

The Thrive Project: Frequently Asked Questions

How is this different from Acts 16:5, Growing Healthy Churches or other revitalization initiatives?

You're correct that most such programs are similar, as all of them are rooted in Scripture and seek to engage congregations toward healthy, missional ministry. The emphasis in The Thrive Project is to engage the entire congregation and not just the pastor and Session. The way the activities are designed and the seasons evolve requires a robust, congregation-wide involvement. These other programs, as strong as they are, allow for top-down leadership that often misses the power of engaging everyone in the conversation.

I'm not sure I understand or like some of the ways the 7 vital signs of health are phrased; can we change what they're called?

Absolutely! Congregations *need* to make the material their own, to find their voice as they sing the Lord's new song. If something doesn't make sense, find the expression that conveys the substance in ways your congregation and your community can embrace.

We're already doing some of these things, why do we need to sign-up?

There is energy in being part of a movement. Registering for The Thrive Project connects you with other congregations who will also discuss and discern, experiment and evaluate. As you hear from others and share your own stories of success, failure, and destinations in-between, there is a greater likelihood of persevering.

We're already overscheduled, why should we add one more thing?!

PLEASE, don't add one more thing. Rather take what you already do and focus on healthy, missional ministry. The activities and seasons are designed so churches can blend them into existing ministry. The power of The Thrive Project will be found as congregational leaders give focused attention, focused practice, and focused experimentation that engages the entire congregation toward healthy, missional ministry.

Can we modify the project activities, or change up the order of the seasons?

Yes, of course. As Presbyterians we are allergic to being micromanaged, so every pastor and every Session needs to make the project her, his, or their own. The seasons evolve in what we think are logical order, but your leadership discernment may see a need to switch the order. It is always necessary for leaders to own the work!

I see lots of activities listed, are these required or just suggestions? Can we add our own ideas?

The activities are mostly suggestions, with the only requirement being that, as a pilot program, we need to give feedback to General Assembly, so they can pay our good ideas forward to other congregations. As for the ideas listed, these are a good starting point, but congregations are encouraged to add their own creativity, savvy, wisdom, and expertise. The only thing we ask is that you *share your good ideas with the other churches, the presbytery, and the General Assembly*, so we can pay them forward.

How do we register?

Complete the Covenant and return it to the presbytery office.

When does The Thrive Project launch?

The Thrive Project launches with the August presbytery meeting, which means a good time for your congregation to start is in the fall. (Just a suggestion ;-)