

Bishop Burkat's Top 10 Indicators of Vital Congregations

At the 2007 Conference Conversations I presented this list of indicators of congregational health and vitality. Many of you asked for a way to score your congregation on these indicators, so we have provided this form to allow you to see how your congregation rates in these 10 priority areas of ministry. These are indicators that I and others have found useful in assessing the relative health of a congregation. I invite you to ask your council and other key leaders to rate your congregation's performance in each of these areas, then total the scores and rank them to see which areas your congregation should celebrate, and which might be areas of future growth.

In Christ,
+ Claire S. Burkat, bishop

A. Indicators of vitality		
Rate your congregation on each of the indicators below (5 = excellent, 1 = needs improvement)	Your ratings in this column ↴	Total scores in this column ↴
10. Property Priorities		
Well-maintained, clean and welcoming facilities outside and inside	5 4 3 2 1	
Facilities fit the size and program of the congregation	5 4 3 2 1	
Cost of building/maintenance is an appropriate percentage of budget	5 4 3 2 1	
Safety and major structural issues are resolved quickly	5 4 3 2 1	
Appearance fits with/enhances the neighborhood	5 4 3 2 1	
Future improvements and repairs are anticipated and planned for	5 4 3 2 1	
Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡		<input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
9. Functional Structures		
Safe church policies and personnel checks are current	5 4 3 2 1	
Payroll and other taxes are up-to-date and paid in a timely manner	5 4 3 2 1	
Clergy and staff medical/pension benefits and salaries are paid and current	5 4 3 2 1	
Loan/mortgage payments are made regularly and on-time	5 4 3 2 1	
Bills for utilities and other services are paid promptly	5 4 3 2 1	

A yearly audit is performed and parochial report is shared with the Synod	5 4 3 2 1	
Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡		
8. Community Congruence		
Membership demographics are congruent with the neighborhood	5 4 3 2 1	
Clergy and leaders takes responsibility for adapting to the changing missional context	5 4 3 2 1	
Community activities and outreach opportunities flow through the building during the week	5 4 3 2 1	
A significant percentage of members are involved with programs and ministry geared toward the neighborhood	5 4 3 2 1	
The facility is used for mission and ministry, not rental income from non-missional programs and organizations	5 4 3 2 1	
The ministry of the congregation is respected and appreciated by community leaders and associations	5 4 3 2 1	
Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡		
7. Inspiring Worship		
God is glorified, and people are brought into a life changing relationship with Jesus Christ.	5 4 3 2 1	
People are spiritually fed as well as challenged in worship.	5 4 3 2 1	
Newcomers are warmly welcomed and greeted by a variety of people.	5 4 3 2 1	
Average weekly worship attendance represents, on average, 30-50% of active membership	5 4 3 2 1	
Two or more services are offered weekly	5 4 3 2 1	
Plans to add worship opportunities are discussed and implemented	5 4 3 2 1	
Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡		
6. Effective stewardship		
The gifts and talents of the people are well matched with opportunities for mission	5 4 3 2 1	
Members are regular, generous and joyful givers	5 4 3 2 1	

Regular operations are funded by member giving	5 4 3 2 1	
The budget is a realistic reflection of the mission and ministry capacity of member giving	5 4 3 2 1	
The congregation makes generous gifts to the ministry of the larger church a priority, modeling generosity to its members	5 4 3 2 1	
The congregation collaborates and cooperates with other congregations and ministries to maximize effective ministry.	5 4 3 2 1	

Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡

5. Leadership Development

The congregation and leaders regularly discern God's direction for adapting to a changing ministry context, through prayer and Biblical reflection.	5 4 3 2 1	
The congregational dynamics are resilient enough to deal with changes and challenges in a hopeful manner	5 4 3 2 1	
Leaders are well matched to their responsibilities and have a balanced time and energy commitment	5 4 3 2 1	
Young people and those new to the faith are guided and mentored in vocational discernment.	5 4 3 2 1	
The core leadership is open to new ideas and innovative directions	5 4 3 2 1	
The core leadership intentionally shares ministry and leadership with others, including new members	5 4 3 2 1	

Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡

4. System Resilience

Inevitable conflicts that develop are dealt with openly, honestly and in a timely manner	5 4 3 2 1	
There are no recent major conflicts (or misconduct) that continue to undermine the congregation	5 4 3 2 1	
Lay and clergy leaders attend to conflict promptly rather than deflect, deny or avoid it	5 4 3 2 1	
Decisions are made with awareness of their long-term ramifications	5 4 3 2 1	
The leadership is flexible and willing to consider change for the sake of the Gospel.	5 4 3 2 1	
Changes in staff and leadership are handled in a healthy manner	5 4 3 2 1	

Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡

3. Vision and Mission		
Vision for God's intended future of the congregation is hopeful and positive	5 4 3 2 1	
The vision and mission is widely understood and communicated regularly	5 4 3 2 1	
The congregation sees a connection and interdependence with the larger church and the resources available through it	5 4 3 2 1	
Plans, programs and budgets are based on prayer, spiritual discernment and a vision for God's mission in their context	5 4 3 2 1	
The congregation regularly engages in spiritual discernment for future planning and evaluation of current ministries	5 4 3 2 1	
Members know and share the congregation's mission statement/sense of purpose	5 4 3 2 1	
Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡		
2. Passionate Spirituality		
Christ and His mission are evident in everything the congregation does and stands for	5 4 3 2 1	
Worship and devotional practices touch the whole person – heart, body, soul and mind	5 4 3 2 1	
Leaders and a significant percentage of the congregation regularly engage in biblical reflection, prayer, spiritual disciplines and leadership development	5 4 3 2 1	
Members share their faith with others outside the membership with joy, compassion and sensitivity	5 4 3 2 1	
Throughout the year, the congregation offers additional opportunities to deepen the spiritual life of the people.	5 4 3 2 1	
There are small group opportunities for growth in discipleship, support, service and faith sharing.	5 4 3 2 1	
Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡		
1. Faithful Discipleship		
Ministry is joyful, inspiring, challenging and fulfilling	5 4 3 2 1	
Love for God and one another is contagious and evident in worship, community service/ministry, and congregational spirituality.	5 4 3 2 1	

Clergy, leaders and congregational members have a sense of humor and humility and an attitude of gratitude to God	5 4 3 2 1	
Advocacy and engagement in justice and peace making in the public arena, on behalf of God's mission, are a core values for the congregation.	5 4 3 2 1	
The challenges of 21st Century ministry are engaged and embraced as opportunities to learn and grow	5 4 3 2 1	
Prayer, petition, discernment and thanksgiving are core values	5 4 3 2 1	
Total scores for this area and enter in this box ➡		

B. Relative strengths		
<i>List your scores, highest to lowest, and list the ministry areas they refer to.</i>		
Rank	Score	Ministry area
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

➡ Celebrate your strengths and make plans for improvement in areas with low scores!