

Q1: What attracted me to the ERUCC congregation is...

Fellowship, learning

The social ministry and inclusivity efforts of the congregation are what initially pulled my interest. The friendly welcoming and ongoing embrace of community keep bringing me back.

Born and raised

The open, accepting approach and BKD

My wife

Pastor Fred Wenner who was an outstanding leader working for the Frederick community - esp. the shelter, and his facing 'hot-button' issues from the pulpit, and his overall friendly and supportive spirit. He listened!

I had friends who were members of ERUCC, and when I left the Catholic Church, began attending here.

Open and affirming

The pastor (Barbara Daniel), the friendliness of the members, the commitment to service, the music, the progressive values, meaningful worship services.

Programs for Children, Sunday School

The active youth program, "all are welcome" attitude, high energy pastor, status the church has in the Frederick community.

Open and affirming congregation.

Opening and Affirming designation, excellent music program and sermons that spoke to me using scripture as it applies to everyday life.....and the Social Justice priorities....

a church that welcomes all people.

The welcoming people.

history. welcoming congregants. outreach to the community.

Local church and close to home.

Just testing the survey...

Familiar outlook, worship and beliefs based on my previous experience in the UCC.

Friendly and welcoming people

Q1: What attracted me to the ERUCC congregation is...

Inclusiveness, friendliness and willingness to support social issues and democracy

Open and affirming congregation. The Duncans as they've been friends since 1981. Barbara's preaching followed by the loving members of this beautiful community of faith who embraced us so quickly. The 17 retired clergy in our congregation - so proud of that! Unheard of...

Family

It reminded me of my church growing up in Chicago. Pews, stained glass windows, Pastor wearing a robe.

Pastor Fred Wenner and Alison Schaeffer and their excellent worship services, as well as his Bible Studies and social justice action. We were new in Frederick and needed to transfer our UCC membership to a congregation here.

Desire to return to UCC church in Frederick. Pastor was know to me.

I have been a member since birth. My dad played the chimes for 50 years. My was involved in a lot of church programs.

Strong vision for social action and youth programming.

Tradition

Community

Music

Focus on social justice and inclusivity

When we moved to Frederick in 2000, we were looking for a dynamic, UCC congregation. We found it in ERUCC.

Barbara Daniel

I've been going to ERUCC for most of my 70 years. So I wasn't actually "attracted" to join. Although I'm glad I'm a member.

Barbara Daniel, Open and Affirming, the people

Pastor Paul Althouse

Accepting of all people who want to know god and be a positive Person in their community . Also pastor Barbara gave a great sermon

Kids program

Q1: What attracted me to the ERUCC congregation is...

open and affirming policy and practice

I've been here since a child

I have been a member of a UCC church since 1973. When we moved to MD from PA, we looked specifically for a church in this denomination. The church we left in PA was

always struggling financially and eventually closed. We were heartened by ERUCC's relative financial strength.

Warmth and friendliness of the congregation. Effective preaching by Dr. Daniel, the newly arrived settled pastor in 2006. We are committed to the downtown churches and wanted to give our support.

The people I met in the congregation. Also, activities like book club, bible study, etc. I appreciate the openness of the discussions that take place during these activities.

The Fellowship and social community

It's positive stance on LGBTQ+.

I was looking for a UCC church; the welcome I received from Fran Wenner and the fact that I knew several in the congregation. Plus, I loved the stained-glass windows.

The open and affirming nature of the congregation, as well as Pastor Barbara's personal contact and welcome.
a compelling call

Advocacy for LGBTQI and marriage equality; progressive thinking on Christianity; educated congregation willing to ask questions about their faith

Social justice and quality of sermons

An exciting and excited congregation that is truly welcoming of all God's children.

I was attracted to ERUCC because it's Open & Affirming, engaged in justice work, accepting of all people regardless of belief, open to retired clergy, and had a dynamic female pastor - an important thing for me then.

Open and Affirming progressive congregation with a strong focus on youth, adult mission trips, outstanding music, along with multiple programming opportunities.

Q1: What attracted me to the ERUCC congregation is...

I cannot articulate this clearly. I moved to Frederick in 1992 and began looking for a Church. I am not loyal to any one denomination and attended multiple churches. Through a recommendation, I eventually attended ERUCC and felt comfortable. There was something very welcoming about the Church. The pastor at that time was Fred Wenner.

The open minds of the congregation. The willingness to listen to alternate opinions and thoughts
welcoming experience, youth ministries, choir, advocacy, social justice

Generations of my family have attended here

Open and welcoming atmosphere. The 8:30 service - format and content.

Sr. Pastor was female, the strong youth program and the open and affirming congregation.

Reality of "everyone is welcome here;" Covenantal and relational, not credal; Genuinely friendly; Call to love radically, live abundantly; Message that God's love flows, supports, and sustains, always; Commitment to community;

Psychologically sound

WE joined about 32 years ago. We visited Grace UCC and ERUCC. We felt that the size of the church was more akin to what Jeff was use to. He had grown up in an UCC church and I had not grown up in a church.

The no judgement policy- everyone is welcomed

I've been UCC my entire life. When we moved to Frederick, we looked at both ERUCC and Grace. We liked both but liked the service at ERUCC and we received a visit and fresh bread afterward.

Open to LGBTQ persons socially and theologically

The promise of being welcoming & inclusive. A wonderful Zoom capability.

How congregation invested in a new fully accessible addition with elevator, community room, kitchen & plenty of restrooms.

The warm welcome and atmosphere and all the other wonderful things at the church.

How welcome I felt 26 years ago when I entered the church that looked like a church should.

Friends that I knew through NAMI attended ERUCC and I was dissatisfied with the United Methodist Church on LTGBQ issues.

Q1: What attracted me to the ERUCC congregation is...

the love and friendship, the beautiful music, knowing that if I needed something, someone there would help me with it.

Besides being a UCC congregation- what I have witnessed - a spirit love for all and inclusion

the welcoming of all, including the LGBTQ community and the homeless.

An openness and sense of belonging. The ability to be involved and feel a part of a community.

Pastor Althouse and nursery school at that time.na

Gay inclusive. Positive sermons.

Openly affirming church that is growing, values community, and studies the Bible

BKD

The members and style of Worship that connected with me...

Open and affirming, music, radical hospitality

Open and affirming, welcoming, great choir and director, social justice actions

Open and affirming: We have 2 gay sons. We resigned from all United Methodist Churches (we had been Methodist for 27 years) after the 2008 June UMC Conference voted against homosexuality. ERUCC was recommended by Jan Daffern and Nancy Manthey. This was just after ERUCC voted almost unanimously to be Open and Affirming.

My Parents and grandparents were long time members

Warmth of people

Our friendship with former Pastor Fred Wenner.

My collegial relationship and friendship with Fred Wenner when I served as associate pastor of CRUCC in Middletown.

Open and affirming. I grew up in a UCC church and wanted my children to experience that God loves everyone

Q2: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest disappointments is...

My wife hasn't become more involved

Lack of weekly communion in the main worship service.

Attendance has been about the same

no more BKD

No disappointment s

The building expansion that took place about 10 years ago, putting us deeply in debt. The association president and UCC headquarters recommended against this action unless we could raise X amount of \$ for the project. We proceeded with the building expansion in spite of only being able to raise less than 50% of X for the project. Serious objections were raised by a number of people, but the motion to proceed with the building passed in a congregational vote.

It took some time to become comfortable. I grew up in the Catholic Church and ERUCC was very different.

Congregation needs more people of color.Seeing

The very small number of people of color and young adults.

The decision to the 2nd remodeling. Cornerstone had said we would be able to raise \$1,000 ,000 and that was all. A plan B was not permitted by Barbara.

Can't really think of any disappointments

The lack of ethnic and racial diversity

Started coming to ERUCC after churches opened back up after Covid. Just started to get comfortable when former pastor, Barbara decided to retire.

Losing an associate pastor, Jan Daffern. Her departure was shrouded in mystery and not handled well. It was embarrassing as a consistory member

seeing some people leave and not knowing if someone (a committee, a person, anyone) is reaching out to understand the reason for leaving. (And I know there are many ranging from age of children, the individual's age, etc.)

Pastor Barb leaving shortly after we started attending.

Q2: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest disappointments is...

Being completely honest here and very personal. My greatest disappointment is feeling disconnected - partially due to the pandemic but even before. I no longer feel that I fit in. I no longer feel part of the community of ERUCC. I'm not a parent of a youth congregant; I'm not a member of the choir. I attend church alone. ERUCC has and does wonderful things but I

How progressive The Church has become.

Just testing the survey...

Nothing really

Loss of Barbara Kershner Daniel

I cannot think of any; here less than 2 years. We are so grateful to be here.

I have not been disappointed.

Lack of compassion for me in times of need. I feel invisible & ignored sometimes. A 20 page weekly bulletin that "highlights" everything we just read in the Trinity Chimes & the Thursday Thoughts.

A lack of transparency in decisions about changing the structure of the Consistory when Pastor Kershner arrived and failure to publish minutes from the Consistory meetings. And although, as a clergywoman, I appreciate the need for the Spiritual Counsel to provide emotional and spiritual support to the pastor, I felt that the suggestions they made in how evaluations should be written suggested that even constructive criticism would not be welcome.

None

I don't have any

This was early on, when the kids were very young but we would have liked the kids close to us (not in Trinity Chapel) and at our sides in church. With Kirstin's direction, she has been closing that gap. We attachment parent and when kids are little, we prefer them at our side. Then we need ERUCC adults in middle/high school engagement.

?

Pastoral care

The inability to keep the preservation funds sufficient to address building issues as they arise.

Q2: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest disappointments is...

The music. The hymns are mainly 20th c., and I miss music from the 18th century, which inspired me. The choir is full of well-meaning, lovely people, but I can't distinguish the words, so all I hear are sounds - not a meaningful experience.

Honestly, I find most of the hymns are boring. Of course there are favorites from the past, but I would like more upbeat music. My wife and I call much of it "funeral dirges ". Our favorite service each month is the one with the more contemporary music. I know everything about going to church isn't supposed to make you happy, but I do feel more of it could have positive vibe! Especially in these days and times, with so much negativity in the country. As much as I love BKD, I always thought not being able to applaud a nice music piece or a good sermon etc, was silly, especially when it involved the kids. . Even Pastor Morgan wanted to applaud the other week but went for an amen instead lol. I don't want us to turn into a "praise" style church, but we could have more modern music and maybe an updated service structure, while still incorporating aspects of the church's traditions. ERUCC has no problems embracing modern social/political ideas, why can't the service be modernized too?

I don't have one

We took too long to establish a youth group.

Nothing

As with any organization the 10% that does 90% of the work
that we are physically unable to attend weekly services now

The adult education classes, except for the Bible studies, have limped along. There have been some good offerings at 9:30 so I know that someone is trying, but frequently only a few people attended. I don't know if that means that there is not a need or an interest in the programming, or if the time slot is bad—people getting to church at that time, or needing to do other church things that conflict (greeting, communion prep, deacon activities, welcome table, setting up for fellowship, etc), or if the "class" format is not speaking to people.

Q2: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest disappointments is...

Lack of congregational growth in spite of effective preaching by Dr. Daniel. Lack of adequate financial support. Lack of freshness in Sunday morning services and often too many different elements included in the same morning service which detracts from forward movement and any unifying thrust.

We don't sing enough hymns that are familiar. I think that it's a struggle to try to sing obscure hymns that few people know. Familiar hymns often provide a more spiritual and emotional connection, and I would like more of them.

I have no great disappointments.

The possibility of taking down the spire at Trinity Chapel.

The red hymnal meeting.

That Sunday morning worship is not organized around a single theme, but is instead presented as a catch-all for a variety of activities with no common thread (children's choir, bell choir, new members, baptisms, personal stories, communion, etc).

my inability to serve with the spiritual strength the congregation deserves

Would like to see more adults taking advantage of adult Bible study opportunities

The management of people/congregants in church operations has seemed problematic. Burnout, etc

Lack of onsite parking

Perhaps it's the grumbling about pew removal, but this happens in every congregation. I'm not sure I've discovered my greatest disappointment.

Lack of refreshments during Fellowship. There have been Sundays when the offerings were very slim. It is not necessary to provide a meal, but, there needs to be enough.

I have not received individual pastoral guidance. Esther Ziegler is the only minister who ever reached out to me among all the pastors who have served at ERUCC during my tenure. About 8 years ago I was going through a very serious family situation. I reached out and received a "keep your chin up" response. Perhaps ministers do not have the time to provide this with so many members in the congregation or perhaps I did not articulate my needs clearly.

Q2: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest disappointments is...

I actually have no disappointments.

as with all churches, it's the turnover rate.

Long time members not given opportunities to serve as deacon/elder etc

My lack of taking part in more ERUCC activities.

20% of the people doing 80% of the work.

UCC's official practice of categorically permitting NO contact between a retiring pastor and congregant and of requiring a promise not to have contact I had a hard time believing this to be the policy. In my experience, such categorical, blanket denial tends to create more desire, set up resentment, interferes and distracts from healthy mourning and with forming a new pastoral relationship. In the case of youth, it can be cruel. The appropriate goal of discontinuing pastoral duties and connections and of making space for the new relationship can be accomplished within the processs of leaving and afterward. During the course of their leaving, a pastor can explain concretely and specifically what their retirement means in day-to-day life and activities. Further, denying any personal contact after retirement eliminates the possibility of having the pastor's help in re-directing congregants who have a hard time letting go. If pastors have a hard time letting go, the Association is there to help support them in that. Teachers, therapists, parents, former employers and employees, students all find ways of navigating these endings, transitions, and beginnings without such a radical cut off. Also, the truth is, it simply doesn't work.

Difficulties getting volunteers for committees. We also had to stop renting our Community Room in order to help pay for the rebuilding project.

The departure of Pastor Barbara...

Reliance on a small number of members for more than their share of responsibility.

The enormously hypocritical cliquishness. Not welcoming at all.

Q2: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest disappointments is...

Felt like the Pastor Barb & Fred Wenner were most welcoming and made newer members feel valued and facilitated newer members involvement. Didn't realize how much of an impact the pastor has in that way and the yawning void left when the "coach" has left the field.

I don't have any

How I've felt ignored over the past 5 years.

Sometimes holier than thou attitudes toward more conservative churches and faiths even that is part of the reason I came to ERUCC.

None

None....i only visited the church during the last three Sundays

that there has never been outreach to the huge deaf community in Frederick, by way of signing the services, or any support groups for the deaf. Therefore our "liberal Christian extravagant welcome" has never been afforded to this community.

Unfortunately- the choir. They are aging out and while enthusiastic, they are difficult to listen to on a regular basis.

NA

Barbara leaving.

Not sure if there are many people my age or stage of life? People are friendly but many seem new also

None

Loss of Barbara

Pastors not remembering my name. Also poor communication regarding church usage. I think there needs to be a complete calendar of all church meetings and church use by other groups in Trinity Times and for the next week in the bulletin and Thursday Thoughts.

Congregational attendance at special services like lenten and advent services.

I haven't been disappointed.

none

Q2: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest disappointments is...

Pastor Daniel retiring sooner than I thought she would.

The sudden, unexpected resignation of Rev. Jan Daffern as Associate Pastor.

Our pastor and childrens pastor retiring at the same time

Q3: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest joys is...

Getting to know other believers

The warm, genuine embrace by fellow church members, and the warm welcome that is offered to visitors.

Everyone is helpful and willing to share their talents. We also have a decent amount of children now.

Hosting during the Historic Houses of Worship tours

Bible studies and other study groups: Participating and leading. The pipe organ. Deep friendships. Creative worship. The application of creative arts around the building, and in worship. The children.

The Church's outreach in the Frederick community, and beyond: Habitat for Humanity, support for the local shelter, its support of the Frederick chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness . . .

the genuine friendliness of the people.

Seeing the congregation live up to its reputation.

The people!

Seeing youngster who came to VBS with me grow up to be neat young adults.

ER 's History

Service to the church, opportunity to take part in community events through the church. Christmas season services

Friendliness of staff and attendees.

Getting married at the alter.

Learning to know many people from the Frederick area.

Dr. Morgan and the perspective he brings to a virtually all white congregation.

Learning about the history of the congregation and people and buildings. Being part of outreach efforts to the community. Participating in marches and vigils on the steps of the church.

Watching kids grow up in The Church

Just testing the survey...

Q3: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest joys is...

Established relationships, and common ground on various topics with a number of members. Opportunity for participation in community events.

Inclusion and being with people who are supportive of all people no matter what.

Number 1 is becoming an integral part of this amazingly loving Community. Next, I am very excited about Pastor Morgan and the Transition on our doorstep. Other joys... I have loved working on the Women's Retreat with Pastor Kirstin, and co-facilitating again this year. I've enjoyed hosting Movie Dates for women in the church. I enjoy being a member of the Mission & Social Action team with Michelle et al; our Tuesday Bible Study group with Rebecca; the Greeter team with Sue; our Fellowship team with Renae; the Funeral team with Marj and Cathie; and the new ChRM search team with Peter, Tyler et al. I'm looking forward to co-leading the Ministry Fair with Julie as well as the Pride event. I am also co-leading our upcoming Get Out the Vote with Rebecca. Training is on 3/12.

The warmth of the people.

Healing & anointing in the Chapel.

The progressive nature of many of the Bible Studies, social action, and the excellent preaching and music.

Participating in music program for past 30 years.

The music, choir which I used to be in. Allison does a wonderful job. I am also glad that the church is open to all!!!

Raising our children with ERUCC family. These people are our community who embrace and love them and we need that as parents.

Music

Generational growth

Worship

The process used by ERUCC to decide to become open and affirming.

Q3: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest joys is...

The people.

The love, community and compassion of the church members.

Being able to use my graphic arts training to do the newsletter, annual report and other print media

Mission trips

Making friends and opportunities to give back to church and community through countless activities

The people

the high quality of preaching

Singing in the choir and our used to be women's group

I love worshipping with people who are important to me and at a time when many other churches are doing the same? The “where 2 or 3 are gathered” aspect of the Sunday service and voicing our prayers together moves me.

The openness and acceptance of all people. The growth of the youth ministry. Effective local and national mission outreach.

Personal relationships--friendships--with church members. These relationships provide a sense of belonging and comfort.

Volunteering

Knowing the wonderful kind people at Erucc.

The children and youth being fully a part of the congregation. as well as how the congregation supports them in so many ways.

The spirit of the people in engaging in inclusiveness, outreach, and social justice issues.

being invited to share in the intimate joys and sorrows of so many members

Strong core of students interested in serious Bible study

Sermons, friendships, choral direction, being a part of a congregation that contributes so much to the wellbeing and character of the community.

Q3: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest joys is...

The thought for the day, the weekly invitation for anyone to join the children, and the number of people who participate

Teaching classes, working on committees, and getting to know members.

Singing in the choir.

Working with children and youth. I think the Church's support of and activities for our young people is one of its greatest foundational practices. This includes allowing our high school students attend ERUCC's National Synod and National Youth Event to understand the foundation of the Church better.

The camaraderie of the congregation. The growing number of engaged youth and children. The diversity (and number) of people engaged in leadership. I know it seems like the whole is led by the few, but I continue to observe volunteers I hadn't noticed before. The congregation is "involved."

being involved with the sister churches in Germany

Children growing up in the church

Building relationships with many different people.

Being a part of the Mission and Social Action Committee, helping ERUCC give back and support the local community.

personally: having my heart opened up

communally: anti-racism and lgbtq commitment

Our members who are welcoming to newcomers but also so warm and caring to each other.

Dr. Morgan's sermons- love the different perspective- love his honesty...

ERUCC is truly a multigenerational congregation. It is great to have all generations working together at Franklinton and on activities at church. Our children have many sets of additional grandparents at ERUCC.

Many kids, many age groups

Attending Bible Study.

Q3: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest joys is...

Professional quality Zoom services! Listening to the Spirit Singers. Also watching how Pastor Kirsten has grown the number of children participating in the Sunday 10:30 Children's lesson. Many options for Bible study and on Zoom.

Seeing everyone on Sunday morning

Seeing my Nursery babies grow up, go to college, get married, & have babies of their own.

meeting loving, caring members who have become close friends.

the friendships I have made and the feeling of "family," and that everybody's welcome.

How many members have welcomed this stranger like a lost son or brother - which I am

the continuance of the nurturing of children, the high quality of music, the global outreach and growing ecological awareness.

Working with kids, serving others, doing project that help the underserved. Learning more about the word of God.

Worship, friends, teaching Sunday School, mission trips, youth group, activities.

The kindness of people in the congregation. The acceptance I feel.

Finding community and being welcomed

Just interacting with the people.....and the Bible study group

Getting to know other members and feel a part of the community

Music

Mission trips and traveling with church friends.

Choir with Alison.

Messages of words, music and fellowship

The addition of the new Community Room.

Q3: Since I have been a participant in the ERUCC community, one of my greatest joys is...

The congregation's commitment to welcome people "no matter where they are on life's journey." The work of the Green Team to promote ecological justice and good stewardship of creation. The partnership with churches in Germany has been a great blessing and broadened participants' and hosts' worldview and faith perspectives.

Friendships that my children have made and experiences we have been a part of. My children feel ERUCC is a second home.

Q4: As I reflect on the future of ERUCC, I am most concerned about...

People not going to church any more

The financial circumstances of the congregation, particularly in relation to Trinity Chapel.

Politics in church. Almost every sermon has a political twist to it , and I would prefer church and government stay separate... most of the time. It seems those are the only sermons we hear anymore.

Finding a pastor who can preach effectively, someone who can take the ancient scriptures and make them real to what we are facing today: bigotry, violence, etc. I don't want a Bible study lesson: I want an interpretation that has meaning for TODAY.

Can't think of anything

1- the congregation aging out, and 2- balancing the budget.

I hope that our future Pastor open minded, spiritual and compassionate. I hope that the future Pastor is very supportive of our youth Pastor who is doing a wonderful job for our kids.

Too little effort to get more members.

Balancing respect for our history while embracing the new.

Money

Trinity Chapel

The lack of ethnic and racial diversity and any notion of "this is how we've always done it". Lack of progress.

Choosing the best pastor to lead the congregation that keeps the values of being open and affirming. To also engage and support the local community.

Finances.....finances.....finances

long-term debt.

The church losing its local involvement with the community.

Finances and continuing to be a presence of faith and nurture in the community and that includes preservation of the Trinity Chapel.

Politics in the pulpit.

Just testing the survey...

Q4: As I reflect on the future of ERUCC, I am most concerned about...

Continued vitality and a variety of opportunities to participate that can be attractive to the wide range of individuals here.

growing our congregation and getting more people involved in activities and giving financially and finding an inspiring new settled Pastor.

Our debt and the Clock Tower repairs but I know God has a plan for us. Our Finance team has great expertise. Proud that Niel has joined that with Will and our Clock Tower team with Dave.

That people will lose their excitement about participating in the ministry. A loss of energy.

Too much going on. Dwindling of old time members & new members not understanding 'church'. Things have gotten too casual. Prayer list not up to date with some people being on there for YEARS & new concerns not added.

My sense that as folks from other denominations or no religious background are welcomed into the congregation, as they should be, the instilling of UCC history, polity and participation in Christian Education is not consistently encouraged.

Continuing participation of older, long time members.

Lack of membership as churches all over are going though the same thing

Keeping our vision of social action as a priority for our congregation and our community. I have church shopped and I can't find this combination of progressive ideas and love of God anywhere else. Having a minister who can hold this for us is important to me. With that said, I love my people who are more conservative than me and I want to welcome them too.

Traditions continuing

Finances

Its sort of a double edged sword - I welcome the growth in the congregation and the diversity that it brings with it and yet I am concerned that attention is not being given to foster the spirit of what it means to be UCC.

Q4: As I reflect on the future of ERUCC, I am most concerned about...

A new pastor whose sermons can't compare to Barbara's. She spoke about recent events and made them relevant. She always seemed to speak on subjects that affected me personally. She held our attention and made us all feel special. As a wife and mother, she related to families.

Being stuck in the past when it comes to worship services. Along with inability to attract new/younger members, as is true of many main line churches. Also the(hopefully slim) possibility of selling Trinity Chapel. That would be horrible in my view.

finding a new settled pastor

Growing income versus expenses

Nothing

Money

continuing the feeling and the service of the congregation

Our new minister

I am concerned that the Evangelical right has usurped part of our name. People from outside our church have, on more than one occasion asked for an explanation. I am wondering about how many people might be assuming they know who we are based on what they hear about Evangelicals on the news or social media. This is a concern about The Church in general, not just ERUCC, and there is a concern that so much of what people think Christianity is does not mesh with our belief as a denomination and my belief personally.

ER's willingness to make creative changes in congregational/worship life which will result in effective growth by attracting people who are searching for an exciting spiritual home. We are also concerned about developing new and more lay leadership and involvement.

The general drift away from organized (particularly mainline protestant) religion in our country.

The age of the congregation and if the particular church will stay around in 30+ years, but I also know the age of the congregation is a worry point for most churches.

That we lose the warmth and connections between members.

Q4: As I reflect on the future of ERUCC, I am most concerned about...

The lack of understanding and respect that comes from a church where the people run it and committees make decisions, bylaws are followed and respected.

Lay leadership - leaders are often not empowered to act, as we observe that decisions are often adjusted/changed by others with no conversation or explanation.

getting through this protracted era of focusing primarily on our buildings

Adapting to the needs of young families with children. There are so many demands on their time that we need to provide quality programming that will be a strong draw for them to participate.

The hire of the next pastor, ensuring that he or she has the same level of commitment to social justice, can deliver a well developed sermon, and on top of this can develop an effective approach to volunteer management.

Finances

I'm concerned about the next pastor being open to ideas and willing to accept the gifts of other clergy and lay leaders.

The church looking forward and rising to the next level as a church/congregation. Big, bold forward thinking for ERUCC to move to the next level is vital.

I have two concerns. First, I am concerned how lax oversight has been of our youth when traveling. I have chaperoned numerous trips. The rules we provided beforehand are very good if they are followed; however, many youth do not follow the rules without any repercussions. In addition, our parents do not support the rules. I have had parents tell me, in front of their child, that their child does not need to have another youth with them when leaving the hotel room to go to the lobby, etc. (when youth are traveling with the Church and not their parents). Second, I'm concerned about the transparency of the Church's decisions. Over the years, I have watched long-term members leave the Church; when I have had an opportunity to speak with them later, it often relates back to decisions being made without full Congregational support. The Church begins with the appearance of transparency, but ultimately makes the decision without following through. (This is a perspective that was communicated to me.)

Q4: As I reflect on the future of ERUCC, I am most concerned about...

the loss of the retired pastoral leaders who lead educational sessions, visit the homebound and step into the pulpit as needed. We are extremely blessed to have them in our midst now.

reigniting the passion of ERUCC

Finances

Making sure our mission is protected and acted out.

Losing members during the interim period.

meeting the financial requirements to maintain buildings

Keeping our youth involved in the church. It is great to see so many children come up for the Children's Sermon and I am hoping that they continue to be part of a Spiritual Journey where we, as members, can nurture and support them.

The state of the world...

Fewer people volunteering

People not engaging the interim process, I guess it's a fear, I want people to engage the process for our future!

Finding a place in a community that minds their own business & welcomes unconditionally.

Don't feel Consistory is straightforward in presenting ERUCC's financial situation specifically in regards to Trinity Chapel. It feels like instead of an honest discussion about the current budget and affordability of various options for Trinity Chapel we were given a yes/no vote to sell. Several months previous to the vote it was reported that few members attended service or Sunday school at the Chapel and parents didn't even like their kids being across the street. Next thing came a rush to position it as critical to the Church's mission. I thought stewardship includes living within one's means.

How we can continue to improve and grow and serve the community.

Spreading ourselves too thin with our hands in too many pots.

Keeping our hearts focused on serving God while we face financial challenges.

nothing.

Q4: As I reflect on the future of ERUCC, I am most concerned about...

Not concerned - but curious about the process or path of renewal and acceptance for a new generation of believers

finances. There seems to be a lack of understanding about how a 501K/ religious institution is supported financially. The building of a new community room without the full understanding of financially and structurally maintaining the old buildings seems negligent. The "old Frederick money" is slowly dying with nothing in comparison to replace it. Jumping into something huge like a constructing a columbarium, without fully investigating its limits structurally and financially seems very remiss, and a huge disappointment to those of us who have invested their money, and their belief that it would be their final resting place.

The full function of the Community Room as a money making arm of this congregation was not thought out thoroughly before it was built, and thus fell flat when needing to be instituted.

I am also concerned about "physical security." In politically charged times such as these, I worry that we are sitting ducks for those who are intolerant of our liberal mindset. The fact that the street was blocked by 3 police cars on a Sunday morning because of a vocal man with a conservative Christian agenda attests to the reality of the situation.

Sustainability. There is a huge movement away from the church in our nation. Younger people don't seem to be as rooted in the church.

Loss of some of the traditional worship services.

The lack of young people in the congregation. The lack of diversity in the congregation.

The aging congregation

The downtown parking situation....

The aging congregation

The dwindling numbers of youth in church

Future Leadership

Continuing to attract young families and youth

Q4: As I reflect on the future of ERUCC, I am most concerned about...

More community usage of our community room. Maintaining a strong youth program, although Kirstin has been doing fantastically in that regard.

What to do about Trinity Chapel.

The heavy debt load we carry.

The heavy debt load incurred by the new addition, even though I think the new addition was needed and is a true asset to our congregation and the Frederick community.

Finding a permit pastor and enough space for our growing children and youth

Q5: Among the things I do not understand about ERUCC are (is)...

Outsiders not more inclined to attend

The congregation's relationship with other area churches. From my new/limited history with the congregation, I have often seen the congregation being open and welcoming to people from diverse church backgrounds, but I have seen or heard little about the church in relation with other area churches, with the exception of the occasional Conference visit and Dr. Morgan's recent installation service.

Nothing

No answer

Hard to answer this question. I feel I understand everything I need to.

N/A

NoneC

?????

How we could give up a very good Associate Pastor.

The direction within the community and the congregation

We speak of diversity within the church but do not see a racial mix at ERUCC.

Non-applicable to me

nothing. I have been around churches all of my life; they are not perfect; seasons come and go; so does the enthusiasm of the congregation, etc. I understand that staffing is often the most expensive and the most contentious issue in a church along with spending on mission, etc.

Why the choir takes the time to come down for their music instead of just staying in the choir loft. Also that some of the prelude and postludes are unnecessarily long.

Why it takes so long to get a new Senior Pastor

Just testing the survey...

Not sure. I believe I have a basic understanding of how things happen and how decisions are made.

Q5: Among the things I do not understand about ERUCC are (is)...

I am not quite sure how we go about getting a new inspiring settled Pastor.

The “underneath the floorboards operations” of Consistory, Elders, Deacons etc. I’d love for us to map this out. I’ve done this with clients so happy to help.

The casual atmosphere.

How the lay leaders are nominated and oriented to their positions.

How a decision is made affecting a program without consulting the leader of that program.

I don’t have any

I have to admit that I am currently actively involved in a variety of roles in the church. For the first 4-7 years I was not involved and felt lost mainly about communication regarding kids and youth programming. It took me a long time to figure out the “division” between what the children’s minister was doing and the senior pastor was doing.

?

I wonder how the scriptures are selected to be read each Sunday. I understand why passages are selected from both the New and Old Testaments, but some passages, such as from Mathew, for example, are read over and over, year after year. Some passages are not necessarily read during the same Sunday in the Church Year. For example, one passage might be read during Lent, and the another year it might be read during Pentecost. How are they selected?

Why we aren’t as progressive with our worship services as we are with our social/political views.

Nothing comes to mind

Seeming lack of concern for older members and more emphasis on new members

Our relationship to the larger organization

(can’t think of anything)

Q5: Among the things I do not understand about ERUCC are (is)...

I can't think of anything to write here.

why the congregation keeps doing the same things over and over, not dealing with things that need correction and/or changing. Poor congregational stewardship with financial support and use of time and talents.

The political commentary during worship. But I am a hard traditionalist more use to singing songs, listening to the Bible, a quick sermon, and a few more songs after that.

Can't think of any.

How the community room is being used to benefit the greater community? How decisions are being made without all staff being involved and from what I can tell little respect to their input.

Why committee meetings are not regularly published so all in the congregation can observe what leadership groups and committees are meeting - such information helps to provide a good overview of what is taking place behind the scenes.

why no one has noticed that the flags in the chancel have been switched again

Why the choir parades out of the choir loft to sing the anthem; takes up too much time in worship

There is a lot I don't understand but they are mostly administrative. NA

How did this wonderful congregation managed to muscle enough financial support for our wonderful addition.

I never understand, whether it's ERUCC or other organization, it's always the same people doing the programming, events, projects. I'd like to see a stronger outreach to all members to ask them to participate in more programming.

Personally asking people seems to be the best approach. We need to do more.

I do not fully understand how ERUCC fits into the national picture, which conference we belong in, etc. More of the national view and how we support it and it supports individual churches.

Nothing I can think of.

the never-ending request for money, but it's necessary

Inconsistent in support for elderly/those who aren't able to come to church

I'm not sure about this one. I don't have any unanswered questions at the moment.

Q5: Among the things I do not understand about ERUCC are (is)...

The no clapping edict.

how things get done

the challenges of recruiting volunteers. Like many organizations, it seems to be the same people serving our church on various levels.

?

Why we have some much trouble getting volunteers

Why we continue to cling to Trinity Chapel when we clearly can not afford it. Failure to live within our financial means.

I am beginning to understand the Interim and Settled Pastor process although I am not sure I like it.

None

How casual it's become.

Not sure

nothing in particular.

I am in the process of learning about the life of ERUCC - the Spirit of God brought me here with a purpose - I am searching for His presence and seeking strength and wisdom

the "power structure..." the committees, Consistory. It has changed significantly in the 14 years I have attended, with committees being dissolved and sometimes partially resurrected, with the Consistory members becoming a very small number.

"Standing committees" that support the structure of the institution were dissolved, and therefore not in place when needed...wedding committee, kitchen committee, funeral committee, library committee, clean-up committee, costume committee, peace and justice committee, etc.

Why it so political

NA

Q5: Among the things I do not understand about ERUCC are (is)...

None

The governance and committee organization. If committee roles were better communicated, there may be more interest in participation.

Why there isn't more awareness of the need for special food, i.e. gluten free, vegan or vegetarian at dinners and fellowship. I believe that fellowship has gotten better.

None to my knowledge.

In the past there was a requirement that in order to serve as a elder one first had to serve as a deacon. This was the practice not only at ERUCC, but in other UCC congregations from the E&R tradition with which I have been affiliated. This practice is no longer followed and I do not recall the change having been communicated with the congregation prior to its implementation.

Q6: If I could change one thing about ERUCC, it would be...

More along good efforts made to engage frederick

Introduce weekly communion at the main worship service.

Less politics and social justice.

More fellowship, service projects and youth engagement in Christian values.

Broader involvement in bible study groups

Have more of the music be what the congregation wants, more of the traditional tunes.

Can't think of anything.

Combine the two church buildings.

More opportunities to socialize with members (dining out, travel outings, home gatherings, etc.)

Too much performance during worship. Too many hymns congregation do not know how to sing.

Add more showcase displays of ER's history in the new Main Entrance lobby areas.

Other than somehow attracting diverse people groups, more service from a broader group of people in the congregation.

No opinion at this time.

Deleted the name Evangelical Reformed. The name Evangelical is outdated and carries a negative connotation for many.

... continue to work on attracting more people to the church.

It would be a more diverse congregation with more progressive theology.

Internally, I think there are many in the congregation who feel they no longer fit in. And I don't know what the answer is. I'm not interested in additional church dinners and large indoor group activities. I'm still very mindful of health concerns. Externally, I value ERUCC's impact on the community and would welcome more participation in external activities (locally).

Shortened the time it takes to get a new Senior Pastor.

Just testing the survey...

Q6: If I could change one thing about ERUCC, it would be...

More, and more regular, communication from committees and leaders about issues under consideration, alternatives, and decision making

Not sure, I kind like the way we are.

We need more young people and seeing that starting to shift!!

Q6: If I could change one thing about ERUCC, it would be...

Sometimes it seems we try to do too many things and then struggle to have help and participation in all of them. I feel guilty about not being able to help with everything and then want to distance myself to protect my peace. Let's do a few things really well

(can't think of anything)

We might be more outward facing. Right now, because we are examining ourselves, we have to be self absorbed, but we need to focus on the needs of the world outside ERUCC and not just congratulate ourselves on the use of our front steps as a gathering place for addressing justice issues.

less crowding of items in worship services which destroys a sense of unity and causes a poor use of time. e.g. a morning service with full sermon, reception of new members, Holy Communion, and multiple choirs singing. All that often causes much distracting movement which takes away the sense of sacred presence.

The choice of hymns, which seem to be chosen for their significance to the Sunday scripture/sermon. Hymns are an important part of the service, and many of the ones we sing remind me of dirges. Although the lyrics may be uplifting, the tunes leave a lot to be desired.

Less political commentary during worship.

Better audio in the sanctuary. I often have difficulty hearing the pastors.

To change the 8:30 service, in order to provide it as a second option for worship, instead of as a communion & healing service for 10-20 people.

to find a more descriptive name than ERUCC

Put less in the bulletin, particularly of things that the pastors speak (call to confession, assurance of pardon, benediction) so that congregation is more inclined to look up and listen, rather than just read from the bulletin

Q6: If I could change one thing about ERUCC, it would be...

Nothing comes to mind.

I'd expand our children's area at the front of the sanctuary.

Parking!!

I would like to institute a better orientation for members who agree to be on one of the Church's committees, be a teacher/ volunteer, etc. Every time I have agreed to do one of these things, I was left to figure things out for myself. For instance, most recently I was asked to be co-chair of a Committee. I then learned about decisions/activities from that Committee, and I knew nothing about it. In addition, I started receiving invitations to the Consistory meeting without knowing I was now a member. I ultimately came to the conclusion that my co-chair position was expected to be confined to one area, but that was not articulated to me. Once again, this is something I experienced under multiple Church leadships, not just the current leadership. Also, I would like to have the various aspects of ERUCC easily accessible to Church members. Recently, I was looking for Church information on the Church's tenets, the various committees and their members, etc., but I could not find it. If possible, I would like to see this base information easily accessible to members.

An increased congregation-wide recognition of the time and dedication given to our church by our pastoral and administrative staff.

What if we took it so far as to have an annual "Pastor Recognition Sunday?" The entire service would be led by congregation members, perhaps even those who are not in current leadership roles. The pastoral staff, consistory, elders, and deacons merely attend and be praised.

Stop the Franklinton mission. They're redoing projects we had already completed for the sake of making work. Let's find a mission closer to home.

More outreach to members not participating.

Making it bigger - making an impact more on Frederick and the larger community.

Always singing hymns, a variety of worship music would be GREAT.

Q6: If I could change one thing about ERUCC, it would be...

to further foster community in meeting concrete needs of congregants - perhaps similar to the Quaker use of Committees

to have more volunteers on the sound system. Of course I am biased but it has been an uphill challenge to recruit more people letting those few responsible for manning not only church services but also funerals and meetings.

?

More people actively involved in helping.

Convince the influential members of the congregation that we have to live w/in our means. Otherwise, there is no church at all....

Nothing

Practice what you preach about concern & caring for everyone.

to increase the diversity of our congregation.

nothing.

Nothing at this table me - I like everything I see and the love

Q6: If I could change one thing about ERUCC, it would be...

None

Communication regarding activities and building use. A monthly calendar and weekly updates would be great.

Reduce the mortgage sooner so we would be able to do more for missionary outreach locally and world wide.

Q6: If I could change one thing about ERUCC, it would be...

The choir loft.

I know it is beautiful to look at but it is difficult to maneuver around the organ - too many tight corners, too close seats to squeeze between the front row and the organ (I have to do a sideways shuffle). Not enough space for the feet of those who have to sing standing directly behind the organ.

First we had too many singers for everyone to sit in the loft, so we would come down to the front of the stairs to sing. I find that moving while the preacher or someone else is speaking is disruptive to the service both to myself and to the congregation. I feel embarrassed when we do and it messes with my worship.

Now, it is too hard for people with back and or knee issues to climb narrow stairs or sit comfortably in the loft.

We do not have both a choir director and an accompanist. Alison does a fantastic job doing both. She only has 2 hands yet she is able to both play complicated music and direct us artistically.

We have to watch her carefully. She has to sit where the piano fits. This means we have to stand facing at least her hand so that everyone in the choir can see her gestures.

We have heard from people sitting on the opposite side of the church asking why we do not face more towards them. It is because we must watch Alison and we cannot put the piano any more to the center of the sanctuary. There are no speakers that can make the that side of the church louder.

Bring back the practice of Elders serving pew communion once a quarter.

Q6: If I could change one thing about ERUCC, it would be...

Reinstate the practice of passing the offering plate during worship.