

## **Church Health in Community and Public Engagement – Kelly Crawford 11/8/21**

The “Church Health & Vitality Indicators” form outlines that for community engagement, churches and their members should be looking beyond themselves and serving the needs of the local, national and global communities, including offering practical action for justice. How this happens, specifically, will vary from church to church and person to person. However, it is clear that this is a mindset and mindsets are products of discipleship. The discipleship-building culture of a church should recognise that community engagement is a product of our relationship with Christ and means to relationship growth. If a church is engaged with the local community (or in a national or global project), ideally they would:

- a) Know their neighbourhood or the community where they are placed or called to
  - a. For this they would have to use some assessment tools
  - b. It would be good if they not only knew who or what was there, but also had a propensity toward looking at strengths and assets as opposed to needs and problems.
- b) Facilitate and participate in change or transformation that brings shalom. Ideally, this would happen in collaboration with others in the community.
- c) Speak and act for justice for the poor, the marginalised and the disempowered. For this to happen there are:
  - a. Education components
  - b. Campaign opportunities
  - c. Advocacy opportunities as they arise
- d) Articulate their faith. Ideally, as they grow in community engagement they should also be growing in their ability to articulate the gospel. This again is a product of discipleship.
  - a. Evangelism tools and training
  - b. Relationship building (growing in proximity)
- e) Hold activities loosely so they can adapt/change, experiment/create as required.
  - a. Be willing to iterate quickly
  - b. Be ok with failing and pivoting