

Become a
CHURCHwith
IMPACT!

Participant's Guide


ALABAMA STATE MINISTRIES
CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY





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CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY

April 27, 2019

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Become a Church with IMPACT training! In the 1990's the Church of God of Prophecy began to make a "turn to the harvest," as we followed the Holy Spirit's call to turn away from our inwardness and see the lost and hurting world just outside our doors. In the years that followed, the church sought God's heart regarding how we might respond to this call and follow his leading. I believe the Become a Church with IMPACT ministry model is the Holy Spirit's response to our seeking.

This course is designed to enable church leaders to keep a congregation focused on its task as God's agent in a particular place. It presents the importance of a Biblically defined vision, introduces leaders to the ten characteristics of a healthy church and invites leaders to see their church as a system that can have an impact on its community. You have made a wonderful decision to be a part of what God is doing!

I am so thankful for our partnership with our International Offices Leadership Development and Discipleship department and our wonderful friends at the Multiplication Network, who have made this course material possible. I believe the greatest days for the Church of God of Prophecy in Alabama are before us. Thank you for joining together to seek God and see our congregations make an IMPACT on their communities!

Sincerely,

Brian T. Sutton
Presiding Bishop
Alabama State Ministries

TRAINER’S MANUAL |

Become a Church With Impact! course enables church leaders to keep a congregation focused on its task as God’s agent in a particular place as it joins God in his activity there. It presents the importance of a Biblically defined vision, introduces leaders to the ten characteristics of a healthy church, and invites leaders to see their church as a system that can have a significant impact on its community.

This manual provides additional material and suggestions for instruction.

Resources for trainers:

1. Trainer’s Manual
2. Participant Manual
3. PowerPoint slides (available through our website).
4. Help from the Center for Biblical Leadership (visit our website for contact information).

The Center for Biblical Leadership promotes the growth and planting of churches through pastor and leader training. We provide free access to our materials, ready for downloading and printing, on our website: www.idd.cogop.org

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL |

This guide will enable you to lead participants through the course. Each page shows what appears in the Participant Manual in the main part of the page and information for the leaders in the margin or with a small font in the same manual. Answers for the Participant Manual are found in this guide on the participant pages in capitals, underlined and in bold print (for example: **GOD**).

For each session, the manual provides questions that participants may answer in pairs or small groups as time allows. There won’t be time for participants to discuss all the questions for each session, so we encourage trainers to select the most pertinent ones so as to keep participants actively engaged.

We encourage each trainer to enrich the material using his or her own experiences, illustrations, and examples.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE |

Each session is designed to last an hour and a half. Please leave enough time at the end for the participants to fill out the evaluation form.

COURSE MATERIALS |

Our goal is to make this course available to as many leaders as possible. (You may photocopy the Participant Manual locally and work with the church(es) involved to arrange for refreshments and meals.)

All Biblical references are from the New International Version,
Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984.

ONE DAY INTENSIVE

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Passion, Vision, Mission

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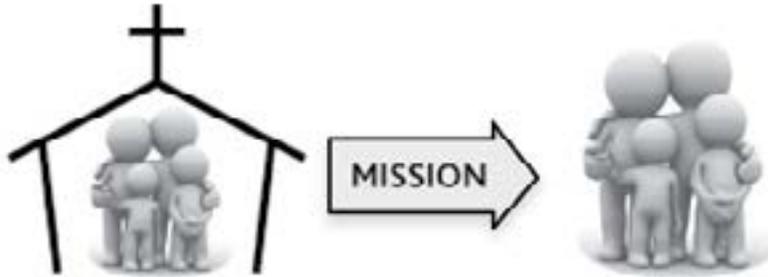
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SESSION 1

PASSION, VISION, MISSION



CREATION, FALL, REDEMPTION, NEW CREATION

The “Big Story” of the Bible begins in Genesis 1 with creation of a beautiful and good world. The entrance of rebellion and disobedience led to the Fall and the disruption of all crucial relationships: between human beings; between us and God; between humans and other creatures; and within human beings themselves. The good news that God sent Jesus Christ into the world to invite us to renew our relationship with God through repentance, confession, and commitment to living God’s way is the heart of redemption. God’s ultimate purpose is to restore us and the whole world to its original harmony, completely reconciled to God. This is the biblical hope when God makes all things new (Isa. 65:17-25; Rev. 21:1-7).

WHAT IS “INTEGRAL CHURCH GROWTH”?

Church growth is healthy when it promotes improvement in all dimensions of a church’s life, rather than just an increase in the number of members or attendees. A healthy congregation sees itself in the broad framework of the purposes of God for the world, humanity, and the cosmos—renewal in all dimensions of life. The church takes the Reign of God as its starting point and seeks to extend God’s Kingdom in all areas of life (home, community, work, etc.) through the impact of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

A FRAMEWORK FOR INTEGRAL CHURCH GROWTH

This session helps us remember that a devotional relationship with God is essential in order to carry out the work he is calling us to do. When we are passionate about God’s work, we develop a vision of what God wants to do and can do through us. When we respond in obedience to God’s call, the church turns outward in mission toward the world. This only happens when we understand

This session begins with an explanation of healthy church growth.

“Bread on One Side and Milk on the Other” | Explain the importance of adapting church growth methods and strategies to the context.

Years ago grocery stores in the U.S. discovered a strategy for getting people to buy more. People came to the stores for certain basic items, like bread and milk, but would buy much more if they had to walk past other items and stands with special offers. Nowadays stores do all kinds of studies to find ways to get people to buy more as they shop, from the type of music they play (slower music so people walk at a slower pace), to the way they place items (locating the items they most want to sell at or near the customer’s eye level).

If stores take so much time to study how people shop just to sell them more things, shouldn’t we as Christians learn as much as we can about people and how they behave in order to be able to more effectively invite them to know Christ and become part of his people? Even though the basic message of life in Christ will never change, cultures and people’s ways of doing things do change. So our methods and strategies for sharing the gospel will need to change to fit the context in which we are sharing Christ.

Vision | The main goal is that leaders understand the importance of having a Biblically based, clear, and inspiring vision that moves others to join God in what he is doing in their location.

The Role of Eyeglasses | A guy that needed glasses had a big surprise when he put them on for the first time and realized he could see much better! The Bible works very much like eyeglasses. When we see things through Scripture (ourselves, our life situations, our neighbors), we see things much more clearly. We begin to have God's perspective on our lives and our communities.

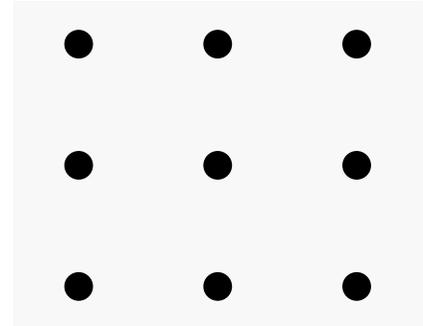
Biblical Examples | A church without a Biblically defined vision quickly becomes a social club, a community-service agency, or a spiritual "fast-food restaurant" where we come to get what we want. Instead, to be faithful to God, we need to organize our life as a congregation by what God says we are. We need to look at our congregations and our communities through God's eyes. What does God call us to be and do?

The Example of the Builders | Once a man approached three men who were working cutting stones and asked them what they were doing. The first said, "Earning a living." The second said, "Doing my job as a stone-cutter." The third said, "I'm building the most beautiful cathedral this city has ever seen." So often in the church we go about our work just thinking about the task of the moment—preparing a Sunday school lesson, taking a meal to a family in need, putting our money in the offering plate—without seeing the larger vision God has for our work: lives, families, and communities changed by the Good News of Jesus Christ.

what the Bible teaches us about the relationship between God, the church, and our community.

Exercise | Connect-the-Dots

Try to connect all the points by drawing 4 lines, but without lifting your pencil.



VISION

Having vision is looking toward the **FUTURE** and seeing what God wants to do through you in order to achieve his redemptive purposes.

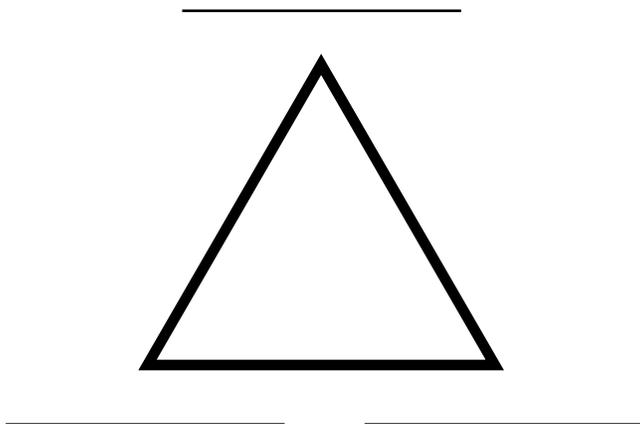
- The role of eyeglasses.
- **Biblical examples:** Scripture has many examples of leaders with a vision for what God wanted to do in and through them.
 1. **Abraham** to have many descendants, a land for them and be a blessing to the world: Gen. 12:1-3.
 2. **Noah** to keep his family and the animals safe in the flood: Gen. 6:13-14, 17-20.
 3. **Joshua and Caleb** to enter the land that God had promised Israel: Numbers 14:6-9.
 4. **Paul** to share the Gospel with Gentiles throughout the Roman Empire: Acts 26:13-18.
 5. **Jesus** to bring healing, hope, and freedom: Luke 4:18-19.
- A healthy church starts with a clear, motivating vision.
- Example of the builders.

*Do you want to be a part of the work of building the Kingdom of God?
When will you lay the first stone?*

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Hebrews 11:6

"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails." Proverbs 19:21

Diagram | Relationship between God–the Church–the Community



Read the verses that deal with the relationship between God and the community. God has a heart for the lost. In Jesus' ministry, he went to the lost, the sick, and the outcasts in order to heal and restore them. God is also at work in peoples' hearts and communities before we are there. He calls us to participate in what he is doing, and he works through us as we reach out to people with the Gospel.

Finally, read the verses that deal with the church's relationship to its community. God calls us to be his hands, feet, and voice in the communities where he has placed us. Ask someone to give an example of a church they know of that nurtures its relationship with God and also is God's hands and feet in its community.

This diagram presents three relationships within a single picture:

1. Relationship between the Church and God

PRINCIPLE | For any congregation to make an impact on its community, nothing is as important as an ever-deepening relationship with the Lord.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

"Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain." Psalm 127:1

2. Relationship between God and the community

PRINCIPLE | JESUS' INCARNATIONAL MODEL, Philippians 2:5-8
God is always at work around us. He is in a place long before the first evangelist or missionary arrives.

Story of Florence Chadwick | On the morning of July 4, 1952, Florence Chadwick dove into the cold water off Catalina Island in an attempt to swim to the coast of California—a distance of 22 miles. She had already crossed many different canals, rivers and lakes, but this day things were different. The water was very cold and the fog didn't allow her to see very far. After 15 hours of swimming, Florence was exhausted and asked the people following her to lift her into one of the boats. Her mother and trainer tried to get her to keep going, but after a few minutes she gave up, unable to reach her goal. When the boat got to shore, she realized that she had only been 700 meters from the shore when she quit. Upset, Florence explained that if she had been able to see the coast she would have made it despite the cold and the exhaustion, but the fog kept her from seeing it. Some months later Florence returned to Catalina Island and attempted the daring feat again. The cold water and fog were the same or even worse than the day of the first attempt, but she swam all the way to the California shore. When she was asked how she was able to do it, she answered, "This time the shore was already in my heart." The question for us as Christian leaders is the same: Do we have God's vision for our communities in our hearts? Are we ready to fight against the wind and the tide in order to achieve the purposes that God has for us?

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness." Matthew 9:35

"When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them..."
Matthew 9:36

3. Relationship between a congregation and its community

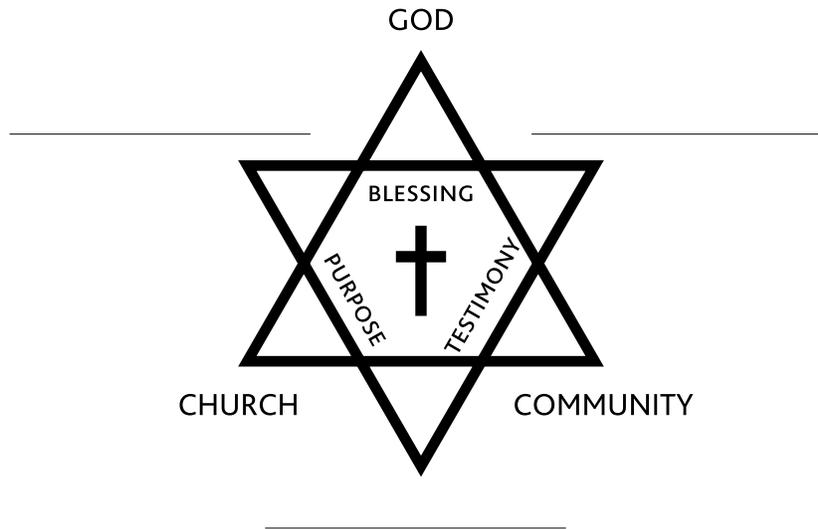
PRINCIPLE | God wants to work through us. We are his hands and feet and voice in this world. Before achieving great things, we must be faithful in the small things.

Jesus said to his Father, "As you have sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world." John 17:18

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4:18-19

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness.'"
Matthew 25:21

Diagram | Passion, Vision, Mission



When the church is in right relationship to God, it has passion for God’s mission. When the church understands God’s plan for the community, the church has vision. Then the congregation is ready to carry out its mission in the community. God’s blessing grows the church as it bears testimony in word and in deed in the community.

Conclusion:

Story of Florence Chadwick, July 4, 1952, Catalina Island.

Challenge:

If not today, when? If not I, who?

SESSION 2

7 SHIFTS IN MISSION FOR A HARVEST BREAKTHROUGH

INTRODUCTION

Story of Rosa

I met Rosa de León Venegas in Buenos Aires last year. Rosa is a middle-aged Peruvian lady who immigrated to Argentina many years ago. She arrived with nothing but some clothes and a mattress, and some scars on her body and in her heart. Her face shows some of the struggles she has endured, as well as the tenacity with which she has confronted the challenges of life in a new country. She is a small but feisty woman—I told her I would not want to get into a fight with her!

Rosa is a Christian. In fact, she is a leader of a small church of about 80 people, and she is going through the church planting modules of the Multiplication Network. Rosa has experienced the fullness of the transforming Gospel in her life, and she is passionate about helping others come to know Christ and find faith, hope, and love in Him.

Rosa works in one of the sprawling edges of Buenos Aires, where thousands of Colombians, Peruvians, Paraguayans, and others have moved in, hoping to escape poverty in their own countries of origin. She decided that something more had to be done in this area of so few churches and thousands of people who need the hope of the Gospel. She started evangelizing and discipling people, and today she has a beautiful community of faith that shines the light of Christ to its own people, and to all who see them. Not only that, Rosa has planted several daughter churches. Younger couples and singles mentored by Rosa lead these churches. Rosa doesn't want to just add to the Church as she bears witness to the Kingdom. She wants to multiply!

Ten other church planters are going through the Multiplication Network church planting modules with Rosa. During a lunch at her house, Rosa introduced us to several of them and later we went to visit the neighborhoods where they work. These people are planting faith, hope, and love in areas that desperately need it. These neighborhoods are filled with idolatry, witchcraft, prostitution, drug use, family violence, and *umbanda* (an Afro-Brazilian folk religion). We even heard testimonies of demon possession witnessed by several leaders. However, the gospel is liberating and healing many people thanks to the work and ministry of these church planters. They have great joy in the work and are examples of perseverance. The COGOP hopes to have 30 new churches planted in Argentina in the next two years.

Pray for Rosa and the planters she mentors. Rosa says about her mission context: "there is a lot of strength on the other side"... referring to the spiritual opposition she feels.

TRANSITION

Rosa is not just a pastor; she is a multiplier—besides making disciples and planting churches herself, she is also being led by the Spirit to equip others to do the same. People are confessing with their mouths that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him from the dead. Together they are bringing in a breakthrough harvest in the power of the Resurrection! Let me explain what I mean by "working in the power of the Resurrection."

You see, we can't talk about any strategy or strategic shift in mission unless we first understand the power we Christians need for a BREAKTHROUGH HARVEST: the power of the Resurrection! Many people question this, but it is at the heart of the Gospel. This and this alone, is able to bring meaningful and substantive transformation. Let me give you three examples or evidences of this:

Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene was an unlikely leader in the early church. Not only was she a woman—and women had little status in Jewish society—but she was a woman of questionable background. Mary had been possessed by demons, and by some accounts she had a reputation as a harlot. Yet this messed-up, devalued woman was granted the privilege of being among the first eyewitnesses to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not a Jewish businessman, or a Pharisee, or a rabbi. Not even John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, or Peter, the leader of the disciples. No, Mary is the one mentioned in all four Gospel accounts as being present at the crucifixion and the Resurrection. If you were making this story up in the first century you would never choose a woman to be one of your key witnesses.

But something extraordinary had happened...

First Disciples

The second example deals with Jesus' disciples. They were men who had all run away after the crucifixion. In John 20 we see them hiding in a room with the door locked, afraid and disheartened. In Luke 24 we hear the doubt and disappointment in the words of the two walking to Emmaus. In Mark 16 we read that they are "mourning and weeping" (v10). However, in the book of Acts these same frightened, doubtful, weeping men were now praising God and healing and preaching. These once scared and disheartened disciples were boldly standing up to the same authorities they had been hiding from! How can this be?

Something extraordinary had happened...

First Christian Communities

The third evidence revolves around the Church. The earliest Christian communities were notably different from their surrounding culture:

- They embraced the marginalized of their society.
- They welcomed slaves as brothers and sisters in Christ at the same communion table.
- They showed greater respect to women, and they cared for widows who had no children.
- Not only did they refuse to abandon orphans—which was accepted practice at the time—they established orphanages.

Why would these early Christians do all this?

Something extraordinary had happened...

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ!

Today we talk about the Resurrection almost nonchalantly. Nevertheless, only the Resurrection explains Mary Magdalene's transformation, the disciples' transformation, and the early Christian communities'

transformation. It was fresh and powerful then; but we treat it as commonplace today! Unfortunately, many Christians and churches take for granted how profound and farreaching this transformation is.

It was the Resurrection that sealed in the disciples' minds and hearts that Jesus was who he claimed to be. Now they understood that Jesus had ushered in a new order of things, namely the inauguration of God's redemptive power in the world through the presence of the Kingdom of God. Seeing the Messiah raised from the dead meant that the Kingdom of God was *real* and it ignited a passion in the early Christians—it gave them something to live for, and even something to die for; because it made them joyous, and fearless!

THE RESURRECTION IS THE ESSENCE OF THE GOSPEL

Paul puts it in simple terms in the book of Romans: *That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)* There are two premises in this thought: 1) Jesus is Lord, and 2) Jesus is Risen. This is a spiritual, political, ethical, economic, religious, and cosmic claim! It is an all-encompassing assertion! To say JESUS IS LORD in first-century Palestine—where the LORD was supposed to be the Caesar—was powerfully counter-cultural. And to believe that God raised him from the dead was to give the God of Israel the ultimate power over sin and death and life!

Paul insists in *1 Corinthians 15:14*: *"And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith."*

The RESURRECTION is the cornerstone of our Christian faith! It is the definitive HISTORICAL EVENT that forever changed history and destiny. We celebrate this as an Easter people! NT Wright says, "The Resurrection is not a last-minute invention that is tacked on to the edge of Christianity. It stands as the centerpiece of our entire faith." (paraphrase) We are an Easter people and Hallelujah is our song.

We need to tap into the Resurrection Power of Christ, and this happens only by the Spirit and the Word! Like the two lenses of my glasses we need both to have a clear vision from God that can lead us to a BREAKTHROUGH HARVEST. You can know the Word inside and out, but if you are not led by the Holy Spirit you won't get a breakthrough harvest. On the other hand, you can claim to have a lot of the Holy Spirit, but with no grounding in the Word you won't get a breakthrough harvest—at least not a Christ-centered one.

TRANSITION

The Resurrection is the foundation of our Gospel message. This is the source of its power. But many have drifted from this foundational, core message, and much of the Church has gradually leaned on other sources such as self-confidence, technical ability or even technological advances for strength, sustenance and inspiration. As a result, we are not seeing the breakthroughs God wants to see. If we will shift our thinking in seven key areas, we can once again experience a harvest breakthrough.

(These sources in particular have helped shape my thinking on these shifts: *Take Your Church's Pulse*, Koster & Wagenveld; *The Shaping of Things to Come*, Frost & Hirsch; *9 Critical Shifts in World Mission*, T. J. Addington, and *The Essence of the Church*, Craig Van Gelder.)

Exercise |

1. From EXTRACTIONAL to INCARNATIONAL

2. From AUTOCRATIC LEADERSHIP to SERVANT LEADERSHIP

3. From SEGMENTED FAITH to INTEGRATED FAITH

4. From BUILDING to COMMUNITY

5. From BOUNDED SETS to CENTERED SETS

6. From OWNING & CONTROLLING to STEWARDING & RELEASING

7. From ADDITION to MULTIPLICATION

SESSION 3

THE FIVE COMMITMENTS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

This session provides a description of five essential commitments of a healthy church:

1. Clear vision
2. Empowering leadership
3. Members involved in ministry
4. Stewardship of resources
5. Connection between the text and the context

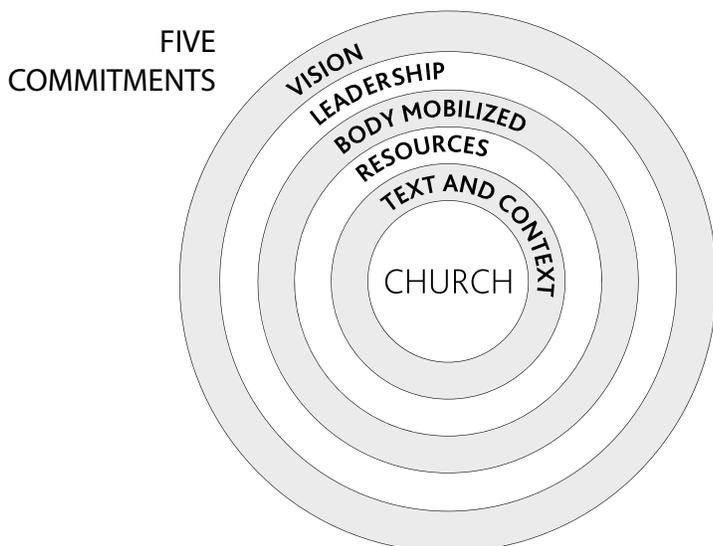
Understanding these commitments enables leaders to do strategic planning and evaluate their ministries.



Example | The man on the railroad tracks

In order to have a healthy and growing church, we must pay attention to all the parts of the church's life and ministry (the five commitments and the five functions).

Diagram | "Vital signs of a healthy church"



The man on the railroad tracks |

There was a man who one day went walking on the railroad tracks. He felt the rails beginning to shake under him, but he didn't see any train, so he kept on walking. Then he heard the sound of a train that seemed very close, but he didn't see a train in front of him, so he decided to keep walking. What happened next? [He got hit by the train, which came up behind him.] The man was only trusting his eyes and didn't realize the train was coming toward him from behind. Not paying attention to the signs around us can have disastrous consequences! In the same way, in a congregation we need to consider all the signs of what's going on in the church's life, not just one or two aspects.

The point of the sessions on the 5 Commitments and 5 Functions of a healthy church is that to have a healthy and growing church, we have to take care to develop all the parts of the church's life. Otherwise the church as a whole will suffer.

The 10 areas of a healthy church (5 commitments in Session 2 and 5 functions in Session 3) are all interrelated and are all important for churches, no matter what the congregation's stage of maturity.

After the description of each element and function, there are a few statements that participants can respond to in order to evaluate their church.

Clear Vision | The Biblical and theological aspects of vision—what God calls the church to be and do—were presented in Session 1. Here we address the role of a vision statement in a local church. Key aspects of a vision statement are that it is in line with what God teaches in the Bible, is clearly defined, is communicated over and over, and is embraced by both the members and the leaders.

Vision Statement to Analyze | Invite people to identify how the sample vision statement reflects the 8 key commitments. Does it present a clear picture of a preferred future? Does it enable people to see things from God's perspective? Is it based on the redemptive purposes of God? etc.

1. CLEAR VISION | I Peter 2:9,12

The church sees clearly what God wants it to be and do as the Body of Christ in action in a particular place and time. This vision is aligned with the redemptive purposes of God and focuses the church on its mission. In a healthy congregation, decisions about ministry, funds, the building, etc., are made based on the mission.

8 Key Aspects of a Vision Statement:

1. It presents a clear picture of a preferred future.
2. It enables one to think of possibilities with God's "eyeglasses."
3. It's based on the redemptive purposes of God.
4. It's not satisfied with the status quo (the way things are at present).
5. It takes faith.
6. It's communicated in a simple form.
7. It moves one toward prayer and action/it gives a sense of urgency.
8. It's shared among leaders and members.

A Vision Statement to Analyze:

"Our vision is that every person and family in our town has the opportunity to accept Christ as Savior and Lord, to grow in their knowledge of him, and to use their talents and resources for his glory."

Exercise | Take Your Church's Pulse

Read each statement and indicate your opinion. ("1" indicates you disagree completely with the statement; "10" indicates you completely agree.)

- Our church has a clear and defined vision for a preferred future.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- I feel inspired by the vision of the church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP | Ephesians 4:11-12

The church is served by leaders called by God who understand its vision, communicate the vision clearly to the congregation, and organize the members to make the vision a reality.

Characteristics of leaders in Scripture:

1. The leader is sent by God. (Jn 17:18)
2. The leader is a servant. (Phil 2:5-8; Mk 10:42-45; Jn 13:14-15)
3. The leader seeks God's guidance. (Ps 25:4-5)
4. The leader motivates and equips God's people. (Eph 4:11-12; II Tm 2:2)

Contrast between Leadership Styles:

THE AUTHORITARIAN LEADER:	THE SERVANT LEADER:
Says "Follow me!"	Says "Let's follow Jesus!"
Decides what his vision and goals are for the church.	Works with leaders to discern the vision and goals God has for the church.
Doesn't delegate, just gives orders.	Involves others.
Makes decisions on his own.	Invites others to participate in making decisions.
Complains about the weaknesses of the congregation.	Strengthens the congregation in its areas of weakness.
Does everything himself: preaching, visiting, praying, teaching, leading worship, etc.	Trains others to do ministry and affirms them.
Sees other leaders as competitors and threats.	Sees other leaders as partners and blessings.

Thinking that pastors are the only ones who can do things in the church is not only foolish—it's unbiblical. In Exodus 18:13-27 Moses had to learn how to empower others to do ministry so that the people could have the attention they needed and he wouldn't get burned out.

Reflect | Do you put others to work? Who in your church can you involve in different ways?

Empowering Leadership | Emphasize what Ephesians 4:10-12 teaches about the role of leaders to train and mobilize all members for ministry. The leaders' job is to know what the church's vision is, communicate it clearly to the congregation, and organize the members to use their gifts and resources to achieve that vision. The era of the "do-it-all-pastor" is over, and the time of the pastor as facilitator is here. The pastor should no longer try to do everything by himself, but instead should lead others to use their gifts in ministry. Everyone has a gift that should be used to bless others inside and outside the church.

Exercise | Take Your Church's Pulse

- There are leaders being trained and prepared for future positions of leadership.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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- The leaders help and guide those desiring to become active in the church.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Mobilized Body | The members of the church work together using their gifts responsibly, both in the congregation and in the community. Emphasize the importance of having each person find out what his or her gift is and use it.

Share the following story | Once a Bible study leader gave each group member a wrapped gift. He asked, "What should we do with these?" Of course they said they should open it. Inside each found a puzzle piece. Then the leader asked what they should do to use the pieces. The members realized that they would have to put their puzzle pieces together to see what it would be. They put their pieces together, but realized that some pieces were missing! The Bible study leader told them, "Now we have to look for more people to lead to Christ, so their gifts will complete the work of the church!"

Ask | Each Christian has a gift to be used—do you know what yours is? Does your church help people identify their gifts and use them?

Moving Members into Ministry | All the members of your church should be nurtured in their relationship with God (be disciplined), be trained for service, and be helped to find a ministry in which to use their gifts. Have participants work with partners or in small groups to identify the ways their church fulfills each type of ministry. Ask them to identify which categories have enough activities and which need more attention.

3. MOBILIZED BODY | I Corinthians 12:7; I Peter 4:10-11

The members of the church work together, using their gifts responsibly in the congregation and in the community. An effective pastor knows how to motivate and involve the members of the church. He or she delegates tasks to others so that they can use their gifts.

Successful work as a team involves:

1. A clear and inspiring goal
2. Work structured to achieve results
3. Competent members
4. Commitment of all members
5. A collaborative environment
6. A standard of excellence
7. Servant leadership

Exercise | Take Your Church's Pulse

- The church helps members to discover their gifts for ministry.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

- I've been trained to serve or lead in the congregation and community.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Exercise | Moving Members into Ministry

INSTRUCTIONS | Think about the existing ministries in your church and list them under the following categories:

ENFOLD PEOPLE	BUILD PEOPLE	EQUIP PEOPLE	MOBILIZE PEOPLE
<p>Ways you get people connected to your congregation, make them feel welcomed, and invite them into relationship with Jesus Christ (examples: special worship services, concerts, community service projects, friendships with non-Christians, door-to-door evangelism, etc.)</p>	<p>Ways you disciple people and help them grow in their faith (Bible study groups, Sunday school, prayer partners, new member classes, women’s ministry, men’s ministry, mentoring relationships, etc.)</p>	<p>Ways you train people for specific ministries and help them identify and develop their gifts (evangelism workshop, class on spiritual gifts, seminar on finances for families, training people to lead worship or preach, training for small group leaders, etc.)</p>	<p>Ways people use their particular gifts inside and outside your congregation (meal preparation, visits to families, teaching, leading songs in worship, leading a class on a particular activity they are good at, having a soccer camp for neighborhood kids, cleaning the sanctuary, etc.). Anything that people are able to do can be incorporated into the ministry of the church!</p>

Now review your lists to see where your church is most effective and where you should take action.

ENFOLD PEOPLE	BUILD PEOPLE	EQUIP PEOPLE	MOBILIZE PEOPLE
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

With the leaders in your church, repeat the Moving Members into Ministry Exercise:

1. List the activities your church has for each type of ministry.
2. Ask whether the activities you list for each category are effective in that area.
3. Decide where you need to take action and what should be done.

Stewardship of Resources | The church challenges its members to be good stewards of their resources—time, treasures, talents, and temple of God (physical bodies)—in order to extend God’s Kingdom in the church and in the community. The church itself should also be a good steward of its resources.

Examples of good stewardship |

- The church takes good care of its building and facilities.
- The deacons or a special committee count and manage the finances—not the pastor. They keep accurate records of tithes and offerings and report regularly to the congregation how money is spent.
- The church encourages people to use their time well (caring for family, working, serving in the church and community).
- The church makes a budget that is in line with its vision.

A dynamic church is always at the limit of its resources and is investing what it has in its ministry and mission, not storing up resources for itself. Ask participants to give examples of how their churches help people manage their time, talents, treasures, and physical temple well. Ask them to share with a partner how their churches handle budgeting and bookkeeping.

4. STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES | I Corinthians 4:2; Proverbs 3:9-10; I Corinthians 6:19-20; Acts 20:35b

The church challenges its members to be good stewards of its possessions and goods as well as their own. All Christians can use these resources (time, talent, and treasure) to carry out their work in the Kingdom of God, both within the church and in the community. The church itself should use resources wisely and with transparency.

The Four “T’s” of Stewardship:

1. _____
2. Talent
3. _____
4. Temple of God (Our physical bodies)

Exercise | Take Your Church’s Pulse

- Our church practices good stewardship in terms of handling the budget well.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

- Our church teaches regularly about stewardship and tithing.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

5. CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TEXT AND THE CONTEXT

| II Timothy 3:16-17; Acts 17:22-23; I Corinthians 9:19-22; Matthew 9:35-38

A healthy church takes into account its context (geographic location, social and economic factors, cultures, etc.). While the message of the good news in Jesus Christ does not change, the methods for sharing it do.

Exercise | Take Your Church's Pulse

- Our church is aware of the needs in our social context.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

- Our church tries hard to build relationships in the community.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Conclusion:

Each church has its own distinctive personality and unique abilities. A church that is strong in the five areas we discussed in this session will be moved by the Holy Spirit to make a difference in its community in the name of Jesus. It will call people to find new life in Christ and help them to live in him, giving glory to God.

Emphasize the different social, economic, and cultural contexts that are found in different countries, provinces, cities, towns, and neighborhoods. Describe how these differences impact a church's evangelism, worship, organization, vision, functions, etc.

II Timothy 3:16-17 | God's Word is the guide for life.

Acts 17:22-23 | Paul shapes his message to fit the people and the place.

I Corinthians 9:19-22 | Paul relates to people in a way they understand in order to reach them with the gospel.

Matthew 9:35-38 | Jesus went out looking for people and met them where they were.

Optional Activity | Have participants think about which of the five areas their church is strongest in, and which area their church is weakest in. Have them share about this with each other in a group of 3 or 4 people. Ask them to pick one area to work on and brainstorm how a church could improve in that area.

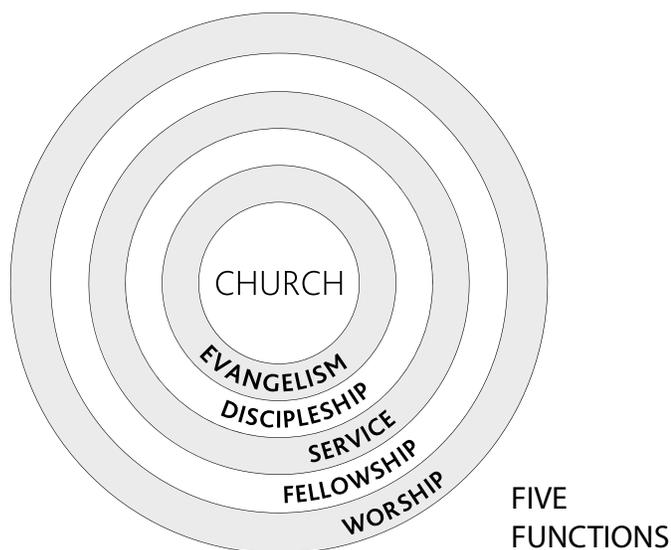
SESSION 4

THE FIVE FUNCTIONS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

This session provides a description of the five functions of a healthy church: worship, service, evangelism, discipleship, and fellowship. Evaluating a congregation in terms of these functions helps leaders in their strategic planning.

Five Essential Functions | Acts 2:42-47



Each function has an impact on the others.

1. **EVANGELISM** | Acts 2:47; II Timothy 4:1-2; Acts 5:42; Colossians 1:28-29

The church announces, in words and deeds that people can understand, that through Jesus Christ the Kingdom of God has come. It calls people to believe this good news, to turn their lives over to Jesus, and to become his disciples. Our lives give evidence of the new creation in Christ—a “living proclamation” of what God has done.

It is God who adds to the church. The Holy Spirit works in people’s hearts, moving them to receive the life offered in Christ.

Questions to reflect:

- To how many people have I presented the Gospel in the last two months?
- How many believers has our church trained to share their faith?

Three Kinds of Changes Needed for People to Come to Know Christ:

- 1. A CHANGE OF POWER** | People recognize their own weakness and experience the power of God in their lives through the work of the Holy Spirit, giving them life, breaking the power of sin in their lives, and bringing about the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- 2. A CHANGE OF BELIEF** | People's eyes are opened to accept that Jesus is who the Bible says he is: the resurrected Son of God. People come to see that God speaks through the Scripture and that what he says can be trusted.
- 3. A CHANGE OF WILL** | People turn their lives over to Christ and submit to his will in all areas of their lives.

Exercise | Take Your Church's Pulse

Read each statement and indicate your opinion. ("1" indicates you disagree completely with the statement; "10" indicates you completely agree.)

- Our church trains and equips its members to give witness in the community.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

- I feel personally involved in the evangelistic task of our congregation.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Follow-up with leaders of your church:

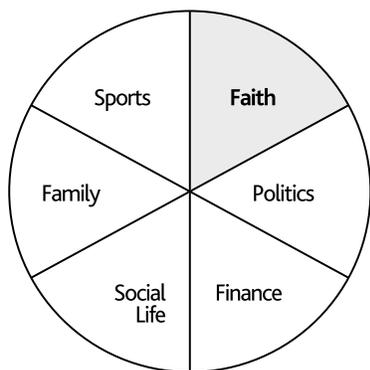
- How does our congregation encourage people to see God's power, hear God's truth, and respond with a whole-hearted commitment to Christ?

2. DISCIPLESHIP | Acts 2:42; Matthew 28:18-20; II Peter 3:18

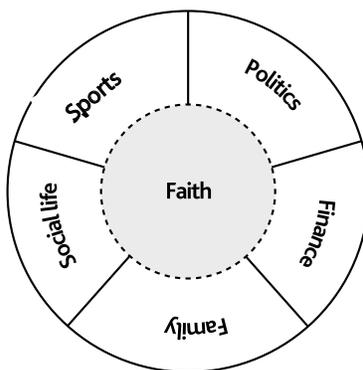
A healthy church helps people of all ages know Christ and his will better so that they follow him in all areas and aspects of their daily life. As we know him and his will better and depend on his Spirit, we become more and more like Christ in our:

1. Conduct
2. _____
3. Character
4. _____

Diagram | Segmented Faith vs. Integrated Faith



Segmented Faith



Integrated Faith

Discipleship |

- Conduct (our behavior is more and more like that of Jesus: Philippians 1:27; Ephesians 5:1-2)
- Thinking (we have the mind of Christ: Philippians 2:5; Philippians 4:8)
- Character (we reflect the fruit of the Spirit: Galatians 5:22-24; Ephesians 5:1-2)
- Commitment (we commit ourselves to God's will no matter the cost: Matthew 26:39; John 6:38)

Segmented Faith | Faith is just another part of our lives. We think of God when we are worshiping him, but the rest of the week we go about our lives without thinking of him. We don't think about how God is related to our family life, our finances, politics, sports, etc.

Integrated Faith | Our faith in Jesus has an impact on how we treat our family, how we live in our community and nation, how we play sports, how we manage our finances, etc. In every area of life we seek to please God.

Exercise | Take Your Church's Pulse

- When a new person accepts Christ he or she is immediately disciplined by someone.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- The church is helping me grow spiritually.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Follow-up with leaders of your church:

- How does our church help people grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ?
- What opportunities does our church provide for people to study the Scripture and apply it to their lives?

- What opportunities does our church have for people to pray together and for each other?
- How does our church help members learn to follow Jesus in their family life, their decision-making, their daily work, their use of money, and their use of time?

The book of James makes it clear that faith without works is dead (James 2:17). Serve others, not to win our salvation, but as a token of gratitude for what God had done for us.

In a world filled with isolation, loneliness, separation, and violence, it is imperative that the church provide a community of love, reconciliation, grace, and forgiveness.

Ask participants to mention other ways that members can get to know each other and help each other.

3. SERVICE | Acts 2:45-46 Galatians 6:10; Mark 12:31; James 2:17

The church holistically helps meet the needs of people and the community in the name of Christ and invites them to be his disciples.

The book of James makes clear that faith without works is dead (James 2:17). We serve others not to earn our salvation, but out of gratitude for what God has done for us.

Serving others with our gifts and resources is the visible proof of God’s love for them.

Connections between Service and Evangelism:

1. Service is a result of evangelism: God’s love makes us want to serve others.
2. Service is a bridge to evangelism: We do concrete acts of service first, and those acts of service open doors to share our faith.
3. Service accompanies evangelism: As we serve others, we speak of God’s love for them in Christ.

Exercise | Take Your Church’s Pulse

- Our church helps people with their physical needs.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

- The people of the community know that we want to demonstrate Christ’s love in practical ways.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Follow-up with leaders of your church:

- How do the members of our church serve their community?
- How does our congregation as a whole serve our community?

4. FELLOWSHIP | Acts 2:42, 44, 46; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 4:25-26 and 5:2

In a healthy church, the members enjoy each other and bear one another's burdens, showing the love and compassion of God. This means we have to get to know each other and share in each others' lives, so we can know the best ways to help. The word in Greek for fellowship, *koinonia*, means "in common." Christian fellowship, then, is first of all to have Christ in common, and because of that to share who we are and what we have with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Small groups are one way that Christians can support each other and grow together in their faith.

Healthy churches understand that conflict is a normal part of life as a congregation. They resolve conflict in a constructive way, with a focus on how to handle the situation so that the church stays faithful to its vision and speaks the truth in love. Leaders need to be loving and respectful but firm. When members or leaders do not act according to Biblical guidelines, they need to be corrected in a caring but firm way.

a. JOHN 17 | The theological basis for fellowship comes from the Trinity itself—the FIRST community.

b. PSALM 133 | Already in the OT we see the value ascribed to the unity among believers.

Exercise | Take Your Church's Pulse

- The ministry of the church helps members grow in friendly relationship with others.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

- There is a positive fellowship in our church.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

How leaders can address conflict in a church |

1. Identify the conflict (what people are disagreeing about).
2. Analyze the conflict as objectively as possible: its causes, behaviors that increased the conflict, etc. Do not let people attack each other with words—focus on behaviors, not people.
3. Identify what the opposing parties have in common.
4. Identify ways that the conflict can be resolved.
5. Select the way that is most faithful to God's commands in Scripture, most faithful to the vision and mission of the church, and most appropriate for the situation.
6. Invite people to ask for and offer forgiveness.
7. Implement the decision.

Follow-up with the leaders of your church:

- How well do the brothers and sisters in Christ in our congregation know each other?
- How have we seen them support and encourage each other?
- Does our church have a plan for addressing conflicts?
- What was the last serious conflict in our congregation, and how was it resolved?

5. WORSHIP | Acts 2:42, 47a; Psalm 47:1; Psalm 48:9; Romans 12:1-2

The church gathers together as God's family to listen to God and respond to God in praise, confession, thanksgiving, and intercession. In worship we recognize God's greatness and offer ourselves to him.

The worship service is a special time when God's people gather to meet with God together. This is a special encounter in which God speaks to his people and his people speak to him:

- God calls us to worship him—we respond by praising him together.
- God calls us to confess our sins—we respond by confessing our sins and asking forgiveness—God forgives through Jesus Christ.
- God speaks to us through his Word—we respond with confessions of faith, offerings, testimonies, and prayers of petition.
- God shows us his love in the Sacraments (Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Feet Washing)—we receive the work of God through his Holy Spirit.
- God blesses us and sends us out into the world—we leave the worship place ready to serve God in our life functions. The first verses of Romans 12 show that worship in the broad sense involves all areas of our lives. We live all our days in the presence of God, responding to his goodness and greatness.

Worship factors that can help a church to grow:

1. Warm welcome to visitors (making sure they have a place to sit/stand and explanations so they know what's going on).
2. Follow-up of visitors (some personal contact shortly after they've attended worship).

3. Room for new people in the worship area.
4. Solid Biblical preaching that is faithful to Scripture and relevant to people's lives.
5. Clear communication about ways people can become involved in the church.

Exercise | Take Your Church's Pulse

- The worship in our church nurtures and strengthens us for the Christian life.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

- In our worship services the triune God is recognized: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Follow-up with the leaders of your church:

- Is our worship both reverent and joyful?
- Do we use the arts to God's glory?
- Do we put too much emphasis on one aspect (music, specific leaders, etc.)?

Analysis | Five Functions

After participants fill out the chart, have them identify in which of the five functions their church is strongest and in which area their church is weakest. Have them share this with partners or in groups of 3–4 people. As time allows, have participants share ideas for how to improve the weakest areas.

There are other important factors in the growth of the church that leaders will also take into account in their decision-making, such as its structure, programs, and communication, and the community and spiritual context in which the church finds itself. We'll deal with some of these in the session on the Transformational System.

Analysis | Five Functions

For each function indicate your church's ministries:

EVANGELISM	DISCIPLESHIP	SERVICE	FELLOWSHIP	WORSHIP
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

1. Once you filled in the chart, do you notice areas of strength or weakness?

2. Does the chart show a fairly balanced approach to ministry?

SESSION 5

INTRODUCTION TO TAKE YOUR CHURCH'S PULSE® TOOL

Take Your Church's Pulse is a diagnostic tool that leads to healthy conversations for congregational change. This manual will give you an overview of the tool and how it can be used to strengthen your church.

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OVERVIEW OF THE TOOL

Take Your Church's Pulse (TYCP) is an instrument that can help you diagnose your congregation's health by evaluating several key areas of church life. It serves as a tool for self-evaluation and planning in the local church, two important processes for churches that seek both quantitative and qualitative growth. This tool can be accessed by going to the Center for Biblical Leadership website at: <http://cogop.org/cbl/course-descriptions-and-resources/>

In addition to serving as a measuring instrument that reveals vital information about the state of a congregation's health, the purpose of TYCP is to encourage dialogue and deep reflection among leaders, members, and pastors of local churches regarding the important elements that determine a congregation's development and health.

The following ten characteristics of a healthy church are described in the book *Take Your Church's Pulse*.¹ They are divided into two groups: five key commitments and five vital functions.

5 KEY COMMITMENTS	5 VITAL FUNCTIONS
A clear and inspiring vision	Compelling witness
A mobilizing leadership	Comprehensive discipleship
A motivated ministering body	Compassionate service
Proper stewardship of resources	Caring and welcoming community
Integration of text and context	Dynamic worship and prayer

CHURCH LIFE: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

- A. Past: The History Timeline will help a congregation understand its past.
- B. Present: The TYCP survey will provide a picture of the present.
- C. Future: The Strategic Planning Process & Hopes and Dreams looks forward.

¹ The book is also available for free download at <http://cogop.org/cbl/course-descriptions-and-resources/>

TIMELINE | A tool to help you understand the past and have a vision for the future.

Before analyzing the results of the Take Your Church's Pulse questionnaires, it is helpful to create a timeline of your church's history. Gather your congregation's leaders together and review the history of your congregation so you can see where you are at the present. Understanding the past will also help you envision what God wants you to be and do in the future. To create the timeline we recommend putting some large sheets of paper on the walls or using a chalkboard or whiteboard. Put a long horizontal line on the paper and follow these steps:

- 1. Individually.** Ask all the participants to write down on a small sheet of paper what they believe are the most important moments in the congregation's history. Have people think about the beginnings, the transitions of leadership, successes, conflicts that left a mark on the congregation, etc. Include also events in the community or country that were significant.
- 2. Form groups of 4-7 people and share your lists in the groups.** Share your individual lists, talking about the importance of each event or person in the history of the congregation. As a group, put each important person or event on a sheet of paper (8½ x 11 sheet). These will be hung on the large timeline on the wall in step 3.
- 3. Gather the whole group together.** Put an X on the timeline on the wall to signify the start of the church. Invite people to talk about the founding of the church using the questions below. (For things far in the past, you'll need to find older people who can help you remember how the church started!)

Ask these questions about the founding of the church:

- a. What was the spirit and purpose of the church at its start?
- b. Who were the key people who started the church?
- c. What marks did the founders of the church leave on its ministry?
- d. What were the strengths and weaknesses of that time?

Put the important events and people identified by the groups on the timeline in the correct place. If different groups mention the same things, put the papers on top of each other on the same part of the timeline. Examples of items for the timeline:

Changes of pastor	Times of growth or decrease
Changes in location or construction	Key people, etc.
Changes in name or council	Changes in the community or country
Changes in leadership	Divisions, debates, conflicts, controversies, etc.

Answer the following questions for each event:

- a. What was the importance of this event for the congregation?
- b. What marks did that event leave on the ministry of the church?
- c. What were the strong points and weak points of that time?

After you have placed the events on the timeline, put a "P" to indicate the present and use these questions to describe what the church is like in the present.

Answer these questions:

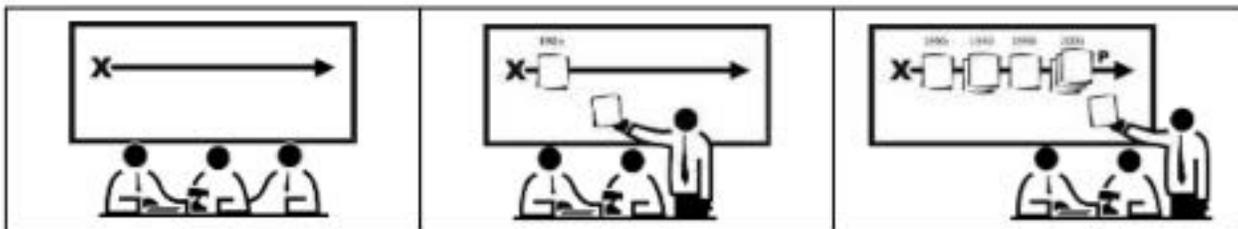
- How has the past influenced who we are today?
- What aspects of the past do we want to celebrate and continue?
- What aspects of the past require healing and reconciliation?
- What aspects of the past do we want to leave behind and change?

Celebrate the good aspects of your congregation's history and God's faithfulness to the church. Pay attention to the good parts as much as to the painful parts of the church's past. Both are important.

Spend time in prayer: thank God for what He has done in and through your congregation in the past; confess sins that you have become aware of in the congregation's life; ask God to bless the evaluation process (Take Your Church's Pulse Questionnaires) so you can work toward an even better future for His glory. You can pray in small groups first and then as a whole group.

Finish this process by answering these questions. Be sure to record your answers so they can be used in the strategic planning process that follows the Take Your Church's Pulse Evaluation process.

- When we look toward the future, what do we see? What do you think God wants us to be or do?
- What obstacles do we have?
- What institutional factors (of the church) should we take into consideration?
- What contextual factors (of the community) should we take into consideration?
- What advantages and resources do we have?



Example of the "New Jerusalem Church"

X

1985	1990	1998	2005	2008
Founding of the church by Rev. Henderson Urban area with much growth	Construction & accelerated growth Over 200 people in attendance	Conflict over music styles 11 families leave with the co-pastor, Rev. Burton Some important factories close Difficult economy for the church	Stability and reconciliation Little growth in the church Evaluation of the ministry	Rev. Henderson dies

THE TAKE YOUR CHURCH'S PULSE PROCESS

The survey is a conversation starter between the leadership of the church and the members. The key idea is to discover where the Church has been, by God's grace, and where it is going. These tools will help a congregation have healthy conversations about their **IDENTITY** and their **VOCATION** in Christ in a given community.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

General Recommendations for the User

- This is a process rather than an activity.
- The questionnaire should be filled out by as many church members as possible.
- The form should be filled out by all of the leaders who participate in the process.
- The spirit of the process should be constructive.

Suggested Steps for the Process

1. Explore the tool by downloading it from the website.
2. Secure agreement from your church leadership to begin the process.
3. Sign up - have your pastor go to <http://cogop.org/cbl/course-descriptions-and-resources/> and find the survey. There is an option to sign up online that will provide an electronic survey for everyone to fill out.
4. Share the survey link with leadership first.
5. Share the link with the congregation and encourage everyone to fill it out.
6. Look at the results and determine a strategy for selecting priorities for your goals.
7. Share the results with the congregation and discuss them.
8. Decide the next steps for your church's future.

Note: This tool is only worth the healthy conversation that it engenders among leaders who seek to make prayerful changes led by the Holy Spirit to be a better witness for the Kingdom of God in their community. Remember that becoming a healthier church is a process that needs to be rooted in God's Word and will.

OPTIONS IN CONDUCTING THE SURVEY

- A. Paper Option
- B. Digital Online Option

PRACTICE FILLING OUT THE FIRST TWO VITAL SIGNS

If you have not filled out the survey already this is the time to fill out a couple categories of the tool right on to the TABULATION SHEET provided.

1. VISION

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. The church leadership gathers every year to evaluate the ministry and plan for the future.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. Our church has a clear and defined vision for a preferred future.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. Our church leadership knows where it wants to take the congregation two years from now.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. The pastor and the leaders communicate the vision clearly to the congregation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. I feel inspired by the vision of the church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. I know the vision and plan of the church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. I feel a sense of enthusiasm over the future of our church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. LEADERSHIP

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. The leaders create opportunities for developing new leaders.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. There are leaders being trained and prepared for future positions of leadership.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. I feel that the leadership circle of the church seeks to reproduce itself and grow.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. I can identify at least two new leaders who have been developed in the past year.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. The leaders help and guide those desiring to become active in the church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. The quality of our leaders in the church is very good.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. The leaders are decisive in the direction they want to lead the church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. BODY MOBILIZED ACCORDING TO GIFTS

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. The church helps members to discover their gifts for ministry.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. The church leadership trains members according to their gifts to serve.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. The church provides clear information to those who would like to serve in their area of giftedness.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. I feel the church has made it possible for me to use my gifts appropriately.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. I've been trained to serve or lead in the congregation and community.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. There are ample opportunities of service and ministry for those who wish to get involved.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. Our ministry structure is functional for mobilizing people into ministry.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. RESOURCES

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. Our facilities are appropriate for carrying out our calling and ministry.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. Our church practices good stewardship in terms of handling the budget well.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. Most people give willingly of their time to serve the church and its ministry.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. Our church teaches regularly about stewardship and tithing.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. I feel personally motivated to contribute resources to the ministry of our church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. The leaders keep the members sufficiently informed about the use of the church's finances.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. The congregation takes care of the pastor and its leaders.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. CONNECTION BETWEEN TEXT AND CONTEXT

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. Leaders apply Kingdom values to the daily challenges in the community.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. The Word of God is the main guide for the leadership of the Church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. It is evident that the Word of God is used in the church's meetings and services.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. The Bible guides us in trying to resolve the problems in our community.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. Our church is aware of the needs in our social context.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. Our church tries hard to build relationships in the community.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. People see our church as a positive agent of change in our community.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. EVANGELISM

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. Our church has a clear plan to reach the community with the Good News of the Kingdom.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. Our church is active in building relationships with the unbelievers of our community.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. Our church trains and equips its members to give witness in the community.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. I've been personally trained to contribute to the evangelistic efforts of the church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. I feel personally involved in the evangelistic task of our congregation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. I can identify new people in our church that came in the past year as a result of my evangelistic efforts.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. Our church participates in world mission efforts.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. EDUCATION AND DISCIPLESHIP

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. The church promotes practices of education and discipleship appropriate to all ages.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. Our teachers are effective in discipling/teaching our members.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. When a new person accepts Christ he or she is immediately disciplined by someone.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. As time goes on it becomes increasingly evident that the members live under the guidance of the Spirit.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. The church is helping me grow spiritually.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. I am a member of a small group that helps me grow spiritually.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. Our church promotes a life of prayer.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

8. SERVICE WITH THE COMMUNITY

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. Our church helps people with their physical needs.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. Our church helps people find work, clothing, and food as necessary.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. Our church provides sufficient training to its members to serve with the community with its needs.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. The church has referral agreements with other organizations that can lend practical services to those in need.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. The church provides counseling for people that need it.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. The people of the community know that we want to demonstrate Christ's love in practical ways.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. The church works together with community leaders to improve the social context.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

9. FELLOWSHIP

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. The ministry of the church helps members grow in friendly relationship with others.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. Visitors and new members are intentionally welcomed into the church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. When someone visits our church we follow-up with them that same week.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. Our church has good counseling and pastoral care available for members who need emotional and relational help.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. There is a positive fellowship in our church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. Members gather to share a meal or visit each other regularly.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. Conflicts in the congregation are resolved biblically.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

10. WORSHIP

COMPLETELY DISAGREE

COMPLETELY AGREE

1. The worship in our church nurtures and strengthens us for the Christian life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

2. The music used in services helps the congregation experience the living presence of God.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

3. The messages preached are appreciated by the congregation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

4. Our worship services attract youth.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

5. I feel comfortable inviting a friend or relative to Church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

6. Looking at the whole worship experience, I feel satisfied overall.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____

7. In our worship services the triune God is recognized: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comment: _____



ALABAMA STATE MINISTRIES

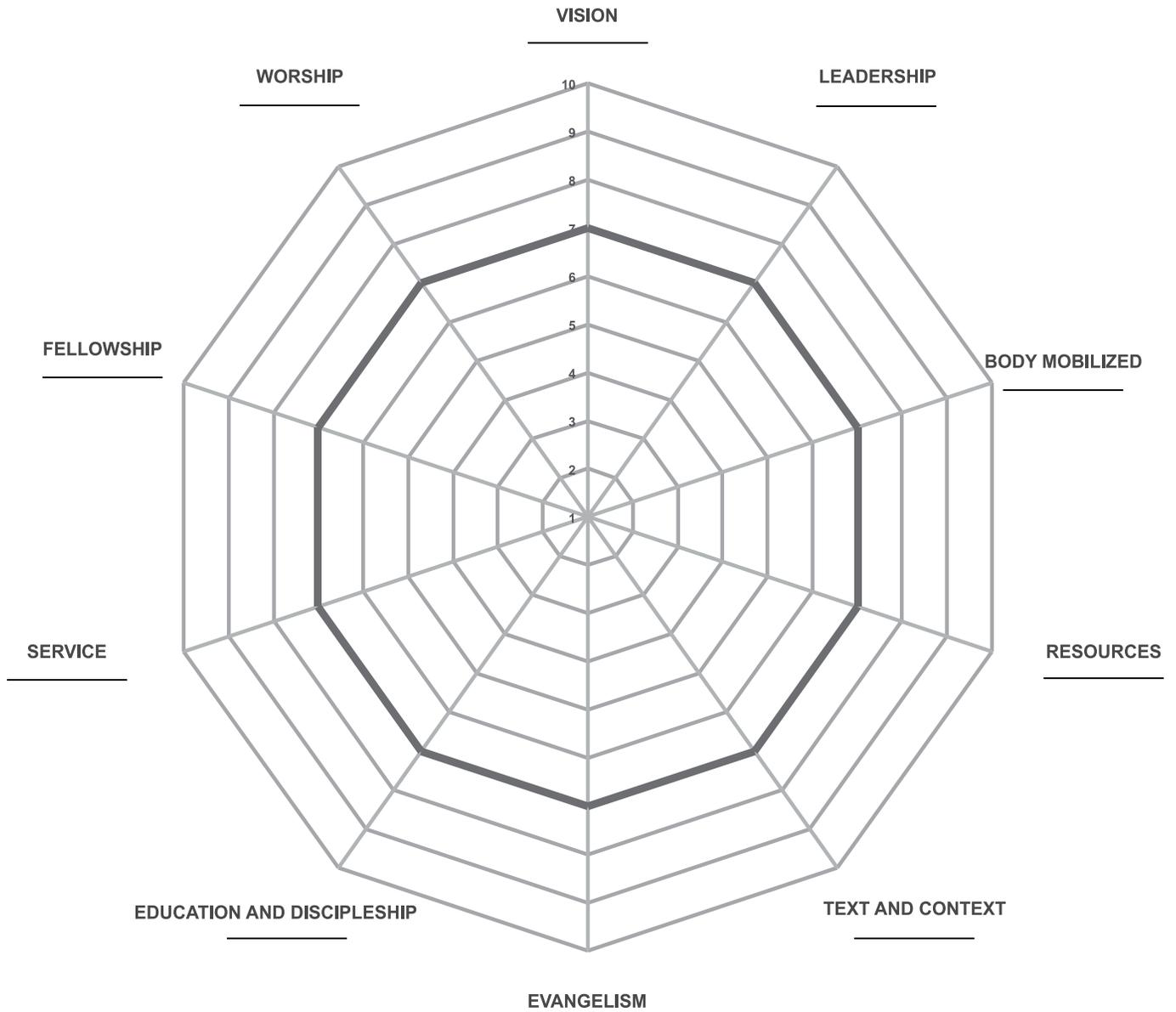
CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY

	COMMITMENTS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH						FUNCTIONS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH			
	VISION	LEADERSHIP	MOBILIZED BODY	RESOURCES	TEXT AND CONTEXT	EVANGELISM	EDUCATION & DISCIPLESHIP	SERVICE	FELLOWSHIP	WORSHIP
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
TOTAL ADD										
DIVIDE	DIVIDE						DIVIDE			
NUMBER OF QUESTIONS	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
EQUAL	EQUAL						EQUAL			
AVERAGE										

BECOME A CHURCH WITH IMPACT!

TAKE YOUR CHURCH'S PULSE
 TABULATION

VITAL SIGNS OF THE HEALTHY CHURCH

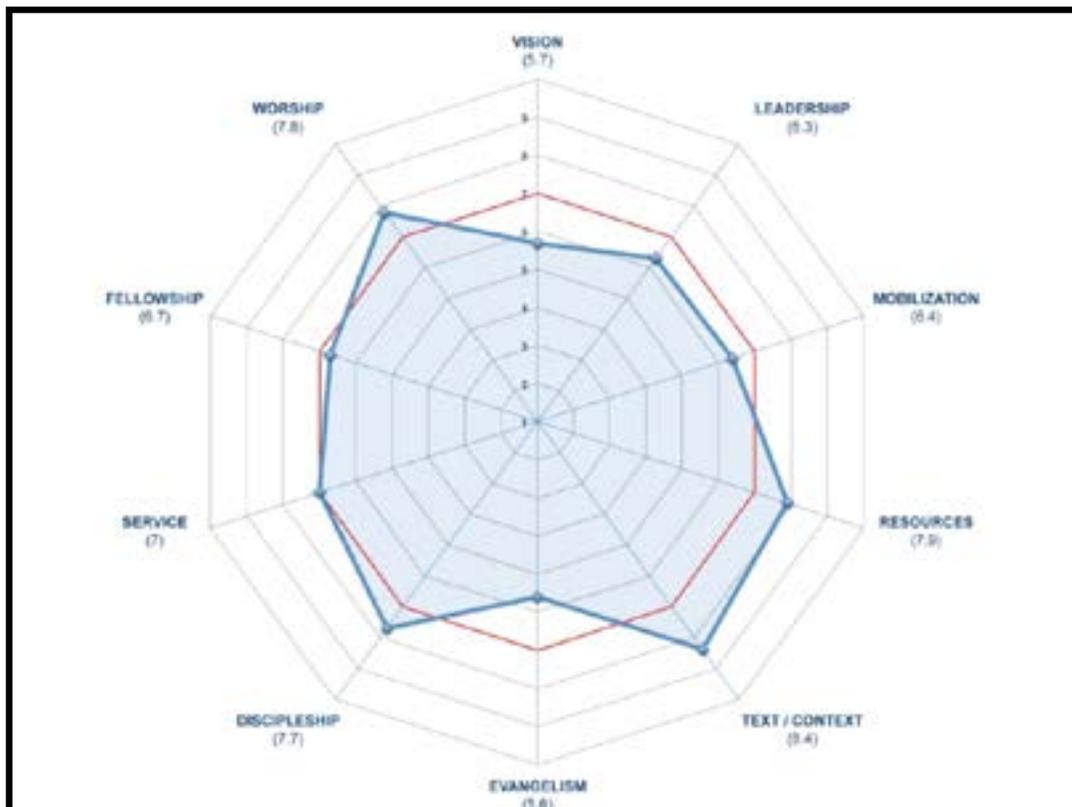
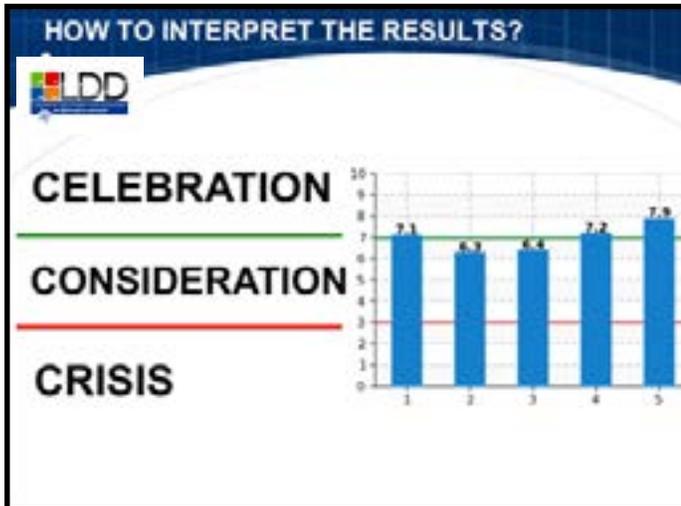


SESSION 6

CHURCH EVALUATION AND PLANNING

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS / EXAMPLE OF THE RESULTS

The trainer will now explain how to read and interpret the results of the survey once completed.



INTRODUCTION TO STRATEGIC PLANNING ACCORDING TO THE RESULTS

Changes Needed

After your church uses the tool and analyzes the results, you will need to identify what changes need to happen in your church.

How to Identify the Changes You Need to Make

Concept

You can identify changes you need to make by looking at the results of the exercise “Take Your Church’s Pulse,” in which several aspects of the church are analyzed to help leaders identify more clearly their congregation’s strengths and weaknesses.

Activities

1. After having leaders complete the “Take Your Church’s Pulse” questionnaires individually and filling out the tabulation sheet for your leaders as a group, compare the leaders’ results with those from the congregation. We recommend that you tabulate the leaders’ answers separately from those of the congregation to know whether their assessments of the church are different and, if so, where they differ. Record differences here:

2. Identify for each group (leaders and members):
 - a. Which two vital elements (categories) have the highest average score?
 - b. Which two vital elements (categories) have the lowest average score?
 - c. Which two vital functions (categories) have the highest average score?
 - d. Which two vital functions (categories) have the lowest average score?
 - e. Which four particular questions on the chart have the highest numbers?
 - f. Which four particular questions on the chart have the lowest numbers?
 - g. Is there a difference between the results of the leaders and those of the members?
 - h. What observations do you have regarding the results of the survey?

Record observations here:

3. Now that you have the results of your survey, there are four valid strategies for selecting priorities for your goals:

- **The Barrel and Staves** – A barrel is constructed of multiple staves. If you try to fill a barrel with water, it will fill only to the lowest stave. At that point, instead of climbing any higher, the water will run out. Our weaknesses can create back doors to our churches, causing existing members to exit as quickly as new members enter. If that is the case, often the quickest path to growth is addressing our weaknesses in order to retain the people we have.
- **Leading with Your Gifts** – Just as individual members have spiritual gifts, so too do congregations have particular strengths. Rather than trying to become someone else’s ideal congregation, focus on being the congregation God intended you to be by identifying your unique gifts and putting them to work. Often our fully exploited strengths are more valuable to the kingdom of God than our marginally improved weaknesses. Plus, it is often easier to move a strength by 2 points than it is to move a weakness 1 point.
- **The Tennis Racquet** – The spider-web graph often reminds people of the face of a tennis racquet. With most sport equipment, from baseball bats to golf clubs to a soccer player’s foot, there is a “sweet spot,” which, when making contact with the ball, gives you both the most power and the most control. With a tennis racquet, if you expand the size of the racquet face, you increase your sweet spot. Your spider-web graph shows the sweet spot of your church, the size of your ministry effectiveness. Instead of worrying about strengths or weaknesses, look for ways to maximize your sweet spot. If you could move one or two of your factors 1 point further out on the scale, which factors would increase the size of your sweet spot most quickly?
- **The Snowball Approach** – When a little snowball begins rolling down the mountain, it collects more and more snow on its outer surface. As it rolls, it grows in size, in speed, in weight and in power until it is mowing down the trees in its path. The secret is in starting small and building momentum as you go. If your congregation has little positive momentum at present, often it is most helpful to choose small obtainable goals where you can get an “easy win.” This will build confidence to tackle more challenging goals in the future.

How to Choose

In short, it is simply a matter of prayer and of knowing your congregation. Some items to consider are the following:

- If, as you look at your survey results, you see weaknesses that are crippling your ministry and will prevent your gifts from ever reaching their full potential, that may be your place to begin. To utilize the barrel and staves approach, use your survey results to identify two weaknesses that are holding you back from your full potential.
- If you have a strong, clear sense of vision and giftedness, playing to your strengths is a good choice, though you may wish to tackle one weaker area as a secondary goal to strengthen your ministry platform. To lead with your gifts, use your survey results to identify two strengths to build on.
- The tennis racquet approach is always healthy as it will constantly be challenging you to broaden your ministry in new directions. If you can't decide between the approaches, it is a safe place to start. Simply look at your spider-web graph to determine which two areas will add the most to your sweet spot. Then look at the results to individual questions within those areas for two places that will make the most difference.
- The snowball approach is particularly helpful to ministries who have experienced a setback, a blow to their morale, or who have been plateaued for a long while. Momentum is a powerful tool. Use it to make your ministry more effective for the Kingdom. After reviewing your survey results, in what one or two areas could your church get a quick and easy win.

4. Gather in a small group and share your thoughts on the following questions:

- Which approach best fits our congregation?

- Which of the vital elements and vital functions should we focus on first? Pick two.

- For the first: The change we want to see in the next three (weeks, months, years) in this area is...

- For the second: The change we want to see in the next three (weeks, months, years) in this area is...

Note: The changes you want to see should be clear, and specific, and in line with what Scripture teaches. Read over the changes that you identified to see if this is the case.

5. In the large group, share your ideas and the reasons for them. You may end up with several sets of great goals. Decide together which of them should have priority, based on a combination of which would have the most impact and which would be the most easily accomplished. Try to narrow the list to two. If you absolutely must have three, agree on which are primary and which are secondary.

CONCLUSION

The biblical, theological, and missional foundations for the identity and vocation of the church have been established in earlier trainings. A practical tool to “put feet on the ideas” has been taught and practiced. Now it is time to implement the training in the local congregations and discover the preferred future that God has in mind for each community of faith as they are instruments of the Holy Spirit in pointing to the coming Kingdom of God with faith, hope and love. If you feel called to do so, please fill out the Commitment to a Healthier Church to pledge your willingness to work towards a healthier church.

Commitment to a Healthier Church

I, _____,

pastor/leader of _____

embrace the five commitments and five functions as biblical components of all healthy churches. I am committed to contributing to improving the health of my local church.

I will follow through by taking appropriate steps within the next three months to implement what the Lord has revealed through His Word and by the Holy Spirit about healthy churches.

I commit to taking action in the days and weeks ahead by doing the following:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Signature of leader

SESSION 7

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL SYSTEM

The example of the forest and the trees refers to the fact that in order to serve well, the leaders of a church need to understand not only each part of the ministry (the trees), but also the ministry as a whole (the forest).

INTRODUCTION

From the medical and scientific communities we have learned about organisms (living things) as systems—a whole with many parts that interact within the organism and with things outside the organism. This understanding of how systems work can be applied to organizations.

The church is both a living organism—the Body of Christ—and an organization. It's a complex and varied body with many subsystems, and it interacts with a particular environment. There is interdependence and interrelationship among all the subsystems forming one large system. This larger system also acts and reacts with other systems and its environment. Seeing this big picture of mutual relationships and interaction with the context is a perspective called "open systems." This concept helps us find practical and healthy ways to undertake and continue the work of "making disciples" and make the necessary changes as a mission-focused congregation.



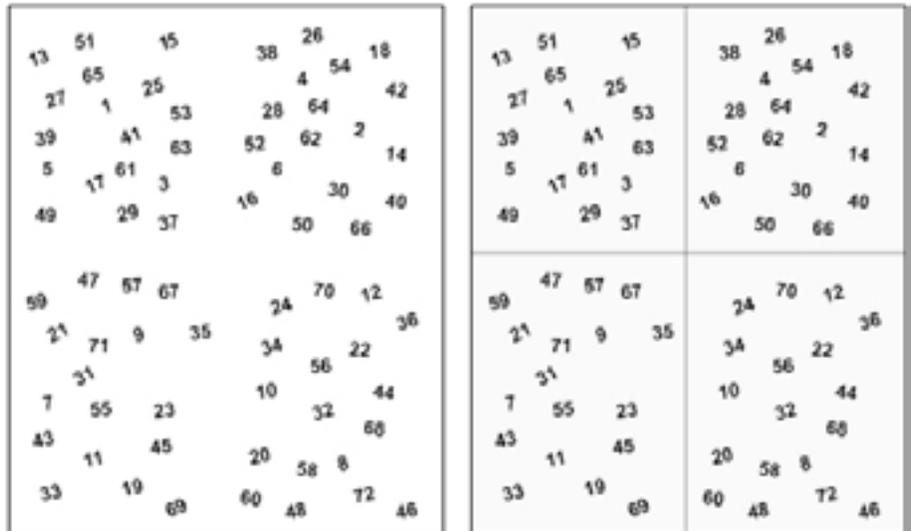
You have to see the tree and also the forest.

PRINCIPLE | The church is a living organism as the Body of Christ, and at the same time it exists in concrete, visible organizations (congregations, denominations) through which God is at work in the world. The more we understand how an organization works, the better we'll be able to help our congregations function well.

Exercise | Scrambled Numbers

You have 30 seconds to find the numbers and circle them in order (starting with 1) to see how far you can get. Look for number 1, circle it, then 2, circle it, and so on.

Write down here the highest number you circled: _____



This shows the value of:

- Patterns
- Order
- Efficiency
- Design
- Understanding the organizational scheme

Scrambled Numbers Exercise | Follow the instructions found in the Participant Manual. Give people 30 seconds to find the numbers and circle them in order, starting with 1, and see how far they can get. They will look for #1, circle it, then look for #2 and circle it, then look for #3, circle it, and so on, until time runs out. At the end of the 30 seconds, ask people to write down the highest number they reached.

Then do the second part of the exercise. This time, have people do the same thing (circling numbers to see how high they can get), but give them these two clues before they start circling:

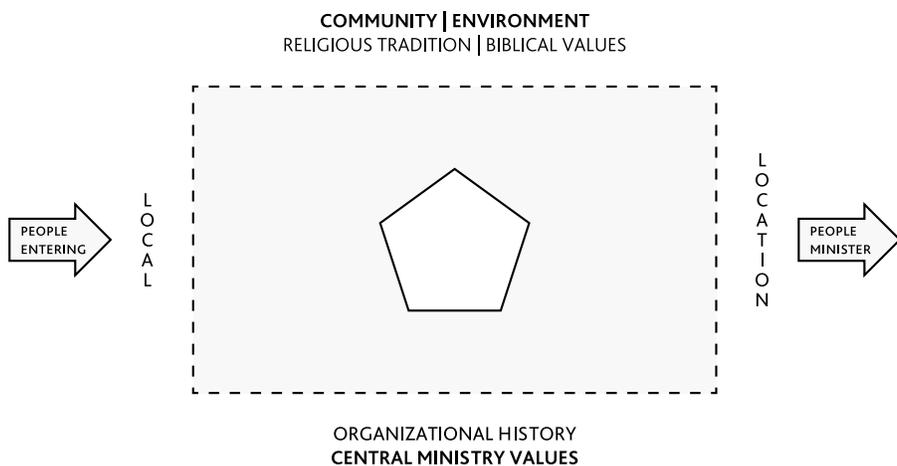
- The numbers are divided into four quadrants. Numbers 1–6 are found in the top half, and the next six (7–12) are found in the bottom half. The following six (13–18) are found in the top half, the next six (19–23) in the bottom half, and so on.
- Also, no two successive numbers are found in the same quadrant. So, for example, the numbers 1–6, in the top half, alternate between left and right.

After telling people the two clues, repeat the exercise, giving people 30 seconds to circle as many numbers as they can. At the end of the 30 seconds, ask people to raise their hand if they reached a higher number the second time. Almost everyone will reach a higher number. Ask participants why they got further the second time. They may say that the second time they understood the system, or they knew how the numbers were organized, etc.

The purpose of this exercise is to show the value of understanding how a system is organized. In the same way, understanding the dynamics of how churches grow can help us be more effective in the ministry that God has given us.

COMPONENTS OF AN ORGANIZATION

Diagram 1 | External Factors That Affect a Congregation



- Some external factors are negotiable and flexible.
- Some external factors aren't negotiable—they're fixed.

Activity:

Give an example of an external factor that has an impact on your congregation. Is it negotiable or fixed?

Follow-up with the leaders of your church:

- Identify some of the external factors that impact and shape your congregation. Which are more negotiable? Which are not so flexible?

Note | This is the most technical part of the whole workshop. If you have trouble understanding the diagrams or do not think they will be helpful for your audience, feel free to go directly on to "The Red Carpet" exercise on page 28 of the Participant Manual.

Key Concepts of a System | An organization has both internal and external components. Remind participants that the institutional church is a visible organization that seeks to transform people and communities for the glory of God and the growth of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Listed is a description of the components of an organization and the key concepts of a system. Explain these components and concepts in conjunction with the three diagrams in this section. Use your own examples to help explain the components and concepts.

Components of an Organization | Parameters/Limits

These are the external boundaries of the organism that distinguish it from other organisms. Biblical values, our particular religious tradition, and our organization's history and values define who we are and what we will do.

For example, a healthy church will follow Biblical limits and not permit its members to gossip (Lev. 19:16; Ps. 34:13; James 4:11). Limits also include physical boundaries, such as the church's building and resources.

- Some parameters are negotiable and flexible. Cultural practices and congregational habits can change. Religious traditions evolve in different ways, and values can change as we grow more in line with what God calls us to be.
- Some parameters aren't negotiable—they're fixed. For example, Biblical commands are non-negotiable!

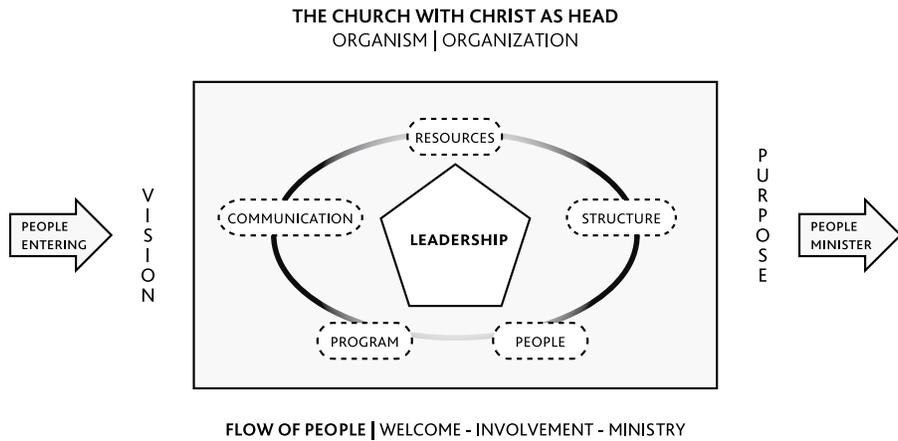
Context | Every organism exists within a situation. Each congregation finds itself in a particular place, in a particular point in time. Being aware of our surroundings (our culture, people's lifestyles, etc.) enables us to communicate the Gospel in more effective ways.

Follow-up Activities | Have the leaders of your church list everything they know about the people in your neighborhood (their interests, needs, etc.). Interview neighbors to find out more about them and what their perception is of the church.

Internal Components | Churches, as organizations, have many parts that affect how they function. Leaders, programs, members, and resources all have an impact, either positive or negative.

The church is under Christ's leadership, and its purpose is to proclaim and live the Gospel in such a way that others come to recognize Christ as Lord. Within the church there are different subsystems, such as the leadership, congregational structure, members, programs, means of communication, and use of resources. When these subsystems are directed toward the mission of the church and are functioning well, people's lives and communities will be transformed by the power of the Gospel. When something goes wrong in one subsystem, the others are affected as well. This is because the subsystems are interrelated and interdependent.

Diagram 2 | Internal Components of a Congregation



- Within each church there are subsystems that have an impact on how the church functions.

Activity:

Identify some subsystems of your congregation (programs, ministries, committees, etc.). How are they related?

Follow-up with the leaders of your church:

- Identify the different parts of your church and the blessings and challenges of each.

Integration and Interdependence | The parts of a system are interrelated and have an impact on each other. In a congregation, something that happens in one area of a church's life has an impact on the other parts. For example, a problem with finances can mean challenges for different programs, while more members using their gifts can be a blessing to the church's programs.

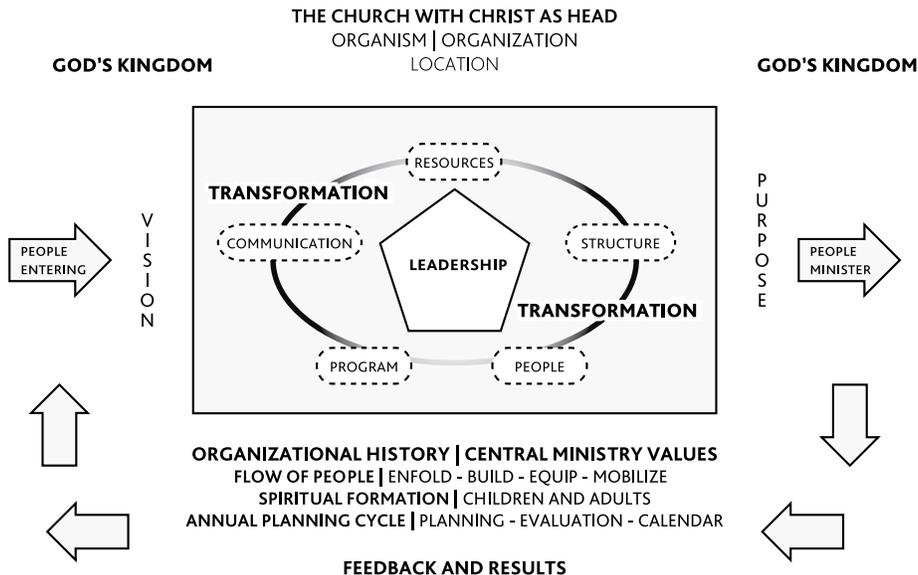
Purpose | Each system has a specific purpose. The purpose of the church is determined by what God teaches in Scripture: to declare the good news of life in Christ and teach people to live according to God's will. (Matthew 28:19-20) When the church neglects this disciple-making mission, it fails to live according to God's design.

Stability and Homeostasis | All systems tend to resist change. In the church we often hear people reject new ideas because "we've never done it that way." People would rather do things the way they always have rather than learn a new way. Leaders need to find ways to help members understand changes and see the reasoning behind them and to make sure the rate of change is appropriate.

Equifinality | There can be many ways to achieve the same goal. This allows systems to be flexible and make adjustments. For example, maybe a church can't afford to buy groceries for single mothers in the neighborhood, but it may have some people who could help with an afterschool activity for kids while the single moms are at work.

Contingency Plans | Organizations function in unpredictable environments and so need to be able to make contingency plans—plans to put into effect if the original plan fails. A healthy system has alternate plans so that it can still achieve its goals when things go wrong. For example, a church planning an outdoor evangelistic campaign would be wise to form a "Plan B" in case it rains.

Diagram 3 | External and Internal Components—Transformation



Transformation | Each system serves a certain purpose. The purpose of the church is to lead people to an encounter with Jesus, so that he can transform their lives and communities.

This diagram shows both external and internal components in one picture.

- What might happen if 5, 10 or 20 new families join your church?
- Among the new people who come to the church, might there be some who have gifts for singing or leading worship?
- Will those who join be nice, agreeable people?
- Will there be a few who have strong opinions?
- Will there be a few who have serious problems?
- Will there be some who gossip?

These questions should cause the participants to think about how growth could affect their present church. A church of 80 people that adds 20 or 30 new people in a year is going to experience a high degree of change and impact on its system. It's important that the leadership of the church be prepared to deal with this impact in a healthy way that allows the church to grow. Otherwise people will drop out and the church won't grow. Here are two examples that you can use to emphasize the importance of balance in the growth of the church:

- If you add more salt to soup, it changes the flavor. You can add more salt, but at some point you have to add more water, vegetables, meat, and other ingredients to keep the balance of the flavor. You can't just keep adding salt.
- The human body is a system that needs balance in order to maintain its health. If your heart is in excellent condition but your liver is not good, it won't help to have a strong heart. You need all your organs to be healthy in order to be well.

- Positive transformation in a congregation and a community occurs as the internal parts of a congregation serve the church's mission in a way that is appropriate for the context.
- Positive transformation is slowed or stopped when the internal parts of a congregation are not directed toward its vision and mission.

KEY CONCEPTS OF SYSTEMS

- Context
- Integration and interdependence
- Purpose
- Stability and Homeostasis¹
- Equifinality²
- Contingency Plans³
- Frameworks and parameters

A healthy church will have ways to welcome new people, involve them, nurture them in their faith, and get them started using their gifts.

A healthy and growing church will regularly review the different parts of its system. It will learn more about its context, evaluate how programs are going, check to make sure resources are being used well, etc.

¹ The ability of an organism to regulate its internal environment to maintain a certain state.

² The ability to achieve the same results through different means.

³ Plans to put into effect if the original plan fails.

Exercise | The Red Carpet

This exercise is the most important part of Session 4. The problem described should generate much discussion and learning. Read the information in the Participant Manual, explain the exercise, and then divide the participants into small groups of 5–8 people to answer the questions provided. This exercise will require at least 20–30 minutes to complete.

The main point of the exercise is for participants to come to understand the complexity of certain decisions in the church's ministry and the way that one change can affect many other areas of the church's life. It's not so important to find a solution to the problem, but rather participants should get a sense of the complexity of issues in a congregation—the potential impact of each decision on different areas of a church's life.

At the end of the exercise, ask two or three groups (as time permits) to have a person share with everyone their group's answer to one of the questions in the manual and what decision their group would make in this case.

Follow-up with the leaders in your church:

Talk about how the different parts of your church are doing and what areas you want to work on.

- Have the leaders of your church list everything they know about the people in your neighborhood (their interests, needs, etc.).
- Interview neighbors to find out more about them and what their perception is of the church.
- Do you know enough about your context?
- Do your leaders communicate well with the congregation?
- Do your members use their gifts?
- Do ministries focus on the vision and mission of the church or on some other purpose?

Exercise | “The Red Carpet”

Twenty years ago, “Living Water” church dedicated its new church building. One of the deacons, Michael Smith, already 67 years old at the time, donated the money for the carpet provided that it would be red, since red was his favorite color. Everyone appreciated Michael's gesture, including his family, who had a great deal of influence in the church, and the red carpet was installed.

Now, twenty years later, the church building committee is thinking of changing the carpet and putting in a different floor so that the worship space can also be used for activities during the week (such as a kids' club and free meals for people in the community). They're thinking of using the funds that they raised for their building remodeling for the new floor. Recently, the very elderly member Michael made a significant donation toward the remodeling and asked that they buy red carpet again. His family agrees with this request, but the building committee prefers the all-purpose floor.

The pastor is worried. He is well aware of the influence of Michael and his family, but he also authorized the building committee to make changes to the sanctuary that would allow for different uses. Although he can't believe that people are about to argue about the floor so vehemently when there are great needs in the community,

there are several people on each side who have threatened to leave the church if the decision doesn't go their way:

- a. A relative of Michael's who hasn't been to church in a long time said that he won't ever come back to the church if the committee doesn't honor Michael's gift and request.
- b. A long-term member of the women's ministry who has been evangelizing people in the community said that if the committee puts the wishes of one person above the needs of the church's ministries, she will need to find another church.
- c. Several families with young children say that the congregation needs to give more attention to its ministry to children.

A further complication is that Michael Smith has recently become ill and has had open heart surgery.

The committee has invited the pastor to their meeting tonight to discuss the situation.

In groups of 3–5 people, imagine that you are the committee and are meeting with the pastor to discuss the situation. Use these questions to help you think through the matter and come up with a recommendation:

1. Does this situation in the church have an impact on the community? How?
2. Does this situation affect any of the areas of the church listed below? How?

Location	Leadership	Organizational history
Vision/Purpose	Members	Values of the church
Resources	Structure	Other areas
Programs	Environment/Communication	

3. What options does the church have? What are the possible consequences of each option?
4. How can the church make this decision based on its vision and mission while taking into consideration the whole system?

CONCLUDING THE COURSE

A church that makes a difference:

1. Obeys the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37)
 - Love the Lord with all your heart
 - Love your neighbor as yourself

2. Fulfills the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)
 - Go and make disciples
 - Baptizing them
 - Teaching them to keep everything that Jesus taught

Every church is called to grow in its love for God, for others in the family of God, and for those who still need to know God. A church that makes a difference understands that holistic mission is its purpose and provides follow-up for converts.

One of the faster-growing churches in the world has coined this phrase:

***“A GREAT COMMITMENT
to the GREAT COMMANDMENT
and the GREAT COMMISSION
makes a GREAT CHURCH.”***

SESSION 8

INTRODUCTION TO STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Strategic Planning Process is an exciting time of utilizing results from the “Take Your Church’s Pulse” instrument, as well as further work and prayer together to choose the best direction for your church and its ministry. Looking to the future for at least the next three years, the Strategic Planning Process helps determine what actions your church will do, why your church will do them, and how your church will accomplish them. With the strategic plan, you can be confident that biblical, sensible, and reliable details are communicated well. The result is a church with personnel focused together on accomplishing God’s kingdom work in the best possible way!

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NARRATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Description

The first four Strategic Planning Worksheets are narrative, which means that they require some written work and dialog among colleagues to achieve the best results. These worksheets are best completed in small groups who come together as a large group to report and receive feedback. The final products of these worksheets will be written documents.

WORKSHEET 1:

VISION | How to Create a Vision Statement

CONCEPT |

The VISION STATEMENT is a clear and simple description of what you believe God wants your congregation to be. It should communicate an overall view of your congregation in its ideal state. However, it should not be so vague in wording that it loses the ability to focus people on definite action. Also, it should describe a state of being that you must work towards, not one that already is accomplished (in that case, it would be a slogan or motto).

EXAMPLES OF A VISION STATEMENT:

- I. *"The Church of God of Prophecy will be a Christ-exalting, holiness, Spirit-filled, all-nations, disciple-making, church planting Movement with a passion for Christian union."*
- II. *"We will be (or, "we are") a church full of the Holy Spirit, growing in the likeness of Christ."*
- III. *"We will be (or, "we are") the light of Christ in the darkness of our community."*
- IV. *"We will be (or, "we are") a community of faith that shines with the righteousness and hope of Christ in our congregation, city, and other parts of the world."*
- V. *"We will be a righteous and faithful congregation, serving the lost as well as fellow believers in our community, region, and around the world."*

Note that each vision statement reflects what God has taught us in His Word about what His church should be like. However, the statements are not equal in effectiveness as vision statements.

- I. **THE FIRST STATEMENT** is the vision statement of the Church of God of Prophecy which the church's leadership developed as part of the Spirit's call through Vision 2020.

II. THE SECOND STATEMENT describes a state of being that could be partially true now, with improvement expected over time. It does not contain specific characteristics of the congregation or ministry action to work towards.

III. THE THIRD STATEMENT is more vague and could be true at any time in various ways. Again, there is no mention of the characteristics of the congregation, or of any level of ministry action.

IV. THE FOURTH STATEMENT is fairly complete, as it describes the characteristics of the congregation (righteous and hopeful in Christ) and where they will minister (congregation, city, and other parts of the world). Both the characteristics and the reach of the ministry are elements to work towards.

V. THE FIFTH STATEMENT is the most complete. It communicates characteristics of the congregation, the intended recipients of the ministry, and the physical reach of the ministry. These ideals are clearly stated and the content is biblical.

ACTIVITIES |

1. In small groups or in pairs, list several single words that describe your congregation as if it were just right according to biblical principles—the way you believe God wants it to be! Some words might be: righteous, faithful, loving, joyful, compassionate, generous, etc. These words describe the congregation’s character. List these descriptive words by using each one to complete the sentence:

God wants us to be... _____

2. Next, list to whom you believe you are to minister. Communicate your list by using each item to complete the sentence:

God wants us to serve... (who?) _____

3. Finally, list several actions that your congregation will be doing when it is in its ideal state. These may be phrases. Some examples are:

- Taking the Gospel to the world
- Ministering to all ages in our community

- Engaging all members in spiritual discipleship
- Growing regularly in financial strength

You can list these actions by using each one to complete the sentence:

We will express our character through... _____

4. Now, discuss with your partner or small group the words describing the congregation's ideal character, who it will serve, and the phrases indicating your congregation's ideal actions. Choose the most important three on each list and write them down.

5. Finally, write a vision statement that uses the most important descriptive words, ministry recipients, and action phrases. (You may use the third or fourth sample vision statement above as a model.)

6. Share with the large group the vision statement that you have written. Work together with the large group to make sure that your wording is clear and communicates your thoughts exactly. Take note of comments shared, and write the final vision statement here.

7. What are the biblical texts that support this vision?

8. Fine-tune the vision statement so that it is clear and simple. How can you communicate this vision to the congregation and invite it to adopt the vision as its own? What will the congregation need to understand and believe in order to support this vision? How can you help the congregation do this?

WORKSHEET 2:

MISSION |

How to Create a Mission Statement

REVIEW |

The VISION STATEMENT is a clear and concise description of what you believe God wants your congregation to be. The VISION is about WHO THE CONGREGATION IS.

NEW CONCEPT |

The MISSION STATEMENT summarizes HOW the church is going to MAKE THE VISION A REALITY. It tells the actions that will bring about the vision. The MISSION STATEMENT is about ACTION.

EXAMPLES OF A MISSION STATEMENT:

- I. *The mission of the Church of God of Prophecy - "Empowered by the Holy Spirit, through prayer, we will plant churches and equip leaders to carry out the biblical mandate to make genuine disciples of all the peoples of the world, to the glory of Christ our Lord, Head of the church".*
- II. *The mission of Living Water Church is to live out the gospel of Jesus Christ through the worship of the Triune God, the preaching of the Word, service to our neighbors, the discipleship of believers from children to adults, and the fellowship of the family of God.*
- III. *At New Life Community Church we will be the light of Christ through:*
 - *Worshipping the true God in Spirit and in Truth (John 4:24)*
 - *Preaching the Word of God with clarity inside and outside the church (Matthew 28:18-20)*
 - *Serving our neighbors and our family, the marginalized, and the forgotten in our community with the love of Christ (Mark 12:31)*
 - *Growing in faith and helping others to grow (II Peter 3:18)*
 - *Serving our brothers and sisters in Christ with the love of Christ (Romans 12:10, 13)*

ACTIVITIES |

1. Based on the sample mission statements above, what are these congregations going to do?

2. Write your congregation's vision statement below (what you wrote on Worksheet 1). If your congregation does not have a vision statement, return to the previous worksheet and develop one.

3. Whom does your church want to reach?

4. How will your congregation achieve its vision for reaching these people? What are you going to do to make it a reality? Make a list of concrete actions:

We recommend that each mission statement include the five vital functions of the church:

- Preaching and evangelism
- Education and discipleship
- Service
- Fellowship
- Worship

5. The mission statement should tell how the vision will be achieved. Make sure that doing the actions in the mission statement will bring about (by God's power!) the vision. Fine-tune your mission statement and write it here.

6. What biblical texts support the activities listed in your mission statement?

7. Share your vision and mission statements (including their biblical basis) with your congregation. You may want to have the pastor preach a series of sermons on the five vital functions (tasks) of the church to prepare the congregation to understand and embrace its mission. When you present the vision and mission statements, ask whether the members agree with them and are ready to support them. Invite members to commit themselves to work together to carry them out.

If the congregation does not agree with the vision and mission as defined by the leaders, it will be very difficult to carry out the ministries and the changes necessary to achieve the vision through the mission. Congregations must work to achieve consensus on the vision and mission before implementing any significant changes.

WORKSHEET 3:

STATEMENT OF CORE VALUES |

How to Create a Statement of Core Values

CONCEPT |

The STATEMENT OF CORE VALUES is a clear and simple list stating the most important character qualities that lead to how a congregation will act as members of God's family. The values are the principles that guide the members as they live together and make decisions as a church.

To distinguish among the VISION, MISSION, and CORE VALUES of your congregation:

- The VISION describes what God wants you to BE.
- The MISSION describes what God wants you to DO.
- The CORE VALUES describe HOW YOU WILL BEHAVE as you carry out the MISSION to achieve the VISION.

- I. The Church of God of Prophecy has identified 4 core values: prayer, harvest, leadership development and stewardship which are suggested for incorporation into each local church's core value statement.

Prayer (Luke 18:1, Matthew 21:13, John 15:16)

We will make prayer the number one priority and core value in each local church.

Harvest (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:18-20)

- Strengthen Local Churches for the Harvest
- Plant New Churches
- Young Harvest
- Mission Awareness
- Harvest Alliance

Leadership Development (II Timothy 2:1-2, Matthew 28:28-30)

- Pastor Passionate
- Overseer Serving and Equipping

Stewardship (Matthew 6:9-12)

- For God to focus our priorities on Him and for our stewardship to testify of that transformation.
- For our funding to follow divine vision and inspiration with our budgets reflecting those priorities.

- For every state/nation/region to participate together in the financial system to undergird the work of ministry around the world.
- For the Church of God of Prophecy to be found faithful in handling the resources entrusted to us by our Lord.

II. Core Values of Rock of Salvation Church (expressed in action words)

As the people of God, we commit ourselves to:

- Be conformed to the image of Christ as individuals and as a congregation (Romans 8:29; II Corinthians 3:18).
- Speak the truth with love (Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29), in correction and exhortation, and with transparency in regard to decisions and financial matters.
- Serve one another in love, identifying everyone's gifts and giving them the opportunity to use their gifts (Romans 12:1-8; I Peter 4:10-11) and discipling people of every age and ability (Deuteronomy 6:20 & 11:18-21; Matthew 20:18-20).

III. Core Values of Living Water Church (expressed in nouns and action words)

As a community of Christians, we value:

- Clear and relevant preaching of the Word of God (Matthew 28:18-20; II Timothy 4:2)
- Worship focused on the Triune God and not on our preferences (Deuteronomy 5:6-10)
- Service to the needy inside and outside of the congregation (Mark 12:31; Ephesians 5:1-2)
- Discipleship for people from childhood to old age (Matthew 28:18-20; Deuteronomy 6:20 & 11:18-21)
- Knowing and caring for our brothers and sisters in Christ (Ephesians 4:2,25-32)
- Servant-leadership and members that use their gifts (Matthew 20:25-28; I Peter 4:10-11)
- Responsible stewardship of resources (Psalm 24:1)

Notes:

1. Normally the Statement of Core Values includes 5–7 values.
2. Often the activities mentioned in the core values statement have been mentioned in the mission statement. The difference is that in the core values statement, these activities are shown to result from specific character qualities. For example, the core values of Living Water Church mention not just "worship" but the type of worship that is important: worship focused on God and not on human preferences, which demonstrates a righteous character. The core values serve as foundational expectations of the congregation that the leaders will take into account when making decisions, evaluating leaders, ministering to members, etc.

3. All the core values should have a biblical basis. The values must be supported by scriptural texts or a principle taught in scripture.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Divide the participants into groups of three or four people. In each group:
 - Read your VISION and MISSION again.
 - Read over the two examples of core values. They may provide guidance as you think about core values for your congregation.
 - Identify the important, biblically supported values that reflect how you want to act as a congregation. (In your church’s cultural context, values other than those of the example statements above might need to be emphasized.)
 - Choose 5–7 essential values that communicate how your congregation and its leaders should act in the upcoming years. There are many values that can be identified—you need to choose the most important ones for your congregation right now, those that will guide and support your VISION and MISSION.
2. Ask each group to present its list of core values. Identify the biblical basis for each value.
3. Together identify the 5–7 core values that communicate how God wants your congregation to act during the next three to five years.
4. Present the list of core values to your congregation along with their biblical basis, explaining why you chose each particular value. Ask members for comments and ideas. Revise the list of values if necessary, but always be sure to base the core values on the Word of God.
5. Provide an opportunity (for example, a special commitment service) for all the members of the church to commit themselves to living according to these core values. Then, encourage each ministry to identify which values they are already living by and which ones require commitment to achieve. Ask each ministry to work toward a specific goal related to the core values.

Statement of Core Values (final version):

WORKSHEET 4:

STATEMENT OF FAITH |

CONCEPT |

The STATEMENT OF FAITH is a summary of the essential teachings of a congregation, denomination, or organization. It communicates clearly and concisely what the church believes.

Statement of Faith for the Church of God of Prophecy

- We believe in the Holy Trinity—one God, eternally existing in Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- We believe in one God the Father, creator of heaven and earth, of all things seen and unseen.
- We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father. All things were made through Him and for Him. He is true God and true man. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and was born of the virgin Mary. He suffered, died, was buried, and on the third day He rose from the dead. He ascended to the right hand of the Father, and He will return to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will have no end.
- We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who eternally proceeds from the Father. He is Teacher, Comforter, Helper, and Giver of spiritual gifts. Through Him the saving and sanctifying works of Jesus Christ are applied to the life of believers. He is the empowering Presence of God in the life of the Christian and the Church. The Father has sent His Son to baptize with the Holy Spirit. Speaking in tongues and bearing the fruit of the Spirit are New Testament signs of being filled with the Holy Spirit.
- We believe that salvation is by grace through faith in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross; and that He died in our place. The believer's sins are forgiven by the shedding of His blood. We believe that healing of mind, body, soul, and spirit is available to the believer through the blood of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- We believe that the grace of God brings forgiveness and reconciliation to those who repent, as well as transformation in holiness, enabling them to live a Christ-like life. Sanctification is both a definite work of grace and a lifelong process of change in the believer brought by the blood of Jesus, the Word of God, and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.
- We believe in one holy, universal Church, composed of all true believers in Jesus Christ, offering fellowship and calling for service to men and women of all races, nations, cultures, and languages. We believe in the spiritual and ultimate visible unity of the Church.
- We believe that the Bible—both Old and New Testaments—is the inspired Word of God. The Bible is God's revelation of Himself and His will to humankind, sufficient for instruction in salvation and daily Christian living. The Bible is the Christian's rule of faith and practice.
- We believe that God will ultimately reconcile all things in heaven and earth in Christ. Therefore, we look forward to new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

*Note: Document, with revisions, as passed by the 99th International Assembly, COGOP
Wednesday, July 13, 2016.*

QUANTITATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Description

The last six Strategic Planning Worksheets facilitate the use of the Planning Form. Included in its use are instructions for choosing and implementing change. Help in scheduling activities, establishing a budget, choosing leaders, and evaluating projects make this portion of the strategic plan practical. Previous efforts in Worksheets 1 through 4 provide an excellent, biblical foundation to clarify and carry out the day to day and long term work of the church.

Worksheets 5-10 describe how to use the Planning Form as a tool to manage the process of making changes in your congregation. The Planning Form is found at the end of Worksheet 5.

WORKSHEET 5:

CHANGES NEEDED |

How to Identify the Changes You Need to Make

CONCEPT |

You can identify changes you need to make by looking at the results of the exercise “Take Your Church’s Pulse,” in which several aspects of the church are analyzed to help leaders identify more clearly their congregation’s strengths and weaknesses.

ACTIVITIES |

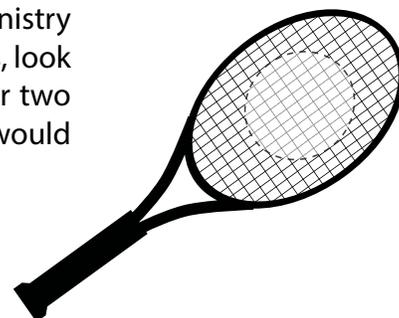
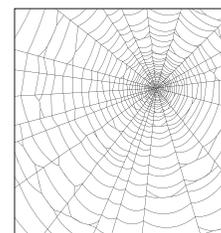
1. After having leaders complete the “Take Your Church’s Pulse” questionnaires individually and filling out the tabulation sheet for your leaders as a group, compare the leaders’ results with those from the congregation. We recommend that you tabulate the leaders’ answers separately from those of the congregation to know whether their assessments of the church are different and, if so, where they differ. Record differences here:

2. Identify for each group (leaders and members):
 - a. Which two vital elements (categories) have the highest average score?
 - b. Which two vital elements (categories) have the lowest average score?
 - c. Which two vital functions (categories) have the highest average score?
 - d. Which two vital functions (categories) have the lowest average score?
 - e. Which four particular questions on the chart have the highest numbers?
 - f. Which four particular questions on the chart have the lowest numbers?
 - g. Is there a difference between the results of the leaders and those of the members?
 - h. What observations do you have regarding the results of the survey?

Record observations here:

3. Now that you have the results of your survey, there are four valid strategies for selecting priorities for your goals:

- **The Barrel and Staves** – A barrel is constructed of multiple staves. If you try to fill a barrel with water, it will fill only to the lowest stave. At that point, instead of climbing any higher, the water will run out. Our weaknesses can create back doors to our churches, causing existing members to exit as quickly as new members enter. If that is the case, often the quickest path to growth is addressing our weaknesses in order to retain the people we have.
- **Leading with Your Gifts** – Just as individual members have spiritual gifts, so too do congregations have particular strengths. Rather than trying to become someone else’s ideal congregation, focus on being the congregation God intended you to be by identifying your unique gifts and putting them to work. Often our fully exploited strengths are more valuable to the kingdom of God than our marginally improved weaknesses. Plus, it is often easier to move a strength by 2 points than it is to move a weakness 1 point.
- **The Tennis Racquet** – The Spider-web graph often reminds people of the face of a tennis racquet. With most sport equipment, from baseball bats to golf clubs to a soccer player’s foot, there is a “sweet spot,” which, when making contact with the ball, gives you both the most power and the most control. With a tennis racquet, if you expand the size of the racquet face, you increase your sweet spot. Your spider-web graph shows the sweet spot of your church, the size of your ministry effectiveness. Instead of worrying about strengths or weaknesses, look for ways to maximize your sweet spot. If you could move one or two of your factors 1 point further out on the scale, which factors would increase the size of your sweet spot most quickly?



- **The Snowball Approach** – When a little snowball begins rolling down the mountain, it collects more and more snow on its outer surface. As it rolls, it grows in size, in speed, in weight and in power until it is mowing down the trees in its path. The secret is in starting small and building momentum as you go. If your congregation has little positive momentum at present, often it is most helpful to choose small obtainable goals where you can get an “easy win.” This will build confidence to tackle more challenging goals in the future.

How to Choose

In short, it is simply a matter of prayer and of knowing your congregation. Some items to consider are the following:

- If, as you look at your survey results, you see weaknesses that are crippling your ministry and will prevent your gifts from ever reaching their full potential, that may be your place to begin. To utilize the barrel and staves approach, use your survey results to identify two weaknesses that are holding you back from your full potential.
- If you have a strong, clear sense of vision and giftedness, playing to your strengths is a good choice, though you may wish to tackle one weaker area as a secondary goal to strengthen your ministry platform. To lead with your gifts, use your survey results to identify two strengths to build on.
- The tennis racquet approach is always healthy as it will constantly be challenging you to broaden your ministry in new directions. If you can't decide between the approaches, it is a safe place to start. Simply look at your Spider-web graph to determine which two areas will add the most to your sweet spot. Then look at the results to individual questions within those areas for two places that will make the most difference.
- The snowball approach is particularly helpful to ministries who have experienced a setback, a blow to their morale, or who have been plateaued for a long while. Momentum is a powerful tool. Use it to make your ministry more effective for the Kingdom. After reviewing your survey results, in what one or two areas could your church get a quick and easy win.

4. Gather in a small group and share your thoughts on the following questions:

- Which approach best fits our congregation?

- Which of the vital elements and vital functions should we focus on first? Pick two.

- For the first: The change we want to see in the next three (weeks, months, years) in this area is...

- For the second: The change we want to see in the next three (weeks, months, years) in this area is...

Note: The changes you want to see should be clear, and specific, and in line with what Scripture teaches. Read over the changes that you identified to see if this is the case.

5. In the large group, share your ideas and the reasons for them. You may end up with several sets of great goals. Decide together which of them should have priority, based on a combination of which would have the most impact and which would be the most easily accomplished. Try to narrow the list to two. If you absolutely must have three, agree on which are primary and which are secondary.

AREA: VISION / Sample Planning Form With Measurable Indicators							
ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS	CALENDAR			TOTAL BUDGET	COORDINATOR	EVALUATION OF ACTIVITY/ PROGRAM: WHEN—WHO—HOW?	CHANGE ANTICIPATED IN THIS AREA
	MONTH	DAY	YEAR				
1. The leaders will hold a retreat to create a clear vision to reach the community.	11	14	2012	\$100.00 USD		At the end of the event, all the participants will fill out an evaluation sheet.	Our church will understand what God wants us to be and do as the Body of Christ in our present location.
2. The pastor will give a series of 3 sermons on the biblical basis of the vision that the leaders will present to the congregation.	11 11 12	22 29 06	2012			In their next meeting, the leaders will discuss whether the sermons were clear and well-received.	Indicator: How are you going to know that you have achieved this change? All of the church's 10 ministries will have identified how they carry out the congregation's vision.
3. The leaders will present this vision to the congregation and ask for their comments and commitment.	After the worship service					Two days after the service, three leaders will each ask two members if the present-	
4. The pastor and the leaders will communicate the vision to the leaders of each ministry and come up with ideas for how their ministry serves/can serve the vision.	12	06	2012			After each ministry's meeting, the leader of the ministry will let the consistory know how the meeting went.	
5. Each ministry will communicate to the congregation how the ministry supports the congregation in achieving the vision.	Music: 12/8/12 Education: 1/8/13 Building: 3/8/13 Evangelism: 4/8/13 Benevolence: 5/8/13					Church leaders will visit the Adult Sunday School class in May and November 2013 to ask the members if they can identify how the distinct ministries support the congregation in achieving the vision.	When/How: Each month a ministry will communicate this to the congregation during the worship service. Coordinator: Secretary of the consistory Evaluation: Consistory will discuss how each ministry communicated with the congregation.
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							

WORKSHEET 6:

ACTIVITIES AND INDICATORS |

Choosing Activities That Lead to Change

INSTRUCTIONS |

In Worksheet 5, you identified two general changes that you desire to implement in your congregation during the next three years, one a vital element and the other a vital function of the church.

ACTIVITIES |

1. Write down the first change you've identified:

Remember that this change should be clear, specific, and supported by God's Word.

2. Respond to the following questions:

- a. How (what actions will we take) will we achieve this change?

- b. What specific activities will we undertake? Come up with several tasks and list them in logical order (what needs to happen first, second, third, etc). Please refer to the Action Planning Guide following Worksheet 6. This aid to planning change activities can be used over and over again. It can be used to plan short term and long term changes/projects.

- c. Upon achieving this change, what will we see? What will be the sign that indicates that we have achieved the desired change?

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS:

Below you will find some examples of quantitative indicators. These are always measurable (meaning that a number is used to evaluate them).

Choose the best indicator for measuring each anticipated change—an indicator that shows whether the change or the goal was met, one that can be measured easily. Do not choose an indicator that cannot be measured.

Write the indicators in the same column in which you wrote the overall change you are seeking.

Example:

In *“Take Your Church’s Pulse,”* the leaders and members of Life Abundant Church gave a low mark in the first area: CLEAR AND INSPIRING VISION.

Anticipated Change:

Members of Life Abundant Church will effectively express what they believe God wants their church to be and to do as the Body of Christ.

How will they achieve this change?

- They will commit to the process of creating and/or revising a vision statement.
- By November 29, 2013 (date just as an example), all of the church’s ten ministries will communicate to the church how they are carrying out the vision.

Activities that need to happen so that Life Abundant Church understands “what we believe God wants us to be and do as the Body of Christ”:

1. The leaders will have a retreat to design a clear vision to reach the community.
2. The pastor will give a series of three sermons on the biblical bases of the vision.
3. The leaders will present this vision to the congregation, ask for their comments, and ask members to commit to carrying it out.
4. The pastor and the leaders will communicate this vision to the leadership of the church and will ask them to identify how specific ministries presently serve and can better serve the vision.
5. Each month, a leader of one of the ten ministries of the church will communicate how the ministry supports the congregation in achieving the vision.

Indicator that they have achieved this change:

All of the church's ten ministries will have identified how they carry out the congregation's vision.

Evaluation |

How many of the ten ministries have identified how they carry out the congregation's vision? This number, or indicator, will help the church know how they need to continue to work to achieve the desired change.

On the Planning Form (attached), fill in these boxes:

- **AREA:** Write down the area on which you are working.
- **ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS:** List the activities that your church is going to carry out to achieve the change. Put the activities on the Planning Form in chronological and logical order.
- **CHANGE ANTICIPATED IN THIS AREA:** At the top of the column write the change you have decided to pursue, and below that list the key indicator(s) that will be the measurable sign(s) that you have achieved that change.

Worksheets 7–10 will help you fill out the other columns of the Planning Form.

After filling in all the columns on the sheet for your church's first anticipated change, return to the beginning of this worksheet and repeat the process for the second change that you identified, using a second Planning Form.

ACTION PLANNING GUIDE:

Write your desired outcome or change here:

Steps to reach it:

5. _____

4. _____

3. _____

2. _____

1. _____

Write your present day reality here: _____

Write your outcome at the top. Write your present day reality at the bottom. Write the first one or two steps/actions you know you need to take towards the outcome. At step #5, write what needs to be in place or happening immediately before the desired outcome is reached. Work backwards. What should step #4 be—in order to reach #5? As you work from the bottom up and from the top down, fill in the middle steps. This process helps you to think about all steps/ actions involved to accomplish your outcome.

EXAMPLE OF INDICATORS:

- The number of new believers in the past year.
- The number of new small groups we began in the past year.
- The percentage of financial giving in the past year.
- The number of people who discovered their spiritual gift in our congregation.

WORKSHEET 7:

CALENDAR |

How to Schedule the Activities

INSTRUCTIONS |

In the previous worksheets, you filled out the following parts of the Planning Form:

- Area
- Anticipated Change
- Activities/Programs
- Indicators

Now we will schedule the activities that you are going to carry out. On the Planning Form (attached), fill in these columns:

CALENDAR (MONTH/DAY/YEAR):

For each activity, tell when you are going carry out that activity.

If it is an activity that you are going to do in several steps, write down the different dates on which you are going to do each step. Be realistic about when you can do the activities. If you cannot identify an exact date, tell how soon the activity should follow the previous activity (a week later, a month later, etc.).

This will be the detailed budget for the activity. On the Planning Form, write the total of the budget in the indicated column.

If you do not know what certain things will cost, ask for quotes. For the most expensive items, ask for several different quotes to find the best price.

The budget allows us to anticipate the expenses before the activity takes place, and it forces us to think about these questions:

- What financial resources do we have for these activities?
- How are we going to obtain the necessary funds to be able to carry out these activities?
- If we don't have the funds now, what is the anticipated time line for obtaining the funds?

The budget also helps us during the activity to monitor costs and not spend too much. If an item costs more than was anticipated, the amounts for other items will need to be cut to maintain the same total cost in the budget.

Finally, the budget can help us in the future, because it gives us an idea of how much things cost in the past. Keep the figures of anticipated costs and actual costs to help you make budgets in the future.

For your church:

If your church does not have an overall budget, leaders should create one. It is important to make one every year. You can follow these steps to make a budget for all the expenses of the congregation.

- a. Divide the typical yearly expenses into categories appropriate for your congregation, such as these:
 - Worship services
 - Christian education/discipleship
 - Evangelism
 - Salaries
 - Rent for location
 - Outreach to the community
 - Benevolence fund
- b. Identify the typical expenses for each category in every month.
- c. Communicate the budget clearly and simply to the members of the congregation and give a financial report each month or quarter. Explain to the congregation all important decisions regarding the budget.
- d. Teach the congregation about the stewardship of financial resources (tithing, offerings, family budgets, etc.). Make sure to support your stewardship teaching with biblical principles, including scripture references.

WORKSHEET 9:

COORDINATORS |

How to Name Coordinators

INSTRUCTIONS |

In the previous worksheets you filled out the following parts of the Planning Form:

- Area
- Anticipated Change
- Activities
- Indicator(s)
- Calendar
- Budget

In this worksheet you will name a coordinator for each activity. This person is not going to do everything for the activity, but rather will coordinate the work of EVERYONE to carry out the activity.

The coordinator...

- ...will delegate the different tasks to prepare the activity.
- ...will make sure that everyone is completing his/her tasks.
- ...will make sure that the activity is going smoothly.
- ...will make sure that the evaluation of the activity is done as planned.
- ...will give a report to church leaders about the activity.

In choosing each coordinator, we recommend the following:

1. Choose a leader that understands how this activity fits into the strategic planning process. The activity is not just for the sake of doing something: it's related to achieving a specific change in the congregation.
2. Choose a person known to be a mature Christian in the congregation and/or community.
3. Allow the coordinator to guide decisions, with input from church leaders, about who assists with the activity.
4. Remind the coordinator that he or she is not to do everything but rather to coordinate the work and encourage the work of others to carry out the activity.

WORKSHEET 10:

EVALUATION |

How to Evaluate the Activities

INSTRUCTIONS |

Each activity should be evaluated to make sure you are moving toward the overall change you are seeking.

There are several options for evaluating an activity:

- a. Make a questionnaire for the end of the event or process.
- b. Interview or talk with certain members/participants.
- c. Make observations about whether the activity was successful or not, and why.
- d. Submit written reports that address specific questions.
- e. Collect data (number of participants, amount of money collected, how long it took to complete the activity, number of people who responded, etc.).

Choose an evaluation that is appropriate for the type of activity.

To decide how to evaluate an activity:

1. The goal of the evaluation is to discover:
What worked or went well? Why?
What did not go well? Why?
Based on the answers to the above questions, what should we do?
2. For each activity and indicator, answer the following three questions in the Evaluation column of the Planning Form.
When should the activity or indicator be evaluated?
Who is going to carry out the evaluation?
What is the best way to evaluate the activity/indicator?

CONCLUSION |

A Final Note

After going through these 10 steps of strategic planning, review your entire plan to make sure that the activities that you have identified will indeed guide you to achieve the changes your church needs to make.

You have invested significant time, prayer and effort in thinking and planning for the best future possible for your church. Remember that this strategic plan is for you to use every day. It is dynamic, which means it can be revised and expanded to accommodate needed changes. Allow this Holy Spirit led document to be a useful tool for your church. Bathe this process in prayer!

Now you are ready to implement the plan. May God bless your church!

AREA:	ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS	CALENDAR			TOTAL BUDGET	COORDINATOR	EVALUATION OF ACTIVITY/ PROGRAM: WHEN—WHO—HOW?	CHANGE ANTICIPATED IN THIS AREA
		MONTH	DAY	YEAR				
	1.							
	2.							
	3.							
	4.							
	5.							
	6.							
	7.							
	8.							
	9.							
	10.							

SESSION 9

HOPES AND DREAMS: USING SMALL GROUP TECHNOLOGY

CONCEPT |

God has a specific vision for each church that fulfills his heart's desire for the people of each community. Leading a congregation to prayerfully discern the Spirit's purpose and plan involves building on the prior steps: exploring the congregation's past history, taking its current pulse and then listening together to what the Spirit is saying to the church about dreams for the future (Acts 2:17-18). When people have shared their hopes and dreams with each other they are willing to give from their pockets, minds and hearts to work together to make those dreams come true.

ACTIVITY |

Distribute post-it notes to each participant and ask: If money is not an issue and you know that you have God's blessing, what are your deepest hopes and desires for your local church in the next three years? Have a time of prayer before beginning this exercise. Have each person write down five to seven dreams on the post-it note cards. After doing this individually, ask them to form groups of three to five people and decide from among their hopes and dreams the top seven dreams. Finally, have a spokesperson from each group report their results to the entire group. Write these hopes and dreams on butcher block paper or flip chart sheets and put them on the walls of the room so they are visible to the entire group. Discuss themes and trends that surface and pray for the Spirit's guidance in implementing new strategies to see these dreams become reality.