

CHURCH HEALTH CHECKLIST

This is not an exhaustive list, but it arises out of the common themes I see emerging from consulting with churches over twenty years. There are several good assessment tools for churches that are useful in discerning health or vitality indicators.

1. Vision

We have a specific, measurable picture of God's future (say 4 to 5 years) for our church which we have discerned prayerfully and agreed on as a church. This has been broken down into specific strategies to implement and review this year (who is responsible, what and when will they do this?).

We measure key indicators towards this vision at least monthly, including our local community outreach (see 4.) and discipling/leadership development pipelines (see 2. & 8.).

2. Fruitfulness

This is about multiplying ministry. We have people (other than the pastor) and strategies in place for the following:

- Equipping believers in faith sharing (1 to 1 &/or group)
- Discipling/mentoring new Christians
- Training and equipping Christians in ministry and leadership

We are open to planting daughter congregations and are working towards this.

3. Leadership

- a. Involves governance/spiritual discernment, ministry co-ordination, and equipping (Eph 4:11-13). Different groups will carry out each of these parts (and operate differently) in different sized churches, but Leaders (as well as staff) should have key roles in equipping alongside governance/discernment. Role descriptions bring clarity.
- b. Trust between pastor and the peak Leadership group is key, as well as an understanding of how they can enhance each other's ministry, balancing accountability and empowerment.

4. Local Community Outreach

- a. We are aware of the needs of, and trends within, our local community, both through demographics and talking with other service providers.
- b. We meet some of those needs through relevant programs, and through partnering with other churches and like-minded agencies.
- c. We have a bias towards development/empowerment, rather than welfare.
- d. As well as equipping all attenders for relational faith-sharing (see 2.), we have strategies for being known in our community through social media (e.g. Facebook

ads, Google AdWords, SEO, Google maps) and online services and have designed a pathway to move people through increasing levels of engagement.

5. Compliance

We have policies in place for WHS, Child Safe, counting and transport of cash, etc. and these are regularly reviewed and implemented (e.g. sign in sheet for Kids Church). We are compliant with all other state and federal laws (e.g. CCLI, APRA licenses, ACNC returns).

6. Change

- a. There is a peak group responsible for change (e.g. Vision Team or Eldership) and there is a process to widen the change (e.g. Kotter's stages).
- b. We are aware of where our church is in the Life Cycle and are responding to that (so on the downside, redefinition, redevelopment or rebirth).
- c. We communicate changes redundantly in different ways, and with the **why**.
- d. We assist people with the inner transitions that accompany change (Bridges: ending, neutral zone and new beginning).

7. Reviews

- a. We have an external review of our church's ministry every 3 years.
- b. We have ongoing conversations around Leadership/Eldership effectiveness and Pastoral effectiveness that are aimed at improving ministry, and there will be no surprises when it comes to an annual review of each of these areas.

8. Small groups

- a. Relationship-based gatherings that reflect the five purposes of the church.
- b. There must be coherent oversight that equips new leaders and groups, and groups must expect to multiply.
- c. Pastoral care (unless specialized expertise is needed) can be delegated to small group leaders.

9. Conflict

- a. Is normal even for healthy churches, especially where change is being navigated. Is preached on regularly to normalize, and others are equipped for assisting others to process conflict well.
- b. We have several conflict policies in place that are enacted/modeled by Leadership, including:
 - A written/agreed covenant for the leadership team
 - A covenant for the congregation about how to express and process conflict. Triangling others is discouraged.
 - A process for dealing with interpersonal conflict.

10. Burnout

- a. We encourage our pastor to take regular holidays and limit Leadership/Eldership to one or two terms.
- b. We monitor the health of those in ministry positions through regular check-ins.