

DO METRICS BELONG IN THE CHURCH?

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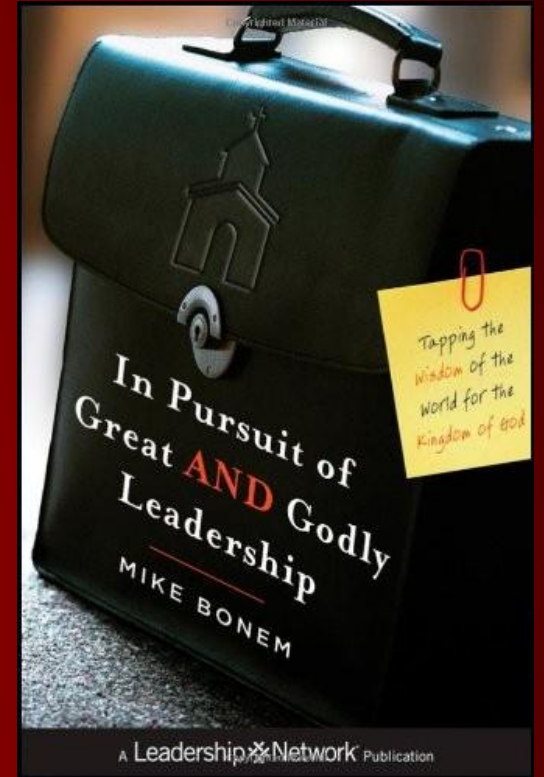
www.timeforcrossroads.com

Defining “Metrics”



- ★ *“a standard of measurement”*
(Merriam-Webster)
- ★ *“a standard for measuring or evaluating something, especially one that uses figures or statistics”*
(dictionary.com)
- ★ *“standards of measurement by which efficiency, performance, progress, or quality of a plan, process, or product can be assessed”* (businessdictionary.com)

“Metrics are simply a tool that helps to define our goals and to tell us if we’re making progress... Metrics for congregations will look different than for businesses, but they are still quite applicable.” (Mike Bonem)



What are we (in the church) already measuring?

[illegible]

Question



The question is not...

“Should we use metrics?”

but...

“What metrics should we use, how, and why?”

Metrics are already in the church!

This can be good...

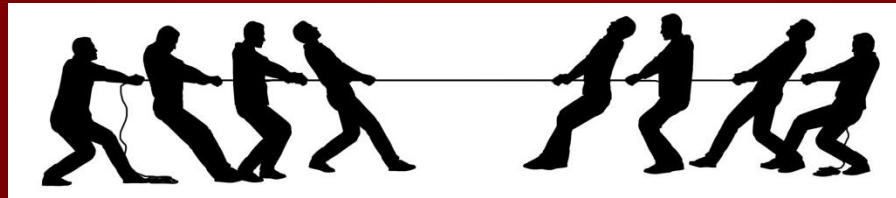
This can be bad...



This is why there are tensions...

“Churches are struggling mightily these days over measurements. The nationwide decline in religious participation in the past ten years adds impetus to this movement. Some insist metrics are crucial while others resist any objective measures. Both groups make valid points but could also learn from each other.”

(The Tussle over Metrics, Lovett H. Weems, Jr. - www.churchleadership.com)



Focus Questions



1. What is at the root of the tensions?
2. Why does having meaningful metrics matter?
3. Which metrics belong in your congregation (ministry)?

1. What is at the root of the tensions?

- ✱ Probably a lack of clarity in understanding that the Lord assigns both to himself and to us a role in “making disciples.”
- ✱ We’re confused if we think...
 - we can do his job of converting the lost and transforming their lives.
 - our faithful efforts don’t matter or that our thoughtfully selected metrics won’t help us become better stewards of our God-given resources.

God's eternal plan and our efforts...

(John Brenner, WLS)

- ✦ *“God has his eternal plan and he will accomplish his will through our efforts.” (5-2012)*
- ✦ *“We will work as if everything depended on us even though we know that all of the results are in God's hands.” (6-2010)*



CHRIST BUILDS HIS CHURCH

Matthew 16:18

“I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” (NIV)

“I will put together my church, a church so expansive with energy that not even the gates of hell will be able to keep it out.” (MSG)



*Many members,
one body.*

Causes of Salvation

“Lutherans should know that the instrumental cause of salvation is the gospel in Word and sacraments, the means of grace... Lutherans should also know that there is a ministerial cause of salvation...”

We cannot improve on the instrumental cause of salvation, but we can always improve on the ministerial cause of salvation.”

President Charles Degner (MN District President's Report 2014)

A guiding principle:

“The ministry of the gospel is the one office instituted by Christ in his church, proclaiming the gospel is the one assigned task, and everything else in the church must support that unique task.” (The Ministry of the Word, Brug)

Two Extremes to Avoid

Thinking that visible church health depends...

1. ONLY on God's activity through the Means of Grace.
2. ONLY on our efforts (methods, programs, styles, metrics).

Our Lord is fully capable of [sustaining or] turning his churches around – always through the power of his Word but, in addition, also through whatever human factors he decides to deploy – irrespective of the circumstances that were associated with their debility. [Turnaround Churches in the WELS]

Our primary task is to “Go and make disciples...”:

(1) by faithfully growing audiences

(2) by faithfully delivering the means of grace



God's numbers and "our" numbers

It's okay to set goals and count both, as long as we remember which category each number goes into and that our Lord is working *in us* and *through us* to accomplish what he desires.

Examples:

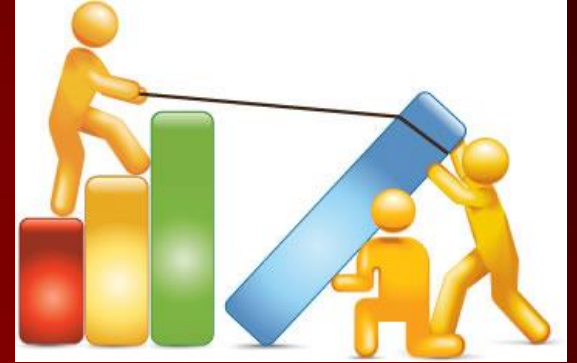
youth and adult baptisms = God's numbers

personal contacts with prospects = "our" numbers

confessions of faith from within the community = God's numbers

multiple touches through community service projects = "our" numbers

2. Why does having meaningful metrics matter?



Good metrics...

- ✦ encourage everyone's best efforts.
- ✦ clarify intended results and provide useful insights.
- ✦ measure what you value and want to manage well.
- ✦ spark stimulating, and often much needed, discussions.
- ✦ keep you focused on accomplishing your agreed-to goals.
- ✦ reveal issues and adjustments that need to be addressed.
- ✦ help you decide which efforts to enhance or suspend.
- ✦ cause you to notice, count, and celebrate visible blessings.

What might using metrics look like?

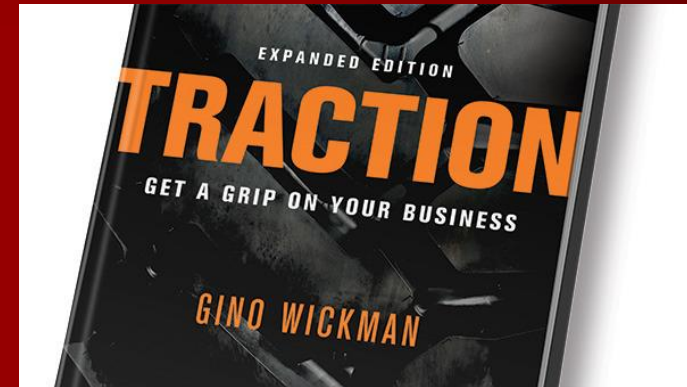
| <u>Mary</u> | <u>Bill</u> | <u>Frank</u> | <u>John</u> | <u>Greg</u> |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Members in worship #480 / 60% | Weekly atten in GG #250 / 40% | School Walk-in/Open House guests 10 | Worship guests contacted 25 | Vision casting 5 |
| Guests in worship #40 / 4% | Weekly atten in Sun. Sch. #115 / 85% | Hits on web site 200 Enrollment 150 | Persons contacted through outreach | Equipping with lay leaders 15 |
| Members in worship ministry role/week #240 / 30% | Weekly atten in HSGG #20 / 50% | Teacher contacts with parents/week 25 | ministries (VBS, LES, etc.) 30 | Pastoral care: sick, shut-in 8 |
| 16-25 y/o in worship 20% | Current # of GG leaders/apprentices 22 | Prospective students being nurtured 30 | Non-members in BIC 10 | strayed/straying 10 |
| Young and single (20-35 y/o) 25% | Current # of SS teachers/trainees 15 | | Members in a new service role 15 | Review Scorecard 1 |
| Married adults in worship 50% | | | | Update staff rocks 3 |
| | | | | Update annual plan 1 |

(metrics, scorecard, dashboard, flash report, measurables, smart numbers)

Metrics and Meetings

“Meeting Pulse” and “Level 10 Meetings”

Traction (Gino Wickman) →



eosworldwide.com

“Level 10 Meeting” including metrics

Video – *“How to Run an Effective Meeting – Tutorial”*



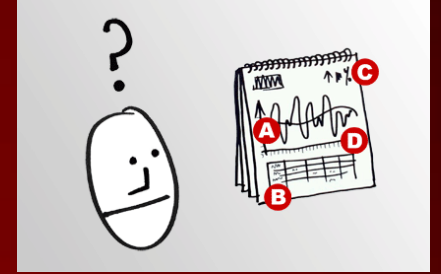
Crossroads – Level 10 Meeting in a ministry setting

**Are you having
“Level 10 Meetings”?**



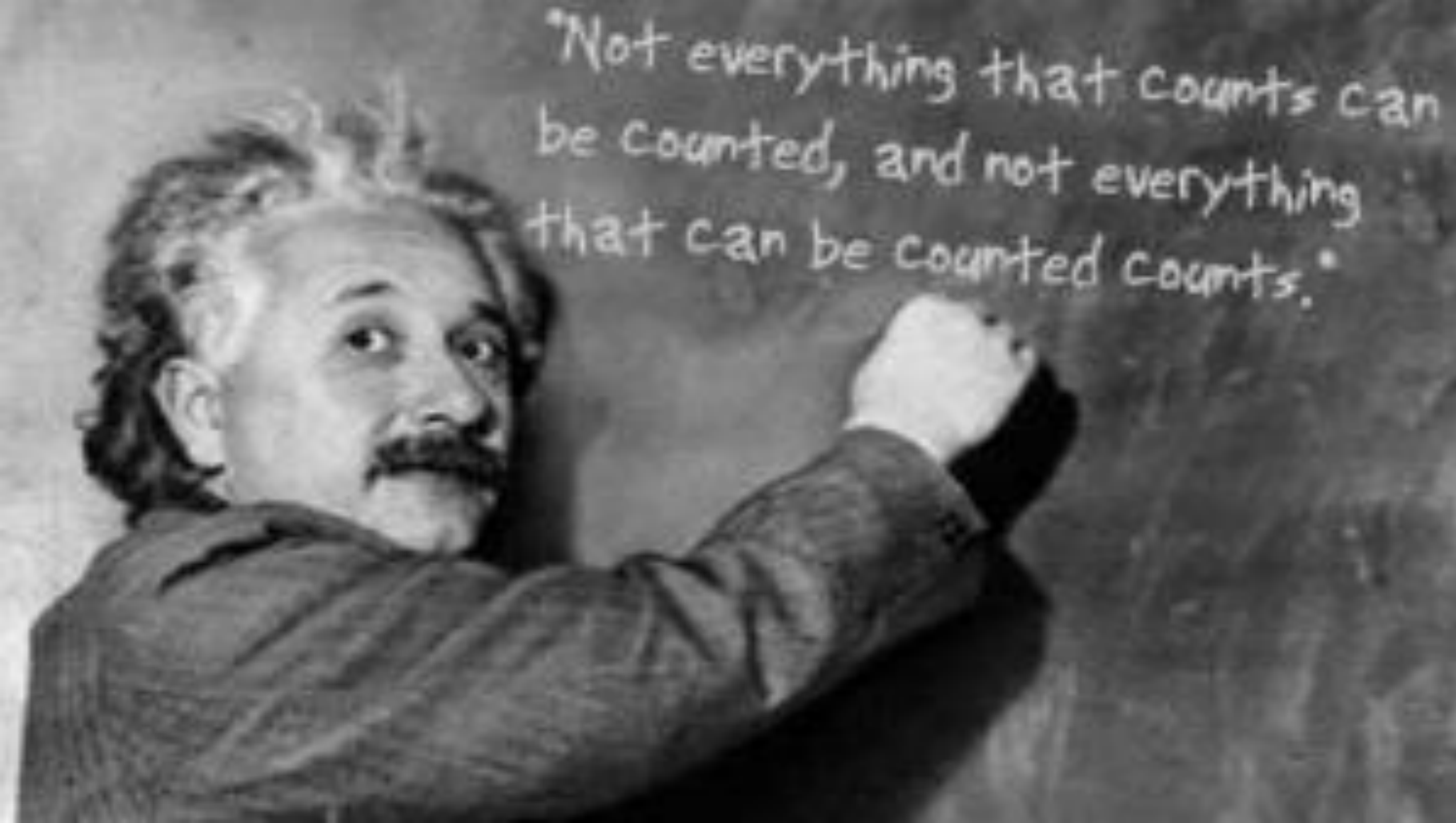
Could you move in that direction?

3. Which metrics belong in your congregation (ministry)?



- ★ The most useful metrics are closely tied to priorities, goals, and strategies based on a clearly articulated mission/vision.
- ★ Use metrics that help you understand how the Lord is blessings your ministry processes (e.g. assimilation).
- ★ Use metrics that help you answer these questions: *“How are we doing? How might we invite more of God’s blessings?”*
- ★ Analyzing your current “normal” metrics may be a first step.
- ★ Tracking trends (going back 5-10 years) may be especially helpful.

"Not everything that counts can
be counted, and not everything
that can be counted counts."



What should you measure to help you plan, implement, and evaluate your efforts?

E.g.: You want to increase your congregation's outreach efforts and time spent with prospects within your community.

- ◆ Number of special events/efforts designed to serve and engage local residents (both on the church campus and off-site within the community)
- ◆ Number of volunteers and hours invested in these efforts
- ◆ Number of community residents served/touched through each of the efforts
- ◆ Number and type of follow-up hours and number of people involved
- ◆ Number of worship guests each week (1st time visitor, visited two or more times) and the reasons these guests first visited and decided to return
- ◆ Number of families on the prospect list (% "hot," "warm," and "cool")
- ◆ Number of contacts and hours invested with prospects (by pastor/volunteers)

How many positive stories can we tell of how God is working *in* and *through* us?



Who will own and report on the specific numbers you wish to monitor and when/how will this be done?



“The conversation about missing a target should look much different than in business, but too often we don’t even have the conversation in ministry settings.” (In the Pursuit of Great AND Godly Leadership, Mike Bonem)

Common temptations...

- ✱ Avoiding the use of meaningful measurements to circumvent personal accountability (e.g. 28 hrs./week)
- ✱ Ignoring obvious data so no one's feelings get hurt and existing relationships are not threatened
- ✱ Playing it safe so we don't discover something we really don't want to know
- ✱ Disregarding obvious issues so we don't have to add to our list of things that must be done

Some Points to Remember

1. Unless you measure something, you won't know if it's growing, plateaued, or declining.
2. Measurables must be connected to and help advance the congregation's (ministry's) mission and vision.
3. Establishing measurables requires a pastor/staff and other committed leaders who are clear on where they are now and where they would like to go (with God's blessing).

More Points to Remember

4. God's people establish measurables and monitor progress with a sense of urgency (souls are at stake and time is limited) and with love (for the Lord, each other, and others).
5. Evaluating measurements must involve honest discussion and appropriate follow-up action.
6. Measure what's most important and put a system in place to ensure data collection and monitoring is worthwhile.
7. You want to avoid getting lost in a maze of data.

Don't be a slave to metrics!



“No set of metrics will paint the full picture of a congregation, but if the measurement system offers a more complete look at people and helps leaders make decisions, it will have served a powerful purpose.” (In the Pursuit of Great AND Godly Leadership, Mike Bonem)



Compelled by Christ's love and passionate about his mission, let's keep striving both to be faithful *and* fruitful – to God's glory.

Within that context – and while exercising spiritual discernment – there is a place for God-honoring metrics in the church.

Limited time for...





Thank you

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