

SURVEY SPECIAL EDITION

February 2003 ✕ ST. MARTHA'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ✕ Bethany Beach, Delaware

ST. MARTHA'S MESSENGER

Congregation congratulated

Surveys describe St. Martha's

Transition Team says thanks

St. Martha's Transition Team congratulates the congregation for an extraordinary effort to complete the surveys provided on Survey Sunday, December 8, or through the mail.

An accurate picture of the parish is now available to use in compiling the Parish Profile, an essential part of the materials needed to begin the search for a permanent vicar.

You have the sincere appreciation of the entire Transition Team: Co-Chairs Carolyn Smith and Ken Hooker, Mimi Dupont, Dottie Seyfried, Tempe Steen, Senior Warden Tom McCormick, and Junior Warden Kathy Rhodes, as well as Interim Vicar Anne Monahan.

A total of 101 surveys were returned by deadline and sent to Percept, the company that provided the surveys, analyzed the data, and supplied the report. This is a marvelous return – more than 50% – for the 180 surveys that were sent out.

A few surveys were received after the deadline. While these could not be sent

to Percept to be part of the statistical results, the written portion of these surveys (comments, assets and challenges) *was* incorporated into the results. Those three sections were not part of the Percept survey, but were sections that the Transition Team added. Therefore, comments, assets and challenges from all surveys submitted are included in these results.

Community sections in the Percept results are compared with national averages gathered from a variety of sources. Congregational percentages in the Percept results are percentages of the returned surveys.

Who is Percept? and Why did we use them?

The diocese and the diocesan Transition Committee recommended Percept, a company that specializes in gathering religion-related demographic data, putting the data into a local context, and converting it to useable information. Percept has developed numerous tools and methodologies that

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have proven themselves with more than 25,000 congregations across the country to be the most effective resources available for church planning and development.

St. Martha's information comes from the extensive survey completed in December 2002 by 101 members and regular attendees. The community information is drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2000 census.

Demographic updates and projections are provided by National Decision Systems and Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates, both recognized leaders in the demographic industry for more than 20 years. Religion-related data is derived from Percept's exclusive Ethos 2000 database.

What do we look like?

From the survey, St. Martha's congregation looks like the following:

- ✘ We're predominantly 55 years and older with 57% at an average age of 65.
- ✘ We have a median (same number above and below this point) income of \$62,500 and an average income of \$74,196.
- ✘ Our level of pledging does not reflect our income level. The average pledge is \$1,263.
- ✘ We have a high education level: 67% have a four-year college degree or higher.
- ✘ We are 68% retired, 20% working full time, and 17% working part time.

✘ We have a primarily traditional family structure.

✘ We have a higher than average involvement in community/church service.

✘ Ethnically, we are 98% Caucasian and 2% Asian/Pacific.

✘ Our religious background is predominantly cradle Episcopalian at 41.3%, followed by former Catholic at 18.5% and former Methodist at 21.7%.

✘ Most of us have been at St. Martha's 5 years or less.

✘ About 90% consider St. Martha's their home church and 70% attend St. Martha's weekly.

✘ As for the theory that those who pray together stay together: 93% of our married parishioners attend church together.

✘ Our congregation has a rich background in how a church operates – there are many former senior wardens, junior wardens and other church administrators among us.

✘ We are pleased with our worship style and life in general.

✘ We desire spiritual development through discussion groups – both Bible based and study groups.

✘ Our membership is projected to remain stable.

What does our surrounding community look like?

Based on area shown on map

The area is in a high growth mode (66% during the 90's) with an expected

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growth of 14% by 2007. This is almost five times the national average. The largest ethnic group is Anglo at 87%, well above the national average of 70%, but the number of African-Americans and Hispanics are lower than the national average.

- ✘ The primary occupations are sales, farming, laborers, factory assemblers, and craftsmen.
- ✘ The family structure is traditional with rural families, seniors and middle class American families predominant.

✘ The average age is 42.6 and the median age is 44.1.

✘ The population is significantly senior compared to the national average with Caucasians being the predominant group.

✘ The fastest growing ethnic group is expected to be Asian.

✘ The church worship style is very traditional

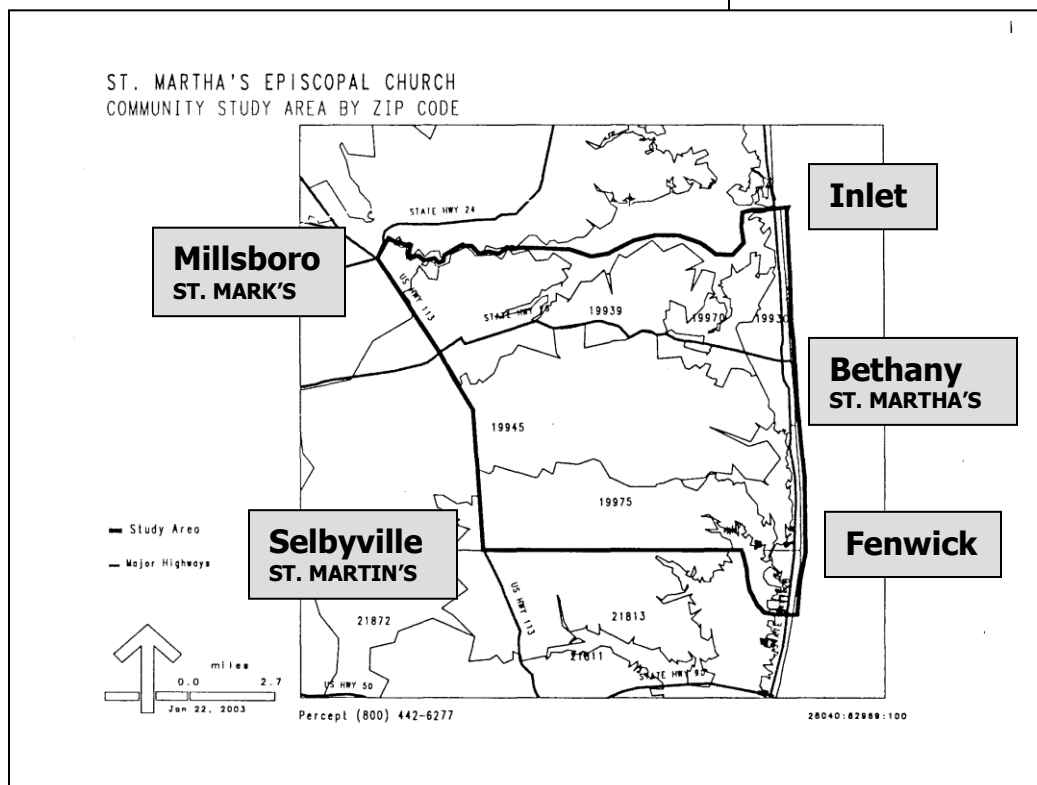
✘ The predominant preference for church programs is recreation.

✘ Three quarters of the population are involved in a church.

✘ The predominant religions are Catholic and Methodist.

How do St. Martha's and the community compare?

Our greatest differences lie in the areas of primary concerns, education level, church program preferences, financial support potential, age, and projected population change. We are similar in the areas of church style, diversity and family structure. *See Selected Comparison chart.*



Southeastern Sussex:

✘ Has a low level of education: only 12.3% college graduates (bachelor's degree) compared to 20.3% nationally.

✘ Main concerns are the basics of life: health insurance, adequate food, abusive relationships, day-to-day financial worries, and alcohol/drug abuse.

✘ There is less concern for community/social problems than either the nation or our congregation.

✘ The median income is \$31,373 per household; average income is \$40,300.

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SELECTED COMPARISONS

NOTE: All numbers are % unless <i>noted</i> (Total does not always = 100%)	St. Martha's	Southeastern Sussex County	United States
Population Change: 1980-1990	-	25	10
Population Change: 1990-2000	-	66	14
Membership Change: 1980-1990	52	-	10
Membership Change: 1990-2000	-2	-	14
Population: Average Age <i>in Years</i>	58.0	42.6	36.7
Population Ethnicity: Anglo	98	87	70
Population Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific	2	1	4
Generations: Age 0-20	3.3	23	30
Generations: Age 21-39	12.3	22	26
Generations: Age 40-59	27.0	26	27
Generations: Age 60-74	48.4	21	11
Generations: Age 75 & up	9.0	8	6
Average Age <i>in Years</i>	58.0	42.6	36.7
Median Age <i>in Years</i>	64.0	44.1	
Education: Less than High School	4	30	25
Education: High School Graduate	8	38	30
Education: Some College/+ 2 yr degree	21	20	25
Education: College Graduate/4 yr only	29	9	13
Education: Post-Graduate	38	3	7
Primary Concerns: Basics	16	27	24
Primary Concerns: Community	17	14	16
Primary Concerns: Spiritual/Personal	29	15	15
Church Style: Traditional Worship	45	20	20
Church Style: Traditional Music	39	26	24
Church Style: Traditional Architecture	34	29	27
Church Style: Contemporary Worship	14	24	26
Church Style: Contemporary Music	13	16	20
Church Style: Contemporary Architecture	23	13	16
Church Program: Spiritual Development	38	25	25
Church Program: Personal Development	5	8	10
Church Program: Community Service	9	22	20
Church Program: Recreation	49	38	38
Economics: Income below Poverty	0	19	14
Economics: Average Annual Income <i>in \$</i>	\$74,196	\$40,573	\$61,904
Economics: Average Pledge	\$1,263 (1.7%)	N/A	N/A
Economics: Gives \uparrow \$500/Yr to Church	74	32	31

✠ STEWARDSHIP ✠

A glimpse at St. Martha's financial picture

A total of 77 individuals and families pledged for 2003, of which 23 are new pledge units. The total amount pledged for 2003 is \$97,286. This represents an increase of approximately \$17,000 over the 2002 pledges, and may mean a decrease in the 2003 plate offering. The total pledge amount from new pledges is \$17,760.

The average pledge for 2002 was \$1254. The average pledge for 2003 is \$1263, an increase of \$9 per year in the average pledge amount. The median pledge is \$936.

Initial pledges are traditionally lower than in subsequent years, so the large number of new pledges (30%) may have lowered the average pledge amount.

2003 PLEDGE REPORT	
Number of Pledge Units for 2003	Total Amount Pledged for 2003
13	Under \$500
30	\$501-\$1000
20	\$1001-\$2000
7	\$2001-\$3000
4	\$3001-\$4000
3	Over \$4000
Total units 77	Total \$97,286
Total new 23	Total \$17,760
Average Unit	\$1263

2003 PLEDGE REPORT	
Changes in Pledging for 2003	
2	Units decreased their pledge
15	Units remained the same
37	Units increased their pledge
23	Units were new
77	Total pledging units for 2003

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2002 PLEDGE & PLATE INCOME

Sunday Date	Attending	Pledge Income	Plate Income	Sunday Date	Attending	Pledge Income	Plate Income
Jan 6	80	3,334	730	Jul 7		1,697	890
13	70	1,388	139	14		2,277	956
20	65	1,376	1,492	21		1,078	831
27	115	739	507	28		1,649	586
Feb 3	55	917	299	Aug 4		2,017	1,167
10	82	1,863	304	11		1,318	942
17	110	1,087	286	18		2,103	2,130
24	75	720	132	25		1,011	802
Mar 3	78	1,934	216	Sep 1		1,937	849
10	98	1,551	451	8	167	2,814	1,010
17	85	1,066	320	15	150	856	525
24	140	704	900	22	142	1,063	688
Easter 31	351	1,191	899	29	148	445	515
Apr 7	67	1,871	113	Oct 6	145	2,024	605
14	85	1,529	859	13	140	1,051	469
21	135	776	378	20	120	1,212	377
28	150	2,394	226	27	95	780	315
May 5	107	1,526	514	Nov 3	100	1,501	635
12	78	808	484	10	105	1,563	346
19	93	762	269	17	100	1,441	303
26	154	3,023	899	24	110	1,586	466
Jun 2		0	0	Dec 1	100	1,290	366
9		759	644	8	101	1,112	888
16		1,952	676	15	115	1,654	145
23		1,130	710	22	70	721	236
30		1,179	836	29	103	493	1,793
TOTALS						72,271	32,117

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How we rated our church programs and ministries

Scale of 1/low to 10/high Rating

Greeters	10
Ushers	10
Altar Guild	10
Summer Services	10

Music	9
Lay Readers/Chalice Bearers	9
Buildings & Grounds	9
Dinners/Luncheons	9
Prison Ministry/Bible Study	9

Prison Ministry/Way Home	8
Eucharistic Lay Visitors	8
Coffee Hour	8

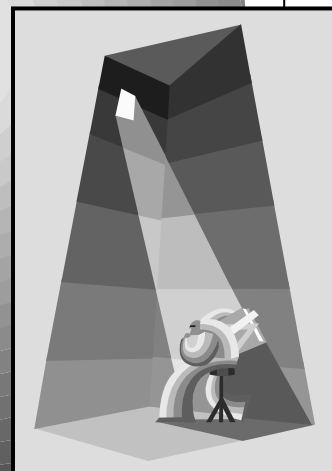
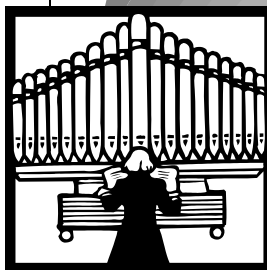
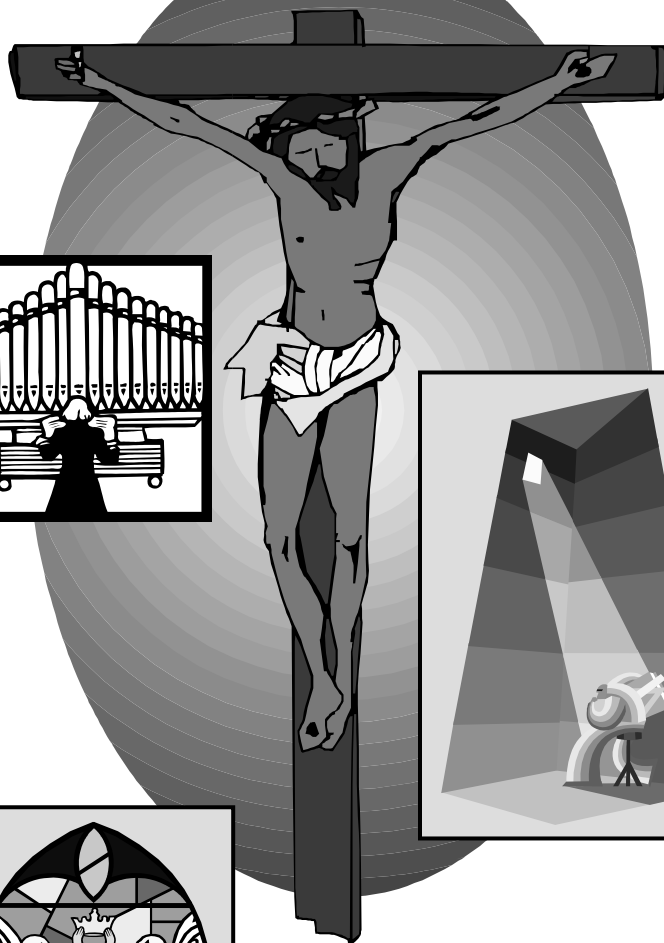
ECP Boardwalk-Bake Sale	6
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Episcopal Church People	5
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United Thank Offering	4
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Acolytes	2
ECP Jumble	2

Christian Education	Adult	0
Christian Education	Youth	0



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How did we respond to the 3 questions about St. Martha's?

Question 1: What are the greatest assets of St. Martha's?

(Note: These are the top 5 responses. The first three listed received an equivalent number of responses.)

1. Location

2. Liturgy and Services

- ✘ Music program: choir, congregational involvement in singing
- ✘ User friendly service
- ✘ Beauty and dignity of service
- ✘ Preaching – Bible based teaching
- ✘ Current pastor

3. Congregation

- ✘ Welcoming, warm and friendly (*see Myths*)
- ✘ Caring for each other
- ✘ Lay leadership is: talented, committed, competent, intelligent
- ✘ Willing to have views challenged
- ✘ Small, intimate size
- ✘ Flexible
- ✘ Social activities: potlucks, golf outings, and more
- ✘ Varied life experiences enrich each other

4. Outreach

- ✘ Prison ministries: Bible study, The Way Home
(Wisdom of choosing one outreach ministry and doing it well.)
- ✘ Ministering to the sick of the parish

5. Organizational

- ✘ Strong, positive relationship to diocese
- ✘ Staff is competent and helpful

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How did we respond to the 3 questions about St. Martha's?

Question 2: What are the greatest challenges facing St. Martha's?

(Note: Finances was the most frequently identified challenge. The other 4 are listed in order.)

1. Finances

- ✘ Financial commitment to support full time priest and become self-supporting
- ✘ Recognize the impact of retirees on fixed-incomes

2. Growth issues

- ✘ Calling full time rector
- ✘ Attaining full parish status
- ✘ Broadening age range
- ✘ Addressing needs of a diverse congregation: spiritual, educational, health
- ✘ Balancing old and new
- ✘ Public relations program and signage
- ✘ Outreach to new residents, particularly in the inland communities
- ✘ Addressing rapid growth in the area

3. Seasonal nature of congregation

- ✘ Reaching out to summer participants: e.g. hymn sings
- ✘ Overcoming the "Summer Parish" perception *(see Myths)*

4. Facilities

- ✘ Parking
- ✘ Larger building for year-round congregation
- ✘ Parish hall for social activities

5. Educational

- ✘ Structured, developmental Sunday School and youth programs
- ✘ Small, spiritual study groups

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How did we respond to the 3 questions about St. Martha's?

Question 3: What are the most important things St. Martha's can do to be more effective?

1. Call a vicar who is:

- ✘ Warm, friendly, firm and dedicated to God
- ✘ A priest with administrative skills (*see Note below*)

2. Congregation

- ✘ Be more involved in parish activities
- ✘ Overcome the "summer church" perception
- ✘ Offer small groups
- ✘ Be available to each other to relate to
- ✘ In-Reach to our members
- ✘ Encourage and train people to "move up" as others "move on"
- ✘ Help summer attendees feel they are part of the church community

3. Outreach

- ✘ Public relations to community
- ✘ Take next step in greeter program to integrate newcomers in life of the church

4. Increased youth involvement

- ✘ Develop and implement structured youth program
- ✘ Encourage young people to train and serve as lay readers and in other liturgical capacities

5. Facilities

- ✘ Separate social hall
- ✘ Remodel old vicarage (Vicar's office, Sunday School room, sun porch/nursery)

NOTE: A separate parish meeting will be held **Sunday, April 6** to discuss the spiritual life of the church and the qualities this congregation seeks in a new vicar.

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⌘ Small Group Discussions ⌘

Your reactions to the survey

What are your reactions to the survey information?

What made an impression on you?

What grabbed your attention?

Four myths of St. Martha's

1. That we are welcoming, warm and friendly...

- ⌘ St. Martha's is not always perceived as "welcoming, warm and friendly" by guests and newcomers.

2. That summer visitors keep St. Martha's afloat...

- ⌘ St. Martha's is a full time; year-round parish that does not received the majority of its income from summer participants.

3. That we are a growing congregation...

- ⌘ St. Martha's average attendance is in about the same range as it was in the mid-1980s. Our congregation's size is stable.

4. That we don't have enough children...

- ⌘ St. Martha's does not have a lot of children in the congregation. But we love children; we cherish them. We provide a year-round Sunday School and nursery for them. We welcome children to join us in worship. The reality, however, is that we live in an area with a significantly larger than average older population, and this is not likely to change any time soon.