

Measure Your Mission!

Use this congregational assessment quiz for understanding the nature of your mission involvement, equipping your congregation for more focused mission, identifying opportunities to deepen engagement, and learning where you might want to seek additional resources.

Directions

1. On a scale of 1-5, rate your congregation's mission involvement as it regards each bolded statement, with "1" representing "disagree" and 5 representing "agree." Use a score of "0" if the statement is not applicable. Write "DK" if you don't know.
2. Tally your total at the end of each of the five sections. At the end of the assessment, tally your total for the whole. Using your totals, read the tips provided in **Appendix A** for tools to enrich your congregation's mission involvement.
3. After filling out the assessment, share the results with your congregational mission leaders.
4. If being done by a mission committee, try this approach: On a piece of paper, create two columns. In the left one, list the "mission partners" with whom your congregation engages. "Mission partners" is another way of naming those whom you serve in mission, or the mission "recipients." In the right column, list the projects, activities or service work that you do with or for each mission partner. Use this sheet as a point of reference when filling out the assessment.

Section 1: Congregational Participation in Mission					
DISAGREE ← → AGREE					
1. Our congregation has a mission committee and long-standing mission work locally, nationally and/or internationally.	1	2	3	4	5
2. A large percentage of our congregation's active members participates in church mission programs, and members are able to get involved in mission in a variety of ways (projects, learning, prayer, giving, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
3. Our congregation has mission as a focus at least once a year, and mission is regularly lifted up as a theme during worship.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Mission is regularly highlighted in communications, such as worship bulletins or newsletters.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Our congregation supports long-term mission personnel (missionaries) financially, in prayer, through communication or otherwise, and receives an offering for mission at least once a year.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Our education programming offers chances for all ages to learn about mission.	1	2	3	4	5
Observations for Section 1:					
	TOTAL SCORE Section 1				

Section 2: Mutuality of Mission		DISAGREE ← → AGREE				
7. Congregational mission leaders ask mission partner leaders what needs are greatest in their community, and how our congregation and mission partners can work together to address those needs.		1	2	3	4	5
8. Building healthy, mutual relationships with mission partners is more important than "doing" things, like building projects or collecting donations for mission partners.		1	2	3	4	5
9. Church members and mission partners work together to decide what mission activities will be done, do the work together, learn from one another and pray for each other.		1	2	3	4	5
10. Our congregation and its members express needs, vulnerabilities and brokenness with mission partners, and listen to their needs, vulnerabilities and brokenness.		1	2	3	4	5
Observations for Section 2:						
		TOTAL SCORE Section 2				
Section 3: Mission Focus and Effectiveness		DISAGREE ← → AGREE				
11. Our congregation pursues mission activities based on stated mission values, and discerns what our mission priorities are based on those values.		1	2	3	4	5
12. The number of mission activities is proportionate to the size of our congregation.		1	2	3	4	5
13. Our mission efforts are rooted in prayer and reflection, with prayer and Bible study as integral parts of our mission endeavors.		1	2	3	4	5
14. Our mission activities are evaluated for effectiveness. • We have a system of reporting to the congregation how funds or resources are used. • We have a regular practice of evaluating mission activities together with our mission partners and making changes based on those evaluations.		1	2	3	4	5
Observations for Section 3:						
		TOTAL SCORE Section 3				
Section 4: Scope of Mission		DISAGREE ← → AGREE				
15. Our congregation engages in different "modes" of mission (direct action, empowerment of mission partners, and advocacy).		1	2	3	4	5
16. Our congregation connects with local, national or international mission networks and is linked to our denomination's mission offices.		1	2	3	4	5
17. Mission "success" is aimed at root causes, seeking sustainability of mission efforts and interdependence rather than long-term dependency on our congregation.		1	2	3	4	5
Observations for Section 4:						
		TOTAL SCORE Section 4				

Section 5: Mission Integration	DISAGREE			AGREE
18. Our mission work is evenly balanced between local, national and international mission activities. Our congregation makes connections between the international, national and local mission work that we do.	1	2	3	4
19. Our congregation brings the mission trip experience (or mission projects) back to the whole congregation, especially to those who weren't able to participate directly.	1	2	3	4
20. Congregational mission participants make long-term commitments and/or lifestyle changes that stem from their experience in mission service.	1	2	3	4
Observations for Section 5:				
				TOTAL SCORE Section 5

Overall Observations	Overall Score

Next Step: Assessing Your Mission Involvement

Using the totals from the individual and overall scores, measure your congregation's mission involvement. Notice the areas where your congregation is strong and compare this to areas where you scored lower. Read the suggested next steps below and consider how such steps might strengthen the mission work in your congregation.

Overall Score

If you scored 0-25: Your congregation may just be in the beginning stages of developing mission partnership. This is an exciting time! Read the sections below to find pointers for how best to set out in this new venture. Reach out to other congregations and denominational offices for help as you begin.

If you scored 25-50: The mission work of your congregation has taken off and is beginning to be shaped by key concepts like partnership, mutuality and effectiveness. As you encounter hurdles, don't get frustrated! God is working through your committee and your congregation to build important mission connections. Read the sections below to learn how to strengthen your mission involvement and deepen your impact.

If you scored 50-75: Mission is a fundamental part of your congregational life. Your work has been shaped through years of discernment and a sensitivity to your partners' perspective. As you continue to strengthen your mission involvement, consider how you might ensure that all members of your community feel involved in your mission work. Read the sections below and find tools for strengthening your mission involvement.

If you scored 75-100: Yours is a congregation driven by mission. You approach mission work with a critical eye and a discerning heart. Find ways to invite others into your mission involvement. Work with neighboring congregations to help them in their mission efforts. Read the following tips to see how you might continue to strengthen your work moving forward.

I. Congregational Participation in Mission (Questions 1–6):

If you scored 0–15: Your congregation will benefit from work to broaden and promote its mission participation.

Tips:

- Form a mission committee to discern your congregation's mission involvement, building mission relationships and encouraging broad participation.
- Work with leaders in worship, Christian education and congregational life to include mission in different facets of church life for people of all ages.
- Talk with your worship committee about regularly including mission themes in your worship services. Consider including a minute for mission during your services.
- Explore ways to communicate mission work more effectively through print and web media.
- Work with the finance committee or other church leaders to include mission in the budget.
- Contact your denominational mission offices for resources on mission involvement.

If you scored 16–30: Mission is a priority in your church, so consider some ways to go deeper.

Tips:

- Use a discernment process with your congregation to learn where people's passions lie, what gifts you bring to mission, and what needs exist in your local, national and global community.
- Brainstorm ways for everyone to participate, be it through prayer, financial gifts, in family groups or during Sunday school. Set a goal that 20 percent or more of your active members have some participation in your mission programs.
- Plan an annual mission-focused worship service. Invite mission partners to participate in worship leadership. Receive an offering for mission at least once per year.
- Report the results of mission activities. People feel inspired by stories of impact, personal relationships and transformation. Hearing such stories may encourage others to join in.

- Set a goal of designating 15% or more of your church budget for local, national or international mission. Support long-term mission personnel financially, in prayer and through communication.
- Work with your Christian Education committee to offer programs or speakers on mission topics. Find ways to include a mission focus in your annual vacation Bible school.
- Connect with local congregations or ecclesial bodies (e.g. presbyteries, conferences, dioceses, etc.) to join in their mission efforts.

II. Mutuality in Mission (Questions 7–10):

If you scored 0–10: Your congregation would benefit from deepening relationships with your mission partners. Consider ways to transform your mission relationship from serving "recipients" of mission service toward viewing them as partners, serving alongside you in God's mission.

Tips:

- Think critically about how mission partners are included in planning as well as "doing" mission. During your mission activities, plan time for intentional conversation, devotions, group games and "get-to-know-you" activities with your mission partners.
- Ensure that your congregation and mission partners have dedicated time to discern if your partnership is a good match. Spend at least a year in relationship-building efforts with mission partners before engaging in mission projects that involve material or financial resources.
- Share prayer requests, faith journeys, needs, vulnerabilities and brokenness with one another.
- Suggest that the congregation participate in a Bible study on mission using books like *Doing Good... Says Who? Stories from Volunteers, Nonprofits, Donors, and Those They Want to Help* (Connie Newton and Fran Early); *Toxic Charity*, (Bob Lupton); or *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor... and Yourself* (Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert).

If you scored 11–20: You recognize that in God's mission, it's not all about "doing." Rather, relationships are primary. Now, how can you go deeper and improve your relationships with mission partners?

Tips:

- Reflect on cultural "intelligence," which explores a person's or group's ability to relate and work effectively across cultures. Identify resources that help you and your mission partner learn about and discuss cultural intelligence in the context of your mission relationship.
- Ask: What resources (financial, spiritual, relational) do you bring to your relationship with mission partners? What do you receive?
- Engage in conversation with mission partners on what it means to be "accountable" and how you exchange resources.
- Consider writing a formal covenant or partnership agreement to help define your mission relationships. Ask the question of your mission partners: "Who are we together as partners in God's mission?"
- Continue to build your relationship with your mission partners through Bible study and prayer.
- Create a liturgy with mission partners for a service to celebrate your relationship in mission.

- Engage in shared Biblical reflection with mission partners that relates directly to the mission activities you've discerned that God is calling you to work on together. Involve as many people in the congregation as possible in at least some aspects of this shared reflection.
- Together with mission partners, develop an evaluation process for mission activities.

If you scored 11–20: Your mission is directed in focused, intentional ways. Your congregation is centered on a few mission activities it can do well and may be successful in evaluating the way it engages in mission.

Tips:

- Create a written mission values statement that defines the areas in which the congregation feels particularly called to service. Use this mission values statement to evaluate new mission proposals.
- Consider a mission sabbatical in which you allow yourself the freedom to stop "for a season" the historic, but not well-supported, mission projects. Ask yourselves: Are there points of connection between all the mission projects you are currently doing that suggest a core interest? If so, can your mission efforts be better focused or tailored to that core interest?

III. Mission Focus and Effectiveness

(Questions 11–14):

If you scored 0–10: You may find yourself wrestling with "mish-mash mission," where multiple mission commitments compete and ultimately take away from one another. By making your congregation's mission activities more focused, you will be able to deepen the congregation's involvement and commitment.

Tips:

- Keep mission activities proportionate to the size of your congregation.
- Engage in a process of discernment to identify where God is leading your congregation in mission. Use a discernment process with your congregation to learn where people's passions lie, what gifts you bring to mission, and what needs exist in your local, national and global community. Contact your denominational mission offices for assistance in this area.

IV. Scope of Mission (Questions 15–17):

If you scored 0–10: There are always ways to improve the scope of mission.

Tips:

- Consider your mode of mission: What percentage of it is direct service (things like soup kitchens, water projects and orphan care)? How much of it empowers mission partners through education and training in their local context? Is advocacy a part of your mission involvement?
- Explore local-global connections in your congregation's mission involvement. How can you connect your local involvement with global mission and vice-versa?
- Invite neighboring churches to participate in your congregation's mission activities. Likewise, explore joining together with another congregation for greater impact locally,

nationally or internationally. What mission activities can you do together? What activities are you engaged in already that are with the same mission partners, and that you could do together?

If you scored 11–20: Use the same list of tips to go deeper. In addition, consider the following activities:

Activities:

- Work with mission partners to evaluate the sustainability of your mission efforts as well as their potential for addressing the root causes of a particular issue.
- Host a “mission retreat” for your local community, encouraging other congregations to deepen their mission involvement.

Tips:

- Brainstorm with mission committee members or other mission leaders, with members of session and with those who organize Christian education and/or worship to find ways to bring the transformational experience of mission into the way your church functions, its mission priorities, Christian education program and worship.
- Research how other organizations or churches are responding to the same issues and needs. Is this an opportunity for you to team up with others who are more experienced with this type of mission?
- Consider ways in which mission leaders and participants can utilize their knowledge in your local community. Make the global-local connection.

V. Mission Integration (Questions 18–20):

If you scored 0–7: There are always ways to heighten the integration of mission into the life of your whole congregation.

Tips:

- Ask in prayer what changes God might be calling your church to make in light of what you've learned.
- Ask that mission leaders host post-mission trip retreats for trip participants to reflect on their experiences.
- Invite mission participants to share compelling stories of witness with the congregation.
- Create venues that bring mission leaders or mission participants together with those in the congregation who do not regularly participate in mission service.
- Encourage worship leaders to create space (perhaps a “minute for mission,” or even a sermon) to allow mission participants to share a story about the experience they've had in mission.

If you scored 8–15: You're off to a very good start.

Notes