



DOING A SELF-STUDY OF YOUR CONGREGATION'S LIFE, MINISTRY AND MISSION

Congregations are encouraged to reflect on their mission and strategy in order to identify their needs and opportunities for ministry. Such self-study is best followed by setting appropriate goals, establishing priorities, and developing plans. Under the leadership of the Spirit of God, these activities will lead congregations toward greater faithfulness and effectiveness in accomplishing God's mission and ministry.

This self-study package contains four tools:

1. "Toward Measurement of Congregational Health"

One person or small committee gathers some basic congregational data. Four diagnostic indicators in the area of worship, Bible study, outreach and service provide clues to congregational health.

2. "Toward Identifying Needs for Ministry"

One person or small committee gathers additional data that helps to provide a clearer picture of the congregation and its priorities.

3. "The Major Areas of Our Congregation's Life and Ministry"

The church council or board of elders may be asked to complete this section.

4. "Additional Resources"

Your circuit visitor is your primary resource person. Your mission and ministry facilitator (MMF) can also provide other resources useful in assessing congregational health, pastoral needs, and community demographics. Contact him for this assistance.

Congregational leaders may then study and interpret the information gathered by these tools, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the congregation and the needs, and opportunities for ministry. (Share the information and the interpretation with congregation members and receive their responses.)

It is recommended that an experienced resource person from outside the congregation be invited to study and interpret the information gathered by these tools. Your MMF may be helpful in this process.

From the study and interpretation, the congregation may then move on to goal setting, prioritizing, and planning for ministry.

NOTE: IT IS EXTREMELY HELPFUL FOR THE PASTOR CALLED BY YOUR CONGREGATION TO RECEIVE THESE STUDIES, ALONG WITH THE OFFICIAL CALL DOCUMENTS IN SECTION V.

I. TOWARD MEASUREMENT OF CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH

By the Gospel (in Word and Sacrament), the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the Holy Christian Church and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In the church He daily and richly forgives all sins to all believers.

This activity of the Holy Spirit is experienced in a congregation of God's called and gathered people. As the Spirit enlightens, sanctifies, and keeps His people by worship and the nurture of the Gospel, He motivates and equips them for His/their ministry of witness and service (to one another and to others).

A healthy congregation is one in which "the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Holy Sacraments are administered according to the Gospel" (Augsburg Confession VII); one in which the people are meaningfully involved in worship, nurture, witness, service and outreach.

The health of a congregation is difficult to measure, since it has to do with worshipping God "in Spirit and in truth" **John 4:23** and with nurture/growth in faith and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ toward "mature manhood" and toward "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." **Ephesians 4:13**

However, there are indicators of congregational health that can be measured. It is something like the human body. Such things as body temperature are clues or indicators of health or illness, but do not by themselves prove health nor identify an illness. Similarly, the indicators of congregational health used in this instrument are items of information that give CLUES about the health of a congregation, but do not by themselves prove health nor identify a problem. These indicators require further probing and more thorough interpretation.

Such probing and interpreting usually is most helpful when both the members of the congregation and "outsiders" take a common look at the indicators. In taking this common look, a congregation's indicators should be compared only with that congregation's indicators of other years, not with other congregations' indicators.

On the following chart, the "Tomorrow" columns may be used to project current trends, to set desired goals or may be omitted.

Obtain "Composite Membership" figures by adding "Baptized Members" plus "Average Sunday Worship Attendance" plus "Average Weekly Bible Study Attendance," then dividing this total by 3.

THE HEALTH OF A CONGREGATION
Diagnostic Indicators

	YESTERDAY						TODAY	TOMORROW		
	10 yrs ago	5 yrs ago	4 yrs ago	3 yrs ago	2 yrs ago	1 yr ago	NOW	1 yr from now	2 yrs from now	5 yrs from now
A. Basic Data										
1. Baptized Members (total membership)										
2. Nonconfirmed Members (Baptized Only)										
3. Confirmed Members (Baptized & Confirmed)										
4. Confirmed as % of Baptized										
5. Composite Membership										
B. Three Key Indicators										
1. Average Sunday Worship Attendance % of Baptized										
2. Average Weekly Bible Study Attendance % of Baptized										
3. Average Weekly Giving per Worship Attendance (divide average weekly contributions by avg. worship attendance)										

II. TOWARD IDENTIFYING NEEDS FOR MINISTRY

1. What is the number of your resident members in each of the following age categories?

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| a. 0 - 5 _____ | g. 51 - 60 _____ |
| b. 6 - 10 _____ | h. 61 - 70 _____ |
| c. 11 - 20 _____ | i. 71 - 80 _____ |
| d. 21 - 30 _____ | j. 81 - 90 _____ |
| e. 31 - 40 _____ | k. 91 - 100 _____ |
| f. 41 - 50 _____ | l. 100 + _____ |

2. What is the number of your resident members in each of the following categories?

- a. _____ Husbands and wives living together with children under 18 at home
- b. _____ Husbands and wives living together with no children under 18 living at home
- c. _____ Single Adults
- d. _____ Widows and widowers living alone
- e. _____ One-parent households with children at home
- f. _____ Others

3. What percentage of the congregation's membership is from minority groups? _____%

4. What is the median age of the congregation's membership? (1/2 this age or older and 1/2 this age or younger.)

Median Age: _____

5. What percentage of the congregation's dollar receipts was given to mission and ministry outside the congregation for each of the last 5 years?

- Last year _____%
- 2 years ago _____%
- 3 years ago _____%
- 4 years ago _____%
- 5 years ago _____%

6. What percentage of the giving units accounted for 50% of the dollar receipts from the membership last year? _____%

7. List the names and dates (years of service of pastors who have served this congregation since its founding.)

III. THE MAJOR AREAS OF OUR CONGREGATION'S LIFE AND MINISTRY

WORSHIP

1. The following resources are often used in our worship service(s): (check all that apply)

- Lutheran Service Book Lutheran Worship The Lutheran Hymnal
 LSB Service Builder Write Own CCLI Song Select

Other (list resources):

2. Our children/youth are involved in worship by:

3. Our congregation's primary worship practices: (Check all that apply)

- Traditional Contemporary Highly Liturgical Blended

4. These choirs, musical groups and organists are active in our congregation:

5. Lay people in our congregation serve in the following worship roles (check all that apply):

- Acolytes Ushers Readers Worship Assistants
 Worship Leaders Greeters Altar Guild
 Communion Assistants: Men Women
 Other (list): _____

7. The percentage of our members who communed at least once in the previous year is:

Communed Once

Confirmed Membership $\times 100 =$ _____%

8. We use the following media in our worship services:

- Organ Piano
 Guitar Keyboard
 Projection on screens Wireless Microphones
 Wired Microphones Printed Order of Service
 Hymnal Other instruments (list):

Other media:

9. Other information about our worship style or structure we want our pastor elect to know:

LEADERSHIP ROLES

What leadership roles do you have in your congregation and who serves in those roles (check the roles the congregation has and who may serve)?

___ Voting members:	___ Men	___ Women
___ Congregational President:	___ Men	___ Women
___ Elders:	___ Men	___ Women
___ Board Chairs:	___ Men	___ Women
___ Board Members:	___ Men	___ Women
___ Treasurer:	___ Men	___ Women
___ Adult Bible Class Leader	___ Men	___ Women
___ Confirmation Teacher	___ Men	___ Women
___ Other, please specify: _____	___ Men	___ Women

EVANGELISM AND WORLD MISSIONS

1. Our mission or purpose statement is:
2. We conduct these intentional outreach activities (List activities and number of people involved in each. -- The question to be answered here is: what activities/ministries are our congregation doing that help bring people to Christ?):

Activity:	Number involved:
a. _____	_____
b. _____	_____
c. _____	_____
d. _____	_____
e. _____	_____

3. Our congregation makes visitors feel welcome at our church by:
4. The number of Adult Confirmation Classes we conduct annually is _____.

Who teaches these classes? (e.g., pastor(s), DCE, layperson) _____

The number of adults we confirmed in each of the last four years is:

_____ Year	_____ # of Adults
_____ Year	_____ # of Adults
_____ Year	_____ # of Adults
_____ Year	_____ # of Adults

5. Our congregation is involved in ministry in the:
___ community ___ state ___ nation ___ world

Note ministries here:

CHRISTIAN NURTURE

1. These ministries are active in our congregation (check all that apply):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday School | <input type="checkbox"/> LWML (<i>or other Women's Ministry</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Bible Class | <input type="checkbox"/> LLL (<i>or other Men's Ministry</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> V.B.S. | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midweek School | <input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult Ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian Day School | <input type="checkbox"/> Stephen Ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early childhood ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mothers' Day Out | |

2. We offer adults these formal programs for Christian growth and/or Bible Study:

3. How many confirmed members are in the congregation? _____

4. How many confirmed members are involved in organized Bible Study? _____

5. How many baptized children—not yet confirmed—are in the congregation? _____

6. How many of these baptized children are involved in Sunday school? _____

FELLOWSHIP

1. We incorporate (assimilate) new members into the fellowship of our congregation by:

2. These fellowship groups are active in our congregation:
(e.g., senior - singles - couples - other)

3. We held these fellowship activities in the last year:

4. These activity groups are active in our congregation:
(e.g., scouting - athletics - quilting - exercise - other)

5. We have had conflicts in our congregation that have influenced our church life and have disrupted unity. These are the events and the results:

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

1. Members are asked to make a financial and service commitment annually by:
2. We teach Christian stewardship in our congregation by:
3. Our congregation teaches and practices the principle of tithing. () Yes () No
4. Our budget is developed by _____ (what group or individual?)
5. The number of giving units (e.g., husband and wife/single adults) we have is: _____
6. Our budget allocations are shown by these percentages:

Missions	_____%
Education	_____%
Salaries	_____%
Worship	_____%
Facility & Utilities	_____%
Debt	_____%
Youth Ministries	_____%
Care Ministries	_____%

- a. Our day school budget is \$_____.
- b. Our total current capital indebtedness is \$_____.
7. Our Per-Communicant giving:
Contributions (All Purposes) = \$_____ per communicant
No. of Communicant Members

8. The sources of our income are (Check all that apply):

___ Members' Gifts	___ Rentals	___ Investment Income
___ Endowments	___ Bequests	___ Memorials
___ Tuition	___ Fund Raisers	___ Other

9. Our total budget over the past four years:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>RECEIVED</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

10. Total amount of money sent for missions through District/Synod last year: \$_____
11. Total amount of money sent for missions directly to Synod last year: \$_____
12. Total amount sent to missions other than district or synod last year: \$_____
13. Our congregation has a parsonage for the pastor. ___ Yes ___ No

SERVICE

1. Our congregation helps its members identify and use their talents and gifts by:

2. Our congregation has served the human needs of our community (e.g., poor - homeless - unemployed - disasters) by:

3. Our congregation is organized to meet the physical needs of its members by:

4. These community groups are active in our building:
(e.g., A.A., Bloodmobile, service organizations, other)

*Please attach a copy of your Constitution and Bylaws.