

What is the Missional Health of Your Congregation?

By

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This month our association began an 18-month journey along with 30 associations throughout the country called The Denominee Journey. Led by the Future Church organization founded by author and consultant Will Mancini, this process seeks to help our association figure out how we can minister with missional effectiveness as a family of congregations in the Midlands of South Carolina.

One early aspect of this journey is to engage in dialogue about the missional effectiveness of our almost 100 member and network congregations using a smart segmentation system adapted by the Future Church organization from a subjective system called *The Right Approach for the Right Congregation*.

What is the missional health of your congregation? We would like to hear from you after you have read the information below and prayerfully consider where your congregation is today. When you are ready, send us an e-mail at CMBA@ColumbiaMetro.org and tell us if you perceive you are an L1, L2, L3, L4, L5 – or a new congregational expression called an L0 – and why you chose this definition for your congregation.

Here are the six categories:

- **L1 - LEADING** - The church is **stellar** with relationship to the mission. There is overall health, leadership trust, external focus, demonstrated discipling and ministry innovation. Ideally, the church has embraced its role to generate resources and innovation for other churches.
- **L2 - LIVING** - The church is **strong**, but the culture of mission is elusive. It has a genuine and positive connection to its community, and effective ministry continues with stability. Yet, there is doubt as to how effective members currently are at making disciples outside church programmatic structures.
- **L3 - LONGING** - The church is **stuck** about being on mission. Effort and energy tilt more inward toward running programs and engaging projects. Intentions are good, but genuine discipling is insufficient. Yet the leaders are aware of it, wanting change, hungry to learn, and seeking ways to move forward.
- **L4 - LAGGING** - The church is **struggling** and has normalized “good enough is good enough.” Maintenance programs are mistaken for mission. There is a looking back to glory days rather than to a new horizon for hope. There is inadequate readiness for transition and change. Spiritual breakthrough with a renewed focus on discipling is needed.

- **L5 - LANGUISHING** - The church is **spiritless**. The lack of spiritual vitality can stem from many causes including spiritual complacency, no vision for future ministry, a survival mentality, inadequate leadership, loss of hope, and even perpetual internal conflict. Spiritual breakthrough with a significant organizational renewal or a complete replanting process is needed.
- **L0 - LAUNCHING** - The church is **starting** and will be in the L1-L5 categories within 18 months.

So, where is your congregation today? Not where *was* your congregation some years ago. Not where do you *hope* your congregation will be in a few years.

If you have questions or need help figuring this out, let us know. We are glad to help. Email CMBA@ColumbiaMetro.org and we will connect someone with your congregation to help you figure out a beginning point for the future of your congregation.