

The Rev. Jay Lawlor References the "12 Marks of Healthy Church Behavior" as keys to Congregational Vitality

The Rev. Jay Lawlor looks at the "12 Marks of Healthy Church Behavior" by Mary MacGregor and Reb Scarborough, Episcopal Diocese of Texas, 2004, edited 2011.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, US, March 7, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Rev. Jay Lawlor](#) states on his



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The Rev. Jay Lawlor

website: "Looking more closely at mission and viability, congregational vitality requires a congregation to do well across numerous aspects of church life and be able to measure/assess their own effectiveness. Of all the materials I have read, presentations I have seen, and conversations I have participated in over the years, I believe the most comprehensive and thoughtful understanding on factors contributing to congregational vitality is by Mary MacGregor and Reb Scarborough for the Episcopal Diocese of Texas. MacGregor and Scarborough developed what they call the [12 Marks of Healthy Church Behavior](#) with reference to work done by internationally respected congregational systems consultant Peter L. Steinke."

The Rev. Lawlor lists the "12 Marks of Healthy Church Behavior" from MacGregor and Scarborough:

1. **Worships:** Designs and carries out in a thoughtful and excellent fashion worship 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.
2. **Knows Itself and Moves Forward:** Defines itself 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 change, seeking God's will for its future. This awareness is grounded in theological definition and understanding.
3. **Invites, Incorporates:** Invites, displays hospitality and works toward inclusion of newcomers and members into active participation in congregational life with an emphasis on relationship formation.
4. **Disciples:** Takes seriously the formation of disciples, grounded in the Baptismal Covenant with emphasis on spiritual formation, biblical education and prayer.
5. **Lives as Stewards:** Promotes good stewardship of parishioner's time, spiritual gifts, talents and money.
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.

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.
9. Fosters a Learning Culture for Leaders: 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.
11. Manages Conflict: Conflicted situations are managed with practices/processes that foster and reflect a theology of reconciliation.
12. Understands the Need to Be Connected to the Greater Church: Demonstrates connectedness and support for the wider church.

Source: "12 Marks of Healthy Church Behavior" by Mary MacGregor and Reb Scarborough (Congregational Vitality Development Basics 101, Episcopal Diocese of Texas), 2004, edited 2011. References: Peter Steinke; The Evangelism, Church Growth, Worship and Mission Agency of the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

Readers can learn how the Rev. Lawlor applies the "12 Marks of Healthy Church Behavior" in his Congregational Vitality Project at <https://www.therevjaylawlor.com/missionprojects/congregationalvitality/>

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