

# Self-Study

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## Instructions

1. It is best to gather a team (Assessment Team) of 2-3 people to complete this Self-Study. The pastor needs to be involved and on this team but should not be chasing down all of this information.
2. Please complete ALL aspects of the Self-Study and be sure to share this information with the church Council/Board, and have them fill out the questions that are for them around strengths and weaknesses and areas to change. This is very important for them to have time for discussion and for those results of their discussion to be included in the Self-Study material that is submitted.
3. You probably need a month to complete all the parts of this study, including the leaders' discussion and opinions. The full final report must be sent to the SCI coordinator 4-6 weeks before your consultation. This gives us time to copy the materials and forward them to the consultant who will then need to study the documents in detail. It is best to send the final report digitally, with widely-used software, and all together, so that we do not get pieces misplaced. Also, send one master hard copy.
4. Sent separately, there is a simple one-page survey that is to be filled out by at least 25% of your active worshipping members. It is best if you can have someone tabulate the survey and send in just the summary. Of course, this also needs to be shared with the leaders as they evaluate the full study materials.
5. Please make (1) HARD COPY, as the master Self-Study and send it along with the electronic copy to:

Kay Kotan

16411 E. 36<sup>th</sup> Street

Independence, MO 64055

[kay@kaykotan.com](mailto:kay@kaykotan.com)

**Any questions? Call Kay Kotan at (816) 350-0333 or her cell phone (816) 401-0944.**

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**History  
and  
Description**

1. Write a brief history of your congregation (maximum four pages). Include those events that contributed to periods of growth or decline in the number of people participating. Write in a factual style. Avoid the temptation to puff the story for public relations and the temptation to inject person commentary regarding past problems.
2. List dates and provide descriptions for any building construction, major renovation, land acquisition, or leasing of facilities. List the amount of acreage you own, lease or rent, the square footage of building(s), and number of parking spaces (distinguishing between off-street and street parking).
3. Write a summary of your congregational structure including the individuals or groups who are responsible for program decisions, budgeting, and financial oversight, buildings and grounds, and any other major interests of the congregation. List committees, task forces, program teams, etc. and explain how these relate to boards or councils. Provide an organizational chart that reflects your current structure.
4. List any formal ties or major ties to other organizations or associations. State how the congregation views and interacts with these groups.

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## Small Church Initiative Self-Study

### Demography and Statistics

1. Call the GCFA for the excel file of your church's statistics for the past 10 years( this is very extensive and helpful report). Here is the person and number to call to request your stats:

Laura M. Chambers  
Office of Analysis and Research  
General Council of Finance and Administration  
The United Methodist Church  
Ph. 615-369-2379 Fax. 615- 369-2410.

2. Prepare a list of the number of current members or regular participants who got involved:
  - Prior to 1960
  - From 1961-70
  - From 1971-80
  - From 1981-90
  - From 1991-2000
  - From 2001- Present
3. List the total receipts and total expenditures for each of the last 5 years or for the entire history if founded more recently.
4. Without listing names, state the amount given by each of the top five contributors of record in the last fiscal year. Total these amounts and state the percentage of giving this total represents in relation to total contributions.
5. State the total number of contributors to the congregation during the last fiscal year and the average amount given per contributor during the last fiscal year.

## Small Church Initiative Self-Study

### Community Study

1. Write a brief overview of the area and community in which the congregation is located and which the congregation primarily serves.
  2. Secure the MissionInsite report for your church (your area) and you can do this by going on the Conference website, [www.moumethodist.org](http://www.moumethodist.org), Center for Congregational Excellence, demographics, and type in your area's information. Order the Executive Report (2-5 mile radius) and if you have any trouble contact, Tammy Calcote, [tcalcote@moumethodist.org](mailto:tcalcote@moumethodist.org), for her help.
  3. Briefly describe the square mile that surrounds the primary location of the congregation.
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### Documents

Please send copies of the following (if you have them):

- Last two year end annual reports
  - Last two annual budgets and full financial statements, for past two fiscal years, as well as the most recent financial report for this current year (YTD).
  - Sample bulletins, for past four Sundays, and newsletters, past four editions.
  - Any policy statements, or policy manuals
  - Other printed documents you deem helpful in providing insight into your congregation.
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### Self-Study Group

After all the self-study information has been compiled, gather 5-10 members/leaders to discuss the following questions:

Give the general consensus of the group; be sure to include the date.

- a) What are the three greatest strengths of this congregation, listed in priority order?
  - b) What are the three most significant weaknesses of your church?
  - c) What three changes would you most like to see made in your church, listed in priority order?
  - d) Do the leaders want this congregation to grow significantly?
  - e) Are the leaders willing to make the difficult decisions required for change and growth?
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## Small Church Initiative Self-Study

Please fill out the following questionnaire so that the consulting team might know more about your congregation. The material comes from a survey by Bill Easum.

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### 1. Parking

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) Average attendance of service.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) Paved off-street parking spaces available (please count)

### 2. Small Groups (15 or less people) These groups need to meet at least twice a month—Do not count Sunday School classes.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) Number of support / recovery groups.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) Nurture groups.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) Ministry teams.

### 3. Sanctuary (Do not estimate or take data from architect's work – measure actual pew lengths and divide by 22 inches.)

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) Sanctuary total capacity
  - \_\_\_\_\_ b) 80% of capacity
  - \_\_\_\_\_ c) Average service attendance
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### 4. Nursery (if applicable)

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) Nursery capacity (30 sq. ft. per child)
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) 80% of capacity
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) Is there a nursery for all events?
- \_\_\_\_\_ d) Are infants and toddlers separated?
- \_\_\_\_\_ e) Are nursery policies given to parents?
- \_\_\_\_\_ f) Are you currently using Safe Sanctuary guidelines?

### 5. Sunday Worship

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) What hours? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) Do you offer worship other than Sunday morning?
  - a. If so, what day and time? \_\_\_\_\_

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**6. Music** (What type of music are you using?)

a) Service time: \_\_\_\_\_ Choir / Praise band / Other \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Sunday School**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- a) Number of adult Sunday School classes.
- b) Average number of youth in Sunday School.
- c) Average number of children in Sunday School.
- d) When was the last time you started a new adult class?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**8. Are the area public schools growing, stable or declining?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**9. What is the percentage of the present debt service (annual mortgage payment) to the annual budget?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. Signing**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- a) Adequate/attractive sign perpendicular to street with worship times to guide first-time visitors?
- b) Clear/attractive signing inside the building to help people find their way? (focused on: nursery, rest rooms, and worship)

\_\_\_\_\_

**11. Are at least 10% of parking spaces designated for first-time guests?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**12. Number of pastors over the past 20 years.**

\_\_\_\_\_

**13. Estimate the number of adults in worship who are 60 years of age or older.** (percentage of total average attendance)

\_\_\_\_\_

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**14. Paid Staff**

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) Number of full-time staff.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) Number of part-time staff.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) Number of meetings the pastors attends in a month.

**15. First-time Guests**

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) Average number of first-time guest families each week.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) Are these families added to church mailing list?
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) Number of hours between attending service and contact from church.

\_\_\_\_\_ **16. How many spiritual leaders does the church have?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **17. How many new leaders are raised up each year?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) Is there an intentional plan in place to do this?

\_\_\_\_\_ **18. How many people are involved in hands-on ministry each week?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **19. Has the church had any major conflicts in the past 20 years?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) If so, is the conflict resolved?
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) Please comment briefly:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_