

## **The Seven Marks of a Healthy Church**

### **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.
- Engaging with Scripture: in creative ways connect with life.
- Nurtures faith in Christ: helping people to grow in and share their faith.

### **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.

### **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.

### **4. Faces the cost of change and growth rather than resisting change and avoiding failure.**

- While embracing the past, it dares to take on new ways of doing things.
- Takes risks: and 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

### **5. Operates as a community rather than functioning as a club or religious organization.**

- Relationships: are nurtured, often in small groups, so 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.

### **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.

**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.