



APPENDIX F

PRE-GATHERING FULLNESS OF LIFE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SNAPSHOT TOOL

This tool is designed as a starting place; one that creates a snapshot of some aspects of the culture in your congregation within the neighbourhood. It might also serve as a starting place for generating new ideas and plans for reshaping your parish's strategies and plans. It is not intended to be all inclusive nor is it size or geography specific. Check the column that best indicates your level of agreement with the statement. Answer spontaneously and honestly. The value in this tool comes in noting where you are and seeing where you might go. The snapshot you create is intended to help you participate in the Reshaping Parish Culture gathering is only intended for your use and will not be collected. It's solely to stimulate your reflections and your sense of what's possible.

Fullness of Life in the Neighbourhood Statements Describing Your Parish	True of most of us	True of some of us	Not true of most of us
Parishioners live in the neighbourhood in which our building is located.			
The immediate neighbours around the building are known to us.			
Parishioners support the local businesses.			
We can see where God is at work already in our neighbourhood and we have joined in that work.			
We participate in community activities with our parish's partners in the neighbourhood.			
We host gatherings out in the community or in our building at which listening to one another's stories is the primary activity.			
We pray for the neighbours and neighbourhood issues.			
Our building space is heavily used for activities that support fullness of life in the neighbourhood.			
We know our individual neighbours around our homes, their stories and their struggles.			
People in our neighbourhood would say they see God's love at work because of our faith community.			
In our daily lives, we notice God moments of grace, justice, wellbeing, and restored relationships.			
We see ourselves as participating in God's kingdom when we advocate for justice, share with those living with poverty, and welcome the stranger.			
Community leaders consult our congregation around key neighbourhood issues.			
We understand ourselves and our neighbours to be gifted with the skills, strengths and passions that, when yoked with the Spirit, are a potent force for fullness of life for everyone in the neighbourhood.			
We are connected to the historians, artisans, poets, musicians, and other Spirit carriers in our neighbourhood.			

See glossary on the back for explanation of community engagement practices



GLOSSARY

Fullness of Life in the Neighbourhood – a phrase that captures that the unfolding of God’s kingdom is for everyone; that Way of Jesus is about love, justice and dignity *for all* – and as followers of the Way, we are called to use our gifts, strengths and passions in the healing of a broken world so that all might experience God’s shalom, God’s wholeness. We focus on the neighbourhood in which your church is planted because Jesus’ message is about being incarnational, being present in body and spirit to the daily rhythms of people’s lives. Jesus’ stories are about fishing, and cooking, and eating, and shepherding... they’re grounded in the lives of the people with whom he dwells. In fact, John 1:14 tells us that Jesus came and pitched his tent beside ours “*And the Word became flesh and lived among us*” or as Alan Roxburgh puts it, “He moved into the neighbourhood and settled in right beside us.” Alan goes on to conclude “That’s the character of a local church.”

God is already at work in the neighbourhood – many of us act as though the place we find God is the worship space, and that the Holy Spirit only works through believers but the reality is that God is out in the world ahead of us, already at work and inviting us to join in.

God moments of shalom – moments where God’s grace and peace is evident; where one can see the foretaste of the kingdom; restored relationships, justice, peace, inclusivity, and wholeness. Conversely, we can also become aware of moments of broken shalom, where people’s dignity is trampled, hunger and homelessness are prevalent, relationships are contentious or power-driven. Wondering how to get to know the neighbourhood better and where to find those shalom or God moments; ask your facilitator about ***Mapping and Praying the Neighbourhood*** in the appendices of the facilitator’s guide.

Listening to one another’s stories – stories are how we get to know one another, to know our hurts, struggles, joys and passions, and to know where the holy touches one another. Taking time to ask people about themselves, taking time to listen, honours their dignity as a child of God and helps to restore kingdom relationships where people can feel safe, can share their authentic selves, and can aspire to wholeness.

Seeing God’s love at work – just as important as telling people how God’s love has transformed our lives is showing people the impact of those changed hearts. When people see and feel God’s love through your actions, the kingdom becomes more real for them. Actions can sometimes say far more about the love of God than words, especially as churches and Jesus followers venture out into their neighbourhoods. And...when the people who hold power in your neighbourhood see how you care for and align yourselves with your neighbours, they will invite you into dialogues oriented towards fullness of life for everyone in the neighbourhood.

Everyone is gifted by God – we can sometimes slide into thinking that only churchgoers are gifted by God, and that we are obligated by God’s generosity to bestow our gifts on others. In reality, God has gifted everyone with strengths, skills, passion and experiences, and it’s in bringing those diverse gifts together that we are truly working alongside God, honouring the dignity of one another and building on our shared assets to create fullness of life for everyone in the neighbourhood.

We pray for the neighbours and neighbourhood issues – we can sometimes be inclusive of the world and global issues but forget the people who share our corner of God’s world. Holding our neighbours and neighbourhood issues in prayer can be transformative for us and for them.