

The local church as a missional community

Some queries to consider and act on

Who are we called to be?

- What is our mission (unique purpose or reason for existing) as a faith community?
- What values (common commitments by which we will live, work, play together) shape and direct our life together?
- What is God's vision (artist's rendition of us faithfully living out our mission) for us as a community ... discerned in light of our understanding of Scripture, the leading of the Spirit, and historic faith commitments?
- How are we communicating/teaching/reinforcing these among our members and with newcomers?

What has God called us to do in our culture context today in our community?

- What is the specific geographic, social, cultural context in which we are located? What are the needs of the people around us? What issues are unique to our community?
- What is going on during this season of our history? What changes/issues/opportunities can we see appearing on the horizon?
- With our mission and vision in mind – to what ministry is God calling us in this time and place? How do our unique gifts, strengths, call and God-given concerns intersect with the needs around us?

What barriers/resistance confronts us?

- Do our structures, relationships and programs have integrity with our stated focus? What internal and external obstacles stand in the way of us pursuing our missional call?
- Are we prepared to do a realistic assessment around the health, vitality and maturity of our church?
- Are we willing to get input from others about how we are doing?
- Are we genuinely willing to change?

What changes in structure, organization, leadership or self-perception would free us to be faithful, fruitful and to flourish?

Some specific areas to consider:

- Functional structures – matching our organizational infrastructure to our size and identity. Are we a family, pastoral, program or corporate sized church? Does our size, complexity or vision require new or different organizational support or change?
- Facility – is our mission defined by our facility? Does it enable us to best live into our mission?
- Staff needs – Are staff focused in areas of need? Are roles clearly defined and commonly understood? Is additional staff needed? Do we all share the same expectations?

- Growth – Do we assess how/if newcomers are welcomed into and integrated into the community? Do we want to grow? If so, what keeps us from growth?
- Budget – Do we evaluate how/if our budget reflects our intended priorities? Is it adequate and appropriately allocated for us to carry out our intended ministry?
- Ministry planning – Do we have an intentional plan to discern God's priorities/plans for our community?
- Who are we empowering to initiate changes? To make decisions? To keep us on course?

What outcomes/indicators can we use to evaluate our faithfulness?

- As we prayerfully implement our strategic initiatives, do we have a plan to evaluate how faithful and fruitful we are being? Are we learning from our accomplishments and our failures?

Do we give thanks and celebrate what God is doing in and through us?

- Do we give thanks for the gifts and resources we are given?
- Do we express gratitude for the ministry we are called to carry out?