

*This guide is designed to help you reflect on your current practices, explore new insights, and make actionable plans for using the ChurchPulse Assessment to promote growth and health within your congregation and leadership team.*

## OVERVIEW OF FLOURISHING

Human flourishing looks at seven dimensions of whole-life discipleship: faith, relationships, finances, purpose, health, character, and contentment. As people tell you how they are doing, you can get back to the heart of pastoral ministry, partnering with them in new ways.

Tailor your church's vision, strategic planning, programming, and next steps to help your people  
*"flourish like a palm tree..." - Psalm 92:12*

### The 7 Dimensions

1. **Faith:** The Faith dimension is a high-level rating of spiritual vitality as measured by the desire to place Jesus first in one's life, and the belief in the authority of the Bible. We often refer to these two items as "the centrality of Christ" and "the centrality of Scripture."
2. **Relationships:** The Relationships dimension looks at how satisfied and content one is with their friendships and close relationships in general. Overall, it measures whether one's expectations of their closest relationships are being met.
3. **Finances:** The Finances dimension of flourishing measures the degree to which one worries about meeting monthly living expenses and whether or not food, safety, or housing emerge as ongoing stressors. Measuring worry is a sound place to start when desiring to measure financial well-being.
4. **Purpose:** The Purpose dimension looks at the experience of purpose and meaning in one's daily activity, whether at work, home, or during one's free time. It looks beyond occupation to one's place and role in the world.
5. **Health:** The Health dimension looks at how one rates both their physical and overall mental health.
6. **Character:** The Character dimension looks at one's overall response to the world and how they engage with the culture around them.
7. **Contentment:** The Contentment dimension looks at a holistic view of one's happiness and the satisfaction they feel in their life.

## OVERVIEW OF THRIVING

Common lag measures like attendance and budgets don't give you a clear picture of your church's health.

Based on decades of research from Barna Group, the 15 dimensions of church thriving help leaders assess the drivers of church health and answer these questions:

1. **Nurturing:** How are we cultivating life within our congregation?
2. **Sending:** How are we equipping people for ministry outside of our church?
3. **Leading:** How are we strengthening our leadership culture and organizational operations?

### The 15 Dimensions of Church Thriving

#### *Nurturing*

1. **Connected Community:** The Connected Community dimension looks at how connected individuals feel to their church community and whether they are forming meaningful Christian relationships that are beyond surface level.
2. **Worship Experience:** The Worship Experience dimension provides insight into how the main worship service is helping congregants feel more connected with God and experience His presence. The wording of these two questions is designed to be relevant for all service styles.
3. **Prayer Culture:** The Prayer Culture dimension asks congregants to rate their development of healthy prayer habits as well as their experience of the power of prayer at their church.
4. **Bible Centeredness:** The Bible Centeredness dimension measures how well the church is helping congregants understand foundational biblical teachings and live them out in their everyday lives (application of biblical knowledge).
5. **Spiritual Formation:** In the Spiritual Formation dimension, congregants rate the extent to which their church provides a clear pathway for ongoing growth and functions as a key partner in their spiritual formation.
6. **Trusted Leaders:** In the Trusted Leaders dimension, congregants rate their level of trust in church leadership and the extent to which they feel they receive clear communication. This dimension measures both trust and connectedness between church institution and congregant.

*Sending*

7. **Faith Sharing:** The Faith Sharing dimension looks at how a church is equipping and encouraging congregants to talk about and share their faith in Jesus. This dimension may be referred to as the evangelism or evangelization dimension.
8. **Serving Others:** The Serving Others dimension measures how a church is empowering congregants to make an impact on the lives of others and the extent to which congregants are actually taking time to serve and help others in the community. Note that the first item measures one's personal priorities and does not mention the church.
9. **Holistic Stewardship:** The Holistic Stewardship dimension measures how well a church is helping congregants embrace their calling and use their gifts as well as their resources to serve God and others. Stewardship activation beyond financial giving is a key element of church thriving.
10. **Leadership Development:** The Leadership Development dimension looks at how clear a church's leadership training pathway is and the degree to which a church empowers young people to become leaders. Equipping the next generation for leadership is a key element of church thriving.
11. **Social Impact:** The Social Impact dimension measures how involved a church is in addressing social injustices as they provide opportunities for congregants to help those who are suffering or marginalized.

*Leading*

12. **Future Focused:** The Future Focused dimension asks leadership to rate the clarity of their vision for the future and the extent to which they feel the next generation is essential to their path forward.
13. **Data Informed:** The Data Informed dimension is about having good systems in place to know and track attendees and the data needed to make well-informed ministry decisions. Church leadership cultures that normalize thoughtful, data-informed decision making tend to be healthier overall.
14. **Resource Stability:** The Resources Stability dimension looks at two key facets of resources: financial optimism and having enough volunteers and leaders to operate effectively (leadership personnel).
15. **Team Health:** The Team Health dimension screens for role clarity and internal trust amongst the leadership.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How do we currently assess how our people are *really* doing? What gaps exist in our current metrics (e.g., attendance, budget) that might prevent us from truly understanding their flourishing?
2. Before deploying the assessment, what do you imagine are the most important dimensions of flourishing we should focus on for our congregation?
3. How well do our current church activities (sermons, programs, small groups) foster whole-life discipleship as described in John 10:10? Are there any areas where we could be more intentional about fostering a flourishing life for our congregants?
4. How can we ensure that our church creates a safe and honest space for people to reflect on their personal well-being?
5. How does our church currently assess its own health and effectiveness in fulfilling our mission? What might be the benefits or perceived challenges of incorporating the 15 dimensions at our church?
6. In what ways are we nurturing our people, sending them out, and strengthening our leadership culture, as highlighted in the ChurchPulse framework?
7. Where do you currently see our church thriving, and where could we improve?
8. How comfortable are we with receiving feedback from our congregation about how they think the church is doing?
9. What steps can we take to ensure our leadership team models the qualities of flourishing that we want to see in our congregation? How can we help each other foster our own personal flourishing?