

Introducing Healthy Church—a congregational discernment process and a leadership pathway that will move your church forward together.



Healthy Church

"Transforming lives and communities worldwide"

***"See the way forward...
Together"***



CHRISTIAN REFORMED

HOME
MISSIONS



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your interest in the Healthy Church discernment process. The Healthy Church process was designed as part of the Christian Reformed Home Missions commitment to assist established churches in strengthening ministry.

The Healthy Church process, carried out over a 6-9 month period, provides an accurate picture and broad ownership for strengths that can be celebrated and continued, along with challenges that need to be addressed. In turn this provides a basis for strengthening present ministry efforts and developing new ministry initiatives, in short it is a way to dream and to move toward God's future together.

Guided throughout by a trained church coach, the Healthy Church discernment process begins with intentional congregational preparation in anticipation of a time to discern together what God is asking this congregation to be and do. Then by means of a survey of all adult congregants, information is gathered on members' perception of their church in eleven health areas as well as perceptions of their own spiritual journeys in the same eleven areas. Included is information about the community in which God has called the congregation to serve. This information provides a basis for a conversation with the entire congregation. In turn the results of this interactive process provide a basis for leadership to develop ministry initiatives and/or a ministry plan for the future.

Enclosed in this packet are a number of items that help in understanding the Healthy Church process:

- A brief explanation of the background of Healthy Church and present status within the CRCNA
- Summary of the eleven health areas measured by the Healthy Church discernment process
- Basic Steps in the Healthy Church Process
- Cost of the Healthy Church process, contract and role of the trained church coach
- Sample questions from the Healthy Church survey
- Comments from pastors and leaders involved in the Healthy Church discernment process

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For a brief overview of the Healthy Church process visit: <http://crcna.org/HealthyChurch>



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Health Areas Measured by Healthy Church Survey—Descriptions

The Healthy Church Survey measures 11 health areas in two ways: people's perception of how healthy your church is and people's perception of how healthy they personally are. Below is a list of these health areas and a brief description of what they involve.

1. **Centrality of the Word of God**—Bible is foundation of our teaching and preaching; we are applying God's word in every area of life; we proclaim and teach the bible in a clear, theologically sound and practical way that reflects the Reformed confessions; we preach gospel of Christ to a lost and broken world.
2. **Kingdom Extension**—Passionate about reaching our community, nation and world with gospel; we are engaged in surrounding community, making positive changes; our members bear personal witness to their faith in Christ.
3. **Loving Relationships**—Build loving relationships without allowing differences to become barriers; we intentionally create opportunities for individuals to engage with one another in practical ways in our congregation; strengthen relationships with small groups and mutual accountability; use biblical principles in handling conflicts.
4. **Authentic Spirituality**—deeply aware of our inclination to be conformed to this world, our congregation emphasizes presence and power of Holy Spirit, enabling us to live transformed, obedient lives; in every area of life, our church enables and encourages us to know God and follow him; we practice spiritual disciplines in our daily lives.
5. **Transforming Worship**—Our worship engages our hearts, minds and emotions in glorifying God; sacraments of baptism and Lord's Supper integral to our worship and celebrated regularly; worship planned to engage and influence both Christians and those not yet committed to Christ; church appeals to various generations attending worship services.
6. **Servant Leadership**—leaders committed to developing and empowering leaders in our church; our leaders are more concerned about members' spiritual development than their own success; leaders work as a team and are held to high standard of godliness and competence.
7. **Generous Stewardship**—we joyfully share our time, talents and treasures in ministries of the congregation, classis and denomination; we teach stewardship principles; our church builds on gifts in our church and community; church promotes faithful stewardship of God's creation.
8. **Intentional Disciple Making**—measure effectiveness by how members' attitudes and behavior mirror Christ; we have clear picture of disciple making process, built into fabric of our church; we are committed to seeing each member use their spiritual gift(s) in context of the church.
9. **Mission/Vision**—our congregation has clear sense of church's mission and compelling vision for its future; we periodically assess all areas of our church's effectiveness based on our mission, vision and goals; we are willing to sacrifice, change, take risks, even suffer for sake of the gospel.
10. **Justice and Righteousness Advocacy**—we proclaim the biblical message of fairness and equity for all, advocating for justice in the world; our congregation demonstrates God's passion for poor, disenfranchised and homeless; we minister effectively to people with disabilities, those who have suffered abuse and others who suffer in our community.
11. **Children and Youth Ministry**—Our congregation makes this ministry a high priority and has a strategy for the faith formation of children and youth; we support parents in their efforts to nurture the faith of their children; our youth remain in a Christian church after becoming adults; we include children and youth in all aspects of congregational ministry.

Basic Steps in Healthy Church Discernment Process

Your church will be coached through the following general phases and steps. Allow approximately 6-9 months. After a Ministry Plan is in place, leadership may opt for continued coaching or to continue the discernment process on its own.

Phase I: Preparation

- Decision/commitment to use Healthy Church discernment process (HC)
- Formation of HC Planning and Prayer teams
- Orientation/preparation at leadership retreat to understand HC process and their roles in it
- Leadership and congregation in discernment

Phase II: Information Gathering

- Online Healthy Church Survey administered to congregation
- Gather additional information about congregation and community

Phase III: Conversations

- Conversation of information gathered: Planning Team and leadership
- Conversation of information gathered: Planning Team/leadership with congregation
- Planning Team prepares summary of conversations
- Leadership retreat (or additional congregational conversations) to develop priority issues

Phase IV: Ministry Plan

- Planning Team formulates Ministry Plan/Priorities for implementation
- Ministry teams and congregation live out Ministry Plan shepherded by leadership or Implementation Team

Phase V: Celebration

- Dedication, celebration and healthy living (as Plan/Priorities lived out)

Phase VI: Continuation

- Repeat process in 3-5 years

Cost of Healthy Church, Contract with Coach and Coach's Role

Cost of Healthy Church

Total cost to an average-size (150 professing members) church electing to do the Healthy Church process (HC) is about \$4,000. Sustaining Congregational Excellence (SCE) offers Health Renewal Grants for smaller congregations. Requesting funds for HC fits the purpose of this grant. For more information go to: www.crcna.org/sce and click on the grants link.

The church contracts with an approved HC coach who will bill church directly for work time (at an hourly rate) plus approved allowances and expenses. Cost for using the Healthy Church Survey and the survey reports received are determined by the number of completed surveys (at \$2 per survey) added to a base fee of \$500. Church will be billed by Christian Reformed Home Missions (CRHM) after survey reports have been created and made available to the coach and planning team. Church should plan for additional expenses that are approved such as costs for materials, copying, refreshments, retreat, coach's mileage, etc. For an average-size church, total cost should break down into three parts: about \$2,500 for coaching; about \$800 for survey and its reports; and about \$700 for additional costs.

Contract with Coach

An external, approved HC coach is essential to an effective Healthy Church discernment and renewal process. CRHM will recommend only trained and experienced coaches. Church leadership will have a voice in determining who the coach will be. Prior to initiation of the HC process, the approved coach will submit for church approval an agreement/contract stipulating process objectives, HC coach commitments, the church's commitments and cost/pricing information for the HC process. Total cost estimate in contract will be considered an agreed to "not to exceed" cost for the process. Healthy Church process begins once the approved coach and a designated church representative sign and date the agreement/contract. Process ends when the Ministry Plan/Priorities are ready for implementation. If church opts to continue services of the coach, a new contract will be negotiated.

Coach's Role

The coach does not do the work of discernment or renewal. It is the responsibility of the church's leaders and congregants to discern the will of God for them and follow the Holy Spirit's into the renewal experience. Below are some ways a coach assists churches in the HC process.

- Helps church leaders discern which process may be most beneficial for the improved health of the congregation at a particular point in time
- Serves as coach and primary resource to the Planning Team, the Prayer Team and the Council throughout the Healthy Church process.
- Serves as coach and resource to the pastor regarding his or her leadership role throughout the HC process
- Prays for the congregation and its leadership throughout the process.
- Assists in administering the survey and in preparing reports of survey results, and helps the leaders and congregation to understand and evaluate survey results
- Trains, assists and collaborates with the Planning Team and Council in facilitating the Congregational Conversation.
- Supports the Planning Team in compiling and organizing the results from the Congregational Conversation and other gathered data.
- Assists the Planning Team in facilitating a Leadership Retreat for further analyzing the results, and developing ministry priorities and next steps.
- Assists the Planning Team in preparing a summary report of the Leadership Retreat for presentation to and consideration by Council.
- Works with the Implementation Team, per agreement, in acting upon the identified ministry priorities and related goals and plans.

Note: This is NOT the complete survey. Only a selection of items are included to illustrate the survey's content and format.



Healthy Church Survey

Christian Reformed Church
in North America

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Healthy Church Survey



Healthy Churches Transforming Lives and Communities Worldwide | Christian Reformed Church in North America | Edition 2011

General Instructions

Please use this survey to rate the health of your church as you see it. Choose your ratings as fairly and objectively as possible. The goal is not to make your church look either good or bad but to provide an honest assessment of it. Your assessment, along with others from the church, is a valuable contribution to making your church as healthy as possible.

Please try to give an answer to every question; however, you may skip any question that you prefer not to answer. Check those responses that most closely represent your opinions and experiences.

The survey has three parts:

- (1) statements about your church,
- (2) demographic questions, and
- (3) statements about yourself.

When the survey refers to **church health**, we want you to think of the general wellness of your church in 11 different areas:

- (1) preaching and teaching the Word of God,
- (2) sense of mission/vision,
- (3) reaching out locally and globally,
- (4) loving fellowship,
- (5) spirituality,
- (6) worshiping,
- (7) leadership,
- (8) stewardship,
- (9) disciple making,
- (10) justice and righteousness, and
- (11) ministry to children and youth.

When the survey refers to **church leaders or leadership**, do not limit your understanding to only pastors or full-time, paid staff. Instead think of all those in your church leading its ministries, whether or not the position is paid or voluntary, full-time or part-time.

Note that **no personal identification is requested**. Responses in the returned surveys from your church will undergo data processing. Only aggregated summary statistical results will be seen by anyone at your church. Your answers will be kept anonymous.

For best results, you should **consider each question quickly and then select your answer**. Do not spend time pondering specific details.

It is expected that this survey will take approximately 30-35 minutes to complete.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this survey. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

About Your Church

Using the scale at the top of the columns, indicate how true you think each statement is about your church.

Please check only one option in each row.



| | Definitely UNTRUE | Hardly true | Somewhat true | Mostly true | Definitely true | Unsure |
|---|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. The Bible is our primary guideline for all that we do and teach in our church. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 2. Our church strongly urges us to apply the Bible to every area of our lives. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 3. At our church, we teach the Bible in clear and practical ways. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 4. Our church preaches the good news of the gospel. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 5. The people of our church have a deep and thorough knowledge of the Bible. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 6. We are committed to understanding the Bible from a Reformed perspective. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 7. Our church's activities clearly reflect our commitment to reaching the unchurched. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 8. Our church works intentionally with our community to make positive changes. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 9. Members of our church are being taught to share their faith with others. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 10. Our church lives out the gospel of Jesus Christ in our community. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 11. Our church works with one or more local organizations to increase the quality of life in our community. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 12. I'm satisfied that our church does enough evangelism. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 13. I am pleased with how much our church does to support international mission outreach. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 14. Our church strongly encourages us to build relationships with one another. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 15. Our church encourages people to develop relationships with unchurched people in the community. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 16. People in our church frequently show care in genuine acts of kindness, support and sharing. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 17. Our church is committed to building up a sense of community among us. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 18. Our church promotes loving relationships that cross racial, social, economic and political lines. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 19. When disagreements occur in our church, people easily and lovingly talk about them. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 20. There is a lot of joy and laughter in our church. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 21. Our church strongly encourages reliance on the Holy Spirit in everyday life. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 22. Spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible reading, silence and personal reflection are actively promoted and practiced in our church. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 23. Our church does a lot of praying together. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 24. Our church shows that it is very forgiving by practicing forgiveness in our daily lives. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |
| 25. Our congregation enjoys a very close and meaningful relationship with God. | O ₁ | O ₂ | O ₃ | O ₄ | O ₅ | O ₉ |

Overall Church Health

1. Please describe your church's current overall health.

- O₁ Awful
 O₂ Poor
 O₃ Fair

2. Please describe your church's overall health five years ago.

- ☐₄ Good
☐₅ Great

☐₉ *Unsure*

☐₁ Awful
☐₂ Poor
☐₃ Fair
☐₄ Good
☐₅ Great

☐₉ *Unsure*

☐₉₉ *Was not at this church 5 years ago*

Demographics

1. What is your gender?

- ☐₁ Female
☐₂ Male

2. What is your age?

- ☐₁ Under 20
☐₂ 20 to 34
☐₃ 35 to 49
☐₄ 50 to 64
☐₅ 65 to 79
☐₆ 80 or older

3. What is your primary racial or cultural group?
Check all that apply.

- ☐₁ American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Indian or Inuit
☐₂ Asian or Asian American
☐₃ Black or African American
☐₄ Hispanic, Latino or Cuban
☐₅ Middle Eastern
☐₆ Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
☐₇ White or Caucasian
☐₈ Multiracial or multicultural

4. What is your current marital status?

- ☐₁ Single or never married
☐₂ Married
☐₃ Divorced or separated
☐₄ Widowed

5. Do you have children currently living at home?
Check all that apply.

- ☐₁ No, I have no children living at home
☐₂ Yes, age 12 or younger
☐₃ Yes, age 13 to 18
☐₄ Yes, age 19 or older

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐₁ Less than high school diploma
☐₂ High school diploma or equivalent
☐₃ Trade certificate
☐₄ Some college or associate's degree
☐₅ Bachelor's degree
☐₆ Graduate degree (MA, PhD, etc.)

About You

Using the scale at the top of the columns, indicate how true you think each statement is for yourself.

Please mark only one circle in each row.

| | Definitely UNTRUE | Hardly true | Somewhat true | Mostly true | Definitely true | Unsure |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. The Bible is my primary rule and guide for life. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 2. I read the Bible every day. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 3. Through hearing God's Word, I often confront my sin and experience God's forgiving grace. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 4. I often engage in conversations about the Bible with others. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 5. The Bible gives me hope and strength for my daily life. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 6. Every day I earnestly think about how to apply God's Word to my life. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 7. I think I have a deep and thorough knowledge of the Bible. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 8. I make a habit of giving significant financial support for international ministry. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 9. I regularly engage in activities that positively affect the broader community. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 10. I intentionally build relationships with non-Christians. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 11. I regularly pray for Christian ministries around the world. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 12. I actively share with others the hope I have in Christ. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 13. I often pray for specific people who do not know Jesus Christ. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 14. Involvement in some kind of community ministry always helps me grow more spiritually mature. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 15. In the past year, I have given time to a local community effort to assist people in need. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 16. I feel participation in small groups deepens our relationships with others and God. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 17. I am growing in my sense of belonging in my congregation. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 18. Building relationships with others of different background (racial, social, economic) makes me a stronger Christian. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 19. I can talk to other church members about their sinful actions or words and still remain good friends. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 20. I trust that I will be cared for by people in my church when I am hurting. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 21. Aside from family members, I have a close friend in my church. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 22. I can recall times when I truly lived out God's command to "love my neighbor." | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 23. I believe I can and do love people of my church with whom I might deeply disagree on some things. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 24. I spend some time every day in prayer and personal reflection on God's Word. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 25. I quite often speak with people of my congregation on a spiritual level. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |
| 26. I try to make confession of sin a regular part of my devotional life. | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 9 |

Optional Comments

Please add your comments about church health and the survey here. *Please avoid any words that might identify yourself or others; even if you want to be known, your self-identification may affect others.*

Thank You!

Thank you for completing this survey. You have significantly contributed to helping your church toward the goal of becoming a healthier church. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

Please return your survey to the designated location at your church or mail it to the church for data entry by your church's office staff or data entry volunteer.

If you are uncomfortable with your survey being viewed by a church member, you may mail the survey anonymously to the following address, and the Calvin College Center for Social Research will do the data entry at a nominal additional expense to your congregation.



A CENTER OF CALVIN COLLEGE

Center for Social Research
Calvin College
3201 Burton St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Questions about the survey results may be addressed to your church's Healthy Church team or Healthy Church coach. Questions about survey data management may be addressed to the Center for Social Research at email csr@calvin.edu or telephone 616 526-7799. Thanks again!

Testimonials – Healthy Church

From Pastors and Leaders

The Park Church Council determined that it was the right time for us to assess and evaluate the strategic plan for our church. We were introduced to the Healthy Church Survey Process in our review of several potential planning tools for us to consider. The Council chose to use the Healthy Church Survey Process because of its focus on encouraging the involvement and participation of all church members in the planning process. We liked the concept of receiving structured feedback from our members on the eleven identified characteristics of a healthy church. This feedback was based on the members' evaluation of Park Church in addition to an assessment of their personal "status" regarding the eleven characteristics. We have been very impressed with the participation of our members in taking the survey and in the follow-up discussions regarding the feedback we received from them. The process results in ownership and involvement by the members and we are excited about prioritizing specific action plans for the future of our church based on the assessment of the survey feedback and follow-up member conversations.

Dale Scholten, Council President, Park CRC, Holland, Michigan

The Healthy Church Survey was a great asset in an overall process we were doing to seek God's leading in our church. We were able to celebrate some areas of ministry that we do well and identify some other areas that we need to do better. The survey was broad enough to help us think about more than just what we already do in our church. It also provided an opportunity for many people to be involved in filling out surveys and discussing the results. Our leadership found the results helpful and understandable as we tried to assess where to put new energy in order to strengthen our church.

Dan Ackerman, Senior Pastor, Kelloggsville Christian Reformed Church, Kelloggsville, Michigan

9.2012

"A broad range of congregational participation in the Healthy Church process produced a nice summary of necessary goals for going forward. We ended with an ownership quotient higher than I have seen in any other planning process."

*Douglas M. MacLeod, Pastor of Preaching and Administration, Calvin Christian Reformed Church,
Grand Rapids, MI 49506*

9.2012

"The two best aspects of H.C. were (1) that the survey asked members to evaluate themselves personally as well as the congregation, and (2) the leaders' retreat which generated not just good ideas/goals but also enthusiasm and energy."

Henry Admiraal, Pastor of Westend CRC, Grand Rapids, Michigan

9.2012

I have found the Healthy Church Survey to be a helpful tool in helping the church come to terms with its areas of vitality and challenge in ministry. I'm particularly appreciative of the fact that Healthy Church is not simply a survey but an integrated process that encourages and equips the church to be the church in word and deed. I also found the Healthy Church leadership team remarkably responsive and insightful in providing guidance for the journey.

David Dethmers, Specialized Transition Minister, Ridgewood CRC, Jenison, Michigan

9.2012

As a Healthy Church Coach, I have had the opportunity to work with several churches as they go through the Healthy Church process. Church leadership often struggles with knowing if the things that they are doing as a church are actually making a difference. The Healthy Church Survey and the congregational conversations help

the church celebrate its strengths and also identify any challenges or ministry opportunities. Through this process, the congregation is able to better determine who they are and what kind of church they want to be moving forward. This allows leadership to build consensus on ministry priorities that are attainable and can be embraced by the congregation.

Rick Droog, Healthy Church Coach, Orange City, Iowa

General Statements without specific church reference (from the 2010 pilot study):

"The survey results gave the council a confirmation of what they already knew about the church's areas of weakness. The survey provided useful information and solid footing to initiate the necessary changes."

"The survey, being a unique mirror in which the congregation sees itself, revealed some interesting qualities of the church."

"This vibrant church is a generous rural congregation with a passion for prayer and a strong sense of church family. These qualities were highlighted by the survey."

"The weaker areas of the congregation that were discovered through the survey included: expressing personal faith, engaging all members in ministry, and inadequate training and mentoring."

"The survey itself is not threatening but rather inviting."

"There were some very simple outcomes as they (the congregation) took action on the survey results. Survey results regarding "centrality of the Word" inspired 70% of church members to participate in 90 days of bible reading. Pastor _____ was amazed that the church would be willing to do "homework." The main fruit that came about as a result of the survey was the bible reading."

"The survey results confirmed the following:

- Church leaders know the people
- They were heading in the right direction as a church
- They were aware of their areas of weakness
- Church leaders and congregation have the facts of where they are as a church."

From a Canadian church involved in the pilot, written by the pastor of a healthy church which has done the survey, received the results, had leadership discussions about the results and was planning the Congregational Conversation at the time of writing this

"We very much appreciated the opportunity to be part of the HCI survey pilot, especially in how it coincided so well with doing our 3rd NCD survey. The results seem at initial reading to reflect similar strength and growth areas. We really liked how the HCI invited anyone and everyone from the church to be part of it, giving a good sense of ownership of the process. We have enjoyed good ownership of NCD results by the leadership in the past and also an embracing by the congregation of action items discerned from the results. With the HCI we are looking to even grow the sense of ownership and embracing of potential initiatives that are prayerfully discerned. One aspect that we did find some concerns about was the emphasis on being "Reformed." While we don't want to downplay being Reformed we also did not see the need to emphasize this or give such tight definition in assessing the health of a church. We prefer to put the emphasis on what we share in common with other churches and denominations and feel that a commitment to basic biblical and doctrinal truths is essential for being a healthy church, but don't see a Reformed emphasis as having such a significant role to play and we find this makes the HCI survey a very in-house document that was not easy to understand in these areas both by newer and longer time members. That was the only point we had concerns about and were curious regarding. "We look forward to moving forward with the Congregational Conversation, as together we seek to prayerfully discern where the Spirit is guiding us as a church. Thanks so much Jack to being on the journey with us!"