

Surveys in Church Planting

Surveys can be useful in church planting for a variety of reasons:

1. To help you better understand your community and her needs so that you can design ministries and messages that will bring God's help to those needs
2. To help you identify prospects for the church
3. To open up witnessing opportunities
4. To directly minister to the residents of the community in some way (such as prayer or servant evangelism, etc.)
5. To increase awareness of your new church in the community
6. To identify "persons of peace" who may help you in a variety of ways, such as opening their homes for community Bible studies, Backyard Bible Clubs for children, etc.
7. Other reasons that you decide

The first thing to determine is the *purpose* of the survey. The questions you ask will be determined by your purpose. In other words, if your purpose is truly to learn the needs of the community to help you design ministries to help, your questions will be different than if your purpose is door-to-door evangelism. You may be able to accomplish more than one of the purposes above in a survey, but you cannot likely accomplish them *all*. Below are several surveys that we have compiled. There will be similarities in many of them. We included some that are almost identical just to give you ideas of different ways to word different questions that will hopefully give you the responses you are seeking. Some are formatted for using outside groups that may come in and help you. You may be able to get some preprinted forms from Evangelism or Sunday School Ministries of the state convention.

Additional thoughts:

- Some like to give something away, e.g., a light bulb or a battery (for smoke detectors) as an example of a desire to be helpful and friendly.
- Always have some kind of information about your church to leave with the respondent.
- Asking if the person would like results of the survey gives you an opportunity to share more later through mail, email, or a return visit.
- Some are doing a survey today simply asking for prayer requests for the community—pure and simple. You can follow up later by returning to ask about answers. Many people need a personal, spiritual touch, and most people are open to having someone pray about needs.
- FAITH, CWT, EE, and other evangelism programs have surveys if you are looking for a purely evangelistic model. These can be done door-to-door, but there may be better response in public places like malls, recreation areas, etc.

- On the following pages are some examples. Most have similarities. Again, these can help you design questions for your particular need.

(SAMPLE 1)

Community Survey Questions for the Unchurched

This survey comes from Rick Warren’s experience planting Saddleback church. It is designed to discover information about those who do not go to church.

1. **What do you think is the greatest need in this area?**
(This question helps get people talking.)
2. **Are you actively attending any church?**
(If they say yes, thank them and move on to the next home. To survey the unchurched, you don’t want to color the survey with the opinions of believers. Notice the question is *not*, “Are you a member?” Many people who haven’t been inside a church for twenty years still claim membership in some church.)
3. **Why do you think most people don’t attend church?**
(This seemed to be a less threatening than “Why don’t YOU attend church?”)
4. **If you were to look for a church to attend, what kind of things would you look for?**
(This question helps understand the kinds of ministries that would appeal to the unchurched in the community.)
5. **What advice can you give to a new church that really wants to be helpful to people in the community? (Or, What could we do for you?)**

At the conclusion, you can ask for name and email address (you already have address) so that you can get to them a copy of complete survey and let them know about the progress of the church.

(Note that this survey is to gather information and meet people. It is not specifically designed to ask diagnostic questions that lead to a personal witness at that time. You can add those if you wish. *Generally, more of your people will respond to go out to conduct a survey if it is simply information taking.*)

(SAMPLE 2)

NEEDS OPINION POLL

(First write the address here, then knock on the door or ring the doorbell.)

Address _____

At the door, say: Hello, I’m _____ and this is _____. We are from _____ Church, and we are trying to help our church more effectively meet the needs of our community by conducting a brief neighborhood needs survey. Could we

have a couple of minutes of your time to ask a few questions? (*Do not ask for person's name or phone number at this time.*)

1. When you attend church, where do you attend?

2. (*If yes*) Would you mind telling us the name of your pastor?

3. In your opinion, how can a church help families deal with today's pressures? _____

4. We would like to pray for you and your family. Are there any prayer concerns you have we could pray for? _____

5. Do you think much about spiritual things? Yes No

6. Have you come to know Jesus Christ in a personal way or would you say you are still in the process?

Yes (*Say: please tell me about it. If answer confirms genuine conversion, go to conclusion. If not, ask permission to share how you came to know Him.*) Share your testimony and a witnessing booklet.

No (*Ask: may I share how I came to know Him? If given permission, share your testimony and a witnessing booklet.*)

Conclusion: Thank you for your time. Would you like to receive information about the ministries of our church? (*Get name and phone number. If possible, leave a witnessing booklet and church information.*)

CONTACT INFORMATION

If the person receives Christ or is responding well and appears to be a prospect, continue with the interview on this page.

1. We would like to invite you to our church. We address the needs of all age groups. Would you be interest in receiving more information about our church?
Yes (*continue*) No (*Thank them again for their time*)

Name of person interviewed _____

Age: (Estimate) () Youth () Young Adult () Adult
() Senior Adult Phone: _____

Other family members and ages

2. We would love for you to attend Bible Study with us. Could we enroll you in a Bible study group? Yes No

CONCLUSION

(If yes) Thank you for your time. (Share information about Sunday School. Offer to meet them at church or pick them up.)

(If no) Thank you for your time. *(Invite them to visit worship services.)*

RESPONSE FORM

Before arriving at the next house, surveyors should:

1. Check the appropriate responses.
 - Allowed the gospel to be presented.
 - Received Christ as Savior and Lord.
 - Accepted a gospel tract or New Testament.
 - Is a prospect for church membership./
 - Is a good fair poor evangelistic prospect

Comments: _____

2. Be sure the above address is on the front of this form.

Not at home Busy Return at _____ a.m. p.m. Date _____

Surveyor's names _____

(SAMPLE 3)

[] Not at home [] Busy [] Refused survey [] Refused materials

Surveyor's names _____

(If you live in area) church _____

Map # _____

“CROSS OVER” COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY

(First, **print** the address here, then knock on the door or ring the doorbell.)

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

At the door, say: Hello, I’m _____ and this is _____. We are with _____ Baptist Church and we are trying to help our church effectively meet the needs of our community by conducting a brief neighborhood needs survey. May we ask a few questions? (***Do not ask for the person’s name or phone number at this time.***)

1. When you attend church, where do you attend? _____
2. Many people seem to be living under a great deal of stress today. Why do you think this is so? _____
3. In your opinion, how can a church help families deal with today’s pressures? _____
4. We would like to pray for you and your family. Are there prayer concerns our church family can pray for at this time? _____

5. Many express increased interest in spiritual matters. Do you think much about spiritual things? [] Yes [] No

6. Have you come to know Jesus Christ in a personal way or would you say you are still in the process?
Yes (Say: please tell me about it. *If answer confirms genuine conversion, go to conclusion. If not, ask permission to share how you came to know Him.) Share your testimony and the Here’s Hope witnessing booklet.*

No (Ask: may I share how I came to know Him? *If given permission, share your testimony and share the Here’s Hope witnessing booklet. If not given permission, go to conclusion.)*

Conclusion: Thank you for your time. (**Turn to back and complete the survey.** If nothing else can be accomplished, leave the information about your church and the witnessing booklet. **Given an invitation to the church for upcoming events and for Bible study and worship.**)

CROSS OVER DECISION/PROSPECT INFORMATION

Name/Address of Person Interviewed: _____ Date ___/___/___

First Name _____ Last Name _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP CODE _____ PHONE (optional) _____

AGE: Child Youth Young Adult Adult Senior Adult

Other Family Members: _____ Age _____
_____ Age _____
_____ Age _____

Church Preference (if given) _____

RESULTS: Check all that apply

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Survey used | Profession of faith |
| Church materials accepted | Rededication/Assurance |
| Received witnessing booklet | Already Christian/Church member |
| Shared the Gospel | Rejection |

Do They Qualify as a Church Prospect?

Yes, Good Maybe, Possible No, Not a Prospect

Comments: _____

Person Sharing _____ Your Association _____

Local church you are helping: _____

For Church Office Use Only:

Prospect Assigned to: _____

Date Assigned: _____ Date of Contact: _____

Method of Contact: Visit _____ Phone _____ Other _____

(SAMPLE 4) [] Not at home [] Busy [] Refused survey [] Refused materials

Surveyor's names _____
Staging Center _____ Baptist Church Plat # _____ Map # _____

COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY

(First, **print** the address here, then knock on the door or ring the doorbell.)

Address _____
City _____ Zip _____

At the door, say: Hello, I'm _____ and this is _____. We are with _____ Baptist Church. We are trying to help effectively meet the needs of this community by conducting a brief neighborhood needs survey. Could we have a couple of minutes of your time to ask a few questions? (*Do not ask for the person's name or phone number at this time.*)

1. In your opinion, what is the most important issue your community faces?

2. What would you suggest a church do to address this issue?

3. We would like to pray for you and your family. Are there any prayer concerns you would like to include on our list?

4. When you attend church, where do you attend?

5. Have you come to know Christ in a personal way or would you say you are still in the process?

Yes – Say: “Please tell me about it.” (*If answer confirms genuine conversion, go to conclusion. If not, ask permission to share how you came to know Him.*) Share your testimony and share the witnessing booklet.

No – Ask: “May I share how I came to Know Him?” (*If given permission, share your testimony and share the witnessing booklet.*)

If not given permission, go to conclusion.

Conclusion: “Thank you for your time.” (*Turn to back and complete the survey. If nothing else can be accomplished, leave the information about the churches and the witnessing booklet.*)

CONTACT INFORMATION

If the person received Christ or is responding well and appears to be a prospect, continue with the interview on this page.

We would like to invite you to _____ Baptist Church. You will find information about the church enclosed in the bag. Would you be interested in receiving more information about our church? **Yes** (*Ask for information below*) **No** (*Go to conclusion*)

Name of person interviewed: _____

Age: (Estimate) () Child () Youth () Young Adult () Adult () Senior Adult

Phone: (____) _____ - _____

Other family members and ages:

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your time. (*Invite them to visit worship services and Bible study.*)

RESPONSE FORM

Before arriving at the next house, surveyors should:

1. Check the appropriate responses:
 Allowed the gospel to be presented.
 Received Christ as Savior and Lord.
 Accepted materials.
 Is a prospect for church membership?
Is a good fair poor evangelistic prospect?
Comments _____
 Rededication of life.

2. Be sure the address is on the front of this form.

| |
|---|
| Office use only: Church assigned to: _____ Date contacted: _____ |
|---|

(SAMPLE 5)

This survey is left on the door, given to a respondent, or mailed to residents. It is printed on a door hanger so that the resident can leave it out for you to pick up.

COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY
**Please fill out the information and
place on your doorknob we pick it
up on Thursday afternoon.**

Resident's name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City, State, ZIP _____

1. About how often does your family attend church? Would you say weekly, once or twice a month, seldom, or never?

Weekly ___ } Go to #2 Seldom ___
1-2 Month ___ Never ___ } Go to #3
Don't know ___

2. Where does your family attend church? _____

3. Does your family have any religious preference? _____

4. In your opinion, what are some specific needs within this community?

5. In your opinion, why do many people no longer attend church today?

6. Would you want a child of yours to receive religious instruction?

Yes ___ No ___ No children ___ Don't know/
not relevant ___

7. Would any of your family members attend a new church in this community?

Yes ___ No ___ Don't know/not relevant ___

8. How important would you say religion is in your own life? Would you say it is very important, fairly important, or not very important?

Very ___ Fairly ___ Not very ___ Don't know/not relevant ___

9. Would you allow us to have Bible study in your home?

Yes ___ No ___ Don't know/not relevant ___