

12 Characteristics of a PDC Church

by Rick Warren

Over the last decade and a half I've seen **Purpose Driven Church (PDC) principles** *transform* the congregations who apply them. Here are some of the characteristics you can expect to see within your congregation as you introduce PDC concepts:

1. They have a **Purpose Statement** that describes (in their own words) their commitment to building the church around the **five New Testament purposes**: worship, evangelism, fellowship, discipleship, and ministry.
2. They use a **Purpose-Driven Strategy** to fulfill their purpose statement. While using a variety of terms, *a purpose-driven strategy brings people to Christ and into membership in His family, then builds them up to maturity, then equips them for ministry in the church, and then sends them out on a life mission in the world in order to bring glory to God.* The PDC strategy is based on two vital assumptions: 1) People grow best when you allow them to make gradual commitments. 2) You must ask for commitment in specific ways, such as using covenants.
3. They organize around a **Purpose-Driven Structure**, which insures balance and gives equal emphasis to all five New Testament purposes. PDC's are team-based, rather than hierarchical in structure. They organize around *purpose-based teams* (at least 5 - one for each purpose) composed of lay leaders and staff, with each team responsible for a specific purpose and target group (such as the community, the crowd, the congregation, the committed, and the core).
4. They **program by purpose**. They have at least one program for fulfilling each of the five purposes and each of the corresponding constituencies. They evangelize the Community, gather the Crowd for worship, fellowship in the Congregation, disciple the Committed, and equip the Core for ministry and mission.
5. They **staff by purpose**. Every purpose has its own champion. PDCs begin by finding volunteers to lead and serve on each purpose-based team, and they develop full-time, paid positions as needed.

6. The pastor **preaches by purpose**. Messages and series are planned to insure that the congregation receives a balanced emphasis on each of the purposes.

7. They **form small groups on purpose**. The PDC DNA is implanted in every cell of the Body of Christ. Each small group helps the members fulfill each of the five purposes in their lives. The goal is to help every believer live a purpose-driven life.

8. They **calendar by purpose**. The purposes are the determining factor in deciding what events are scheduled. Every event must fulfill at least one of the five purposes or it isn't approved.

9. They **budget by purpose**. Every expenditure is categorized by the purpose to which it relates.

10. They **build by purpose**. Buildings are seen as ministry tools, not monuments. They must serve the purposes and never become more important than the purposes.

11. They **evaluate by purpose**. They regularly ask: *Are we balancing all five purposes? Is there a better way to fulfill each purpose?*

Most PDC churches are **built from the outside-in**, rather than in the traditional way from the inside-out. **It's far easier to turn a crowd into a core, than it is to turn a core group into a crowd.** You build a healthy multi-dimensional ministry by focusing on one level of commitment at a time