



What Does It Take To Grow...

**Building a Healthy Church,
Healthy Pulpit, and Healthy Pew**



THE STATE of MY CHURCH

YOU NEED TO GROW YOUR CHURCH... Your pastor is proposing a Change to your worship service. He/she sees the need to draw young adults ages 18-35 to the church. Church membership is declining and young families are leaving the church all together.

The pastor believes that a more contemporary church service might help in the retention of the ones who are leaving and draw others who might be seeking for this type of worship.

The pastor shared the vision: An evening “contemporary worship service.” In order for the vision to become a reality, He/she needs your support. What will be your response?



THE CHURCH

Objective of this Collective Conversation:

- Review the purpose of our church
- Examine our role in the church... (are we drivers or hinderers of the church?)
- Discuss what it takes to grow our church
- What does a Healthy Church Look Like?
- Engage in frank conversation about the state of our Church



Questions to Ponder.



1. Just what is a healthy church?
2. What does It look like?
3. What can we do we do as members to promote church growth?
4. What is the primary purpose/mission of my local church in the community?
5. Does my church have a written mission statement that promotes the vision of the church?

A Healthy Church ... Purpose

- * **Fulfilling our Great Commission in the African Methodist Episcopal Church...**

- * The church is involved in all kinds of social action programs and political programs and community assistance, however these should never overshadow that Christ founded the church primarily to **usher persons into the Kingdom of God**. **Programs must not overshadow purpose.**

- * Our Church must be rooted in the great commission of Matt 28:18-20
Go Ye Therefore and teach all nations, baptizing.....



THE CHURCH

FOCUS

"Life of Worship"
Great Commandment
Matt. 22:37

"Life of Service"
Great Commission
Matt. 28:19

"Life of Love"
2nd Great
Commandment
Matt. 22:39

**Love God
Love Neighbor
Serve Others**



WHAT DO I BRING... Activity?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

- * North, South, East, and West: Compass Points
- * *An Exercise in Understanding Preferences in Church Work*
- * Similar to the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory, this exercise uses a set of preferences which relate not to individual but to group behaviors, helping us to understand how preferences affect our group church work.
- *



WHAT DO I BRING... Activity?

INSTRUCTIONS...

- * 1. The room is set up with four signs on each wall — North, South, East and West.

- * 2. Participants are invited to go to the “direction” of their choice. No one is only one “direction,” but everyone can choose one as their pre-dominant one.

- * 3. Each “direction” answers the four questions on a sheet of newsprint. When complete, they report back to the whole group.



WHAT DO I BRING... Activity?

- * **NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, WEST** Decide which of the four 'directions' most closely describes your personal style.

North

- * *Acting – “Let’s do it;” Likes to act, try things, plunge in.*

West

- * *Paying attention to detail —likes to know the who, what, when, where and why before acting.*

East

- * *Speculating – likes to look at the big picture and the possibilities before acting.*

South

- * *Caring – likes to know that everyone’s feelings have been taken into consideration and that their voices have been heard before acting.*



**Then spend fifteen minutes answering
the following questions as a group:**

1. What are the strengths of your style? (4 adjectives)
2. What are the limitations of your style? (4 adjectives)
3. What style do you find most difficult to work with and why?
4. What do people from the other 'directions' or styles need to know about you so you can work together effectively?



**What role does each of us play
in Church Growth?**



GROWING THE CHURCH

* 4 P's to Growing the Church

**PROMOTE THE
CHURCH**

PRINCIPLE FOCUS

PARTNERSHIP

**POWER AND
SPIRIT**



"Here's a résumé from a candidate who says he can't grow a church but loves attending conferences to learn how."



THE CHURCH

- * **Promote the church** as an Organism (as opposed to an organization)
- * An organism is **alive, adaptable** to external circumstances, and has an inherent **self-sustaining power**. Organizations do not, and depend on the "smartness" of their leaders



THE CHURCH

- * **Principle Focus** (vision) must be rooted in the great commission of Matt 28:18-20
- *
The church is widely involved in social programs and political programs, etc. However, these should never overshadow that Christ founded the church primarily to usher persons into the Kingdom of God.
- * Programs must not overshadow purpose.



THE CHURCH

- * **Partnership:** The leaders (who inspire) and the managers (who administer) must see each other as equal partners and portray this partnership to the world.
- * **1 Cor. 12 makes it clear that leaders and managers are both called by** the same God for the effective functioning of the church. Their legitimacy is divine in both cases. One is not to be subservient to the other



THE CHURCH

- * **The Power and Spirit** of the Christian love must be evident from the Church to the world. The church is a faith body, but the quality of the faith is reflected by the quality of the works.

Jesus in John's Gospel held up his works as evident of his divine appointment.

People were drawn to Christ because of the divine (power-filled God-enabled) works he did.

The people must see "the greater works" of the church, if it is to take the church seriously as an representative of God in the earth.



THE CHURCH

- * SCENARIO 1 and 2....
- * Think about the issues that face our Church daily...
- * Using the given scenario, discuss the implications for church growth.
 - 10 minutes....
 - Report out



THE CHURCH

- * What are the characteristics of a healthy church?
What does a healthy church look like today?
Is it one with strong preaching? A great choir?
Lots of wealthy executives in the pews?
An effective Sunday school program?
A thriving church?



A HEALTHY CHURCH IS...

**A church that feeds your
desire to glorify God.**

***A Healthy Church Glorifies
God.**



- * Scripture says, “Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” ([1 Corinthians 10:31](#)).
- * To glorify God means to magnify, elevate, and draw attention to His radiance. This is the primary purpose of the church and of individual Christians. Personally, we do this by inviting Him into every segment of our lives, by telling others of His greatness rather than grabbing His glory for ourselves, and by nurturing our relationships with Him.



A HEALTHY CHURCH IS...

- * A church that opens the way for meaningful worship.**
- * A Healthy Church Worships God with a Genuine Spirit of Devotion.**



- * The early Christians provide a great example of this: “They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe” ([Acts 2:42–43](#)). These people listened to the Word, and through communion and prayer, they interacted with each other and the Lord.



A HEALTHY CHURCH IS...

* **A Church that Balances Biblical Instruction with Personal Application**

- * The early church emphasized biblical teaching, as should we, because solid, consistent teaching from God's Word helps us grow in several ways:

It matures and stabilizes our faith in times of testing.

It increases our ability to detect and confront error.

It gives us wisdom.



THE CHURCH

- * Teaching that remains theoretical, however, can breed indifference or arrogance. Also, preaching that fails to balance instruction with love and grace may reflect intolerance.
- * And finally, when biblical knowledge becomes an end in itself, it brushes dangerously close to idolatry—worshiping the Bible above its Author, Jesus Christ.
- * **So, look for worship and instruction coupled with compassionate application; this reveals a healthy church.**



A HEALTHY CHURCH IS...

A church is a community of believers who demonstrate genuine concern for each other.

Not only was the early church caught up in worship, individual devotion to the Lord, and instruction from the Word, but “they were continually devoting themselves . . . to fellowship” ([Acts 2:42](#)).



A HEALTHY CHURCH IS...

- * A person experiences true fellowship in two ways: when he or she shares something tangible with a person in need, and when he or she **shares in** something with someone—empathizing with a person's sorrow or joy. **The healthy church is a community of believers who demonstrate genuine concern for each other.**



A HEALTHY CHURCH IS...

- * **A church that reaches out to others... helps people appropriately express their faith where they live or work.**
 - * “And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved” ([Acts 2:47](#)).
- * Churches that reach out in a healthy way **focus** their church services on the growth of the believer, not on evangelizing the unbeliever. The church uses worship, instruction, and fellowship to equip Christians to then take the message of God’s love to the world.



Healthy churches also **refrain from using manipulation** and coercion in evangelism. Instead, they encourage treating others with respect and dignity, allowing the Holy Spirit to work in His way and time.



A HEALTHY CHURCH IS...

Like a magnet, a church with a contagious style draws people to its doors.

It is **biblical** in content.

Messages are **based on the Word of God**, not on the opinions or interests of the preacher.

It is **authentic** in nature. This is a church that believes what it says.

It is **gracious** in attitude. The church sees itself as a family, not as a corporation. It is relevant in approach.

This church shows how God's Word applies to today's needs, issues, and concerns.



Whenever you find a church that

Glorifies the Godhead

Fosters a spirit of devotion to the Lord

Dispenses the Word of God along with relevant application

Generates personal warmth

Touches outsiders with the wonderful news of Jesus

All with a contagious style,

You have found a healthy church.



Back to the beginning...

4 P's in Growing the Church

PROMOTE THE CHURCH ...Are We proud to be a Member of The AME CHURCH?

Have you told anyone lately outside of your circle that you are an AME Church member?

When is the last time you invited someone into the church?

Are you promoting your church?



4 P's in Growing the Church

PRINCIPAL FOCUS

Keep the Main thing the MAIN thing.

What is the vision and mission of your Church?

Who Knows it? Is it widely embraced?

Could Convince someone to join?



4 P's in Growing the Church

PARTNERSHIP

We are individually made yet uniquely intertwined and interdependent.

TOGETHER we can accomplish much... We come from the NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, and WEST, and together we are a FORCE to be reckoned with....

4 P's in Growing the Church

* **POWER AND SPIRIT**

- * The people must see "the greater works" of the church, if it is to take the church seriously as an representative of God in the earth.
- * We are the witnesses that will testify to the power and spirit... to the goodness of God... to the possibilities that are simply by walking the walk.



WHO ARE WE?

I think that I will never see a church
that is all that it ought to be

A church that has no empty pews
a church where people never get the
blues

A church whose music is always great
a church where people are never late

THE PERFECT CHURCH

???????



Such perfect Churches there may be;
but none of them are known to me.



If you could find the perfect church
without one fault or smear,
for goodness sake, don't join that church
you'd spoil the atmosphere!



If you should join the perfect church,
then don't you even dare,
To tread upon such holy ground
You wouldn't fit in there.



But since no perfect church exists
where people never sin,

Then let' stop looking for that
church and love the one we're in.



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Healthy Pulpit, and Healthy Pew**