

## Church Vitality 2.0 Process

### Introduction

It is helpful to identify a baseline regarding a church's posture toward outreach and the function and attitude of its leadership. This also helps the Church Vitality Coordinator (or one of the coaches) to become informed on the general preparedness of church leadership (*pastors, session, and key ministry leaders*) to respond to the process. Knowing where you are is essential for identifying what steps are most helpful and how the presbytery can best support those steps.

It is also very important for church leadership to have a clear understanding of the expectations regarding the Church Vitality 2.0 process so the church can determine if they can commit to participating and so they know what to expect from the presbytery. Below is the summary of the 3-Step Process:

### Step #1 – Church Preparation

Church leadership is presented with this process outline and determines if it is ready to participate.

Church leadership will be sent the “Missional Posture” and the “Ideal Church Leadership” self-assessment surveys (*Attachments 1 and 2 respectively*). These surveys should be taken independently by each member of the church leadership team. Completed surveys are sent to Church Vitality Coordinator to process. This information will serve to 1) help church leadership see where they are and 2) help the Church Vitality Coordinator determine which coach is assigned (matching the attributes and gifts of the coaches with the church). The results of these two self-assessment surveys will be shared with church leadership at an initial meeting.

In a meeting with the assigned coach, church leadership will participate in the Church Lifecycle evaluation – a self-assessment of the trending vitality of the church – whether it is inclining (growing in ministry capacity and effectiveness), reclining (stagnant in ministry capacity and effectiveness) or declining (decreasing in ministry capacity and effectiveness). This is also the time to encourage church leadership (and even the entire congregation) to partake in the “50 Days to Vitality” study as a way to prepare themselves spiritually for the process.

This Step #1 – Church Preparation – may require several meetings and take several weeks/months to complete, but it is a pivotal part of the process.

*As an option, a church may want to attend a G.O. 1 Seminar prior to beginning Step #2 below if a) it has never attended a seminar or b) they consider it would be helpful to refresh themselves on the principles.*

### Step #2 – Setting the Stage

Church leadership then chooses individuals to serve as the Vision Team to move forward with the process. The assigned coach will present to church leadership the characteristics and responsibilities of the Vision Team, which will be the church team that moves the process forward and with whom the vitality coach will work.

The first task of the Vision Team will be for each member to choose a small team of folks (3 or 4 per team member) to serve as their prayer support. This group (the Prayer Team) will be asked to pray for and with the Vision Team. The assigned coach will present to the Vision Team the characteristics and responsibilities of the Prayer Team.

### Step #3 – Follow-up (with assigned Coach)

Subsequent meetings between the coach and the Vision Team will likely be necessary and helpful. The frequency, focus, and format of these follow-up meetings will certainly vary from church to church. However, in all cases, emphasis will be on aligning vision, with strategy, with structure for a more effective outreach. “The Five Phases of Vitalization” (*Attachment #3*) outlines the alignment process for developing more fruitful ministry.

*Mark your level of agreement with the following statements.*

1. *We have started to focus ministry on our own congregation now that we have reached a point of stability.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

2. *We used to see significant conversion growth but it's been awhile since we've seen that.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

3. *We were very connected to our community but that connection seems to have faded.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

4. *We seem to be having less and less of an impact in our community as the community has changed over time.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

5. *We haven't hosted an outreach event in our community in a long time.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

6. *We know that we should reach out to our community but we also know that entails risk and I'm not sure we're ready for that.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

7. *We know that we should reach out to our community but we don't even know where to start.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

8. *We are considering reaching out to our community but are concerned that not everyone will be on board and folks might get upset.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

9. *We have actually considered reaching out but we can't agree on whom we should try to reach.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

10. *We know that Scripture compels us to go but need outside help to walk us through the process step by step.*

*[ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Agree [ ] Strongly Agree*

11. *We would be open to very gradual change if we didn't have to change anything about who we are or what we are doing.*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

12. *We don't think it's wise to spend so much time and energy reaching out to a group of people who probably wouldn't come anyway?*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

13. *We don't have enough energy to care for our own people to reach out to people who probably have even more needs.*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

14. *We aren't willing to risk the open conflict in our church that might result from getting really serious about reaching.*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

15. *We have limited resources that are already stretched too thin to afford outreach to the community.*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

16. *We know that Scripture calls us to leave the safety of our church and reach our community for Christ, but we need someone to tell us how to do this faithfully and well.*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

17. *We're really excited to see new converts from our community in our newcomer's classes.*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

18. *We make certain that our church structure serves our mission to reach the community.*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

19. *We build evaluation and assessment of fruitfulness into every aspect of our church's ministry life.*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

20. *We have a clear process for making mature disciples who make mature disciples.*

*Strongly Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Agree*    *Strongly Agree*

21. *We are so much different from the people in our community that we really don't want them to be part of our church.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

22. *We would only be willing to reach out to the folks most like us theologically and spiritually.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

23. *We use the majority of our mission dollars to support foreign mission work.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

24. *We pray and preach the Gospel faithfully and trust God for the numerical increase.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

25. *We separate from the culture around us to protect ourselves from worldly influence.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

26. *We tried to invite some folks in but they didn't come so it's not worth the effort to continue to do that.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

27. *We enjoy the songs we sing, the fellowship we have and the sermons we hear, but wonder why we are declining.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

28. *We are weary of the possibility of another evangelistic training course or sermon series.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

29. *We are no longer willing to take the risk of inviting others to church.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

30. *We think a change in programming would cause more people to come to faith in Jesus.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

31. *We tried a couple of service projects but no one came to church so we are a little hesitant to keep trying when we obviously don't know what we're doing wrong.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

32. *We know we are surrounded by people who are living without the hope of the Gospel.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

33. *We are seeking to know God's purpose for locating us where we are.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

34. *We want to engage our community with the Good News of Jesus.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

35. *We have been trying to reach people in our own strength and not depending upon the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

36. *We actively identify and develop leaders to expand our church's ministry capacity.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

37. *We mobilize our people to serve our community regularly and specifically.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

38. *We use mission dollars in various ways, including local missions that deepen our reach and credibility in our community.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

39. *We hire staff who see themselves as developers of people who will equip our congregations to engage with others through outreach and evangelism.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

40. *We are sharing our faith now because we want to instead of because we have to.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

41. *We seem to have focused, lately, on getting community people into our church rather than on getting our church folks into the community.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

42. *We are doing well with plenty of people and money, but it seems like we've lost some zeal for reaching the community.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

43. *We aren't taking risks for the Gospel like we used to.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

44. *We've settled into being a very stable, comfortable church.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

45. *We have committed the next season of our church's life to ministering to the needs and wants of our congregation.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

46. *We recognize that our commitment to preaching, teaching and worship has caused our numbers to decrease.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

47. *We are not overly concerned about reaching our immediate community because we are more of a regional church.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

48. *We might be more committed to reaching our community if we thought that the people who live around us had leadership potential.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

49. *We might be more committed to reaching our community if we thought that the people who live around us had the capacity to support the church financially.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

50. *We are not going to compromise for the sake of growth but a few like-minded families would be welcomed.*

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

## The Ideal Church Leadership for Vitalization

Vitalization will not take hold in the church unless the lead pastor, session, and key ministry leaders (“Church Leadership”) are totally committed, making vitalization the priority in the church. There are initiatives the Church Leadership should provide, roles the Church Leadership should play, and attributes the Church Leadership should possess. Of course, no one is the ideal, but a measuring of strengths and weaknesses and a plan to strengthen obvious weaknesses is in order.

### *The Ideal Church Leadership for Vitalization Provides . . .*

- **Attitude:** The Church Leadership must consistently present a positive attitude toward the vitalization process. There will be challenges, resistance and naysayers. The Church Leadership must always point forward and must always foster confidence.
- **Assurance:** Related to the Church Leadership attitude is a posture of assurance that the process of vitalization will be effective if applied faithfully. Joining in negativity or criticism, or adopting a “wait and see how this turns out” perspective, will sabotage the process.
- **Accountability:** The Church Leadership needs to provide accountability for all who participate in the leadership of vitalization. Work must be completed thoroughly and on time or momentum will fail. Though the workforce is typically a volunteer workforce, mediocrity or lack of follow through is not acceptable. Do all things as unto the Lord.

### *The Ideal Pastor for Vitalization Serves As . . .*

- **Catalyst:** Someone must provide the spark to get things started. That someone needs to be the lead pastor. Initiative must come and continue to come from the top.
- **Captain:** The Vision Team\* is in fact a team and all members must actively participate, but the lead pastor is the captain that must keep the team unified and on task.
- **Champion:** Throughout the course of vitalization, momentum will wane from time to time, focus will be lost, and the effort will seem too great. The lead pastor must champion the cause of vitalization repeatedly to achieve sustainable results.

### *The Ideal Church Leadership for Vitalization Possesses . . .*

- **Vision:** The ability to translate the Vision Team’s discerned vision into reality.
- **Drive:** The focus and discipline to move the church forward at an aggressive pace.
- **Energy:** The stamina to fulfill what ministry as usual requires plus lead vitalization.
- **Experience:** The ministry seasoning to work smart, weather storms and lead people.
- **Training:** The equipping to lead vitalization.
- **Support:** Strong devotional and family life to strengthen leading without affirmation, a reality faced by most vitalization Church Leadership moving people through change.
- **Capacity:** The ability to be effective while leading multiple initiatives simultaneously.
- **Health:** Given the enormous challenge of leading vitalization, health in other areas of life is essential, e.g. physical, psychological, financial, spiritual, and family. Vitalization should be the only major challenge of the season.
- **People Skills:** Effective vitalization demands working with people in challenging scenarios. The Church Leadership will need to say things people don’t want to hear, will need to challenge people to give up what they don’t want to give up, and lead people to do what they don’t want to do. This will require high-level people skills.

\*The Vision Team is a team of leaders that is committed to leading the church through the vitalization process. The recommended number for such a team is six, pastor plus five, though that number might vary for a variety of reasons.

**ASSESSMENT:** Use the following tool for an Ideal Church Leadership Evaluation. Each Church Leader should do a Self-Evaluation. All leaders should rate the lead pastor as Catalyst, Captain, and Champion.

Circle the rating that best describes your strength in each area:

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Attitude	1	2	3	4
Assurance	1	2	3	4
Accountability	1	2	3	4
Catalyst ( <i>Pastor</i> )	1	2	3	4
Captain ( <i>Pastor</i> )	1	2	3	4
Champion ( <i>Pastor</i> )	1	2	3	4
Vision	1	2	3	4
Drive	1	2	3	4
Energy	1	2	3	4
Experience	1	2	3	4
Training	1	2	3	4
Support	1	2	3	4
Capacity	1	2	3	4
Health	1	2	3	4
People Skills	1	2	3	4
# Circled in Each Column				

### Descriptive Evaluation

What are primary strengths?

What are your primary weaknesses?

How could your weaknesses be strengthened?

## **Five Phases of Vitalization**

### **Aligning Process for Effective Ministry**

#### **Phase 1 – Aligning Perception – Self Discovery and Analysis**

*Key Questions:*

- What will we discover about ourselves?
- What will we do in light of what we discover?

#### **Phase 2 – Aligning Vision – Who Are We Going to Be?**

*Key Questions:*

- How does God want to express Himself through this church in this community at this time?
- What did God mean by that? (*making adjustments*)

#### **Phase 3 – Aligning Strategy – What Are We Going to Do?**

*Key Questions:*

- How do we make contact with those we are trying to reach?
- How will we develop those we are trying to reach once we've made contact?

#### **Phase 4 – Aligning Structure – Supporting the Strategy**

*Key Questions:*

- What are the criteria for decision-making and resource allocation?
- How does leadership function?

#### **Phase 5 – Aligning People – Manning the Structure**

*Key Questions:*

- How will we get people involved?
- On whom does the future depend?