



The United Methodist Church
of Greater New Jersey

We equip spiritual leaders to make disciples and grow vital congregations to transform the world

1.1 Congregation Evaluation Form
Fall 2017

Our mission is to make disciples and grow vital congregations to transform the world. This requires pastoral leaders and congregational leaders to work together to provide clear vision and direction and focused attention and action to leading the church in the five markers of vitality:

1. Inspire disciples through worship
2. Involve disciples in small group ministry to connect, learn and grow
3. Engage disciples in community hands on mission
4. Inspire disciples to give generously, especially to mission
5. Make new disciples (people who join the church through a profession of faith)

Throughout the evaluation it refers to congregational vitality and the five markers of vitality. Use the above paragraph as a reference point for congregational vitality and the five markers of vitality.

For the purpose of this evaluation, “congregation” can be best defined as the weekly worshippers. “Leaders” refers to the elected leaders and non-elected leaders who lead ministries like small groups, Sunday school, mission teams, etc.

The following evaluation is to be completed at least once a year by the church council as part of the church conference paperwork. If you would like a person to assist you with completing the document contact the Bishop’s office at bishop@gnjumc.org.

Date:

Name and zip code of the church:

Name and email address of the pastor:

Name and email address of the Council chairperson:

Section I – Characteristics and qualities of the congregation

Section 1 gives feedback about the growth opportunities that will enhance the congregation’s vitality. Select a number from 1 to 5 that best represents your assessment based on the following scale and write the number on the line beside the statement.

5-----4-----3-----2-----1
 Exceeds Meets Not
 Expectations Expectations Yet

1. Attitude

The Congregation:

- a. Learns and is:
 - Open to learning new ways of doing things _____
 - Open to learning from other congregations _____
- b. Perseveres to become better when difficult challenges and situations arise _____

- c. Welcomes and accepts all people the same regardless of race, gender, class, age, education, culture, and faithful member or non-member _____
- d. Has a joyful spirit - laughter, positive meetings, upbeat attitude _____
- e. Is hopeful – believes there is a great future for the congregation _____

The Leaders:

- f. Demonstrate a servant’s heart, people readily step forward to serve _____
- g. Encourage and talk optimistically about the congregation _____
- h. Attend workshops to grow skills to lead and grow the congregation, its ministry and community ministry _____

2. Care

The congregation:

- i. Listens to one another _____
- j. Is joyous
 - Connects well with people in the congregation _____
 - Connects well with people in the community _____
 - Goes out of its way to welcome others, and demonstrate hospitality _____
- k. Has self-awareness and understands how it is perceived in the community and by visitors _____

3. Thinks Strategically

The congregation and its leaders:

- l. Discusses regularly strategies to make disciples, grow the congregation and engages in hands-on mission in the community _____
- m. Plans by setting and achieving ministry, property and financial SMART goals. SMART goals can be understood by googling SMART goals and reading articles about them. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant to your ministry, Time specific _____
- n. Evaluates regularly its progress toward mission and goals _____
- o. Understands the people in the community and thinks about how to effectively serve the community _____
- p. Leadership knows and understands the state of the church’s finances, worship attendance, and progress toward congregational vitality _____

4. Time

The congregation:

- q. Starts and ends meetings on time _____
- r. Focuses reports on the vision, mission and goals and is clear and to the point _____
- s. Prepares for meetings and activities _____
- t. Plans and carries out activities and meetings with excellence _____

5. Growth

The congregation:

- u. Has vibrant worship that is inspiring and attracting new people _____
- v. Is constantly inviting family, neighbors, co-workers and friends, especially those who do not have a church home to make new disciples _____
- w. Is constantly starting new Bible studies and small groups and inviting new people from the congregation and community to the groups _____
- x. Sees service in the community as a priority and plans ministries to serve people in the community _____

Section 2 – Evaluating the 5 areas of effective congregational leadership

Section 2 is designed to evaluate congregational effectiveness in areas that lead to health and vitality. Select a number from 1 to 5 that best represents your assessment based on the following scale and write the number on the line beside the statement.

5-----4-----3-----2-----1
Exceeds Meets Not
Expectations Expectations Yet

1. Trust

The leaders:

- a. Follow through with commitments _____
- b. Consistently treat people fairly and honestly _____
- c. Are reliable – on time, faithful, and consistent _____

The Congregation:

- d. Does not gossip _____
- e. Is growing in love and respect for one another and all people _____

2. Disagreement and conflict

The congregation and its leaders:

- f. Respect one another and the ideas of each other _____
- g. When conflict arises, people listen to each other so people feel heard _____
- h. Challenges and issues are thoroughly discussed and addressed right away _____
- i. When there are differences of opinion, people engage in meaningful conversation rather than ignoring or deflecting difficult issues _____
- j. When serious conflict arises, the congregation is quick to get help in dealing with the conflict _____
- k. The congregation addresses issues when they arise _____

3. Commitment

The congregation and its leaders:

- l. Are committed to growing their own faith and deepening the faith in one another _____
- m. Want to come to worship and the activities of the church _____
- n. Are generous with their time to the ministries and activities of the church _____
- o. 90% of the people follow through with tasks and assignments _____
- p. Step forward to provide leadership _____

4. Responsibility

The congregation:

- q. Has a relevant vision for its future ministry that connects with the people in the community and communicates clearly the direction of the church _____

The leadership

- r. Plans a vital and balanced ministry of worship, small groups, mission, stewardship, pastoral care, and growing disciples _____
- s. Keeps committees and groups informed about progress toward its mission and goals _____
- t. People are well prepared for meetings _____
- u. The church building is neat, clean and maintenance issues are dealt with right away _____
- v. The leadership promotes a healthy relationship with and understanding of the denomination and the conference _____

Section 3 - Assessing Section 2 of the Evaluation

Which of the three responses below best identifies the Church Council's responses. Follow the instructions at the end of that section you select.

- The Church Council agrees that the congregation is making appropriate progress toward growing vitality. Identify 2-3 specific competencies (lettered in each section) in which you would like the congregation to continue to grow and develop. Send a copy of the evaluation to the superintendent, bring copies for your participants at your charge conference and retain a copy with the church files.
- The Church Council agrees that the congregation is making progress and there are important areas to improve. Work with your pastor to develop an improvement plan. Addressing these concerns immediately will prevent these areas from impacting the congregation's overall ministry. Send a copy of the evaluation and improvement plan to the district superintendent.
- The Church Council agrees that the congregation is not making the kind of progress they would like and has concerns about areas of decline. The Church Council chairperson is to send the compiled evaluation and comments to the district superintendent who will then identify someone to come and work with the congregation.

After completing the evaluation, place an X next to the description that best describes the congregation.

- We are a highly vital congregation and seek to continue to serve God, grow our disciples and grow our vitality by strengthening the five markers of vitality.
- We are on our way to becoming more vital and are working to grow the five markers of vitality.
- We want to build on our current ministry and become more vital and request assistance in growing our vitality.
- We are satisfied with our current ministry and do not desire to change.
- Our best years are behind us and we request assistance in how we can be a gift to future generations and the future ministry of the larger church.
- Our best years are behind us and we know that we will cease to exist in the future.