

## **The Learning Congregation**

*What insights are suggested by the following in relation to concrete experiences you might design for individual and congregational learning?*

Joe D. Marlow. Beyond Teaching: The Congregation as a Learning Community  
*Christian Education Journal*, Volume 16, 1 (Fall 1995): 63-78.

Marlow describes his vision for the “learning congregation.” He maintains that a learning organization is superbly equipped for two functions: planning and change. The learning church talks through issues, allows diversity of opinion, seeks common ground and shared interests, releases all the gifts of the members. In the learning church there is (1) interdependence, the exercise of spiritual gifts, mutual allegiance and love; (2) shared knowledge of God and the experiential knowledge of a living faith; (3) shared leadership evidenced in the creation of ministry teams, the utilization of spiritual gifts, and in leaders who offer direction, trust, and hope.

Karen Watkins and Victoria Marsick. 1993. *Sculpting the Learning Organization*  
Jossey-Bass.

The design of a learning organization depends on: (1) the creation of continuous learning opportunities (2) encouragement of inquiry and dialogue (3) collaboration and team learning (4) systems that will capture and disseminate learning (5) the empowerment of persons toward a shared vision and (6) the linking of the organization to its environment.