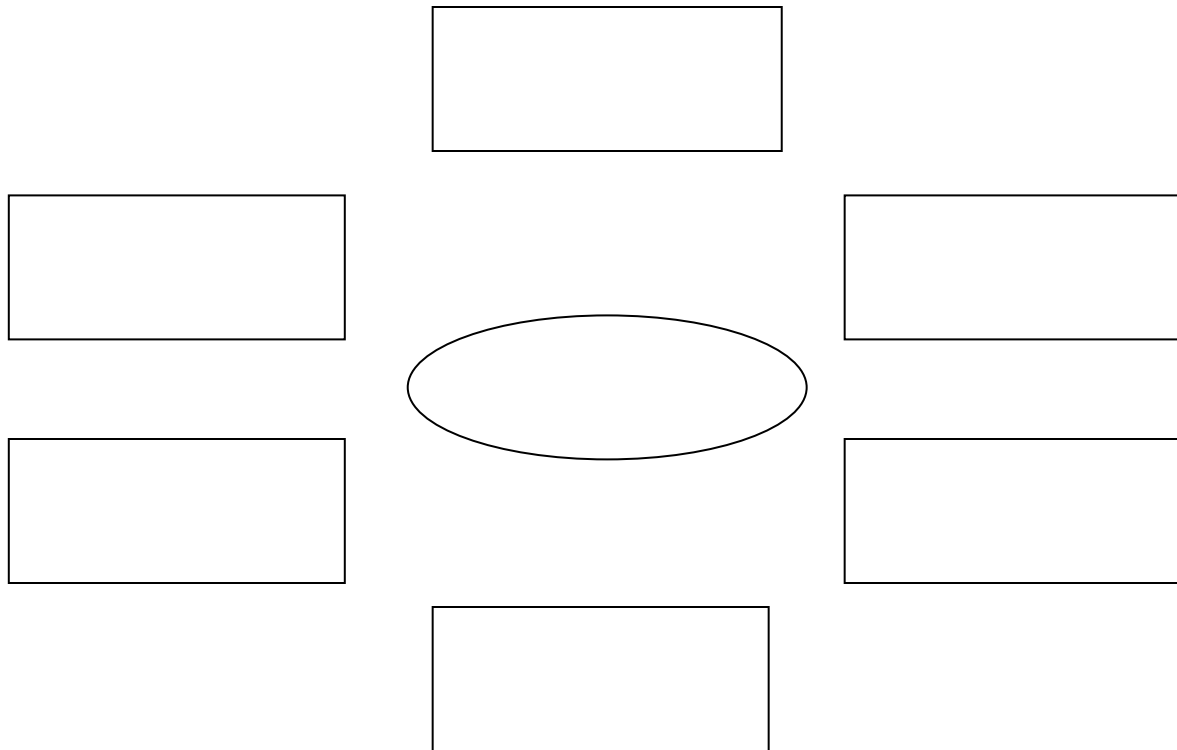


(Tool #34, continued) Community Asset Inventory

Connecting Community Assets

This tool can help you identify connections between your church and the individuals, associations and institutions that represent community assets. This exercise is best done as a group with the ministry planning team along with community stakeholders. This activity can contribute to a ministry vision discernment process (see in particular the Ministry Ideas Brainstorming Chart, tool #41), but is also valuable for its own sake – to help people in the community recognize the potential in their midst.



Directions:

1. Using a flip chart or a computer projection screen, display a diagram that looks similar to the one above.
2. In the center, write the name of your church. In each box write the name of an individual, association, or organization from the Asset Inventory (e.g., city council member, parent-teacher association, daycare).
3. Draw an arrow pointing from the circle to each box. Next to the arrow, write the assets your church could offer to that institution, association or person. Then draw an arrow from each box toward the circle. Next to this arrow, write the assets that the community group has to offer your church. For example, if the group in the box is a daycare, your church could offer volunteers, nursery toys, or customers. The daycare, in turn, may be able to supply childcare at special church functions, and expertise in early childhood development.
4. Next imagine what might be possible if two or more of the groups joined their assets. Draw lines to represent these connections, and add a label describing the joint project (for example, connecting the daycare with the parent-teacher association to offer parenting classes hosted at the church).
5. After your chart is complete, talk about the potential outcomes of these connections. What would the community look or feel like if these various residents and agencies shared their gifts and skills with one another? What would the church look or feel like if it became more linked to this web of assets?
6. Record key themes or ideas that emerge from the discussion, and decide how you will follow up.

Adapted from Communities First: Through God's Eyes, With God's Heart by Jay Van Groningen (CRWRC, 2005).