

## PARISH VITALITY ASSESSMENT

Leaders from across the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, lay and ordained, have gathered and prayerfully identified seven [Vital Signs of Parish Health](#) for Episcopal churches in our context.

**1. Compelling Mission & Vision.** A healthy parish has a clear understanding of its mission, states the mission clearly, and creates ministries which align to that mission. The mission is shared and supported by all levels of ministry leadership, lay and ordained.

**2. Clear Path of Discipleship.** A healthy parish has a path of discipleship for members of all ages and stages of life. This discipleship path is clearly articulated, has multiple on-ramps, and provides growth opportunities for all to engage in formation and ministries.

**3. Faithful Financial Practices.** A healthy parish utilizes financial best practices such as transparency, on-time reporting to the diocese, and forecasting sustainable budgeting. Finances are a faithful conversation, understood as Christian stewardship and formation.

**4. Inspiring & Capable Leadership.** A healthy parish invests in continuing education, training, and rest for its lay and ordained leaders, who are nurtured, valued and appreciated.

**5. Welcoming & Connecting Ministries.** A healthy parish is intentional and strategic about welcoming guests; it is prepared to invite and provide next step connections. Our church family is a place to belong. Welcoming ministries are dependent on the leadership of active lay members.

**6. Uplifting & Inviting Worship.** A healthy parish gathers for worship that engages people with inspirational experiences and relevant teaching; it engages and offers full participation to all. While shaped by our Episcopal ethos, worship expresses the cultural and ethnic heritage of members and the surrounding community.

**7. Blessing Our Community.** A healthy parish advocates for and partners with the local community and other organizations. This engagement focuses on the welfare of our neighbors and justice initiatives such as food scarcity, racial inequities, and immigration concerns. The parish is invested in the health and well-being of its local community.

The Vital Signs of Parish Health give us a framework to evaluate both our strengths and our opportunities for growth. On the next two pages we want to capture your reflections. You will give your parish a rating from 1 to 10 for each vital sign, considering each on the spectrum it being a growth opportunity to a strength of your parish. Please consider your parish's *commitment*, *effort* and *results* in your assessment. We want to recognize that these three things work together to give us a score: 1) commitment, 2) effort and 3) results. Taking all three into account means that if we are very committed to something and making a good effort, but not seeing any results, then the score for that vital sign should not be higher than 6 or 7. If all three are identifiable, then the vital sign is a 9 or 10.

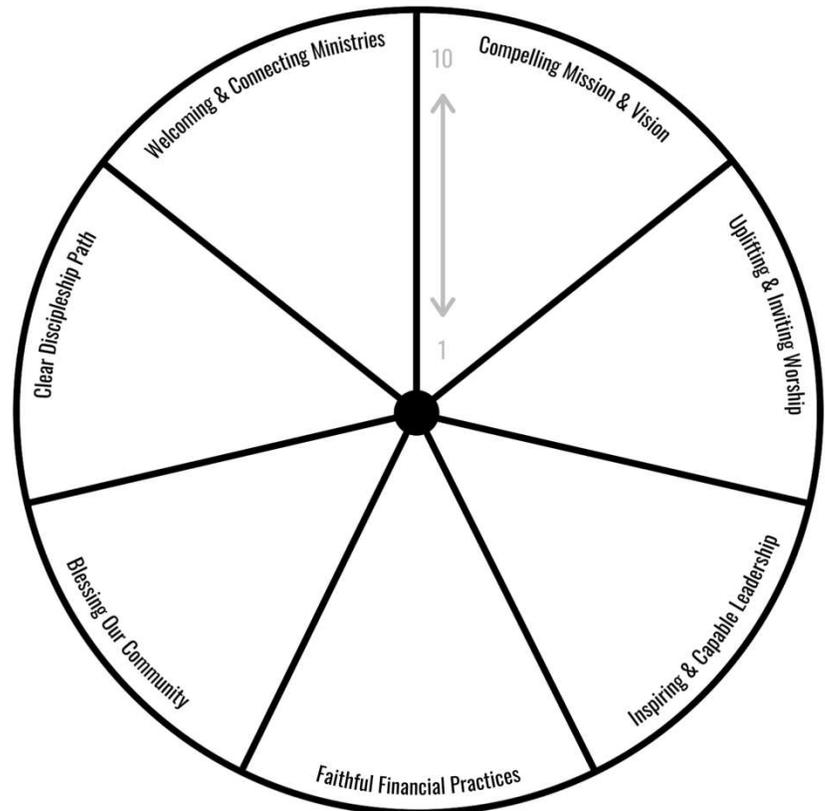
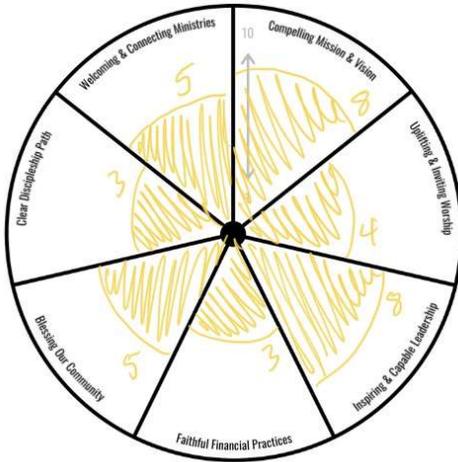


## Capturing Your Reflections

	Growth Opportunity	Strength
1) Compelling Mission and Vision	[1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8 --- 9 --- 10]	
2) Clear Path of Discipleship	[1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8 --- 9 --- 10]	
3) Faithful Financial Practices	[1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8 --- 9 --- 10]	
4) Inspiring & Capable Leadership	[1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8 --- 9 --- 10]	
5) Welcoming & Connecting Ministries	[1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8 --- 9 --- 10]	
6) Uplifting and Inviting Worship	[1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8 --- 9 --- 10]	
7) Blessing Our Community.	[1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7 --- 8 --- 9 --- 10]	

Another way to reflect on the Vital Signs is to use the wheel image below in which you indicate your level of satisfaction with your parish's strength with each Vital Sign? The center of the wheel starts at the weakest satisfaction and the outer ring is the strongest. After drawing lines in each slice of the wheel, give the line a representative number, from 1-10.

Looking at the wheel to the right, where would you draw a line rating the strength of each Vital Signs presence in your parish? An example is shown below.



**Review your responses from the last page and consider these questions:**

1. Which one (or two) of the Vital Signs rise to the top

