



READINESS 360

Multiply your impact.

Readiness 360 Complete Report

For Wilderness Community United Methodist Church

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Overview

Congratulations for being willing to engage in a serious conversation about your readiness to reach new people in new ways! The Christian movement in North America was strong for so many generations because churches planted new churches that planted new churches. Untold thousands of churches, decade after decade, state after state! Only a small percentage of today's churches still have multiplication of ministry on their radar. Your church does - and that sets you apart!

Wilderness Community United Methodist Church asked several of its leaders and participants to participate in the **Readiness 360** process. The survey many of you took assesses your church's spiritual and practical readiness for faithful and effective ministry in the 21st century. **25** persons took the **Readiness 360**, a mix of staff, key leaders and active ministry participants.

The **Readiness 360** assesses four critical capacities for multiplying thriving ministries. In the rating system below, your church's level of multiplication energy is indicated by the number of rabbits (God's most adorable multipliers). The more multiplication energy your church has, the more ready you will be to start something new. Wilderness Community Church is strongest in terms of **Spiritual Intensity** and is most challenged in terms of **Cultural Openness**.

KEY:  =not ready —————  =more than ready

Spiritual Intensity:

In many respects, Wilderness Community Church is on fire in its love for God, but there is also some hesitation to go the full mile. It is well worth exploring what is limiting you in the area of Spiritual Intensity. You are so close to having the fuel necessary to multiply ministry.

Missional Alignment:

Your church often practices what it preaches. But there are yet a few discrepancies - priorities and activities that don't really align with its stated mission.

Cultural Openness:

On one hand, many in the church want to reach diverse people, but many in the church still have great apprehension about what this might mean in terms of changing the face of Wilderness Community Church. There may be some limitations in terms of how far the church is able to reach toward different kinds of people in the next few years. Open communication will be critical.

Dynamic Relationships:

There are some amazing relationship building genes within your congregation and they fuel an overall relational health. However, there at least one or two issues that should be addressed.

SPIRITUAL INTENSITY: 87.75

All great Christian movements are intense spiritually, marked by a deep love for God and a surrendering to what God is seeking to do through human beings. It is critical that a spiritual fire burns within the hearts and souls of those leading and participating in the life of the church. Without personal passion for Christ, we lack an adequate source of spiritual energy for vital and multiplying ministry.

In many respects, Wilderness Community Church is on fire in its love for God, but there is also some hesitation to go the full mile. It is well worth exploring what is limiting you in the area of Spiritual Intensity. You are so close to having the fuel necessary to multiply ministry. In your church:

- Many people have an expectation of encountering the living Christ personally and/or in the congregation.
- Practicing spiritual disciplines (prayer, Bible study, fasting, Christian works, etc.) is not a major part of life together.
- People are willing to take risks as an expression of their faith and trust in God.
- Leaders - paid and unpaid - demonstrate spiritual vitality.

Areas of Relative Strength	Score
1. Your church moves with a sense that it is sent to share something of eternal value with the world.	95.19
2. People have found that hard work and sacrifice pays off richly in spiritual fruit.	94.64
3. There is a spiritual expectancy in the air. People are watching and expecting God to do something amazing.	94.53

Areas of Potential Improvement	Score
1. People report utilizing their spiritual gifts and talents.	57.69
2. Your church has discovered the blessings received in serving and blessing others.	70.19
3. Your church prays together in order to better understand God's will and make good decisions.	80.00

DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIPS: 81.75

Disciple making depends in large part on our relational skills our relationship with God and with others. A church's people must develop good habits for leading others into a transformative relationship with God through Christ.

There are some amazing relationship building genes within your congregation and they fuel an overall relational health. However, there at least one or two issues that should be addressed. Your ability to form relationships with new people is colored by:

- The practice of strong welcoming behaviors.
- A strong track record of bringing people from the outside into participation in the community of faith.
- Positive experience partnering with other leaders and groups.
- A culture of healthy teamwork and leader development.
- Leaders - paid and unpaid - who may be struggling to work together.

Areas of Relative Strength	Score	Areas of Potential Improvement	Score
1. People are okay with the idea that your church could grow.	96.15	1. Your church is committed to team-based ministry.	55.21
2. Over the past three years, it is common for people to come to new faith to Christ through an encounter with your church.	95.19	2. Your church seems committed to doing things in a way that is oriented to guests and visitors.	65.38
3. Staff and laity team well together to advance ministry.	90.74	3. People have a healthy, trusting relationship with your church's denomination or network.	70.37

MISSIONAL ALIGNMENT: 83.75

Highly fruitful churches consistently prioritize the investment of their resources (time, talent, treasure) according to their Biblical vision and mission. Plans and major initiatives must stem clearly from Biblical mandates and a quest for fruitfulness. There is a willingness to let go of strategies that aren't bearing as much fruit. The more churches do this the better they are aligned.

Your church often practices what it preaches. But there are yet a few discrepancies - priorities and activities that don't really align with its stated mission. To this end, your church has:

- A clear understanding of our mandate to reach new people.
- Alignment to a clear direction.
- Fear of backlash if the church makes decisions that are in line with its mission as opposed to pleasing people or maintaining status quo.
- A shared sense of competency about the church's ability to start new ministries.
- Clarity about the core principles of the church's faith.
- Passionate support for the church's direction.

Areas of Relative Strength	Score	Areas of Potential Improvement	Score
1. Your church focuses on God's abundance, not on your lack of resources.	94.23	1. People believe that procedure should never be used to shut down mission advancement.	39.81
2. Your church's mission connects with people's compassion for others who are suffering or spiritually estranged from God.	93.75	2. People are comfortable with the fact that expanding ministry makes it impossible to know everyone.	46.43
3. There is widespread enthusiasm for your church's direction.	93.52	3. Your church is willing to invest for the long term and for major advance, even when the project will run in the red for a few years.	61.00

CULTURAL OPENNESS: 80.75

Since the first century, effective churches have been reaching across cultural boundaries to share the Christian good news with diverse people, who begin with different experiences, perspectives, and stories. Churches that exhibit fortress behaviors or who spend excessive time mourning social change often have difficulty sharing life with new kinds of people.

On one hand, many in the church want to reach diverse people, but many in the church still have great apprehension about what this might mean in terms of changing the face of Wilderness Community Church. There may be some limitations in terms of how far the church is able to reach toward different kinds of people in the next few years. Open communication will be critical.

Your congregation's capacity for embracing new cultures (e.g., socio-economic, racial/ethnic, generational, etc.) is marked by:

- Attitudes and behaviors that support cultural openness.
- A good ability to form meaningful community with people who puzzle and/or offend you in certain respects.
- A perception that diversity in your church is a good thing.
- Energy for working with different kinds of people.
- Difficulty in sharing power with new people.
- Valuable experiences that will help you reach younger people.

Areas of Relative Strength	Score	Areas of Potential Improvement	Score
1. People have a positive attitude toward their neighbors who have different instincts, tastes or points of view.	92.86	1. You have a mix of newcomers and old-timers in leadership at your church.	63.54
2. People report experiencing a sense of common humanity with people who are different than themselves.	89.29	2. People believe that your church is building relationships with young people (ages 18-30).	71.15
3. The ideas of young people are valued.	88.89	3. Your church seeks to honor unique perspectives that people bring even if those perspectives threaten existing practices.	75.00

What excites you about the possibility of us multiplying our impact through starting a new place or ministry for new people?

- Reaching people for Jesus Christ and helping them become His fully devoted followers.
- It excites me to have the opportunity to help bring people closer to God .
- I love to watch God work in new ventures.
- Spreading the glory of God
- It is good whenever some people from a church move out to find even more people to minister to.
- winning hearts to Christ
- new ministry opportunities create new opportunities to give back to our community
- reaching both the non christ believer and the un churchd
- It provides more opportunites for us to reach unchurched people, and those who have no church home, for Jesus Christ, and it brings new energy and resources for the church to accomplish it's mission.
- We are to spread the message of Christ and what better way than to invite others into our house of the Lord to experience how we serve and praise the Lord or to share this knowledge with others to begin experiencing His love.
- We are to go and make disciples. Reaching out to the comminity for Christ and starting new churches is what we're called to do.
- The opportunity to be witness to the transformation of a community, An attempt to respond to the great commission..
- Reaching new people.
- Gives the opportunity to make new disciples for Christ.
- Bringing in new young families, and those who don't currently have a relationship with Christ.
- Just seeing it happen!
- meet and help new people
- Meeting new people and seeing the talents and gifts they have to offer bring more fruit and more blessings to the community.
- The thought of being used by God to bring new people to Jesus Christ and thereby become spiritual reproducers.
- Help others share in the blessings offered in a personal relationship with God. I believe that new converts are an opportunity for others with more experience and faith to disciple, and both can grow closer to God through the experience.
- exciting to be on the ground floor of something new for God

What concerns you about the possibility of us multiplying our impact through starting a new place or ministry for new people?

- Whether we have the resources to undertake such an endeavor
- I would be concerned that a new place to worship in the same area will be hard to survive in today's economy.
- Nothing
- I am concerned as we move forward with creating new places current membership will split between the two new efforts and each effort may suffer financially.
- As a leader in the church, I see that there are the 10-30 go-to people who make sure activities go smoothly. If some of those people left, it would burden those left behind. While sacrifice is important, WCC counts a few to do the work for the whole.
- cost
- we will lose focus on growing the church family and campus that we envisioned when we started WCC
- ministry I support over a new place as the existing 'place' has plenty of room to grow;; I can appreciate another venue/setting to reach people but feel this could act as a ministry; stretching our leadership & resources too thinly is a concern; I am en
- resources, both financial and time.
- I think time commitments and financial issues could be an issue.
- Nothing
- Not reaching everyone, or overlooking anyone. Giving up before the ministry has time to develop.
- We may not be able to sustain our efforts.
- Our budget.
- Not having the facility space for all of the various groups.
- It not happening!
- none
- Lack of space at our facility
- The fear that our efforts would fall on deaf ears because of hardened hearts and competition from the world's values.
- Providing the human resources and commitment to follow through.
- place, money and support

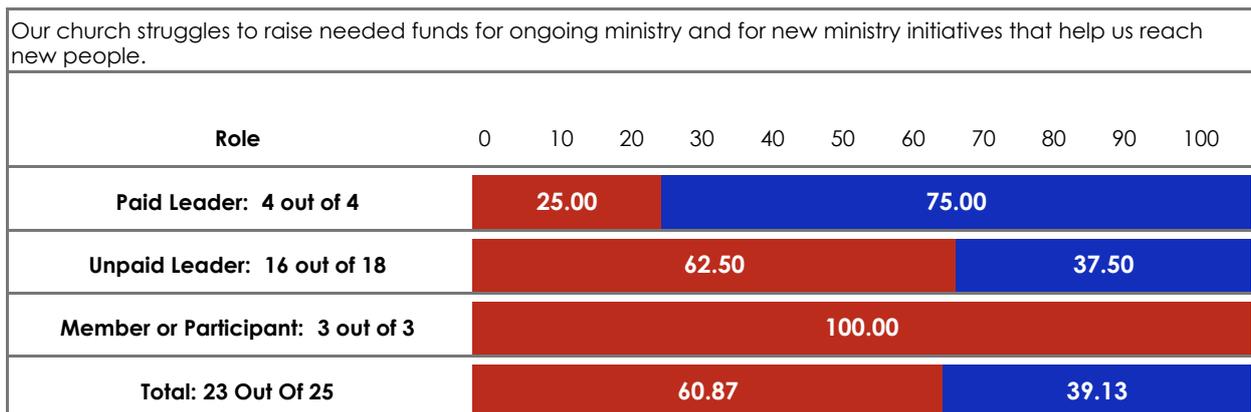
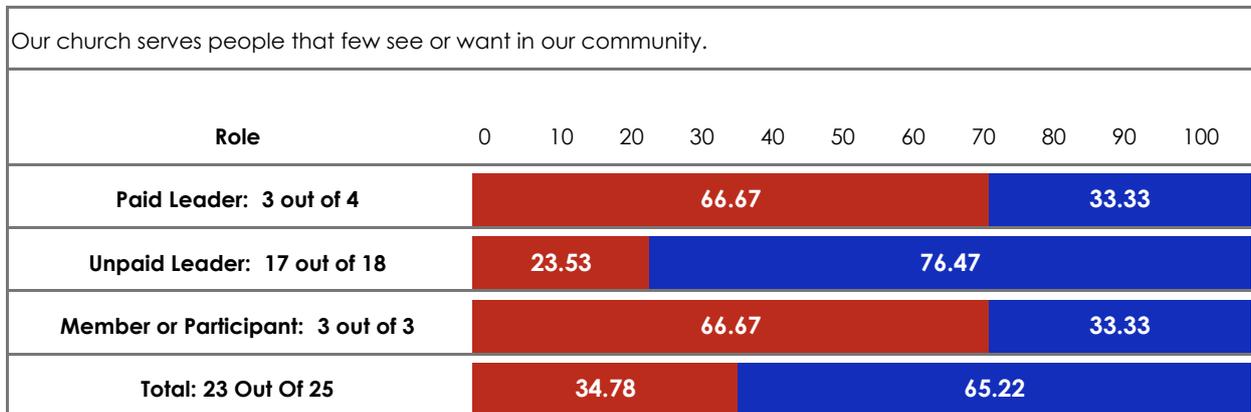
Potential Mixed Perceptions and/or Blind Spots

What follows are some areas in the life of the church where people see reality differently. This is not unusual, especially in times of change. Use this information to identify messages and behaviors that need amplification and/or clarification.

Mixed Perceptions are indicated when there is a significant difference in scores between one people group and another. Blind Spots occur when leaders are 100% strong agreement (strongly agree or disagree) and another people group is clustered in an opposite reality.

In the charts below, blue indicates agreement with the statement while red indicates disagreement.

Different Perspectives by Role:



I cannot afford to tithe one tenth of my income to support God's work.												
Role	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	
Paid Leader: 4 out of 4	75.00							25.00				
Unpaid Leader: 17 out of 18	64.71							35.29				
Member or Participant: 3 out of 3	33.33			66.67								
Total: 24 Out Of 25	62.50							37.50				

It is not always clear who should make decisions when it comes to specific ministry areas.												
Role	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	
Paid Leader: 4 out of 4	25.00			75.00								
Unpaid Leader: 16 out of 18	81.25							18.75				
Member or Participant: 3 out of 3	33.33			66.67								
Total: 23 Out Of 25	65.22							34.78				

Our church is having success building relationships with young people (ages 18-30).

Role	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	
Paid Leader: 4 out of 4						50.00						50.00
Unpaid Leader: 17 out of 18					23.53							76.47
Member or Participant: 3 out of 3											100.00	
Total: 24 Out Of 25						37.50						62.50

Different Perspectives by Generation:

Our church is having success building relationships with young people (ages 18-30).

Age	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
25-44: 9 out of 9	44.44					55.56					
45-64: 13 out of 13	38.46				61.54						
65 & up: 2 out of 3	100.00										
Total: 24 Out Of 25	37.50					62.50					

I value the ideas of young adults (ages 18-30), even when they have less experience than I do.

Age	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
25-44: 9 out of 9	100.00										
45-64: 13 out of 13	7.69	92.31									
65 & up: 2 out of 3	100.00										
Total: 24 Out Of 25	4.17	95.83									

I would put up with a worship style that annoyed me if it was effective in connecting new people to Christ.

Age	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
25-44: 8 out of 9	25.00		75.00								
45-64: 13 out of 13	23.08		76.92								
65 & up: 2 out of 3	100.00										
Total: 23 Out Of 25	30.43		69.57								

I cannot afford to tithe one tenth of my income to support God's work.

Age	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
25-44: 9 out of 9	44.44					55.56					
45-64: 13 out of 13	69.23								30.77		
65 & up: 2 out of 3	100.00										
Total: 24 Out Of 25	62.50							37.50			

Different Perspectives by Longevity at Church:

New people quickly find or create their place of belonging or serving in our church.											
Years (Length Of time at Church)	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
New to Your Church (0-3 years): 1 out of 1	100.00										
Acclimated (4-14 years): 21 out of 24	14.29	85.71									
Total: 22 Out Of 25	13.64	86.36									

Long-time members at our church often resist the ideas that newer leaders bring.											
Years (Length Of time at Church)	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
New to Your Church (0-3 years): 1 out of 1	100.00										
Acclimated (4-14 years): 23 out of 24	86.96										13.04
Total: 24 Out Of 25	83.33										16.67

I believe we should spend down some of our church's savings or allow a project to run in the red for a few years to invest in reaching new people.											
Years (Length Of time at Church)	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
New to Your Church (0-3 years): 1 out of 1	100.00										
Acclimated (4-14 years): 21 out of 24	52.38					47.62					
Total: 22 Out Of 25	54.55					45.45					

I want to see our church facilities open and in use for community people, even if the place gets dirty.											
Years (Length Of time at Church)	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
New to Your Church (0-3 years): 1 out of 1	100.00										
Acclimated (4-14 years): 23 out of 24	4.35	95.65									
Total: 24 Out Of 25	8.33	91.67									

Our church is having success building new relationships with community people.											
Years (Length Of time at Church)	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
New to Your Church (0-3 years): 1 out of 1	100.00										
Acclimated (4-14 years): 22 out of 24	9.09	90.91									
Total: 23 Out Of 25	13.04	86.96									

Leader Tips

Leaders at Wilderness Community Church are more ready than most for leading the church on a robust ministry journey in the days ahead. The church may yet be short one or two critical pieces (or people) for the lead team needed in order to aggressively multiply ministry. The team would probably respond very well to ministry coaching.

These tips were generated for leaders - paid and unpaid - at Wilderness Community Church given specific patterns of response throughout the survey. After you have read through each tip discuss their priority as a team and implement one at a time. If you experience any difficulty in the prioritization process or if you have more than 3-5 tips, we recommend engaging an experienced facilitator or coach.

Tip 1: Commit to your own personal spiritual journey and living out God's call on your life. In order to lead, we have to get in front of the parade. If we are not prayerful personally, it will be impossible for us to competently lead a prayerful church. If we are not robust givers to support the church's mission on the lead team, our church will almost certainly have a lack of robust giving across the ranks. Your leaders would help your church immensely by covenanting together as leaders to a short list of core discipleship behaviors, and then holding yourselves accountable to this covenant on a regular basis. Spend a part of your leadership gathering time tending to this covenant and to your lives as a community of faith, first and foremost. When nominating persons for leadership, begin to insist on certain key indicators in their lives. Are they obviously and passionately committed to living out God's call on their life? Are they actively engaged in practices that deepen their faith journey. Are they giving? Are they engaged in a small group or a ministry team? Whatever you find non-negotiable in terms of the life of faith, make it non-negotiable for your leaders. Also, in churches with high spiritual intensity, it is normal and natural for the senior leader to take work time to go on prayer retreats, where she/he does no work other than to listen and talk to God. Encourage your pastor to take the time to stay spiritually fresh and sharp. A good read for leaders would be ***Practicing Greatness: 7 Disciplines of Extraordinary Spiritual Leaders*** by Reggie McNeal and Ken Blanchard.

Tip 2: Simplify and concentrate your purpose to help your people keep their eye and hearts on reaching your mission zone. All over the world, many of the most rapidly multiplying church movements share this in common: the people are poor and the churches have very little in the way of financial resources. In the west, we tend to create ministry with very high overhead, along with the illusion that we can't afford to do what it takes to grow ministry. In reality, churches always have the resources to do what they really need to do. Your church may need to seriously re-assess its facility and staffing strategies in order to be nimble and effective in the 21st century. A competent ministry consultant may save you several years in sorting through these issues wisely. Printed resources that might assist in the conversation would include ***Deep and Wide: Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend*** by Andy Stanley and ***Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them*** by Ed Stetzer, et al.

Tip 3: Lift up and model habits of cultural openness. When a church is isolated socially from its mission zone, the pastor and a few leaders can break the ice and get involved personally in service projects, community organizations or other intentional experiences where they build relationships with folks who reflect aspects of the community's diversity. A couple good resources for networking in your neighborhood: **Make Your Contacts Count** by Lynne Waymon and **Networking for People who Hate Networking** by Devora Zack. Talking about our experiences building relationships in the community openly and with good humor will help the church begin dealing with issues of how to connect with neighbors and/or younger people who are different.

Tip 4: Let your church know it is time for an alignment. A church will seldom function in a way that is aligned with its stated mission and purpose unless leaders walk the talk, are willing to lift up that mission and ask how each activity helps us to live out that mission. The mission must be rooted in the Gospel of Jesus, framed in ways that are relevant to the community, restated regularly and used consistently. If folks don't hear about it for a month, many will forget it! Be sure you have a simple mission that is easy for folks to understand and remember. If a church's mission doesn't fit on a t-shirt, it isn't simple enough. Regularly point people back to your collective purpose in the preached moment. Ask each group, each program and ministry area to frame their work in terms of the church's core mission. A couple of great reads related to realigning churches to the mission of Jesus in the world would be **The Permanent Revolution** by Alan Hirsch and Tim Catchim, **Missional: Joining God in the Neighborhood** by Alan Roxburgh and **Missional Renaissance** by Reggie McNeal.

Tip 5 : Invest time and energy in developing your skills in teamwork. When leaders begin teaming, it makes it easier for everyone! Great teaming is essential at multiple levels in a church: within the staff group, between pastor/staff and unpaid leadership, and among unpaid people in the church who come together to accomplish ministry tasks. Pastors may wish to identify aspects of their work where they can reflect and plan with others (other staff, laity, a coach/mentor or ministry peers in other churches) in order to model teaming, offer high quality experiences and to make really smart decisions. Some teaming possibilities include: Bible reflection in preparation for sermons, planning special events that offer a "wow" factor for participants, prayer walking the neighborhood and group discernment about ministry opportunities. It is very important that we always include persons in our planning who represent the community that a ministry is to be designed for. Non-members and young persons are often left off the team, and this is a mistake! (And then we wonder why the project bombed.) Some resources worthy of group study are: **Sticky Teams** by Larry Osborne and **Five Dysfunctions of a Team** by Patrick Lencioni.

Tip 6: Empower and educate people to simplify decision-making. It may be that many groups in your church seek to function as gatekeepers. A mission group ideally exists to do good in the world, and to encourage others to do likewise. We get into trouble when one group becomes the clearinghouse that tells other groups what they can and cannot do. It is good for a church to have a clear mission statement and clear boundaries and values on what we do and what we don't do. Beyond that, we want to cultivate a community of trusting permission for any group that wishes to take positive initiative in line with our church's mission and values. Accountability systems must exist, but they should be minimal and simple. If your church struggles around permission giving, an old classic, **Sacred Cows Make Gourmet Burgers** by Bill Easum, may be just what your leaders need to fully get their minds around this. If your church is wrestling with structural issues, we recommend **Winning On Purpose: How To Organize Congregations to Succeed in Their Mission** by John Edmund Kaiser.

Tip 7 : Rid your church of lone ranger ministry mentality and commit to team-based ministry. It is common to find ministries or churches where one or two people are expected to do all the work on behalf of the whole body, but this is not positioning the church or its people for growth. It is often difficult to break this habit! One of the first steps is for leaders to agree that they will let a particular project or ministry rest until a team can be rallied to lead it. A good rule of thumb is to wait to start (or stop) any ministry project until at least five passionate, committed people have enlisted to share in leadership. Those five should then recruit others from the margins of church life and from beyond! Learn more through a study of ***The Teaming Church: Ministry in the Age of Collaboration*** by Robert Crosby.

Tip 8: Get some new people on your most critical teams. Get some younger people and some more recent converts on the most critical teams! Every church needs a steady inflow of new people, new leaders and new ideas. This is critical to a church's health and readiness for risk-taking mission. In too many churches, it's the same people staring at each other across the conference table for many years, with diminishing energy and capacity for innovation. When the leader pool becomes disproportionately long-tenure church members, it is easy for the church to get stuck in terms of old ideas and paradigms. Occasionally we see stalwart lay leaders whose commitment to new ideas and ministry approaches helps keep their church from getting stuck, despite the fact that most of the leaders are old-timers. These leaders are somewhat rare and when they leave a church can freeze up, unless there is a steady and well-established inflow of new leaders. It is also helpful to establish term limits for lay leadership positions.