

DEFINITIONS & GUIDANCE

GENERAL: Several questions ask for yes or no answers, and then comments. But the questions focus on your opinion of your congregation. For example, question 12 asks if you attend convention and pay your assessment on time. There is no instruction or clarity about “on time;” if you think you are paying assessment in a timely manner—monthly or quarterly—say so. Or, if you are paying “as best you can” given plate and pledge variations, say so. Our interest is having you be frank with yourselves about how your church “works.” There may be further conversations about this, but not for punitive purpose.

6. “Other congregations served by your area.” Those within a 30 minute drive of your worship center.

10. “Unit of clergy time:” For example, your agreement with your priest is 1/4 time, as you think of it--or 3 units per week. You have worked out a plan where you may be served by your priest each Sunday and one morning and one afternoon a week for the month. Or, your agreement may call for all 3 weekly units to be spread unevenly across the month. At quarter time, there will be about 12 units per month--maybe two Sundays, one vestry meeting, (3 units so far) and then 2 units per week for 4 weeks, totaling 11 units, with one for emergencies. If the agreement with your priest is 1/2 time, you can double the example above, and so on.

14. Deferred maintenance: Imagine that your parish house needs a roof. You have known for three years that it needs a roof. You know that the cost of the roof will be \$25,000. The value of all your building (from the Church Insurance pages) is \$259,000. It looks as though deferred maintenance is a little less than 10%. (Don't stress on this; a general idea will suffice.)

16. The endowment principal you might use part of to fund annual operations would be only that part of your total endowment that is available for Vestry use. Many endowments limit use to the annual income from the fund, and so you can't count that as part of the principal that you can draw from.

19-21. These questions ask for some personal examples that your fellow members might share about their faith and spiritual lives. They are important pieces of your congregational life, even if they seem personal.