02 – Program Evaluation

The recurring framework for evaluating ongoing programs — measuring faithfulness to mission, health, and stewardship of resources.

- Overview: Program Evaluation
- Program Evaluation Framework
- Program Evaluation Form

Overview: Program Evaluation

Status

Implementation status: Approved by Servants Council

Date: 2026-05-30

Principle (from Streamline)

Lukaszewski's principle: Programs should be evaluated on a recurring cadence against mission alignment, health indicators, and stewardship of resources — not allowed to continue by inertia. Regular evaluation creates permission to retire or reshape programs.

Mayflower's Current Practice

Mayflower uses the program evaluation process to assess ongoing ministries and programs against mission and stewardship criteria. Distinct from event evaluation (which is per-event), program evaluation applies to the ongoing ministry as a whole.

Governance & Document References

- Mayflower Church Event Evaluation Process (related SOP)
- Mayflower Constitution and Bylaws — governance sections

Open Questions

- Cadence and ownership are defined in the Program Evaluation Framework.

Page template: Principle + Mayflower Practice. Part of the Operations Plan, adapted from Michael Lukaszewski's Streamline: How To Create Healthy Church Systems.

Program Evaluation Framework

Mayflower Church Program Evaluation Framework

A Simple, Relational, and Repeatable Process

Purpose

This framework provides a simple and relational approach to program evaluation that aligns with values-based leadership principles. Drawing from Dennis Bakke's philosophy in Joy at Work, this process emphasizes empowerment, shared values, and quality of ministry life over purely quantitative metrics.

Core Principles

- **Relational over transactional:** Evaluation happens through two-way conversations, not one-way reporting
- **Values-based assessment:** Focus on living out our core values rather than achieving purely numerical goals
- **Quality of ministry life:** Success is measured by spiritual health and freedom to use gifts and talents
- **Simple and sustainable:** The process must be easy to implement and maintain without creating bureaucratic burden
- **Empowerment-focused:** Evaluation helps people grow and thrive rather than merely judging performance

What Is a Program?

A **program** is a structured ministry activity with the following characteristics:

- **Intentional design:** Has clear purpose and objectives aligned with church mission and vision
- **Regular occurrence:** Happens on a recurring basis (weekly, monthly, seasonally, annually)
- **Resource commitment:** Requires dedicated time, people, space, or budget
- **Designated leadership:** Has identified leaders or coordinators responsible for its execution
- **Measurable outcomes:** Has identifiable spiritual or relational outcomes (though not always numerical)

Examples: *Discipleship groups, children's ministry, worship services, community outreach initiatives, mission trips, youth programming, adult education classes, care ministry.*

The Evaluation Process

This four-phase approach creates a simple, repeatable cycle:

Phase 1: Planning

Key Questions:

- What is the program's purpose and how does it align with our church mission?
- What spiritual outcomes are we hoping to see in people's lives?
- What resources (people, time, budget, space) are needed?
- Who are the key leaders and what gifts/talents will they use?

Phase 2: Implementation

Key Questions:

- Are people experiencing joy and finding meaning in this ministry?
- Are leaders empowered to make decisions and use their talents?
- Are relationships being built and nurtured?
- What barriers are people facing in their spiritual growth through this program?

Phase 3: Evaluation

Use the **Checkup Loop** approach: regular two-way conversations between the Elders and frontline ministry leaders.

Focus Areas:

- **Direction:** Is the program moving toward its intended purpose **and** advancing the mission, vision, and values of Mayflower Church?
- **Health:** Are participants and leaders experiencing spiritual vitality?
- **Scope of impact:** Who is being reached and served?
- **Growth:** Are people growing spiritually and relationally?
- **Changed lives:** What stories of transformation can we celebrate?

Phase 4: Adaptation (Re-Planning)

Use the simple **Keep/Stop/Start** framework:

- **Keep:** What is working well and should continue?
- **Stop:** What is not bearing fruit or creating unnecessary burden?
- **Start:** What new approaches should we try based on what we've learned?

Practical Evaluation Tools

Tool 1: Simple Color-Coding System

Rate each focus area (Direction, Health, Impact, Growth, Changed Lives) using a traffic light system:

Green	**Thriving - continue and celebrate**
Yellow	Needs attention - requires adjustments
Red	Critical - major changes needed or consider discontinuing

After rating, discuss: "*Why did you vote the way you voted?*"

Tool 2: Relational Checkup Questions

Use these questions in one-on-one or small group conversations:

1. What stories of life change have you witnessed in this program?
2. How are people experiencing God through this ministry?
3. What relationships are being built or strengthened?
4. Where do you see joy in this ministry? Where is joy lacking?
5. What barriers are preventing people from growing spiritually?
6. Are leaders empowered to use their gifts and make decisions?
7. What would need to change for this program to be more effective?
8. Is this program sustainable with current resources?

Recommended Evaluation Timeline

Frequency	Activity
Ongoing	Informal conversations with ministry leaders about what's working
Quarterly	Checkup Loop conversations using relational questions
Bi-annually	Color-coding assessment of all focus areas
Annually	Comprehensive review using Keep/Stop/Start framework; strategic planning for next year

What Success Looks Like

A successful evaluation process demonstrates these qualities:

- **Leaders look forward to evaluation:** It feels encouraging rather than burdensome
- **Stories are shared:** Conversations focus on testimonies of life change, not just statistics
- **Decisions improve:** Evaluation leads to concrete actions that enhance ministry effectiveness
- **Freedom increases:** Leaders feel empowered to adapt and innovate based on what they learn
- **Health is prioritized:** Sustainability and joy are valued alongside impact and growth
- **It stays simple:** The process remains manageable and doesn't create bureaucracy

Additional Resources

Dennis Bakke's Philosophy:

- Joy at Work: A Revolutionary Approach to Fun on the Job by Dennis W. Bakke
- Book summary available at: https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/362307.Joy_at_Work

- Author website: https://dennisbakke.com/summary/

Church Program Evaluation Resources:

- Program Evaluation in Church Context: https://churchconsulting.org/program-evaluation-in-church-context-forerunner-to-effective-church-consulting/
- Responsive Leadership Year-End Evaluation: https://research.lifeway.com/2023/12/11/responsive-leadership-a-year-end-evaluation-for-your-church/
- Ministry Evaluation Form Templates: https://www.vancopayments.com/egiving/blog/church-ministry-evaluation-form
- Tool for Evaluating Ministry Programs: https://network.crcna.org/topic/church-administration/church-admin-finance/tool-evaluating-ministry-programs

Relational Ministry Approaches:

- 5 Elements of Relational Ministry: https://studentministry.lifeway.com/2020/05/29/5-elements-of-relational-ministry/
- 4 Frameworks for Church Service Review: https://unseminary.com/4-frameworks-for-church-service-review-meetings-and-20-evaluation-questions/

Case Studies:

- Christ's Church of the Valley Success Story: https://workplaces.org/articles/christs-church-of-the-valley-case-study-trust-teamwork-and-transformation
- Pastoral Coaching Case Study: https://convergenceus.org/case-study-1/

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Remember: The goal is not perfect evaluation, but faithful stewardship of the ministries entrusted to us for God's glory and people's good.

Program Evaluation Form

Mayflower Church

Program Evaluation Form

Checkup Loop Conversation Guide

Program Information

Program Name:	
Ministry Leader(s):	
Elder(s) Present:	
Date of Evaluation:	
Evaluation Period: (e.g., Q1 2026, Fall 2025, Annual 2025)	

Phase 3: Evaluation

Using the Checkup Loop approach: regular two-way conversations between Elders and frontline ministry leaders.

Focus Area 1: Direction (Completed by Leader(s) prior to the meeting)

Key Question: Is the program moving toward its intended purpose and advancing the mission, vision, and values of Mayflower Church?

Color Rating (circle one):

GREEN Thriving	**YELLOW Needs Attention**	**RED Critical**

Why did you vote the way you voted?

Focus Area 2: Health

Key Question: Are participants and leaders experiencing spiritual vitality?

Color Rating (circle one):

GREEN Thriving	**YELLOW Needs Attention**	**RED Critical**

Why did you vote the way you voted?

Focus Area 3: Scope of Impact

Key Question: Who is being reached and served?

Color Rating (circle one):

GREEN Thriving	**YELLOW Needs Attention**	**RED Critical**

Why did you vote the way you voted?

Focus Area 4: Growth

Key Question: Are people growing spiritually and relationally?

Color Rating (circle one):

GREEN Thriving	**YELLOW Needs Attention**	**RED Critical**

Why did you vote the way you voted?

Focus Area 5: Changed Lives

Key Question: What stories of transformation can we celebrate?

Color Rating (circle one):

GREEN Thriving	**YELLOW Needs Attention**	**RED Critical**

Why did you vote the way you voted?

Relational Checkup Questions (Completed by Elder(s) during meeting)

Use these questions to guide deeper conversation:

1. What stories of life change have you witnessed in this program?

2. How are people experiencing God through this ministry?

3. What relationships are being built or strengthened?

4. Where do you see joy in this ministry? Where is joy lacking?

5. What barriers are preventing people from growing spiritually?

6. Are leaders empowered to use their gifts and make decisions?

7. What would need to change for this program to be more effective?

8. Is this program sustainable with current resources?

Phase 4: Adaptation (Re-Planning)

Use the simple Keep/Stop/Start framework:

KEEP: What is working well and should continue?

STOP: What is not bearing fruit or creating unnecessary burden?

START: What new approaches should we try based on what we've learned?

Action Steps & Next Evaluation

Key Action Items from this Evaluation:

Action Item	Responsible Person

Date of Next Evaluation:

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Remember: The goal is not perfect evaluation, but faithful stewardship of the ministries entrusted to us for God's glory and people's good.

POST EVALUATION ACTIONS:

1. Submit original to the Church Clerk.
2. Church Clerk to scan the document as PDF and save it in the Program Evaluations folder in the Servants Council shared Google Drive. [Filename: “YYYYMM ProgramName Evaluation”]
3. Clerk will share the file to Servants Council members via email.