

Congregational Vitality & Sustainability Quick Check

All congregations want to thrive. A congregation (or any organization) is thriving when it achieves mission goals and is likely to continue doing so into the future. This checklist helps you quickly see how you rate your congregations' vitality and sustainability.

Vitality

A vital congregation is one that lives out God's mission in their part of the world. These congregations connect with God, each other and the world. The following questions can help your congregation determine its current vitality (mission orientation).

How well do these phrases describe your congregation?	Poorly or Hardly at all		Well or Somewhat		Great or Very Well	
	1	2	3	4	5	Copy number from column
<i>Example</i>			X			3
Worship nurtures people's faith						
There's a clear sense mission here						
Excitement about congregation's future						
Congregation is always ready to try something new						
Incorporating new members into congregational life						
Seeking out and using the gifts of members of all ages						
Building strong, healthy relationships among members						
Managing disagreements in a healthy respectful manner						
Addressing social concerns (helping those in need)						
This congregation is a positive force in the community						
Equipping members to share their faith with others						
Interacting with the local community						
Helping members live out their faith in daily lives						
Total all rows						
Vitality Score: (Divide total by 13)						

Sustainability

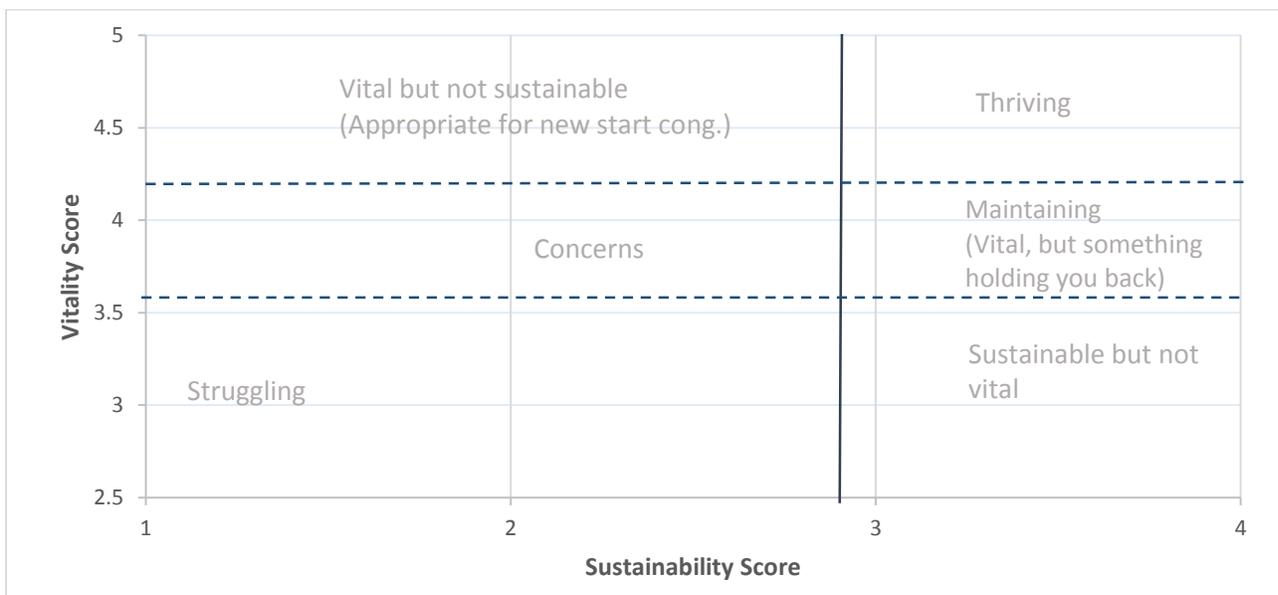
Congregations need resources to sustain ministry. The two primary resources included money (to pay staff, fund ministries and maintain facilities) and people power (to engage in ministries). Use the following questions to estimate your sustainability.

	Declined to not sustainable	Declining but still sustainable	Maintaining	Growing or Increasing	Copy number
	1	2	3	4	
People Power People with energy to lead and participate in worship & ministries					
Income / Expense ratio Do you have enough money for mission?					
Write the lowest number here:					

Since both people and financial resources are necessary for sustainability, the lower number represents the “weakest link” in your congregation’s sustainability chain.

Balancing Vitality and Sustainability

Use the following chart to mark where your congregation falls in the matrix. Find your sustainability at the bottom and move up until you are level with the vitality score from the first page. The placement on chart **estimates** your congregation’s most likely vitality/sustainability balance. This is not a perfect measure because these categories overlap some in real life.



A congregation needs to be both vital and sustainable in order to be thriving. Vital congregations that aren’t sustainable can’t continue God’s mission in their setting. Sustainable congregations that are not vital may have lost touch with God’s mission for them in this time and place. What are your congregation’s strengths and challenges?

Now What?

Ask other people in your congregation to take this short survey and talk about your answers. Talk with your synod’s Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) to learn more about vitality, to take the congregation-wide survey, or to use the contributing factors worksheet.