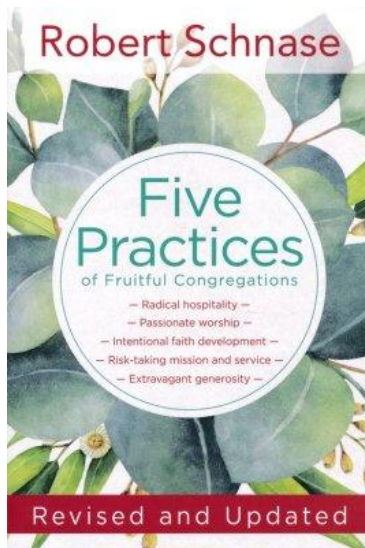


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Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

Author: Robert Schnase

Robert Schnase serves as bishop of the Rio Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church. Prior to that assignment, he served as the bishop of the Missouri Conference from 2004-2016. Schnase is the author of the bestselling books *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, *Five Practices of Fruitful Living*, *Practicing Extravagant Generosity*, and *Seven Levers: Missional Strategies for Conferences*. His latest book, *Just Say Yes: Unleashing People for Ministry*, is written for people whose passion has been simmering for years, who yearn to be told Yes! Schnase examines the systems and attitudes that restrain and control ministry. He demonstrates practical ways church leaders can rethink fundamental assumptions about organizations and leadership. Before his election as bishop, Schnase served for 15 years as senior pastor of First United Methodist Church in McAllen, Texas, a congregation that became widely known for its extensive mission and outreach, for reaching younger generations, and bicultural ministry. He also served congregations in Harlingen, Texas and in Great Britain. Schnase is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and Perkins School of Theology. He enjoys birding, fishing, canoeing, and traveling in Central America. Schnase is married to Esther and they have two adult sons, Karl and Paul.



A fruitful church, as defined by [Bishop Robert Schnase](#), focuses on five key practices. **Radical Hospitality** (unconditional welcoming), **Passionate Worship** (transformative encounters with God), **Intentional Faith Development** (nurturing spiritual growth in community), **Risk-Taking Mission & Service** (outward focus on world needs), and **Extravagant Generosity** (giving beyond expectation). These practices work together to help congregations make disciples and bring about positive change in the world, moving beyond just attracting members to genuinely transforming lives and communities.

Here's a breakdown of each practice:

1. **[Radical Hospitality](#)**: Actively seeking to welcome strangers, the unchurched, and newcomers, creating a spiritual home where everyone feels they belong and can experience God's love without prejudice.

2. **Passionate Worship**: Engaging in worship that is authentic, honest, and open to God's presence, leading to life-changing encounters and inspiring people to live out their faith all week.
3. **Intentional Faith Development**: Nurturing spiritual growth through Bible study, small groups, and intentional programs that help people mature in their understanding and practice of faith at all life stages.
4. **Risk-Taking Mission & Service**: Stepping outside comfort zones to serve the needs of the world and embody Christ's love in practical ways, driven by the Holy Spirit.
5. **Extravagant Generosity**: Aligning financial resources and personal gifts with God's purposes, giving generously (of time, talent, and treasure) to support the church's mission and bless others.