

# Roadmap to Discerning Your Congregation's Future

## Summary Report

Is now the right time to consider the vitality of your ministry and to imagine what the future will bring? If yes, then this roadmap will help guide you through a process to discern and discover your congregation's future.

### 01 Become a Hope in Christ Partner

Contact the Synod Director of Evangelical Mission with the Synod to make arrangements to become a partner.

### 02 Form a 'Guide Team'

Form a team to help with the assessment process, communication, and make arrangements for the events.

Elkton, MN

### 03 Complete a Ministry Assessment

Two assessment tools are used to provide a clear picture of your congregation's sustainability and ministry vitality. A summary report is prepared by the consultant.

## Hope in Christ

*Where is God leading us in the next chapters of*

*our ministry together?*

"For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building."

Prepared by Pr. Peter Soli, Dialog Works; in partnership with

Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELC



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# Hope in Christ

## St. John's Elkton, Report

Prepared by Pr. Peter Soli

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### Overview

On Sunday, December the congregation of St. John's met together in a Congregation Conversation to answer the question, "Where is God leading us in the next chapters of our ministry together?" Thirty-four people were present at 10:20 am when the conversation began. At 2:00 pm when the meeting concluded twenty-four people were participating. Several had to leave because of prior commitments. Pr. Peter Soli representing Dialog Works facilitated the conversation.

The meeting was hosted by members of St. John's Guide Team. These include Lisa Dietrich, Ruth Hamilton, Carmen Howe, Sam Klagen, Sally Vietor, and Pastor Liz Erickson. A brunch was served.

The Congregation Conversation is the culmination of the Hope in Christ process. This began in September when St. John's contracted with the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA and Rev. Peter Soli of Dialog Works. The Guide Team was formed and in early October met with Pr. Soli to plan how the process would proceed at St. John's. Lisa Dietrich agreed to coordinate the work of the Guide Team and to speak to the congregation.

Members of the congregation were invited to participate in the process by completing a Vitality Survey and Visioning Questionnaire. The Guide Team also worked through a Sustainability Assessment. Results of these assessment tools are included in the appendix of this report.

### Vitality Survey

The Vitality Survey indicated that St. John's is neither moving forward in mission nor does it indicate that the congregation is struggling. The majority of people completing the survey were over the age of 65 which was a cause for concern with members. There is general concern about the aging of the congregation and the continued viability of the congregation.

### Sustainability Assessment

The sustainability of the congregation shows vulnerability in the area of finances and participation. A smaller number of generous contributors are currently sustaining the church financially. Average weekly attendance has dropped more than 25% in the last four years. There is a general feeling that the church is "maxed out" in giving and uncertain about how to sustain and grow ministry.

### Practical Vision

The Guide Team worked together to articulate a Practical Vision for the congregation. The Vision was built on the written responses to the Visioning Questionnaire as well as the wisdom of Team members.

A more detailed report is included in the appendix of this report. The following list identifies the hopes and vision for the process. These answer the question “What do we want to see in place in 3 – 5 years as the result of our actions?”

1. Make our gifts known
2. Active youth involvement
3. Grow our stewardship and mission
4. Focus more on the mission and less on the budget
5. Create partnerships with area congregations
6. Enhance the worship experience
7. Invite, welcome, and open doors

## Congregation Conversation

The agenda for the Conversation included: 1) Review of the assessments and the practical vision as proposed by the Guide Team, 2) Determination what is blocking the Vision, 3) Actions which deal with the blocks and advance the vision 3) Identifying directions for ministry.

## Blocks to the Vision

In an effort to understand what might prevent, block, or impede moving towards the seven-part practical vision, the group did a sober analysis of the factors and realities of the congregation. They responded to the question: “What is blocking us from moving toward our vision?”

There were seven primary areas identified to be addressed. These five areas are detailed in the appendix.

1. Paralyzing fears
2. Accommodating all generations
3. Fear of leadership
4. Competition and distractions
5. Vision for meaningful worship
6. Rigid expectations
7. Location with declining population

## Spirit-led Direction Finding

The group was asked to brainstorm actions designed to overcome or work around existing blocks to achieving the vision. They responded to the question: “What innovative, substantial actions will deal with the underlying contradictions, move us toward our vision, and be pleasing to God?” The results of this portion of the workshop are detailed in the appendix.

Individual strategic actions were grouped together into seven areas:

1. Involve youth in new ways
2. Enhance the worship experience
3. Experiments

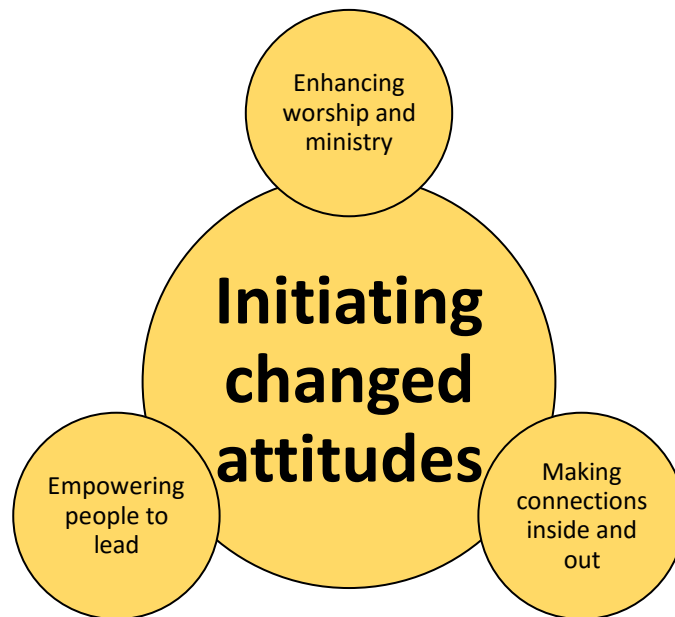
4. Establish new relationships
5. Promote St. John's
6. Promote open minds and hearts
7. Grow leaders

These individual actions were then grouped into for Spirit-led directions:

1. Enhancing worship and ministry
2. Making connections inside and out
3. Empowering people to lead
4. Initiating changed attitudes

## Closing

In the closing conversation, the group was asked "Which direction is key?" The responses indicated that all were important and that a the four might be thought of as building on each other. The conversation around the direction "Initiating changed attitudes" indicated that it might be both a starting point as well as the result of actions.



It was agreed that taking these directions and turning them into action will move the congregation toward the practical vision and deal with the blockages. We had run out of time and in the end when asked if there were an image or phrase that might capture the work the group had done that day, the response was to try to capture the idea that God has been with us, is with us, and will be with us as we move into the future. Great is Thy Faithfulness could serve as a possible theme hymn.

**SPIRIT-LED  
DIRECTIONS**

*What innovative, substantial actions will deal with the underlying contradictions, move us toward our vision, and be pleasing to God?*

**Enhancing  
worship and  
ministry**

**Making  
connections  
inside and out**

**Empowering  
people to lead**

**Initiating  
changed  
attitudes**

**BLOCKS**

*What is blocking us from moving toward our vision?*

- ✦ **Paralyzing fears**
- ✦ **Accommodating all generations**
- ✦ **Fear of leadership**
- ✦ **Competition and distractions**
- ✦ **Vision for meaningful worship**
- ✦ **Rigid expectations**
- ✦ **Location with declining population**

**VISION**

*What do we want to see in place in 3 – 5 years as the result of our actions?*

1. **MAKE OUR GIFTS KNOWN**
2. **ACTIVE YOUTH INVOLVEMENT**
3. **GROW OUR STEWARDSHIP AND MISSION**
4. **FOCUS MORE ON THE MISSION AND LESS ON THE BUDGET**
5. **CREATE PARTNERSHIPS WITH AREA CONGREGATION**
6. **ENHANCE THE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE**
7. **INVITE, WELCOME, AND OPEN DOORS**

# Recommendations and Next Steps

Prepared by Pr. Peter Soli

It appears that St. John's is a small, strong congregation challenged by changing demographics, a changing culture, and its rural location. Its strengths and assets include: a beautiful, well maintained, spacious facility; long-term capable, caring, and creative pastoral leadership; committed members with deep roots and loyalty; generous giving; and a desire to step forward in faith. There is concern about being able to continue ministry as it is without making changes. The current path the congregation is on will not increase membership or participation and, if nothing were to change, lead to closure. Members recognize their situation, have a sense of what needs to be done, and what is getting in the way.

My recommendations include the following next steps.

## 1. Making Connections Inside and Out

I would like this area of ministry to "courtship." You may want to consider adding to the number of activities or events at the church (beyond Sunday worship). These activities will be what you and your "date" do together during "courtship". These activities will provide the opportunity to invite, welcome, and get to know new people and become a stepping stone to inviting new people to worship.

Here are some ideas for the types of events other churches have added. These fall into one (or more) of three different areas:

**Fellowship** – simply doing something fun together like eating, playing, watching, dancing, musical concert, etc. This is the area where your current church meals would be.

**Support** – offering support for people going through a difficult time or after a difficult life event like grief support, new mothers or parents, living with Alzheimer's, empty nest, retiring, moving parent to a nursing home, etc.

**Learning or Study** – this can be Bible study, book club, movie discussion, workshops, etc.

**Service** – bring people together to help someone less fortunate like painting someone's house, cleaning, cooking, making something useful, raising money for a cause [cancer walk], etc.

These new activities would be lay-led, supported by the pastor, and would serve as a way to build a relationship with someone new. Also, some of these events could be done in partnership with other congregations and serve as a way to build these relationships.

These events along with the worship life of the congregation could be promoted and reported on Face Book or other social media.

## **2. Empowering People to Lead**

The addition of the above activities and events will require leadership. I would encourage the pastor along with a few others survey congregation members, young and old, in order to identify individual's gifts, passions, and abilities. These individuals would be encouraged, empowered, trained (as needed), and supported as they would organize their own small group to host the event or activity for the congregation. Their leadership would be affirmed and their contributions to the future of the congregation celebrated.

There are many resources available to build leadership. These include books and workshops on the small group, coaching, and working with volunteers.

## **3. Initiating Change – Attitudes**

What makes change difficult is that the good which results from change doesn't happen until after you make the change. We tend to hang on to what is familiar rather than embracing the potential for something better.

The consultant and author William Bridges has studied and written extensively about change and change management. The principles identified by Bridges apply to change in the congregation and changing attitudes. I highly recommend his work in this area.

Below is a link to an article by William Bridges where he uses the story of Israel leaving Egypt and wandering in the wilderness on their way to the promised land as an example of change management. <https://wmbridges.com/featured/articles/getting-them-through-wilderness>

The following is a short summary of Bridge's work that will help people and organizations deal with change:

1. Make a clear case for why change is needed. This needs to be easy to understand, motivating, and be communicated in 20 – 30 seconds.
2. Be able to name those familiar things that will need to be left behind or discarded in order that change can happen.
3. Identify what it is of the past (relic) that can continue or be part of the new.
4. Communicate what is changing (destination), how it is going to change (path), and the timeline for the change.
5. Mark the end of the old and the beginning of the new in some significant way (symbolically or with a ritual).
6. Prepare for a time of wandering, an in-between time, when the benefits of the change haven't materialized.
7. Celebrate and mark milestones along the way.
8. Celebrate your arrival at the new place.

## Final Thoughts

The congregation has identified four directions for the future of ministry at St. John's. These initiatives are all aimed at renewal and growth. Wrapped up in these initiatives is the assumption that more people and participation will please the Lord and strengthen the likelihood of continued ministry. However, this plan is vulnerable to issues of timing. Growing ministry is making new friends and relationships; but relationship building moves at its own pace and the financial implications of this work are neither guaranteed or realized quickly. Therefore, it is possible that what is needed to sustain the parish financially may not be achieved by these efforts alone.

During my time with St. John's, some of the options I list below were hinted at and may have been in the back of some people's minds. None of these options were lifted up for serious consideration at this time. I offer these for consideration if the time were to come when sustainability is a more critical issue.

- Partnering with another congregation.
- Becoming part of a multi-congregation parish (more than 3 or 4 together) – area parish
- Reducing staffing costs by going to less than a full-time pastor or staffing with a Deacon or other lay professional.
- Exploring creative uses for the facility to be used which would generate cash flow for the congregation.

## Thank you

It has been a privilege to work with the leaders and the St. John's congregation in this project. Your commitment to being Christ's church in the 21st century is strong and vibrant. May God bless your work together in spreading the Good News!



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St. John Lutheran Church, Elkton

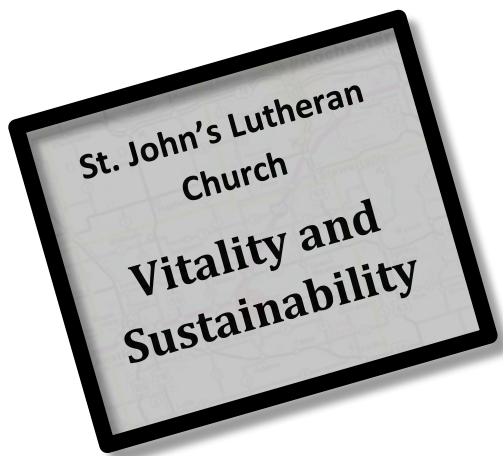
# Practical Vision

*What do we want to see in place in 3 – 5 years as a result of our actions?*

<b>Make Our Gifts Known</b>	<b>Active Youth Involvement</b>	<b>Grow Our Stewardship and Mission</b>	<b>Create Partnerships with Area Congregations</b>	<b>Focus More on the Mission and Less on the Budget</b>	<b>Enhance the Worship Experience</b>	<b>Invite, Welcome, and Open Doors</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertise our missions and special events</li> <li>• Host special events (meal, music, fun)</li> <li>• Increase use of facility</li> <li>• Show what we are doing as a congregation</li> <li>• Use social media to increase awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep youth involved – readers, projector operator, etc.</li> <li>• Involve youth so feel important</li> <li>• Continue faith formation of our children</li> <li>• Younger children involved with music during service</li> <li>• Sunday school – keep it going</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Caring ministry</li> <li>• More awareness and celebration of stewardship</li> <li>• Sharing ideas of mission work we want to see done</li> <li>• Create more stewardship and mission work</li> <li>• Increase options for mission support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect with other congregation’s youth groups (ball games, other activities)</li> <li>• Share ministries with local congregations</li> <li>• Increase outreach to communities – joy of serving together</li> <li>• More participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep full-time pastor and active Council</li> <li>• Balance expenses and giving so more is available for mission</li> <li>• Sense of joy toward stewardship to increase giving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maybe once a month have a contemporary service – experimental</li> <li>• Vital, meaningful worship that inspires people to share their faith</li> <li>• Special music during service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue hospitality to all who come through our doors</li> <li>• Members inviting others to worship – share what they enjoy about St. John’s</li> <li>• Bring back younger members (20 – 30 yr. old)</li> </ul>

<b>What is blocking us from moving toward our vision?</b>						
<b>Paralyzing Fears</b>	<b>Accommodating all Generations</b>	<b>Competition Distractions</b>	<b>Fear of Leadership</b>	<b>Vision for Meaningful Worship</b>	<b>Location with Declining Population</b>	<b>Rigid Expectations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear of inviting people to worship</li> <li>• Need people to do the inviting</li> <li>• Fear of the unknown</li> <li>• We are judgmental</li> <li>• Mindset of scarcity and fear</li> <li>• Lose identity if we form partnership</li> <li>• Church boundaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old congregation (self-satisfied)</li> <li>• Age of congregation</li> <li>• Centered around older generation</li> <li>• Our church hasn’t changed in 20 yrs. We need to keep up with the times.</li> <li>• Idea that mission work is for the elderly</li> <li>• Un-involvement of young people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church not a priority</li> <li>• People don’t make church a priority</li> <li>• Creatures of habit</li> <li>• Don’t want to change</li> <li>• Church is not a priority for variety of reasons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Someone to plan and follow through</li> <li>• We are a congregation of followers not leaders</li> <li>• Hard to get people to volunteer to coordinate activities</li> <li>• Trust the Council</li> <li>• No one really in charge of advertising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staying away from worship because of offering</li> <li>• Shortage of money for regular special music</li> <li>• Church is not interesting enough for young people</li> <li>• We don’t have talented people to perform</li> <li>• Hoping for a quick fix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distance of neighboring churches</li> <li>• Physical distance</li> <li>• Kid’s parents working on Sundays transportation issue</li> <li>• Fewer people in rural area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth schedules and parent’s schedules</li> <li>• Family schedules and parent involvement</li> <li>• Need for more time for activities</li> <li>• Family’s time is stretched thin</li> </ul>

Strategic Actions			Directions
<b>Involve youth in new ways</b>	<b>Enhance worship experience</b>	<b>Experimenting</b>	<b>Enhancing Worship and Ministry</b>
Youth leader to organize activities Utilize area schools and talents – invite Get the youth to sing in church 8 pm non-traditional communion worship for 12-18 yr. old 1/month Sign-up sheet for kids to take part in worship service – offering plate, bell ringing, communion, etc.	Hire cantor for worship singing Contemplative Taize healing service 1/month Bring music into worship Volunteer to read in church Congregation involved in Xmas program Look for contemporary worship ideas that fit St. John’s Explain more completely usher’s duties such as greeting new people	Have shorter church services Have church service 2x per month Change church time for service	
<b>Establish new relationships</b>		<b>Promote St. John’s</b>	
Attend area churches, share our strength Do fun events with other churches With Dexter Methodist, canvas for unchurched		Form advertising committee to promote Use Facebook and Twitter to get our name out there Welcome baskets for people who just moved into the area Congregational Christmas caroling Offer fresh loaf of bread to passerby 1X/week Visiting team for inactive members Appoint a visitation committee to encourage former and new members	
<b>Grow leaders</b>			<b>Empowering People to Lead</b>
Leadership teams of two Do what you can to help. Don’t be afraid to say no if you work, etc. Have more group leadership, not one person Take a small group to leadership event With knowledge comes wisdom – positive support for those who step up Shorter committee obligation and no renewable of time served Encourage and support younger Council members			
<b>Promote open minds and hearts</b>			<b>Initiating Change in Attitudes</b>
Personal mind-set to accept change Sit in another pew, on the other side, upfront Look into yourself to accept and make change			



## Vitality Survey

Nineteen congregation members completed the Vitality Survey. St. John’s score is 3.8 on a scale of 1 to 5. This shows that St. John’s is not a congregation which is moving forward in mission nor does the score clearly indicate it is struggling. The majority of those completing the survey were active members over the age of 65.

The survey indicates that St. John’s has a strong worship tradition and helps people to deepen their relationship with God. The congregation clearly helps those in need and interacts with the community. While none of the indicators show imminent danger, the lowest score is in the area of “excitement about the future” and indicates concern for the congregation.

Complete results of the survey are available upon request.

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## Sustainability Assessment

The Sustainability Assessment provides a picture of the strength of the congregation in several areas. The following is a summary of the results:

1. Facility
  - a. The building is in good shape and is an asset and strength.
2. Building usage
  - a. On an average, the facilities are used five or less hours during the week (excluding Sunday mornings).
  - b. The facilities are under-utilized and are an opportunity for the congregation.
3. Financial stewardship
  - a. The congregation uses traditional stewardship means and resources
  - b. There is financial exposure in that the congregation is partially dependent on the gifts of one or two top givers.
  - c. There is a feeling that the congregation is “maxed out” in its capacity to give and this is a concern.
4. Pastoral compensation
  - a. The congregation is currently able to provide adequate compensation to their pastor.
  - b. There is concern for the future in this area as it is increasingly difficult to maintain current levels of compensation.
5. People power
  - a. There is a sense that there are enough people for worship, Council, and maintaining the current ministries of the congregation.
  - b. Average weekly attendance has fallen by over 25% in the last four years. Participation is declining.

Overall the assessment indicates that St. John’s is currently maintaining but not growing.

# Congregational Vitality Project



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St John

Elkton

MN

Congregation ID 11749

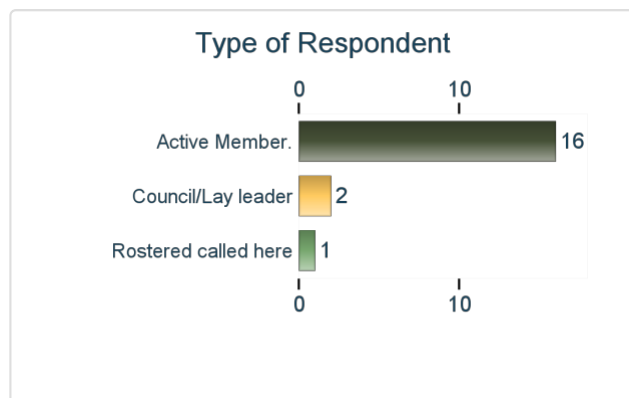
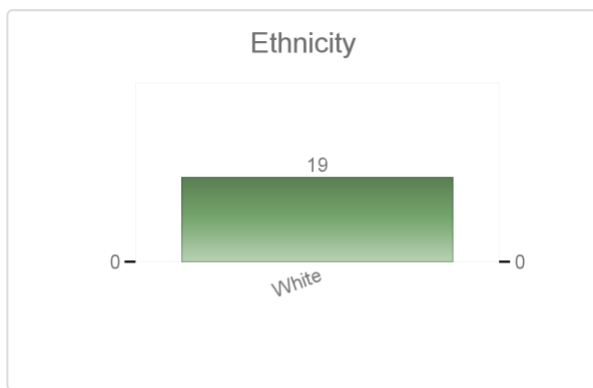
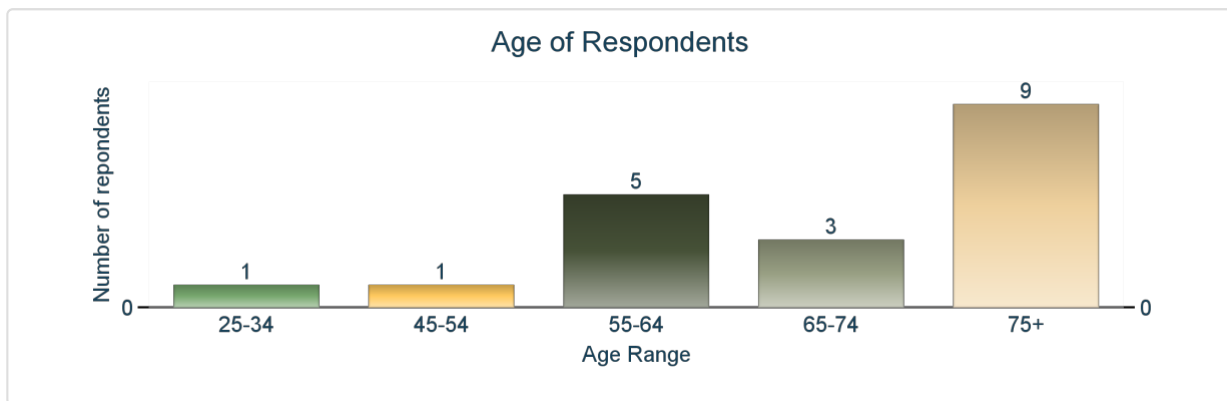
Synod: Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

## Measuring Vitality

This survey measured perceived strengths and challenges of the congregation in three critical areas: the congregation’s connections with God, each other and the world. All items range from 1 (poor) to 5 (great). The target score is 4 or higher. A average vitality score was created by averaging all items together. Compare your congregation with aggregated ELCA congregations.

This report is divided into three sections. The first section tells you who completed the survey. The next section shows the average responses to the 15 questions and the average vitality score, and the last section shows details of how each question was answered.

Total responses 19



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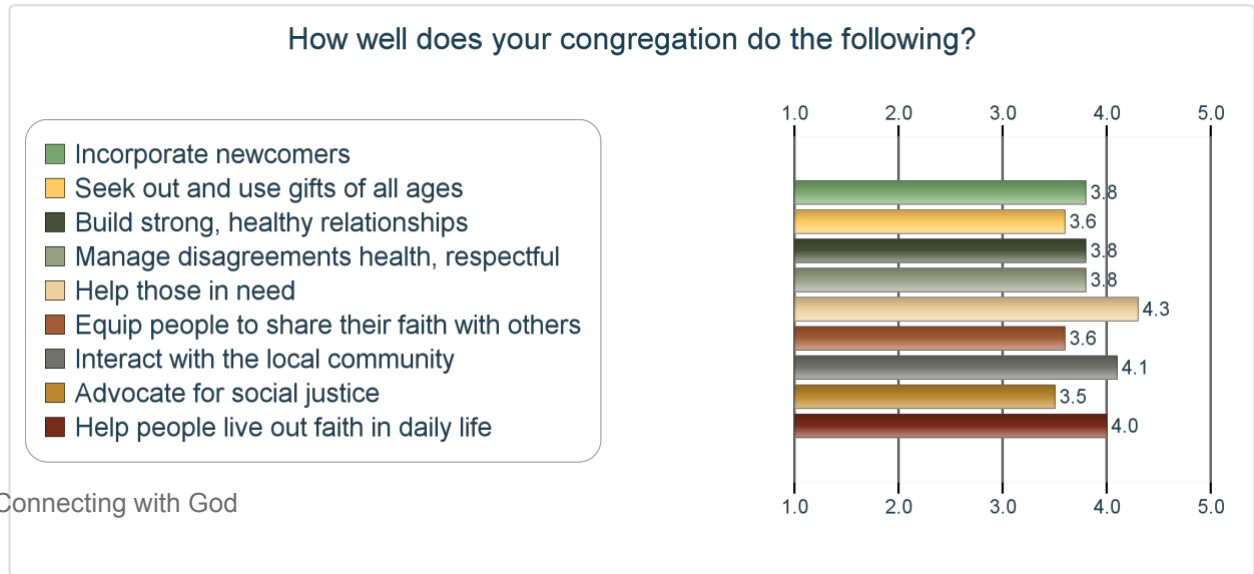
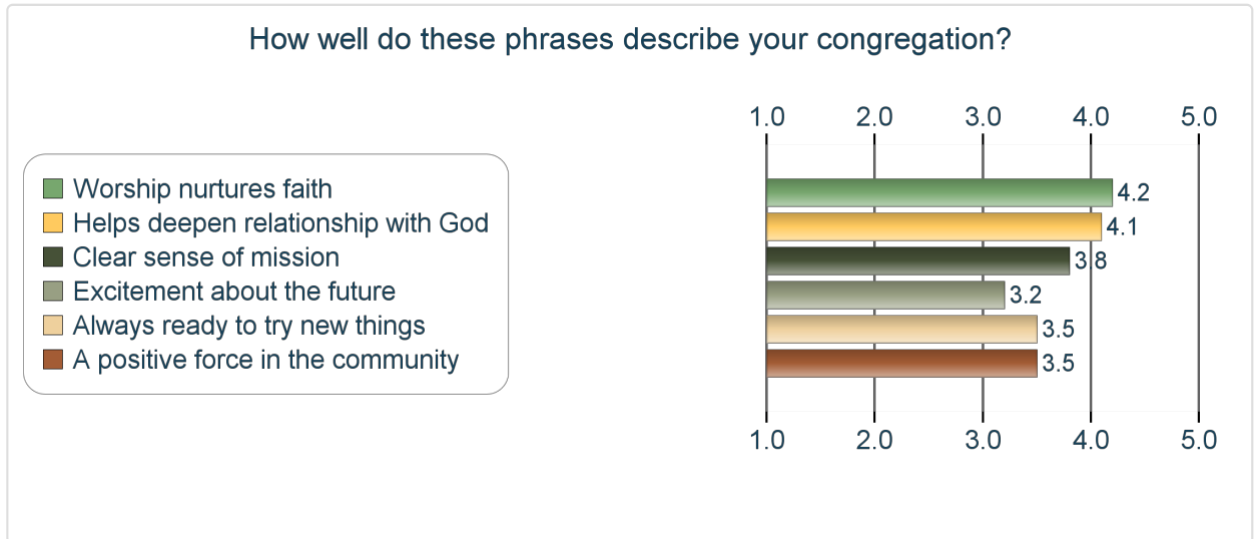
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# Congregational Vitality Project



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Connecting with God

Your Average  
Vitality Score

3.8

Struggling	Concerns	Maintaining	Moving Forward
<3.2	3.5	4.0	4.3+

This range is based on real experiences of other ELCA congregations. Mark your congregation's score in the shaded area and choose the description that best matches your score.

Note that labels are not precise. Some congregations with a score of 4.1 are moving forward, while others are maintaining. However, very few congregations with a 4.1 are in struggling just as few congregations with a 3.6 are moving forward in mission.

Visit [www.CongregationalVitalitySurvey.com/Resources.html](http://www.CongregationalVitalitySurvey.com/Resources.html) and use the Congregation Check-up for suggested next steps. Talk to your synod's Director for Evangelical Mission for more information.

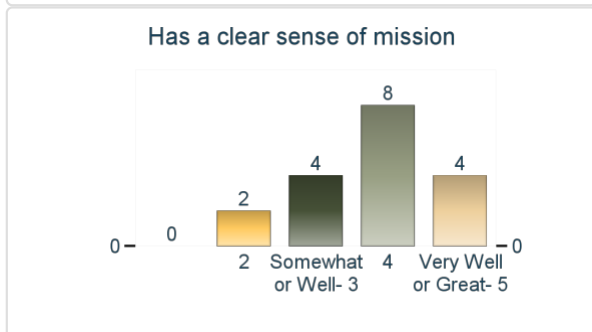
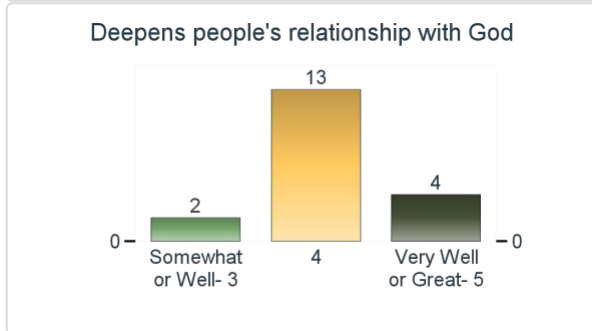
# Congregational Vitality Project



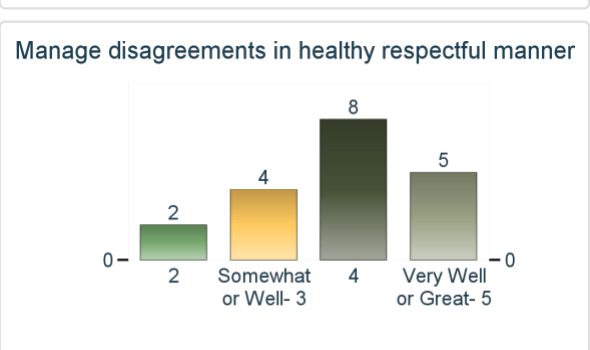
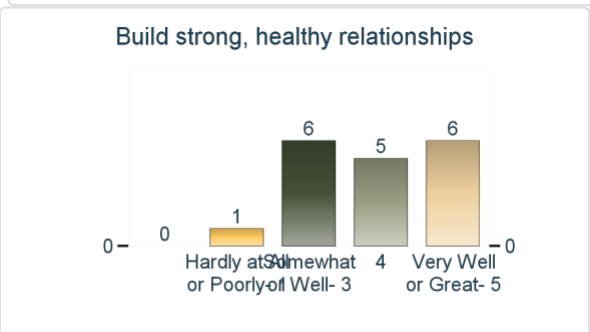
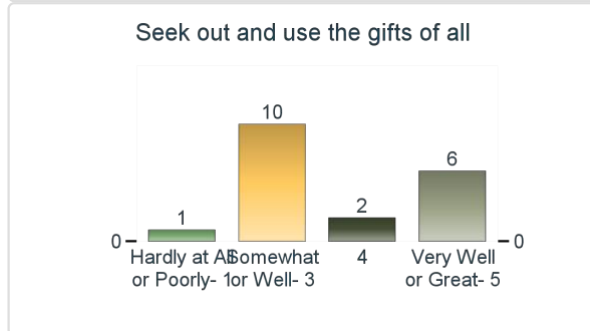
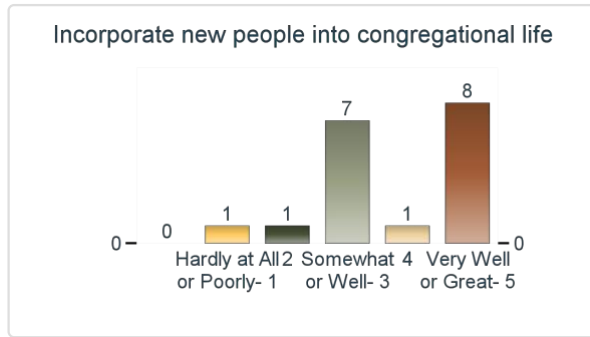
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## Item by Item Responses

### Connecting with God



### Connecting with Each Other



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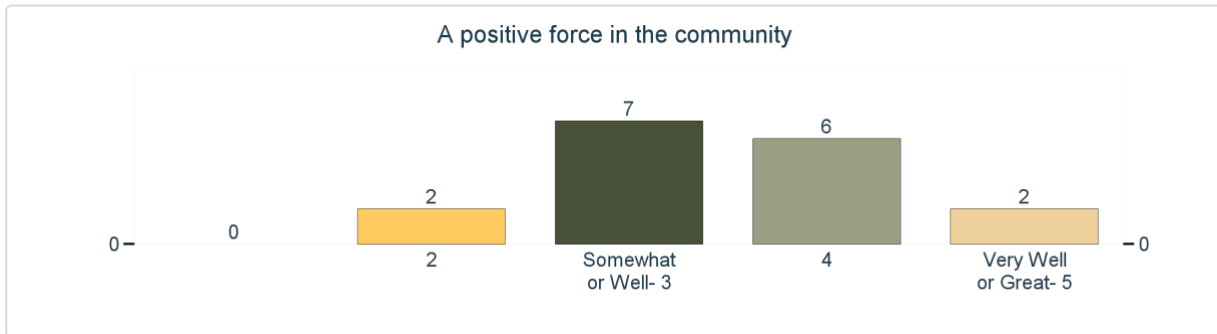
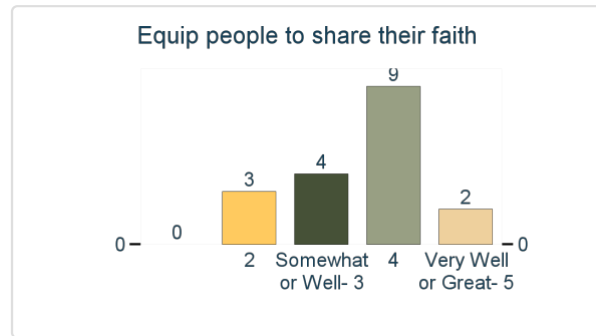
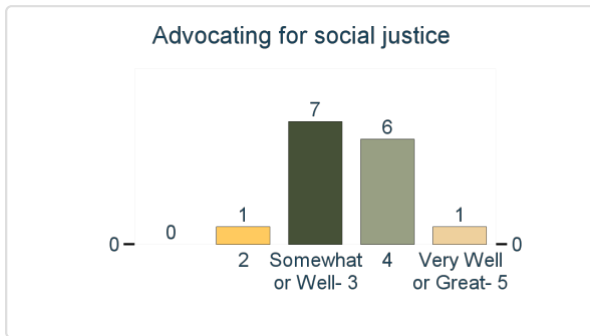
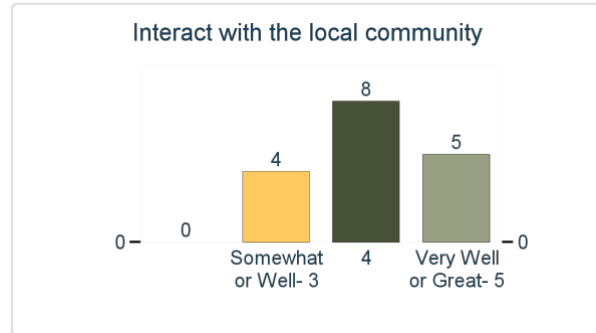
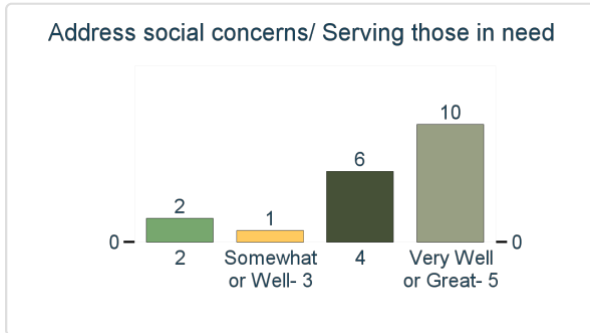
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# Congregational Vitality Project

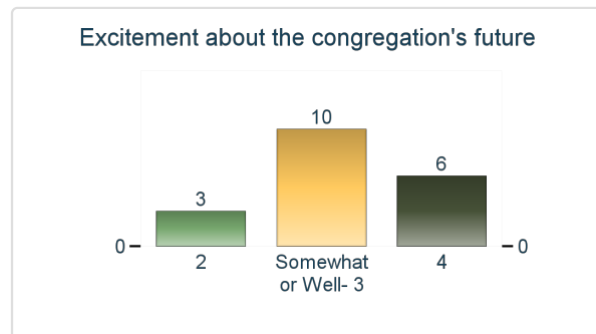
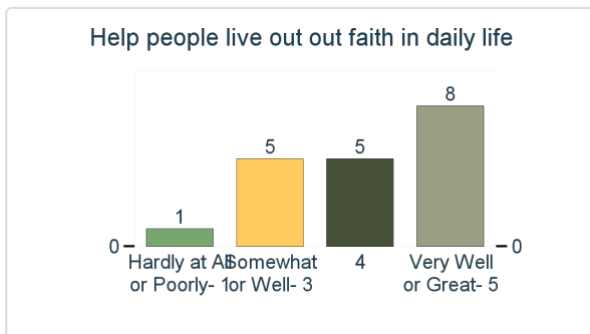


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## Connecting with the world



## Overall





# Congregation Sustainability Assessment

Welcome to the Sustainability Assessment for congregations. Upon completion, you will have measured your congregations facility capacity, financial resources, and people power. These three contribute to the vitality and sustainability of ministry.

To complete this assessment you will need to be familiar with:

1. The building - heating and air conditioning upgrades, additions, other church buildings or property
2. Congregation's finances - giving, stewardship, endowments, synod support, pastor compensation, and sources of income
3. People - a sense of needed leadership and worship participation

You will be able to start the assessment, set it aside, and come back to it later. To do so, page through to the end and submit the form. You will receive an email with a link to edit responses. Click on this to complete it later.

Thank you for taking the time to bring all of this information together.

Email address \*

jdiet@frontiernet.net

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Congregation's name \*

St. John's Lutheran Church

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The congregation's city. \*

Elkton

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Who is completing this survey? \*

Lisa Dietrich

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## Building(s) - Age and Maintenance

Tell us about the church building, additions, extras, and any other buildings like a parsonage.

What year was your sanctuary or parish hall constructed?

Parish Hall 1959; Sanctuary 1967

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If you have added on or completed major remodeling, what year was this completed? What is the addition?

Leave this blank if there have been no major additions.

New Roof 2007

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What other buildings does the church own and what years were they constructed?

None

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Is the HVAC and other major system operations new or been replaced within the last ten years?

Yes

No

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

If our sanctuary A/C or heating, or other major system failed next week, we would have the funds on hand to replace or repair.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Other: .....

Would such a major expense pose a financial crisis for the congregation

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Other: .....

Think back to the last major building maintenance needed (roof, windows, HVAC, etc.), what was needed maintenance, how did the congregation respond, and how were the needed funds secured?

New roof in 2007 paid from Boeff memorial fund

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Is it realistic now, to expect the same response and resolution from the congregation when the next major building maintenance need arises?

- Yes
- No
- Other: .....

Based on your answers, do we see our building age and maintenance as a strength or weakness for sustainability as a congregation.

- Strength
  - Weakness
  - Other: .....
- 
- 

### Current Building Usage

How many hours each week, excluding Sunday mornings, is your building utilized for ministry, gatherings, and outside community activities?

- 0 - 5 hours
- 5 - 20 hours
- 21 - 40 hours
- 40 - 60 hours
- Other: .....

Overall, our facilities are:

- Under-utilized
- Just right for our needs
- Too small for our needs
- Other: .....

Do you currently rent any of your facilities out to other organizations?

No

Yes

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### Rent Income

How much rental income does the congregation receive a year?

\$400

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### Building Usage

Based on your answers, do you see current building usage as an opportunity or as a threat for sustainability as a congregation?

Opportunity

Threat

Other: .....

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## Congregation Finances

Our current stewardship education consists of: (check all that apply)

- Adopting a budget at the annual meeting
- Printing the offering amount in the bulletin each Sunday
- Including a bulletin appeal or letter when funds are running short
- Monthly stewardship temple talks by a lay leader. These focus on practices of generosity as part of growing in faith.
- We have an Annual Financial Stewardship campaign with pledges and a focus on the Biblical practice of tithing
- Other: Periodic Stewardship Campaigns

Half or more of our annual congregational giving comes from the 65+ age group.

- No
- Yes

If our congregation's top one or two giving households were to die within the next year, there would be a financial crisis within our congregation.

- No
- Yes

Do you know the giving capacity of the congregation, based on the average household income in the area?

In order to determine the giving capacity in your area use this link: <http://www.city-data.com>. There you will enter your zip code in the search bar. The results will include income, housing, education, and and other information.

No

Yes

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### Congregation special funds

Does the congregation have a congregational, endowment, or memorial fund?

Yes

No

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### Congregational, endowment, or memorial fund

In the last 12 months, we have withdrawn money from our fund to pay regular ministry expenses.

Yes

No

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## Fund information

Over the last 12 months, how much has been withdrawn from the fund for regular ministry expenses?

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How much money remains in this fund?

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## Receiving Gifts

We receive financial gifts: (check all that apply)

- Passing around plates/baskets in worship.
- By providing and promoting online giving, giving at kiosks, etc.
- By providing and promoting gifts through estate planning, trust, stock gifts, etc.
- Other: Simply Giving option



How much mission support do you provide to or through the Synod and ELCA?

- We do not provide support
- Less than 5% of our budget
- 5 - 10% of our budget
- 10% or more of our budget

Based on your answers, do you see the congregation's financial stewardship as an opportunity (we have additional capacity to give) or as a threat (we are maxed out on our capacity to give) for sustainability as a congregation?

- Opportunity
  - Threat
  - Other: .....
- 
- 

## Pastoral Compensation

We provide a parsonage and pay for the cost of the utilities.

- Yes
  - No
- 
-

## Pastoral Compensation

We are able to provide full-time compensation (salary + housing allowance + social security offset) to our pastor at least at the synod's minimum guideline of \$51,568/year.

Yes

No

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## Pastoral Compensation

We are able to provide full-time compensation (salary + social security offset) plus the parsonage to our pastor at least at the synod's minimum guideline of \$39,784/year.

Yes

No

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## Benefits for the pastor

We currently are able to provide full benefit coverage (family health, disability, retiree support) and at least 10% pension to our pastor at a cost of between \$17,000 - \$32,000/year

- Yes
  - No
  - Other: .....
- 
- 

## Benefits

What level of benefit coverage are you able to provide to your pastor?

.....

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## Other Pastor Expenses

The congregation is able to provide continuing education, professional expenses, and mileage reimbursement to the pastor.

- Yes
- No
- Other: .....

Based on answers to the previous questions, do you see pastoral compensation as a strength or weakness for your sustainability as a congregation?

- Strength
  - Weakness
  - Other: It is both a strength (believing in our future) and weakness (difficult to maintain)
- 
- 

## People Power

### Leadership

We regularly have enough people to serve on Council.

- Yes
- No
- Other: .....

We regularly have enough people to serve on committees or boards.

- Yes
- No
- Other: .....

We regularly have enough people to lead the most important ministries we do.

- Yes
- No
- Other: .....

Based on your answers, do you see your leadership as a strength or weakness as a congregation?

- Strength
- Weakness
- Other: .....

## Worship

Our congregation has enough people to prepare and provide worship leadership for on a weekly basis.

- Yes
- No
- Other: .....

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## Weekly worship attendance

Specific figures can be found at <http://www.elca.org/tools/FindACongregation> ...enter your zip code...click on your congregation's name...click the link 'Full Trend Report of this Congregation'...a file will download...on page 3 you will find a graph and numbers back ten years.

Average weekly attendance 2016

39

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Average weekly attendance 2015

41

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Average weekly attendance 2014

44

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Average weekly attendance 2013

48

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Average weekly attendance 2012

53

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Are we?

- Growing
- Holding steady
- Declining

Based on your answers, do you see your worship as a strength or weakness for sustainability as a congregation?

Strength

Weakness

Other: .....

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## Overall Assessment

Congregations need resources to sustain ministry. The three primary resources include facilities, financial, and people. Reflect on this survey and your answers and then answer the following questions to estimate your sustainability.

Do you have what you need to sustain or expand your ministry?

	Declined to not sustainable	Declining but still sustainable	Maintaining	Growing or increasing
Facilities Capacity - maintainability and usage of facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Resources - to pay for facility, staffing, ministries, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People Power - to provide leadership, strengthen and sustain one another	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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## Closing

Thank you for providing this information. After submitting the survey, the result will be compiled and a summary prepared. Once completed, these will be emailed to the address which has been provided. If you have any further comments or questions, please include them in the final question before clicking on the SUBMIT button. May God bless your ministry.

Please use the space to provide additional information or to make comments. Thank you!

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