

Tool #25: How Holistic Is Your Church's Outreach?

Holistic ministry is the church's bold calling to proclaim and demonstrate the good news of God's kingdom. It is the external expression of the body of Christ as living salt and light that transforms culture, rebuilds community, and befriends the poor. Holistic outreach means a "both-and" approach to local missions that emphasizes wholeness – ministering to persons as body-mind-spirit wholes, sharing the whole Gospel in word and deed (for a more complete definition, see the first chapter of *Churches That Make a Difference* by Ron Sider, Phil Olson and Heidi Unruh).

Consider the extent to which the following components of holistic mission are in place in your church's outreach, and assess the level of commitment for strengthening each component. How might your answers suggest areas for change and growth?

1. *Program content* that effectively integrates the best insights of social work, community development, education or medicine with opportunities for spiritual transformation and discipleship, including biblical guidance, worship, Christian counseling, and prayer.
 - a. This characteristic describes our church's outreach ministry ... (circle a number from 1 to 5)

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |
 - b. Developing this characteristic is important to our church ... (circle a number from 1 to 5)

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |
2. The teaching of a *holistic worldview* that understands that personal and societal brokenness results from a complex interplay of both sinful personal choices and unjust social structures, and thus seeks wholeness at the spiritual and material / personal and societal levels.
 - a. This characteristic describes our church's outreach ministry ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |
 - b. Developing this characteristic is important to our church ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |
3. *Ministry volunteers* with passion for spiritual and social transformation, love for the congregation and the community, and a desire to represent Christ's love to those they serve.
 - a. This characteristic describes our church's outreach ministry ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |
 - b. Developing this characteristic is important to our church ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
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(Tool #25, continued) How Holistic Is Your Church's Outreach?

4. *Ministry staff* who are selected on the basis of character and spiritual maturity as well as professional skills, with a commitment to excellence and to the church's broader mission.

a. This characteristic describes our church's outreach ministry ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |

b. Developing this characteristic is important to our church ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |

5. *Evangelism training* that prepares staff and volunteers to integrate word and deed in ways that are sensitive, relational, clear, contextually appropriate, and winsome.

a. This characteristic describes our church's outreach ministry ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |

b. Developing this characteristic is important to our church ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |

6. An emphasis on *prayer and dependence on the Holy Spirit*, leading staff and volunteers to pray regularly for the healing of those they serve.

a. This characteristic describes our church's outreach ministry ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |

b. Developing this characteristic is important to our church ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |

7. Opportunities for building *relationships* of caring and trust with the people served, as a basis for faith-sharing, mentoring, holistic support services and referrals, and invitations to join a Christian community (whether your own or another church).

a. This characteristic describes our church's outreach ministry ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very much | ... | Somewhat | ... | Hardly at all |

b. Developing this characteristic is important to our church ...

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
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