

**Results of *INSIGHT* Survey
October, 2009**

Number of responses:

Mailed	44
Faxed	4
On-line	10
TOTAL	58

1. Please choose the answers that best describe you (check as many as apply):

Category:	Mailed:	Faxed:	On-line:	TOTAL:
Ministry Personnel	4	1	1	6
Lay person	30	4	10	44
Employed by the church	3	2	4	9
Volunteer	20	2	3	25
Active – local congregation	34	3	5	42
Active – Presbytery/Conference	8	0	3	11
Other	6	0	1	7

2. Should Toronto Conference continue to publish *INSIGHT* in *The United Church Observer*?

	Mailed:	Faxed:	On-line:	TOTAL:
Yes	41	3	10	54
No	3	1	0	4

2A. If you answered yes, please tell us why you made this choice.

Responses - mailed:

- easy for me to read it in the UC Observer
- we get ideas for activities, fund raisers; we get ideas for Conference; we get news about our Presbytery
- I am interested in the “local” news
- value the information provided; keeps me in touch
- it’s one of my favourite parts of the magazine, an update on what is happening in other churches and Five Oaks
- it gives a broader perspective across the Conference; good to hear stories and know what is going on
- now that Presbyteries are so much larger, it is another way to keep in touch
- it keeps us informed on what is taking place in Toronto Conference
- I read the yellow pages first; I like to read about what other churches are doing and what’s happening in the Conference; it’s really important now for the Presbytery to keep putting information in the yellow pages as not all Presbytery reps are good at keeping the congregation informed

- sometimes articles give me a wake-up call, e.g. president's message this issue (Sept/Oct); sometimes a local congregation attacks a problem in a way that helps, or could help, our own congregation; what better place to put it? If you're reading a church magazine, your mind is prepared for spiritual things
- for awareness of what is happening in other churches
- always interesting current news
- I enjoy seeing what's happening in other places
- I receive *The Observer* and read faithfully; usually the first section I read is *INSIGHT*; it keeps me informed "locally" and I hope others do so as well; I do not have a computer channel of information; better than cost of mailing and more permanent than e-mail
- keeping me informed what is happening at cong. level; Presbytery comments; activities re youth in our church; coming events, workshops
- I enjoy reading about what goes on in areas outside of my own
- this keeps abreast of information at Conference and Presbytery level; what would the church do without volunteers and they are getting few and far between
- *INSIGHT* keeps me informed of events and happenings of Toronto Conference which is of great interest to me; in my 80s now I no longer have the energy to do a lot – in the past I was very involved with our local church, Presbytery, and Conference; was a two-time delegate to General Council; so please include *INSIGHT* in *The Observer*; those of us that don't have the electronics are completely left out. I would miss it!!!
- we can get good ideas from other congregations and share our own; the old saw 'why reinvent the wheel?' applies; readers also can learn the names and involvements of local movers and shakers, some of whom could be resources to contact for advice, help with projects, etc.; the printed word is still suitable for many of us
- I find it interesting to learn more about local events
- it helps me to know more about what is happening in Toronto Conference
- although it is not of much use or interest to me, I'm sure there are some who would find it helpful
- it is wonderful to read about the ministry development in the Don.
- it's often the only news I have of other Presbyteries and Conference as a whole; it introduces those being ordained each year; it's often the only communication from our president; it connects us
- it not only keeps me up to date on many issues, but answers many of my questions plus being very interesting
- it's the best way to reach the largest number of people
- ? because of recent changes; interesting to hear how others are doing; don't want more mail or e-mail
- increases my knowledge of what is going on
- particularly in this transitional period, it is important that we are informed about the four new Presbyteries; with larger geographic entities, communication is critical; without it we could easily become disengaged; we could easily lose our connections, e.g. M&S, Christian development, etc.
- it's convenient
- the material written was most interesting and informative; gives us insight of what is going on at Conference level; keep it up; very good ideas
- it includes more local news; I often read it first to read about what congregations are doing; gain understanding of Presbytery/Conference work
- because of the information contained about the United Church and other denominations
- very informative of our district

- it is the only way I learn about 'local' news, i.e. Presbytery and Conference
- it gives me information about things 'closer to home' than the magazine as a whole

Responses – faxed:

- contained in *The Observer*; I would read *INSIGHT*
- easier to read than e-mail; size of print better than in e-mail
- it is good to hear our church at work and involved in many different areas; also it's nice to hear about current events

Responses – on-line:

- it is a good local and accessible way for the community of Toronto Conference to feel like a community and hear good news about each other as well as share resources
- it is one way to learn about the wider church close to home
- president's message articulates the vision of the Conference in relation to the whole UCC and our role as the body of Christ; the section highlights activities within the Conference, so it's a little closer to home than global articles that dominate the magazine; we need to see/hear how God is working; the Spirit is moving in our midst in the Conference, so we can celebrate it
- I dislike having to read things of any length on the computer; I prefer to sit down in comfort at odd times, or immediately when it comes in
- I feel connected with other congregations; I appreciate the column by the president of Toronto Conference; UCW work; it is an avenue for all of us to talk about and share our work; I feel it adds to *The Observer* which I love; I feel *INSIGHT* is an asset; they are willing to cover events and I feel this is another avenue for us; I wouldn't want to see it discontinued; we need the connections
- gives us information referring to our own local Presbytery and Presbyterial and local news of churches with which we are familiar
- it's a wonderful opportunity to hear about what is going on in other parts of the Conference
- to the average member, what Presbyteries and Conference do is rather murky, best to explain and be positive about your value add; I received too many e-mail newsletters already; paper in a magazine still gets more attention from me
- it isn't the most exciting read of the month. but it's useful and interesting and I probably wouldn't read it anywhere else; that is, I doubt I would go read it at a web site and I probably wouldn't pick it up at church where my attendance is terrible anyhow; if it were mailed separately to me, I would probably glance at it at the kitchen table as I look at the mail but I probably wouldn't take it along and sit down and read it comfortably, usually in bed
- after I read the letters to the editor, I immediately turn to the Toronto Conference yellow pages to read the president's message and to get reports about Conference activities

2B. If you answered No to question 2, how would you like to receive information from Toronto Conference and/or its Presbyteries?

Options included:

Subscribe to an e-newsletter
Automatically receive an e-newsletter

View it on the Conference/Presbyteries website
 Mailed directly to me
 Other

Responses – mailed:

- 1 - Subscribe to an e-newsletter
- 2 - Automatically receive an e-newsletter
- 1 - View it on the Conference/Presbyteries website
- 1 - Mailed directly to me
- 2 – Other

Comments offered:

- provide subscribers, or even those who don't subscribe to *The Observer*, with alternative means an e-newsletter that one subscribes to is a good first choice; direct mail would be a fine alternative for others
- I'd never read it on e-mail or website; direct mail is a waste of money
- e-newsletter may be the way to go; *The Observer* web page is terrific
- as is – within *The Observer*

Responses – faxed:

One response indicated that *INSIGHT* is useless

Responses – on-line:

One person checked e-newsletter

3, What do you do with the information in *INSIGHT*? Check all that apply:

Response:	Mailed:	Faxed:	On-line:	TOTAL:
I read it for information only		2	8	
I share it with others, e.g. committees, groups, friends, etc.				
I/we include it as part of announcements at Sunday worship			1	
I use it to plan upcoming events		1	5	
I don't use it				
Other			1	

Comments under "Other":

- have used articles about UCC/Conference vision or restructuring in sermons about change. I've celebrated the Spirit's movement in ministry at different churches, sometimes drawn from these pages in prayers.

4. If *INSIGHT* (or some other communication tool) offered the following types of articles and information, please rank each one according to their importance. Number 1 being the least important and number 5 being the most important.

- mailed
- faxed
- on-line

	1	2	3	4	5
More in-depth articles	3 0 1	5 1 1	15 0 4	6 0 3	6 2 0
Local newsworthy items	1 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	15 1 5	17 2 5
Highlighting a congregation	1 0 0	3 0 0	5 1 0	16 0 5	16 2 5
More articles on spirituality	6 0 0	5 1 2	9 1 4	12 0 4	7 1 1
A forum to share best practices	0 0 0	4 0 1	11 1 3	10 0 3	12 2 3
Calendar of events and activities	3 0 0	1 0 0	13 0 1	10 0 4	13 3 5
Classified section for announcements, personals, church supplies, etc.	11 0 1	5 0 4	9 2 3	10 1 0	6 0 2

5. Please list any other types of articles or information other than those listed above that you might like to see in some form.

Responses – mailed:

- very happy with *The Observer* in its present format
- Presbytery news; presbyterials news; news about prominent person in the church
- articles about clergy in government, both federally and provincially; would be interesting
- I always appreciate learning about innovative/creative ideas for worship and for practices
- highlight agencies supported by M&S, prefer one at a time in depth rather than a review
- a better understanding of the new staff office at Guthrie and its role in congregational life
- I feel you do an excellent job
- Presbytery highlights; Community Ministry focus; ways to network/share resources; accessibility help
- what does the Conference look like now – staff and committees?
- the above seems well rounded
- creative ways to help youth stay interested in the church

- people in the news in the church, local as well as national
- youth activities; church school activities
- letters and comments columns
- where prominent political figures stand on issues which the United Church finds important, e.g. poverty, housing, justice, security, foreign aid; tough interviews, not 'feel good'
- youth info and activities happening
- articles on other non-Christian faiths, esp. comparing more than contrasting beliefs, practices, ethics and religious government; articles concerning our federal and provincial governments impacting our lives, e.g. finances vs social legislation as in e.g. Sweden; some history of Christian church, e.g. Roman vs Byzantine
- M&S I I feel it's getting lost in the new Toronto Conference set-up; UCW events; church celebrations
- policies and procedures from Conference level; if congregational news from other Presbyteries, i.e. where is South West in this month's edition?
- none
- I am interested in what is going on in my own church (Islington United)
- the categories given a '5' in number 4 would provide plenty of material along with the '4s'
- highlighting individuals/groups doing worthwhile things, interesting or innovative things

Responses – faxed:

- where is the CGIT? and Wonder café? Bobblehead? mid-week?
- 1) regular articles on outreach/M&S; there are great stories out there; the Lower Don area article is not written with excitement/passion; 2) more congregational news; there is nothing in this issue; *INSIGHT* was meant to be a communicator for the people, not the staff

Responses – on-line:

- nothing jumps out at this moment shy of a brief article perhaps about our history (as a Conference or as congregations); shows us just how far we've come and how we have changed and will continue to evolve the changing demographics and values of society; or a brief article each time on someone celebrating a milestone in ministry, telling how God has moved in them and their ministry over the course of 25, 30, 40, 50+ years
- articles showing practices used by other congregations to interest new families to attend and join our congregation; VBS helped a great deal to bring young families into the church; more ideas could be shared; new ideas for UCW programs and projects could also be shared
- what events or announcements that congregations are doing on social justice issues, e.g. poverty, aboriginal issues like treaties and land claims
- perhaps more information about what is going on outside the Greater Toronto area (if you can get it; perhaps the new formation will help that)

6. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions you have about *INSIGHT*.

Responses – mailed

- sometimes it is the first thing I turn to when I read *The Observer*
- I've appreciated your coverage of the new four-Presbytery system

- possibly more pictures of activities
- this is the part I turn to first; it is up-lifting to read about the variety of Christian witness in the Conference; the July/August issue prior to General Council is still relevant as I read it today (Sep. 25); please keep on keeping on; *INSIGHT* is terrific outreach
- since first nations congregations were moved to a separate Presbytery/Conference, connections have been lost; for instance Rama United just celebrated their 100th and that was not shared anywhere except in local newspaper
- is the paper we're using environmentally friendly?
- this is my first introduction to *INSIGHT*, I am really unable to pass judgement on it; I can't see that my filling out this form could be of any possible help to you; I am 83 years old and barely ambulatory; I enjoy getting out to church for the sociability and the spiritual uplift that I occasionally receive
- I read it every time it is issued, cover to cover; I want to know what is happening in Toronto Conference
- sometimes churches have a particular need, e.g. church closing and getting rid of supplies that another church might use
- over the years and presently I look forward to the articles and information given in *INSIGHT*; it is a good tool for the local church
- I like reading it and I think it is just fine!
- thank you for giving me the opportunity to be included in this survey
- give more content, info, e.g. what is Guthrie?
- I do enjoy it and read it thoroughly
- appealing conversational style, often informal or light humour; personalities shine through; informative
- best practices and other positive items would be refreshing; more good news in the Conference
- without too much extra expenses, could you format (highlight) *INSIGHT* some other way than with flimsy paper; I think it gives the impression that it is not all that important, and may suggest you can just skip it
- an article on UCW 40th anniversary award
- if some people want it by e-mail, okay, but PLEASE keep sending it by mail either in *The Observer*, which I like, or separately
- Bloor Street is one of the parish nurse positions; the other one?
- forget about *INSIGHT*, concentrate on excellent articles; more attention might be paid to articles appealing to young people; the articles outside *INSIGHT* are very good and I read most of them; you are doing a fine job and *The Observer* in the national community is highly respected
- I believe that *INSIGHT* is an important communication tool for Toronto Conference to keep; in this busy world, even retirees need quick and easy access to information; therefore, an e-newsletter as an alternative to the print format is essential
- great job Vivian Harrower

Responses – faxed:

- some people do not have e-mail; printed copy is easier to read; could be mailed to anyone requesting it; read *INSIGHT* first, then letters to the editor
- a suggestion – what about a Bible study after the children pass and receive their grade 4 Bible; I am sure the Gospels could be used as scriptures; just a suggestion, the child

could read the scripture during the week and have questions; why do you use this kind of paper for *INSIGHT*?

- the layout needs to be more creative and attractive; all photos should always be sharp and professionally cropped; there should be more news; the impression is no one is out there digging up stories on human interest articles; no one cares; who needs a page form the president? How dull the head “president’s message”
- I find the *INSIGHT* totally useless.... it does not have interesting articles... you make no mention of the successful churches.... your articles are all politically framed... so who really cares except yourselves and your small group

Responses – on-line:

- in-depth articles and spirituality are not Conference matters, but are of benefit to the whole church; keep *INSIGHT* focussed on our Conference, its gifts, people, unique ministries, best practices, events and anniversaries
- it is a good low-keep form of communication; thank you for keeping it going
- I have always appreciated *INSIGHT* in its present form
- I look forward to seeing pictures and interesting articles on activities in our own and other churches and Presbyteries and presbyterials
- I like the presentation and layout of *INSIGHT*; I go to it when I receive *The Observer*; I find many of the events interesting; I just like the whole magazine; the articles are well written and thought provoking; please keep it going
- *INSIGHT* is the first section of *The Observer* that I read; then I turn to the other pages and look for articles on things like spirituality and in-depth articles unless they are specific to Toronto Conference; again, I don’t see any necessity of a classified section unless the ads are specific to us
- it’s actually a good little read; I had no idea about the major projects in my own little neck of the woods (the Lower Don) until I read the article in the most recent issue and it was good to know that I am, however remotely, a part of that