

## Elders' Toolbox

### 10 Ways to Revive a Dying Church

- 1. Who are you?** Figure out who you are as a congregation. As Rick Warren once said, “You will attract who you are, not who you want.” Visitors can tell if a church is not being authentic to who they really are.
- 2. Pick the right leader:** Knowing who you are as a church and what the current needs of the congregation are is vital to searching and choosing the right leader and pastor.
- 3. Follow the leader:** A good leader needs a good follower. In fact, it doesn't matter how good the leader is if there are no followers.
- 4. Everything is outreach:** This means being intentional about providing a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere for members and visitors to feel at home within the church and out in the community. This perspective changed the way we worshiped, how we gathered, and planned programs and activities.
- 5. Keeping a pulse on the congregation:** Every member should be engaged in participation of some kind when it comes to carrying out the mission of the church. There should be a variety of entry points for people to participate in.
- 6. Prepare for the future:** We changed not only the way our elders and deacons functioned, but even how they met. Less time is spent on doing business and more time is spent on actual dreaming, planning, and implementing outreach efforts.
- 7. Partner up:** Everything you do should be interconnected and communicated. Effective ministry doesn't happen in isolation, but in collaboration.
- 8. Be thou my vision:** Everything done should be visibly clear and understood by the entire congregation. When asking a random church member, they should be able to say in a few short sentences what the mission of the church is, and it should be visibly obvious and evident.
- 9. Move from revival to relevance:** As a church, it isn't about reviving or redeveloping a dying or struggling church. It's about being relevant in one's community — visibly living out Christ's presence in your neighborhood.
- 10. Pray!** Lastly, be in prayer. It may seem obvious, but in order to discern the direction where Christ is calling, a faith community needs to be in constant prayer for guidance, strength, and faith.

It isn't easy being a part of a church that is struggling for whatever reason, but there are unique gifts that a struggling church can offer. It just takes a willingness to step out into the unknown, a commitment to change, and an acceptance to give up the things that may be holding your congregation back from doing something only God knows.

*This is a condensed version, used with permission of author, Theresa Cho. For the full version go to <http://blog.sojo.net/2011/07/12/10-ways-to-revive-a-dying-church/>. Theresa blogs at [Still Waters](#).*