

SWOT - Strengths

- **Positive church atmosphere...10:** friendly...10, welcoming...8, inclusive...5, warm...3, accepting...3, open/engaging to all...3, open Communion Table...2, kind, helpful with disabilities, adaptable to kids with special needs, homey, unpretentious, modest, gracious, longevity of members, people hungry to grow spiritually, forward thinking/looking, people can sense the Spirit is at work
- **Strong Sunday morning worship experiences...6:** music...6, Praise Team...3, good variety and quality, wonderful sanctuary...3, talented musicians...2, related to message, Handbells...2, quality of online service...2, the pastor, Early Word...connects to adults and kids, updated technology, Faith Stepping Stones
- **Good with community outreach/community events...4:** park/playground used by public...4, Reading in the Park...4, Party in the Park...3, Lil Library...3, Labyrinth...2, Christmas Day Dinner...3, Meals and Missions...2, classrooms used for AA recovery groups, people willing to serve in community...2, Meals on Wheels
- **Knowledgeable Staff...4:** strong teaming spirit...4, strong leadership, devoted team players...2, gifted/skilled, know history of families, and members, , staff works towards excellence, staff knows congregation, loves children, likes to have fun, willing to try new things, longevity.
- **Well-cared for building and property...3:** high pride in building and grounds...3, fabulous playground...3, fabulous Labyrinth...2, beautiful firepit...2, grateful space is being used by AA, giving to community with blood drives, plenty of classrooms.
- **People's willingness to serve in church/well-functioning teams:** so many people serving and volunteering, strong value in teaming, Greeters, Guest Connections, Prayer Ministry (NEW ministry), Adult Discipleship (new teaming and growth), SING (NEW ministry), Worship Design Team, Finance Team

SWOT - Weaknesses

- **No Youth Group...12:** not attracting young families/low number of young families w kids in church...12, no Youth Group...7, no activities for youth/not connecting with graduates...3, lack of you connecting with older generation, loss of Curtis, sports taking families/youth from church, lack of parents' buy in to make alternative Youth programming happen.
- **Attendance is down...9:** older/aging congregation...9, don't have consistent attendance...3, lack of kids to attend Confirmation...2, Covid taught people to stay home...2, attendance spikes when Hand Bells play, Snowbirders, small size of congregation.
- **Not having two services (traditional and contemporary)...6:** not having 2 services...6, dislike the 9am service, no choir, more hymns to balance modern music
- **Lack of leadership/leadership development...5:** too much put on current leaders/volunteers...5, lack of identifying/developing new leaders...4, limited small group leaders, lack of commitment, lack of communication about committees, lack of vision statement.
- **Lack of programming...3:** better visitation group (other than pastor) for hospital/nursing homes...3, no Women's Group, No Preschool, no ministry to shut-ins, no transportation to church, waning BeFriender's Ministry
- **Fellowship issues...3:** unwillingness to change/it's always been like this, I know more than you do/cliques...3, poor potluck attendance, outsiders not being included, appointments needed to visit people because people are so busy,
- **Lack of Marketing...3:** more sharing of Methodist policy changes, lack of cards/paper/word of mouth, inviting to classes or small groups, lack of signs for people to find us, location/our church is hard to find, lack of centralized space for communication of information.
- **Lack of Communication...3:** for Sunday School, Coffee Sign Ups, communication is siloed, is church open during the weekdays for prayer, helps for those with hearing loss, electronic versus mail communication.
- **Lack of discipleship/small group/class opportunities...3:** lack of discipleship opportunities, more Bible studies/small groups, lack of programming, lack of Budgeting Classes
- **Sunday School...3:** lack of music for children, minimal Children's Ministry, lack of communication about camps, not enough safety policies
- **Finance/budgeting restrictions...2:** lack of budget/money...2, need more financial stability...2, size of church means limited resources for tasks, mentality of "we can't afford that", no budget for Youth Programming, promote electronic giving.
- **New Pastor:** still learning the job, staff unsure of duties...2, workload too much for too few...2, staff not setting goals, picking up slack, unsure of staff vision/future goals.
- **No research to learn what the needs are in our community in Buffalo...2**
- **Lack of involvement/volunteering:** little explanation of what volunteers need to do/no ministry descriptions, no telling us of what positions are needed, limited size = limited resources

Topics w. one vote: **Crusty offices:** first impression is not good.

SWOT - Opportunities

- **Developing Youth programming...10:** implementing youth programming, more youth opportunities, creating youth activities, members multi-generational engaging with youth, get the opinion of kids and youth, Youth Leader – Curtis, create space for young growth, Confirmation and graduates to get together after their church programming is done, Confirmands and youth serving opportunities, partner youth with older members, musical opportunities for youth, retreats for both youth and confirmands, more use of Youth Rooms, combining youth opportunities with other churches, get involved with other nearby Youth Groups
- **Maximize our new members...9:** have sponsors/mentors for new members, wisdom to engage with new members and longtime members, adapt to where the new members are, new energy, accepting, having new members is always the goal, exciting to have new members, using/utilizing new members strengths/talents/gifts, members engagement, Mentors for new families
- **Better marketing and advertising...8:** better signs...3, use the newspaper...2, More awareness of facility amenities/signage, expand online capabilities, use social media more, use more media in service, use social media to reach youth and young families, Website needs updating, updates to market the church, building youth program information on BUMC website, share website (with safety practices) to show activities, Creative marketing
- **Getting more involved in our community...7:** more involved in Foodshelf and food scarcity...3, after school programming with Northwinds...3, Party in the Park – with expanded businesses invited to support us...3, Blood Drive...2, Fresh Expressions...SING (Spirituality In Nature Group)...2, Playground, brings new people into our church, more ideas to connect with, outreach for members and non-members in community, more awareness of community needs, recovery groups, awareness of homelessness, more after school activities, float in Buffalo Days Parade, Little Library, Opening up church grounds
- **Congregation/Fellowship...7:** transportation, Use Family Fund money to help those in need in our church, Better connection with people using cards, calls, texts, wear new name tags often, extend care to church members, Love Inc, Get hearing aid for congregation: Public T Coil, print off sermons, wear nametags, more casual and social groups...ice cream social, potato bar, Travel club...share trips and tips
- **New Pastor...5:** new energy to move things forward, warmth and spirit, new ideas and new buy-in, daily devotional from members/pastor (Tue-Fri)

- **Expand Sunday School...4:** day camp/VBS, Expand Sunday School past 6th grade, More summer programming – spread out years activities
- **Having a 2nd service...3:** 120ish in attendance for many weeks gives us opportunity to re-think 2nd service design...2
- **New ways to rent out BUMC's space...3:** building usage or renting it out, homeschooling, clubs
- **Fundraising...3:** more fundraising to support more programs, Financial giving out of retirement savings, Fundraising
- **Emphasis on Volunteers...3:** encouraging members to volunteer, get more volunteers to help with ministry, Volunteers asked by personal invitation
- **Expand Adult Discipleship...3:** have bibles studies all year long, regular heartbeat, more classes, need more education on LGBTQ+, Prayer Ministry team with AD
- **Worship ideas...3:** ecumenical worship services, reach out to others who have less worship opportunities, make church fun/music
- **Need a stronger missional heart...2:** lack of leadership in missions, have more mission outreach opportunities to engage the youth and younger adults
- **Start now working with Debbie to replace her position...2:**
- **SWOT is an opportunity to listen and respond...2:**

Following topics had one vote/didn't know where to combine them into categories:

- Rule of Christ training...having our own process, having an agreed upon process
- Location of our church
- Having concerts again, enjoyable
- The emerging Prayer Ministry and our Breakthrough Prayer
- Michelle's new desk, better workflow, better first impression
- More special events
- More music...Saturday Awakenings
- Men's Fellowship
- Inner faith opportunities
- Work together for our future
- Bring more arts into the building
- Build off park, opportunities to build the school
- Take more risks
- Use adults with children's message interactive
- Use Labyrinth
- Space for a variety of ages
- Orient area for community

SWOT - Threats

- **Aging members...11:** hearing problems, lack of options for viewing when seniors miss, membership declining...5, Death of long-time family lineages
- **Big Box Church coming to Buffalo...10:** they will be offering Youth Group, music, other churches that entertain, stronger Children's programming
- **Financials/giving down and operational costs up...6:** insecurities – feeling judged when can't put something in the offering plate as it comes by, decline in our budget, aging facilities
- **Post-Modern World Culture...5:** our culture is a non-believing culture, Christian culture is shrinking
- **Sports on Sunday/Wednesday...5:** school activities, busy parents/families...5, changing family dynamics
- **Not attracting young families...4:** Younger families don't commit as readily...2
- **Economy...4:** lack of financial security, Do we have a future?...2
- **Lack of Volunteers...4:** Volunteer schedules full causes staff stress, volunteers always needed/declining support
- **Covid/other illnesses...3**
- **Debbie's replacement/staff leaving...3**
- To grow youth/need youth director...2
- "me" versus "we" mentality in our world...2
- Worship...2: Online people versus people in the sanctuary, watch when you want...2
- Technological threats...2
- Political division...2
- Divisive issues/lack of tolerance, fellowship in cliques...2
- Lack of diversity...2

The following topics had one vote/couldn't figure out how to categorize:

- Staff changes, not working together
- Lack of 2 services
- More people gravitating to non-denominational churches
- Many people are against "organized religion"
- Global Methodist versus United Methodist (we are in a conference that is 85% progressive)
- Some with "End Times" mindsets
- Many members go south for the winter/Snowbirders
- Lack of communication
- Lack of security...fear of killings, robbery, lack of safety and liability
- No missional activities
- Hole in our congregation when Craig L. leaves, Ottie knew names
- Lack of prayer and spiritual maturity/growth