



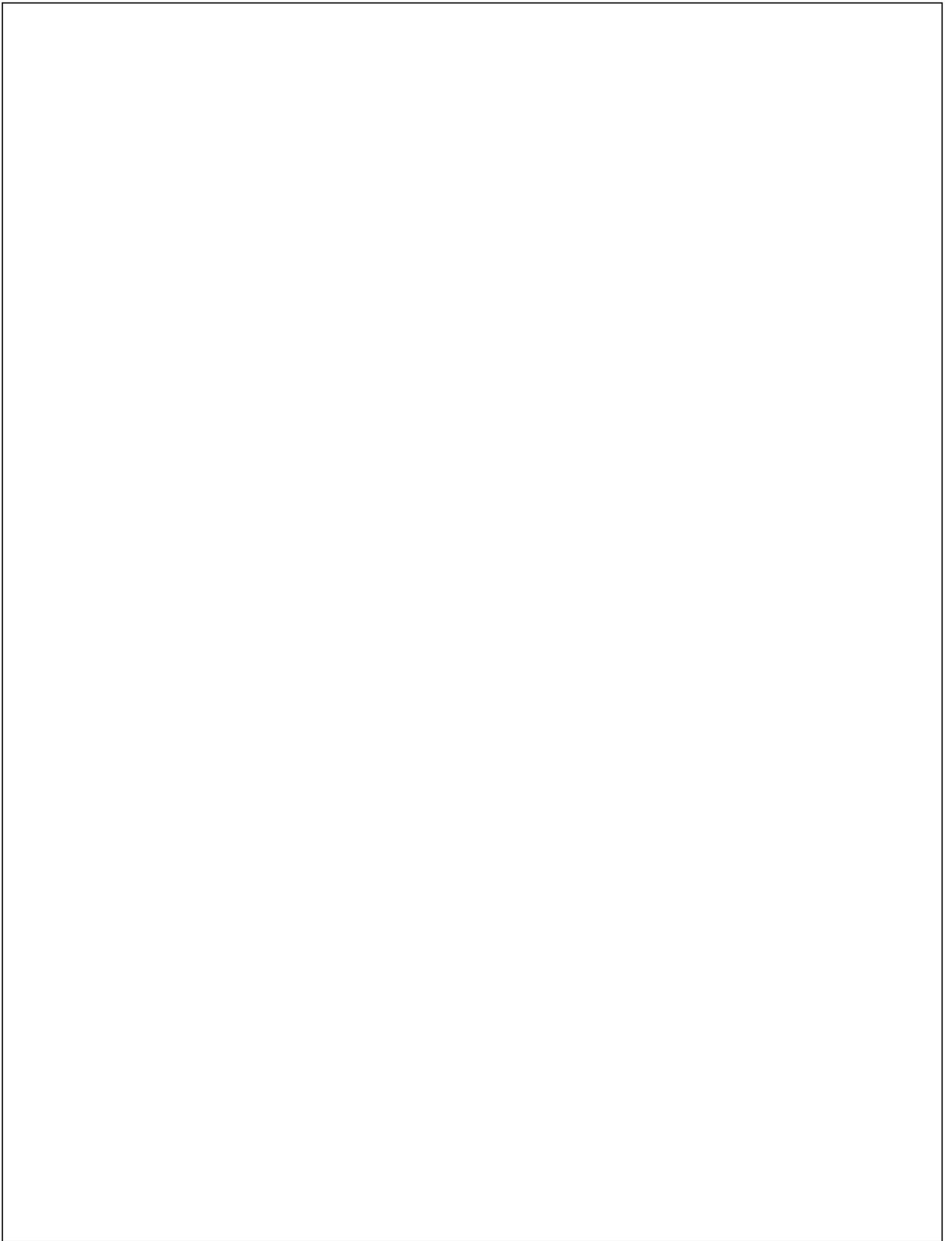
pulse

A Congregational Vitality Assessment Tool

Eastside Covenant Church

Tucson, AZ

September 2018



Introduction

*Do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought,
but rather think of yourself with sober judgment. Romans 12:3*

Thank you for participating in PULSE. You care about your church, and so do the Conference and the Denomination. Our fervent prayer is that every Covenant church would become a Healthy Missional church. By “healthy” we mean pursuing Christ. By “missional” we mean pursuing Christ’s priorities in the world.

PULSE is an assessment that flows out of the Veritas experience. As we say in Veritas, “There is no vitality without reality.” Jesus said, “You shall know the truth (that’s reality) and the truth will set you free (that’s vitality).” *John 8:32*.

Paul tells Christians to speak the truth in love. *Ephesians 4:15*. This is why the PULSE behavioral covenant is so important. The behavioral covenant is the conversation before the conversation, so that our words will be full of grace and truth. Jesus is full of grace and truth. *John 1:14, 17*. You may also insert your own behavioral covenant.

PULSE diagnoses the vitality of the church using the Ten Healthy Missional markers and a number of other factors. The Ten Healthy Missional markers are identified and explained in section 1.

Section 2 provides a summary of Healthy Missional marker scores. Questions 1-40 of the assessment were grouped by the Healthy Missional marker to which they pertained. Based upon the statistical analysis of participant responses*, a score was assigned to each marker, using a 4.00 scale. The score for each marker is then plotted based on that scale. A breakdown of each individual question sorted according to church type, is also provided.

Section 3 reveals important internal demographic information about Eastside Covenant Church. These are presented in a chart format for easy identification.

Section 4 highlights the responses to the open ended questions. These are grouped according to topics mentioned in the responses. Although more can be said, please note that there are a few interpretive comments attached to the end of this section.

Section 5 contrasts participants’ responses. One chart shows how the participants’ responded based on how long they have attended the church (tenure). The other chart contrasts responses of leaders and non-leaders.

Section 6 graphs the church’s attendance and income trends. These numbers were taken from the annual report that is sent by the church to the Denomination each year. Although numbers do not tell the whole story, they do tell part of the story.

Section 7 identifies the level of VIM: Vision, Intention and Means. All three are needed in high concentrations to become a Healthy Missional church. These categories are explained and applied to the current reality at Eastside Covenant Church.

Section 8 identifies the church type and trajectory. In the Covenant there are four types of established churches: Healthy Missional, Stable, Critical Moment, and At-Risk. Using all the information from PULSE and what we know of other churches in the Covenant, an assessment is made about the type of church that Eastside Covenant Church is right now and the direction it seems to be headed. An “X” and an arrow are plotted on the Veritas architecture to indicate current location and direction.

Section 9 summarizes the next steps that the Denomination and the Conference suggest that you take as a church. This section is divided into two parts, one for the congregation and one for the pastor(s). The suggestions themselves are categorized according to Spirituality, Chemistry, and Strategy. We ask that you prayerfully consider and discuss these recommendations in a timely manner. The Conference Superintendent or staff is available to answer any questions you may have.

Section 10 summarizes the entire PULSE report. The intent of PULSE is to help you as a church reach your full Kingdom potential in Christ and grow in ways that matter to God.

One of the goals of PULSE is to stimulate conversation, not to solve every problem confronting the church. The answers are not in the data, the answers are in the conversations that the leadership and the congregation have regarding this information.

Thank you again for letting us take your PULSE. Please remember that PULSE is a reflection of what *you* say and think about your church. These are the scores you have given about your church. We are merely reporting them back to you, along with some interpretation.

*For Eastside Covenant Church, 34 assessments were completed and submitted for data analysis in ***August and September 2018.***

Eastside Covenant Church

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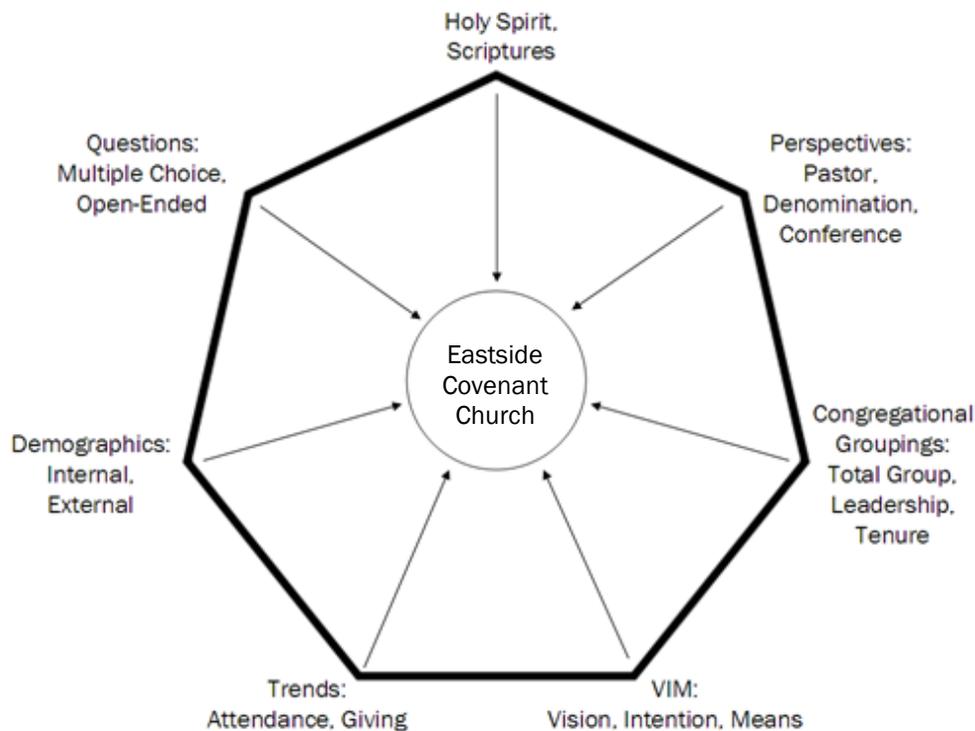
The Purpose of PULSE

The purpose of PULSE is to edify and strengthen Covenant churches. In other words, PULSE...

- P**rovides awareness of current reality
- U**pdates progress annually
- L**inks the church more closely with the mission and message of Jesus
- S**uggests next steps
- E**ncourages spiritual discernment

How PULSE Works

PULSE works due to a powerful combination of factors, depicted in the chart below.



These factors help the church get a fix on their current position. Awareness and acceptance of one's current reality is an important step in becoming a Healthy Missional church. Admitting the truth is the first step toward change. Acting on the truth may even be more challenging.

The seven letters of Revelation were addressed to seven distinct churches to help them develop a deeper awareness and acceptance of their current reality. Only then could they overcome and reach their full kingdom potential in Christ.





At Eastside Covenant Church:

Starting with the basic Commandment to love God and to love others as ourselves

- We commit to love and treat each other the way we hope to be loved and treated.
- We pledge to make positive investments in each other's lives.

We will love each other deeply enough to trust each other as family, living as sisters and brothers in Christ

- We commit to be honest with things that are troubling us and communicate directly with each other, based on a firm foundation of trust, love and respect.
- We seek to discover what is best for our church as a whole, not what may be best for just us or for some small group in the church.
- We accept and welcome conflict as a normal part of every healthy community, and during times of disagreement we pledge to assume the best of each other and give each other the benefit of a doubt.

We will seek and embrace the community beyond our walls, remembering that all are God's children and welcome in God's family

- We promise to welcome the stranger and always make room in our hearts and our church for more of God's children.
- We remember that we are stewards of God's kingdom on earth - not owners of a building or ministry.



Section 1: Healthy Missional Markers

Centrality of the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16)

- We believe that the Bible is the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine and conduct.
- Our preaching and teaching in all settings reflects careful preparation, relevance, and creativity.
- Our people are equipped and growing in their ability to study and apply Biblical truth in ways that lead to a scripturally integrated life.

Life transforming walk with Jesus (John 3:3,30; Phil. 1:6)

- We teach our people how to be attentive to Christ in all circumstances.
- Our people understand the radical nature of the message and mission of Jesus that continually deconstructs and reconstructs a person's life.
- Our people are equipped and growing in their ability to use a variety of spiritual growth resources, experiences, and settings.

Intentional evangelism (Matthew 28:18-20)

- We are burdened for the spiritual condition of those who do not yet know Christ.
- We have identifiable pathways for evangelism to take place in our ministries.
- Our people are equipped and growing in their ability to build spiritual friendships and know how to share their faith as God-birther opportunities arise.

Transforming communities through active compassion, mercy and justice ministries (Micah 6:8)

- We are burdened for the hurting people in our community and beyond.
- We have identifiable pathways for compassion, mercy and justice ministries to take place.
- Our people are equipped and growing in their ability to see and address the hurts and the causes of hurt in our community and beyond.

Global perspective and engagement (Acts 1:8)

- We raise the sights of our members beyond our congregation and community by developing a Biblical worldview and often pray for and reference global matters.
- We have identifiable pathways to support the cause of Christ globally.
- Our people are equipped and growing in their ability to participate in the global dimensions of our ministry.

Compelling Christian community (Acts 2:42-47)

- We understand that our love for one another is a powerful testimony to the deity of Jesus.
- We love each other as we are, not as we should be.
- We share life together beyond the worship service.

Heartfelt worship (Psalm 138:1a; John 4:23)

- We exalt and celebrate God for who he is, what he has done, what he is doing and what he will do.
- Worship reflects careful preparation to help give voice to many dimensions of response to God such as adoration, praise, contrition, lament, and commitment.
- People leave worship knowing something more about the heart of God and about their own hearts.

Sacrificial and generous living and giving (Romans 12:1-8)

- We help people discover, develop and deploy their spiritual gifts.
- We regularly, graciously, and unapologetically teach on the importance of financial stewardship in the spiritual growth of the Christian.
- We have many examples of lifestyle choices being made on the basis of stewardship and the priority God plays in the lives of our members.

Culture of godly leadership (Hebrews 13:7)

- Our leaders at all levels serve with character, competence, and conviction.
- A spirit of collegiality pervades, with our people trusting our leaders and our leaders trusting our people.
- We continually identify and train godly leaders for all dimensions of our ministry.

Fruitful organizational structures (Exodus 18:13-26, Acts 6:1-7)

- We can articulate a compelling, Christ-honoring vision for our church.
- We embrace evaluation as normal and natural and work through conflict constructively.
- Our organizational structures are designed to be efficient at making decisions while at the same time building congregational ownership for those decisions.



Section 2: Summary of Healthy Missional Marker Scores



Missional Marker Rankings		
Marker:	4.00 Scale	
Life Transforming Walk with Jesus	3.63	Healthy Missional
Compelling Christian Community	3.57	
Transforming Communities Through CMJ Ministries	3.56	
Culture of Godly Leadership	3.43	Stable
Heartfelt Worship	3.42	
Centrality of the Word	3.22	
Fruitful Organizational Structures	3.18	
Sacrificial and Generous Living and Giving	3.17	
Intentional Evangelism	2.96	Critical Moment
Global Perspective and Engagement	2.94	
Average Score	3.31	

Grading Scale:

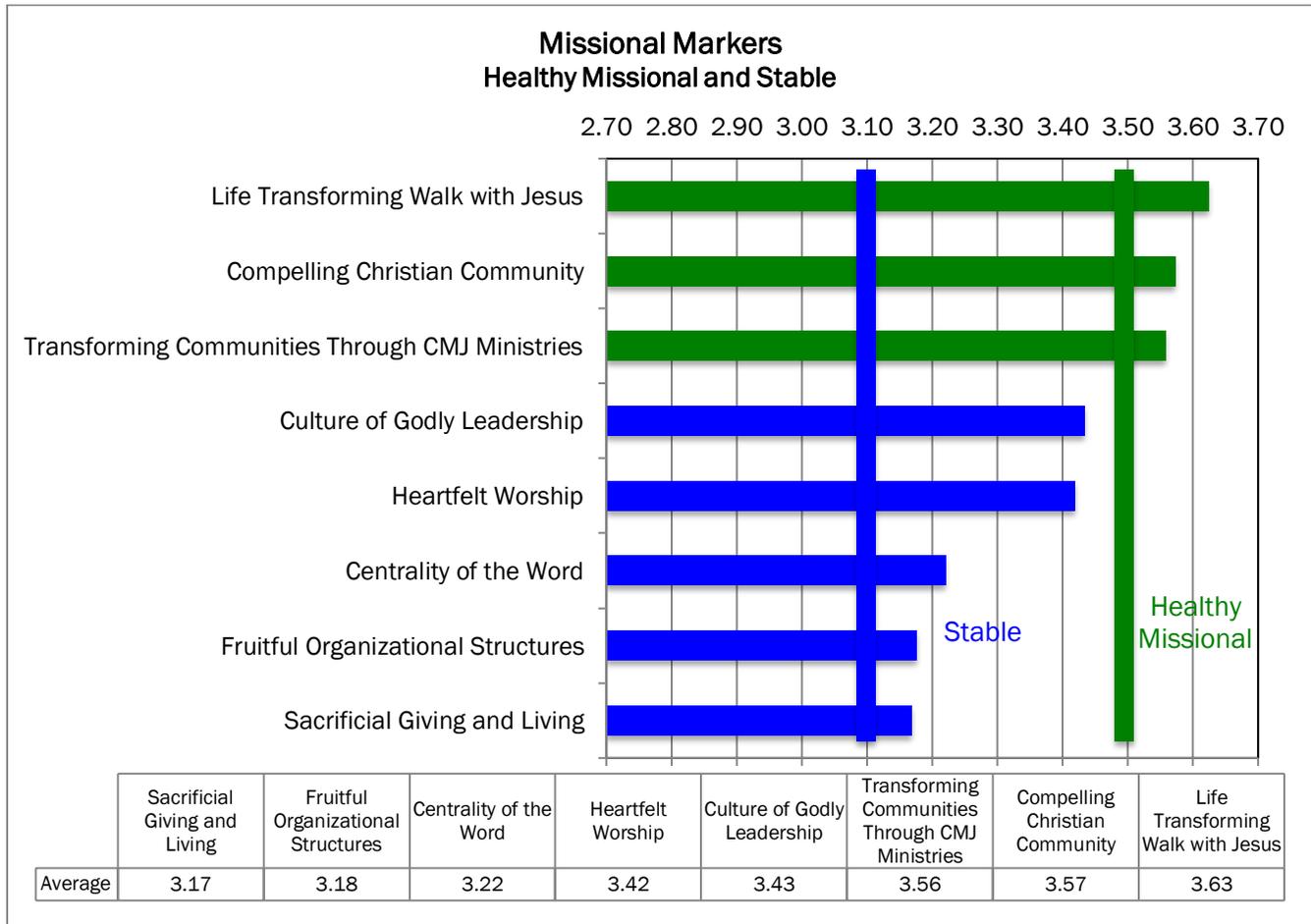
Healthy Missional	3.50 – 4.00
Stable	3.10 – 3.49
Critical Moment	2.70 – 3.09
At-Risk	0.00 – 2.69

Eastside Covenant Church

Stable 3.31



Summary of Healthy Missional and Stable Markers



Questions with Healthy Missional Scores

Question	Marker	Total
30	It seems to me that at Eastside Covenant Church, people have a genuine love for each other, even if we don't agree on every issue.	Compelling Christian Community 3.97
3	The Bible is central to the preaching, teaching and worship of our church.	Centrality of the Word 3.88
39	I sense that prayer is a significant part of the life of Eastside Covenant Church.	Life Transforming Walk with Jesus 3.82
21	I am experiencing more joy in Christ by being a part of Eastside Covenant Church.	Life Transforming Walk with Jesus 3.76
23	The sermons at Eastside Covenant Church are relevant to my life.	Heartfelt Worship 3.71
33	If I made my need(s) known to Eastside Covenant Church, I am confident the church would respond in a caring manner.	Compelling Christian Community 3.71
17	Mercy is extending God's unconditional love. My church is intentional about extending mercy to those in our community and/or around the world.	Transforming Communities Through CMJ Ministries 3.71



16	I believe that our lay leaders are competent to handle change and lead our church forward.	Culture of Godly Leadership	3.65
14	Compassion is identifying with and joining in the suffering of others. My church suffers alongside those who are hurting in our community and/or world.	Transforming Communities Through CMJ Ministries	3.59
37	Justice is joining God in making things right. My church is aware of injustices and actively working to make things right.	Transforming Communities Through CMJ Ministries	3.59
31	I am confident in our pastoral leaders ability to skillfully guide Eastside Covenant Church forward and handle necessary change.	Culture of Godly Leadership	3.56
8	When I think of inviting someone to worship what goes through my mind is:	Heartfelt Worship	3.56
11	My church has helped me make positive changes in my walk with Christ in the past year.	Life Transforming Walk with Jesus	3.53
12	I feel inspired by the musical portion of the worship service at Eastside Covenant Church.	Heartfelt Worship	3.53
7	I hear prayers in our church for the broader concerns of our world (e.g., AIDS, human trafficking, world hunger):	Global Perspective and Engagement	3.51
9	Since attending Eastside Covenant Church I have developed close friendships with others at the church.	Compelling Christian Community	3.50

Questions with Stable Scores

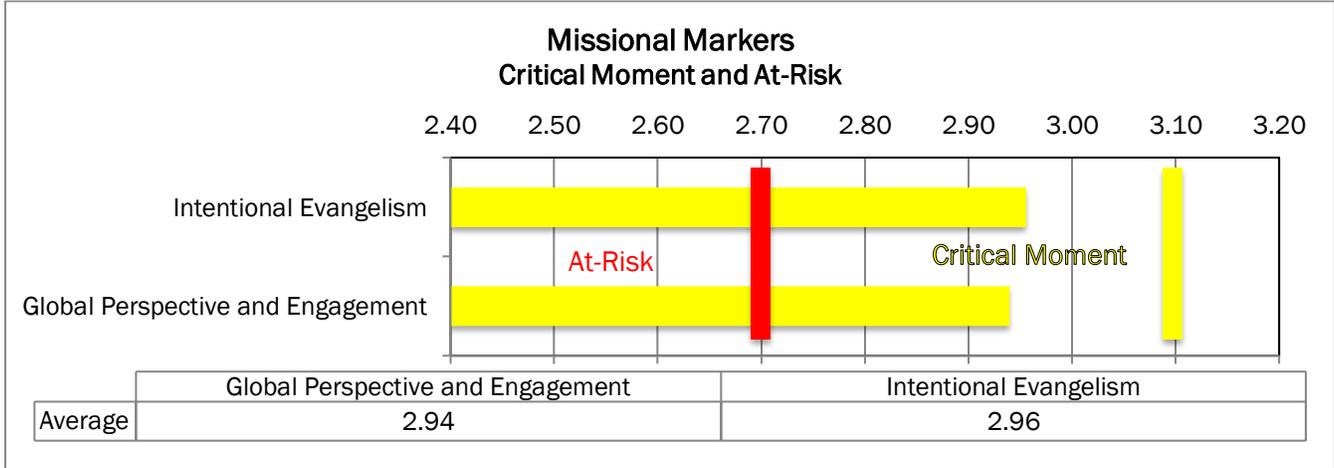
Question	Marker	Total
19 I believe the leaders of our church (lay/pastoral) are able to manage conflict in a healthy way.	Culture of Godly Leadership	3.41
35 My church has helped me align my priorities so I can better follow Christ.	Centrality of the Word	3.41
5 In using my spiritual gifts to serve my church and/or community, I feel that:	Sacrificial Giving and Living	3.41
25 My church helps me sense the presence of the Holy Spirit in my life.	Life Transforming Walk with Jesus	3.38
28 Our church's teaching on compassion, mercy and justice has compelled me to act.	Transforming Communities Through CMJ Ministries	3.35
32 I am not confident in the process Eastside Covenant Church uses to select lay leadership.	Fruitful Organizational Structures	3.29
20 Our leaders take time to build congregational ownership for major decisions.	Fruitful Organizational Structures	3.26
24 In the last few months, my behavior has changed in at least one specific way as a result of applying God's Word to my life.	Centrality of the Word	3.21
40 God called his creation good and gave instructions to care for the garden. Our church has challenging teaching regarding our God-given responsibility for the wise use of God's creation.	Sacrificial Giving and Living	3.18
34 I am praying for my unsaved friends to meet Christ.	Intentional Evangelism	3.18
10 I am satisfied with communication in our church.	Fruitful Organizational Structures	3.12
36 After important decisions are made, I notice that some people seek to undermine those decisions.	Culture of Godly Leadership	3.12



22	When there is tension in our church we work to name and address it.	Compelling Christian Community	3.12
18	My church is helping me to share the Gospel clearly and boldly.	Intentional Evangelism	3.12



Summary of Critical Moment and At-Risk Markers



Questions with Critical Moment Scores

Question	Marker	Total
2 Eastside Covenant Church has sponsored one or more mission projects in which members and attenders could participate:	Global Perspective and Engagement	2.85
6 I give the following portion of my income to God for the support of the ministry of Eastside Covenant Church:	Sacrificial Giving and Living	3.06
15 In my church I do not receive biblical instruction about financial giving.	Sacrificial Giving and Living	3.03
26 During the week, it is uncommon for me to think about something I experienced or learned while worshipping at Eastside Covenant Church.	Heartfelt Worship	2.88
27 I am building relationships with people who need to know the Lord.	Intentional Evangelism	3.06
29 I am unaware of the ministries and organizations with whom our church partners.	Global Perspective and Engagement	2.74
38 Our church eliminated or significantly changed a program that was not working in the last five years.	Fruitful Organizational Structures	3.03

Questions with At-Risk Scores

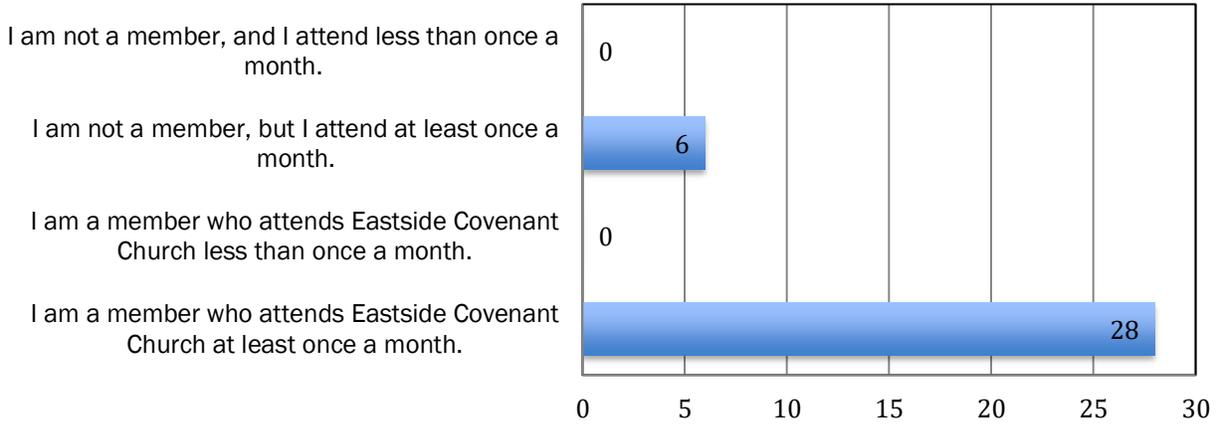
Question	Marker	Total
4 I hear reports about or prayers for our church's/denomination's missionary efforts around the world:	Global Perspective and Engagement	2.67
13 I do not hear of people coming to know Christ through the ministries of our church.	Intentional Evangelism	2.47
1 On average, I read the Bible:	Centrality of the Word	2.38



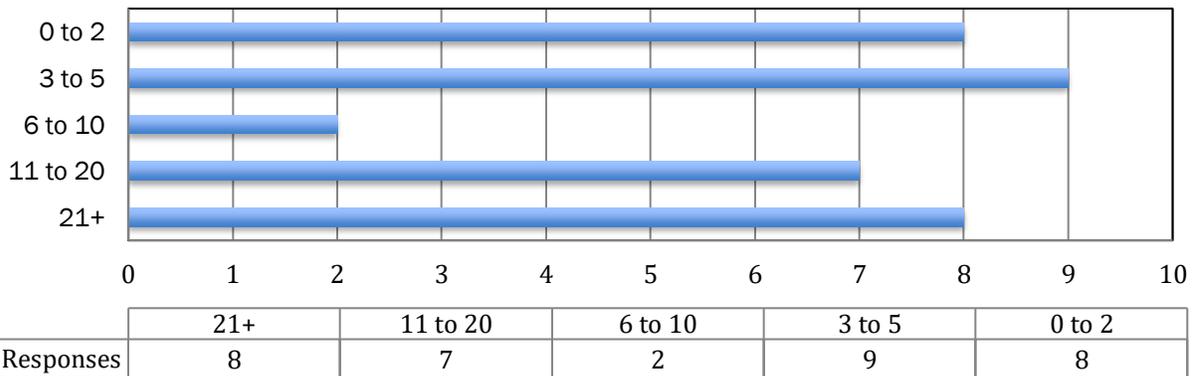
Section 3: Demographic Results

Internal Demographics

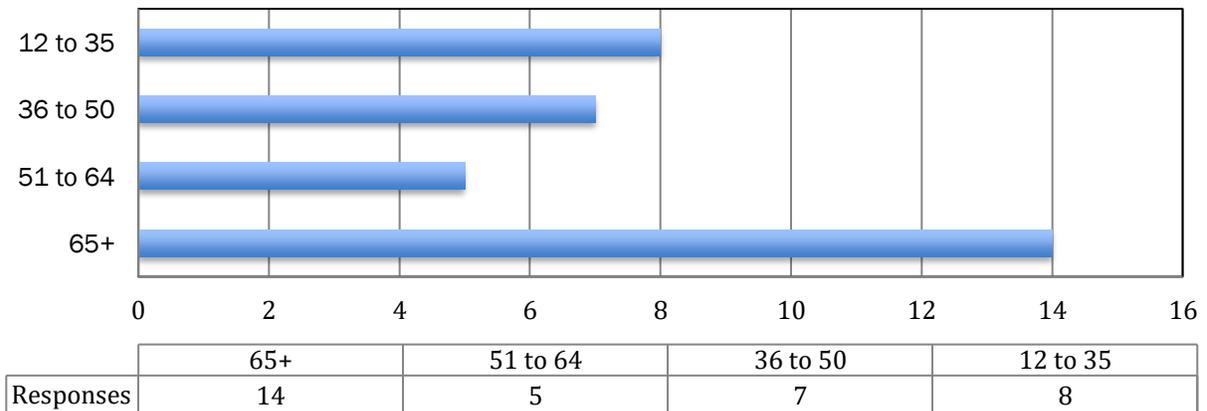
Question 46: Please select the statement that best describes you:



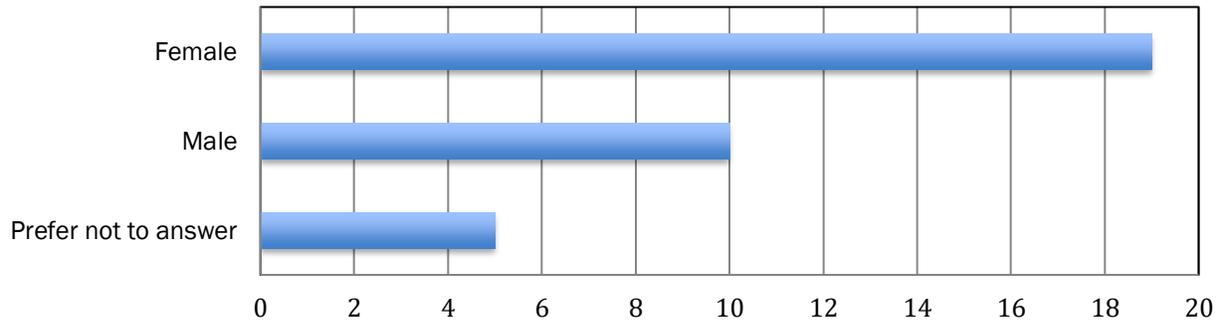
Question 47: I have been attending Eastside Covenant Church for the following number of years:



Question 48: I am in the following age category:

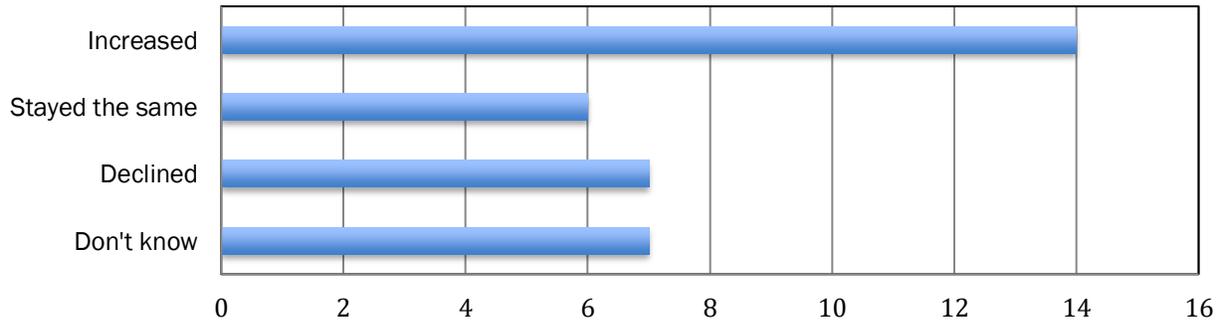


Question 49: I am:



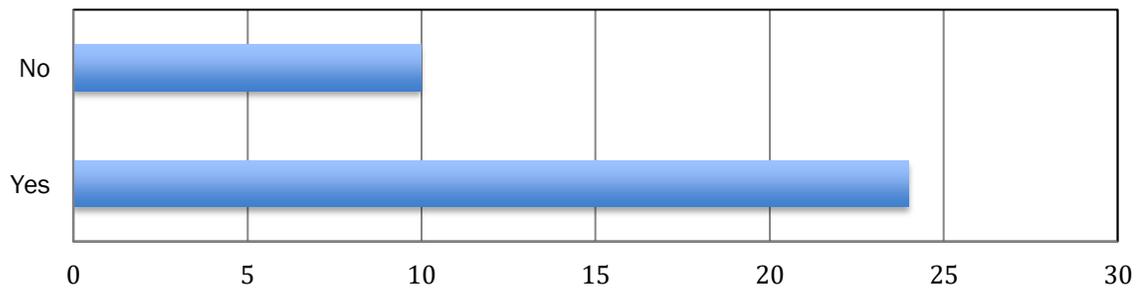
	Prefer not to answer	Male	Female
Responses	5	10	19

Question 50: In the last 10 years, our worship service attendance has:



	Don't know	Declined	Stayed the same	Increased
Responses	7	7	6	14

Question 51: When asked I could clearly state our church's mission and/or vision:



	Yes	No
Responses	24	10



Section 4: Responses to and Interpretation of Open-Ended Questions

Summarized by Topic

41. In your opinion, what is the single greatest strength of Eastside Covenant Church? (34/34)

Biblical Preaching (9/34, 26%)
The People/Community (9/34, 26%)
It Is Friendly & Welcoming (7/34, 21%)
Genuine Love & Support For Each Other (5/34, 15%)

42. In your opinion, what is the single greatest area for improvement of Eastside Covenant Church? (33/34)

Grow In Attendance (11/33, 33%)
Community Outreach (6/33, 18%)
Communication (4/33, 12%)

43. In a few sentences, how would you describe the overall health of Eastside Covenant Church? (34/34)

Healthy Missional (3/34, 9%)
Stable (9/34, 26%)
Critical Moment (6/34, 18%)
At-Risk (1/34, 3%)
Between Stable & Healthy Missional (3/34, 9%)
Between Stable & Critical Moment (6/34, 18%)

44. If you could change one thing about Eastside Covenant Church, what would that be? (33/34)

Communication (6/33, 18%)
Growth In Numbers (4/33, 12%)
Community Outreach (3/33, 9%)
More Small Group Opportunities (3/33, 9%)

45. Is there anything else you would like to share about Eastside Covenant Church? (31/34)

I Love This Church (11/31, 35%)
It Is A Wonderful Church (5/31, 16%)
It Is Full Of Loving & Caring People (4/31, 13%)
Great Sermons (3/31, 10%)



Interpretation of Data and Open-Ended Responses

The following is a list of observations and questions for the congregation, based on their responses to the open-ended questions (41-45). Although there are other questions to be asked, these are the ones that are most apparent. Please prayerfully consider these observations as you discern God's future for your church.

OBSERVABLE STRENGTHS

1. RESILIENCE

Though the attendance charts included in this report do not yet reflect it, we understand that your attendance has been growing since you essentially re-booted the church in 2015-2016. At that point, you were considering closing your doors, but now have doubled attendance and show other remarkable evidences of strength in your response to PULSE questions. Everything you had to say about the church in response to Question #45 was positive, and there is a generally positive tone reflected throughout the rest of PULSE responses. Kudos for your bravery and hard work to have arrived at where you are today. May God continue to bless your faithfulness with His own.

2. SENSE OF COMMUNITY

You all seem to enjoy each other very much. Nearly two-thirds of you responded in one way or another to Question #41 that you value the relationships you have with one another, and you pegged Compelling Christian Community as your second highest missional marker. This is a solid base upon which to build to attract new members to your Body.

3. LIFE TRANSFORMING WALK WITH JESUS

We suspect that much of this has to do with the two above-mentioned strengths, as well as your understanding of how your church is working to transform communities through CMJ Ministries and the concern you have expressed for more community outreach. A Life Transforming Walk with Jesus is like a beacon of light shining on the hill of a dark community. It will not go unnoticed.

GROWTH AREAS

1. APPRECIATING CULTURAL CHANGES WITH REGARD TO CHURCH ATTENDANCE

In past decades, there was a social norm in America when church attendance was "the thing to do," if not for religious reasons, for social acceptance. Churches did not have as much of a problem filling their pews as they do today. In recent generations, the role of the church in society has been undermined and waned, and with it, the expectation of attending church even on "special" occasions. Because of that, we can no longer "do church" as we once did. We note in a significant number of your responses a somewhat passive attitude that reflects an expectation for visitors to just show up and then you'll be intentional about folding them into your flock. We encourage you to rethink what it will mean for you to "grow your numbers."

2. EXPANDING YOUR SENSE OF COMMUNITY

While you value your internal relationships, you score lowest on Intentional Evangelism and Global Perspective and Engagement. Being a small church can feel very comfortable and familiar. But God did not call you to lives of comfort. He called you to "love your neighbor as yourself," and to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all nations." These imply getting outside of the safety of the church and actively engaging in work and relationships that will expand your knowledge and experience that give you entree to invite others into the same kind of life transforming walk you have with Jesus. In order to see growth in your fruitfulness, you will need to grow in your intentionality.

3. BEING CLEAR ON WHAT CONSTITUTES GROWTH AND WHERE IT COMES FROM

From the responses you have provided on PULSE, it appears that you deem growth in the number of attenders as the single greatest area for improvement (Question #42) and as one of the top things you would change about Eastside Covenant Church (Question #44). While we do not dispute that it is imperative for the health of Eastside to grow your numbers, we would like to suggest that growth in numbers stems from other things within your capacity to effect. Growth will come as you focus on Eastside's specific mission as God's outpost in Tucson and in the world. It will require more than planning the work; you'll also need to be intentional in working the plan. Make sure that includes personal focus and intentionality, not just the corporate agenda.



4. DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC MINISTRY PLAN

We commend you for forming A Strategic Ministry Planning Team. Completing PULSE and revisiting its results are meaningless unless you can use the data and its implications for moving forward with a detailed plan for ministry and intentionally carrying it out. We believe that being more intentional in your planning will bring a focus that will help with galvanizing those currently among you as well as those who come to check you out and consider whether they should stay and join you in your Kingdom work.

5. IMPROVING COMMUNICATION

Several of you noted that one change you would like to see at Eastside Covenant is an improvement in communication. We suspect that developing a strategic ministry plan that is shared with the congregation will create a healthy buy in. Regular communication with the congregation regarding decisions church leadership has been made is also critical to addressing this concern.



Section 5: Tenure, Leadership, and Age

Marker:	Score by Years at the Church:				
	0-2 (8)	3-5 (9)	6-10 (2)	11-20 (7)	21+ (8)
Centrality of the Word	3.28	3.28	3.00	3.21	3.16
Life Transforming Walk with Jesus	3.84	3.69	3.38	3.46	3.53
Heartfelt Worship	3.66	3.47	3.13	3.39	3.22
Intentional Evangelism	2.75	3.19	2.63	2.79	3.13
Transforming Communities Through CMJ Ministries	3.69	3.53	3.88	3.50	3.44
Global Perspective and Engagement	2.57	2.79	3.11	3.27	3.15
Compelling Christian Community	3.53	3.58	3.63	3.64	3.53
Sacrificial Giving and Living	2.89	3.21	3.03	3.45	3.19
Culture of Godly Leadership	3.84	3.28	3.38	3.46	3.19
Fruitful Organizational Structures	3.22	3.42	3.00	3.21	2.88
Average Score	3.33	3.34	3.21	3.34	3.24

Note: Average scores are remarkably consistent.

Marker:	In Leadership (9)	Not in Leadership (25)
Centrality of the Word	3.28	3.20
Life Transforming Walk with Jesus	3.56	3.65
Heartfelt Worship	3.44	3.41
Intentional Evangelism	3.06	2.92
Transforming Communities Through CMJ Ministries	3.53	3.57
Global Perspective and Engagement	2.86	2.97
Compelling Christian Community	3.67	3.54
Sacrificial Giving and Living	3.42	3.08
Culture of Godly Leadership	3.39	3.45
Fruitful Organizational Structures	3.47	3.07
Average Score	3.37	3.29

Note: To what do you attribute the somewhat significant differences in perception with regard to Sacrificial Giving and Living and to Fruitful Organizational Structures between those who identify themselves in leadership, and those not in leadership?

*Parentheses () indicate number of responses in each category, of a total **34** responses. In our experience, the difference in the figures in these two columns must at least .2 before they become significant.

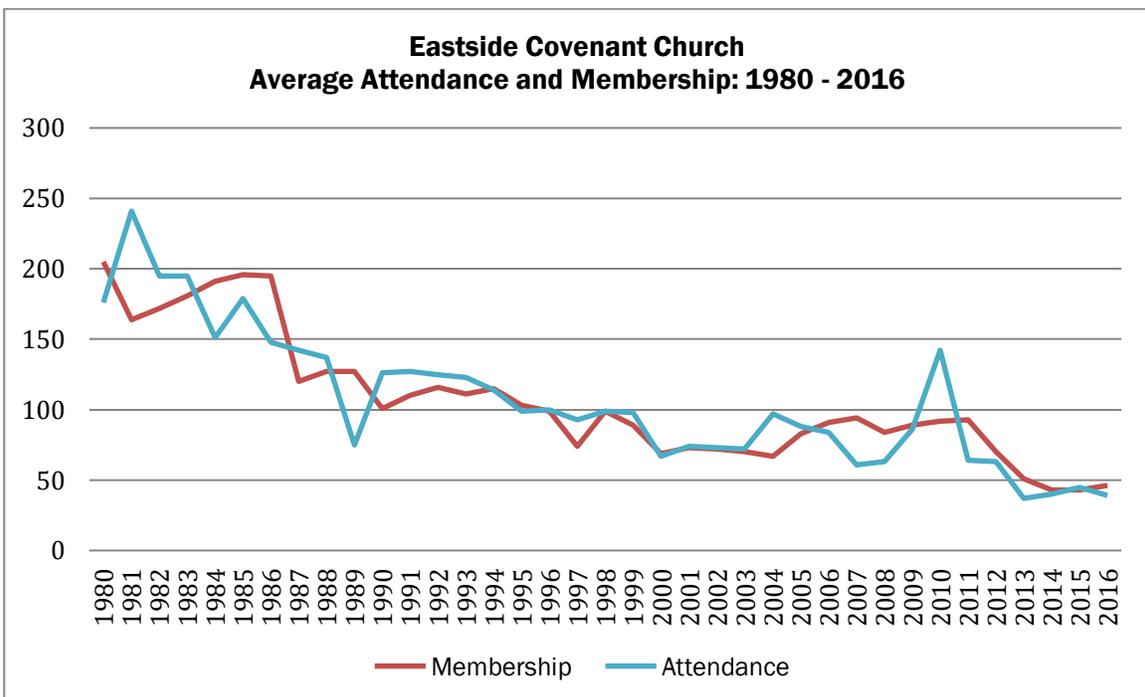
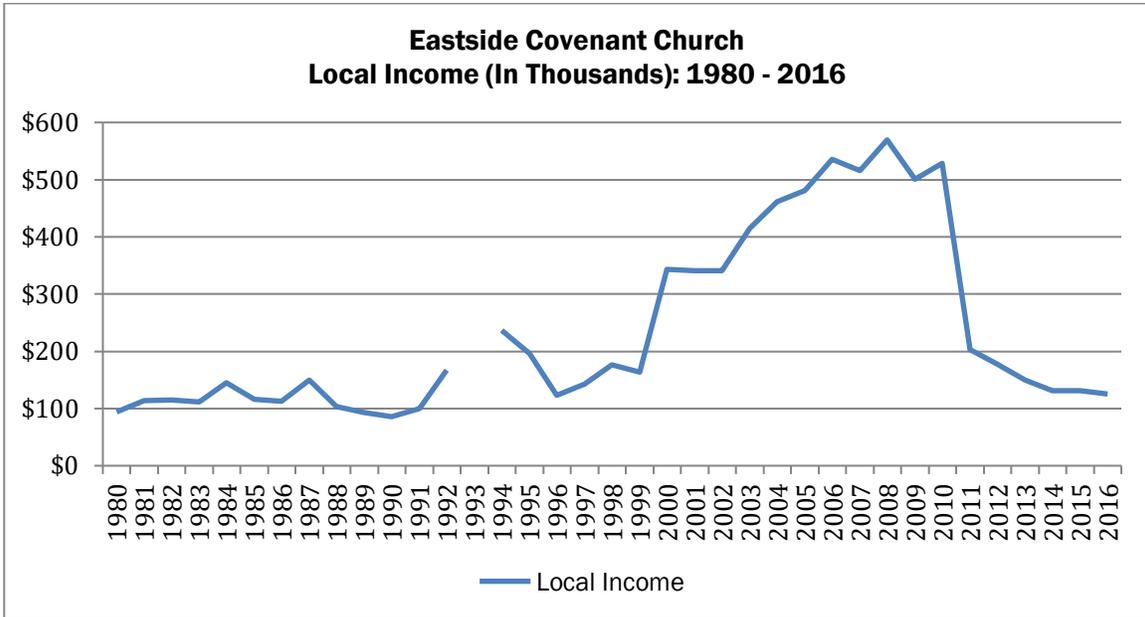


Marker:	Score by Age Range			
	12 to 35 (8)	36 to 50 (7)	51 to 64 (5)	65+ (14)
Centrality of the Word	3.13	2.93	3.35	3.38
Life Transforming Walk with Jesus	3.63	3.57	3.75	3.61
Heartfelt Worship	3.47	3.61	3.45	3.29
Intentional Evangelism	3.06	2.71	2.55	3.16
Transforming Communities Through CMJ Ministries	3.47	3.43	3.70	3.63
Global Perspective and Engagement	2.65	2.74	2.99	3.19
Compelling Christian Community	3.66	3.54	3.60	3.54
Sacrificial Giving and Living	3.03	3.14	3.21	3.25
Culture of Godly Leadership	3.47	3.43	3.70	3.32
Fruitful Organizational Structures	3.38	3.18	3.20	3.05
Average Score	3.29	3.23	3.35	3.34



Section 6: Attendance and Income Trends

As reported to the Start and Strengthen Team of the Evangelical Covenant Church every November



Section 7: VIM Assessment

Healthy Missional churches are full of vim and vigor. VIM stands for Vision, Intention and Means. While these dynamics are sometimes difficult to rate, they do provide another look into the current reality of the church. The VIM rates are measured in terms of low, medium and high. There is a correlation between the type of church and the rate of VIM. For example, Healthy Missional churches have a VIM score of High Vision, High Intention and High Means. At-Risk churches have a VIM score of Low Vision, Low Intention and Low Means.

The VIM score is a result of deduction and discernment, not statistical analysis. The PULSE team takes into account all the results, combines the information with what is known from other established churches in the ECC, and prayerfully discerns the VIM levels.

Vision is the picture of a preferable future – God’s future for the church. Vision gives people a target and gets people in the game. Vision helps dreams become bigger than memories. Christ honoring vision is compelling and inspires people to move forward to reach their full kingdom potential in Christ. It is communicated with clarity, urgency and passion.

*Based on the responses from PULSE and information about other ECC churches, the rate of vision for Eastside Covenant Church is **MEDIUM**.*

Intention is the resolve to move forward and the will to live, the willingness to count the cost and pay the price. It is the commitment to do whatever it takes to move forward and become a Healthy Missional church. Intention also embraces the understanding of what it means to carry out the message and mission of Jesus in a post modern, post Christian culture. There is a willingness to accept the degree and the kind of change that is truly necessary to become a Healthy Missional church in this culture. Churches often underestimate just how much change is needed in order to thrive. There is a belief that “we can grow without change and change without pain.”

*Based on the responses from PULSE and information about other ECC churches, the rate of intention for Eastside Covenant Church is **LOWER END OF MEDIUM**.*

Means are the available resources to accomplish the vision and follow through on the church’s intentions. Means refers to the ministry muscle of the church. Ministry muscle includes factors like stamina, children and youth, finances, building, leadership, number of volunteers. This asset base provides a sufficient platform for moving forward.

*Based on the responses from PULSE and information about other ECC churches, the rate of means for Eastside Covenant Church is **LOWER END OF MEDIUM**.*

VIM Summary:

MEDIUM Vision, LOWER END OF MEDIUM Intention, and LOWER END OF MEDIUM Means is a pattern consistent with other ECC churches that are Stable.



Section 8: Church Type and Trajectory

There are four types of established churches in the ECC: Healthy Missional, Stable, Critical Moment and At-Risk. These are churches that have been in existence for at least ten years.

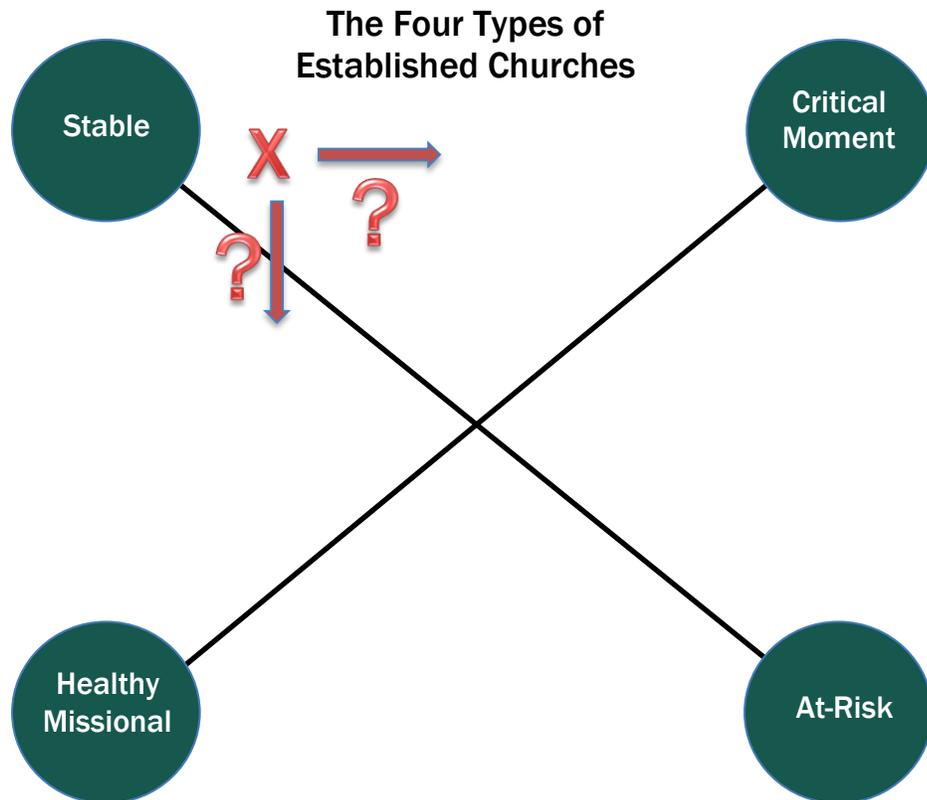
Jesus loves each of these churches equally, just as he loves the seven churches in the book of Revelation. Even though churches come in different shapes and sizes, it is comforting and reassuring to know that each one matters to God.

In a Healthy Missional church, the ten markers are lived out consistently. There are no perfect churches, but a Healthy Missional church generally displays all the signs of life and vitality.

Based on the responses from PULSE and information about other ECC churches, the church type that most closely describes Eastside Covenant Church is **STABLE**.

The trajectory of the arrow is more important than the location of the "X". Eastside Covenant Church is headed toward Healthy Missional but could easily fall back into Critical Moment.

How can a church that is Stable move forward in the journey of becoming a Healthy Missional church? The next section is devoted to answering that question.



Section 9: Next Steps and Recommendations **...for the congregation and leadership**

As a **STABLE** church, Eastside Covenant Church has incredible potential to become a Healthy Missional church. The following recommendations are made in a spirit of humility and gentleness.

Spirituality

- Your lowest score on PULSE was in response to Question #1. In order to enjoy an even greater life transforming walk with Jesus, we encourage greater consistency in studying the Word and what God has in store for you.
- Ed Siloso has defined *Prayer Evangelism* in his recent book of the same name, “talking to God about our neighbors before we talk to our neighbors about God.” We encourage you to pray for a heart for the harvest and continue to pray for your unsaved friends to meet their Savior. Then seek out and intentionally build relationships with people who need to know the Lord (Question #27) until you are able to share your faith with them.
- It is interesting to note that more people in your congregation responded to Question #50 with a sense that your attendance in worship services has increased over the past 10 years, as opposed to remaining the same and/or declining. While, according to the information provided by your congregation to the denomination, attendance has actually declined (and/or according to more recent anecdotal communication that suggests you may have returned to 2008 numbers), we suspect your congregation’s perspective reflects more of a sense of momentum, which permeates your PULSE responses. Keep up the good work and positive spirit!

Chemistry

- While chemistry for purposes of PULSE refers to the chemistry within the church, we also encourage you to consider how your gratitude for your own individual lives transformed by Jesus might be better reflected in your personal sacrificial living and giving. How might giving more of your time, talent and/or treasure to Eastside transform other lives for the Kingdom?
- One of the secrets to your success as a Compelling Christian Community may be that 80% of you are estimated to be part of some small group for Bible Study, fellowship and/or ministry. These opportunities are perhaps the easiest, most normal and natural way to invite others to delve more deeply into your midst. Guard against becoming too comfortable and/or entrenched in a single group. Participate in more than one, or change groups occasionally to ensure that you are getting to know others/new people and to bring a freshness to another group.
- Remember that Eastside Covenant Church is not just about those of you who currently call it home. While you may consider yourselves a Compelling Christian Community, your growth should reflect that. If you are not out in your community, your community will not be in you. What presence do you have in the community? How are you using your current facilities? What factors may be inhibiting you from being in the community?
- Intentionally develop relationships with unchurched people.

Strategy

- *Coming* to church does not necessarily equate to *being* the church. Particularly when a congregation is as small as yours, it is important for “all hands on deck” to advance the ministry of the church. Ensure that each of you is actively contributing all you can to maintain and advance Eastside’s ministry agenda. Perhaps you are not able to commit for a weekly engagement, but what about covering for someone who is burned out on a short term basis or monthly basis. Think creatively about how God might be calling you to fill in where needed.
- What strategies do you have in place to assimilate new people into the life and ministry of your Body? We encourage you to create/review/enhance these strategies. Make sure that these include newbies into a small group, and take into account a Spiritual Formation pathway for those new to the faith.



- Kudos for forming a Strategic Ministry Planning Team! Think specifically about your unique DNA and the needs in your community. Be sure to ask yourselves questions like, Who are we? What is God calling us to do? Who is our neighbor? What are we already doing that we need to keep and enhance? What needs to die for Eastside Covenant to live? Don't allow the plan you develop to move forward to sit on a shelf. Use it as a living, working document to chart your course and your progress. Include milestones to celebrate.
- Take your PULSE every two years. PULSE is a good way to check your progress and discern how God is moving. There is no cost to PULSE. Make evaluation a normal and natural part of who you are as a church. The more people that take PULSE the more accurate the assessment.



Next Steps and Recommendations ...for the Pastor(s)

Spirituality

- Your congregation has expressed its appreciation for your biblical teaching as one of the greatest strengths of Eastside Covenant Church. There can be no greater foundation for ministry than upon the rock of the Word. Kudos for your success in this area!
- Pastor, preach and model evangelism. Make evangelism a normal and natural expression of a life transformed by one's walk with Jesus. Relay stories to them about your experiences leading someone to Christ and/or those who have experienced new life in Christ to encourage their participation in this redemptive act.
- Care for God's earth and all of the other bounty, including money, with which God has entrusted us, are gifts intended to be used to bring glory to Him. Your congregation needs a healthy understanding of the relationship between sacrificial living and giving and the blessings God bestows on his stewards. Help them to experience that it is indeed more blessed to give than to receive.
- Centrality to the Word is critical to transforming one's spiritual walk. Encourage your congregation to be in the Word on a more regular basis apart from Sunday mornings.

Chemistry

- Your congregation appears to be fairly cohesive as a Body. However, it is common for a small church, particularly coming from a critical moment history, to be tempted to focus primarily on its internal relationships. Continue to orient, equip and prod your congregation to reach outside the church boundaries to growth the Kingdom (and in so doing, their own walk with Jesus).
- While there appears to be a good mix of the generations at Eastside Covenant, there may be some generational differences at work in your church. There are significant leadership challenges to leading this type of bi-modal congregation. EPIC will assist you to understand the lead this kind of church. How you lead, manage and care for each generation requires flexibility and understanding of generational cohort values. Understand that tenure trumps generational cohort values. You may want to read *The Multi-Generational Church* by Gil Randle (Alban Institute).

Strategy

- Your congregation has scored lowest on Global Perspective and Engagement. Part of this is due to their not hearing much about what the church and denomination are doing in the world (Question #4) or about the ministries and organizations with which Eastside partners (Question #29). We encourage you to be more intentional in your communications about these things; this could include bulletin inserts, in sermons or prayers, etc.
- Your congregation has also expressed some concern about not knowing about leadership decisions that have been made. What protocols might you put in place to ensure that this is addressed? You might consider posting Minutes and/or decisions in a particular place(s) (perhaps one online and one in the church office or narthex of your Sanctuary) with regular reminders of its/their location(s). Also ensure that each congregational meeting includes a summary of decisions made along with updates on your ministry initiatives and things on the horizon.
- Support the work of your Strategic Planning Committee. Work with them to set measurable ministry goals, objectives and tasks; then follow through, making assessment a normal and natural part of your DNA as a church.
- Become a part of an evangelism cohort to equip your congregation for evangelism. This may be offered for free by the denomination or conference.



Section 10: Conclusion

“...Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” Ephesians 4:15-16

The intent of PULSE is to speak the truth in love so that churches will reach their full Kingdom potential in Christ and grow in ways that matter to God. Your church matters to God regardless of your current state of health. Just like the words to the seven churches of Revelation, the message of PULSE contains a call to awareness, rugged hope and redemptive warning.

Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches? Revelation 2:7

According to your responses and from what we know about other established churches in the Covenant, Eastside Covenant Church is **STABLE**. While this represents a lot of hard work on your part, guard yourselves against becoming too comfortable or complacent as a stable church. It's appropriate to celebrate how far God has brought you in the past few years. Do that! But, also remember that stability can become the enemy of vitality. Becoming a healthy missional congregation should still be your goal, and becoming healthy and missional requires ongoing intentionality. The enemy is crouching and ready to pounce on any evidence he sees as weakness. You are right to be concerned about your relatively low attendance numbers. But the answer is not growth in numbers; it is growth in health and mission. Focus on these two things and the rest will follow.

As stated in the introduction, the answers are not in PULSE, the answers are in the conversations you have about PULSE, as the Holy Spirit leads and guides. These conversations need to be civil, compassionate, and Christ honoring. This is why a behavioral covenant is vital.

As you ponder, discuss and pray about these recommendations, may you sense God's empowering presence and love for you. Keep your ears and eyes open to the leading of the Holy Spirit and to follow through with courage and faith. This is a matter of spiritual discernment and we commend you to the Lord,

as you listen to the still small voice
as you love one another
as you discern what God's desire is for you and your community.

