason to believe something would be off in this department. I briefly glanced in the daycare room as I was with members showing me around but I would have to bring my kids to experience that aspect of the ministry. There was a short story-telling time before the children were dismissed where the pastor had the small crowd of 5 or 6 children come to the front and sit with him as he paraphrased the sermon for a few minutes. The children were then dismissed and little if anything was mentioned about the children's ministry or events to be held. The bulletin or event calendar does not suggest that there is a large group of children who regularly attend Lake Harbor. My impression isn't too affected by this due to its older attendance for this service time. I do not necessarily think my children would enjoy their time there.</p>
11:00 AM	<p>The church was clean with adequate signage, which made me feel like the daycare was probably well organized and I would have no problem leaving my children there. Before the service started, announcements were made about upcoming children's activities in the youth ministry, which sounded fun, and I would also allow my children to participate in that.</p>

11:30 AM The church and its public areas looked very clean, organized, and safe. The staff seemed responsive and friendly. There was plenty of evidence that the kids were well cared for, which included bulletins and sign-up sheets for upcoming events. It was also stated in the day's itinerary that there was an area dedicated to children for the attendee's convenience. The guest speaker is also the youth pastor, which would have helped my decision in going to this church if I had children because he seems to be a lot of fun. I think children/youth do enjoy their time there, and I was pleased to have seen both young children and teenagers attending the service with interest.

11:30 AM This church has a youth ministry and I believe children would enjoy it there, but I would not leave my child unattended. There were a few children just running around and nobody was really paying attention. The kids were running around and playing on the pews and one of them could have gotten hurt.

11:30 AM I did not have the opportunity to view any of their youth ministry services or provisions. All of the children remained in the service and some of them were even sitting by themselves. Children were walking back and forth at their leisure and adults were as well. There were separate discussions going on in different corners of the worship area and it just seemed perhaps a bit too informal. I like informal, I like comfortable, but this service may have taken it bit too far.

11:30 AM There were several children present during this service, even though I believe other children were being cared for in another part of the building. The children in the service were restless and talkative, causing somewhat of a distraction. One young girl, about 8 years old, who was old enough to sit quietly through the service, sat on the floor and colored on the front row. I felt this was somewhat distracting. From what I could glean, there was some type of child care during this service that looked to be overseen by some of the teen members. They all came into the sanctuary toward the end of the service (the service held over longer than one hour and possibly it was thought that the service would conclude at one hour's time) and waited for the service to be over. I noticed that once the youth came into the sanctuary, there was not much looking-after being done by the teens, and the kids were up running around. Since the service was out late and the kids were already downstairs, it didn't feel right to go up the stairs into the classroom area without drawing attention to myself. The bulletin did indicate that there was a children's time in the first service after which they went out of the sanctuary to another room, and also that in between services, Sunday school classes were held for all age groups.

11:30 AM

The church talked about the youth ministry and how there is a mission trip every summer. During the service there were children that were taken care of, and came back for the end of the service. The Youth pastor seemed very upbeat and full of life. I would love to have my children be part of this youth ministry.

Diversity and Outreach

Question: *Rate the strength of the church's diversity and outreach efforts. What did you observe, either before or during your visit, that leads you to believe that this church values diversity? "Diversity" means more than different races and backgrounds; it also includes people who are young and old, wealthy and poor, and male and female. What specifically did you observe that demonstrates the church's efforts to attract various groups from the surrounding community? Examples may include, but aren't limited to, offering a service in another language, showing diversity in pictures, using different styles of music, etc.*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	4.33
11:00 AM	4.00
11:30 AM	7.20
Total	5.50

Time of Visit	Diversity and Outreach Comments
9:30 AM	I did not see where the church offers diversity. This is a church with an older congregation in their 50s and older. I did see one young couple in their 30s, but they were mostly older middle-class people. They really need to reach out to the younger generation to keep the church alive.
9:30 AM	I saw little, if any ,evidence of diversity. No racial diversity, not much socioeconomic diversity and most of the congregation looked 40 or above. I saw two evidences of caring for the "other": Hosting Family Promise, and the Noisy Offering to support CROP/Church World Services, but I didn't see anyone at the service that looked like the "other".
9:30 AM	The church serves the neighborhood, which is European, middle class and aging. The congregation reflects this. I did not see mention of any ministries that reach out and connect with other people, other than financial, and donation support of Mission for Area People.
9:30 AM	Based on the "early service" congregation, it appeared that the church (although it has many out-reach programs in the community) was geared for and directed to an older, middle to upper class Caucasian population. We did not observe other opportunities of services in other languages or with different styles of music. That being said, the later service at 11:30 may be more geared towards diversity based on the information in the bulletin.

9:30 AM	I think I only saw Caucasian people at the church but it seemed like there was a pretty good diversity of people from different walks of life. There were a lot of married couples but single people as well. They did show diversity in pictures, with a video that had people of different races. From what I observed, they are very open and tolerant.
9:30 AM	Everyone seemed to be of the middle class and there was little diversity of age at this particular service. Most were Caucasian. In this service, I saw or heard little about the efforts to impact the surrounding community outside of its members.
11:00 AM	I have lived in the city all my life and have never heard any mention of this church involved in an outreach, even though I'm sure they are. Their traditional service seems to be the popular service, which attracts the older generation. There were only 25 people at the contemporary service. It didn't seem like a service that the younger generation would want to come back to. There seemed to be an equal amount of men to women, but most of the attendees were Caucasian. They talked about their outreach programs and how through church affiliation groups, they are participating in the Box City program. They also talked about the upcoming Crop Walk, which is an outreach program with other churches.
11:30 AM	I felt the church accepted diversity, but did not necessarily push for it. The people who attended this service were both young and old, male and female, and different races. However, I did not notice a service being offered in another language, no pictures showing diversity, and the style of music did not hold a lot of variety.
11:30 AM	The church did not seem to have a problem with anyone young or old, rich or poor, or of any minority when it came to attendance, yet I did not see anything in particular that would lead me to believe that they are actively trying to attract different types of people to the church. The church is what it is with no attempt to draw in a more diverse group.
11:30 AM	This church has three different services so they offer something for a variety of worshipers. They seem to be trying very valiantly to reach anyone who would like to attend a religious service. I did notice that even with such a small congregation (of about 30 people), I saw most age brackets represented, married and single people, Caucasians, African-Americans, and casually dressed people. I am not aware of any specific outreach programs they may have other than the website.
11:30 AM	There were various types of people in the service that were diversified in race, backgrounds, age, and wealth. I noticed each person was accepted for themselves, and not because it was expected by the church. I am not sure what the attraction was for these various people, but they all seemed to feel that they fit in this church's community.

11:30 AM

There was a very diverse group of members at this service. I think that this church includes all people around the community. There wasn't much talk about diversity, but it seemed that everyone would be welcome. There was a more upbeat style of music which would attract a younger group of people.

Return

Question: *Based on your overall experience and what this church has to offer, please rate how willing you would be to return to this church. Comment on why you would or would not return. Would you encourage other people to attend church here? In your opinion, what groups (older/younger/families/college/teens/children) are more likely to be attracted to this church?*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	5.67
11:00 AM	1.00
11:30 AM	6.40
Total	5.58

Time of Visit Return Comments

9:30 AM Overall this is a great church that reaches out to the elderly. It seemed very quiet. I'm into more contemporary music and a little "amen" every now and then. I felt that you had to be very reserved in this church setting. I would not go back to this church again because of the traditional service. As far as recommending to others, if they are looking for this kind of service I would definitely recommend it to them. Again, I think they are attracting the elderly people in our community. I'm not sure if the 11 a.m. service is more contemporary and brings in the younger crowd.

9:30 AM I think this is a church for older, white folks and thus not the kind of church I am looking for. When visiting a church, it matters a great deal whether or not you get the sense that they want you to be there, even with or without that, I'm able to worship and engage and learn, but it doesn't feel like a community I would want to be a part of. From my experience, I would not encourage others to attend church here. I would not discourage them either.

9:30 AM It's a struggling church, due to an aging population. Using the gifts of the members to emphasize to younger generations the value of traditional worship, this church has potential to be reinvigorated with families. The enthusiasm alone is enough to make me want to return.

9:30 AM	Based on what this church has to offer regarding the separate service options, outreach and ministry opportunities, and overall friendliness of the church, we would be willing to return to this church. The one lacking area might be with the 5-12 year-old age group that has no real opportunity to go to class and learn more at their level. We would encourage other people to attend this church. Based on the early service I would think that older individuals and couples would be attracted to this church service.
9:30 AM	I would probably return to this church and the friendliness the biggest reason why. The sermon part didn't really appeal to me but the church has a good atmosphere. I would recommend this church to other people and encourage them to try it out. Since I went to the more traditional service and the majority of the people were older, I would say older people probably like that one better. I was told though that the celebration service has a younger audience, so that would be cool to check out.
9:30 AM	I would not discourage someone from attending this service nor would I encourage it. I wouldn't say anything about it unless I was asked and I would have a different answer depending on who asked me. I would recommend this specific service to a 50-70 year old with a Methodist upbringing because there are nice people here. There was nothing that I took away that would encourage me to pursue further fellowship.
11:00 AM	I would not return because upon entering and being told that the contemporary service was being held in a small corner of the church with folding chairs, I felt uncomfortable immediately. The service itself took an hour and a half and was just too long for a sitting situation like that. The sermon was uninteresting and the music, while good, did not engage me. I would not recommend this church to anyone. I feel married couples who are ages 60 and older might be most attracted to this church.
11:30 AM	My overall experience was that of a positive one! If I were interested in attending a church on a regular basis, I would be more inclined to go to this one because this is the only one I've attended in quite some time. I would encourage others to attend if they were part of a young family. I feel older generations would also feel comfortable so long as they were open to a more modern approach to the religion.
11:30 AM	I would be willing to return to this church because it was very welcoming and I enjoyed that. I would also recommend this church to anyone who asked. I believe that young adults would enjoy this church more than children would. Maybe if they were to use more lively music they could attract teenagers and get them more engaged in the service.

-
- 11:30 AM I have no desire to attend this church regularly. I wouldn't encourage others to attend nor would I discourage them. In general, my visit was not a pleasant one so I would not want to repeat it. The message was good but that was about it. I wish now that I would have opted for an earlier service as it would have been larger and it may have afforded me a better profile of the church in general.
-
- 11:30 AM Based solely on this type of service, I would not attend again. I did not have a religious experience or feel closer to God by attending, but felt it was more a social gathering. I might have enjoyed the earlier, more traditional service, though. This type of service seems to appeal to a younger crowd. I was personally looking for serenity and prayer, and electric guitars and "praise" songs just don't provide that, in my opinion.
-
- 11:30 AM I would be very willing to return to this church. It was very laid back and upbeat and welcoming. Everyone was very nice and made me feel part of the group. I would encourage other people to attend this church as well. I am very interested in going to the early service to see the live band that is offered.
-

Overall Commentary

Question: *Rate your overall perception of this church. Based on your experience, what suggestions do you have for them? Keep in mind that the purpose of Faith Perceptions' research is to help this church improve the experience for future guests. If you chose to fill out a visitors' card, the church may follow up by sending you a letter, email, etc. We track these communications, so please send us an email indicating when and how they contacted you. Please share with us any other observations you have about this church that may not have been explained earlier.*

Average Score:

9:30 AM	6.67
11:00 AM	5.00
11:30 AM	6.80
Total	6.58

Time of Visit Overall Comments

9:30 AM	Overall it was a nice message and a beautiful church. The only thing I would change is to get some of your young families into the church.
9:30 AM	Encourage everyone, not just the official greeters, to reach out to people they don't recognize. Perhaps people have to be instructed on how to greet (get out of your row, seek out someone you don't know, ask them this or that question), because for some it doesn't come naturally. Unfortunately, it is hard for an older white church to attract anyone else unless the leadership (elders, pastor, music directors) is more diverse. I rate this church a 4, because it is very similar to a lot of the other churches I have visited this year.
9:30 AM	My overall experience was very favorable. Here are a few comments that did not fit in previous questions: 1. The fact they did not use Styrofoam for coffee was very appealing. The homemade breads made coffee time feel more special, too. 2. For the sake of uniformity, women in the choir should not carry purses down the aisle. 3. Invite visitors to other church functions.

9:30 AM

Our overall perception of the church was very favorable. I would recommend looking into furthering their children's program for the elementary-aged children during the service so the parents can concentrate on the sermon. Perhaps a full service for the children at the same time, only geared more towards their concentration and activity levels would be beneficial. The church had people holding the door, greeting people and passing out bulletins, it may be possible that one of these folks could ask if this was our first time to the church and ask another member to "welcome" us during the pre-service. "Welcomers" would perhaps be able to give us the gift that we received during the hand-shaking time, but also be introducing us to the people that we were sitting near so we could start making connections without feeling awkward approaching others. Also, we observed that the entire service was very formal and didn't encourage applause or congregation participation unless it was scripted. They have a very talented choir and musicians, it would have been nice to show appreciation for their individual contributions. Encouraging an impromptu "Amen" would not be discouraged. Overall the experience was positive, the people were friendly and informative, and the sermon was well laid out and easy to understand. Thank-You for a lovely morning in God's Word!

9:30 AM

I feel like this is a very good community of people and they are so nice. They are willing to answer questions and show you around. The only improvement I can think of is the sermon; other people seemed to enjoy but I didn't think it was that great. They do a very good job at showing things visually though. They had pictures around the room that go with the services from week to week. Overall I enjoyed going here and getting to know the people.

9:30 AM	<p>My overall perception of the church after one visit to one service is a mixture of emotions. I understand that this way of by the book ministry is acceptable, useful and common but I just didn't see anyone hungry for revelation and truth. It just seemed like comfortable traditions were the priority. My main suggestion would be for the leadership to get the congregation of this service more engaged versus entertained. Maybe speaking to their generation in a more intimate way to relay such a beautiful experience as baptism. I also did not hear one comment about the community outside of the immediate church members and church events. Lake Harbor seems to be pretty disconnected from the surrounding community influence with minimal acknowledgment of the light they are intended to be for the world to see. On the face of it all, Lake Harbor does a decent job of holding a social gathering, but in all honesty they aren't as successful in preparing to encounter God as a ritual. Less music and more prayer, sharing, and preaching would also be helpful to attract devoted followers who have real struggles to address.</p>
11:00 AM	<p>My overall perception of the church is that it's a struggling church with a small congregation. My recommendation would be that they send some of their elders and ministers into the nearby churches that seem to be doing well and observe the differences. They might also consider reaching out to people moving into the area.</p>
11:30 AM	<p>I enjoyed my visit to this church, though I would encourage that they make it more apparent where to go if services are not to be held in the main room. It may also be worthwhile if the church updated their website. The guest speaker was great, though! His style of doing the service was the most appealing to me, and very refreshing.</p>
11:30 AM	<p>Overall it was a very nice church to attend, but perhaps they could have a more energetic tone when it comes to the message. I have seen preachers scream and holler their praises to God during the service and really get the audience pepped up for Christ. Not saying that this preacher should scream and holler but being loud and energetic helps keep the people excited about being there. Also, if the church is going to have a ministry for young kids, then the one in charge of that needs to keep an eye on them the entire time, not just let them wander off. Kids could get hurt by playing around on the pews and I'm sure the church doesn't want to deal with angry parents. I loved how welcoming everybody was though and I would be more than willing to attend again.</p>

11:30 AM For this specific "celebration" service, I would recommend that they restrict the movement of the children a bit more, both for safety and out of respect for the service. I would also recommend they use their music as entertainment only and allow the congregation to sit and enjoy it rather than have to stand and attempt to participate in songs that they probably have never heard before. I would also suggest that members recognize visitors and attempt to greet them and maybe have the pastor stand at the exit to meet newcomers and thank them for coming. I did not have the opportunity to fill out any sort of visitor card, though I would have had it been offered.

11:30 AM The one thing I found very distracting was the habit of the members to get up at any time, walk to the back of the room and get food or drinks, and then walk back in and sit in their chairs, all while the service was going on. Not only did I feel it was rude to get up while the pastor was talking and walk around, but I was embarrassed for him as well. This type of activity is fine for before or after the service, but not during. Maybe I sound old-fashioned, but the pastor should be given recognition and respect. I didn't find that at this church.

11:30 AM My only suggestion to this church would be to place signs to show where the parking lot is located.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 9:30 AM
Service Date: 9/1/2013
Service Title: Eternal Work
Guest Gender: F
Guest Age: 49
Guest ID: 28821
Overall Rating: 7

1. Community Awareness

I stopped at a Mobile gas station on the corner of Henry and Norton. The clerk working there said she knew where it was but then sent me out to Seaway and said I would see the church on my right. I told her the church was on Henry Street, and she then replied that she wasn't sure where the church was.

2. Signage

The church itself is beautiful. The cross and the words "Are you ready?" were beautiful, along with the stained glass of Jesus. As far as signage, this could use some work. When I walked in I did not see where the children would go without asking. I went to the nursery and the young girl was on her phone while I was asking her questions. There were no children in the room yet, but it seemed very dark. She said the nursery went up to age 7, but she was not really sure. The signs were very small for the nursery. As far as parking and signs on service times, there was a sign in front of church for the 11 a.m. service but no sign for the 9:30 service. They really could use a permanent sign that shows the times of service out by the road. I did drive by Friday and there were no signs at all for service times.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

The greeters were very welcoming. They showed me where the bathrooms were as I entered the sanctuary.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

Everyone was very friendly at the church. There was one usher who went above and beyond to get me info for the youth programs. She also gave me a welcome gift of a coffee cup with some goodies in it. This did put a smile on my face and made me feel welcome. The people of the church itself really did not go out of their way to say hi or be friendly, but the ushers and greeters were very warm and friendly.

5. Seating

The pews were very comfortable. The people were spread out so you could really choose wherever you felt comfortable. They had plenty of seating at the 9:30 service. Again, the church itself was a beautiful, clean church.

6. Music

The style of the music was traditional. There were a trumpet and a trombone along with organ. It was not my style, but it did keep the attention of the congregation. This music would reach more of the older generation, people over their 60s. There were very few young people in the church. If you're looking to grow the church, you may need to explore music options to reach the younger generation.

7. In-Service Greeting

The greeting during the service was perfect. They welcomed any visitors and asked them to sign the attendance book, and then we meet with the people around us. Everyone was very friendly and sincere.

8. Message

The message was very good. Pastor Mark Erbes talked about how when we work, if we look at it like we are working for God, our attitudes will change. We sometimes feel like we are just digging a hole and going nowhere, but we can choose to get out of that hole when we change our attitude and in everything we do. Do it for God! It lasted about 15 minutes and then he played a short video that really tied it all together - the video was of a guy digging in the sand going nowhere and then he decided to make a change and climbed out of the hole and was on top of the mountain. This helped me for right now. I'm in a place in my life where I have lost my job, but whatever I'm doing, if I do it for God, I will have a better attitude knowing I'm doing it for God. I can be a blessing anywhere I go if I have the right attitude.

9. Speaker

Pastor Mark Erbes was very prepared, comfortable and easy to follow. I loved how he used the short video to tie it all together in the end.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

They had fellowship after the service with coffee. This was very nice. No one approached me as I left. I did shake hands with the pastor and told him to have a blessed day, but he did not really say anything to me. As far as overall impressions, it was a nice experience.

11. Information

The bulletin was very informative and it looks like they are very connected to the neighborhood. The welcome gift was very cute - a coffee cup with candy, pencil, coffee and tea. I was very excited when it was handed to me. I did leave my information in the attendance book. They do have a newsletter for the month. The information was all correct on the website and I found it easy to use. They had a signup for the exercise classes that they are starting in September. It also looks like they are having a block party in September.

12. Friendliness

I felt very welcomed. I feel this service was geared to the older generation, but overall it was a very nice experience.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

I asked where the youth classes are. I was told they won't have classes until the children are back in school. I did not see any classrooms for the children, just the nursery, so I am unable to comment on the appearance of them. This is a concern. We need to have our young people in church, so I was a little disappointed by this.

14. Diversity and Outreach

I did not see where the church offers diversity. This is a church with an older congregation in their 50s and older. I did see one young couple in their 30s, but they were mostly older middle-class people. They really need to reach out to the younger generation to keep the church alive.

15. Return

Overall this is a great church that reaches out to the elderly. It seemed very quiet. I'm into more contemporary music and a little "amen" every now and then. I felt that you had to be very reserved in this church setting. I would not go back to this church again because of the traditional service. As far as recommending to others, if they are looking for this kind of service I would definitely recommend it to them. Again, I think they are attracting the elderly people in our community. I'm not sure if the 11 a.m. service is more contemporary and brings in the younger crowd.

16. Overall Experience

Overall it was a nice message and a beautiful church. The only thing I would change is to get some of your young families into the church.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 11:00 AM
Service Date: 9/1/2013
Service Title: Celebration Service
Guest Gender: F
Guest Age: 16
Guest ID: 28760
Overall Rating: 5

1. Community Awareness

They were aware of the location, but that's all they were able to tell me.

2. Signage

There was a sign outside (visible from the main road) announcing the 11 a.m. service. The worship times were listed and easy to read. There were signs indicating where to enter and where to park. There were signs directing me to the service, restrooms and children's area.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

There were greeters right outside the door and inside the church. They welcomed me with a small gift and everyone was very sincere and welcoming.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

Everybody was very friendly and welcoming. I can't think of anything they could have done to make it more friendly. It elevated my mood and made me feel like the service would be uplifting and energetic.

5. Seating

There were plenty of seats to choose from, but they were very uncomfortable folding chairs. Everybody sat close together.

6. Music

The music was contemporary. It was live music and the vocalists seemed sincere about their part of the service. Most of the people were engaged in the music. I feel the age groups that the music would most appeal to are anywhere from 8 to 40.

7. In-Service Greeting

Everyone in attendance shook hands with one another and it felt sincere. I don't feel like it was overdone. It felt like just enough.

8. Message

The message was not appealing to me. The message was about what the Bible has to say about working. It was comparing working for rewards and how working is like toiling in the wind. The sermon was about 15 minutes long. I felt the message was over-simplified and the comparisons seemed obvious. The concept was easy to grasp. It was relevant, but I already understood this concept. The message was not interesting or enjoyable for me.

9. Speaker

Pastor Mark was giving the sermon. The speaker lacked enthusiasm, which made it hard to stay focused and listen intently. He seemed prepared and comfortable, but not engaging enough with the congregation. The video, however, was excellent. That was the only prop used by Pastor Mark during the sermon.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

A few members of the church staff interacted with me after the service. They gave off a very friendly vibe that made me feel welcomed and they invited me to come back.

11. Information

First, they passed around the attendance record. They had leaflets in their bulletins which explained the happenings. They had a corner near the entryway with a table filled with information and outreach programs. There was a bulletin board in the vestibule with the fall schedule and it was very nicely done. I visited their website and it did not seem to have been updated since June, other than an upcoming party. I would like to see what each week's sermon is going to be about in advance. The street address on the website was not prominent and it needs more pictures.

12. Friendliness

They were extremely friendly. They couldn't have been nicer. I felt very welcomed.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

The church was clean with adequate signage, which made me feel like the daycare was probably well organized and I would have no problem leaving my children there. Before the service started, announcements were made about upcoming children's activities in the youth ministry, which sounded fun, and I would also allow my children to participate in that.

14. Diversity and Outreach

I have lived in the city all my life and have never heard any mention of this church involved in an outreach, even though I'm sure they are. Their traditional service seems to be the popular service, which attracts the older generation. There were only 25 people at the contemporary service. It didn't seem like a service that the younger generation would want to come back to. There seemed to be an equal amount of men to women, but most of the attendees were Caucasian. They talked about their outreach programs and how through church affiliation groups, they are participating in the Box City program. They also talked about the upcoming Crop Walk, which is an outreach program with other churches.

15. Return

I would not return because upon entering and being told that the contemporary service was being held in a small corner of the church with folding chairs, I felt uncomfortable immediately. The service itself took an hour and a half and was just too long for a sitting situation like that. The sermon was uninteresting and the music, while good, did not engage me. I would not recommend this church to anyone. I feel married couples who are ages 60 and older might be most attracted to this church.

16. Overall Experience

My overall perception of the church is that it's a struggling church with a small congregation. My recommendation would be that they send some of their elders and ministers into the nearby churches that seem to be doing well and observe the differences. They might also consider reaching out to people moving into the area.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 9:30 AM
Service Date: 9/29/2013
Service Title: Combined Service
Guest Gender: F
Guest Age: 44
Guest ID: 29661
Overall Rating: 4

1. Community Awareness

I stopped at a gas station after the service that was 1/2 mile south of the church on the same main road and the gas station attendant who was a younger female had no idea where it was located.

2. Signage

The church was obvious from the road. It recognizable by its shape and the sign that had worship times listed. Apparently they are adding a new sign (which I didn't see), that is soon to be up-and-running. It was obvious where to park and there were plenty of parking spaces. I was greeted at the door on the way in and it was obvious where to go (the sanctuary was immediately in front of me). There were signs for restrooms, children's ministry, office area, etc. and they were easy to read.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

The door greeter who held open the door did his job well, but was not especially friendly. Of the three greeters inside, one (an older man) seemed genuinely happy to meet me. I was asked to sign a guest registry at the door. I felt the older gentleman's greeting was truly sincere.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

A few people sitting near me said hello, but nothing further. There was a feeling(mood)of warmth between people who knew each other (lots of chatting before the service), but not towards me. I was not feeling very welcome and a little uneasy.

5. Seating

There was plenty of comfortable seating and I was not directed toward a particular spot (my preference). People were quite spread out and as usual avoided the front few rows.

6. Music

The music was not excellent. The pianist/organists made a lot of mistakes, which I found distracting. I couldn't say if she was feeling sincere about her performance or not. There was an organ, piano, traditional choir, a praise song with guitar and the postlude was a jazzy piano/drum number. There was a little of something for everyone. I did not feel that people particularly connected with the music based on their response (no clapping, or amens, or the like). I am not sure who would enjoy the music.

7. In-Service Greeting

The service began with a time to greet, but like most of the churches I've been to this year, it was very perfunctory. A few people introduced themselves. Some said hello or asked my name or asked if I was a guest. The amount of time seemed just about right. One woman with dark wavy hair who had given an announcement at the beginning of service also seemed genuinely warm in her greeting.

8. Message

The message was well given and I came away with some good thoughts to chew on about humility, but I didn't resonate with his reference to right and wrong questions. I understood the concept and felt parts of the sermon were relevant to me. I have been known to tell my children that the only bad question is the only one they already know the answer to. And I'm afraid some people would come away from that sermon being afraid to ask God (and each other), difficult questions. I don't know how long the sermon lasted but the entire service lasted exactly one hour. The message was more interesting than enjoyable.

9. Speaker

The speaker was prepared, comfortable and I assume the head pastor,(Pastor Mark). He was easy to listen to and spoke clearly. He used some PowerPoint slides, but I didn't find that they added very much to the presentation.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

Some people in my row were very anxious to get out quickly, so I moved to the aisle quickly and then meandered to the back of the church. Then, I walked to the water fountain and then I left because several people were speaking with the pastor. No one said anything to me before I left. I felt pretty invisible which confirmed my sense that there are people who belong there (and do lots of good things), and then there's everyone else. Perhaps this was because there were several events happening right after the service. This did not make a good impression on me, but didn't surprise me either.

11. Information

The bulletins (three papers) were packed full of information. I had two opportunities to leave my contact information. The website does not seem to have nearly as much particular information. The website could use more information for guests and needs to be updated. I also found a Facebook page with daily devotionals and upcoming events listed. I saw there was a table near the door with several sign-up sheets but I didn't stop to look and see what they were, I was ready to leave.

12. Friendliness

Even though I looked basically like everyone else in the church (white, middle-class, well-dressed), I did not feel particularly welcomed. I can only surmise how someone who looked different would feel.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

The facility was clean and welcoming. I saw in the bulletin that they have youth groups for Jr. High, a staffed nursery for infants and toddlers etc., but I saw very, very few children or young families. I would feel comfortable enough to leave my child in their care. The children's ministry looked to be well staffed and secure.

14. Diversity and Outreach

I saw little, if any, evidence of diversity. No racial diversity, not much socioeconomic diversity and most of the congregation looked 40 or above. I saw two evidences of caring for the "other": Hosting Family Promise, and the Noisy Offering to support CROP/Church World Services, but I didn't see anyone at the service that looked like the "other".

15. Return

I think this is a church for older, white folks and thus not the kind of church I am looking for. When visiting a church, it matters a great deal whether or not you get the sense that they want you to be there, even with or without that, I'm able to worship and engage and learn, but it doesn't feel like a community I would want to be a part of. From my experience, I would not encourage others to attend church here. I would not discourage them either.

16. Overall Experience

Encourage everyone, not just the official greeters, to reach out to people they don't recognize. Perhaps people have to be instructed on how to greet (get out of your row, seek out someone you don't know, ask them this or that question), because for some it doesn't come naturally. Unfortunately, it is hard for an older white church to attract anyone else unless the leadership (elders, pastor, music directors) is more diverse. I rate this church a 4, because it is very similar to a lot of the other churches I have visited this year.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 9:30 AM
Service Date: 10/13/2013
Service Title: Entering God's Promised Land
Guest Gender: M
Guest Age: 33
Guest ID: 29402
Overall Rating: 8

1. Community Awareness

I stopped at Burger King about 1 mile down the road. The customer service representative had not heard of the church and referred me to the computer in the dining area to search for it.

2. Signage

The sign by the road is large and clear. Signs were not needed to know where to park, but one could see visitor parking spaces easily. Upon entry, activity was hustling and plenty of people were eager to greet, so one could not focus on signs. There was no noticeable signage directing to coffee hour, classrooms, or restrooms from the sanctuary, but people directed me to the coffee.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

I have never been greeted so enthusiastically by so many people. There were greeters at the door, but members approached from all directions. Even, after sitting, several people came over to introduce themselves and say how glad they were for my visit. After the service, the greetings continued and many said they hoped I would return.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

They were happy and upbeat. A couple people told me about special things going on that day, so I would understand what was going on.

5. Seating

People spread out among the pews. They did not favor one section to another. People filled in around me, leaving me comfortable. The pews were standard and padded. There was room to sit in the back, front, side, or wherever one prefers.

6. Music

The music was a mix of hymns sung by a choir or congregation and accompanied by piano. The choir did not have facial expressions that reflected what they were singing. A bell choir played 1 song. The congregation was engaged, as they knew the traditional music. The music appeals to all ages who like familiarity.

7. In-Service Greeting

Before the start of worship the pastor recognized guests and visitors and a gift was presented to each. Following was a time of greeting each other. People around me were very engaging and moved around to shake hands.

8. Message

The message was part of a series that tied with a book/lesson the church has been working on. It was relevant and easy to follow. I would have liked the title of the book referenced to better understand the overall picture. I did not time the message, but it seemed short. Time was given for members to complete a survey of response. I did not like the text being read from the Message Bible. This version loses meaning. Besides, if members cannot understand the NRSV, or similar versions, they will also not be able to understand the texts of the hymns.

9. Speaker

Pastor Mark Erbes delivered the message. He was comfortable with the topic, knew his content enough to not have to read and flowed well. Props, like a door and word signs were used as part of the series.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

As stated, several approached me afterwards and told me they hoped I would come again, or reiterated how glad they were that I was there. A gentleman began a conversation with me during coffee time. I was not invited to Sunday school or any adult education that morning or for anything in the future.

11. Information

All sorts of information was posted on bulletin boards and down the halls, highlighting ministries, events and resources. There was not a central area, but it was available and easy to see. The bulletin has both services printed on it, which was a bit much. PowerPoint was well used before and during the service. An attendance book in each pew allowed one to connect further, as well as a guest book in the hall. Nobody invited me to sign it though. Prayer request cards in the pew were available and explained. The web site looks professional. Basic information is available, such as address and service times. I would suggest having an outside person review it as they sat with a congregational member. The coffee mug gift included a list of ministries, which is nice.

12. Friendliness

One cannot enter these doors without feeling overwhelmingly welcomed. The lacking was the invitation to attend other events, studies, etc.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

It is clear that the congregation understands that children's ministries are important. More needs to be done to include children in the worship (as readers, ushers, etc.). I did not see anything that would inform parents where the nursery is, where classrooms are, or if there is Children's church (in the bulletin, or signage).

14. Diversity and Outreach

The church serves the neighborhood, which is European, middle class and aging. The congregation reflects this. I did not see mention of any ministries that reach out and connect with other people, other than financial, and donation support of Mission for Area People.

15. Return

It's a struggling church, due to an aging population. Using the gifts of the members to emphasize to younger generations the value of traditional worship, this church has potential to be reinvigorated with families. The enthusiasm alone is enough to make me want to return.

16. Overall Experience

My overall experience was very favorable. Here are a few comments that did not fit in previous questions: 1. The fact they did not use Styrofoam for coffee was very appealing. The homemade breads made coffee time feel more special, too. 2. For the sake of uniformity, women in the choir should not carry purses down the aisle. 3. Invite visitors to other church functions.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 11:30 AM
Service Date: 10/20/2013
Service Title: Change...It Is Time!
Guest Gender: F
Guest Age: 28
Guest ID: 29407
Overall Rating: 8

1. Community Awareness

I stopped at a Speedway gas station prior to arriving at the church. The gas station resides on the same street as the church, just a few miles north. I asked the two women behind the counter if they knew where the Lake Harbor church was. One woman pointed and replied, "That way, further down." The other woman confirmed by nodding. I asked them if they knew exactly where and both shook their heads.

2. Signage

It was easy to locate the church thanks to the sign out front by the road. The sign has a digital display with times and dates and other announcements. It was very easy to read. There were signs indicating where to park, but the main entrance was not marked. It did look somewhat obvious on where to enter, fortunately. Upon entering I had to ask where the service was being held because the main room looked empty. There were no signs. It turned out that the service was taking place in a small area off the main room. I also learned that the service was taking place at 11:30am, not 11:00am as I was assigned. Restrooms were easy to locate, but I did not notice a children's area. There was a small area that pertained to children, though, with name tags and activity bags.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

I was very satisfied with the pre-service greetings! Everyone was extremely friendly. I believe I was welcomed by the designated greeter (unsure if they were just an attendee or not). Guest speaker Jimmy Epplert, who was filling in for the pastor, warmly shook my hand and welcomed me.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

The atmosphere was very warm and welcoming. I was immediately offered coffee and cookies prior to the service starting. At least 3 attendees introduced themselves to me and stated their gratitude for my attendance. Though it was obvious that many of the attendees knew each other well, I felt they were all open to my being there.

5. Seating

Because the service took place off of the main room, fold out chairs were used for seating. It wasn't the most comfortable, but I did not mind personally. There was plenty of seats to choose from. Everyone was fairly spread out, but with the small space being used, it felt like we sat fairly close to one another.

6. Music

The music was provided by three musicians. It sounded great and they seemed to have enjoyed their part of the service. The main vocalist was very talented and sang well. The style was acoustic and somewhat modern, which I think would appeal to more of a younger generation. The majority of those attending sang along with the band. Lyrics were provided on a projected screen. I gave the music a ranking of 9 only because I would have welcomed a bit of variety in musical style.

7. In-Service Greeting

The guest speaker prompted everyone to greet one another before the service started. By the tone, it seemed like this was normal to do. A few attendees seemed very sincere in meeting me when shaking my hand, a few others seemed to be more interested in the conversation they were having with one another. The guest speaker was very interactive with everyone. I personally did not feel it was too little, but I could understand if someone else felt cheated in meeting everyone who was there.

8. Message

The message was about change. The guest speaker spoke of his own life and how it was when he first arrived to the Lake Harbor Church years ago. He was looking for change. He then referred to a biblical story about a man who, for 30-something years, waited to receive help in getting into the healing pool. Jesus eventually came to him, healed him, and told him to get up and walk. The guest speaker then related the story to people in the public who were looking for help, for change, and then encouraged attendees to spread the word of the church. The guest speaker was great in using humor and today's language to help me fully understand the concept. I found it sincere and easy to relate to. I would guess that this portion of the service took close to half an hour.

9. Speaker

Guest speaker Jimmy Epplett seemed very comfortable, energetic, and prepared. I enjoyed his views on the story he read especially. The video projector displayed images behind him, but they were not used as visual aids per se. He was easy to listen to and understand because of his casual demeanor.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

The service ended with everyone holding hands and singing. Afterward, as I was preparing to leave, the guest speaker came to me and thanked me for attending. Two other attendees approached me with their thanks as well. It seemed many of the guests were open to hanging out and having conversation. It was very nice and I left with a smile on my face. My overall impression of this church was very positive.

11. Information

There were two large standing fixtures upon entering the building that included announcements, brochures, upcoming events, and pictures. There was a guest book near the front doors for attendees to leave their contact information. A table was set out for a bake sale (though it was not 'active' at the time) and another station was set that included newsletters, volunteer sign up sheets, and other information. Their website is simple and clean, though somewhat dull and takes time to load certain pages (possible server issues?). Their Facebook link is also broken. I would have ranked them a 10 here but their website is poor.

12. Friendliness

The church and those who attended were very friendly! I felt very welcomed and warm from the whole experience.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

The church and its public areas looked very clean, organized, and safe. The staff seemed responsive and friendly. There was plenty of evidence that the kids were well cared for, which included bulletins and sign-up sheets for upcoming events. It was also stated in the day's itinerary that there was an area dedicated to children for the attendee's convenience. The guest speaker is also the youth pastor, which would have helped my decision in going to this church if I had children because he seems to be a lot of fun. I think children/youth do enjoy their time there, and I was pleased to have seen both young children and teenagers attending the service with interest.

14. Diversity and Outreach

I felt the church accepted diversity, but did not necessarily push for it. The people who attended this service were both young and old, male and female, and different races. However, I did not notice a service being offered in another language, no pictures showing diversity, and the style of music did not hold a lot of variety.

15. Return

My overall experience was that of a positive one! If I were interested in attending a church on a regular basis, I would be more inclined to go to this one because this is the only one I've attended in quite some time. I would encourage others to attend if they were part of a young family. I feel older generations would also feel comfortable so long as they were open to a more modern approach to the religion.

16. Overall Experience

I enjoyed my visit to this church, though I would encourage that they make it more apparent where to go if services are not to be held in the main room. It may also be worthwhile if the church updated their website. The guest speaker was great, though! His style of doing the service was the most appealing to me, and very refreshing.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 9:30 AM
Service Date: 10/27/2013
Service Title: Honest Humility
Guest Gender: M
Guest Age: 42
Guest ID: 30911
Overall Rating: 8

1. Community Awareness

We stopped at a local gas station less than a mile from the church and asked if the attendant knew where Lake Harbor UMC was located. The attendant was in her early 20's. She sent us to a different church nearby and told us that she thought that was the one we were looking for.

2. Signage

The main sign on the street was very attractive and caught our attention. It gave the name of the church, and the name and date of the message. It was a fancy sign that lit up electronically. When entering the parking lot, there was a parking lot sign that said "Visitor Parking." I couldn't tell if it was in front of one parking spot or marked the entire row. It was a little confusing. Doors did not have signs indicating which ones to use, but greeters were holding the doors open so they may have been blocked. Upon entering the building, the service area was directly in front of the main doors. No signs were used or necessary as there were plenty of people to greet us and answer our questions. Restrooms were well labeled. I did not see any signs for the children's area.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

The pre-service greetings were fantastic! They had individuals holding the outer doors open, greeters just inside the door, and they had individuals passing out bulletins. All were very friendly, eager to ask who we were, and gave us their names. They also were able to answer any questions we had about children's services or child service expectations. All were friendly, welcoming, and sincere.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

While coming into the church, we felt welcomed by the greeters and other volunteers near the door. Once we sat down, we did receive many curious looks, and there were many people talking to one another or in small groups, but no one approached us while waiting for the service to begin. The conversations we overheard were friendly and people were catching up on their week. Although no one approached us, we could hear many conversations where the congregation had obviously known each other for some time and enjoyed each others company. We expected a traditional service because we were able to review the bulletin during this time and the bulletin gave the impression that the service to come would be traditional.

5. Seating

There were four sections of cushioned bench seating available. Seats were comfortable for the duration of the service. There were plenty of seats available for the early service. The middle sections of the seating were more filled than the outer ones. The congregation did spread out through each section, but concentrated a bit more in the center.

6. Music

The music was very traditional hymnal music. It was very well played on the organ, piano, and drum accompaniment at times. Worship singing was led by a choir and the choir also did a very nice job, and were sincere about their part. Being solely hymnal based without any contemporary blend did not appeal to me on a musical level, but the hymns chosen were very relevant to the sermon, were well played and sung, and did fully engage the more senior members of the congregation.

7. In-Service Greeting

The greeting from the pulpit welcomed everyone, and encouraged visitors to sign their guest book. Also from the pulpit, the Pastor asked the congregation to take a few moments to greet one another and shake hands. During this time we were approached, asked if we were new to the area, if it was our first time to the church. We were also given a welcome coffee mug with a "treat baggie" inside. Everyone we met was friendly and sincere with just the right amount of curiosity, and all said they hoped to see us again in the future.

8. Message

The message was very appealing to me and was about "Honest Humility." The example used for the message was Luke 18:9-14. The message was only 20 minutes in length but filled with Biblical examples, every day examples, and how to apply it to our daily lives. The message also mixed in a video clip for attention-getting purposes at the beginning of the message. The concept was very easy to grasp and very relevant. I found the message to be a "friendly reminder" to look inward and assure that we do not put ourselves before God or others.

9. Speaker

The Pastor communicated the message very well. Pastor Mark Erbes gave the message. First there was a video clip, then Pastor Mark gave a children's message. During the children's message, Pastor Mark used props to demonstrate ways that we may sometimes come to God--too full of ourselves or completely empty. Pastor Mark read from Luke 18:9-14 and gave both the Biblical and everyday example of how to apply how God wants us to come to him. The message was very easy to listen to and understand.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

Once the service was done, many members sitting near us approached us. We were asked who we were, if we lived nearby, and if we wanted to go to the Bible study groups held after the sermon. We were asked to join them for coffee and cookies. We met many more people while drinking coffee and enjoying a few cookies. Everyone was very friendly and informative. We were very impressed by the welcoming feel of the church and their desire to have us engaged and coming back in the future.

11. Information

The connection resources were very useful and informative. The bulletin provided information about the congregation members working in different positions (greeters, ushers, attendants, etc.) as well as the bulletin (agenda) of service and Pastor information. The bulletin also had announcements, activities, a weekly schedule of events, upcoming events, devotional information and a place for sermon notes. The welcome gifts had the mug with the name of the church, a welcome brochure that gave good basic information about the church services, how to connect on Facebook or the web, as well as an e-mail address and phone number for contact. The brochure also listed "ministry opportunities" and had basic information about each opportunity listed. The website gave all of the information that was found on the bulletin and welcome brochure and much more. Full information on the ministry opportunities, pictures, archives of old messages, and more was found on their webpage. Their Facebook page has contact information, a daily verse, pictures and reminders. All information, either in the church bulletins or on their social media sites, were well put-together and very informative. We did not see an information table or welcome center, but the church was having a baked goods sale so that may have been blocking the information.

12. Friendliness

The congregation was very friendly and we felt very welcome and received many invitation so return soon.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

The church only had a place for the infants and toddlers to go during the service. All other elementary-age children were expected to attend the regular church service. Safety, cleanliness, and ease of location were all good, and if our children were younger I would have no issues with having them attending the nursery. We did wish that there was a separate activity time for the children during the regular service to get them more engaged at their level, even though there was a children's message built into the service. I believe that the non-service activities for the junior high and high school aged children were active and well-organized based on information found on their web page, Facebook, and bulletin information.

14. Diversity and Outreach

Based on the "early service" congregation, it appeared that the church (although it has many out-reach programs in the community) was geared for and directed to an older, middle to upper class Caucasian population. We did not observe other opportunities of services in other languages or with different styles of music. That being said, the later service at 11:30 may be more geared towards diversity based on the information in the bulletin.

15. Return

Based on what this church has to offer regarding the separate service options, outreach and ministry opportunities, and overall friendliness of the church, we would be willing to return to this church. The one lacking area might be with the 5-12 year-old age group that has no real opportunity to go to class and learn more at their level. We would encourage other people to attend this church. Based on the early service I would think that older individuals and couples would be attracted to this church service.

16. Overall Experience

Our overall perception of the church was very favorable. I would recommend looking into furthering their children's program for the elementary-aged children during the service so the parents can concentrate on the sermon. Perhaps a full service for the children at the same time, only geared more towards their concentration and activity levels would be beneficial. The church had people holding the door, greeting people and passing out bulletins, it may be possible that one of these folks could ask if this was our first time to the church and ask another member to "welcome" us during the pre-service. "Welcomers" would perhaps be able to give us the gift that we received during the hand-shaking time, but also be introducing us to the people that we were sitting near so we could start making connections without feeling awkward approaching others. Also, we observed that the entire service was very formal and didn't encourage applause or congregation participation unless it was scripted. They have a very talented choir and musicians, it would have been nice to show appreciation for their individual contributions. Encouraging an impromptu "Amen" would not be discouraged. Overall the experience was positive, the people were friendly and informative, and the sermon was well laid out and easy to understand. Thank-You for a lovely morning in God's Word!

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 11:30 AM

Service Date: 10/27/2013

Service Title: Honest Humility

Guest Gender: M

Guest Age: 21

Guest ID: 30737

Overall Rating: 7

1. Community Awareness

I stopped at a gas station a little down the road from the church and I spoke with the cashier. She knew of the church's existence but was a little confused as to its actual location and told me it was the opposite way of where it really was. I also talked with a cashier at a convenient store down the road the other way from the church. He also knew about the church but his directions would have had me turning a road too early!

2. Signage

The primary sign for the church was an illuminated board with the church name with service times. The parking area was clear and didn't need any signs. The entrance was a little confusing to me at first because there was no sign to direct me. Upon entering, the only signage I could see was a wooden welcome sign nailed to the upper door from of the entrance way past the front door.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

There was no designated greeter, although there was a podium up front that led me to believe that on ordinary service may have a greeter. I was greeted however by one of the leaders of the church. He welcomed me warmly and it seemed sincere enough. I was also give a Welcome Mug that had a pen, a little bulletin with service times and days, and a little bag with some candy in it.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

Everyone was very nice and it set a good tone for the service. Everyone welcomed me with a handshake and seemed pleased that a new face was there in the group. The group made me feel right at home.

5. Seating

The seating was a bunch of padded folding chairs lined up, which seemed appropriate for a small service, and they were comfortable as well. In the front two rows, almost all of the seats were occupied leaving the last three rows with plenty of empty seats.

6. Music

The music was very contemporary with a live vocalist playing a guitar. The music was very nice and everybody was engaged and singing, but they weren't sing very loudly. It almost seemed to me like everyone except the vocalist was just going through the motions. The guitarist/vocalist seemed sincere and his lyrics were pretty good as well. The music really kept my attention. Any age group could enjoy this music, with maybe young adults being the most likely to enjoy it.

7. In-Service Greeting

The in-service greeting started with the preacher saying the church announcements, then he broke off to let everyone say good morning and shake hands. It was very pleasant and everyone was smiling and shaking hands. Overall it was very warm and inviting.

8. Message

The message was approximately 40 minutes long and was about honest humility, with the core of it being if our hearts are full of pride, like if we are full of ourselves, then there is no God. If we are not prideful in our hearts, then there will always be room for God and we can listen to what he has to say to us. The concept was relatively easy to grasp, although some people may need it explained another way. It was a very interesting message, and rather enjoyable as I have never really thought about humility and how it affects our relationship with God.

9. Speaker

The preacher giving the message seemed prepared, but he seemed a little tired and was not very energetic about the message. He was easy to listen to and understand, but he kind of dragged on a little in the beginning. A video was used to help prove his point that it is hard to define humility. It was about one minute long and was just a couple kids trying to define humility and not being able to do so.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

After the service ended, a few people came up and thanked me for being there, and a women stopped to talk to me for a little bit. She asked if I was from around there and what I did with my life, such as school and work. She was a really nice lady and invited me to join them for Thursday night Young Adult services. It made me feel like I could come back and feel like part of the group.

11. Information

When I walked into the church, there was a container of weekly newsletters standing on a table that contained all kinds of information dealing with recent events and activities, recent news inside and outside the church, upcoming activities and events, and a calendar showing the months major activities and events. A sign-in sheet was passed around, although somehow it bypassed me completely, to take the names of everyone in attendance. There is also a website showing service times, what the church is about, all of the ministries of the church and a link to their Facebook page. The website was very well put together with just about any information one might need about the church.

12. Friendliness

Everyone was extremely friendly and very inviting. I felt right at home with this group of people.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

This church has a youth ministry and I believe children would enjoy it there, but I would not leave my child unattended. There were a few children just running around and nobody was really paying attention. The kids were running around and playing on the pews and one of them could have gotten hurt.

14. Diversity and Outreach

The church did not seem to have a problem with anyone young or old, rich or poor, or of any minority when it came to attendance, yet I did not see anything in particular that would lead me to believe that they are actively trying to attract different types of people to the church. The church is what it is with no attempt to draw in a more diverse group.

15. Return

I would be willing to return to this church because it was very welcoming and I enjoyed that. I would also recommend this church to anyone who asked. I believe that young adults would enjoy this church more than children would. Maybe if they were to use more lively music they could attract teenagers and get them more engaged in the service.

16. Overall Experience

Overall it was a very nice church to attend, but perhaps they could have a more energetic tone when it comes to the message. I have seen preachers scream and holler their praises to God during the service and really get the audience pepped up for Christ. Not saying that this preacher should scream and holler but being loud and energetic helps keep the people excited about being there. Also, if the church is going to have a ministry for young kids, then the one in charge of that needs to keep an eye on them the entire time, not just let them wander off. Kids could get hurt by playing around on the pews and I'm sure the church doesn't want to deal with angry parents. I loved how welcoming everybody was though and I would be more than willing to attend again.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 11:30 AM
Service Date: 11/17/2013
Service Title: Aligned with God's Purposes
Guest Gender: M
Guest Age: 64
Guest ID: 31907
Overall Rating: 5

1. Community Awareness

I first stopped at a Speedway on Henry and Broadway. A young lady working there knew nothing about the church and had no idea where it was. I then stopped at Pic and Pac on the corner of Henry and Porter. A young lady there knew of the church and she gave me directions which included landmarks.

2. Signage

There was an electronic sign outside but so many messages were included that I never knew that service times were on the sign until I left and it flashed across the screen. There were no other signs outside and I had to guess where the front door was. When I stepped inside I saw no signage at all. The doors were open and I could see the main auditorium but it was dark and quiet. Later I discovered there were signs on the back of the open doors for the restroom and kitchen but they could not be seen until the doors were closed.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

I stood in the lobby for a couple of minutes before the service. Three people passed me by without saying anything to me. Finally, I stopped a lady and asked if there was an 11:30 service that day. She said yes and that I could follow her. She was very friendly. There was no designated greeter present. When we arrived at the service area, a young man introduced himself to me. He was very friendly and welcoming. He explained all three services to me and offered me a tour of the facility.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

Besides the young man and the woman who showed me in, nobody else said a word to me. The attendees were very happy and animated but stayed to themselves. I was on the outside looking in and definitely did not feel like a part of the group.

5. Seating

This happened to be a rather small service of about 30 people. They had folding chairs set up in a corner of the main auditorium and there were plenty for everyone. They also had pews from the main auditorium that could be used. Everyone was sitting rather close together. I sat on the end of one of the main pews by myself but it was by choice. Both the folding chairs and the pews were comfortable.

6. Music

This was a "celebration" service and though the musicians seemed to play well enough, I definitely did not like the music. I would call it "entertainment music" because it was too loud and more like rock and roll music, but this was a contemporary service so it fits. It just wasn't my personal preference. I also felt that the music didn't really lend itself to participation from the congregation so everyone was just standing and listening. Some of them mouthed the words as they read the video words but they were not into the singing part. I think they enjoyed the music they just didn't want to try to sing it.

7. In-Service Greeting

There was no in-service greeting, recognition from the pastor, or greetings among the congregation. The service was small enough that I must have stood out as the visitor but no one acknowledged that fact. The closest the service came to "mingling" was at the end during the prayer request time. All attendees stood and clasped hands as the pastor said the closing prayer. I liked that a lot. In addition, two men made a gap and invited me into the circle; that was the most welcome I felt during the entire service, other than the young man before the service.

8. Message

The message was about 20 minutes long. The pastor used video and stills to supplement his presentation. This was the part I was waiting for. I like the message portion of a church service and the pastor did not disappoint. The message was about making sure we were in line with what God expects of us and to "make sure our ducks are in a row." The pastor represented this well with the example of a string of dominoes. If one of them is out of place, the toppling effect simply won't work. The concept was very simple to understand. What I personally like about the sermon portion of church is I get to learn something about the Bible I didn't know before. That was true for this service as well.

9. Speaker

The pastor was not dynamic but he kept my interest and presented the message very effectively. I think the pastor's name was Steve but we were never introduced. He was very easy to listen to, engaging, and interesting. He used video as necessary and even passed out dominoes at the end to remind people to get in alignment with God.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

Following the prayer requests, the pastor dismissed everyone. I took my time getting my coat on, gathering my things, and preparing to leave. I could hear and see all the camaraderie but nobody approached me at all, not even the pastor. Nobody interacted with me in any fashion. I slowly made my way to the exit and a couple of people even passed me by without acknowledging me. The atmosphere was very happy and warm amongst themselves. It was clear they all knew and enjoyed each other but it seemed as though there was no room for outsiders. This made me sad about the church because they were such a happy church but they didn't seem to be willing to share that happiness.

11. Information

There were minimal connect resources in the main lobby. The young man I met before the service gave me a very nice visitor gift though. It had a cup with a coffee packet, a tea bag, a few pieces of candy, a pen, and a few other things. I didn't notice a visitor center but I didn't ask for one either. There was a sign-in pulpit but I didn't partake. I went to the website and it is very nice. It is very simple to use and full of information. If I were to research the church online before visiting, this website would have provided me with all the information I would need. In addition, they are listed on a Bing search with a Google map.

12. Friendliness

The congregation themselves are clearly happy people and had a good time but they just didn't share any of their energy with me. I didn't feel welcome at all, almost to the point of leaving early. I actually felt like I wasn't even there, as far as they were concerned, except for the young man who welcomed me first.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

I did not have the opportunity to view any of their youth ministry services or provisions. All of the children remained in the service and some of them were even sitting by themselves. Children were walking back and forth at their leisure and adults were as well. There were separate discussions going on in different corners of the worship area and it just seemed perhaps a bit too informal. I like informal, I like comfortable, but this service may have taken it bit too far.

14. Diversity and Outreach

This church has three different services so they offer something for a variety of worshipers. They seem to be trying very valiantly to reach anyone who would like to attend a religious service. I did notice that even with such a small congregation (of about 30 people), I saw most age brackets represented, married and single people, Caucasians, African-Americans, and causally dressed people. I am not aware of any specific outreach programs they may have other than the website.

15. Return

I have no desire to attend this church regularly. I wouldn't encourage others to attend nor would I discourage them. In general, my visit was not a pleasant one so I would not want to repeat it. The message was good but that was about it. I wish now that I would have opted for an earlier service as it would have been larger and it may have afforded me a better profile of the church in general.

16. Overall Experience

For this specific "celebration" service, I would recommend that they restrict the movement of the children a bit more, both for safety and out of respect for the service. I would also recommend they use their music as entertainment only and allow the congregation to sit and enjoy it rather than have to stand and attempt to participate in songs that they probably have never heard before. I would also suggest that members recognize visitors and attempt to greet them and maybe have the pastor stand at the exit to meet newcomers and thank them for coming. I did not have the opportunity to fill out any sort of visitor card, though I would have had it been offered.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 11:30 AM
Service Date: 11/24/2013
Service Title: The Power of Pruning
Guest Gender: F
Guest Age: 59
Guest ID: 30344
Overall Rating: 5

1. Community Awareness

I stopped at a Shell gas station approximately 2 miles from the church before the service because I was lost. The woman behind the counter called for another employee to help me because she said she was unable to give directions "even to my own house." The male employee who came out to speak to me did not know of the church, however, a customer who overheard our conversation told me she thought there was a UMC church on Henry. I told her that was the one I was looking for and she was able to give me directions to the church, even though she was not certain what the name of it was.

2. Signage

I saw the church as I approached because there were signs out on the lawn, but there was no indication as to where to pull in. I quickly determined I needed to enter by the drive before the church building as there did not appear to be another drive on the other side of the building. I pulled in and drove to the back of the church, where I found 10-12 vehicles parked. I noticed a woman walking in a door, so I followed her lead, as I didn't see any signs to enter the church at that location. Once inside, I was greeted by a man who directed me into a room off the sanctuary, where he said the Celebration Service was to take place. After the service, I had time to look around and saw signage for the nursery up the stairs, and the restrooms across from the stairs.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

I was greeted by a man who asked me if I was there for the Celebration Service. I told him I was, and he introduced himself before asking my name. He then told me he was glad that I had come to the service, and showed me by pointing where I should go to sit down. On my way to the gathering room, I was greeted by two other people who introduced themselves and welcomed me to the church.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

The initial greeting of the members of the church was nice and I felt welcomed. I asked one of them if there was a certain place I should sit, as the seating was limited and several chairs were "taken" with coats and bulletins. I was told to sit anywhere. Once I sat, I felt very much alone and out of place, as the other members were milling around and talking to each other. They all seemed to know what was going to happen, but I felt very alone. It did not seem "churchy" to me, but more like a social gathering. I did not feel connected, and I did not feel that anyone was mentally preparing for the service but was instead socializing.

5. Seating

The seats were padded folding chairs that were comfortable. They were placed very close together in rows, with a center aisle. Many of the regular members sat close together, but I sat alone in the second to last row with only a few people near me.

6. Music

The music was contemporary. It did not really appeal to me because I like the more traditional music with an organ and a cantor. The music was live with four men at the front leading the singing and three with guitars. The words to the songs were displayed on a projector instead of being in a hymnal. They seemed sincere, but some of the audience members were dancing and playing around while the singing was going on. It made it difficult to feel a holy vibe in the room, something I was looking for. I think this kind of music and service would attract teens or young adults.

7. In-Service Greeting

There was a welcome portion to the service where each person was to greet others sitting around them. Several people came up to me and offered their hand, asked my name, and told me theirs. This continued for about four minutes, which seemed to be just the right amount of time, before the service continued.

8. Message

The message was entitled "Aligned with God's Purposes" and it lasted about 20 minutes. It centered around how God wished for His people to allow Him to "prune" them in His ways, not let them grow unruly according to their whims. The minister used the example of pruning raspberry bushes to bear the best fruit for the best nourishment of people, instead of letting the bushes grow wild and only sprouting greenery that would not benefit anyone. The concept was easy to grasp. The minister used some Biblical quotes to back up his sermon, specifically John 15 "Apart from me, you have nothing." The message was relevant and not exceptionally preachy, but delivered so that any age group could learn something from it.

9. Speaker

The speaker was the minister, Pastor Mark Erbes. He seemed very at ease in speaking, and while he had notes with him, he did not seem to read directly from them, but use them to keep his message on track. Before his sermon, there was a skit put on by two members that had God and man talking about God pruning man to His expectations. The person playing God had brought a pair of pruning shears with him to the service to use as a prop.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

After the service, most of the people went into their own little groups or out the door. I had the feeling that many of the group were just waiting to bolt out of their seats, to be on to the next thing in their day. I did not have a peaceful feeling at the end of the service. I walked to the door where I had entered, and was briefly spoken to by Pastor Erbes, who thanked me for coming and left me with the hope that I would come again. I did not feel very involved with the group overall after the service.

11. Information

This church did have a website that I perused before going to the service. It described the church as a family-centered church with open arms to everyone. The website had information on services, classes, and contact information that a first-time guest would be interested in learning about. The bulletin that I was given had an insert called, "Harbor Happenings" which described all the various activities coming up in the church. It was very detailed and interesting. During the service, there was an announcement time where several of the activities were discussed, and also an attendance pad for each person to sign in.

12. Friendliness

I was welcomed in a friendly manner before the service, but after the service, little was said to me. I did not feel a part of the congregation. There was more opportunity for members of the group to continue the friendly atmosphere after the service by encouraging me to return, but this was not done except by the pastor.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

There were several children present during this service, even though I believe other children were being cared for in another part of the building. The children in the service were restless and talkative, causing somewhat of a distraction. One young girl, about 8 years old, who was old enough to sit quietly through the service, sat on the floor and colored on the front row. I felt this was somewhat distracting. From what I could glean, there was some type of child care during this service that looked to be overseen by some of the teen members. They all came into the sanctuary toward the end of the service (the service held over longer than one hour and possibly it was thought that the service would conclude at one hour's time) and waited for the service to be over. I noticed that once the youth came into the sanctuary, there was not much looking-after being done by the teens, and the kids were up running around. Since the service was out late and the kids were already downstairs, it didn't feel right to go up the stairs into the classroom area without drawing attention to myself. The bulletin did indicate that there was a children's time in the first service after which they went out of the sanctuary to another room, and also that in between services, Sunday school classes were held for all age groups.

14. Diversity and Outreach

There were various types of people in the service that were diversified in race, backgrounds, age, and wealth. I noticed each person was accepted for themselves, and not because it was expected by the church. I am not sure what the attraction was for these various people, but they all seemed to feel that they fit in this church's community.

15. Return

Based solely on this type of service, I would not attend again. I did not have a religious experience or feel closer to God by attending, but felt it was more a social gathering. I might have enjoyed the earlier, more traditional service, though. This type of service seems to appeal to a younger crowd. I was personally looking for serenity and prayer, and electric guitars and "praise" songs just don't provide that, in my opinion.

16. Overall Experience

The one thing I found very distracting was the habit of the members to get up at any time, walk to the back of the room and get food or drinks, and then walk back in and sit in their chairs, all while the service was going on. Not only did I feel it was rude to get up while the pastor was talking and walk around, but I was embarrassed for him as well. This type of activity is fine for before or after the service, but not during. Maybe I sound old-fashioned, but the pastor should be given recognition and respect. I didn't find that at this church.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 9:30 AM
Service Date: 12/8/2013
Service Title: Traditional Service
Guest Gender: F
Guest Age: 19
Guest ID: 31259
Overall Rating: 8

1. Community Awareness

I stopped at the Pic-n-Pac gas station on the corner of Henry Street, just down the road from the church, and asked the cashier. I was assuming since it was so close to the church they would know about it and where it was and they did. They told me that it was just down the street on the left.

2. Signage

Outside of the church is a big, bulletin board type sign with the name and times of each service they have. It was easy to read. There were not parking signs but they did have a parking lot alongside the church so I assumed that's where I should park. There wasn't a sign for the door to go in but it did look like a main door. When I went inside, I didn't see any restroom signs or children signs, but when I was meeting the secretary (I think it was the secretary) she explained to me where everything was. The service area was immediately inside the door so no sign for it was needed.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

My first greeting was when I went up to an older couple in the parking lot to ask them which door to go in and I introduced myself. They were so nice and asked me about myself and where I lived. I walked with them inside and they introduced me to the secretary. She greeted me very kindly and said welcome to the church. Then I asked the couple that I had met if they minded if I sat next to them and they were so happy to let me do that.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

Before the service started and I was sitting next to the couple, they were explaining to me the different services the church offers. There's one at 11:30 too that I could try out that has a younger group because the 9:30 service was mostly older people. Also, while we were waiting, people would come up to me and introduce themselves and the couple would tell them that I was visiting and they were very happy to hear that. There was a man sitting on the other side of me and when he found out that I was a visitor, he told me that they give the visitors a little gift so he went and brought me one. It was nice and had a coffee mug with some candy, a pen, notepad, and a brochure with more information. I thought that was really unexpected and so nice of them.

5. Seating

I thought the seating was awesome. They had a really big area and you could spread out, but it was in a shape where everyone was the same distance away because it wrapped around the front where the pastor stood. The seats were cushioned and comfortable. Everyone was spread out due to there being so much room, and I noticed that most of the people sat more towards the back of the room, including us.

6. Music

I believe that the music was blended because it was traditional church songs but they were sung in a faster, more upbeat way. They had a choir of about 13 people that only sang one song on their own; the rest of the songs everyone sang. They were all older ladies with a couple of older men and they seemed to really enjoy singing and had smiles on their faces. When they sang, everyone was engaged, including me, and I thought they were really talented. I think middle-aged people would enjoy it the most because of how fast it was at times, but the people singing in the choir were a little older and enjoying it, so anyone middle-aged or a little older would love it, I think.

7. In-Service Greeting

Everyone was greeted by the pastor at the beginning and welcomed, and he started off by asking about visitors so I was recognized and everyone greeted me, which was cool. Then everyone greeted each other and I met all of the people sitting around me who were very friendly. I thought that everyone greeting each other was nice, but I don't know if I would really like the idea of doing that every time.

8. Message

I felt like the sermon was like a history or a geography class. Because of Christmas, they are talking about Nazareth and other places from around the time when Jesus was born, so the pastor was talking about what had happened and about where on the map it was and what cities were around it. Also he was trying to be funny and he wasn't; no one laughed at him. The sermon was actually very short, probably only ten minutes long, which I think is too short. I understood what he was talking about because I've heard about stories from around Christmas, but it wasn't something I was expecting when he was talking about the geography. I don't think it was that great of a sermon. It seemed like more of something you would teach the younger kids in Sunday school.

9. Speaker

The pastor seemed prepared and was good at communicating, he just wasn't all that funny. While he was talking he was holding papers that probably had what he was going to say on them, which I think is unusual because I feel like they usually just talk from the heart.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

After church was over, I talked with the couple that I had been sitting with about the service and she explained to me about the other service that I could go to. Also people told me that they were serving bakery and juice or coffee in a different room and that I could have some if I wanted to, which made me feel very welcomed. I chose not to and said goodbye to the couple and they invited me to come again.

11. Information

The sign outside of the church was helpful for knowing about when you could attend the services. They handed out a brochure at the door which had tons of information like happenings, important dates, and announcements, along with what we would be doing during the service. There was an opportunity to get more information when we signed the attendance book and you could put your address as well. On their website, they have a very welcoming paragraph addressing potential members, or just people that want to check the church out. They also have the times of the different services offered and events that are going on. They have a very good page for contact information with hours, numbers, and the church's address with a map. They do a very good job of describing all of the parts of the church and everything going on. I was pleased with everything they had on there and I don't think there's anything they're missing.

12. Friendliness

This church was very friendly. I was immediately greeted by anybody that saw me and they wanted to know who I was, especially the couple that I had met in the beginning and ended up sitting by. They were more than happy to answer any questions I had and tell me about what they do there and about the church.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

I thought that it was very safe for children. There were no stairs that I saw; it appeared to be all one floor. I didn't see any signs directing where the kids go during the service, but I was told where they go. It was a very big room that seemed to be safe so I would definitely leave my kids there. There was not much information about it that was visible in the church, though, so any decision a parent makes here would have to be based off the information people tell you. I think the kids really enjoyed it; from what I saw they were coloring. They also had a little talk with a lady in the front of the church which was kind of like a mini Sunday school. She had props and talked so that the kids understood clearly what she was talking about. On the website they have a page with explanations of the nursery and how there is a supervised nursery for infants through age 6.

14. Diversity and Outreach

I think I only saw Caucasian people at the church but it seemed like there was a pretty good diversity of people from different walks of life. There were a lot of married couples but single people as well. They did show diversity in pictures, with a video that had people of different races. From what I observed, they are very open and tolerant.

15. Return

I would probably return to this church and the friendliness the biggest reason why. The sermon part didn't really appeal to me but the church has a good atmosphere. I would recommend this church to other people and encourage them to try it out. Since I went to the more traditional service and the majority of the people were older, I would say older people probably like that one better. I was told though that the celebration service has a younger audience, so that would be cool to check out.

16. Overall Experience

I feel like this is a very good community of people and they are so nice. They are willing to answer questions and show you around. The only improvement I can think of is the sermon; other people seemed to enjoy but I didn't think it was that great. They do a very good job at showing things visually though. They had pictures around the room that go with the services from week to week. Overall I enjoyed going here and getting to know the people.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 11:30 AM

Service Date: 1/5/2014

Service Title: The Road to Egypt: Escape

Guest Gender: M

Guest Age: 27

Guest ID: 33774

Overall Rating: 9

1. Community Awareness

I stopped by a gas station that is about 2 miles down the road from this church and the gas station employee did not know where which church was located. She knew where Lake Harbor was, but did not know where the church was located.

2. Signage

There was a very large sign out front of the church that stated the date and the time of the service. There weren't any directions to the parking lot, although there were two entrances to it. There were two different doors that we could go in, one had a sign on it welcoming people. There were signs in the building directing people to the restrooms, as well as people to help direct you to where you needed to go.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

The pre-service greeting consisted of multiple people welcoming me to the church and directing me where I should go for the service. Everyone was very nice and welcoming. Everyone that I spoke with seemed very sincere.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

The hospitality of the church was very welcoming. There was coffee, cookies, and candies available. Everyone was very laid back talking with each other and made me feel very welcome and as part of the group. The atmosphere of this church made me very excited for the service.

5. Seating

The 11:30 session is a more contemporary service so the seating is more personal in folding chairs. The congregation sat close to everyone else and it was a very personal setting. There was a decent amount of people there but not too over crowded. The seats that were available during the 11:30 session were folding chairs with padding. They were very comfortable and easy to sit in during the service.

6. Music

The music was very modern and upbeat. There was even a song played that I had heard on the radio. I was told there is normally a live band, but they were ill today. Everyone in the group seemed very engaged and paid attention to the music and joined in on singing. This music would attract a young crowd, but others would enjoy it as well.

7. In-Service Greeting

The in-service greeting was formal and informal. Everyone walked around to everyone else shaking hands and introducing themselves to me. It was a very sincere greeting and seemed to be just right. Everyone was very nice and welcoming.

8. Message

The message was about the dark road that Jesus took as a young baby with his family fleeing to Egypt. This message really hit home as there have been many dark roads in my life. The concept was very easy to grasp and there was even a map on a projector screen that showed what the journey would have looked like. It was a very interesting and enjoyable service that I think could get the attention of various ages. Everyone in the group was paying attention and very aware of the message. It was a very personal service, which I enjoyed. The entire message and service was almost 2 hours in length. It didn't seem this long though because it was very easy to understand and very interesting.

9. Speaker

The speaker communicated the message very well. He seemed very comfortable with the message especially since he said he hadn't preached about this journey ever in his 20 years of preaching. Pastor Mark was very easy to understand and it was great that there was a projector screen to show the actual journey that was taken by Jesus and his family. It shows that this was not just a one day journey that it was a long hard road to Egypt.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

Everyone was very laid back and welcoming. We were offered cookies, coffee, and candies multiple times prior to and after the service. The atmosphere was very welcoming and laid back. I felt like part of the group and was very pleased with the message, service, music and people.

11. Information

The bulletin was full of all kinds of information including an extra insert about what all is going on with the church family. There were signs up around the church depicting the different services that had been talked about over the past weeks in the church as well. There was a place that talked about a university in Africa and different mission trips the church had been a part of. I was able to leave my contact information in the guest registry. The website of the church is also very easy to follow. They are doing a survey of all of their church members, allowing them to come into the church to use their computers if they do not have access from home. Mission, meeting and youth information was also posted on the website and around the church. The website has a wealth of information ranging from events to information about the church and youth service, missionary projects, Facebook link, and happenings of the church. It would be really neat to see this church have a Twitter account to be able to reach more of their service members. I think that this church would be able to handle have a Twitter account.

12. Friendliness

This church was very friendly and welcoming. I felt like part of the group and would recommend it to others and would be willing to return.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

The church talked about the youth ministry and how there is a mission trip every summer. During the service there were children that were taken care of, and came back for the end of the service. The Youth pastor seemed very upbeat and full of life. I would love to have my children be part of this youth ministry.

14. Diversity and Outreach

There was a very diverse group of members at this service. I think that this church includes all people around the community. There wasn't much talk about diversity, but it seemed that everyone would be welcome. There was a more upbeat style of music which would attract a younger group of people.

15. Return

I would be very willing to return to this church. It was very laid back and upbeat and welcoming. Everyone was very nice and made me feel part of the group. I would encourage other people to attend this church as well. I am very interested in going to the early service to see the live band that is offered.

16. Overall Experience

My only suggestion to this church would be to place signs to show where the parking lot is located.

Lake Harbor UMC

Commentary by Service/Guest

This section of the report groups the comments by service and guest experience. It allows you to review the feedback from each individual mystery guest experience.

Service Time: 9:30 AM
Service Date: 1/12/2014
Service Title: Baptism- An Act of Submission
Guest Gender: M
Guest Age: 33
Guest ID: 33888
Overall Rating: 5

1. Community Awareness

I stopped at the Mobil station about a mile north down the road from Lake Harbor after my visit. A man there had no recollection of Lake Harbor or its location but was aware that there were a few churches in that direction.

2. Signage

Externally this church is present with its architectural layout catching one's eye. Signage out front was visible and easy to read. Parking felt natural and easy to understand. Signage was not present to direct into building but the building layout and carport to entrance was self explanatory. I did not see signs to the restroom from the entrance nor for the children's area. I had to ask a member and was directed.

3. Greeting Upon Arrival

There was a greeter on the exterior to greet me and he was welcoming but he didn't seem to be the greeter type. On the interior, after I hung up my coat, I was handed a bulletin by a team of two smiling gentlemen. They were helpful and their position in the aisle were natural points into the open sanctuary. Everyone was helpful but no one seemed excited.

4. Pre-Service Atmosphere

The overall hospitality was warm and welcoming. It was a standard sanctuary with minimal extras on the walls and quite simple and plain, which is completely appropriate. It felt like the atmosphere matched the members well. No one seemed bummed or unhappy to be there and they were excited to see someone under 40 I think. There was no sort of expectations in any sense on behalf of the vibe or members in my opinion.

5. Seating

Seating was fine regarding comfort. The members were spaced out and I did not get a head count but I would guess 70-100 people were present at most. People were seated randomly.

6. Music

The music was traditional and seemed to be what everyone was used to. No one seemed bored but no one seemed engaged either. The percussionist was out of rhythm on multiple occasions and I would be very surprised if they had more than a 30 minute practice throughout the week. The choir seemed to be sincere in the opportunity to be a part of the social event but honestly I did not sense any conviction or intimacy in any of the music, although I enjoyed the words and songs themselves. It was very formal and to the point and no one seemed to mind, so I imagine this is what the members are looking for and seem to find value in. People were paying attention to the flow of instruction and seemed to be pleased. The crowd of 50 and older were the ones who seemed to most enjoy the music selections and performances.

7. In-Service Greeting

The in-service greeting was too much and too forced. It just felt like they were trying too hard unfortunately. I didn't sense a genuine interest from the majority of the members. A couple members were full of spirit and youth which I found to be very kind.

8. Message

The message was 20 minutes tops and was about the upcoming next few weeks of baptism study that they will be focusing on. The concept was very basic and I was not engaged by the passion nor the timing of the sermon. I imagine that this is a part of the yearly calendar cycle of sermons to be preached, unfortunately I picked up very minimal conviction, honesty, or passion on the subject. It wasn't horrible, just dry, uninspired, and didn't seem relevant to the congregation. In my walk, it added nothing to me. However, the pastor is a nice guy and seems to be a good fit for the style of ministry the members are accustomed to.

9. Speaker

The speaker was prepared and knew what he was going to do and stuck to it. That could be why it felt so fixed and uninspired. It was technically sound and he had some basic insights but no one was going to be led towards conviction or praise. There was just no sense of revelation in his message and there just lacked a fire or sense of life that it was real to him. This introductory sermon did have a 5 minute video that went over some basic concepts of baptism as the pastor narrated. This was a helpful aid and probably a step in the right direction of incorporating technology into his presentations.

10. Post-Service Atmosphere

I was able to spend some time in the sanctuary by myself for a moment and feel the sense of the room and read a few passages. I was greeted again by a wonderful woman brought me a visitor's packet with a coffee cup, a pen, and 2 peppermint candies. She also invited me to a study group at the church. I felt sort of comfortable with her but a little pressured as I got a coffee and met a couple who had been at the church for 30 plus years. We had some small conversation and they were glad to give me a tour of the church. We had a decent surface conversation and then we said goodbye. Overall, post service was decent but slight pushy.

11. Information

The bulletin and calendar suggests that they have some sort of event or meeting on a daily basis. I imagine there is a core group of 20 people who facilitate and contribute to these events and see them through. I was recommended to fill out the visitor's information log located in the back of every pew by a few people. The website's homepage had comments from July of 2012 and zero activity since. I saw a link to their Facebook page but could not access it through the website along with other departments. I think it's probably under construction. I saw a long list of committees and boards with many names wearing multiple hats which would be crucial and necessary for a church of this size to function and maintain events and ministries. The website and bulletin are basic and yet communicate well enough the information.

12. Friendliness

I wouldn't say that there couldn't be improvement but by no means were people rude. They were nice members and the pastor himself was friendly and greeted my and thanked me for coming.

13. Children's/Youth Ministry

I have no reason to believe something would be off in this department. I briefly glanced in the daycare room as I was with members showing me around but I would have to bring my kids to experience that aspect of the ministry. There was a short story-telling time before the children were dismissed where the pastor had the small crowd of 5 or 6 children come to the front and sit with him as he paraphrased the sermon for a few minutes. The children were then dismissed and little if anything was mentioned about the children's ministry or events to be held. The bulletin or event calendar does not suggest that there is a large group of children who regularly attend Lake Harbor. My impression isn't too affected by this due to its older attendance for this service time. I do not necessarily think my children would enjoy their time there.

14. Diversity and Outreach

Everyone seemed to be of the middle class and there was little diversity of age at this particular service. Most were Caucasian. In this service, I saw or heard little about the efforts to impact the surrounding community outside of its members.

15. Return

I would not discourage someone from attending this service nor would I encourage it. I wouldn't say anything about it unless I was asked and I would have a different answer depending on who asked me. I would recommend this specific service to a 50-70 year old with a Methodist upbringing because there are nice people here. There was nothing that I took away that would encourage me to pursue further fellowship.

16. Overall Experience

My overall perception of the church after one visit to one service is a mixture of emotions. I understand that this way of by the book ministry is acceptable, useful and common but I just didn't see anyone hungry for revelation and truth. It just seemed like comfortable traditions were the priority. My main suggestion would be for the leadership to get the congregation of this service more engaged versus entertained. Maybe speaking to their generation in a more intimate way to relay such a beautiful experience as baptism. I also did not hear one comment about the community outside of the immediate church members and church events. Lake Harbor seems to be pretty disconnected from the surrounding community influence with minimal acknowledgment of the light they are intended to be for the world to see. On the face of it all, Lake Harbor does a decent job of holding a social gathering, but in all honesty they aren't as successful in preparing to encounter God as a ritual. Less music and more prayer, sharing, and preaching would also be helpful to attract devoted followers who have real struggles to address.