Is Urbandale United Church of Christ a Healthy Church System?
An Evaluation Checklist Based on Eight Systems

Are we as a church healthy? You may use this checklist to evaluate where you think we are in regards to these eight areas of a healthy church system. You may have different criteria – and that would make interesting dialogue. The shaded area on the left, “The Relationship Factor,” is meant to be overlaid on all the other systems.  Maryellen Knowles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Relationship Factor</th>
<th>AREA*</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH SYSTEM**</th>
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<td>____ There is an inclusive process for planning the church services and educational offerings</td>
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<td>____ Recommended changes are incorporated into the planning process</td>
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<td>____ Planning, implementing and evaluation of the services is cyclical</td>
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1. The Weekend Service System:

|____  | ____ There is an inclusive process for planning the church services and educational offerings |
|____  | ____ Worship Services are inspiring, fulfilling, creative; there is a sense of energy |
|____  | ____ Educational offerings are available, appropriate and of vital interest for all ages |
|____  | ____ There is a team approach to implementing the church services; volunteers are plentiful and responsible |
|____  | ____ There is a process for evaluating church services and determining changes and/or additional services |
|____  | ____ Recommended changes are incorporated into the planning process |
|____  | ____ Planning, implementing and evaluation of the services is cyclical |

2. The Outreach System:

|____  | ____ Our church’s mission and ministry is visible in the community |
|____  | ____ There is an effective plan for attracting people to our church |
|____  | ____ There is a process for welcoming visitors |
|____  | ____ Visitors are extravagantly welcomed by the congregation |
|____  | ____ There is an effective plan for visitor follow-up |
|____  | ____ Visitors return, are remembered and warmly greeted by multiple members |
|____  | ____ Attendance is growing by all ages |

3. The Assimilation and Belonging System:

|____  | ____ Visitors choose to become members |
|____  | ____ New members attend comprehensive classes before belong |
|____  | ____ There is an effective plan for integrating and assimilating new members |
|____  | ____ There are sufficient places for members to “land and belong” |
|____  | ____ New members are assimilated in service, stewardship and shared talent |
|____  | ____ Youth are invited and integrated into all aspects of the life of the church |
|____  | ____ There is sufficient, responsible, broad-based volunteers so over 50% of our congregation is involved |
**These eight areas were designed by Nelson Searcy in an on-line workshop, [http://www.churchleaderinsights.com/blog/](http://www.churchleaderinsights.com/blog/).**

**The check list is tailored towards our congregation from my perspective. It was created from our UUCC Discernment Statement, various on–line articles on healthy church systems and my own thinking. If anyone is interested in reading more about this topic I can give a list of references.**

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| **4. The Small Groups System:** | * There is an understanding of the importance of small groups in building community  
--- There is a variety of active, vital small groups that are of interest to members  
--- There is a plan for creating, re-creating and reproducing small groups.  
--- A majority of church members participate in a small group  
--- New members are assimilated in a small group in a timely manner  
--- We recognize and resolve conflicts within the context of healthy system teachings  
--- We practice inclusiveness and equality in order to welcome all people  
--- We practice a loving, non-anxious presence in our relationships with each other  
--- We practice open dialogue and communication with each other  
--- We create an atmosphere for safe, effective, open dialogue  |
| **5. The Stewardship System:** | * There is a plan on how to develop extravagant givers at our church  
--- There is an attitude of financial generosity based on a vision for ministry and programs  
--- The congregation is aware of how the vision is connected to the level of giving  
--- The members include the wider mission of the community and church in their giving  
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| **6. The Leadership System:** | * Leadership seeks divine guidance in the work of the church  
--- Teams are active, empowered and energized  
--- Leadership is shared rather than dominated by a few people  
--- Leadership is dedicated to evaluation and goal setting of the #7, Strategic System  
--- Teams feel empowered and there is shared leadership  
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| **7. The Strategic System:** | * There is a conscious awareness and attention to the various systems within a church  
--- There is an evaluation system in place for programs  
--- There is an evaluation system in place for personnel  
--- The evaluation process is cyclical in nature and used in goal setting in System 6, The Leadership System  
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| **8. The Mission/Vision System:** | * There is a planned, inclusive process for determining the direction of our church.  
--- The congregation owns the vision and mission  
--- The church’s vision, mission and congregants support youth’s spiritual development  
--- People are growing in community as evidenced by attendance, participation, service and stewardship  
--- Optimal care and ministering to one other is provided  
--- Acts of charity and advocacy are practiced to promote and create a just society  
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