

Seven Marks of a Healthy Church

Mark 1: energized by faith

rather than just keeping things going or trying to survive

- *worship and sacramental life: move people to experience God's love*
- *motivation: energy comes from a desire to serve God and one another*
- *engages with Scripture: in creative ways that connect with life*
- *nurtures faith in Christ: helping people to grow in, and share, their faith*

Mark 2: outward-looking focus

with a 'whole life' rather than a 'church life' concern

- *deeply rooted in the local community, working in partnership with other denominations, faiths, secular groups and networks*
- *passionate and prophetic about justice and peace, locally and globally*
- *makes connections between faith and daily living*
- *responds to human need by loving service.*

Mark 3: seeks to find out what God wants

discerning the Spirit's leading rather than trying to please everyone

- *vocation: seeks to explore what God wants it to be and do*
- *vision: develops and communicates a shared sense of where it is going*
- *mission priorities: consciously sets both immediate and long—term goals*
- *able to call for, and make, sacrifices, personal and corporate, in bringing about the above and living out the faith.*

Mark 4: faces the cost of change and growth

rather than resisting change and fearing failure

- *while embracing the past, it dares to take on new ways of doing things*
- *takes risks: admits when things are not working, and learns from experience*
- *crises: responds creatively to challenges that face the church and community*
- *positive experiences of change: however small, are affirmed and built on.*

Mark 5: operates as a community

rather than functioning as a club or religious organization

- *relationships: are nurtured, often in small groups, so that people feel accepted and are helped to grow in faith and service*
- *leadership: lay and ordained work as a team to develop locally appropriate expressions of all seven marks of a healthy church*
- *lay ministry: the different gifts, experiences and faith journeys of all are valued and given expression in and beyond the life of the church.*

Mark 6: makes room for all

being inclusive rather than exclusive

- *welcome: works to include newcomers into the life of the church*
- *children and young people: are helped to belong, contribute and be nurtured in their faith*
- *enquirers are encouraged to explore and experience faith in Christ*
- *diversities: different social and ethnic backgrounds, mental and physical abilities, and ages, are seen as a strength.*

Mark 7: does a few things and does them well

focused rather than frenetic

- *does the basics well: especially public worship, pastoral care, stewardship and administration*
- *occasional offices: make sense of life and communicate faith*
- *being good news as a church in its attitudes and ways of working*
- *enjoys what it does and is relaxed about what is not being done.*