

A Church Leader's "Healthy Church Assessment" Tool

Churches who are living God's vision for themselves are healthy. A healthy congregation is one that is alive and pursuing the purpose for which God created them - making disciples for the transformation of the world. Congregational health is one of the fruits of redeeming souls and circumstances. The questions below are intended to help you assess the current health of your congregation and point to areas where some intentional interventions should be considered as you seek to be faithful, fruitful and bold.

CHARACTERISTICS

1 LOW SPIRITUALITY ←-----→ **HIGH SPIRITUALITY**

God seems distant and uninvolved. Most people in our congregation have little expectation that God will be active in their life or through our church.

Most people practice prayer, Bible study, and other means of grace on a daily basis. As a result, there is on-going, meaningful experience of the Holy Spirit's activity in our personal and corporate life.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

2 LOW CLARITY OF MISSION ←-----→ **HIGH CLARITY OF MISSION**

Only a few people understand God's reason for the church existing. Church is mostly a social place for us and our kind of people. Church meetings deal with routine "business" of fellowship and maintenance.

Most know the church exists in and for the world; to reach people with the gospel so souls and circumstances can be redeemed. Governing bodies focus on this mission. Decisions are made based on how it advances God's mission rather than on whether it satisfies one's preference and/or will "keep the peace."

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

3 LOW QUALITY WORSHIP ←-----→ **HIGH QUALITY WORSHIP**

Worship lacks energy and seems perfunctory or lacking preparation. We come to worship out of habit - expecting little to happen.

Worship is alive, has energy and suits the context. People are inspired. People come to glorify God and to experience a fresh encounter with the living God.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

4 LOW FAITH FORMATION ←-----→ **HIGH FAITH FORMATION**

Few classes or groups exist with none recently stated. Most classes are not serious about deepening one's walk. There is little sense that people are on a journey toward mature faith. We can't remember when someone in our church responded to God's call to a vocation of Christian service.

We intentionally have adequate numbers of classes and groups studying the Bible, Christian faith and doctrines of the church. This learning leads to persons practicing faith in their everyday life and sharing faith with others. New groups are started each year. Many are growing as mature disciples who witness, serve, lead, or teach. We expect some will respond to a vocation of Christian service.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

5 LOW EVANGELISTIC PASSION ←-----→ **HIGH EVANGELISTIC PASSION**

Beyond our children and youth confirmation classes, we rarely have an adult make a profession of faith. We don't reach out to non-Christians in any organized way. We seldom invite people to church and have few visitors.

We regularly have new people professing faith in Jesus Christ for the first time. We are constantly thinking of ways to communicate the gospel in order to connect with the unchurched and open them to a wonderful life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

6 LOW HOSPITALITY ←-----→ **HIGH HOSPITALITY**

We think we are friendly, but we have few repeat visitors. We would rather keep things comfortable than make adjustments to reach others who are different from us.

We are intentional at making people feel welcome and helping them find a place in the community without being too pushy. We willingly seek new ways to reach the people who live in our community.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

7 LOW DIVERSITY ←-----→ **HIGH DIVERSITY**

We rarely reach out to people who are of a different ethnic group. Seldom do we have a visitor of a different racial group.

We take intentional steps to be a racially and ethnically diverse community of faith. We regularly adapt/expand ministries to be inviting to people of different backgrounds to meet their spiritual needs, enabling us to experience the full richness of Christian community.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

8 LOW PRIORITY FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, & YOUNG ADULTS ↔ **HIGH PRIORITY FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, & YOUNG ADULTS**

All our children have grown up and moved away. We have no young people who are part of our church.

We have a good cross-section of all ages -- particularly children, youth and young adults. We are constantly adapting or expanding our ministries in ways that are inviting to young people and meet their spiritual needs.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

9 LOW COMMUNICATION ←-----→ **HIGH COMMUNICATION**

We use word of mouth and announcements at church to get the news out to our participants. People often complain about not knowing what is going on. Little or no effort is made to communicate with outsiders through media. We don't see advertising as a significant tool for ministry outreach or evangelism.

We regularly expand our communications within the church family and beyond. We use websites and e-mail to enhance our contacts for ministry. We send articles to the paper and use advertising as an intentional strategy for reaching people outside our church with our desire to serve them and offer them the gifts of faith.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

10 LOW CARE FOR FACILITIES ←-----→ **HIGH CARE FOR FACILITIES**

Our facilities and yard are not maintained. Repairs are neglected. We have poor signage throughout the building and grounds, or no signs at all. Our main entrance is hard for newcomers to find. We assume everyone knows where to go and how to get there.

Facilities are well cared for, appealing and clean. Repairs and maintenance are timely and regular. The building is used throughout the week. Our building is inviting. We honor God by the way we care for and utilize these facilities as a ministry resource.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

11 LOW OUTREACH & MISSION ←-----→ **HIGH OUTREACH & MISSION**

Our needs are the first priority. A seasonal food drive or similar projects stretch us to the limit. We occasionally talk about "adopting a needy child" or supporting a missionary or one of our church agencies, but we rarely follow through.

We believe through reaching out we truly become the Body of Christ in the community and the world. We offer many opportunities for hands-on involvement in meeting human needs and relieving suffering in the name of Christ. We go outside our walls - into our community and world - to extend God's reach.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

12 LOW ADVOCACY & JUSTICE ←-----→ **HIGH ADVOCACY & JUSTICE**

Our church rarely joins in the cry of those hurt by societal circumstances that diminish the Divine worth of any human (i.e., injustice, bias, racism, poverty, etc.)

Our church is sensitive to the suffering caused by injustice, bias, racism, poverty, and other social ills of our society. Our church is intentional about teaching the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church and seeks to make a positive impact on at least one issue each year.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

13 LOW STEWARDSHIP & GENEROSITY ←-----→ **HIGH STEWARDSHIP & GENEROSITY**

People give little more than their "extra money" to support the church. Giving is viewed as "paying our dues." Our church has a 'scarcity' mind-set that limits ministry.

An increasing number of people are moving toward giving the first 10% of their income (tithe) and beyond to the work of God with attitudes of sacrifice, generosity and joy. People see the abundance of God's provision and adjust their lifestyle to advance God's mission.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

14 LOW CONNECTIONALISM ←-----→ **HIGH CONNECTIONALISM**

Our church is "congregational" in nature. We don't see ourselves as being part of the Church universal and rarely as part of the United Methodist connection. We see apportionments as taxes that take limited ministry resources out of our congregation. We are connectional only when it suits or serves us.

We recognize that being part of the Body of Christ connects to other United Methodists and other Christian denominations. We gladly share in expanding God's mission throughout the world through apportioned giving. We know we can do far more together than any of us can by ourselves. The connection is a blessing to us.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

15 LOW ACCOUNTABILITY ←-----→ **HIGH ACCOUNTABILITY**

There is a low level of commitment on the part of all with many unkept promises. Accountability is avoided to prevent conflict.

There is a high commitment on the part of most leaders and increasingly among all the members. Accountability is done lovingly with the goal of personal growth and mission advancement.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

16 LOW LEADERSHIP ←-----→ **HIGH LEADERSHIP**

Few laity are involved in the ministry of the church. Clergy and lay leaders are focused only on the bare essentials of church operation. Clergy serves as chaplain; most others are consumers.

Pastoral and lay leadership is focused on helping people identify and use their spiritual gifts to advance God's mission. We frequently conduct leadership training to help prepare people for leadership. Many people in our church feel like "ministers" engaged in Christ's work of redeeming souls and circumstances.

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

17 LOW MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT ←-----→ **HIGH MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT**

No new member classes or any coordinated planning to bring new members into the life of the church. New members are allowed to "find their own paths" of ministry as it suits them.

Clear plans and leaders in place to provide ample opportunities for new members to learn, investigate, and take advantage of ministry opportunities of the congregation

-1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5-

SCORING SUMMARY		WORKING WITH THIS SURVEY	
1. _____	10. _____	Scoring: Circle a number in response to each question, 1 being lowest and 5 being highest.	
2. _____	11. _____	Indicators: Note high scores and ask, "What more can be done to keep these scores high?" Keep your strengths healthy.	
3. _____	12. _____	Note low scores, and ask, "What can be done to raise these scores?" Enhance weaknesses but not at the expense of your strengths.	
4. _____	13. _____	Total Score: The total score is helpful when comparing surveys with others, a quick way to see variables from person to person, or group to group.	
5. _____	14. _____	By taking the survey a second time at a later date, the "total figure" indicates any perception of changes, up or down, since the survey was first completed.	
6. _____	15. _____	Church Name: _____	
7. _____	16. _____	District: _____	
8. _____	17. _____		
9. _____	Total: _____		

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Church Leaders

Healthy Churches

assessment survey