When comparing congregations that say they are “thriving or doing okay” with “struggling” congregations, greater percentages of thriving congregations are spiritually vital, inclusive of newcomers, have a clear mission and purpose, and are willing to change in order to meet new challenges. (Figure 1)

Interestingly, similar percentages of “thriving or doing okay” churches (57.7%) and “struggling” churches (47.9%) agree/strongly agree that the celebration of denominational heritage is part of their mission and identity.

71.9% of all congregations indicated that denominational identity and affiliation are “relatively” or “very important” to the majority of attending congregants.

Nearly seven out of ten UCC congregations indicated that they “specialize in” or put “a lot of emphasis” towards community service activities and helping those in need, a 26% increase since 2010 (from 55% in 2010 to 69.3% in 2015).

In the last two years, more than half (57.3%) of UCC congregations have begun to engage in new social advocacy issues and/or serve new community needs such as free food events for the community/food pantries and homeless/immigrant/refugee assistance.

UCC churches are utilizing social media/technology as a form of outreach. 80% of all congregations indicate that they use Facebook. Fewer churches are using other social media platforms, with 18.3% utilizing a blog, 18% “tweeting” on Twitter, and 12.5% utilizing other sites (Yelp, Tumblr, Pinterest, etc.).