



## Assessing Congregational Commitment to Adult Education

*Use these criteria to determine the degree to which your congregation adopts practices that contribute to effective adult educational ministries. Check the box next to those criteria that fit your congregation. You will likely have checks in more than one area but there should be a good indication of which category your congregation aligns with the most. You can also determine which of the criteria in higher categories you wish to focus on to increase practices that are consistent with good adult education planning and implementation.*

Systemic – The use of adult education (A.E.) is an integral part of the congregation’s perception of how it will achieve its goals.

- A paid staff person with specific preparation in adult education has a significant portion of his/her responsibilities focused on A.E.
- Adequate financial resources are consistently designated towards the A.E. program (@ \$10 per communicant member per year – not including salaries.)
- Adequate facilities are designated for A.E. opportunities and an effort has been made to make the facilities adult-friendly.
- Clear goals have been articulated for the program and are shared regularly with the adult attendees. Those goals align with the pre-determined characteristics of a maturing disciple (see “significant” below.)
- There is a regular assessment of the congregational members to determine how well the members exhibit the characteristics of a maturing disciple. Identified deficiencies will influence curricular goals.
- Training exists for all adult educators regarding the unique aspects of adult learners.
- A.E. programming is regularly evaluated relative to the overall goals.
- Participation exceeds 30%+ of members (not just worship attendees) in a given week.
- A “scope and sequence” has been designed for members.
- Multiple formats are used regularly.

Significant – Adult education is promoted as a key congregational priority.

- A key leader has been designated as the point person for adult educational programming.
- There is significant public support from the senior pastor.
- Church leadership has defined the “characteristics of a maturing disciple” and makes those characteristics known to the congregation. The characteristics should focus on what a maturing disciple should know, feel and do.
- Financial resources are regularly available for A.E. ministries.
- The congregation has a strong history of active A.E. programs.
- Facilities include A.E. spaces that help facilitate learning.
- 20 – 30% of members (not just worship attendees) regularly participate.
- Program evaluation takes place regularly.

(over)

Supplemental – Adult education is perceived as a positive and important priority, but as one which is supplemental to the overall congregational mission.

- ❑ A.E. is not formalized in any one person's job description and is seen as one component of a loosely structured educational effort.
- ❑ The senior pastor is supportive of A.E., but seldom takes the opportunity to publicly promote the programming.
- ❑ Less than 20% of members (not just worship attendees) regularly participate.
- ❑ No specific budget line item exists for A.E.
- ❑ Learning opportunities are delivered using one primary format.
- ❑ Educational efforts have primarily a cognitive focus.
- ❑ Facilities may present some barriers to participation.

Substandard – Adult education is an afterthought. If it happens at all, it is often done because it is an expectation.

- ❑ No significant resources are specifically designated towards A.E.
- ❑ The primary format used is lecture-style.
- ❑ 10% or fewer members (not just worship attendees) regularly participate.
- ❑ No stated goals – no evaluation – little content application – attendance records seldom kept.
- ❑ Course offerings are randomly selected without consideration of needs.
- ❑ Classes are teacher-centric – the teacher selects the curriculum without much input from students, talks for more than 70% of class time, doesn't use upper level questions, and doesn't work to build trust with the attendees.