

Twelve Steps to Church Growth

adapted slightly from “Re-Imaging Church for a Post-Christian World”
a presentation given by the Rev. Dr. Gary Nicolosi
in the Diocese of Montreal on May 14, 2011

Step 1: Focus on Spirituality

Principle: Foundational to church growth is to make our churches communities of transformation where people experience God. The church of the future must emphasize spirituality. It must not shy away from the supernatural. Above all, the church must put its focus into satisfying the spiritual hunger that is in every human being who seeks an experience of transcendence, and yearns for purpose, meaning and significance. To do this effectively, the church will integrate the classical spiritual disciplines with a post-modern spirituality. It will focus on Jesus rather than on the institutional church.

Old Paradigm

Spiritual but not religious
Dwelling
Intellectual
Institutional
Either / Or
Closed boundaries
Withdrawal from the world
Sacred and secular separated
Permanence
Membership
Inhabiting
Rules
Systematic understanding of life
Liturgy as uniform experience
Church, Bible, Denomination
Search for the historical Jesus
Christian education
Prefers absolute answers
Systematic theology

New Paradigm

Secular but spiritual
Seeking
Experiential
Individualistic
Both / And
Open parameters
Engagement in the world
Sacred and secular connected
Transition
Connections
Journeying
Symbolic Messages
Try whatever promises to work
Liturgy as variety
Jesus
Search for the life transforming Jesus
Christian formation
Comfortable with paradox
Contextual theology

Action Steps:

- (1) Teach people the classic spiritual disciplines, especially how to pray, meditate and read the Bible.
- (2) Give seekers an experience of God, invite them into community, and help them grow in faith – experience, community and faith – in that order.
- (3) Provide a balanced spirituality of the God encounter, the journey within and compassion for others.
- (4) Emphasize the importance of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, as a way of encountering God.
- (5) Rediscover a living liturgy as the center point of life, including the importance of music, art, architecture, color, dance and drama.
- (6) Teach stewardship as personal life management.
- (7) Offer group and one-on-one spiritual direction.
- (8) Offer courses on Jesus.
- (9) Offer both thinking and feeling approaches to faith.
- (10) Develop a healing ministry and prayer partners.

Questions:

- (11) What opportunities for spiritual growth exist in your church? Do the ministries of the church help you to grow spiritually? How?
- (12) What is it that you deeply long for as a regular aspect of your life? How can the church help meet that need?
- (13) How does the liturgical life of your church promote the spiritual growth of members? Non-members with little familiarity with Christianity?
- (14) Describe a person who embodies for you an inspiring example of a spiritual life? What are some of the traits that characterize such a life?
- (15) How does being Anglican assist people to grow spiritually? What does the Anglican tradition have to offer seekers?

Step 2: Become an Open Church

Principle: An open church believes passionately that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is about God's amazing grace and unconditional love transforming lives. Therefore, an open church practices radical hospitality that welcomes, accepts and reaches out to all sorts of people – no matter who they are or where they are on their journey of faith. It is a church that practices radical hospitality, blessing rather than cursing, including rather than excluding, always finding room for one more so that no one is ever shut out. The open church draws the circle wide – as wide as the love of Jesus. It is a church of open hearts, open minds and open doors, where everyone is accepted at his or her own level of need and understanding.

Old Paradigm

Church as birdcage
Defined parameters
One size fits all
Church as destination
Church in the box
Church for members only
Exclusive
Dogmatic
Join an institution
People conform to church
Institution as priority
Fixed rules
Principles above people
Keeping the faith
Possessing the truth
Having the answers
Church-centered
Believing the right things about God
Baptism leads to communion
Believe to belong
Certainty
Spirit in the church alone

New Paradigm

Church as birdbath
Freedom and flexibility
Custom fit
Church as way station
What box?
Church for members and seekers
Inclusive
Pragmatic
Bond with people
Church accommodates people
Relationships as priority
Flexible rules
People above principles
Exploring faith
Pursing truth
Living the questions
Christ-centered
Experiencing God
Communion leads to baptism
Belong to believe
Clarity
Spirit in the church and world

Actions Steps:

1. Help seekers experience God, invite them into community, and lead them to faith.
2. Put an inclusive statement of welcome in your worship bulletin such as, "Whoever you are and wherever you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome."
3. Take Robert Frost's definition of home and apply it to your church: "the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in."

4. Recognize that becoming a Christian takes a lifetime of growth, and that people who come to your church are at different stages of development.
5. Don't expect people to act like Christians until they are Christians.
6. Be patient with people who know little or nothing about Anglican decorum.
7. Follow the wisdom of an old Chinese proverb: *“Go to people. Live among them. Learn from them. Love them. Start with what they know. Build on what they have.”*

Questions:

1. What does your church believe about God's love for all people?
2. In your reading of scripture, how does Jesus treat “outcasts, sinners and disreputable people”, and how does your church treat them?
3. Would outsiders and non-members recognize Jesus present in your church? If so, in what ways?
4. In the life of your church, how do you include people? How does your church exclude people?
5. Would someone of little or no church background feel comfortable in your church? Why or why not?
6. What judgmental or moralistic attitudes in your church might turn outsiders away?
7. How can your church proclaim, “Jesus is Lord” without appearing to be intolerant?

Step 3: Upgrade Your Physical Facilities

Principle: The first impression people have of a church is the facilities. An attractive church complex attracts visitors. The appearance of church facilities presents an image to outsiders as warm, friendly and inviting or cold, uncaring and foreboding. Growing churches have gotten over their addiction to physical mediocrity.

Old Paradigm

Traditional
Handicapped inaccessible
Dark and cramped
Stuffy and musty
Member sensitive

New Paradigm

Contemporary
Handicapped accessible
Bright and spacious
Fresh and invigorating
Guest sensitive

Buildings look and feel old
Falling apart
Pews
Buildings reflect a staid church
Too scary to enter

Buildings look and feel new
Well maintained
Chairs
Buildings reflect a lively church.
Too attractive not to enter

Action Steps:

1. Begin with your signs, parking facilities and restrooms.
2. Have handicapped accessible entrances and washrooms.
3. Maintain an excellent sound system.
4. Invest in warm, inviting lighting.
5. Designate visitor parking.
6. Air-condition the worship space.
7. Build a cry room.
8. Spare no expense to provide an excellent nursery.
9. Provide change table in both men and women restrooms.
10. Remodel on an ongoing basis.
11. Remember the Rule of 80: when the church is filled at 80% of capacity, it feels full. At that point, begin a second service.

Questions:

1. If a group of strangers looked at the outside of your church, would they want to come in? Why or why not?
2. What do the physical spaces of your church “say” to strangers and newcomers? What are the unspoken, and perhaps even unintentional messages being projected?
3. Survey the grounds, the nursery, the restrooms, the outer appearance, and so on, as a guest. What needs to be done to give the property a sense of excellence?
4. What physical barriers might exist in your church that makes it difficult for young families, seniors, and the physically challenged to feel welcomed or included?

Step 4: Become a Third Place in Your Community

Principle: *A Third Place is that informal public place outside of work and home – where people gather, put aside their concerns of work and home, relax and talk. According to sociologist Ray Oldenburg who first elaborated the concept in his book *The Great Good Place (1989)*, a Third Place promotes connection, conversation and community. In a church setting, a warm, caring community is one of the first things a visitor notices and one of the last things a member relinquishes. All visitors expect to find blessing in the church by a meaningful*

touch, spoken words of acceptance, their high value affirmed, a special future for their lives and an active commitment to the fullness of life. Growing churches will help visitors feel affirmed, accepted and welcomed into the life of the congregation. They offer a non-pretentious homey place, foster a playful mood, and promote social equality and an inclusive atmosphere.

Old Paradigm

Membership
Believing leads to belonging
Low touch, no touch, slap
Church as a proper place
Judgmental
Law
Formal dress code
Bigger is always better
Keep up appearances
Perfect people
Affirming the strong
Casual talk
On your guard

New Paradigm

Relationships
Belonging leads to believing
High touch
Church as a safe place
Non-judgmental love
Grace
Informal dress
Intimacy is what matters
Unconditional acceptance
Imperfect people
Healing the wounded
Meaningful discussion
Letting go and letting God

Actions Steps:

1. Position your church as a web of relationships.
2. Have a friendly pastor: “Give a look, a word and a touch.” (Robert Schuler)
3. Make a friendly first impression within the first twelve minutes of a visitor coming to your church.
4. Allow and affirm diversity.
5. Show concern for what people think, feel and need.
6. Offer opportunities for connection, conversation and community.

Questions:

1. Describe a Christian community you think embodies the church at its best. What are some of the traits that attract you?
2. How important is a caring community in the lives of your church’s members? How open are they to showing that caring to strangers?
3. Why do some people feel it difficult to welcome strangers? How might strangers threaten us?
4. Have you ever experienced being a stranger? Describe the situation, the emotions, and the story. Did anyone welcome you with hospitality? If so, what forms did the

hospitality take?

5. In what ways does your church practice “intentional caring” for each other?
6. How might your church strengthen the bonds of community that already exist?
7. Is your church a “safe place” to belong, where people can find security, honesty and vulnerability with one another? What might be done to make this kind of community a reality in your church?

Step 5: Be Intentional about Newcomer Ministry

Principle: The primary purpose of newcomer ministry is to build relationships with the people who come to your church. Newcomers do not join churches; instead they bond with people. Their first question in evaluating a church is, “Is there anyone here like me?” Therefore, the initial task is to introduce newcomers to people like them – people who have common bonds, common experiences or common backgrounds. The goal should be to expose guests to seven contacts with people like them over a three-week period. You then incorporate people into the church by encouraging and equipping them to become involved in ministry, thus developing even more relationships.

Old Paradigm

Membership
Visitors
Church for believers
Denominational loyalty
Stability
Church as destination
Dwelling spirituality
Seek the truth
Tell me about Jesus
Tradition
Heritage

New Paradigm

Relationships
Guests
Church for seekers
Personal Preference
Transitions
Church as a way station
Seeking spirituality
Seek what works for me
Show me Jesus
Transparency
Authenticity

Action Steps:

1. Train ushers and greeters in relationship evangelism.
2. Develop a clear and attractive information packet.
3. Consider producing a church video.
4. Use e-mail to communicate with guests.

5. Introduce newcomers to people “like them” in the parish.
6. Follow-up on visitors within 72 hours by phone call and letter / e-mail.
7. Be extra diligent on Christmas, Easter and special occasions.
8. Develop a four-part membership program: Basic Christianity, Anglicanism, knowing your spiritual gifts and cultivating the spiritual life.
9. Have as your goal “Worship Plus Two” for all newcomers: worship plus a ministry to serve others, plus a ministry to nurture oneself.
10. Provide additional nurture opportunities in Christian faith and spirituality.

Questions:

1. Why are people in your area most likely to attend church?
2. If a couple, thirty years of age, with two children, should visit your church,
 - a) Why might they join?
 - b) Why might they look elsewhere?
3. What are the kinds of things that first time guests might think and feel as they enter your church? If you were a first time guest, what would you think and feel about your church?
4. Why do you want people to come to your church? How ready and willing is your church to welcome them?
5. What type of newcomer ministry do you have in your church now? How well does it work? What can you do to improve it?

Step 6: Be Seeker Sensitive in Your Worship

Principle: While Anglican churches cannot be seeker-driven, they can and should be seeker-sensitive. That means planning and evaluating your worship through the eyes and ears of a seeker. In an experiential economy, people evaluate preferences based on experience rather than logic. So ask: What kind of worship experience are we offering seekers? Does such worship resonate with the people we seek to reach? Are we connecting with the community through our worship? Regardless of the worship style of your church, every worship experience should be an encounter with the living God. Seekers evaluate worship in three ways: ANTICIPATION (Something good is going to happen to me through this worship. Did it happen?); CELEBRATION (I experienced a divine presence in this worship. Was this service alive or dead?); INSPIRATION (I came away from this service strengthened for the journey of daily living. Did the service give me a lift or let me down?).

Old Paradigm

Learn about God
Print / book
Linear thought
Creeds
A community of the baptized
Presumed religious literacy
Continuity of church and culture
Liturgy as uniform experience
Male
Dress up in Sunday best
Traditional worship
Didactic sermons

New Paradigm

Experience God
Sight, sound, sensation
Kaleidoscopic thought
Celebration
A gathering of baptized and seekers
No religious assumptions
Discontinuity of church and culture
Liturgy adapted to different people
Male and female
Casual dress
A variety of worship experiences
Narrative sermons

Action Steps:

1. Do worship planning with your target in mind by asking: “Who are we trying to reach? And will this worship service resonate with such people?”
2. Match your music with the people you want to reach.
3. Make worship times convenient to the people in your community.
4. Offer multiple worship styles: traditional, contemporary, blended, *et al.*
5. Avoid wordiness in the liturgy and preaching.
6. Shorten the lessons or use two lessons instead of three.
7. Keep to a one-hour service. (One hour ten minutes maximum in large churches)
8. Concentrate on making guests feel comfortable
9. Preach to the real needs of people with biblical, practical sermons.
10. Combine high tech and high touch in one worship experience.
11. Print a user-friendly worship bulletin or use screens.
12. Read scripture from a contemporary translation.

Questions:

1. What is negotiable and what is non-negotiable about your worship? Why?
2. Look at the worship service through the eyes of first time unchurched guests. What might they be thinking or feeling? What might you do to make the service more visitor-friendly?
3. Evaluate the sermons from the perspective of a newcomer. Look at the topics addressed, the language used, the relevance to everyday life, and the applicability. How might the sermons be more visitor-friendly? What topics might the sermons deal with in order to accomplish this goal?

4. What does your worship say about the kind of church you are? Who is excluded from your worship? Who is included?
5. In what ways does your worship connect with people in your community? Identify any cultural barriers first time guests need to overcome in order to feel comfortable with your worship?

Step 7: Market and Advertise with Your Target in Mind

Principle: “If you build it, they will come” only works in the movies. Growing churches market and advertise themselves with great method and intention. For any congregation the competition is not another congregation, but all the recreational activities, audio / visuals, and sporting events the world has to offer. Moreover, we know that the most open segment of the population to attending church is families with young children. To prepare your church to reach this group, you need 1) Excellent staff, programs and facilities to draw and keep families, and 2) Ministries that respond to the needs of families, offer them support, give them guidance and help them in parenting.

Old Paradigm

Church as all things to all people
 Church as a center of community
 People connect with the church
 Passive church
 One size fits all
 People come to church
 Brand loyalty
 Assume your purpose
 Live with mediocrity
 Expect people to come, regardless
 Offer people nothing special

New Paradigm

Church designed for specific groups
 Segmentation and niche marketing
 Church connects with people
 Competitive church
 Many styles meet specific needs
 Church goes to people
 Consumer preference
 Know your purpose
 Pursue excellence
 Add value to people’s lives
 Offer what only the church can give

Actions Steps:

1. Probe: learn all you can about your area.
2. Partition: divide your market into segments.
3. Prioritize: choose which segments to go after.
4. Position: develop a clear image of the type of church you want in relation to the type of person you want to attract.
5. Define your target geographically, demographically, culturally and spiritually.
6. Focus on groups your church is most likely to reach.
7. Learn to think like an unbeliever.
8. Let your target determine your approach.

Questions:

1. Who is your church currently reaching? What is the average age of your community? What is the average age of your church members? How do the two compare? In general, does your congregation reflect the community?
2. Describe the type of person you are. Describe the kind of people who already attend your church. Why do you think members are attracted to your church? What needs are you meeting?
3. What does your church do well? What would you like to improve?
4. What needs are not being met by other churches in your community? What people are not being reached? What are the characteristics of this target audience (their values, attitudes, beliefs, musical tastes, view of the church, and so on)?
5. What will reach them? What activities, styles of worship, or programs might attract them? Develop a profile of the target audience.
6. What makes your church different from other churches in your community?
7. If your church ceased to exist, would anyone in the community miss it? Why or why not?

Step 8: Train People in Lifestyle Evangelism

Principle: Lifestyle evangelism is simply speaking truthfully and lovingly about what is experienced in one's life as a result of being a Christian. Lifestyle evangelism training should be an on-going part of the formation of all members in general, and specifically for those members called and gifted in the ministry of evangelism. Anglicans need to learn ways to share their faith with family and friends naturally and respectfully – and feel comfortable about it.

Old Paradigm

Christianity as religion
Only clergy engage in mission
Mission field far away
Evangelism by advertisement
Proclamation
Salvation
Words of condemnation

New Paradigm

Christianity as lifestyle
All baptized are missionaries
Mission field at home
Evangelism by invitation
Relationship
God's love
Words of affirmation

Confrontational
Bring Jesus to people
Spirit confined to the church
Talk of heaven and hell
Non-Christian religions ungodly
Four Laws
Faith in the abstract
Talk about my church
Appearance and propriety

Care-frontational
Finding Jesus in people
Spirit everywhere in the world
Talk of life issues
Non-Christian religions respected
Personal narrative
Faith in my life
Talk about Jesus
Honesty and transparency

Action Steps:

1. Teach and preach on lifestyle evangelism.
2. Offer training programs in faith sharing.
3. Allow occasional two-minute personal testimonies at worship.
4. Use Jesus as the model for evangelism.
5. Build bridges of friendship with the unchurched.
6. Avoid being judgmental at all cost.
7. Teach people to share their faith stories with those outside the church by answering the question, “How is God (Jesus) making a difference in my life?”

Questions:

1. Watch some TV commercials with a group and discuss: What is being sold, and to whom? What is the producer using to sell the product? What do you suspect this product will in fact do? What testimony does this ad give to the values and priorities of our society?
2. What are the various forms in which people give testimony, verbal and nonverbal? Which of these does your church encourage? Which is discouraged?
3. Has there been a time when you experienced the activity of God in your life? Can you tell the story, speak it out loud?
4. Do you feel anxious when you consider speaking out loud about your faith? Can you articulate the reasons for your anxiety? How might the church help you overcome that anxiety?
5. Think of someone who’s living / dying has been a testimony of faith. Describe the person and why you value him or her.
6. Why do you attend your church? Has participation in the church made a difference in your life? Explain the difference it has made.
7. In what ways can you affirm “Jesus as Lord” without appearing a bigot?

Step 9: Transform Your Church a Mission Outpost

Principle: If the primary mission field is right outside our church doors, then churches need to become mission outposts and members need to see themselves as missionaries. Evangelism becomes the starting point for all church ministries. Making evangelism a priority in the church's life is to evaluate every ministry by asking, "How does this ministry contribute to reaching people with the good news of Jesus Christ?"

Old Paradigm

Christendom
Supportive culture
Mission field away
Church as mainline
Church as fortress
Passive church
Church programs for members
A church for believers
Top priority: maintain traditions
Focus on members
Exclusive
Maintain the institution
Christians as respectable citizens

New Paradigm

Post Christendom
Neutral or hostile culture
Mission field at home
Church as marginalized
Church as light and leaven
Engaged church
Church programs for non-members
A church for believers and seekers
Top priority: share the Gospel
Outreach orientation
Inclusive
Reach the unchurched
Christians as resident aliens

Actions Steps:

1. Evaluate ministries by their effectiveness in reaching nonmembers.
2. Let the mission of the church determine the ministries of the church
3. Be sensitive to scheduling concerns.
4. Offer high quality program options.
5. Be focused on your message but be flexible in your methods.
6. Design ministries for different generations.
7. Plan programming with the unchurched in mind.
8. Open church facilities to community groups.
9. Have members struggle with the question, "What is it about this church that I cannot live without?"
10. Focus on the Great Commandment and the Great Commission: love God, love people and reach out to others

Questions:

1. What are the things your church is doing today that no longer make sense? Why does your church continue to do them? What are the implications of not doing them? Is it possible to direct them towards ministries, which further the church's mission?

2. What can you make possible today in your church to make it more vital and relevant tomorrow?
3. In what ways do the programs of your church reach out to the unchurched in your community?
4. How might you design your church programs to have an outreach component?
5. What is there about your church that people cannot live without?
6. Who is Jesus to you? Why should others know him?

Step 10: Develop a Permission-Giving Ministry

Principle: Every Christian is a minister by virtue of baptism. Moreover, every minister is important. Growing churches give people permission to develop their own ministries based on their spiritual gifts, provided the ministries are in accord with the church’s mission statement. Therefore, a growing church will intentionally encourage, equip and empower its members to develop new ministries in the church and new ventures in mission in the world.

Old Paradigm

Priesthood
 Role determines ministry
 Centralization
 Hierarchy
 Focus on the needs of the church
 Ministry as necessary to the institution
 Busy with meetings
 Committees, votes, lengthy process
 Systems and structures valued
 Clergy minister to members

New Paradigm

Laity
 Gifts determine ministry
 Decentralization
 Ownership
 Focus on the gifts of the members
 Ministry as meaningful to members
 Active in ministry
 “Just do it!”
 Spontaneity valued
 Members minister to members

Actions Steps:

1. Teach stewardship as personal gift management.
2. Preach on vocation and spiritual gifts.
3. Help people to find their SHAPE: spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality type, and experiences.
4. Maximize ministry and minimize maintenance.
5. Make ministry placement a priority in your new member assimilation strategy.
6. Provide on the job training.
7. Never start a ministry without a minister.

8. Delegate authority with responsibility.
9. Keep your ministries visible.
10. Celebrate all parish ministries at least once a year.

Questions:

1. How do you view the clergy of your church? What kind of authority do they possess? What is their leadership style: Authoritarian? Directive? Facilitating? Equipping? Collaborative? Supportive?
2. What makes ministry meaningful to a person?
3. Why do people sacrifice themselves for a cause?
4. Why do you volunteer in your church? What benefits do you receive from volunteering?

Step 11: Transform Your Ministries into Sharing Groups

Principle: Churches can only grow larger by becoming smaller – and this happens through sharing groups. Any ministry in the church can become a sharing group where people experience Christian community (koinonia). Sharing groups provide people with an opportunity for building relationships, finding support, experiencing affirmation and ministering to people. Sharing groups may be service-oriented or nurture-oriented.

Old Paradigm

Believing
 Sunday school
 Attending
 Membership
 Entry point: Sunday worship
 Clergy as pastors
 Clergy-led Christian education
 Meetings at church
 Meetings on Sundays
 Formality
 An appearance of being okay
 Church for the healthy and wholesome
 Clergy minister to members
 Keeping the pain to myself

New Paradigm

Belonging
 Seven-day-a-week church
 Bonding
 Relationships
 Entry point: Need meeting ministries
 Laity as shepherds
 Lay-led spiritual formation
 Meetings in homes
 Meeting when convenient
 Intimacy
 “I’m not okay, you’re not okay”
 Honesty, vulnerability, acceptance
 Members minister to each other
 Sharing my wounds with others

Action Steps:

1. Create points of entry with need meeting ministries.
2. Find new ways to meet needs and heal hurts by starting more groups.
3. Develop sharing groups with distinctive purposes: evangelizing the unchurched, discipling new Christians, and shepherding members.
4. Train the laity to conduct sharing groups and regularly evaluate effectiveness.
5. Assimilate new members into a sharing group within six months of their first visit.
6. Always look for ways to form new sharing groups, link sharing groups to ministry interest, and let some groups die a natural death.
7. Structure your church into three parts: Celebration (the entire parish), Congregation (different worshipping groups) and Cell (ministries within the church).

Questions:

1. Define your church's current strategy for nurturing people? Is the strategy working? Does it offer people a way of experiencing continued spiritual and personal growth?
2. What do you want to have happen in the lives of your members? How can you actively encourage people to grow?
3. How might small group ministry already be present in your church? How might it be extended?
4. Why might some clergy feel threatened by small groups led by laity? How might their apprehensions be alleviated?
5. Identify some personal and community needs where small groups might be an appropriate response by your church?

Step 12: Engage in Community Outreach

Principle: Growing churches take the whole gospel seriously. They are active in living out their faith through good works in the community as a witness to the living Christ within them. Offering missional evidence to the truth they proclaim helps not only the recipients of their activity, but allows the members to grow spiritually.

Old Paradigm

Obligation

Church as exclusive

New Paradigm

Compassion

Church as inclusive

Church as other-worldly
British / European
People give to the church
Maintenance
Focus on the soul
Congregational life in church building
Live for self
Get people to join the church
Tell people the Way
Love in words
What you know

Church as this-worldly
Multicultural
Church gives to the community
Mission
Focus on the whole person
Congregational life in community
Live for others
Share the good news of God's love
Show people the Way
Love in action
How much you care

Action Steps:

1. View the church as a centre of ministry in the community.
2. Teach a spirituality of engagement and connection with the world.
3. Practice hands-on ministry.
4. Offer people opportunities for mission.
5. Discern what needs in the community your congregation can meet.
6. Proclaim a *whole* Gospel to the *whole* world for the *whole* person.
7. Think globally, act locally.
8. Meet needs and heal hurts. Note: the more needs your church meets and the more hurt your church heals, the more likely your church is to grow.

Questions:

1. How do you understand the Gospel? Do you think that evangelism and social justice are both part of the Gospel? Why or why not?
2. How does your church express love beyond itself? How does your church make an impact on the surrounding community right now?
3. What needs are not being met by other churches in your community? What people are not being reached? How might your church respond to them?
4. What kind of vision does your church offer people? What kinds of opportunities do you currently offer that enable people to make a difference? What opportunities could you offer?
5. Given the resources of your church, what needs in the community might your church respond to?
6. If money were not an issue, what kinds of outreach would you like your church to do within the next five years?