

# Judicatory Vitality Assessment Report

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Test, OR 97080

Section	Score	Users
<b>I. VISION, MISSION, AND DISCERNMENT</b>	<b>Moderate Vitality: 2.7/4</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>Well done. Your survey results show that your judicatory has made progress toward a clear identity of who you are, where you want to go, and how you want to get there. You can further strengthen this by making sure to highlight your vision, mission, and values at all major judicatory events, as well as engaging local congregations in setting goals and living out mission.</p>		
<b>II. CONGREGATIONAL ENGAGEMENT &amp; EMPOWERMENT</b>	<b>Moderate Vitality: 2.6/4</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>Your score shows that you have a solid foundation of mutual respect between your congregations and your judicatory. The congregations which you serve are a key piece to being a more vital judicatory and are essential to living out your core mission. To further strengthen this work, consider reviewing the composition of judicatory committee membership, inviting new local leaders to share their voice and experience on these committees, and actively seeking insight for ways to improve engagement. Also ensure that individuals who work directly within the judicatory system as well as those serving in congregations have a place or person where they can offer feedback and suggestions.</p>		
<b>III: CONTEXT AWARENESS AND INCLUSION</b>	<b>Moderate Vitality: 2.2/4</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>Based on your score, your judicatory is likely aware of its responsibility to engage with the people in the communities in which you serve. Your greatest opportunity moving forward is to build authentic relationships with local and regional civic leaders as well as with the clergy and lay leaders in your congregations. Empower and encourage all judicatory leaders to be ambassadors to these communities, making connections and growing relationships with people. Also ensure that your judicatory leadership regularly reviews the demographics, culture, and needs of each of your congregations.</p>		
<b>IV: CHANGE READINESS</b>	<b>High Vitality: 3.6/4</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>Though change is a dirty word for some, your judicatory clearly embraces it. If you want to raise your game even more, share the ways you're changing with other judicatories and/or other denominations to inspire them to try something new.</p>		
<b>V. DEALING WITH DIFFERENCES</b>	<b>Low Vitality: 1.6/4</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>It's probably safe to say that your judicatory tends to either avoid conflict or sweep it under the rug, and people continue to trip over it. Chances are your judicatory has its fair share of gossip mongers and/or power brokers (a.k.a. bullies) who wield their influence to get their way. Regardless, you would do well to enter into a judicatory-wide period of discernment in order to begin the tough work of engaging differences with open and gracious dialogue and ground rules that help people feel safe. Start with judicatory leadership, then make sure to engage congregational leaders in the process as well. Conflict isn't something to be avoided; it's something that can be transformative if handled appropriately.</p>		
<b>VI. SPIRITUAL LIFE AND WORSHIP</b>	<b>High Vitality: 3.4/4</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>Based on your score, it appears your judicatory cares deeply about engaging all its leaders and members in worship and helps nurture their spiritual life. To go further, give all your key leaders the time to share stories about their personal journeys of faith before or during important gatherings as well as during meetings of your committees and elected leadership body.</p>		
<b>VII. FORMATION, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING</b>	<b>Moderate Vitality: 2.4/4</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>Well done. Your judicatory has been wrestling with the question: What is our judicatory actively doing to encourage its members to grow in their spiritual lives and commitment? You most likely have a system in place to identify and encourage discernment for all orders of ministry. Strengthen your vitality in this area by ensuring that you actively promote lay leadership as an important and essential call to ministry while also identifying future clergy leaders. Also consider assessing how you do or don't support bivocational clergy and congregations. Reach out to other judicatories who you feel do a good job of this and seek advice and strategy.</p>		

**VIII. OUTREACH TO CONGREGATIONS****Low Vitality: 2/4**

Based on your score, it seems clear that your judicatory needs to evaluate its interactions with and support structures for your congregations. Begin by assessing the relationship that judicatory leaders have with congregational leaders. Are these relationships collaborative and supportive, or top down? Consider doing a listening tour with key congregations and leaders to learn more about the kinds of connections and support your congregations need. Also take inventory of which congregations collaborate and partner with each other. Are these relationships grown out of mutual interest and mission or were they imposed based on geography or financial need. Where do you see success stories that can be shared and used as an example of collaboration? Engaging in honest dialogue is a tremendous first step.

**IX. LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATION****Low Vitality: 1.2/4**

1

Healthy lay/clergy teams are at the very heart of all vital judicatories. Unfortunately, your judicatory seems to have significant work to do in this area. You probably lack systems and structures for working together effectively. Consider developing an organizational chart that clearly indicates roles and responsibilities, keeping in mind the importance of delegating decision-making authority to lay leadership. Identify a resource list, including books, articles, webinars, etc., (Note: faithx.net and ecfvp.org have many good resources) and commit key leadership like your clergy, governing body, and others to learn and grow together.

**X. STEWARDSHIP****Moderate Vitality: 2.2/4**

1

The good news for you is that your judicatory has done a decent job raising money to tend to its annual operating budget, and you most likely have systems in place to support struggling congregations with their own stewardship. However, there is still some significant room for improvement. Thriving judicatories practice stewardship year-round, make a constant connection between stewardship and discipleship, and practice mission-based and/or zero-based budgeting. To shift your judicatory's culture in this direction, recruit or recharge a stewardship committee to research what good stewardship entails and how you can incorporate it into what you currently do. Make sure your approach to stewardship is not just about money but rather about time, talent, caring for God's creation, and more. Don't be afraid to make bold decisions to grow deeper into God's call for you.

**XI. COLLABORATIVE MINISTRY****Moderate Vitality: 2.2/4**

1

Good news: Overall, your judicatory appears to be doing okay in the area of Collaborative Ministry. Better news: There are specific actions your judicatory can take to do even better. Time spent developing plans and strategies to improve mutual collaboration and accountability between the judicatory and its congregations and among its congregations would be time well spent. You might want to work to facilitate improved collaboration among adjacent congregations, as well as among congregations of similar size, mission, goals, and programs. You might also explore ways you might better engage congregational leadership in planning and even implementing programs intended for their benefit. And since some congregations may be wary of help from judicatory leadership, it's always worth going the extra mile and wherever possible prioritizing facilitation over top-down imposition.

**XII. ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION****Moderate Vitality: 2.4/4**

1

Good news! Your judicatory has already achieved a moderate level of vitality in the area of Assessment and Evaluation. Better news: Having taken this assessment, you now have a better idea what the judicatory needs to improve in this area. Assuming the judicatory has policies and procedures in place for Assessment and Evaluation, perhaps judicatory leadership could explore whether it needs updating and refining. Do the congregations the judicatory serves have the tools and support they need to assess their vitality and sustainability on a regular basis? You may want to make that available to them through the JVA's sister diagnostic tool, the Congregational Vitality Assessment – Judicatory Platform. Does the judicatory need to improve its processes for employ evidence-based assessment and impact evaluation? Help may be available through your denomination, and its denomination-adjacent foundations or seminaries. Is the judicatory experiencing higher clergy turnover in its congregations than seems reasonable? Perhaps you can work on developing assessment procedures that might help spot warning signs.

**XIII. INFRASTRUCTURE****Low Vitality: 1.6/4**

1

It definitely looks like your judicatory has its work cut out for it in the area of Infrastructure, crucial important function that only the judicatory can perform in a holistic and systematic way. Questions you need to ask: Are all of your judicatory's congregations in areas of high missional opportunity? Does the judicatory have access to tools and resources to help you answer that question? Does the judicatory have the necessary resources and structures in place to support synergistic collaboration and networking opportunities, and to developed shared a

common vision shared between the judicatory and its congregations? Does the judicatory have structures in place to help support congregations in leveraging their property and buildings to better serve their neighborhoods, while upholding their own unique vision and mission. And finally, does the judicatory provide the necessary tools and support to help congregations discern when they are nearing the end of their lifespan, so that they can close strategically, in a manner consistent with their vision and mission? Once you have answered these questions, you will be in a better position to put in place or improve the missing or weaker parts of judicatory infrastructure. And remember: You don't have to do this alone. Your denomination and its denomination-adjacent foundations and seminaries may be helpful in this endeavor, along with faith-based consulting organizations that specialize in this area.

**XIV. JUDICATORY-CONGREGATION TRUST** **Moderate Vitality: 2.3/4** **1**

Good news. According to your score in this area, your judicatory has made good progress toward building a strong foundation for trust between the judicatory and its congregations. Keep up the good work. You probably already know that the only way to build trust between the judicatory and its congregations is to model in its actions toward its congregations the kinds of trust it wants to happen between the judicatory and them. Keep acting like you believe your congregations and their leaders are trustworthy. Keep inviting them into judicatory decision making processes. Keep looking for ways give them agency. Keep listening to their concerns without becoming defensive). Keep demonstrating fairness, honesty, gratefulness, transparency, and accountability in all your dealing with congregations and their leaders. And last but not least, keep on keeping the promises you make.

**XV. PROVIDING FOR LEADERSHIP GROWTH** **High Vitality: 3.2/4** **1**

Great news! According to your score, providing Leadership Growth opportunities in your judicatory is one of your biggest vitality strength. Still, there's always room for a little tweak here and bit of refinement there. Make it point to regularly examine your expectations for leadership improvement, how you are communicating them, and how you are resourcing leaders to meet your expectations. Look for ways to make it easier for leaders to access training and educational resources for leadership development.

**XVI. MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT** **Moderate Vitality: 2.4/4** **1**

The good news is you've had modest success in this area, but you still have a fair amount of work to do. It is time to begin a through-going assessment in this area. Do you have the right people with the right expertise and experience in the right positions? Do they have the support and resources they need to discern the needs, develop the plans, and do the work? If your judicatory already has a ministry development and redevelopment plan, is it tied to your mission, which in turn is tied to clear vision? Is it anchored in a foundation of data-grounded discernment about your strengths and weaknesses as an organization and the opportunities and challenges present in the community of congregations you support and the communities they serve? Armed with the answers to these questions, you can build on what's working well, adapt what not working as well as it should, stop doing those things that are ineffective, and experiment with new things as necessary.

**XVII. SUSTAINABILITY** **Low Sustainability: 1.6/4** **1**

Perhaps you already know your judicatory lacks the resources to be sustainable. Perhaps your judicatory is not bringing in enough income from its member congregations to support its essential programs, leadership, people, and facilities. Perhaps the pool of available volunteers for judicatory working groups is shrinking. Perhaps the number of vital and sustainable congregations within your judicatory boundaries is dwindling. Perhaps the your membership of your congregations is aging and have fewer financial resources and are less energetic. Perhaps the congregations and people of your judicatory have become discouraged to engage fully in the work and ministries of your judicatories. Perhaps you have been using endowments in ways that have negatively affected your stewardship and that of your congregations. While your judicatory and congregational leadership definitely have work cut out for them, God does have work cut out for you to do. However, you may have to re-imagine your structures and the ways in which you do ministry in ways that require fewer fiscal and physical resources. You may need to strategical examine whether your congregations are still located where the people and the ministry opportunities are. You and your congregations may have to discern whether your congregations' lands and buildings are being most effectively leveraged to meet needs of the neighborhoods they serve and carry out their vision and mission. All of this will require better understanding the communities the judicatory and its congregations serve, and more effectively engaging the missional opportunities and challenges present in the communities your judicatory and congregations serve. Just remember: God does not require of you and your congregations be successful but to be faithful. You can be smaller and do fewer things but still have a significant impact doing the work God has set before you. And even if discernment makes it clear to congregations that they

have to close their doors or the judicatory may need to merge with another, even those decisions may be discerned and carried out faithfully.