

Church Name _____ Contact Person for Conference Follow up _____
Contact Person Phone # _____

NCNY CONFERENCE HEALTH EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The goal of our Annual Conference is that every church be a healthy (vital) church; that means that every congregation is moving forward in spiritual growth and faithful mission.

The checklist below is used by the Revitalizing Congregations Team of the NCNY Conference as a way of observing growth toward health (vitality) in our churches. Your answers will assist the Team in forming and offering resources that can assist churches on this path.

It is the goal of the Revitalizing Congregations Team to offer resources on two tracks:

Track One – training, networking, and other opportunities that are available to all churches.

Track Two – strategic allotments of (limited) Conference resources – e.g. financial grants, mentoring, more specific training opportunities – to congregations qualifying for designation as striving to be a healthy (vital) UMC (details below).

We recommend that the leadership of your church spend time completing this form, and consider designation as striving to be a healthy (vital) UMC.

Questions and/or comments about the “Health Evaluation Checklist” should be sent to the Director of Congregational Development, PO Box 1515, Cicero, NY 13039.

HEALTHY (VITAL) UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES HAVE:

1. Recognized the power of prayer and made prayer a regular discipline.

- _____ a. We have an active prayer chain.
- _____ b. _____% of our laity can lead spontaneous prayer.
- _____ c. We have a specific program to teach children and youth to pray.
- _____ d. Our meetings are undergirded with prayer (not just an invocation but constantly lifting up the team).
- _____ e. We have one or more of the following (please circle):
 - 1. Special prayer services
 - 2. A prayer room
 - 3. Prayer partners
 - 4. Prayer teams
 - 5. Other _____

GROWTH AREA – Designate one specific way your church can grow in this area:

2. Vital leaders, lay and clergy, who are maturing followers of Christ.

- _____ a. _____% of our church officers/Board members are in a Bible study/spiritual growth group.
- _____ b. We have a training/mentoring process for developing new leaders.
- _____ c. Our leaders can describe their relationship with Christ.
- _____ d. Our leaders can talk about the vision of their church, and their place in it.
- _____ e. Our regular attendees can talk about the vision of the church, and their place in it.

GROWTH AREA – Designate one specific way your church can grow in this area:

3. Evangelism efforts that invite community, form relationships and communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ to all people.

- _____ a. We have a plan for welcoming visitors (e.g. Igniting Ministries).
- _____ b. We have a strategy for evangelistic outreach into our community (How do people hear about us?).
- _____ c. We invite people to be followers of Christ, both verbally and by example.
- _____ d. Our members can articulate the Good News to others.
- _____ e. We can tell stories of people connecting with our church at times of need and celebration.
- _____ f. We have defined a mission field (target group) in our community, and developed a plan to minister for Christ in that field.

GROWTH AREA – Designate one specific way your church can grow in this area:

4. Respect, encourage, and nurture people in all stages of Christian faith development.

_____ a. We have an intentional process for helping those new to the church grow in their faith.

_____ b. We have an intentional process for helping our participants grow in their discipleship. We have a process for (please circle):

1. Children
2. Youth
3. Young Adults
4. Adults
5. Older Adults

_____ c. We include culturally diverse people in our church's ministry.

_____ d. We appreciate the opportunity to learn from other faith perspectives.

GROWTH AREA – Designate one specific way your church can grow in this area:

5. As a priority, teaching and living an example of Christian stewardship by use of prayers, presence, gifts, and service in mission within and without the walls:

_____ a. We are reminded of our membership commitment (prayers, presence, gifts, and service) throughout the year.

_____ b. We teach financial stewardship, and see evidence of growing financial

support for our church.

_____ c. We have grown in one or more of the following (Where solid data is not available please make your educated estimate):

	Current Year	One Year Ago	Five Years Ago	Ten Years Ago
Worship attendance				
Church School attendance				
Small spiritual growth group participation				
Children's ministries				

_____ d. We have care ministries with formal and/or informal networks.

_____ e. We have offered a program to help our members identify and utilize their spiritual gifts.

_____ f. We have an appreciation for the history/continuing legacy of ministry in our location.

_____ g. We teach and practice environmental stewardship.

GROWTH AREA – Designate one specific way your church can grow in this area:

6. Buildings and equipment that are conducive to vitality (health) because they facilitate the church's mission and ministry to the world.

_____ a. Our facilities are fully accessible.

_____ b. Our facilities are flexible enough to meet all of our ministry and programming needs.

_____ c. We have plans to address any situation where our facilities are more

- _____ than 80% filled in attendance.
- _____ d. Our nursery facilities are excellent and well-staffed (volunteer or paid).
- _____ e. Our building is clean, inviting and welcoming.
- _____ f. We have attractive signs in the community, in front of, and inside the church building.
- _____ g. Our church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth and adults who participate in our ministries and activities.
- _____ h. These community groups use our building throughout the week:
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____ i. We are striving to become more energy efficient.

GROWTH AREA – Designate one specific way your church can grow in this area:

7. Mission and ministry opportunities that utilize God-given gifts.

- _____ a. We can list hands-on mission projects of our congregation.
- _____ b. We encourage second-mile giving (special offerings and Advance Specials) after 100% of shared giving and direct billings are paid.
- _____ c. We have a system for missional strategy and evaluation.
- _____ d. We live out Acts 1:8 -- Local, Regional, and Global mission projects.
- _____ e. We have a plan to understand and live out our United Methodist Social Principles (Paragraphs 160-166 *The UM Book of Discipline*).
- _____ f. We are educating and raising awareness around social justice issues.

_____ g. We have events to celebrate the ministry of our church.

GROWTH AREA – Designate one specific way your church can grow in this area:

8. Accountability to each other within the United Methodist connection through shared ministry support, and shared mission and resources.

- _____ a. We partner with other United Methodist congregations.
- _____ b. Our direct billing and shared ministries are paid in full, or we have a clear plan moving toward that goal.
- _____ c. We study our Wesleyan roots, traditions, and institutions.
- _____ d. We intentionally live by *The UM Book of Discipline*.
- _____ e. We support participation of our pastor and laity in connectional events and ministries.

GROWTH AREA – Designate one specific way your church can grow in this area:

Count the number of items you can confidently answer in the affirmative _____

Congratulations! You have identified areas of faithfulness and giftedness in your ministry for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, as the leadership team, review the Growth Areas identified above. Select the two that you believe are the most essential at this time. Make a specific plan for each of these items: **Who** will implement, **When** will you expect to see results, **How** will you go about it? Record your goals on the attached form, and send to the Revitalizing Congregation Team.

Congratulations! Your plan, prayerfully and intentionally carried out, identifies you as striving to be a Healthy (Vital) Church. The Revitalizing Congregations Team will pray for you,

assist you however we can, and offer Conference resources to the best of our abilities. May God bless you in your mission for Jesus Christ.

GROWTH AREA PLANNING SHEET -- # 1

Church _____ Date _____

Address _____ E-mail: _____

ITEM: _____

SPECIFIC PLAN: _____

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT THE PLAN?: _____

WHEN DO YOU EXPECT TO SEE RESULTS?: _____

WHAT SPECIFIC ACTION STEPS WILL BE FOLLOWED?: _____

WHEN AND HOW AND WHO WILL EVALUATE: _____

Pastor's Name: _____ Signature _____

Lay Member's Name: _____ Signature _____

Lay Leader's Name: _____ Signature _____

Adm. Council/Board Chair's Name: _____ Signature _____

Please send a copy of the completed checklist to: Director of Connectional Ministries, NCNY Conference, P. O. Box 1515, Cicero NY 13039-1515.

GROWTH AREA PLANNING SHEET -- # 2

Church _____ Date _____

Address _____ E-mail: _____

ITEM: _____

SPECIFIC PLAN: _____

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT THE PLAN?: _____

WHEN DO YOU EXPECT TO SEE RESULTS?: _____

WHAT SPECIFIC ACTION STEPS WILL BE FOLLOWED?: _____

WHEN AND HOW AND WHO WILL EVALUATE: _____

Pastor's Name: _____ Signature _____

Lay Member's Name: _____ Signature _____

Lay Leader's Name: _____ Signature _____

Adm. Council/Board Chair's Name: _____

Signature _____

Please send a copy of the completed checklist to: Director of Connectional Ministries, NCNY Conference, P. O. Box 1515, Cicero NY 13039-1515.

GROWTH AREA PLANNING SHEET
(SAMPLE)

ITEM: Item: 2 -- Vital leaders, lay and clergy, who are maturing followers of Christ.
a. _____% of our church officers/Board members are in a Bible study/spiritual growth group.

SPECIFIC PLAN: To double the number of church officers/Board members that are in a Bible Study or spiritual growth group

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT THE PLAN?: The Pastor, Lay Leader and Administrative Board chairperson

WHEN DO YOU EXPECT TO SEE RESULTS?: Within 6 months

WHAT SPECIFIC ACTION STEPS WILL BE FOLLOWED?:

1. Currently there are approximately 14 church officers or board members out of 56 (25%) that are involved in an ongoing Bible study or spiritual growth group, we hope to double participation to 28.
2. The pastor will develop devotions to begin each committee or board meeting that will encourage participation in a Bible study or spiritual growth group.
3. The Lay Leader, Administrative Council chair and the pastor will contact 4 individuals who will share the power of spiritual growth in their lives. These four will write newsletter articles and will share a brief testimony during worship once a month.
4. During at least two worship services each month the pastor will emphasize the importance of growing spiritually, especially the need for church leaders to lead in this.
5. At least three Bible Study or spiritual growth groups will be offered within three months of initiating this plan. The studies or growth groups offered might include, but will not be limited to: Disciple Bible Study I, Christian Believer, Alpha, Purpose Driven Life and Companions.

WHEN AND HOW AND WHO WILL EVALUATE: At the end of 3 months the pastor, Lay Leader and Administrative Council chair will count the number of leaders involved in a Bible Study or spiritual growth group. If the number has increased by 10% we will continue this plan. If the increase is less, we will reevaluate and possibly develop an alternative plan. At the end of 6 months we will again count and determine the success or needed changes to the plan.