

Congregational Self-Study

Instructions

- 1) It is best to gather a team, made up of lay members as well as the pastor/staff, to complete this Self-Study. The pastor needs to be involved and on this team but should not be doing this report alone.
- 2) Please complete all portions of the Self-Study and share this information with the Council.
- 3) Have **20-25% of your active worshipping members** fill out the attached Assessment Exercise. (ex. If you average 100, have 25 fill it out.)
- 4) Have **10% of your average worshipping congregation or 25 people**, whichever is larger participate in the ***Readiness 360 On-Line Survey*** that will be administered by your church secretary and the office of Growing Effective Churches. This unique survey report and approach will help your Consultation Team offer you prescriptions that will mobilize your congregation to multiply your impact.
- 5) Have Leadership Team (Pastor and Council) complete the attached Church Snap-Shot and the Readiness 360 Questionnaires.
- 6) The Self-Study including a video of each service, all completed forms from your assessments and a tabulation of the assessment reports should be mailed to Growing Effective Churches, 303 Mulberry Drive, Suite 105, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050 and a copy to the consultant, coach and DS. **ALL MATERIALS MUST BE IN TWO (2) MONTHS PRIOR TO CONSULTATION.**
- 7) With questions, call or email a) your consultant, b) Growing Effective Churches Office gecoffice@susumc.org or c) Dennis Otto, Director of Growing Effective Churches.

Self-Study Group

After all the self-study information has been compiled, the Council, and staff need to discuss the following questions (in smaller congregations, gather 20-30 members/leaders, whether in official positions or not, to fulfill this item):

Give the general consensus of the group; be sure to include the date.

- a) Do the leaders want this congregation to grow significantly?
- b) Are the leaders willing to make the difficult decisions required for change and growth?

History and Description

- 1) **Write a brief history of your congregation (maximum four pages). Include those events** that contributed to periods of growth or decline in the number of people participating. Write in a factual style. Avoid the temptation to puff the story for public relations and the temptation to inject person commentary regarding past problems.
- 2) Provide a list of all full and part-time program staff positions for the last twenty years, or from the beginning if founded more recently. List schools and degrees for full-time program staff. Give the dates for people's tenure and state the real reason why individuals left. (Leave out the pertinent specifics only where required by law.)
- 3) Provide a list of all people who oversee specific areas of ministry. List the number of positions for which they are responsible in their oversight. State whether these people are full-time, part-time, or volunteer staff.
- 4) List dates and provide descriptions for any building construction, major renovation, land acquisition, or leasing of facilities. List the amount of acreage you own, lease or rent, the square footage of building(s), and number of parking spaces (distinguishing between off-street and street parking).
- 5) Write a summary of your congregational structure including the individuals or groups who are responsible for ministry decisions, budgeting, and financial oversight, buildings and grounds, and any other major interests of the congregation. List committees, task forces, program teams, etc. and explain how these relate to boards or councils. Provide an organizational chart that reflects your current structure.
- 6) List any formal ties or major ties to other organizations or associations. State how the congregation views and interacts with these groups.

Community Study

- 1) Get the MissionInsite report for the community around your church. Your pastor has the necessary password. If you need help, contact Mike Bealla, Director of Connectional Ministries (717) 766-7441 or Peggy Spengler, AA – GEC (717)545-0525.
- 2) Prepare and include an Executive report for the most appropriate area (1 mile, 3 miles or custom polygon).
- 3) Briefly describe the square mile that surrounds the primary location of the congregation.

Demography and Statistics

- 1) Estimate the average age of the people participating in the regular activities of your congregation. State how this was determined.
- 2) Prepare a list of the number of current members or regular participants who got involved: (this can be done by looking at your chronological record that you are required to keep)
 - Prior to 1960
 - From 1961-70
 - From 1971-80
 - From 1981-90
 - From 1991-2000
 - From 2001- Present
- 3) Without listing names, state the amount given by each of the top twenty (20) contributors of record in the last fiscal year. Total these amounts and state the percentage of giving this total represents in relation to total contributions.
- 4) State the total number of contributors to the congregation during the last fiscal year and the average amount given per contributor during the last fiscal year. Also list the number of non contributing households.

Beliefs and Practices

- 1) List the core values and/or basic beliefs of the congregation.
- 2) List other important commitments or practices that characterize the congregation such as:
 - a) Covenants or Codes of Conduct
 - b) Key Social Issues
 - c) Political Positions
 - d) Regular Activities
 - e) Significant Financial Commitments

Documents

Please place the following in the appropriate Drop box (if you have them) or send if not digitally available to consultant, coach and DS:

- Last two annual reports
- Last two annual budgets and full financial statements, for past two fiscal years, as well as the most recent financial report for this current year (YTD).
- Last Audit including ALL accounts and all endowment accounts and investments.
- Sample bulletins, for past four Sundays, and newsletters, past four editions.
- A DVD of each worship service
- Any policy statements, or policy manuals
- Other printed documents you deem helpful in providing insight into your congregation.

Assessment Tool Exercises

- Assessment Exercise: (See attached document). Have 20-25% of your active worshipping members fill this out. Please send the originals with a tabulation of each column and then an overall tabulation of the all the Assessment Sheets.
- Readiness 360: This is an On-Line survey customized to your congregation. Your pastor and/or Administrative Assistant/Secretary will provide Peggy Spengler, AA-GEC with some basic data that will be used for internal research purposes to customize your survey. When your Readiness 360 account is set up, your office will receive an email that you will then email to all of your worshipping congregation. They will be asked to take the 20 minute on line survey.

If you have folks that don't have access to the internet: a) set-up a computer lab for those folks or b) assign impartial phone interviewers to those without internet access (some youth groups love this task). The interviewers would act on the interviewees behalf, reading them the questions on the screen, typing in answers and providing no clarifying statements.

Church Snap-Shot Questionnaire

Bill Easum, 21st Century Strategies, Inc. 2008, used with permission Growing Effective Churches

See attached document. The pastor and Council should work together to fill this out.