

CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH CHECK

This is not intended as a “score-card” to rate congregations. Rather, it is intended to be a tool for the overall evaluation of church health. It may identify areas that need more careful “diagnosis.”

Captivating Vision

1. Can members tell significant stories of the church (past and present)?
2. Do members have a clear understanding of what it means to be American Baptist?
3. Are vision and purpose clear and up-to-date? Can members recite them? Are they publicized?
4. Do vision and purpose direct church decisions, especially in issues of staff, structure, resource allocation, and program design?

Loving Community

5. Does each member have a strong personal relationship with four or more other church members?
6. How many relational groups (both formal and informal) are there? Do members participate in more than one group? How do the groups relate to one another?
7. How does the church open itself to newcomers? How do they establish friendships and become part of groups?
8. How long is the average pastorate? Can you list reasons pastors leave? Why did pastors choose to stay? Why do members stay or leave?

Vital Worship

9. What forms and elements are used in worship? Do the worship services express the “culture(s)” of the community?
10. How many persons help lead congregational worship? What are the opportunities for congregational participation?
11. How is worship open and inviting to visitors?
12. In what ways do worship experiences allow persons to meet and respond to God? What difference does worship make for the rest of the week?

Dynamic Spirituality

13. How do you experience God’s presence when this church is gathered?
14. What attention is given to the spiritual life of individuals?
15. How do different groups demonstrate the Spirit at work in the church?
16. Is prayer taught and practiced? What about other spiritual disciplines (e.g., fasting, devotional reading, meditation)?

Growing Disciples

17. How many new disciples have been welcomed into the church this year?
18. What opportunities are given for persons to mature spiritually?
19. What is the evidence that persons are growing in their discipleship?
20. How is financial stewardship taught as a part of discipleship?

Sharing Ministry

21. Is it expected that every member has a gift to be expressed through ministry?
22. What is the regular effort to help persons discover their gifts and find a place of service?
23. Do members regularly practice their gifts through meaningful Christian service? Do pastor and members show signs of being a ministry team?
24. What ministries are done on behalf of non-members?

Compassionate Outreach

25. How do members show their care for others?
26. What are specific ways that God's love is shown to those outside the church?
27. In this community, who do you most care about? Why? What is the church doing about it?
28. How do non-members in the community describe the church?

Living Network

29. How does the church participate with other nearby congregations in meaningful ways?
30. How does the church participate in American Baptist life? Area events? Regional events? National events?
31. Which ABC missionaries have visited the church? Do they have regular contact (e.g., newsletters, e-mail)?
32. Have regional or national leaders from ABC been invited to the church activities?

Effective Organization

33. How does the organization of the congregation provide adequate accountability and communication?
34. Who makes decisions and how?
35. Are organizational structure and processes documented (e.g., By-Laws), and are they followed?
36. How does congregational structure allow for new work and ministry initiatives?