Church Resource Inventory

A Leadership Team Exercise for Seeing the Resources God Has Already Placed in Your Church and Community

What This Tool Helps You Do

This tool helps leadership teams identify resources, strengths, relationships, and opportunities that may already be present but overlooked.

Instead of beginning with the question, *"What are we missing?"* this tool invites your team to ask, *"What do we already have?"*

When to Use It

Use this tool when your team:

- Feels stuck or unsure
- Finds conversations centered around lack
- Is exploring a new ministry or opportunity
- Is discerning how to reach the community
- Is entering a season of transition, revitalization, or change

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What You'll Need

- 45–50 minutes
- Copy of Inventory for each participant
- A pen, markers
- Whiteboard, chart paper, or digital workspace

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> **One Important Ground Rule**
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> During the inventory portion of the exercise, resist the temptation to explain why an idea will not work. There will be time for discernment later. For now, your task is simply to see what is there.

Inventory the Resources

Before You Begin

This exercise is not about ignoring challenges. It is about seeing your situation more accurately. For the next few minutes, resist the urge to explain why something will not work. Simply notice what God has already placed in your church and community.

Core Question: What Do We Have?

Ground Rules:

- Name assets before naming limitations.
- Be specific.
- Include people and relationships, not just money and buildings.
- Do not evaluate or commit to ideas yet. Just notice what surprises you.

Resource Area	What Do We Have?	What Have We Overlooked?	What Might This Make Possible?
People: gifts, skills, professions, passions, spiritual gifts			
Relationships: schools, nonprofits, businesses, neighbors, community leaders			
Places: buildings, homes, kitchens, land, community gathering spaces			
Knowledge: community history, professional expertise, cultural understanding			
Trust: reputation, credibility, long-term collaborative relationships			

Time: retirees, flexible schedules, volunteer availability			
Technology: social media, websites, livestream, digital skills			
Experience: lessons learned, resilience, previous ministries			
Community Needs: opportunities to provide tangible support to community members			
Spiritual Resources: prayer, spiritual gifts, biblical knowledge, testimonies, discipleship relationships, practices of faith			

Look for Intersections

We Have...	We Notice...	This Could Make Possible...
Ex: A retired teacher + a school relationship	*Students needing reading support*	*A weekly tutoring ministry*
Ex: A Kitchen + cooks + food insecurity	*Families need meals and connection*	*A community meal ministry*

Discern the Next Step

1. What surprised us most about what we already have?

2. What have we been calling “not enough” that may actually be enough to begin?

3. Where do we see the clearest intersection between resources, community need, and mission?

4. What one possibility deserves further prayer and exploration?

5. What is one small next step we could take in the next 30 days?

Our Most Promising Possibility

We believe God may be inviting us to explore...	
The resources already available to us are...	
The community need/opportunity we are responding to is...	
Our first small step will...	
Who will take responsibility for that step?	

Try This Next

After completing the Church Resource Inventory, choose one possibility your team identified and explore it more deeply.

Do not begin by designing a full program. Instead, ask:
What is the smallest faithful experiment we could try?

Identify one action that could help you learn more within the next 30 days. That might mean:

- Having a conversation with a community partner.
- Inviting several people with a shared passion to meet.
- Testing an idea with a small group.
- Visiting a school, neighborhood, organization, or community gathering.
- Asking community members what they actually need.
- Using an existing space or resource in a new way.
- Trying a one-time event or short-term experiment before creating an ongoing ministry.

After the experiment, gather your team again and ask:

- What did we notice?
- What did we learn?
- What surprised us?
- What might God be inviting us to do next?

Don't move immediately from idea to permanent ministry. Learn to slow down, notice, experiment, learn, and discern.

Adaptations

For a Church Council or Leadership Team

Complete the full inventory together. Assign different sections to small groups and then bring everyone back together to identify intersections and possibilities.

For a Larger Congregation

Invite multiple groups to complete the inventory independently: staff, lay leaders, young adults, long-time members, or ministry teams. Compare what each group notices. Pay particular attention to resources one group identifies that another group overlooks.

For a Small Church

Do not let size become the primary measure of capacity. Focus especially on relationships, trust, knowledge, experience, spiritual gifts, and community connections. A small congregation may have fewer people but significant relational and community assets.

For a Church in Revitalization

Use the exercise before discussing new programs or strategies. Ask your team to identify where life, energy, trust, and engagement already exist. Look for places where something healthy is emerging rather than beginning only with what is declining.

For a New Church or Emerging New Faith Community

Expand the definition of resources beyond those owned by the church. What exists within the community? Who is already doing good work? What relationships, gathering places, networks, and community assets could become part of what God is forming?

For a Community-Focused Exercise

Invite people from outside the congregation to participate. Community leaders, school staff, nonprofit leaders, neighbors, and local business owners may recognize resources and opportunities that church leaders cannot see from inside the congregation.

For Ongoing Use

Repeat the Church Resource Inventory annually or whenever your congregation enters a new season. Resources change. People develop new skills. Relationships deepen. Community needs shift. New opportunities emerge. The question *"What do we have?"* is not meant to be asked once. It can become a regular practice of leadership discernment.