



## Remember...

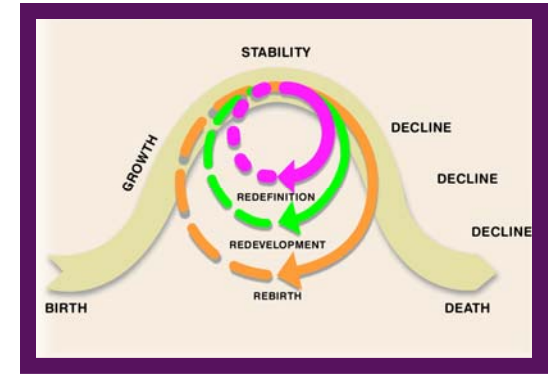
- There is not one life cycle in a congregation; there are many life cycles (of programs, groups, etc.)
- “Congregations can do just about anything...but stay the same.”  
*George Bullard*
- This simple tool may not produce the longer term systemic change that might be necessary but it may encourage leaders of the congregation to do the deeper work.

For more  
information on  
the

## Congregational Life Cycle contact:

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## A Simple Assessment Tool for Church Boards

“Congregations can do  
just about anything...but  
stay the same.”

George Bullard



## A Simple Assessment Tool

Congregations have a life cycle, like all living things; birth, then growth, then stability. At stability, you can either redefine the ministry, or the congregation declines. Ministry can be redefined by answering these questions.

1. What was the original vision for this ministry? (value the past)
2. What has been accomplished? (evaluation)
3. What is new that was not anticipated? (analysis)
4. Where do we want to see this congregation in 3-5 years? (planning)



## Using Life Cycle Theory with the Congregation's Board

1. List all the ministries of the congregation.
2. Have each board member individually rank each ministry as growing, stable, or declining.
3. Collect and collate this information.
4. For the ministries that are growing, the board asks: how can we help, add resources, etc.?
5. For the stable ones, ask:
  - What was the original vision for this ministry? (value the past)

- What has been accomplished? (evaluation)
- What is new that was not anticipated? (analysis)
- Where do we want to see this ministry in 3 years? 5 years? (planning)

6. With the rest, ask the board which ones should be allowed to die, and make plans for a dignified “burial”.

7. For the ones they do not want to die, intervene (but it will be costly), including personal one-on-one time, etc. Then see if they still need to die; some may need to die even if leaders do not want them to die.