



# USCVS

U.S. Congregational Vitality Survey  
DISCOVER YOUR STRENGTHS

## INFORMATION SHEET

What is the U.S. Congregational Vitality Survey?

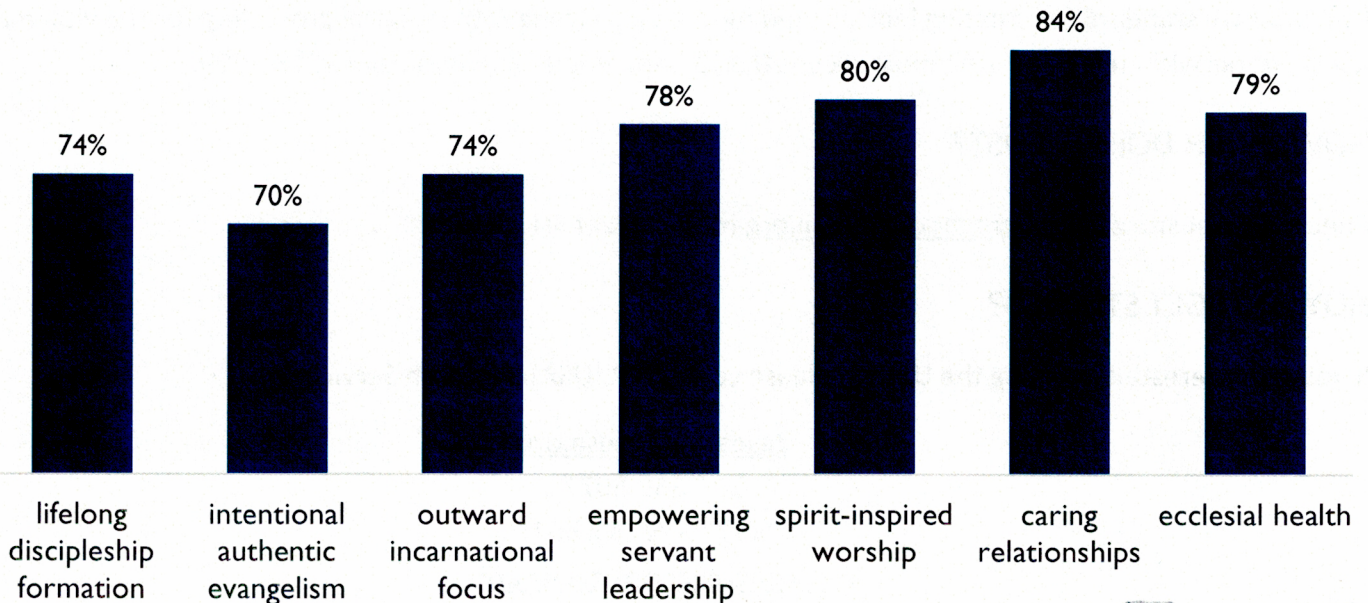
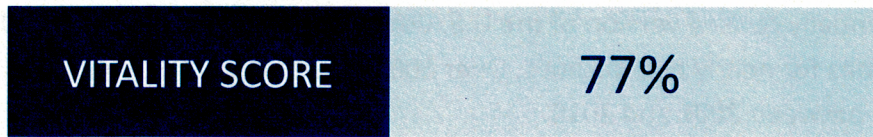
*Congregational life is not simple. Our research demonstrates that all congregations have strengths. Further, congregations require multiple strengths to be effective. A congregation that excels in serving the community, but lacks any other strength is little more than a social service agency. A congregation that excels in providing a sense of belonging where people care for one another, but lacks other strengths, is little more than a social club.<sup>1</sup>*

### WHAT IS THE USCVS?

The U.S. Congregational Vitality survey (USCVS) is designed to help you understand the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of worshipers and leaders in your congregations. This ecumenical instrument was created through a collaboration between sociologists, theologians, and Christian educators in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We've been helping congregations from many denominations (Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists, and more!) measure their vitality since 2001.

The USCVS assess congregations' strengths based on seven marks of congregational vitality—discipleship, outward focus, evangelism, servant leadership, worship, caring relationships, and ecclesial health. So far over 15,000 worshipers representing over 240 churches in 6 denominations have taken the USCVS.

### HOW VITAL ARE U.S. CONGREGATIONS?



<sup>1</sup> From *Beyond the Ordinary: Ten Strengths of U.S. Congregations* (Woolever and Bruce, Westminster John Knox Press, 2004).



## HOW DO I INTERPRET THE RESULTS?

About four weeks after a congregation returns its completed surveys, you will receive a Congregational Vitality Report. This report provides overall scores on seven marks of congregational vitality and results for each survey question.



It is up to you and others in the congregation to interpret the findings considering what you know about the congregation—where it is located, how it is changing, and where it is going. We recommend each congregation dedicate a leadership meeting to reviewing the results together. Do not focus on the negative—celebrate your strengths. Your report will also include guidance for interpretation.

PC(USA) Research Services is available for helping you interpret your results. We can provide extra assistance through email, a phone conversation, a video conference, or we will come to your church to provide a workshop on your results. Contact us or check [uscongregations.pcusa.org/contact-us/](https://uscongregations.pcusa.org/contact-us/) for fees.

## WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND OF THE USCVS?

The USCVS is a substantially revised version of the U.S. Congregational Life Surveys (USCLS) survey, which was offered to congregations for nearly two decades. Over 500,000 worshipers in over 5,000 congregations completed the USCLS between 2001 and 2018.

This new, third wave, addresses some issues with the previous survey by redesigning the questions to scales (the industry standard for creating indices) and by having a stronger theological grounding for the vital marks. It also works with new data—the most recent USCLS benchmark data was from 2008-2009.

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Check our website at [uscongregations.pcusa.org](https://uscongregations.pcusa.org) for a current list of prices.

## HOW DO I GET STARTED?

If you are interested in taking the USCVS, please contact PC(USA) Research Services at:

[research@pcusa.org](mailto:research@pcusa.org)

502-569-5077

800-728-7228 x 5077

[uscongregations.pcusa.org](https://uscongregations.pcusa.org)

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