**Worksheet on Congregational Sustainability**

Using attendance figures for the previous ten years, chart your congregation’s average attendance (or use the trend report from the ELCA website). Then use the following questions as a springboard for further discussion, answering each with a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

1. Do we have a pattern of growth in attendance?
2. Will our trend of growth, plateau or decline allow us to thrive and develop ministry for the future in this place?
3. Can we maintain our own existence as a congregation and provide ministry in the community, synod and ELCA?
4. Can we survive without some form of significant outside financial help from bequests, special gifts?
5. Do we have sufficient numbers of people to volunteer for ministry within the congregation and outreach into the community?
6. Are new efforts in evangelism and faith formation feasible?
7. Are there sufficient funds and interested membership to do ministry within the congregation as well as outreach and evangelism into the community and world?
8. Are we experiencing the presence of first-time visitors on a regular basis?
9. Do they return for a second or a third visit?
10. Do 20-25% of our first-time visitors eventually join the congregation?
11. Is the congregation striving to do more than trying to survive/keep the doors open?
12. Has the congregation grown in the last five years?
13. Do we have enough members to do ministry well?
14. Does the giving in the congregation enable “Great Commission” work, or does most of the giving go toward maintenance and survival?
15. Are there young families active in the congregation?
16. Has the congregation maintained a good level of stewardship including several families (10-12) who tithe faithfully to the congregation?
17. Is the congregation willing/able to adapt its ministry and lifestyle in order to develop the ministries that will meet the needs of a changing community?
18. Is the present facility physically adaptable for use?
19. Can the congregation afford the repairs that are needed to use these facilities for ministry?

**If you marked 5 answers ‘no’**, we suggest you contact the Dean of your Conference to discuss the trends that are revealed. **If you marked 8 or more answers ‘no’**, this may suggest a serious condition of decline for your congregation. It is time to look courageously and honestly at your situation, and consider what options you have as a congregation.