

What is your congregation celebrating?

Looking forward to 125th anniversary
Joint ministries with other local congregations, one is Episcopalians
One of our members is going to Baylor Univ to become a minister
Rich history
Young pastor who is energetic and has a sense of the future and outreach
Friendly church
Thriving daycare and after school care
Sunday School breakfast bar attracting families
Steady generous giving
Strong WELCA
Growing youth attendance after many years of decline
Interim pastor
Little Lambs program(church funds and federal funds for early childhood school)
We're all still alive
125th anniversary
Congregation works well together and satisfied with where we're going
New pastor
500th anniversary of Reformation
Increase in attendance of upper elementary age youth
Formation of new young adult class
New attendees
Out of debt and bills are paid
Bright future
Noah's Ark Daycare
10 year anniversary
Jesus
God's gift of grace
Hiring a full time youth coordinator
New faces in church regularly
New members and baptism this morning

With what is your congregation struggling?

Reserve funds for future maintenance
Striving to build attendance over 100
New memberships
Aging memberships
Aging population
Declining average weekly attendance
Aging buildings and facilities
Where to go from here as pastor's contract is up June 30
Aging congregation and illness of key members
Open communication
Lay leadership
Need a chain of command – who is responsible? And don't tell me it's on-line.
Need to involve more people
Need a clear mission
Parking
Parking and money
Finances

Written responses received at Cibolo Creek Conference Pre-Assembly Assembly, 3/26/17

No widespread volunteerism

Hurt feelings

Change/reformation/transformation

What our future ministry will be

Mission direction

Uncertain how to reach out beyond our walls; we have to be healthy enough ourselves first.

What is one thing you think the synod does well and should continue to do?

Good support through the call process

Bishop was supportive during the transition period

I don't know that the synod does any one thing to help or support St. John Castel

Support mission congregation (not just financially)

Support Crosstrails

Doing the business of the synod

Workshops – Healthy Congregations and others

Making program material available on a wide array of subjects

Parish Ministry Program and filling vacancies from the program

On-line communication – E-news and Vista

Efficient and productive synod assemblies

Outreach to Hispanics and Spanish speaking people

Conventions are well organized and they get things done

Please finish this sentence: I hope that 5 years from now the Southwestern Texas Synod is ...

Shining prominently in our communities through all our congregations

Alive and well and still continuing the ministry of our faith

Growing

Filled with hope

Deeply rooted in southwestern Texas (we're different than other places and should embrace that)

Growing ecumenical ministries - cooperative ministry

Incorporating the younger generations into mission

Stable

Taking more responsibility to research with congregations the church's current capabilities to provide for a new called pastor

More diverse

Stronger than ever

Celebrating growth

Raising up new pastors

Alive and well and starting new missions

Staying aware of smaller congregations

Notes from stories that were shared:

One story was about seminarians with crippling debt and how calls are difficult for young pastors if going to small congregations.

One church talked about Travis who saw his faith get wheels after visiting Camp Chrysalis.