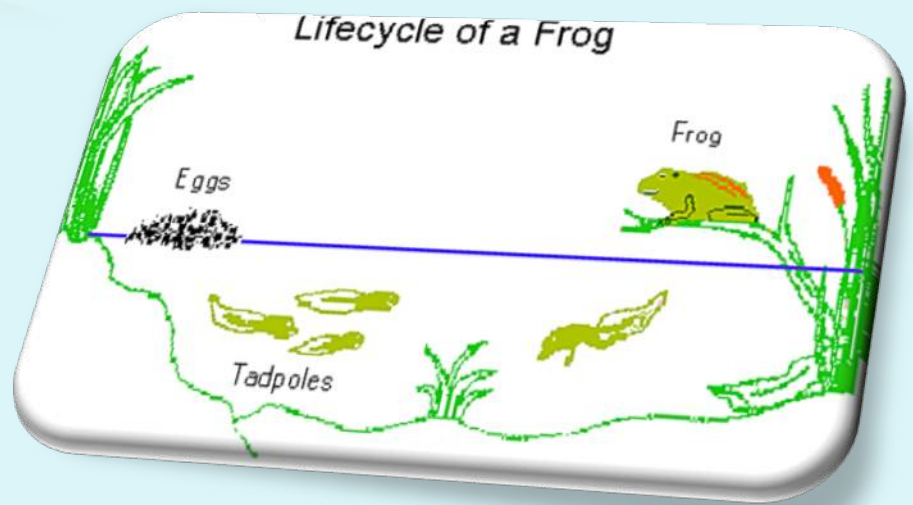
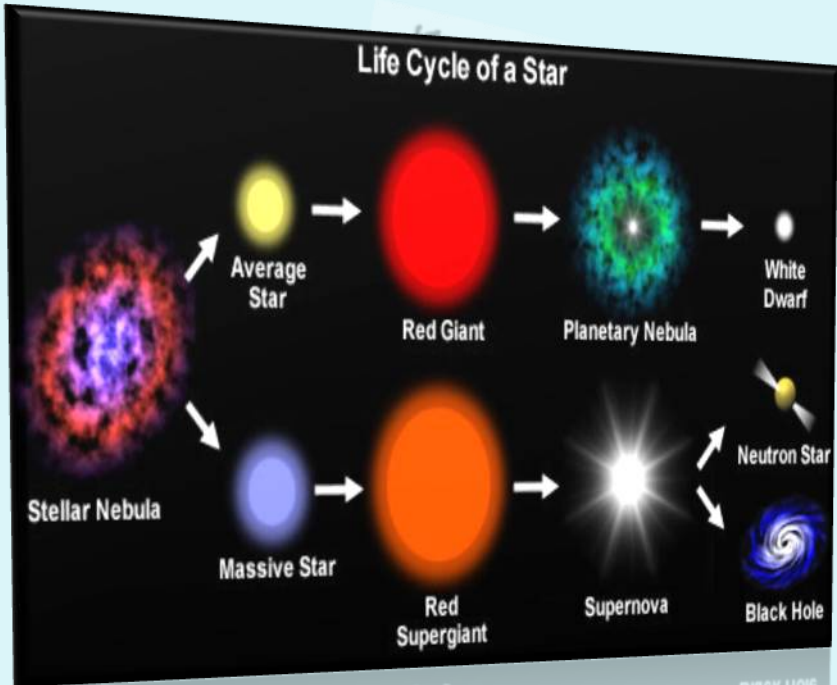
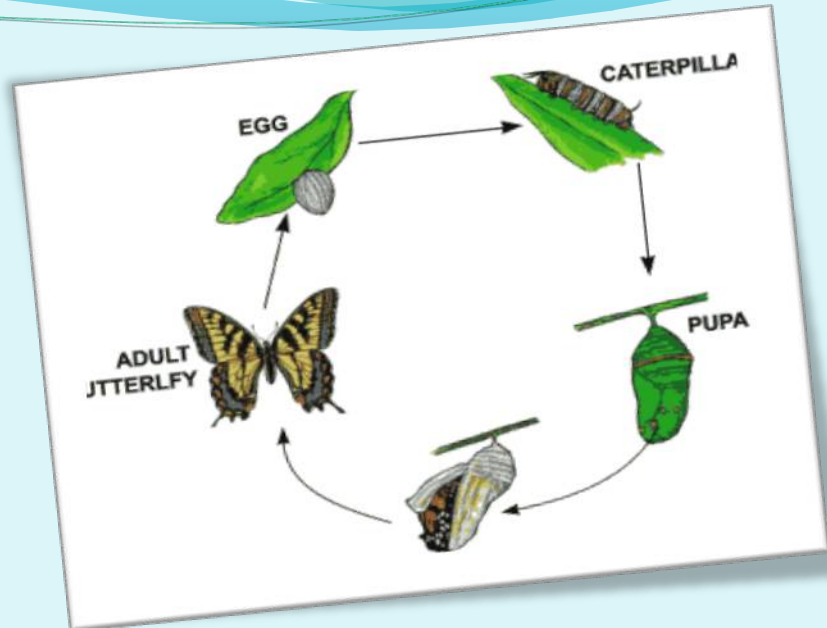
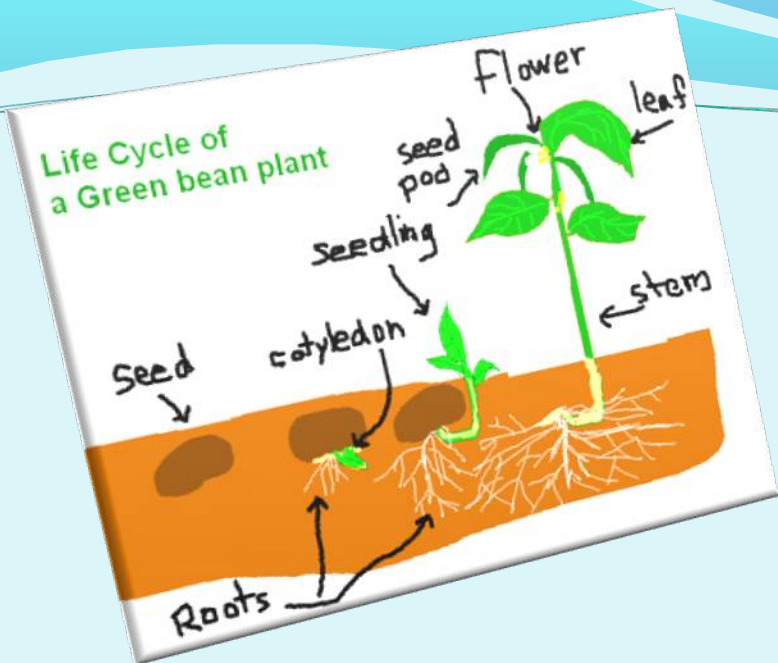
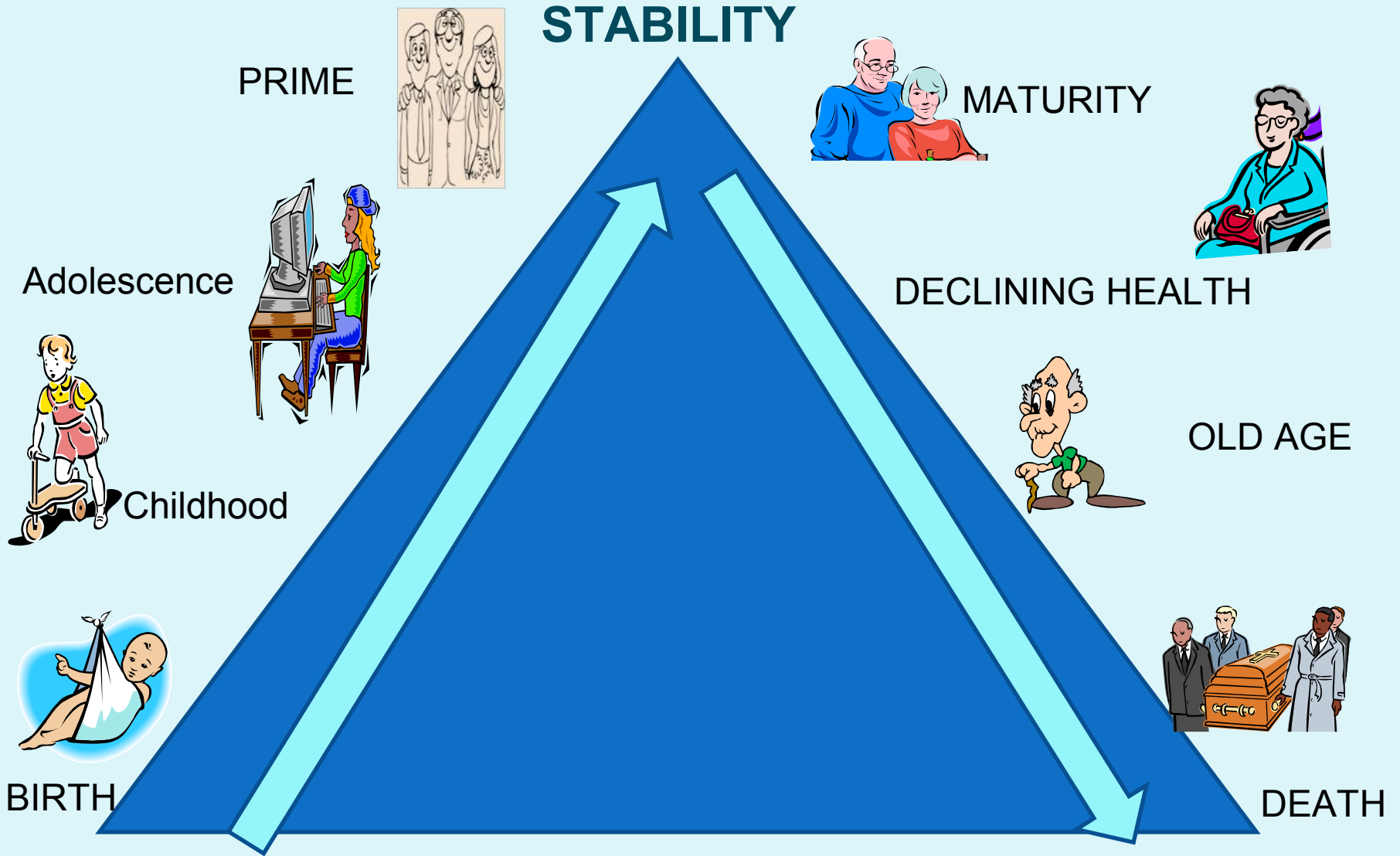


LIFE CYCLES AND LIFE STAGES



LIFE CYCLES



ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES for each stage

- **VISION**

WHERE ARE WE GOING

- **RELATIONSHIPS**

WHO IS GOING WITH US

- **MINISTRY/PROGRAMME**
HOW DO WE GET THERE
- **STRUCTURE/MANAGEMENT**
WHAT DO WE CONTROL

VISION

Vision is the fuel or energy that will drive the congregation into the future with hope and a sense of potency.

Vision reflects the core values of the congregation.

Relationships

How the congregation attracts new people into the Christian faith journey helps current parishioners deepen and mature in their faith journey and nurtures relationships within the church community.

MINISTRIES/PROGRAMMES

Programmes, ministries and activities embody the vision of the church and reflect the gifts and vocations of the members.

Effective programmes meet real, identified spiritual, social and emotional needs of people in the neighbourhood as well as the community of faith.

Evidence of effective programmes is that the church is known for the excellence of its programmes, ministries and activities

STRUCTURE/MANAGEMENT

Management are those systems that facilitate orderly decision-making, the allocation of resources, integrates new developments and establishes boundaries.

Effective management is efficient, well defined and supports the vision, relationships and programmes of the Church.

CHILDHOOD

- Churches begin with a vision or dream for their life together
- Possibilities seem endless
- Mission focus is outward
- A high commitment of founders is essential to birth the dream

ADOLESCENCE

Focus on vision is needed in order to continue to flourish

The outward-oriented sense of mission becomes more solid through experience

- Goals and priorities are updated to help drive the vision (some of the original goals may be displaced)

There is conflict as behaviours need to change to fit new environment

PRIME

It is relaxed. It is successful. It has a positive spirit. It is focused. It is clear about its vision, and its vision shared broad ownership in the congregation.

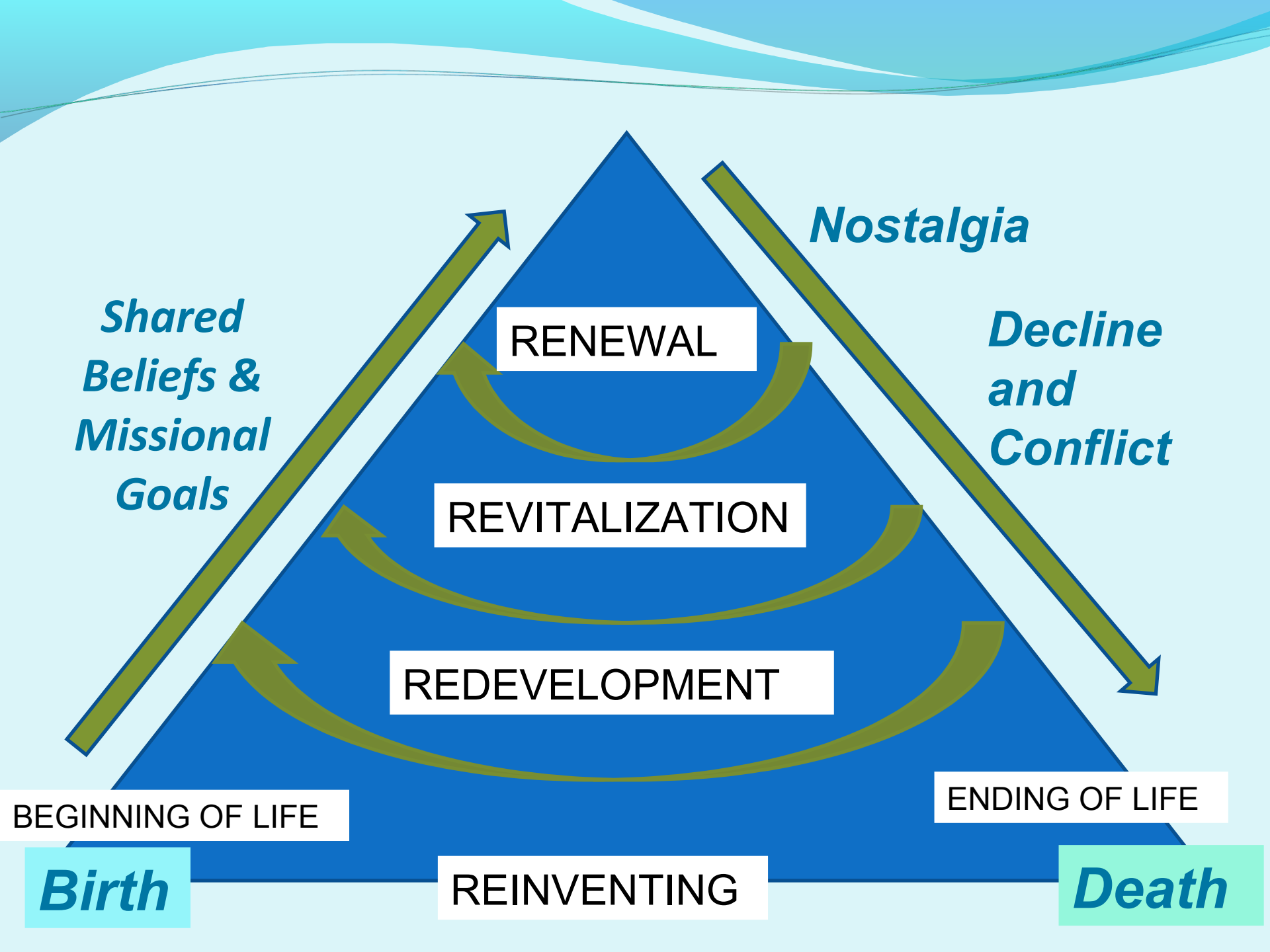
It is positive about its future. It feels that it can accomplish anything to which it sets its mind, as long as it matches the will of God for the congregation.

MATURITY

- A plateau has been reached that will take more and more effort to maintain.
- Renewal is needed or the church will lose ministry health.

DECLINING HEALTH AND OLD AGE

- Conflicts begin that can be seeds for revitalization—especially if the pain of the present gives rise to a willingness and urgency for change. Anxiety, if unmanaged, will lead to doubt and polarization.



*Shared
Beliefs &
Missional
Goals*

RENEWAL

Nostalgia

*Decline
and
Conflict*

REVITALIZATION

REDEVELOPMENT

BEGINNING OF LIFE

ENDING OF LIFE

Birth

REINVENTING

Death

LEADERSHIP

There are certain types of leaders that are best able to lead churches at various phases in their life cycles. (trained Interim Ministers and Catalytic Lay Leaders).

Such knowledge can benefit the pastoral call process as well as promote church health



- Sometimes it is wise to bring in leadership from outside the system to guide transition. An Interim Ministers and Catalytic Leaders have gifts and assets to initiate change, manage transition and sustain healthy momentum into the early phases of transformation.

A HEALTHY CHURCH DREAMS

A KIN-DOM DREAM

No matter where a church is on the life cycle, whether on an upward slope, a plateau or downward slope whether in need of renewal, revitalization, or redevelopment the common factor for health and transformation is **vision**.

The bottom line?

- A healthy church is based upon a healthy vision.
- When vision ceases to be the driving force of a church's ministry, it is susceptible to disease, decline and ultimately death.
- Plateaued or declining congregations can start new life cycles when a sense of Godly urgency and vision drive a process of change.

Discussion

- As the lifecycle story was shared, where did you recognize your congregation currently?
- Do most people in your group agree that's about where your congregation is currently?