

**Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod Survey #1: Congregational Direction, Vitality and Capacity**

Survey #1 asks participants to assess these two aspects in their congregation’s life: its vitality & direction as well as the resources needed to maintain and pursue its vitality and direction. If your answer to a question is “Yes” or you think the congregational attribute is strong, circle “+”. If your answer is neutral, circle “=”. If your answer is “No” or think the congregational attribute is weak, circle “-”.

Yes	Neutral	No	<b>Resources for Congregational Life</b>
+	=	-	<b>Capable, Spiritual Leadership</b> Are leaders capable & future-oriented, focused on strengthening the congregation for greater future faithfulness?
+	=	-	<b>Membership Trends</b> Is the congregation growing in committed participants?
+	=	-	<b>Adequate Volunteers</b> Are there enough volunteers to maintain and grow the congregation’s ministry?
+	=	-	<b>Partnerships with Other Organizations</b> Does the congregation increase its capacity to attain its goals by partnering with other organizations, thereby increasing the available resources for attainment of its goals?
+	=	-	<b>Financial Stewardship and Giving Trends</b> Does the congregation exhibit financial generosity?
+	=	-	<b>Ability to Maintain Budget</b> Can the congregation pay its expenses without relying on invested funds (eg. Endowments, Memorial Fund, designated funds)?
+	=	-	<b>Financing the Future</b> Can the congregation increase its financial resources to support the pursuit of new goals?
+	=	-	<b>Endowments and Savings</b> Are there adequate financial reserves?
+	=	-	<b>The Church Building</b> Is the physical condition of the building an asset (+) or liability (-)?
+	=	-	<b>The Church Building as a Tool for Ministry</b> Does the building’s layout, accessibility, and space availability lend itself to being used to help attain the congregation’s goals?
+	=	-	<b>The Congregation’s Context: The Wider Community</b> Is the congregation’s neighbourhood or wider community an asset that will help the congregation attain its goals (+) or not (-)?
			<b>Column Totals</b>

\_\_\_\_\_ subtract \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ (SUMMARY NUMBER MAY BE NEGATIVE)  
 # of +’s                  # of -’s                  Summary #

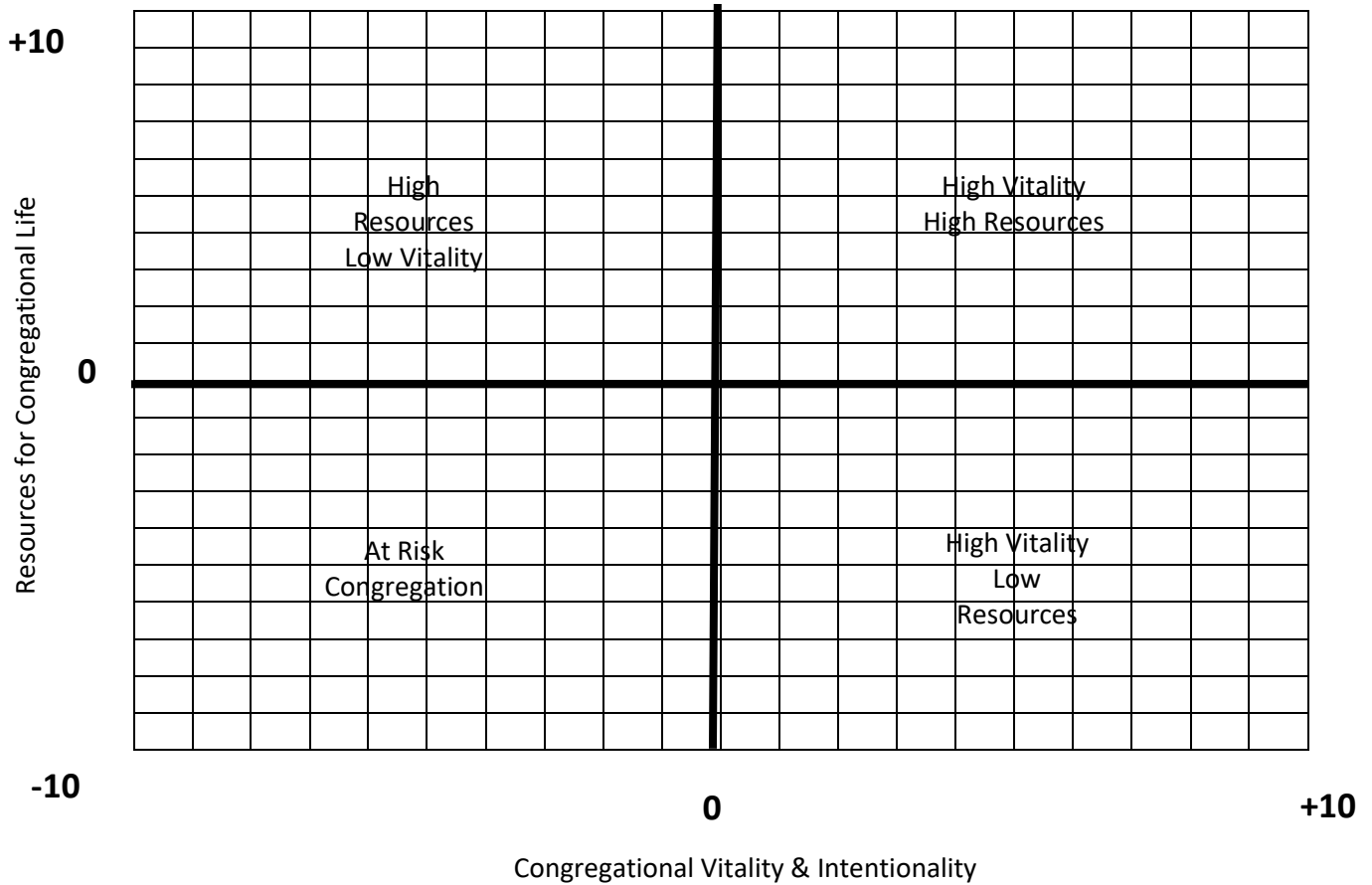
PLOT THIS SUMMARY NUMBER ON THE GRAPH ON THE “RESOURCES FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE” AXIS (runs up and down).

Yes	Neutral	No	<b>Congregational Vitality and Intentionality</b>
+	=	-	<b>Congregational Direction</b> Does the congregation have a vision for its future and clear goals for that vision's attainment?
+	=	-	<b>Measuring and Monitoring</b> Does the congregation track progress in its goal pursuit?
+	=	-	<b>Accountability</b> Is there a means of ensuring that those responsible are fulfilling their responsibilities?
+	=	-	<b>Worship</b> Is worship engaging, meaningful and life-giving to the congregation?
+	=	-	<b>Faith Nurture</b> Is the congregation supporting people's growth as disciples of Jesus Christ?
+	=	-	<b>Spirituality</b> Do congregants feel connected with God and find their souls nourished?
+	=	-	<b>Congregational Community and Care</b> Is the sense of community in the congregation strong, with people knowing they can give and receive help one to another?
+	=	-	<b>Mission</b> Does the congregation engage the wider community in addressing some of its needs?
+	=	-	<b>Adaptability</b> Is the congregation open to change and willing to take risks when needed?
+	=	-	<b>Mood</b> Is the congregation's overall mood positive?
			<b>Column Totals</b>

\_\_\_\_\_ subtract \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ (SUMMARY NUMBER MAY BE NEGATIVE)  
# of +'s            # of -'s            Summary #

PLOT THIS SUMMARY NUMBER ON THE GRAPH ON THE "CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY & INTENTIONALITY" AXIS (runs left to right).

## Congregational Direction, Vitality and Capacity



### Interpreting Your Graph

The two summary numbers on the two axes will intersect at one point on this graph. Place a DOT there.

This survey assesses two things:

- Vitality: the overall well-being of the congregation and its intentionality in facing its future
- Capacity: the strength of congregational resources for maintaining congregational vitality

#### High Vitality / High Resources

Congregations that have “high vitality” and “high resources” are strong, being equipped to pursue their chosen future. This is true of your congregation if your DOT is in the upper right quadrant, and more true for your congregation the further right and up the DOT is. If your congregation is in this quadrant you can be confident that it has what it takes to pursue its vision for the future proactively. Review your assessments in this survey paying attention to your “No” responses. Ask yourself: “Will this aspect of congregational life hold us back? Can we strengthen it, and how? Can we work around it somehow?”

#### High Vitality / Low Resources

Congregations that have “high vitality” but “low resources” are healthy and more future oriented, but lack the volunteers, funding or the appropriate facility to pursue their desired future. This is true of your congregation if your DOT is in the lower right quadrant, and more true of your congregation the further

right and down the DOT is. Review the first page of the survey and reflect on the congregational resources that you rate as a “no”. Ask yourself: “How might we strengthen the limiting resources? What changes can we make to congregational life so our limited resources will not constrain us? Could we reimagine our desired direction in a way that makes it more attainable given our limited resources? Are we able to partner with another organization (congregation, non-profit organization, a business or government agency) that shares the same values and direction so we can pool resources?”

#### Low Vitality / High Resources

Congregations that have “low vitality” but “high resources” have what they need to be vital but lack the intentionality to use their resources for the sake of the congregation’s present and future wellbeing. This is true of your congregation if your DOT is in the upper left quadrant, and more true of your congregation the further left and up the DOT is. Review the second page of the survey and reflect on the indicators of congregational vitality and intentionality that you rate as a “no”. Ask yourself: “How might we turn these “no’s” into “yes’s”? Which “no’s” should we start with? Beginning with one or two of them, what changes would be most easily attained and / or give us the best boost before tackling other ones? Do we need to strengthen our congregational leadership by inviting “capable & future-oriented leaders who will focus on strengthening the congregation for greater future faithfulness” (resource #1 for congregational life)?”

#### Low Vitality / Low Resources

Congregations that have “low vitality” and “low resources” are most at risk of closing in the coming years. This may be true of your congregation if your DOT is in the lower left quadrant, and more probable for your congregation the further left and down the DOT is. Review both pages of the survey and reflect on the aspects of congregational life that you rated as a “no”. Ask yourself: “Are all my assessments here fair, or are there some that can fairly be changed to either “neutral (=)” or “yes (+)””? How have we tried to turn “no’s” into “yes’s” in the past, and were we successful doing that? What can we realistically change from a “no” into a “yes”, and would those positive changes significantly affect our future? If those changes could significantly affect our future in a positive way, what would be the most effective way to go about making these changes? If change is unlikely, should we begin to think about alternative futures for our congregation or alternative ways to be a congregation so we can continue a meaningful, vital and future-focused life but just in a different form?”

#### Next Steps

If you completed this survey as part of the presbytery visitation to your congregation in 2017-2018, please save your results for the upcoming session discussion. You can compare your assessment to the pooled assessment made by all the elders on session. **If you ONLY completed the survey on paper please submit a copy of your completed survey to your minister or congregational office by the due date.** Thanks!

Survey created by  
Rev. Peter Coutts, General Presbyter  
Calgary-Macleod Presbytery  
Adopted by Presbytery 1 November 2016