

7 Marks of Vital Congregations (even during Covid-19)

Mark #4: Empower Servant Leadership

Share in reading aloud the entire scripture texts and quotes below:

John 13:2-17 *“ . . . so if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ”*

Ephesians 4:1-16 *“The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.”*

“Empowering servant leadership . . . is nurturing the use of the gifts of all people to serve . . . because all voices and people are necessary. . . . This focus stands against perspectives that support ideas like ‘it’s the Pastor’s job’; monopolized leadership; hiring the young energetic pastor; and burning out good volunteers.”-PCUSA Office of VCI

“The church of Jesus Christ is not short of leaders. The Church of Jesus Christ is short of people who are willing to be servants” –Rodger Nishioka, Rooted in Love.

“The one who is fully like us, who deeply understands our joys and pains or hopes and desires, and who is willing and able to walk with us, that is the one to whom we gladly give authority and whose “Subjects” we are willing to be. It is the compassionate authority that empowers, encourages, calls forth hidden gifts, and enables great things to happen. –Henri Nouwen, Bread for the Journey

Sample Reflection and Discussion questions:

- 1) Revitalizing requires adjusting to new circumstances.
What parts of the scripture and quotes above speak to you about “servant leadership” during a time of quarantine and distancing?
- 2) What evidence have you seen or heard in our congregation of expecting only the pastor, the youth minister, or special experienced volunteers to take the lead? Has this changed during the pandemic? How? What prevents you from serving where you may be needed? What tempts you to say “yes” when there are others who could be asked to help?
- 3) In what ways does or could our congregation empower more servant leaders? How do you or others might feel about sharing leadership in situations that has often been “your or their job”?