

REDEVELOPMENT PREPARATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Congregational Services – Church of God in Western Canada

Dear Congregation,

The following pages contain some explanations and exercises that will help you understand what is needed to undergo Church ReDevelopment. It will also assist Ministry Services to ascertain your readiness for redevelopment. Please read the explanation and instructions, and complete the exercises. When completed please **submit a copy to Ministry Services 2 weeks prior to their scheduled visit.**

The exercises are intended for Leadership Team members. They should be first answered individually and then discussed as a team. In cases where consensus cannot be arrived at please note the spectrum of viewpoints on the copy submitted to Ministry Services. The exercises may take 2 or more meetings to complete.

What is Congregational Redevelopment?

Congregational redevelopment is a process by which congregations facing significant challenges engage in a new or renewed spiritual strategic journey leading to congregational transformation.

Congregations in need of redevelopment are ones that realize there is a growing gap between (1) the reality of their life and ministry and (2) their full kingdom potential.

- Once this gap was smaller because the congregation was thriving.
- Now the gap is widening because the congregation has lost its sense of spiritual strategic journey.
- It is wandering in a wilderness of chaos without the order that being in the midst of God's will can bring to them as a faith-based community.

Question: What do you understand Congregational Redevelopment to mean and entail?

Initial Considerations: Readiness

Readiness involves engaging in the readiness activities necessary for a congregation to achieve the change and transition necessary for congregational redevelopment to take place.

A. Initial Considerations: Four aspects of readiness

Four aspects of readiness for change and transition must be addressed for a congregation to truly have readiness: passionate readiness; spiritual readiness; leadership readiness; and strategic readiness.

Passionate Readiness

“Our leadership and congregation feels a sense of urgency about change, and a need to “do what it takes” or the congregation will face continued deterioration and perhaps death. There is a strong passion for the existence of this particular congregation in the community and a sense that it offers something unique to the spiritual needs of people.”

How would you rate your congregation in terms of it's passionate readiness? (1 = low; 10 = high)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What makes this congregation unique?

What would the community miss if this congregation were no longer to exist?

Spiritual Readiness

“The leadership and congregation is firmly committed to seeking God for his vision and intervention in the life of this congregation. It is ready to meet regularly for prayer and to be open to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. It is open to corporately taking appropriate responsibility for past hurts, and conflicts, and is open to confessing those to God”

How would you rate your congregation in terms of its spiritual readiness?
(1 = low; 10 = high)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

In Revelation 2 & 3 there are 7 letters to the churches of Asia. (You may want to take time to read through those Scriptures before proceeding with the question. If Jesus were to write an 8th letter to your church what would he ...

- a. Commend you for

- b. Rebuke you for (note: things committed and things omitted . What have we tolerated?)

- c. Challenge you to
How ready is the leadership and congregation to confess it's "sins" of omission and commission?

Leadership Readiness

"Our leadership is willing and prepared to do what it takes for this congregation to achieve transformation and reach its full kingdom potential. It is willing to surrender control and allow respected outside leadership to assist and give direction to the redevelopment of the congregation. "

How would you rate your congregation in terms of it's leadership readiness?
(1 = low; 10 = high)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strategic Readiness

"Our leadership and congregation is prepared to transition and undergo a process of re-visioning as to the future of the church. It is ready to embrace altogether new strategies and tactics in order to achieve its full kingdom potential. It is open to learning experiences which will help reshape the life and future of the congregation "

How would you rate your congregation in terms of it's strategic readiness?
(1 = low; 10 = high)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What are things you would like to preserve in moving into the future?

What are things you are willing to let go of?

B. Distinctive Characteristics

Choose words from each of the following 3 columns that you feel best describe your church at the present.

Future Oriented	Present	Past Oriented
Vision Driven	Oriented	Structure
Community	Program Driven	Core Focus
Innovative	Congregational	Custodial
High Risk	Managerial	No Risk
Investor	Low Risk	Preserver
New Leadership	Sustain	Incumbent
Conversion	Established	No Growth
Growth	Transfer Growth	Serve > Default
Serve > Gifts	Serve > Slot	

Add up the total number from each column.

- Column 1 represents the characteristics of a church on the incline.
- Column 2 the characteristics of a church on the recline.
- Column 3 the characteristics of a church on the decline.

C. Church Lifecycle

Please refer to the attached “Church Lifecycle Chart”. Below are some corresponding descriptions of the stages in the lifecycle. Read the descriptions and then place an “x” where you feel your church is on the lifecycle chart. At the end of the descriptions are a couple of questions to discuss.

CHURCH LIFECYCLE

1. Birth

Birth is the first six months to two years of the public life of a congregation.

The Birth stage is driven by the expression of a passionate God-given *Vision* concerning the life of the newly emerging congregation.

Relationships, Programs, and Management activities are happening, but they are not fully developed at this stage.

Leadership is expressed through vision, and assists in fuelling the forward progress of the congregation.

INCLINE

2. Infancy

Infancy is the three to five years following the Birth stage when *Vision* and *Relationships* are dominant.

The expression of discipleship patterns that focus on worship, spiritual development, and the formation of warm and rich relationship patterns or a sense of true community in the congregation characterize infancy.

During Infancy the passion of the congregation to fulfill its vision will increase as people discover their role in this exciting spiritual and strategic journey.

Out of this passion people readily volunteer to do the work of the congregation because their congregation has the character of a movement they very much want to enhance and empower.

Healthy patterns of worship, evangelism, discipleship, leadership development, and ministry and missions are established during this stage.

3. Childhood

Childhood usually begins around five to six years after the Birth of a congregation, lasts for five to six years, and focuses on *Vision* and *Programs*.

Childhood is initiated by the realization that the congregation is succeeding, but that its programs, ministries, and activities are unorganized and not developed in a form that will allow the congregation to reach its full kingdom potential.

The energy that was going into the development of deep, meaningful *Relationships* is now focused on developing and implementing the *Programs* structure for the congregation.

4. Adolescence

Adolescence begins around 10 to 12 years after the public launching of the congregation, and is a stage where *Vision*, *Relationships*, and *Programs* are all emphasized.

It is often a time of a great crescendo of qualitative and quantitative growth.

The congregation is able to relax following five to six of program development and implementation. People can enjoy their relationship with God and one another.

It is also a time of some chaos as people begin to multiply the dreams they have for the future of the congregation, and the core dream or vision of the congregation may appear fuzzy.

The longer Adolescence lasts, the more the congregation begins to realize they must address the *Management* systems of the congregation.

RECLINE

5. Adulthood

Around 18 to 22 years after the public launching of the congregation, it reaches Adulthood when all four organizing principles—*Vision, Relationships, Programs, and Management*—are all fully developed.

The congregation is ready to soar as a fully development spiritual community with great resources and the proper balance or alignment of these resources.

Often, however, congregations do not soar because of one or both of the following reasons:

First, their fantasy of what it would feel and look like when they arrived at Adulthood, does not match what they see. So, they are waiting for something else to happen.

Second, they may feel that what they have done is enough, and they may relax and begin to become complacent about their spiritual and strategic journey.

6. Maturity

When congregations are around 22 to 27 years old, or approximately a generation from their Birth, they slip without much notice from Adulthood to Maturity.

Maturity is when *Vision* is no longer dominant or fully developed. The congregation is no longer living out the vision that God has given them. They are, instead, living out the patterns of *Relationships, Programs, and Management* they have developed.

Without the fueling and driving aspects of *Vision*, the congregation is being motivated by *Management*.

At the same time, Maturity may be a very high quality stage in the life of the congregation. There continues to be a crescendo of quality, even if *Vision* is diminished.

Often congregations will plateau numerically during Maturity.

Maturity represents the first stage when a congregation could redevelop or transform and move forward to a new partial life cycle.

DECLINE

7. Empty Nest

If a congregation does not redevelop during Maturity it will move on to the Empty Nest stage.

Empty Nest is when *Vision* and *Programs* are no longer dominant or fully developed. The congregation is experiencing disintegration of the quality and quantity of programs, ministries, and activities.

Management is driving the direction of the congregation.

Relationships, while still vital, are turning increasingly inward in their focus.

Empty Nest has three phases.

Phase one is characterized by nostalgia that carries with it a hope that tomorrow will bring the return of yesterday. Most stories are about the glories of the past and not the anticipation of the future.

Phase two is characterized by disappointment that triggers a renewed call for commitment by the faithful core. Overachieving persons demand that everyone be as committed as they are to the redevelopment of the congregation.

Phase three is characterized by anger that results in a pattern of blaming. Often blaming focuses on the leadership of the congregation, even the pastor.

Empty Nest represents what can turn out to be the angriest stage of the life cycle for a congregation.

8. Retirement

If a congregation does not redevelop during Empty Nest it will move on to the Retirement stage.

Retirement is when *Vision* and *Relationships* are no longer dominant or fully developed.

Management is driving the direction of the congregation.

Programs are once again dominant as congregations seek to revitalize their programs, ministries and activities.

9. Old age

If a congregation does not redevelop during Retirement it will move on to the Old Age stage.

Old Age is when *Vision*, *Relationships*, and *Programs* are no longer dominant or fully developed.

Management is the only factor that is still dominant or fully developed. As such the habit or pattern, generally at a mediocre level, drives the direction of the congregation.

10. Death

If a congregation never redevelops, then it will die. Death is where the congregation ceases functioning as a Christ-centric faith community with regular worship, discipleship, and fellowship activities.

QUESTIONS

Individually answer the following questions on a prepared written form:

- At what stage of the life cycle is your congregation today?
- What is the evidence of this stage?

What Does Regeneration Take?

1. The congregation must be willing to engage in the redevelopment process
2. The congregation must be willing to undergo deep and radical change.

Often congregations really don't want to transform:

- they want to be fixed, to have less pain, or to restore past glory.
- they do not want to change, but are afraid of dying
- persons with positions of leadership do not want to risk losing position by giving permission for change

3. Congregations must be willing to surrender control and leadership.

"I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life." John 12:24,25

Given the above description of what redevelopment takes, reflect on where you are at as a leadership in relationship to these statements.

**The Church of God in Western Canada - Division of Congregational Services
4717 – 56 Street, Camrose, AB T4V 2C4
Ph. (780) 672-0772; Fax (780) 672-6888; E-mail: wcdncog@cable-lynx.net**