

MATURING CHURCHES

FIELD MISSIONARIES

CHURCH HEALTH STRATEGISTS (CHS'S):

Southwest Region – Gary Horton

Central-West Region – Jack Noble

(Associate – Shawn Ames)

North Region – Darrell Webb

(Associate – Doug Stell)

Central-East Region – Steve Bradshaw

(Associate – Don Crain)

Southeast Region – Don Cokes

(Associates – John Burr and David Bounds)

STATEWIDE STRATEGISTS:

Student Ministry Strategist: Steve Maltempi

Women's Ministry Strategist: Sue Sawyer

MISSION STATEMENT

The Maturing Churches Team exists to assist the local churches of the SBCV in enhancing relationships between pastors, staff, and lay leaders and to assist them in becoming healthier and growing congregations as they carry out the Great Commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This mission is carried out by a very able decentralized team of missionaries called church health strategists (CHS's), associate church health strategists (ACHS's), specialized strategists, and support staff.





by Steve Bradshaw, Director of Maturing Churches and Church Health Strategist, Central-East Region

Objectives

Church health strategists work alongside the local church to provide opportunities for:

1. Pastoral and Staff Growth
2. Church Growth
3. Lay Leader Training
4. Outreach and Evangelism
5. Church Health Analysis

Many of these objectives are realized through statewide events such as: Pastors, Staff, and Wives Connection Fellowships; Pastors and Staff Power Breakfasts and Lunches; Ministers of Education Conference; Pastors, Staff, and Wives Retreat; Studentz Camp; Children's and Youth Bible Drill and Speakers' Tournament; E412; VBS Clinics; Youth Evangelism Conference; and the God's Plan for Sharing initiative.

Beyond state events, CHS's are capable of helping your church network to host a regional event that could benefit multiple churches in your area. They are equipped to provide customized trainings at your church on deacon ministry, Sunday School, small groups, strategic planning, stewardship, pastor search committees, and even conflict resolution. They also make house calls and hospital visits to ministers, staff, and their families when necessary.

Analysis

When a person visits the doctor for a checkup, the doctor examines his/her vital signs and checks things such as weight, temperature, blood pressure, and heart rate. To discover a need below the surface, however, may require more testing, like an x-ray or a CT scan.

Could your church use a check-up? For some churches, a thorough checkup would require more than just looking at the Annual Church Profile's (ACP) statistics and trends. Some churches would benefit from attending a Church Health Workshop or having a church health strategist (CHS) conduct a Church Health Analysis.

While a Church Health Workshop will give you the tools necessary to check your church's vital signs, a Church Health Analysis is customized to your specific church. Through congregational surveys, your church can discover its current health. Your CHS can then help you plot your health condition.

Each CHS has been trained as a certified Church Consultant with the Church Central Leadership Community. This training gave the CHS missionaries the foundation that led them to the creation of the SBCV Church Health Cycle. While many types of consultations lead to a diagnosis, the Church Health Cycle does more. It will help your church cast a vision for future desired outcomes and will offer prescriptions of resources, training, and events that will aid you in becoming a next-level church.





Which apple does your church resemble?

...in relation to your church's health and well-being.



RE-START CHURCH

Symptoms: survival mode, few attendees, lack of financial resources, community still needing to be reached, unable to call a pastor, on the verge of closure, etc.

Prescription: move to a church plant status, revise the constitution and bylaws, put transitional leadership in place, take financial and facility assessments, etc.

Example: Gracepoint Church, Wise (see article, pg 8)



REVITALIZING CHURCH

Symptoms: decline in worship attendance, small groups, baptisms, giving, etc.

Prescription: create a pastor–church covenant, send church leaders to SBCV Basic Training, cast a vision, plan strategically, connect

pastor with a mentor, have conflict resolution, take space and facility assessments, help church members understand the biblical purpose of the Church, simplify the church’s organizational structure, develop servant leaders, etc.

Example: Liberty Baptist, Appomattox (see article, pg 16)



TRANSFORMING CHURCH

Symptoms: holy-living Christians engaged in ministry, positive community impact, need for expansion of internal organizational structure, need for expanded facilities, etc.

Prescription: offer spiritual gifts inventory for church members, use *Body Life Journey* discipleship study, utilize certain evangelism and outreach strategies and resources, have a comprehensive discipleship strategy, become an Acts 1:8 church, utilize certain prayer strategies and resources, make church renovations, get involved in church planting activities, go on mission trips, etc.

Example: Westwood Baptist, Waynesboro (see article, pg 14)

REPRODUCING CHURCH

Symptoms: vision for church planting and/or multi-sites, great desire to reach the lost, ministry expansion, organizational structure expansion, etc.

Prescription: plant an autonomous church, implement more worship venues, target affinity groups, discover church planters, prayer-walk, start new small groups or a multi-site campus, forge mission partnerships, train next-generation leaders, etc.

Example: Swift Creek Baptist, Midlothian (see article, pg 13)

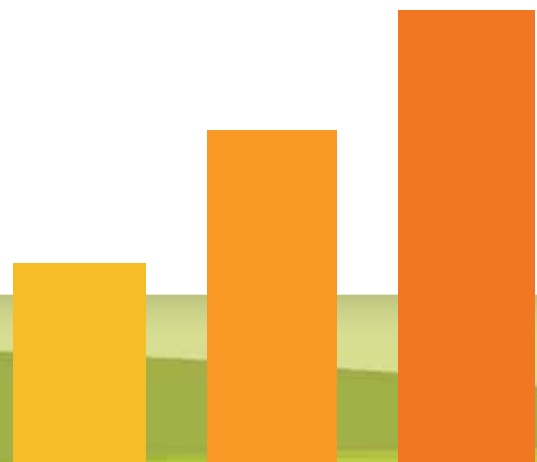


KINGDOM CHURCH

Symptoms: church plants and/or multi-site campus(es) in place, engaged in going on mission trips, exciting worship, healthy discipleship, outreach and evangelism, etc.

Prescription: plant additional churches, assist and network with other churches, develop ministry multipliers, send out career ministers and missionaries, broaden the church’s vision, expand the church’s reach, engage in a state-to-state partnership and/or an international missions partnership, etc.

Example: First Baptist Church, Norfolk (see article, pg 7)



Maturing Church Defined

A maturing church is one in the process of advancing to the next level of health by growing upward and moving outward. Picture the cross of Christ and ask yourself, “Is my church growing upward in relationship to Him, the Head?” Then consider His hands extended and ask yourself, “Is my church moving outward in relationship to others?” With maturing churches, Christ is the Head and the congregation is the body—the hands that extend, the feet that move.

Growing Upward

in relationship to Christ

Moving Outward

in relationship to others

Would your church like to be a next-level church?

Contact your regional CHS for details.

Transformed Leaders, Transformational Churches Introduced

Ed Stetzer and Thom Rainer have just introduced LifeWay’s new initiative, *Transformed Leaders, Transformational Churches*, based on Romans 12. The criteria of LifeWay’s research consisted of worship attendance growth, percentage involved in small groups, ratio of conversions to attendance, percentage of conversions who become active in the church, percentage of church members with regular church responsibilities, percentage of church members serving in the community, and whether reports of changed lives are consistently heard. Stetzer promised, “You can count on additional research to be conducted throughout the campaign.” This summer, Stetzer and Rainer will also release a book bearing the same title. SBCV CHS’s will be certified Transformational Church Consultants, and local congregations will be afforded a cost-effective diagnostic instrument to determine church health through congregational surveys. Many other resources and events will be provided to aid churches in becoming “transformational.” One of LifeWay’s pilot events for *Transformed Leaders, Transformational Churches* will be SBCV’s equipping conference, E412, to be held April 30 and May 1 at Swift Creek Baptist Church in Midlothian. Registration is available online at www.sbcv.org/events.

