

# Church Health Assessment Tool

John 15 “This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”



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# Biblical Health



1. Is there a time when our church is systematically studying, preaching or teaching through a book of the Bible? There is nothing wrong with a topical sermon or series, but we also want to help our church members to be reading through an entire book verse by verse.
2. Are we as adults modeling to our children that we value God's Word? If we want children to memorize scripture, how can we model that as adults?
3. Are we asking every member to read the Bible during the week and be ready to discuss what they read when they come to SS class or small group? Could we do the same thing for the sermon – "Read Romans chapter 6 before you come for the sermon this Sunday."?

# Biblical Health

4. In SS class, do we give class members time to tell what they read, what stood out to them? Do we ask members to talk about what they learned about God and people in this passage? Do we ask them how this Bible passage has affected them and what they are learning as they try to apply it?
5. In this age of seeing Bible verses on a worship screen or on a phone screen, are we teaching children and adults to also use a printed Bible to read and underline verses?
6. Do we accept the Bible as absolute truth, or do we allow the changing morals of our culture to change our view of scripture (marriage, adultery, salvation, racism)?

# Worship Health



1. Piano, organ, guitar, drums or orchestra? Books or words on a screen? Normal sound volume or so loud that churches pass out ear plugs at the door as you enter? Standing or sitting? Praise team, a soloist or a choir? Songs written 300 years ago or 5 years ago? Do we want people to sing or just listen? Do we want two services with the same style or two different styles? Walk forward invitation or come see me when the service is over? Should everything in the service be led by paid staff or should we also use volunteers? Robes or no robes for the choir?

2. There may be different styles of worship as times change, but some basic principles can always guide us.

# Worship Health

## Basic Principles

1. It should be songs that people want to sing. If  $\frac{3}{4}$  of your members want to sing one type of songs, do you want to force them to switch, or just start a second service with a different music style?
2. The preaching, singing and fellowship is better when people sit close to one another. Either take out some of the chairs and pews or rope them off. Pretending that it is okay for people to not sit together (excluding pandemics) hurts everybody. Solve the problem.
3. Involve as many people as possible, not just paid staff members.

# Worship Health

## Basic Principles

4. People want to see authenticity. Let them see you are real when you preach. Have church members share testimonies of how they came to Christ, what they are learning, what they did on a mission trip, what is happening in their small group, etc. There is a saying that goes “let people see your scars, not your wounds.” People may not always want to spill their guts and show their fresh wounds until they have processed and figured out what they are learning, and the wounds have turned to scars, and that is okay. But we do need to be real with one another and not pretend that we are perfect.

# Worship Health

## Basic Principles

5. If you are a pastor, try to come up with a topic series or go through a book of the Bible. In general, it isn't as helpful to do unrelated topics one after the other.
6. For the same reason, if you don't have a pastor, it isn't the best to have a different speaker every Sunday and a different topic every Sunday. Plan some kind of strategy for your preaching and ask your interim pastor or pulpit supply preachers to help you with the plan.
7. Just like you have greeters at the front door, could you have several greeters inside the worship center. Guests enjoy it better when people linger to talk, not shake hands and walk away.

# Worship Health

## Basic Principles

8. People often become creatures of habit and sit in the same pew every Sunday. Consider asking 5 families if they would be “worship service missionaries”. When they see a new guest in the worship service, they will voluntarily go and sit near them, strike up a conversation, make sure they feel welcome and answer questions they may have. If possible, they are willing to linger after the service to continue visiting with the new guest.

9. Another strategy is to ask Sunday School teachers if their class would enjoy sitting near one another in worship. Sitting together as a class increases fellowship and a feeling of belonging. It also helps a new guest to feel they belong in a family group.

# Educational Health



1. Can your teachers coach 2 or more members in the class to become co-teachers?
2. Can your class members sit near one another without too many empty chairs?
3. Is your class sitting in a circle, not in rows?
4. Can you designate half your class time for discussion groups?
5. Is your class having a monthly social event and inviting friends and family?

# Educational Health

6. Are you expecting every class member to read the scripture passage before they come to class? (not the SS book, the Bible verses) Are you encouraging accountability by giving them time in class to share what they liked or learned when they read the verses?

- “What was one of your favorite verses?”
- “What stood out to you in this story?”
- “What do we learn about God or Jesus in this passage?”
- “What do we learn about people in this passage?”

7. Could you help class members learn to share their faith by giving a different person every week 5 minutes to share the story of how they met Christ and were saved?

# Relational Health



1. Are SS classes and small groups having a monthly fellowship? Are they building a list of prospects and inactive members to contact regularly with email, text, phone and visits.
2. Are classes sitting together in worship?
3. Are members looking for guests in worship and sitting beside them?
4. Are staff, deacons and teachers modeling integrity in their speech – no gossip and being prompt to address a relationship problem - forgiving and asking forgiveness?

# Ministry Health



1. It's easier to minister to someone you are close to and are aware of what they are going through – isolation, depression, sickness, bitterness, disappointment, frustration, bullying, loss of a job, loss of a loved one. Are we doing all we can to get every member and guest involved in a small group and surrounded by people who know and care?
2. One, or even a handful of people, cannot meet the needs of everyone in the church. For ministry health that allows a church to grow, there needs to be lots and lots of caregivers – staff, deacons, teachers, small group leaders and others. Think of ways that you can provide training to volunteers who will do all sorts of ministry.

# Missional Health



1. Are we multiplying – more deacons, more teachers, more volunteers?
2. Are we looking outside the walls of our church? What needs have we focused on in our community? We can't tutor every child, but we can tutor 30 children at one school. We can't provide backpacks for every child in the city, but we can for all the first graders at one school. We can't care for the whole city, but we could help with yardwork and paint for homes on 10 streets.
3. If we have space at our church, could we provide room for a new church start? Most new churches need space for 10-40 people, and they can't afford to pay a lot for rent.

# Missional Health

4. How are we being intentional to help every church member learn to explain the gospel – children, students, young and older adults?
5. Are we supporting Association and Cooperative Program mission activities?
6. Are we looking for opportunities to help in our state or nation with disaster relief?
7. Could we offer 10 local mission events or ongoing activities and encourage all our members to choose one – tutoring at a school, Red Cross, prison, homeless shelter, pregnancy center, food distribution, construction/painting, work with internationals, etc.?

# Organizational Health



1. Do your leaders get together to plan a calendar and budget for the next year?
2. Is there an intentional focus on improvement? Do you brainstorm before an event and evaluate after an event is over?
3. Once-a-year training for an hour doesn't cut it. Is there a process for continual training for all your leaders – paid and volunteer?
4. Is there alignment – is the whole church on the same page and working together?

# Organizational Health

5. Is there a shared simple strategy that is understood by all your leaders? Otherwise, people are advocating and doing different things, sometimes in competition with one another.

An example of a simple strategy that some churches have used:

“Attend worship, be faithful in a small group and help with a ministry.”

# Church Building and Grounds Health



1. Does your grass, trees, and flowers need some attention?
2. Are all your church signs clean and nicely painted?
3. Are your doors clean of smudge marks and nicely painted?
4. In your Sunday School classes – do walls, ceilings or floors need some attention?
5. Are bathrooms updated and modern, clean looking and actually sanitary?

# Church Building and Grounds Health

6. Will parents feel proud of your children's area – sanitation, modern toys and books?
7. Are there safety issues anywhere – tripping, slipping, falling or protection of children?
8. Are your SS classrooms the right size? If there is only space for 10 people in a room, it is going to be hard for your class to grow. Are there large open spaces like a gym or fellowship hall that could be used for small groups meeting around tables?
9. What about clutter – are there rooms piled with junk? Do SS classrooms need to have clutter removed from tables and shelves? Are there too many chairs in a classroom?

# Leadership Health



1. Are staff being trained, encouraged and listened to? Are new leaders being coached and mentored? Sometimes there is a tendency by older staff members to discount the contribution and training of younger staff members. Are you intentional to ask young leaders to read and discuss leadership books with you? Are you helping them learn to plan, budget, brainstorm and evaluate? They don't teach seminary classes about developing an emotional IQ. Young leaders might struggle with discouragement when they are criticized by older church members or people who are resistant to change. Help them learn to preach and teach. Help young student ministers as they learn to relate to parents of students.

2. Is every leader coaching new assistants and helpers and multiplying their ministry – music, preaching, missions, children's and student ministry, senior adult ministry, deacons, etc.?