

R-3-09

REVIEWED

Indicators of Congregational Vitality

The Synod Outreach Team was directed by the 2008 Synod Assembly to review R-2-08 for future consideration by the assembly. The following is offered as a substitute motion for R-2-08. It has been circulated to the deans for consideration in the conferences. The South Central Conference which sent the original motion to the 2008 Assembly has endorsed the revision at its spring assembly and finds this document consistent with its intentions to encourage congregational vitality.

WHEREAS in the I-K Synod we see every person as a missionary, every pastor a mission director, and every congregation, conference, and ministry a mission center, and

WHEREAS congregations desiring to be effective witnesses to the Gospel benefit from self-evaluation of ministries and from support within our synod,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod adopt the following as indicators of congregational vitality.

INDICATORS OF CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY

The Indiana-Kentucky Synod recognizes that the congregation is a major expression of God's church and the vitality of individual congregations is an indicator of the vitality of the whole church.

This document is designed as an evaluation tool for congregations and the bishop's office to use both to celebrate a congregation's effectiveness and to consider a congregation's need for improvement in ministry.

Congregations are encouraged to study these indicators at least annually in their self-assessment as well as when they prepare the call process or hire staff. These criteria will be reviewed by the office of the bishop with congregations engaged in the call process.

Indicators of congregational vitality include:

- A.** Offers an engaging weekly word and sacrament worship (e.g. with dynamic & inspirational music, carefully prepared Gospel proclamation; see ELCA Model Constitution C4.02a & C4.03a)

- B.** Has regularly sponsored or mentored people into the rostered ministry during the past 30 years (e.g. offering a contextual education or an internship site, significant scholarship, sent a member into ELCA ministry; see ELCA Model Constitution C4.02b)

- C.** Offers a significant teaching ministry (e.g. small groups, Sunday School; see ELCA Model Constitution C4.03d)

- D.** Offers a significant evangelism ministry (e.g. effective advertising, visiting homes of new residents, clear mission statement; see ELCA Model Constitution C4.03e)

- E.** Offers a significant service ministry (e.g. prayer groups, Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity; see ELCA Model Constitution C4.02d & C4.03f)

- F.** Is the only ELCA church within a readily accessible cultural/population/geographic area (e.g. 20 minute or commuting drive; multicultural ministry, etc; see ELCA Model Constitution C4.03.h,i)
- G.** Has a facility for worship and ministry that is readily accessible, both physically and culturally, to the community it serves
- H.** Has addressed any chronic conflict within the congregation (e.g. conflicts which church members are not addressing in accordance with the IK Synod's Conflict Resolution/ Healthy Congregations guide)
- I.** Has attendance or constituency that is generally stable or growing over past 10 years
- J.** Has a trend of financial giving that is generally stable or growing over past 10 years (see ELCA Model Constitution C4.03 g)
- K.** Has an ongoing emphasis on stewardship of life and possessions
- L.** Has been moving toward giving a tithe or more in synodical benevolence over the past 10 years (see ELCA Model Constitution C4.03g, h)
- M.** Is able to offer pastoral candidates salary/benefits that meet or exceed minimum synodical guidelines.

The Reference and Counsel Committee **RECOMMENDS ADOPTION.**

R-3-09 was adopted.