



## Landscape of Wisdom Ways-Data Story

### Executive Summary

#### What story does this data tell?

Wisdom Ways seeks to better understand who their clients are, what the center is currently doing well, and where they can do better to meet the spiritual needs of those they serve. Wisdom Ways is already committed to, and making strides toward, creating a more inclusive and comprehensive center for spiritual growth. This research project will further inform that trajectory, explore the impact of the organization on the clients it serves, and help Wisdom Ways demonstrate their commitment to those in search of spiritual guidance and connection.

To design the research project, Springtide conducted Discovery calls with Wisdom Ways stakeholders to identify the set of clarified objectives noted below. Springtide then used those objectives to build the research tools, collect the data, and conduct analyses. This report features the key findings that speak directly to the research project objectives.

### Objectives

Objective 1: Create a snapshot of Wisdom Ways' clients

Objective 2: Evaluate Wisdom Ways' effectiveness in meeting clients' spiritual needs

Objective 3: Identify the usefulness of Wisdom Ways' structure and programming

Objective 4: Explore the value of Wisdom Ways for clients

Objective 5: Identify the lessons learned since COVID-19

### Methodology

#### Survey

We used a combination of existing measures and original, customized questions to develop a comprehensive survey to identify who Wisdom Ways clients are and how the organization can better meet their spiritual needs. The survey was launched in mid-February 2022 and closed at the end of April 2022. In total, 356 clients started the survey and 208 completed the survey, for a response rate of 59%.

### How to read this report

This report is organized in the following manner:

1. Highlights and Recommendation - A brief snapshot of the subsequent full analysis.
2. Data Analysis - Key findings and discussion of the findings. This section is organized by objectives and includes data from the survey.

3. Conclusion - Summary of the project and possible ways forward, which are also highlighted in the "Highlights and Recommendations" section.

## Highlights and Recommendations

### Objective 1: Create a snapshot of Wisdom Ways' clients

- Wisdom Ways is currently reaching an older population (55+) of people who currently have or have once had a church/faith community. And, while the majority of clients are straight, non-Hispanic white women, there is a strong appreciation for the work this organization does to be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive space (see Objective 4).
- Many clients are finding out about Wisdom Ways through word of mouth, have been part of the organization for at least seven years, and typically connect on an annual or bi-annual basis. The most meaningful activities for spirituality building include being in nature, reading, constructive conversation, and living out one's faith.

Recommendation: Wisdom Ways is doing a good job of meeting the spiritual needs of their current clients but should consider expanding their experiences to target younger adults (or make them more aware of Wisdom Ways and its offerings) and encouraging participation on a more regular basis. Additionally, consider building relationships with your current base to further encourage and reward referrals, since word of mouth is a successful connection point. Young people will engage with an organization if someone refers them, so have your current population reach out to younger people as potential clients.

### Objective 2: Evaluate Wisdom Ways' effectiveness in meeting clients' spiritual needs

- While those who have the means to participate do see the importance and worth of the core experiences offered by Wisdom Ways (i.e., labyrinths, spiritual care resources, ritual activities, and events and activities), the awareness of and participation in these components varies widely. Typically, folks are most aware of/engaged in the events and activities that Wisdom Ways offers. However, they are not very aware of/interested in utilizing spiritual care resources.
- Among many participants, concerns when engaging with Wisdom Ways center around accessibility (i.e., distance, time, and cost).
- Many participants are inclined to try activities at Wisdom Ways if they expect to find a sense of community, believe they will be welcomed by staff and leaders, and think the experience will help them grow in their spirituality.
- Among those who are utilizing the various experiences at Wisdom Ways, the sense of community, constant learning and growth in their spirituality, and breadth and depth of topics covered are what keep people engaged and coming back. Often participants had few, if any, suggestions for improvement or reasons they disliked a given event or activity.

Recommendation: Wisdom Ways could benefit from being more intentional about disseminating information on what they offer and when it is available and providing means to reduce the costs of attendance for those who do not have the means. Create pathways for clients to engage in and foster community to establish belonging. Incentivize community building and engagement, which will lower the barrier to entry as well as assure clients that

they will belong to something. Incentivizing community shows that Wisdom Ways regards it as a key offering and organizational value.

### Objective 3: Identify the usefulness of Wisdom Ways' structure and programming

- Almost all of Wisdom Ways' clients find that a meaningful life is created through multiple sources, see spirituality as relational (with the self, God, nature, society, and others), and are not limited to one path, tradition, or way of thinking.
- Wisdom Ways' clients want a spiritual learning center that helps their self-growth, promotes a supportive environment for constructive conversation, and provides new paths for growth and change.
- The majority of Wisdom Ways clients are recommending the core components to others, and often when they aren't suggesting an aspect of Wisdom Ways, it is because they are unfamiliar with it themselves (i.e., it is not applicable). Usually, clients are spreading the word to at least one of their friends or family members and do so when the person indicates a desire for spiritual growth/learning OR when they feel the friend/family member would benefit from spiritual growth and knowledge.

Recommendation: Wisdom Ways should continue to expand their offerings to include more traditions, paths, and ways of thinking about spirituality and faith. Likewise, the organization will continue to benefit from the promotion of activities and experiences that create a sense of community and support constructive conversations, while providing the space for self-reflection and exploration.

### Objective 4: Explore the value of Wisdom Ways for clients

- Despite living in areas where they have spiritual growth and enrichment options, clients ultimately turn to Wisdom Ways to fulfill these needs. When engaged, the majority of clients always feel welcome, safe, supported, included, heard, and validated.
- Participants value the programming and structure of Wisdom Ways. Clients appreciate the organization's diversity of offerings, who is brought in to instruct others, how the organization is consistently living out its mission and vision, and that staff and leaders are attentive to and adapting to meet the spiritual needs of those they serve.
- Participants indicated that they would appreciate an expansion of Wisdom Ways' programming and reach. Many clients would like to see more workshops and activities that are derived from faith groups and religious traditions not as common in the United States, greater emphasis on creative self-expression, and more support for voices from the margins (i.e., BIPOC speakers). Likewise, clients would like to see Wisdom Ways partner with other faith-based and non-profit organizations doing good work in their communities and expand their reach to spaces in the western suburbs and into South and North Minneapolis.

Recommendation: Wisdom Ways is successfully creating a space where clients feel welcome and supported. Staff and leadership should identify both programmatic and geographic areas in which they can expand their services to meet the growing needs of those they serve. Wisdom

Ways could benefit from doing a deep dive into the responses from open-ended survey questions and identifying which suggestions for programs/activities, partnerships, and locations they could implement in the short and long term.

#### Objective 5: Identify the lessons learned since COVID-19

- COVID-19 has been a major reason that client participation has decreased, and clients have stopped showing up in Wisdom Ways spaces. More specifically, pandemic-related concerns, distance from home, and the transition to/integration of online learning were the top reasons why folks' involvement with Wisdom Ways either increased or decreased.
- While around 40% of participants did not participate in Wisdom Ways online, the majority who did found the transition a positive change and would like this to continue but not at the expense of in-person learning.
- While the pandemic has undoubtedly caused disruptions in the lives of Wisdom Ways' clients, most of Wisdom Ways' clients felt that there was nothing the organization could have done better during this time, and a smaller subset even praised Wisdom Ways for their response to COVID-19.

Recommendation: Wisdom Ways should consider using a hybrid model of online and in-person experiences, and if possible, offering the same activities in multiple formats. Not only is this format indicative of what current clients say they would like, but this format could help Wisdom Ways continue to grow and expand their reach to audiences that cannot easily access the physical grounds.

## Data Analysis

### Objective 1: Create a snapshot of Wisdom Ways' clients

#### Discussion

Wisdom Ways clients are typically 65 years of age or older (63%) or between 55-64 (24%). Very few respondents were between 18-24 (2%) and 25-34 (3%). Most are female (85%), using she/her/hers pronouns (85%), and identify as straight/heterosexual (76%). Likewise, participants self-identify as white (89%) and non-Hispanic or Latina/o/x (92%).

Most of Wisdom Ways clients found out about this spiritual learning center through a friend or family member (35%) or an "other" means (39%), especially CSJ Province Ministries and Saint Kate's. Around 9% found out through Women's Press ads, and about 10% found out through a search engine or social media platform. Surprisingly, very few clients found out about Wisdom Ways through an invitation by staff members (3%) or an event coordinator (4%). Of participants, the majority have been connected to Wisdom Ways for over ten years (50%), and another 19% have had a connection to Wisdom Ways for between seven and ten years. Seventeen percent of clients have had a connection to Wisdom Ways for four to six years, and 14% have been connected to Wisdom Ways for three years.

Around 23% of Wisdom Ways' current clients utilize the organization annually, and 45% interact a few times a year. Only 5% and 1% of respondents engage with Wisdom Ways once a week or more than once a week. Monthly and bi-monthly engagement with Wisdom Ways occurs for 22% of the sample. The majority of clients do not have a connection to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and/or St. Paul Province (57%). Eleven percent and 13% of respondents are connected to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and/or St. Paul Province, respectively. Twenty-four percent of respondents indicated their connection as "other," which focused on having a personal and professional connection. Participants often described their CSJ connection in ways like "we have been donating to SSJ for many years," "relatives are CSJ's, friends are consociates," "longtime 'fellow traveler,'" numerous professional and personal connections," and "employee."

The top three methods of communication preferred by Wisdom Ways participants are emails (68%), mailed catalogs (60%), and e-newsletters (45%). Five percent or fewer participants indicated their preferred methods of communication were text messages (5%), word of mouth (4%), and phone calls (1%). Of those who indicated the mailed catalog as a preferred method of communication, almost all (92%) would like them bi-annually. Most participants are already on the Wisdom Ways email list (86%). Of those not on the email list, 60% indicated a desire to be part of the email list and provided a valid address (sent separately to Marian). Around two-thirds of participants prefer to be notified about the upcoming activities and events hosted by Wisdom Ways monthly (44%) or bi-monthly (24%). A smaller percentage of folks want weekly (14%) or yearly (15%) updates from Wisdom Ways; only 3% indicated that they never wanted updates directly from Wisdom Ways and would prefer to find out about the goings-on on their own.

Participants typically connect with Wisdom Ways by participating in events and programs (78%), receiving the email newsletter (76%), and receiving the catalog (78%). Few respondents have utilized the Labyrinth rental (2%) or volunteered (4%). Around 10% of respondents have been a presenter (8%), used the library (11%), followed Wisdom Ways on social media (11%), and donated to Wisdom Ways (13%). The top two reasons that folks continue to engage with Wisdom Ways center around the events offered (78%) and the organization's commitment to shared wisdom and learning (62%). Additional reasons that folks stay engaged include the reputation (43%), the mission (42%), and the commitment to elevating historically marginalized voices (35%). Almost one-third of Wisdom Ways participants indicated the association with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet (31%), and the mutual support and belonging (30%) found at Wisdom Ways keeps them connected. Continued engagement does not seem to be supported by integrative life coaching (3%) or group spiritual companioning (13%).

Around two-thirds of members currently have a church or faith community (68%). Of those who do not currently have a church or faith community, 90% have had one in the past. Most members also consider themselves slightly (24%) or moderately (41%) religious; almost one-fifth consider themselves not religious (17%) and very religious (18%). Only 1% of respondents consider themselves not spiritual, while 69% consider themselves very spiritual and 28% consider themselves moderately spiritual. Wisdom Ways' participants find spiritual enrichment through a host of spaces, including being in nature/at a state park (81%), spending time with friends (64%), during small faith/spirituality-based groups (60%), at a place of worship (57%), and at Wisdom Ways (54%). About 35% of participants find spiritual enrichment at a center for spiritual/faith/religious learning other than Wisdom Ways. Of the 40% of folks who selected "other" as a place they find spiritual enrichment, the most common write-in answers included reading and writing, self-reflection, meditation, and retreats and spiritual direction.

Activities that are most influential for building spirituality among the majority of Wisdom Ways participants include being in nature (e.g., walking your dog, hiking) (81%), reading (75%), living out one's faith (63%), talking with friends/peers (63%), and prayer (60%). Likewise, yoga or meditation (59%), attending ritual services (e.g., evening prayer, Lenten ritual, solstice celebration) (56%), serving my community (55%), and talking with mentors/elders (51%) are essential activities that help build spirituality among many clients. Looking into how often folks participate in various activities for spiritual purposes indicates that the activities most influential in building spirituality are typically utilized most regularly. The spiritual practices that are often used include reading (76%), living out one's faith (75%), being in nature (68%), prayer (66%), talking with friends/peers (58%), yoga or meditation (48%), and serving one's community (45%). Activities that are never or seldomly utilized for spiritual purposes among Wisdom Ways participants include journaling (67%), participating in small groups like Bible study (60%), and having a voice in one's faith/spiritual community (49%).

## Data

\*Note: Not all tables will add up to 100% because of “select all that apply” style questions.

### General Demographics

*What is your age?*

	%
18-24	2
25-34	3
35-44	4
45-54	6
55-64	24
65+	63

*With what gender do you identify?*

	%
Female	85
Male	13
Non-Binary	0
Gender Fluid	1
Gender Queer	1
Prefer to self-describe	0
Prefer not to disclose	1

*Which sexuality do you most identify with?*

	%
Asexual	1
Bisexual	5
Gay	4
Straight (heterosexual)	76
Lesbian	5
Pansexual	1
Queer	1
Questioning or Unsure	0
Same-gender loving	1
An identity not listed (please specify)	1
Prefer not to disclose	7

*Which pronouns do you most identify with?*

	%
She/her/hers	85
He/him/his	13
They/them/theirs	0
Other (please specify)	3



*What is your racial identity?*

	%
American Indian or Alaska Native	5
Asian or Asian American	1
Black or African American	1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0
White	89
Some other race, ethnicity, or origin	1
Prefer to self-describe	3
Prefer not to disclose	5

*Are you of Hispanic or Latina/o/x origin?*

	%
No, not of Hispanic or Latina/o/x	92
Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicana/o/x	1
Yes, Puerto Rican	0
Yes, Cuban	0
Yes, other Hispanic/Latina/o/x origin	3
Prefer to self-describe	1
Prefer not to disclose	4

**Faith/Spirituality Demographics**

*Do you currently have a church or faith community?*

	%
Yes	68
No	32

*Have you ever had a church or faith community?*

\*Note: only asked to those who do not currently have a faith community

	%
Yes	90
No	10

*To what extent do you consider yourself a religious person?*

	%
Not religious	17
Slightly religious	24
Moderately religious	41
Very religious	18

*To what extent do you consider yourself a spiritual person?*

	%
Not spiritual	1

Slightly spiritual	2
Moderately spiritual	28
Very spiritual	69

*Where do you find spiritual enrichment? Check all that apply*

	%
At a center for spiritual/faith/religious learning other than Wisdom Ways	35
At Wisdom Ways	54
Spending time with friends	64
At a place of worship	57
In nature/at a state park	81
During small groups/activities (non-faith based)	40
During small groups/activities (faith/spirituality-based)	60
Other (please specify)	40

*What practices are most influential for building your spirituality? Check all that apply*

	%
Talking to mentors/elders	51
Talking with friends/peers	63
Being in nature (e.g., walking your dog, hiking, fishing, etc.)	81
Yoga or meditation	59
Living out my faith	63
Serving in my community	55
Leading social justice efforts	20
Participating in small groups like Bible study	21
Listening to podcasts/YouTube videos	36
Having a voice/autonomy	24
Attending ritual services (e.g., evening prayer, Lenten ritual, solstice celebration)	56
Journaling	48
Singing/choir	23
Prayer	60
Reading	75
Storytelling	19
Dance/movement	18
Playing music/listening to music	46
Other	17

*How often do you participate in each of the following activities for spiritual reasons?*

	% Never	% Seldom	% Occasionally	% Often
Talking to mentors/elders	11	18	41	30
Talking with friends/peers	3	8	31	58

Being in nature (e.g., walking your dog, hiking, fishing, etc.)	1	6	26	68
Yoga or meditation	6	15	31	48
Living out my faith in everyday life	3	5	18	75
Serving in my community	3	17	35	45
Participating in small groups like Bible study	33	27	24	16
Listening to podcasts/YouTube videos	15	27	33	26
Having a voice/autonomy in my faith community	21	28	27	25
Attending a weekly worship service	22	21	16	42
Journaling	39	28	19	14
Singing/choir	12	21	24	43
Prayer	4	12	19	66
Reading	0	7	17	76

### Wisdom Ways Demographics

*How did you find out about Wisdom Ways?*

	%
Recommended by a friend	31
Recommended by a family member	4
Social media posts	5
Google or other search engine	5
Invited by a staff member	3
Invited by an event coordinator	4
Womens press ads	9
Other (please specify)	39

*How do you connect with Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

	%
Participate in events and programs	78
Utilize the library	11
Receive the email newsletter	76
Receive the catalog	78
Follow on social media	11
Donate	13
Volunteer	4
Presenter	8
Labyrinth rental	2
Other	13

*How long have you been connected to the Wisdom Ways community?*

	%
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0-3 years	14
4-6 years	17
7-10 years	19
Over 10 years	50

*How often do you engage with Wisdom Ways?*

	%
More than once a week	1
Once a week	5
Almost every week	5
A few times a month	11
Once a month	11
A few times a year	45
Once a year	23

*What is your preferred method of communication? Select up to 3*

	%
Social Media	13
Webpage updates/calendars	20
Emails	68
E-newsletter	45
Mailed newsletter	23
Word of mouth	4
Mailed catalog	60
Phone calls	1
Text messages	5
Other	1

*How often would you like a mailed catalog?*

\*Note: only asked to those selected "mailed catalog" as a preferred method of communication

	%
Once a year	8
Twice a year	92

*Are you on Wisdom Ways' email list?*

	%
Yes	86
No	14

*Would you like to be on Wisdom Ways' email list?*

\*Note: only asked to those said they were not on the email list.

\*Note: emails were sent to Marian in a separate document

	%
Yes	60
No	40

*How often would you prefer to be notified about the activities and events at Wisdom Way?*

	%
Once a week	14
A couple of times a month	24
Once a month	44
A couple of times a year	15
Never, I prefer to find out about updates on my own (e.g., check the website or social media page).	3

*What are your preferred methods of learning? Select up to three.*

	%
Asynchronous (learning on your own schedule)	30
Synchronous (all class meetings scheduled)	43
In person	58
Hybrid with combined in-person and online learning	51
Online hybrid with some lessons asynchronous and some synchronous	29

*Would you be interested in purchasing programs and content available on a learning platform that would be available on your own schedule*

	%
Yes	29
No	26
I don't know	45

*Do you have a connection to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Paul Province?*

	%
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet	11
St. Paul Province	13
None	57
Other	24

*Which of the following reasons keep you engaged with Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

	%
The events offered	78
The spiritual direction	21
Group spiritual companionship	13
Integrative Life coaching	3
Wisdom Ways reputation	43
Wisdom Ways mission	42
Association with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet	31
Communities of mutual support and belonging	30
Commitment to shared wisdom and learning	62
Commitment to elevating historically marginalized voices	35
Other	16



## Objective 2: Evaluate Wisdom Ways' effectiveness in meeting clients' spiritual needs

### Discussion

#### *Events and programs*

Respondents who indicated that they stopped attending events and programs primarily did so for a reason “other” than what was listed (60%). The “other” reasons included COVID-19, distance from home, and programmatic changes. Additional reasons that stopped clients from attending events and programs included the limited activities that served their interests (30%), the costly nature of the activities (21%), and the inaccessibility (17%). People would be inclined to start attending events and programs again if they felt a sense of connection when involved (44%), there were more experiences for their age group (44%), and participation helped them grow in their spirituality and/or faith (39%). Additionally, folks indicated they would be inclined to start attending these again if they were budget-friendly (35%), covered a broader range of areas (30%), facilitated more constructive conversations with others (28%), and were more easily accessible (28%).

Around two-thirds of the clients who currently attend (regularly or rarely) the events and programs enjoy the sense of community they feel when engaged (68%), that they are constantly learning and growing in their spirituality (65%), and that staff and leaders cover a broad range of areas (63%). Around one-half of participants also enjoy events and programs because they are cost-effective (57%), accessible online or in-person (50%), and have a space for constructive conversation with those who are different (48%). The majority of participants who currently attend (regularly or rarely) the events and program indicated that there was nothing they disliked about the events and programs at Wisdom Ways (51%). What clients disliked most about Wisdom Ways' events and programs were the cost (12%), a lack of diversity (14%), and limited activities serving their interests (16%).

#### *Spiritual care resources*

Similar to those who stopped attending events, respondents who indicated they stopped utilizing spiritual care resources primarily did so for a reason “other” than what was listed (48%), like COVID-19 related concerns and restrictions. Additional reasons that stopped clients from utilizing spiritual care resources (i.e., spiritual direction, group spiritual companionship, integrative coaching) included the limited resources that served their interests (19%) and the costly nature of these resources (29%). People would be inclined to start utilizing spiritual care resources again if they felt a sense of connection when involved (38%), the resources were more budget-friendly (41%), and they helped them grow in their spirituality and/or faith (37%). Additionally, folks indicated they would be inclined to start utilizing spiritual care resources if staff and instructors made them feel welcome (32%), could be open about their experiences without fear of judgment (33%), and were more related to their interests (29%).

The top reason that the clients who currently utilize (regularly or rarely) the spiritual care resources enjoy the resources is because they feel a sense of community when engaged (40%), and staff and leaders cover a broad range of areas (38%). Around one-third of respondents also enjoy that they are cost-effective (34%), easily accessible online or in-person (32%), and have a

space for constantly learning and growing in their spirituality (30%). The majority of participants who currently attend (regularly or rarely) the events and program indicated that there was nothing they disliked about the events and programs at Wisdom Ways (53%). Of the explanations listed, what clients disliked most about Wisdom Ways' spiritual care resources was the limited activities serving their interests (11%). "Other" reasons for why folks disliked spiritual care resources were submitted by less than 7% of respondents.

### *Labyrinths*

Once again, respondents who indicated they stopped utilizing Labyrinths at Wisdom Ways primarily did so for a reason "other" than what was listed (53%). The "other" reasons centered around accessibility (i.e., lack of transportation/distance from home) and COVID-19 related concerns/changes. These clients would be inclined to start using the Labyrinths again for other reasons (32%), especially transportation and increased awareness, and if they felt a sense of connection when involved (23%). Additional considerations for starting to utilize Labyrinths include the cost of attendance (17%), having grounds that were more conducive to spiritual growth (15%), feeling welcomed by staff and instructors (12%), and if the Labyrinths were more easily accessible (12%).

Most clients who currently utilize the Labyrinths (regularly or rarely) feel at peace while at Wisdom Ways (56%). Many who use the Labyrinths think the grounds are warm and inviting (46%) and are constantly growing and learning in their spirituality when involved (44%). Additional enjoyments of the Labyrinths for around a quarter of participants include the sense of community they feel (23%), how cost-effective they are (24%), how accessible they are (23%), and how they feel a sense of belonging (21%). Eighty percent of participants indicate that there is nothing about the Labyrinths that they dislike. In fact, less than 4% of participants said they dislike the Labyrinths for each of the reasons provided.

### *Ritual services*

Lastly, respondents who indicated they stopped attending ritual services did so primarily for a reason "other" than what was listed (47%). The "other" reasons include COVID-19 and transportation issues. Additional reasons that stopped clients from attending ritual services included the limited activities that served their interests (22%) and the inaccessibility (19%). People would be inclined to start attending ritual services again if they were budget-friendly (34%), were more easily accessible (28%), and if they felt a connection when involved (29%). Additional reasons that clients would start attending ritual services are if staff and instructors made them feel welcome (27%), "other" reasons (i.e., when the pandemic ends and folks can access the center) (25%), and if there were more activities geared toward their interest (21%).

Most clients who currently utilize (regularly or rarely) ritual services at Wisdom Ways enjoy that they feel a sense of community when engaged (53%). Likewise, many clients appreciate that they are constantly learning and growing in their spirituality (46%), feel at peace on the grounds (44%), and find the grounds warm and inviting (41%). When asked what they dislike about ritual



services, 65% indicated that none of the reasons provided applied to them. In fact, less than 10% of respondents (and at times 0%) said they disliked any given reason provided.

Data

*How familiar are you with each of the following experiences at Wisdom Ways?*

	% Not at all familiar	% Somewhat familiar	% Very familiar
Events and programs	2	48	50
Spiritual care resources	29	55	16
Labyrinths	12	50	37
Ritual activities	25	54	22

*Which of the following best describes your participation in each of the following experiences at Wisdom Ways?*

	% Regularly Attend	% Rarely Attend	% Previously Attended	% Not attended, didn't know it was offered	% Not attended, no desire to do so	% Other
Events and programs	26	29	25	2	4	14
Spiritual care resources	5	23	11	21	24	17
Labyrinths	8	25	24	8	20	15
Ritual activities	9	23	16	18	21	12

*What are the reasons you stopped attending events and programs at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they previously attended

	%
Staff and leaders did not cover a broad range of areas	14
I did not feel a sense of connection when involved	14
Experiences at Wisdom Ways were too costly	21
The experiences were not easily accessible	17
I did not have friends there	17
I was afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	4
I did not have constructive conversations with others	4
There was a lack of diversity within the community	10
Staff and instructors did not make me feel welcome	2
The grounds/campus/learning centers were not conducive to spiritual growth	0
Wisdom Ways did not help me grow in my spirituality and/or faith	4
Limited experiences available for my age group	12
Limited activities that served my interest	29
Lack of family-oriented experiences	0
Other	60
None of the above	10

*What are the reasons you'd be inclined to start attending events and programs at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said previously attended or not attended because they were unaware of it.

	%
Staff and leaders cover a broader range of areas	30
I felt a sense of connection when involved with Wisdom Ways	44
Experiences at Wisdom Ways were budget-friendly	35
Experiences were more easily accessible	28
I had friends there	18
I had constructive conversations with others	28
I wasn't afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	12
There was more diversity within the community	14
The staff and instructors made me feel welcome	26
The grounds/campus/learning centers were more conducive to spiritual growth	16
Wisdom Ways helped me grow in my spirituality and/or faith	39
There were more experiences available for my age group	23
There were more activities that served my interests	44
The environment had more family-oriented experiences	2
Other	25
None of the above	5

*What are the reasons you stopped utilizing spiritual care resources at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they previously attended

	%
Staff and leaders did not cover a broad range of areas	5
I did not feel a sense of connection when involved	10
Experiences at Wisdom Ways were too costly	29
The experiences were not easily accessible	10
I did not have friends there	10
I was afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	0
I did not have constructive conversations with others	0
There was a lack of diversity within the community	0
Staff and instructors did not make me feel welcome	0
The grounds/campus/learning centers were not conducive to spiritual growth	0
Wisdom Ways did not help me grow in my spirituality and/or faith	5
Limited experiences available for my age group	10
Limited activities that served my interest	19
Lack of family-oriented experiences	4
Other	48
None of the above	20

*What are the reasons you'd be inclined to start utilizing spiritual care resources at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said previously attended or not attended because they were unaware of it.

	%
Staff and leaders cover a broader range of areas	22
I felt a sense of connection when involved with Wisdom Ways	38
Experiences at Wisdom Ways were budget-friendly	41
Experiences were more easily accessible	24
I had friends there	11
I had constructive conversations with others	22
I wasn't afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	33
There was more diversity within the community	19
The staff and instructors made me feel welcome	32
The grounds/campus/learning centers were more conducive to spiritual growth	21
Wisdom Ways helped me grow in my spirituality and/or faith	37
There were more experiences available for my age group	13
There were more activities that served my interests	29
The environment had more family-oriented experiences	4
Other	18
None of the above	5

*What are the reasons you stopped utilizing Labyrinths at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they previously attended

	%
Staff and leaders did not cover a broad range of areas	2
I did not feel a sense of connection when involved	10
Experiences at Wisdom Ways were too costly	4
The experiences were not easily accessible	6
I did not have friends there	6
I was afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	0
I did not have constructive conversations with others	8
There was a lack of diversity within the community	4
Staff and instructors did not make me feel welcome	2
The grounds/campus/learning centers were not conducive to spiritual growth	6
Wisdom Ways did not help me grow in my spirituality and/or faith	6
Limited experiences available for my age group	2
Limited activities that served my interest	10
Lack of family-oriented experiences	0
Other	53
None of the above	10

*What are the reasons you'd be inclined to start utilizing Labyrinths at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said previously attended or not attended because they were unaware of it.

	%
Staff and leaders cover a broader range of areas	2
I felt a sense of connection when involved with Wisdom Ways	23
Experiences at Wisdom Ways were budget-friendly	17

Experiences were more easily accessible	12
I had friends there	11
I had constructive conversations with others	5
I wasn't afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	8
There was more diversity within the community	6
The staff and instructors made me feel welcome	12
The grounds/campus/learning centers were more conducive to spiritual growth	15
Wisdom Ways helped me grow in my spirituality and/or faith	2
There were more experiences available for my age group	2
There were more activities that served my interests	5
The environment had more family-oriented experiences	0
Other	32
None of the above	21

*What are the reasons you stopped attending ritual services at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they previously attended

	%
Staff and leaders did not cover a broad range of areas	9
I did not feel a sense of connection when involved	13
Experiences at Wisdom Ways were too costly	16
The experiences were not easily accessible	19
I did not have friends there	9
I was afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	0
I did not have constructive conversations with others	9
There was a lack of diversity within the community	3
Staff and instructors did not make me feel welcome	0
The grounds/campus/learning centers were not conducive to spiritual growth	0
Wisdom Ways did not help me grow in my spirituality and/or faith	6
Limited experiences available for my age group	16
Limited activities that served my interest	22
Lack of family-oriented experiences	0
Other	47
None of the above	6

*What are the reasons you'd be inclined to start attending ritual services at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said previously attended or not attended because they were unaware of it.

	%
Staff and leaders cover a broader range of areas	19
I felt a sense of connection when involved with Wisdom Ways	29
Experiences at Wisdom Ways were budget-friendly	34
Experiences were more easily accessible	31
I had friends there	18
I had constructive conversations with others	12
I wasn't afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	18

There was more diversity within the community	13
The staff and instructors made me feel welcome	27
The grounds/campus/learning centers were more conducive to spiritual growth	13
Wisdom Ways helped me grow in my spirituality and/or faith	18
There were more experiences available for my age group	9
There were more activities that served my interests	21
The environment had more family-oriented experiences	0
Other	25
None of the above	7

*What do you enjoy about the events and programs provided by Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they regularly or rarely attend

	%
Staff and leaders cover a broad range of areas	63
I feel a sense of community when engaged	68
Experiences at Wisdom Ways are cost effective	57
Experiences are easily accessible online or in person	50
I have friends and family that attend	24
They have something for everyone	21
The grounds/campus/learning center are child friendly	3
I can share what is on my mind without judgement	33
I have constructive conversations with others who have different experiences, opinions, etc.	48
The staff and instructors make me feel like I belong	45
The grounds/campus/learning center feels warm and inviting	47
The grounds/campus/learning center is somewhere I feel at peace	43
I am constantly learning and growing in my spirituality (and/or faith)	65
Other	3
None of the above	2

*What do you dislike about the events and programs provided by Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they regularly or rarely attend

	%
Staff and leaders do not cover a broad range of areas	4
I do not feel a sense of community when engaged	2
Experiences at Wisdom Ways are too costly	12
Experiences are not easily accessible	4
I do not have friends here	3
I am afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	5
I do not have constructive conversations with others	2
There is a lack of diversity within the community	14
The staff and instructors do not make me feel welcome	1
The grounds/campus/learning centers are not conducive to spiritual growth	1
Wisdom Ways as not helped me grow in my spirituality (or faith)	2
There are limited experiences for my age group	6
There are limited activities that serve my interests	16

The lack of family-oriented experiences	1
Other	13
None of the above	51

*What do you enjoy about the spiritual care resources at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they regularly or rarely attend

	%
Staff and leaders cover a broad range of areas	38
I feel a sense of community when engaged	40
Experiences at Wisdom Ways are cost effective	34
Experiences are easily accessible online or in person	32
I have friends and family that attend	13
They have something for everyone	15
The grounds/campus/learning center are child friendly	4
I can share what is on my mind without judgement	21
I have constructive conversations with others who have different experiences, opinions, etc.	23
The staff and instructors make me feel like I belong	25
The grounds/campus/learning center feels warm and inviting	26
The grounds/campus/learning center is somewhere I feel at peace	23
I am constantly learning and growing in my spirituality (and/or faith)	30
Other	8
None of the above	23

*What do you dislike about the spiritual care resources at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they regularly or rarely attend

	%
Staff and leaders do not cover a broad range of areas	6
I do not feel a sense of community when engaged	4
Experiences at Wisdom Ways are too costly	4
Experiences are not easily accessible	6
I do not have friends here	2
I am afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	4
I do not have constructive conversations with others	0
There is a lack of diversity within the community	6
The staff and instructors do not make me feel welcome	2
The grounds/campus/learning centers are not conducive to spiritual growth	0
Wisdom Ways as not helped me grow in my spirituality (or faith)	2
There are limited experiences for my age group	6
There are limited activities that serve my interests	11
The lack of family-oriented experiences	0
Other	15
None of the above	53

*What do you enjoy about Labyrinths at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they regularly or rarely attend

	%
Staff and leaders cover a broad range of areas	12
I feel a sense of community when engaged	23
Experiences at Wisdom Ways are cost effective	24
Experiences are easily accessible online or in person	23
I have friends and family that attend	12
They have something for everyone	12
The grounds/campus/learning center are child friendly	8
I can share what is on my mind without judgement	15
I have constructive conversations with others who have different experiences, opinions, etc.	14
The staff and instructors make me feel like I belong	21
The grounds/campus/learning center feels warm and inviting	46
The grounds/campus/learning center is somewhere I feel at peace	56
I am constantly learning and growing in my spirituality (and/or faith)	44
Other	12
None of the above	18

*What do you dislike about Labyrinths at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they regularly or rarely attend

	%
Staff and leaders do not cover a broad range of areas	2
I do not feel a sense of community when engaged	3
Experiences at Wisdom Ways are too costly	2
Experiences are not easily accessible	3
I do not have friends here	2
I am afraid to be open about my experiences for fear of judgement	2
I do not have constructive conversations with others	2
There is a lack of diversity within the community	2
The staff and instructors do not make me feel welcome	2
The grounds/campus/learning centers are not conducive to spiritual growth	2
Wisdom Ways as not helped me grow in my spirituality (or faith)	2
There are limited experiences for my age group	2
There are limited activities that serve my interests	3
The lack of family-oriented experiences	2
Other	8
None of the above	80

*What do you enjoy about ritual services at Wisdom Ways? Check all that apply*

\*Note: This question was asked to those who said they regularly or rarely attend

	%
Staff and leaders cover a broad range of areas	27
I feel a sense of community when engaged	53
Experiences at Wisdom Ways are cost effective	32
Experiences are easily accessible online or in person	23
I have friends and family that attend	20



They have something for everyone	14
The grounds/campus/learning center are child friendly	5
I can share what is on my mind without judgement	17
I have constructive conversations with others who have different experiences, opinions, etc.	21
The staff and instructors make me feel like I belong	28
The grounds/campus/learning center feels warm and inviting	41
The grounds/campus/learning center is somewhere I feel at peace	44
I am constantly learning and growing in my spirituality (and/or faith)	46
Other	9
None of the above	18

*What things do you consider when deciding whether or not to participate in Wisdom Ways?*

	%
Time commitments	75
Family/friends attendance	10
My health (not Covid-related)	12
Changes in my faith/spirituality	15
Community at Wisdom Ways	17
Accessibility	19
Financial costs	46
Covid-19 pandemic	30
Spiritual/faith fulfillment elsewhere	24
The experiences available for my age	15
The activities that serve my interests	59
My relationships with CSJs	12
Other	10
None of the above	.5

*Think about your experiences at Wisdom Ways and please rate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.*

	% Never true	% Sometimes true	% Completely true	% Not applicable
Wisdom Ways is accessible	0	32	59	9
Wisdom Ways is cost effective	1	51	41	7
Wisdom Ways offers plenty of variety in event topics	3	42	52	3
Wisdom Ways offers plenty of experiences for growth and enrichment	1	62	34	3
Wisdom Ways helps with my spiritual growth	4	44	46	6
I feel comfortable at Wisdom ways	3	23	66	8
I enjoy the spiritual care provided at Wisdom Ways	4	32	20	44

I can explore my faith/spirituality-based questions and concerns at Wisdom Ways	4	38	38	20
Wisdom Ways is diverse	6	55	30	9
Wisdom Ways is accepting	2	19	72	7
Wisdom Ways is reflective of my beliefs and values	2	48	45	5
Wisdom Ways is innovative	2	47	44	8

### Objective 3: Identify the usefulness of Wisdom Ways' structure and programming

#### Discussion

Almost all of Wisdom Ways' participants agree that they are interested in a meaningful life, and they don't think meaning comes from only one source (94%). Similarly, 94% also find that their relationships with themselves, others, society, God, and nature are part of their sense of spirituality (94%). Likewise, 90% indicate that when it comes to their spiritual life, they don't feel limited to one path, tradition, or way of thinking about the world. However, only 19% said that their spiritual lives were formed outside of a faith or religious tradition. Participants are split evenly (50% agree, 50% disagree) about whether they are interested in joining any faith/spirituality-based institution because they seem too static or rigid. Over three-quarters of participants agree that when it comes to spirituality, they want to be part of the conversation (88%), are interested in building something new (83%), and see most leaders as having integrity (79%).

When asked what encourages them to check out new organizations, over two-thirds of participants indicated the importance of the organization having a good reputation (70%), the ability to explore themselves more deeply (63%), and knowing others who have participated and liked it (60%). Likewise, the majority also find that the opportunity to learn about spirituality from others (58%), being part of an organization that lives out its mission and vision (57%), and feeling comfortable enough to ask questions, even about difficult or controversial ones (54%) are essential considerations when checking out new organizations. Furthermore, over one-half of Wisdom Ways clients find it necessary that new organizations appear to benefit their future in some way (51%) and that they have friends or family that attend (51%) if they are going to check it out. The key things that deter participants from checking out new organizations are hearing negative things from others (58%), not feeling welcome or like they don't belong (53%), and feeling unable to ask questions and examine the information given to them (47%).

Wisdom Ways participants indicated it is very or extremely important for spiritual learning centers to help them understand themselves better/self-reflect (94%), promote a supportive environment for developing and sharing personal feelings and beliefs (89%), and show new paths for individual growth and change (88%). Around three-quarters of participants found it very or extremely important that a spiritual learning center spurs individuals to act on their convictions (78%) and builds community (75%). Two-thirds of participants (66%) also indicated it is very or extremely important for a spiritual learning center to inspire reverence and awe.

Most Wisdom Ways' participants recommend Wisdom Ways to others (86%). The majority recommend between 1 and 5 people (70%), although 12% have recommended 11 or more people. Almost one-half (48%) of participants tell others about Wisdom Ways when someone indicates a desire for spiritual growth and learning. Another 20% tell others about Wisdom Ways when they think someone could benefit from spiritual growth and knowledge. Another 10% of respondents always find a way to bring up Wisdom Ways in conversation if the topic is about spirituality, faith, or religion, and 14% indicated an "other" response. Only 5% of folks

never tell others about Wisdom Ways, although they are comfortable talking about faith and spirituality.

When asked how likely they are to recommend the primary offerings of Wisdom Ways to a friend or family member, the majority are more likely to do so than not. For events and community activities, 79% are likely to suggest them to others, 14% are unlikely to recommend them, and 7% said this was not applicable. In terms of resources, 72% are likely to recommend Wisdom Ways' resources, 14% are unlikely to recommend Wisdom Ways' resources, and 14% said this was not applicable. For the Labyrinths, 54% are likely to recommend, 22% are unlikely to recommend, and 22% said this was not applicable. Lastly, 49% of respondents are likely to recommend spiritual care, 25% are unlikely to recommend spiritual care, and 27% said this was not applicable.

The top factors that impact the likelihood that someone will recommend events and community activities to a friend or family member are quality of services (64%), quality of leaders/staff (44%), cost of attendance (32%), accessibility (27%), and safety and security (20%). What least impacts the likelihood that someone will recommend events and community activities include changes in their faith/spirituality (10%), length of services (10%), and ability to get spiritual fulfillment (8%). The top factors that impact the likelihood that someone will recommend the Labyrinths to a friend or family member are quality of services (29%), accessibility (29%), and cost of attendance (21%). What least impacts the likelihood that someone will recommend the Labyrinths include changes in my faith/spirituality (7%), length of services (7%), and ability to get spiritual fulfillment (5%). The top factors that impact the likelihood that someone will recommend spiritual care (spiritual direction, group spiritual companionship, integrative coaching) to a friend or family member are quality of services (25%), quality of leaders/staff (21%), cost of attendance (16%). What least impacts the likelihood that someone will recommend spiritual care are the length of services and changes in their faith/spirituality (6%).

Of the events that Wisdom Ways has offered over the past few years, the experiences utilized most by participants are seasonal rituals (39%), centering/contemplative prayer (36%), and writing/workshops (30%). Around one-quarter of participants have attended soul conferences (26%) and the Hedgerow Institute (24%). The least-attended event was the seasonal retreats (13%), and about one-quarter of respondents have not attended any of these events (26%). Of the events that folks have not heard about, 40% would consider attending a seasonal retreat. Around one-third of participants who have not participated in seasonal rituals (31%), centering/contemplative prayer (31%), or writing workshops (34%) would consider attending in the future. Around one-quarter (26%) of participants who have not participated in soul conferences indicated they would consider doing so. Only 17% of participants who have not attended Hedgerow Institute would consider doing so in the future.

Of these events that clients have participated in, 45% would participate in seasonal retreats again, 40% would participate in centering/contemplative prayer again, 38% would participate in writing/workshops in the future, 30% would attend another soul conference, and 22% indicated

they would attend a seasonal retreat in the future. While these numbers seem low, readers should remember that a continuous suggestion for improvement centers around accessibility—many clients are aging and homebound, many live in areas too far for regular engagement, and some cannot afford the cost of participation. Likewise, some of Wisdom Ways' core experiences, like spiritual care resources, are currently underutilized by clients, so few participants received and responded to these questions.

When asked what events or activities they would like to see Wisdom Ways start offering, about 19% indicate things like "don't know," "can't think of anything," and "unsure." A similar percentage (17%) indicated a desire for Wisdom Ways to do more with other faiths and various faith groups, saying things like "astrology workshop, feng shui, aromatherapy, holotropic breathwork," "more interreligious events," "more ecumenical events with Christian orgs & churches," and "history of different spiritualities." Another similar percentage of respondents (18%) indicated that they would like more events and activities centered around creative self-expression, including "more spiritual aspects of the arts," "more poetry readings from the margins," "memoir/writing," "musical healing," "more visual art workshops," "feature speakers on feminist theology, poetry, and spirituality, etc." and "more authors." Between 5% and 9% of respondents mentioned they would like to see Wisdom Ways have more of a focus on social justice and supporting marginalized voices.

When asked if Wisdom Ways should offer more programs in partnership with other organizations, 70% said yes. However, only 53% want programs provided at different locations. When asked where they would like Wisdom Ways to offer more programs and with whom they should partner with in the future, participants suggested specific or general faith-based groups and offered general geographic areas for expansion. The general responses for partnerships included things like "with other religious groups," "St Joan of Arc," "progressive churches & seminaries," "retreat centers, larger centrally located churches/college," and "community center, other denomination's churches." Likewise, most participants provided general areas for expansion, including the "western suburbs," "South/North Minneapolis," "south of the river," "north suburbs," "Minneapolis," and "more outside core cities." Some participants just suggested a desire for more access, saying things like "places that increase accessibility."

Data

*How many people have you recommended Wisdom Ways to?*

	%
0	14
1	10
2	17
3	11
4	8
5	10
6	8
7	3
8	1
9	0
10	7
11+	12

*Please select the statement that best describe how you feel about recommending Wisdom Ways*

	%
I always find a way to bring up Wisdom Ways in conversation regardless of the topic	1
I always find a way to bring up Wisdom Ways in conversation if the topic is about spirituality, faith, or religion	11
I never tell others about Wisdom Ways because I am uncomfortable talking about faith and spirituality	2
I never tell others about Wisdom Ways although I am comfortable talking about faith and spirituality	5
I tell others about Wisdom Ways when they indicate a desire for spiritual growth and learning	48
I tell others about Wisdom Ways when I think they could benefit from spiritual growth and learning	19
Other	14

*How likely are you to recommend each of the following to a friend or family member?*

	% Very Unlikely	% Somewhat Unlikely	% Somewhat Likely	% Very Likely	% N/A or I have not attended
Events and community activities	8	6	34	45	7
Spiritual care	9	16	30	19	27
Labyrinths	7	15	25	29	24
Wisdom Way resources	5	9	39	33	14

*Factors that impact the likelihood someone will recommend events and community activities to a friend or family member.*

	%
Quality of services	64

Quality of the leaders/staff	44
Changes in my faith/spirituality	10
Length of services	10
Accessibility	27
Cost of attendance	32
Safety and security	20
Ability to get spiritual fulfilment	8
Other	13
N/A or I have not participated	8

*What impacts the likelihood that someone will recommend the Labyrinths to a friend or family member.*

	%
Quality of services	29
Quality of the leaders/staff	16
Changes in my faith/spirituality	7
Length of services	7
Accessibility	29
Cost of attendance	21
Safety and security	14
Ability to get spiritual fulfilment	5
Other	17
N/A or I have not participated	28

*What impacts the likelihood that someone will recommend the spiritual care (spiritual direction, group spiritual companionship, integrative coaching).*

	%
Quality of services	25
Quality of the leaders/staff	21
Changes in my faith/spirituality	9
Length of services	6
Accessibility	10
Cost of attendance	16
Safety and security	14
Ability to get spiritual fulfilment	13
Other	6
N/A or I have not participated	10

*I am likely to avoid checking out a new organization if... (check all that apply)*

	%
I have heard negative things from others	58
I have read negative news reports/social media stories	41
My friends or family don't support it	12
I don't feel like I can be my full self	44
I am not allowed to have an opinion, experience, or understanding that is different from what they do	45
I feel like my identity is not accepted	29

I do not feel welcome or like to belong	53
I don't know anyone else there/have friends or family that attend	13
They are accepting of me but not others who are different from us	32
They are not living out their mission or vision	38
I cannot ask questions and examine information given to me	47
The campus/grounds are not a warm and inviting place	35
Other	15
None of the above	0

*I am likely to check out a new organization if... (check all that apply)*

	%
I have friends or family that attend	51
It will benefit my future in some way	51
It is known as an accepting place to be	59
It has a good reputation	70
It allows me to be exactly who I am	49
I can explore myself more deeply	63
I can learn from others about my spirituality	58
I know people who have participated and liked it	60
I don't feel like I have to behave differently than I do in order to belong	41
I can ask questions, even if they are difficult or controversial	54
They appear to be living out their mission and vision	57
The campus/grounds seem like an inviting place	49
Other	11

*How important is it that a center for spiritual learning does the following?*

	% Not important	% Somewhat Important	% Very important	% Extremely Important
Build community	2	24	42	33
Help us understand ourselves better/self-reflection	1	5	46	48
Promote a supportive environment for developing and sharing individual feelings and beliefs	3	10	45	44
Spur individuals to act on their own convictions	4	19	50	28
Inspire reverence and awe	9	25	36	30
Show new paths for individual growth and change	1	11	46	42

*Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.*

	% Strongly disagree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly agree



When it comes to my spiritual life, I don't feel limited to only one path, tradition, or way of thinking about the world	8	2	35	55
I am interested in building something new when it comes to my spiritual or inner life	4	13	62	21
I want to be a part of the conversations around spirituality, faith, and religion -- I just don't want to be handed something	5	6	51	37
I would never join an organization where I can't be my whole self	4	11	55	29
My relationships to myself, others, society, God, and nature are all part of my sense of spirituality	4	3	37	57
I'm not interested in joining any faith/spirituality-based institution because they seem too static or rigid	15	35	29	21
I would rather quit an organization than feel like I can't be myself	4	10	56	29
Most spiritual leaders I know (personally, in the media, etc. ) have integrity	4	18	65	14
I don't necessarily feel like I was formed in any faith or religious tradition	28	53	12	7
I am interested in a meaningful life, and I don't think meaning comes from only one source	3	3	38	56

## Objective 4: Explore the value of Wisdom Ways for clients

### Discussion

The majority (56%) of participants live in a city with up to 10 organizations or institutions that focus on spiritual growth and enrichment. However, 12% indicated no organizations in their city, and 12% also stated that there are over 50 institutions focused on spiritual growth and enrichment in their city. Three-quarters of participants (76%) attend between 1 and 4 educational faith/spirituality-based organizations. These numbers indicate that many folks have spiritual growth and enrichment options but ultimately turn to Wisdom Ways to fulfill these needs. However, it is important to note that 9% indicate that they do not attend any educational organizations that are faith/spirituality based. When engaged, the majority of participants feel welcome (73%), supported (55%), safe (76%), included (61%), validated (51%), and heard (56%) all of the time while engaging with Wisdom Ways. Less than 8% of respondents indicated that they feel these things in Wisdom Ways "none of the time." As for "some of the time," between one-fifth and one-third of respondents feel welcome (24%), supported (38%), safe (20%), included (33%), valid (34%), and heard (38%).

Participants also indicate that they appreciate the leadership and policies of Wisdom Ways. Over three-quarters of participants agree that the center has staff and leaders who are friendly and easy to approach (77%), can be relied upon to keep members' sensitive information private (78%), are continuously living out their mission and vision (78%) and help community members understand how spirituality matters in their lives (79%). Around three-quarters also agree that the center is good at understanding the challenges and issues community members face in their spiritual lives (74%), is innovative and changes to meet what is needed in the modern world (74%), and changes its traditions in response to a changing world (70%). Likewise, the majority of participants also believe that Wisdom Ways' responsibility to the community extends beyond official duties (66%), and the organization can be relied upon to give good guidance to those seeking spiritual guidance and enrichment (57%). Only 13% or less of the participants disagree with each of the statements above. However, a moderate number of participants did find the following statements not applicable, "Wisdom Ways can be relied upon to give good guidance to those seeking spiritual guidance, enrichment" (39%) and "Wisdom Ways has a responsibility to the community extends beyond official responsibilities" (28%).

Generally, participants' experiences with Wisdom Ways' structure and programming have been positive. In fact, the majority of Wisdom Ways participants agree that Wisdom Ways is spiritually uplifting and inspirational (88%), helps with spiritual growth (84%), deepens their relationship with God (67%), is a moral beacon in the community (69%), touches the lives of many people who live nearby (61%), has well-organized activities and programs (85%), has programs and activities that strengthen personal relationships among members (61%), has a clear sense of mission and purpose (76%), and is a place where participants can be their authentic selves (76%). Only 13% or fewer of the participants disagree with each of the statements above. Likewise, these statements applied to most participants, although between one-quarter and one-third did indicate that "Wisdom Ways is a moral beacon in the community" (31%) and "Wisdom Ways programs and activities strengthen personal relationships among members" (26%) were not applicable.

Participants were asked to list one or two things they appreciated about Wisdom Ways. Of the 201 responses, incredibly less than 1% of folks chose to leave this blank, typed a few random letters, or the words no/NA. And, in many cases, folks decided to identify numerous things they appreciate about Wisdom Ways. Some of the most common responses centered on the value of programming, especially the variety of topics and the relationships that can develop. Often clients would say things like "program diversity, engagement with others," "creative and broad offerings for faith and spiritual development," "the outside-the-box offerings that stretch me," and "I have always appreciated the commitment to Celtic, feminist, and progressive subjects, speakers, etc." The second most common response for participants focused on the structure and organizational commitments of Wisdom Ways. Many participants appreciate the structure of Wisdom Ways, saying "it's an alternative to the rigid and hierarchical things that often come from the church," "the open-hearted spirituality approach," "the general openness to learn and evolve," and "from the beginning, a deep commitment to feminist theology and to transforming church and society."

Additionally, many participants left general comments about the environment and learning center. Often participants said they appreciated things like "that you exist," "it has been a deep and rich spiritual home for me, many others, and this community," "welcoming all people - unlike some Bishops' response to LGBTQ and women," and "leaders have been creative, innovative, inclusive, feminist-friendly and theologically progressive." Lastly, the most common set of appreciations centered around Wisdom Ways' attention to diversity. Often clients would say things like "the mission and commitment to diversity of thought/faith," "attempts to be inclusive," "BIPOC presenters, Hedgerow," "progressive and open, non-biased & non-discriminatory."

Data

Please list one or two things that you appreciate about Wisdom Ways.

\*NOTE: see codebook for a list of answers

*How many organizations or institutions that focus on spiritual growth and enrichment are in your city?*

	%
0	12
1-5	37
6-10	19
11-15	5
16-20	2
21-25	3
26-30	3
31-35	1
36-40	2
41-45	0
46-50	4
51+	12

*How many educational faith/spirituality-based organizations (including Wisdom Ways) do you attend?*

	%
0	9
1	19
2	27
3	20
4	10
5	7
6	4
8	1
9	1
10	2
12	2

*Please rate your level of agreement with each of the following statements*

	% Strongly Disagree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Not Applicable
My experiences at Wisdom Ways are spiritually uplifting and inspirational	1	3	51	37	7
My experiences at Wisdom Ways help my spiritual growth	1	6	50	34	10
Wisdom Ways has helped me deepen my relationship with God	1	10	43	24	22
Wisdom Ways is a moral beacon in the community	3	6	44	25	22

Wisdom Ways touches the lives of many people who live near it	2	6	42	19	31
Wisdom Ways programs and activities are well-organized	1	3	49	36	11
Wisdom Ways programs and activities strengthen personal relationships among members	2	11	41	20	26
Wisdom Ways has a clear sense of mission and purpose	2	11	43	33	12
Wisdom Ways is a place where I can be my authentic self	2	7	46	30	14
Wisdom Ways is a place where I am thriving	2	15	32	13	38

*How often do you feel each of the following things at Wisdom Ways?*

	% None of the time	% Some of the time	% All of the time
Welcome	3	24	73
Supported	7	38	55
Safe	4	20	76
Included	7	33	61
Valid	5	34	51
Heard	6	38	56

*Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements when you think about how you feel about Wisdom Ways overall*

	% Strongly Disagree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Not Applicable
Wisdom Ways is good at understanding the challenges and issues community members face in their spiritual lives	1	10	55	19	16
Wisdom Ways staff and leaders are friendly and easy to approach	1	4	46	31	19
Wisdom Ways can be relied upon to give good guidance to those seeking spiritual guidance, enrichment, etc.	1	4	36	21	39
Wisdom Ways can be relied upon to keep members' sensitive information private	1	5	54	24	17

Wisdom Ways' responsibility to the community extends beyond official responsibilities	3	4	43	23	28
Wisdom Ways is continuously living out their mission and vision	2	5	54	24	17
Wisdom Ways helps community members understand how spirituality matters in their lives	2	3	51	28	16
Wisdom Ways is an innovative organization that changes to meet what is needed in the modern world	2	11	49	25	12
At Wisdom Ways, traditions are changed in response to a changing world	2	9	49	21	19

*Below are listed some events that have been offered by Wisdom Ways over the past few years. Please select all of the events you have participated in.*

	%
Soul Conferences	26
Seasonal Rituals	39
Hedgerow Institute	24
Seasonal Retreats	13
Centering/Contemplative Prayer	36
Writing/Workshops	30
I don't know	0
None of the above	26

*Of the events that you have attended, which of the following would you participate in again?*

*\*Note this was only asked to those who did not select 'None of the above' to the question above*

	%
Soul Conferences	30
Seasonal Rituals	45
Hedgerow Institute	28
Seasonal Retreats	22
Centering/Contemplative Prayer	40
Writing/Workshops	38

*Of the events that you have not attended, which would you consider attending?*

	%
Soul Conferences	26
Seasonal Rituals	31
Hedgerow Institute	17
Seasonal Retreats	40
Centering/Contemplative Prayer	31
Writing/Workshops	34

*Please list one or two events you'd like to see Wisdom Ways offer that have not yet been offered.*

\*NOTE: see codebook for a list of answers

*Should Wisdom Ways offer more programs in partnership with other organizations?*

	%
Yes	70
No	30

*What organizations would you like to see Wisdom Ways partner with?*

\*NOTE: see codebook for a list of answers

*Should Wisdom Ways offer more programs at different locations?*

	%
Yes	53
No	47

*At what locations would you like to see Wisdom Ways offer programs?*

\*NOTE: see codebook for a list of answers

## Objective 5: Identify the lessons learned since COVID-19

### Discussion

Participants were asked about their involvement with Wisdom Ways during the transition to online experiences. Around one-half (52%) of folks indicated that their participation in Wisdom Ways decreased since the pandemic started, and about 36% said their participation remained about the same. Only 12% showed an increase in their involvement with Wisdom Ways. There are a host of reasons why involvement changed (increased or decreased), which include pandemic related concerns (56%), time commitments (34%), having activities that serve my interests (38%), distance from my home (30%), and transition to/integration of online learning (28%). What had less of an impact on folks' level of participation -19 include the community at Wisdom Ways (13%), financial costs (13%), spiritual fulfillment elsewhere (15%), staffing of Wisdom Ways (16%), and the structure of Wisdom Ways (15%).

During COVID-19, many faith/spirituality-based organizations became eager to find online connections. Folks were asked to think about their experiences with Wisdom Ways online during the pandemic and select any statements that applied to their experiences. Over one-third of respondents (39%) indicated that they did not participate in Wisdom Ways online. Of those who participated, around one-half suggested that moving to an online platform was a positive change that should be continued (45%) but not at the expense of in-person learning (53%). Only 5% indicated that the shift to online learning should not be continued. Likewise, around 41% of participants indicated that it is harder to find community and a sense of belonging online than in person (41%). Only 2% found it is easier to find community and belonging online than in person. Additionally, 35% of folks suggested that spiritual growth depends on the message and conversation, not the space. Only 8% indicated that being in a specific place is needed for their spirituality to flourish.

Participants were also asked about their preferred modes of learning in light of the changing world. The top three most desired modes of learning among clients were in-person (58%), hybrid (in-person and online) (51%), and synchronous (meeting online at the same time) (43%). Around one-third of participants indicated a desire for asynchronous—learning on your schedule— (30%) and online hybrid—some lessons asynchronous and some synchronous— (29%). Many folks are unsure (45%) whether or not they'd be interested in purchasing asynchronous (learning on your own schedule) programs and content, while 29% said "yes" and 26% said "no."

Participants were asked how Wisdom Ways did in providing support, including but not limited to checking in with community members and maintaining quality experiences. Overall, less than 9% of folks indicated that the organization did a "poor" job on each item. Over one-half of participants rated Wisdom Ways as "excellent" or "average" in fulfilling their mission and vision to the best of their ability (64%), maintaining quality events and activities (56%), and creating/maintaining a sense of community and connections (56%). Over one-half of folks indicated that each of the following statements was not applicable ("N/A"): check-in with community members (56%), providing emotional support to those dealing with loss (75%), providing technical support to those transitioning to online services (65%), providing financial



support to help mitigate class/event costs (73%), aid those outside of the immediate community (65%), maintain quality spiritual care services (63%). The amount of N/A for this set of statements is expected given that 39% of current clients have not participated in Wisdom Ways online and 45% have not utilized spiritual care services in the past.

When asked, in open-ended form, what Wisdom Ways could have done better or more during the COVID-19 pandemic, around one-half (52%) did not have any suggestions leaving comments like "unsure," "N/A," "no comment," "I don't know," and "no idea." Around 11% of respondents did not have suggestions, indicating that "I think you did great, it's just that you cannot reduce the drive (1 hr.) or eliminate the pandemic" and "it did the best it could. I enjoyed the emails and the hopeful words to color." Much of the remaining comments centered on types of offerings (wanting more and of a different variety) and online media (getting communications and managing online platforms). Around 15% of respondents commented about wanting more diversity and affordability in activities offered—"offered more progressive, challenging topics," "not focused so much on traditional Catholicism/Christianity," "more affordable classes and variety," and "have more outdoor clean air activities." Likewise, about 15% of participants wanted more communication about, access to, and an increase in the number of online programs, saying things like "increased online offerings and sought feedback," "increase communication, survey for needs," "I didn't receive a catalog for many months, didn't know what programs were available," and "have zoom programs available as recordings for those who missed an event."

## Data

*During COVID-19 many faith/spirituality-based organizations became more eager to find online connections. Think about your experiences with Wisdom Ways online during the pandemic and check all that apply.*

	%
Moving to an online platform was a positive change that should be continued	45
Moving to an online platform was a positive change that should not be continued	1
Moving to an online platform was a positive change that should be continued	53
Moving to an online platform was a negative experience overall and should not be continued	4
I need to be in a specific place (e.g., Wisdom Ways) for my spirituality to flourish.	8
My spiritual growth depends on the message and conversation, not on the space.	35
It is harder to find community and a sense of belonging online than in person	41
It is easier to find community and a sense of belonging online than in person.	2
I did not participate in Wisdom Ways online.	39

*How well did Wisdom Ways do with each of the following during the COVID-19 pandemic?*

	% Poor	% Average	% Excellent	% N/A
Check in with community members	3	30	11	56
Provide emotional support to those dealing with loss	5	16	5	75
Provide technical support to those transitioning to online services	4	16	16	65
Provide financial support to help mitigate class/event costs	5	13	10	73
Fulfill their mission and vision to the best of their ability	3	25	38	36
Provide services to those outside of the immediate community	2	20	13	65
Maintain quality spiritual care services	3	19	16	63
Maintain quality events and activities	5	29	27	36
Create/maintain a sense of community and connections	9	29	27	36

*Has your involvement in Wisdom Ways increased, decreased, or remained about the same since the start of COVID-19?*

	%
Increased	12
Decreased	52
Remained about the same	36

*What has led to the change?*

\*Note: asked to those whose involvement either increased or decreased

	%
Time commitments	34

Family/friends attendance	5
Health concerns (not Covid-19 pandemic)	19
Changes in my faith/spirituality	5
The community at Wisdom Ways	13
Distance from my home	30
Financial costs	13
Covid-19 pandemic	56
Spiritual fulfilment elsewhere	15
The experiences available for my age group	8
Having activities that serve my interests	38
Changes to the staffing of Wisdom Ways	16
Changes to the structure of Wisdom Ways	15
Transition to/integration of online learning	28
Other	8

*What are the top two things Wisdom Ways could have done better or more of during the COVID-19 pandemic?*

\*NOTE: see codebook for a list of answers

## Conclusion

Wisdom Ways serves an older population (55+) of people who are or were connected to a church/faith community. This group, the majority of which are straight, non-Hispanic white women, is very positive about their experience with Wisdom Ways. They appreciate the ways in which Wisdom Ways aims to be an equitable and inclusive space. They like the sense of community, spiritual growth, and learning that they gain from participation in Wisdom Ways. They feel welcome and supported by the staff and leadership at Wisdom Ways. And they share their Wisdom Ways experience with others.

To increase their reach, Wisdom Ways would do well to target other populations and include a wider variety of traditions, paths, and ways of thinking about spirituality and faith. It seems likely that this outreach and expansion would be supported by the current participants, who appreciate diversity and believe that a meaningful life is created through multiple sources. With more intentional approaches to communication about the offerings and resources available, Wisdom Ways can also reengage its current participants who have decreased participation in light of the pandemic.

Often when given the chance to respond to an open-ended question survey participants will choose not to answer. That was not the case in this survey. Rather, folks were eager to share their suggestions and compliments. This simple dedication to sharing reveals that Wisdom Ways serves a group of individuals who are eager to help make sure that Wisdom Ways and its offerings is the best it can be.