

12 Marks of Healthy Church Behavior (Episcopal)

1. Worships: Designs and carries out worship in a thoughtful and excellent fashion that is responsive to the individual nature of the congregation. The congregation understands the power of the Holy Eucharist to renew the spirit. Worship is vibrant and alive and touches the worshipper. Liturgy is well planned and executed and inspires worshipping community to live their faith.

2. Knows Itself and Moves Forward: Articulates and lives into its Identity as a community of Christ defined by its sense of values, mission (purpose) and vision with resulting plans for the congregation. The culture is one of expectation of constant movement and transformational change, seeking God's will for its future. This awareness is grounded in scripture, tradition, theology and understanding.

3. Invites, Greets, Orients and Incorporates: Proactively invites and displays hospitality to both newcomers and members alike. Works toward inclusion of newcomers through an intentional orientation process to the local congregation, Christianity, and the Anglican Episcopal ethos. Seeks and engages newcomers and members into active participation in congregational ministry and community with an emphasis on developing and nurturing relationships.

4. Disciples: Takes seriously the formation of Christian disciples, grounded in the Baptismal Covenant with emphasis on spiritual formation, Baptismal ministry, biblical education, prayer and theological reflection on life.

5. Lives as Stewards: Promotes good stewardship of parishioner's time, spiritual gifts, talents, money and material assets. Optimizes use of its facilities and grounds for ministry or to generate support for its mission. Teaches and integrates healthy stewardship of the environment and environmental issues in its practices.

6. Empowers: Fosters a culture of empowering ministry utilizing knowledge of persons' spiritual gifts, passions and talents for service coupled with expectation and accountability for those who undertake ministry. Proactively explores ministry roles for each of its members through open opportunities, communication and invitation.

7. Cares: Responds with thoughtfulness and pastoral sensitivity to individuals in the congregation when illness, personal crisis, death and other challenging life circumstances arise.

8. Reaches Out: Focuses significant ministry outside the congregation to the community and beyond authentically articulating God's kingdom through serving others in need. (See Matthew 11:1-5 for marks of God's Kingdom)

9. Fosters a Learning Culture for Leaders: Supports and understands that leaders in Christian community have a distinctive call, that they seek God's guidance, are willing to risk, lead change well, and learn from experience. Leaders are trained and expected to mentor future leaders. Lay leaders foster a healthy relationship with their clergy.

10. Communicates: Generates effective communications inside the church and outside to the community. Constantly assesses communication practices and explores emerging communication media for effective communication.

11. Manages Conflict: Conflicted situations are managed with practices/processes that foster and reflect a theology of reconciliation and mutual respect.

12. Understands the Need to Be Connected to the Greater Church: Demonstrates connectedness and support for the wider church, its sister congregations, the greater diocese and the bishop and our common mission.

Authors: Mary MacGregor and Reb Scarborough, 2004, edited 2011
Revised by Lance Ousley, 2014

References: Peter Steinke; The Evangelism, Church Growth, Worship and

Mission Agency of the Presbyterian Church of Canada