

SUMMARY OF HBC STAFF INTERVIEWS

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This report synthesizes insights from 12 interviews with current, former, and interim staff

Church Strengths

- **Vibrant, growing community** with 100+ new members in four years
- **Exceptional music ministry** that attracts and engages members
- **Remarkable resilience** through pandemic and leadership transitions

Key Challenges

- **Leadership vacancy** and interim challenges hampering momentum
- **Staff concerns** including turnover, workload imbalances, and burnout
- **Financial pressures** from \$3.8M HVAC project and budget constraints

Key Tensions

1. **Staff Wellbeing vs. Performance Question**
 - Culture of overwork (50-60 hour work week expectations) and high standards leading to burnout
 - Reported performance variations and balance between oversight and autonomy in ministry
 - Different experiences of team dynamics – some report camaraderie, others distrust
2. **Leadership Style Preferences**
 - Tension between visionary leadership (decisive action) and collaborative leadership (inclusivity)
 - Need for balance between nurturing staff and maintaining accountability
3. **Governance and Procedures**
 - Policies provide structure but have become unwieldy
 - Complex systems creating inefficiencies and administrative burden

Systemic Issues Requiring Attention

- **Leadership Development:** Training new lay leaders
- **Vision Alignment:** Establish clearer, focused direction matching current capacity
- **Communication:** Improve patterns between staff and congregation
- **Community Building:** Bridge divides between strong subgroups
- **Financial Stability:** Address immediate pressures without sacrificing mission

Path Forward

- Highland possesses the theological resources and commitment to address these challenges
- Current transition offers opportunity to:
 - Reimagine leadership structures and ministry priorities
 - Develop sustainable staff expectations
 - Focus on fewer initiatives with greater impact
 - Build bridges across subgroups while honoring distinct contributions

Next Steps

- Identify leadership development pathways that respect time constraints
- Discern which ministries should receive focused attention
- Restructure communication patterns for better information flow
- Consider metrics beyond attendance and giving to evaluate effectiveness