

Congregational Assessment Detailed Description

The following information will be organized in a summary report to the congregation. Once the needed information is received, it will take approximately one month to organize the report.

1. Congregation History

- a. Summary of pastor transitions and significant events often shows why a church follows certain patterns.
- b. Ten Year Trends in worship, membership, financial giving, and baptisms are clues to health and possible future directions. The trends of the past continue unless there are intentional discussions and changes.

2. Facilities

- a. Building capacity – this chart shows how much the congregation is actually using the building. An additional graph shows how the building is being used – worship, fellowship, classrooms, and administration.

- b. Appearance to visitors (including website)

This portion of the report includes:

1. Is the main entrance clearly marked?
2. Is there adequate parking?
3. Is the building welcoming?
4. Is there clear signage in the building to offices, sanctuary, childcare, and bathrooms?
5. What is the sanctuary capacity?
6. Is there room for visitors?

- c. Deferred maintenance list – Will the building expenses take money and energy from new ministry and mission opportunities?

3. Membership

- a. Generational and Racial-Ethnic populations of the congregation compared to the community.

- i. Are the population segments of the congregation the same as the community? If not, there may be a disconnection from the community.
- ii. Vital congregations will normally experience a 50-50 split between the Boomer + generations and the younger groups. A chart will show the generational divisions of the church compared to the community.
- iii. How does the Racial-Ethnic population of the congregation compare to the community?

- b. Participant Tenure

- i. This chart shows how long people have been members of the church.
- ii. Healthy congregations usually have a 50-50 split between members who have been in the church five years and less and those over five years.
- iii. The new members often bring energy and new ideas for ministry.

- c. Households of members
 - i. A map will show the location of members' homes and drive times.
 - ii. The longer people have to drive to church often impacts their participation and disconnect from the immediate community around the church.
 - iii. Clusters of members can open up the opportunity of small group ministries.
 - d. Participant Engagement – the congregational life will be divided up into four categories – Direct Spiritual Development, Relational Development, Direct Mission Delivery, and Decision Making.
4. Finances
- a. Income and Expenses for three years – this graph shows the financial giving and possible future trends.
 - b. Budget allocations – the budget will be divided into four main areas – Salary Support, Building/Administration, Program, and Mission.
 - c. Assets and loans – Is the congregation living within their means or relying on savings accounts?
5. Community
- a. Who lives in the community around the church?
 - b. What are the barriers to growth?
 - c. What are the education, salary, and housing demographics?
 - d. What are the age segments of the community?
 - e. A description of lifestyles will also be included.
 - i. How do people spend their free time?
 - ii. What magazines do they read and internet websites visit?
 - iii. What kind of cars do they drive, vacations, and places of shopping?
6. Appreciative Inquiry (sample questions)
- a. When you consider all of your experiences at this church, what has contributed the most to your *spiritual life*?
 - b. What do you think is the single, most important, life-giving characteristic of this church? When we are at our best, what are we doing?
 - c. What are the ministry opportunities begging for our attention in this area?

Information needed for the report

1. Income and expenses for 3 years and a meeting with treasurer.
2. Church calendar for full year.
3. Participant roster (spread sheet sample attached).
This will include only people who attend 4 or more times a year.
4. A tour of the building and a meeting with the property chair.
5. A congregational gathering for Appreciative Inquiry discussion.
6. Meet with a few people who know the history of the church.