

NORTHWEST ADVENTURE

It's Time to Innovate for Change

By William D. Gibson

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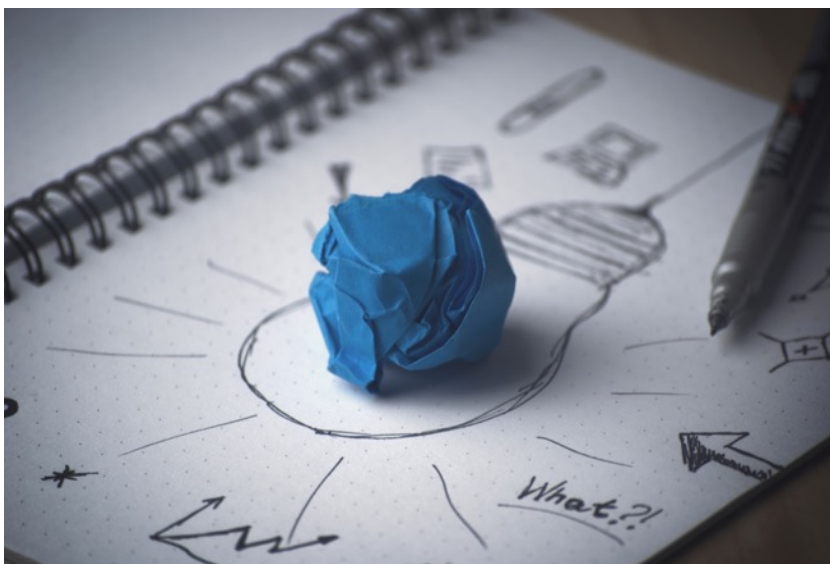
Don't you think it's about time to embrace innovation, for a change? Actually, what we sometimes forget is that innovation is *about* change. Culture is always emerging — the ever-ticking clock ticks — and it would be an understatement to say the church doesn't do well to keep up. "The times they are a-changin'," — always — to reference the poetic genius of Bob Dylan. If you can stomach it, simply look at your news feed for glimpses of the upside-down world of "alternative facts," "fake news," and the minute by minute, widening political and theological divide.

No misunderstandings intended here; I am not inferring that the church is suppose to *become* culture... What I am saying is that we — as the church — have been slow

The Greater Northwest Episcopal Area represents the Alaska United Methodist Conference, Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference, and the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference. More @ greaternw.org

to engage culture, move beyond think-out-of-the-box conversations, and actually do more that would accurately reflect innovative ways to influence culture. In our current climate, we've got to shift beyond carving out "safe space" and now create more "courageous space," to riff off one of my ministry team partners, Kristina Gonzalez.

So, what does it mean to be innovative?



One of the most influential books I read as a young, rookie business entrepreneur was Peter Drucker's *Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Practice and Principles* (Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc. 1985). In the opening chapters, Drucker explained that entrepreneurs can't help but be innovative. Entrepreneurs innovate. Period.

From Drucker's perspective, innovation wasn't a technical activity. It was economic or social. In other words, innovation was wonderfully nuanced by the emotional temperament of humanity. It engaged the deep recesses of our creativity (both producers and consumers), which was often suppressed by sensibility and certainty.

Over the years, the church has tried to embody innovation through the business phrase "best practices." For the business world, "best practices" were about maintaining quality and establishing benchmarks. In the church, however, we've had a tendency to see "best practices" as program options that will ensure our success. If they worked in **that** church, then surely they will work in **our** church. A tempting argument.

The problem — as I have alluded — is that the church is not as adaptive as Corporate America. We don't like change. We are drawn into it kicking and screaming. Or, at the very least, we are so guarded that our fear of change keeps us from operating out of the box.

In 2011, I stumbled upon a valuable little book written by Stephen Shapiro. In *Best Practices Are Stupid: How to Out-Innovate the Competition*, Shapiro argues that the time has come to be more innovative about the way we innovate. His core argument rests upon this premise:

We often say that we want our leaders to be more entrepreneurial, creative, and innovative; however, our church has been slow to help develop, resource, or provide room that encourage such skills/gifts.



"Following in the footsteps of others is the fastest way to irrelevancy. Instead, create your own path. Find new and creative ways of staying ahead of the competition. Only through repeated, rapid, and efficient change can an organization survive and thrive in today's volatile marketplace" (pp. 6).

What does it look like for you — for us — to think outside the box? Or, to get a new box altogether? How can you be a catalyst for organizational change and culture shift, by being more innovative about the way you innovate?

Neither Shapiro or myself are saying that we should ignore "best practices;" not at all. In fact, it is extremely important to understand **what** is working in a particular context and **why** it is working. There are always nuggets that may spark something that works in our setting. But... It's a mistake to think that a "best practice" is a silver bullet answer for a declining church that lacks creativity and innovation. We've got to move beyond a "plug and play" approach to "best practices" and start focusing on what I call **contextual problem solving**. This is the more robust pathway toward creativity and innovation in ministry.

Many argue that "best practices" for the church allow the church to at least do something. This is true. However, we want to move us from "at least doing something" to actually advancing the mission of the church; **to make disciples for the transformation of the world**. I desire to make a difference; to change the crazy world in which I find myself. My hope (and assumption) is that you do as well.

So, what would it look like for you and I to be more innovative in our work? What would it look like to engage culture, elevate the gospel above the noise of this world, and challenge ourselves (and others) to change? That will take a very different and practical approach. It's risky. It's kind of like... No; I would say it is exactly like "walking by faith."¹

We hope that in the pages ahead, you find resources and ideas that spark movement in you and your mission fields; ideas that help shift your work toward being a contextual problem solver. If we are going to create new places for new

"It's a mistake to think that a 'best practice' is a silver bullet answer for a declining church that lacks creativity and innovation."

¹ See 2 Corinthians 5:7.

people, especially considering our current political and theological climate, then we are going to have to embrace such a time as this. It's time to innovate for change.

Creating New Places for New People

For The United Methodist Church, a Northwest Adventure in new church development provides a unique setting, which demands leading-edge strategies that challenge us to intersect culture and elevate the gospel above the noise of society. The opportunity for new growth and life is greater than in any other geographical area of the United States.

In 2015, according to Professor James Wellman of the University of Washington, more than 60 percent (in what we know as the Greater Northwest Area) are religiously unaffiliated. Eleven percent are Catholic, 10 percent are some form of evangelical, while the rest are a conglomeration of mainliners, Jews, Mormons, and Muslims. That leaves 60 percent who are religiously unaffiliated — 30 percent are **"Nones"** (unchurched) and the other 30 percent **"Dones"** (disconnected) attest to being Catholic or Protestant, even though no church reports or claims them.

Along with the Northeast, the Northwest area of the United States presents the greatest opportunities for growth in the movement we know as Christianity. We tend to see such opportunities as impossible challenges, talking more about what we don't have and what is impossible instead of what is possible. Professor Wellman argues that because of the opportunities that exist, we should change the name from the "None Zone" to the "Abundance Zone."

**"It is the
Abundant Zone,
made by and
given for the
glory of God ..."**

— JAMES WELLMAN

resistance of secularization. We are not sure how helpful this general description really is, considering ever-shifting contexts, but it does offer a glimpse of the

Our ministry context presents all the elements of an awesome adventure, as together we work on **creating new places for new people.**

Christianity in the 21st century has been characterized a number of ways, depending to whom you listen. A more popular characterization is to describe Christianity as the Church's pursuit of relevance and unity against the continued



60% of people who live in the Greater Northwest Area are "religiously unaffiliated" — 30% are "unchurched" and another 30% are "disconnected."



challenges Christianity faces today, especially in United States, where the dominate lifestyle is American consumer culture.

Even so, in the history of Christianity, no method for reaching unchurched and disconnected people and making new disciples of Jesus Christ has been more effective than starting new churches and launching other kinds of innovative ministries. It is true that new people are far more likely to engage new things, which is another way to acknowledge that culture is always emerging. Our Methodist movement in America was birthed through exponential multiplication, but then over the years, as our churches grew more stable, we lost this focus. Today, if we expect our faith to breathe into emerging generations, we must regain that focus on starting new churches that reach new people in new ways.

When we talk about organizing a new United Methodist church, we are talking about a specific kind of new project, which has the following characteristics, according to Path1 New Church Starts at Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church.

The Greater Northwest Episcopal Area is the largest episcopal area in the United States, serving United Methodists in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, along with small parts of Montana and Canada.

- 1. They are theologically Wesleyan**
- 2. They worship frequently and celebrate the sacraments**
- 3. They have effective systems for developing disciples**
- 4. They teach and practice biblical stewardship**
- 5. They are missional and work toward community transformation**
- 6. They receive new members**
- 7. They will embed multiplying DNA in all ministries and will plant other new churches in 3 to 5 years**

8. They will remain connected and accountable to The United Methodist Church

What does it look like to organize and create something new? This process guide booklet is intended to help you unpack what the previous list looks like in our unique context, as you discover the unfolding and evolving process of creating new places for new people in the Greater Northwest Area. Through this resource, we hope to help you develop a more robust and comprehensive Ministry Plan. A solid plan should articulate a compelling vision and the practical steps needed to make your vision a reality.



A Word of Pause Around “Affinity”

Before we are too deep into naming and shaping strategies for creating new places for new people, I want to press pause for a moment around the importance of affinity. Much of the existing strategies for church planting across our denomination elevates the consideration of “affinity” between the planter/innovator and the mission field/communities to which they are appointed. However, I want to de-emphasize this notion. And, yes, I am aware that there will be folks who disagree. Regardless, take a moment to read my brief argument that follows.

First, strategies around leveraging affinity groups are based on the Church Growth Movement (CGM), which came into view in the 1960s. The 1950s and 1960s represented years of significant upswing in church attendance and engagement. The CGM was actually birthed by Donald McGavran at Northwest Christian College in Eugene, Oregon. I find it ironic that the CGM was given life in our context; what is today (as you now know) called the “None Zone,” where there are more people outside of the church/Christian community than anywhere in the United States.

Essentially, in the 1960s, alarm bells were going off around the exiting of young adults from the church, much like today. In the midst of a twentieth-century crisis there was a struggle for Christian identity, which found division among races. During these years, and in the midst of a fight for civil rights, white supremacist hate groups, most of which undauntedly claimed a legacy of Nazism, radically promoted their belief that white Christians were God’s chosen people.² Though the ideologies of these groups varied, history shows that these groups primarily directed their

Developing a comprehensive Ministry Plan, which articulates a compelling vision and points toward unfolding practical steps, is essential to starting well. You can find a helpful resource in the Appendix of this document.

² John Butler, Grant Wacker, and Randall Balmer, *Religion in American Life: A Short History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 443.

vindictiveness toward Jews, homosexuals, and other minority persons of color, especially African Americans.

Upon this backdrop there grew strategic considerations for church growth within Evangelical Christianity. Resulting from scientific principles and set on 30 years of missionary experience in India, McGavran founded the Institute of Church Growth around the vision that congregations must be formed from homogeneous groups of people, and that it was important for folks to feel comfortable and “at home” with others. People with similar skin color, beliefs, priorities, fears, hopes, etc. would successfully grow in community together. McGavran expressed his theory on the sociological implication of Christian community development, by stating,

“[People] like to become Christians without even crossing racial, linguistic or class barriers... It has been found that where cultural obstacles are recognized and new converts nurtured in churches of their own culture, the evangelistic efforts are far more effective...”³

The base premise was that because people indeed have prejudices, that these biases should be used and made as an aid to Christianity, drawing individuals together in comfortable and like-minded groups.⁴ This was based on the idea that church growth professionals believed that in the struggle for Christian identity, and the overall Christian movement, most opposition in society was not theological, but instead sociological. A broad example is that Sundays contained the most segregated hour of the week.

There are several “church growth” models, many of which are present still today in strategies for congregational development. These bear witness to the CGM and include the following examples: mega-church, cell church, Alpha course, Natural Church Development, seeker sensitive, soul-winning, and other similar programs and methods. It is absolutely true to state that our natural human tendency is to be drawn



³ Martyn Percy, “How to Win Congregations and Influence Them: An Anatomy of the Church Growth Movement,” *Modern Churchman*, 34 (1992): 25.

⁴ Ralph H. Elliott, “Dangers of the Church Growth Movement: Is it possible to maintain our identity as the church and to be a ‘successful’ institution at the same time?” *The Christian Century*, 98 (August 1981).

to others who are just like us in every way. We have what Parker Palmer calls an ancient fear of “the other.” This is embedded in our humanness, so it would make sense to leverage this for some sort of gain, right? That is what the CGM proposed to capture; a formulaic approach for the Christian movement. And, as the CGM began to cross from the twentieth to the twenty-first century, methods leveraged our dominant American consumer culture, drawing upon marketing and sales strategies.

As good as this sounds, when we consider embracing the “Good news that will bring great joy to all people” (Luke 2:10, NLT), sacrificing the theological position over sociological truths is contrary to the gospel. The gospel subverts such a posture. The gospel reaches cross-culturally and reflects the “kin-dom” of God, representing all races and ethnic groups as one. The gospel breaks down the barriers that divide us, for “there is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female. For we are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28, NLT).

In short, Jesus desires to subvert these natural human tendencies in us, nudging us toward “the other” with whom we, more often than not, do not share a common affinity.

Is there a time when this makes sense? Yes. I believe that affinity is most important when it relates to persons of color who find themselves in a dominant culture (e.g. dominant Anglo). Cultivating a safe space around affinity in this instance is absolutely appropriate. However, if as planters/innovators/pastors we are not allowing Jesus to subvert this tendency in our own lives, and then modeling what it looks like to step into unfamiliar relationships with others, then how do we expect our communities of faith — new and old — to do the same?

While “affinity” appears natural in developing safe and courageous spaces, I do not believe it should, today, be a primary consideration for how we foster Christian community. Instead, I believe that we should be more readily embracing **intercultural competence** as the primary lens through which we understand ourselves then see and engage the world around us. This is an inside-out move that would begin to provide visible evidence of an invisible grace working within each of us.

If you are interested in discussing this more, ask me (William Gibson) how I took this approach in my last appointment as a planter/innovator. Let’s talk.

“Jesus desires to subvert these natural human tendencies in us, nudging us toward ‘the other’”

How Should We Classify and Talk About New Things?

When we classify new things, it can get a bit confusing. What are we talking about and what are the expectations surrounding new church development? To help us in this area, this past year Rev. Curtis Brown (Path1 New Church Strategist for the Western Jurisdiction) provided the Western Jurisdiction Developers new language that we were able to tweak into new classifications of new things. This helps us begin the work of shaping expectations.



The following has been adopted by the boards and committees across the Greater Northwest Areas, which will help us understand and classify our work — what is expected of all of our churches, a new church, a new faith community, and a new place for new people.

All Communities/Churches should be committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ and:

- be theologically Wesleyan
- teach and practice biblical stewardship
- be missional and work toward community transformation
- remain connected and accountable to The United Methodist Church.
- be committed to multiplying the mission through planting a new church, community or place every 3-5 years

A New Church is a project that intends to become an independent congregation that will be self-governing, self-funding, and provide for its own leadership (and can be initiated by an existing church or churches). Further, it:

- worships regularly and celebrates the sacraments
- has effective systems for making disciples of Jesus Christ
- receives new members
- anticipates chartering as an independent congregation or existing as an additional physical site of an existing congregation
- participating in Tithes+ giving and apportionments

A New Faith Community is a project of an existing congregation, individual, or team to create a new worshiping and disciple making community. It is distinct from creating an alternative worship service in an existing congregation due to its focus on reaching those outside of any existing church. Further, it:

- worships regularly and celebrates the sacraments
- has effective systems for making disciples of Jesus Christ

A New Place for New People is a smaller project of an existing congregation, individual, or team to create a new opportunity for those outside of any congregation to encounter a disciple making practice. Further, it:

- involves some sort of regular community building activity
- has access to effective systems for making disciples of Jesus as part of its own practices or in partnership with an existing congregation

How Do We Develop and Start New Churches?

The work of starting new churches emerges from the strategic initiatives of the District Superintendent, who is designated as the “chief missional strategist,” and happens with the guidance and development work of the Developer. New churches are launched based on ¶ 259 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (BOD), under which the Bishop in charge and the Cabinet, with due consideration of the conference entity assigned the responsibility for congregational development, and the District Superintendent of that district, determine the organization, deployment, and appointments related to new church development projects. The District Superintendent, or her/his designee(s), serves as the “agent in charge” of the project until such project is chartered as an official United Methodist Church.

Starting a new church is a significant endeavor that demands a strategic approach. In the Greater Northwest Area, our planting process stresses two major aspects of starting a new church:

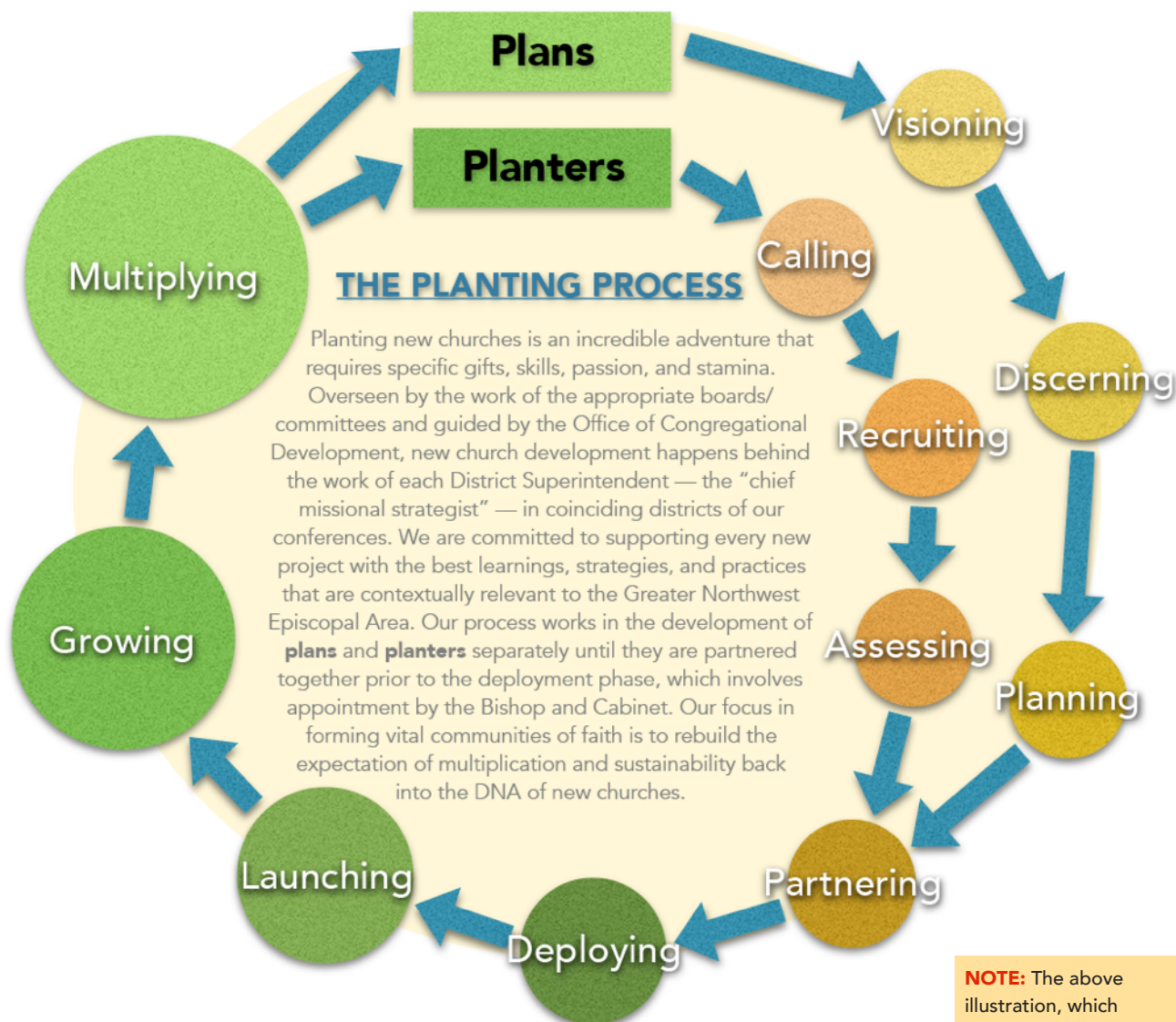
1. **Plans** and strategies for development of a new church project
2. **Planters/Innovators** and leaders assessed for those plans

NOTE: The following section — “How Do We Develop and Start New Churches?” — has been adapted and modified from a previous department document. It does a good job of conceptually explaining the stages (**plans and planters**) of an involved and lengthy process.



NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

The development process for new projects in the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area



NOTE: The above illustration, which visually represents the entire **planting process** (all the plans and planters stages covered in this section), was adapted and modified from a previous department illustration.

The development of plans and the raising up of planters/innovators sometimes occur together, as when an individual develops a call to launch a new church, but more often they originate independently and grow together. Our process looks at plans and planters separately until they are partnered together prior to the deploying phase. We will briefly look at the first four stages of development for a new church, and then we will look at the process of calling and assessing potential leaders for that new church. Finally, we will review the four steps that combine planter and plan into a growing and multiplying new church or community of faith.

DEVELOPING NEW CHURCH PLANS:

Plans: Stage 1. Visioning

God raises a vision for a new church in many different ways and among many different people. Regardless of how the initial vision comes from God, we want to explore and develop that vision. We know that God doesn't always use "authorized" agents to deliver vision and mission to the church, so we intentionally value everyone's ideas, hopes, and dreams when developing new churches. A conversation with the Developer and with your District Superintendent is a good way to take the next step.

Plans: Stage 2. Discerning

In this stage, we explore and seek God's guidance to confirm and further develop a vision for a new church. New church projects are to fit into the strategic initiatives of each district as a part of a larger vitality strategy. Based on the strategic plan, demographic research, and deep listening, a discernment process emerges.

Plans: Stage 3. Planning

In this stage, we work to refine the vision and begin the initial work of ministry plan development, based on a specific ministry context. This work formulates a possible launch team, key partners, and other sponsoring/supporting groups, and involves the work of the District Superintendent, the Developer, the Board of Congregational Development (PNW), Ministry Leadership Team (Oregon-Idaho), or the New Church and Faith Community Development Committee (Alaska), and other individuals and boards/committees as appropriate (collectively, the "stakeholders").

Plans: Stage 4. Partnering

At this stage, we intersect with the planters development process, which is described next. The planter is named, based on assessment, gifts, and contextual affinities. This involves also convening the stakeholders of the project.



DEVELOPING NEW CHURCH PLANTERS/INNOVATORS:

Planters: Stage 1. Calling

Before we can continue describing the planting process of a new church, we need to back up and consider how we identify and develop leaders for new churches and faith communities. Planting churches is a unique and difficult form of leadership for lay and clergy, and helping leaders understand their gifts and calling to planting ministries is critical to the success of starting any new church. This process begins with a leader experiencing a call from God to help launch a new church. This calling can come to lay or clergy leaders, to young or old, to men or women, to people of any culture in any community of any economic status. The strength of the Methodist church planting tradition has always been its willingness to recognize God's giftedness and calling to all people, not just to seminary-trained clergy of the dominant culture time.

Planters: Stage 2. Recruiting

Next, a potential planter will explore new church development through indirect and direct recruiting. This will allow the potential planter to learn as much as possible about this form of ministry. Not everyone who feels an initial call will decide to take leadership in a new church project. Sometimes, we will discover that God has a slightly different idea than what we initially perceived. The recruiting stage is designed to best equip and expose potential leaders with the information required to best interpret God's call for themselves.

Planters: Stage 3. Assessment

In the assessment stage, we continue to work together to best assess and evaluate a potential planter's fitness and affinity for helping launch a new church or new ministry. In the Greater Northwest Area we have an assigned assessment team, which interviews potential planters, following initial screenings and an assessment tool. The assessment team provides recommendations to the Cabinet and appropriate boards/committees. People wishing to be assessed should contact their District Superintendent or the Developer in order to enter the assessment process, which consists of eight phases (see the Planter Assessment Process in the Appendix).

Planters: Stage 4. Partnering

In this step we partner an approved/assessed planting leader with a new church development project plan. Sometimes leads will have a part of developing this plan from the very beginning, especially when an existing church is sponsoring a new

church project. Even in this case, the leaders will need to be appropriately assessed and recommended before assignment or appointment, which happens in the deployment stage.

Stage 5. Deploying

After partnering the assigned or appointed planter/leader with a new church project, we begin adapting and executing the strategic launch plan. This is described as the deploying stage of birthing a new church. Actions in this stage have a profound impact on the long-term health of the developing church.



Stage 6. Launching

Although often thought of as the “beginning” of a new church, the public launch comes after a great deal of development work that has involved a number of individuals and boards/committees. Public launch often takes the form of the beginning weekly gatherings or worship services, but some launch plans in house church, organic church, or cell church models may not include larger group public worship and consequently look different.

Stage 7. Growing

New churches don’t stay new forever. They are supposed to grow spiritually and numerically. In this stage a new church project grows with support and accountability. This growth is reflected in self-sustainability, making disciples, and expanded engagement in the mission field.

Stage 8. Multiplying

Healthy organisms don’t keep growing larger indefinitely. Healthy organisms reproduce in order to adapt and evolve in rapidly changing environments. Our new churches are expected to follow this cycle of reproduction and multiplication, raising up new leaders/planters and new plans for expansion sites or other new church projects.



Seasons of Innovating in Our Context

Remember, innovation is about change. It's about becoming more adaptive in the ebb and flow of our cultural contexts. All the more reason we should talk about the rhythms and seasons of our work together. Why? Because we have institutional perceptions and habits to break. There are strategies and practices that worked in the past, particularly around how we used to find success in church planting, which are not as fruitful today, especially in the west.

Former successful strategies focused on systematically meeting with tons of people, one-on-one, as a primary way of initially gathering people. This method comes from business marketing tactics and relies on the law of averages to form a core group (or to sell a product). It is also akin to the previously mentioned Church Growth Movement, a formula-based process that was birthed in Eugene, OR in the 1960s (see, **"A Word of Pause Around 'Affinity,'" pp.6**).

As we gathered people through strategic one-on-one meet ups, we were to make a shift toward regular worship gatherings and then slowly add other supporting ministries to the mission of making disciples. This way of planting churches, with focused intent toward systematic process, found fruitfulness over a two to four year period of implementation. This is why most of our funding patterns (some still this day) follow a three year disbursement. Typically, this has been \$100,000 in year one, \$70,000 in year two, and \$30,000 in year three.

However, while the opportunity to reach more people who are outside of Christian community is greater than ever, so too are the obstacles we have to consider. More and more people that today fall in the category of "Nones and Dones" are there because of their own skepticism of the church. For far too long people have observed

the church teaching one thing and “Christians” behaving in a completely different manner. Or, they see no significant, long term action taken by churches to be change agents in their communities. Or, they feel they have been targeted by churches (for their money, energy, gifts, etc.) for the church’s survival instead of being seen as human beings who want to make a difference in the world. They are frustrated and skeptical, and can sniff out a perceived sales pitch or ulterior motive. They understandably don’t trust us.

There is nowhere in the United States we find this reality more prevalent than in our own context of the Greater Northwest Area — the “None Zone.” So, why would we utilize tired strategies, methods, and tools just because they are familiar, when they clearly have not been as fruitful in the last 10 to 15 years? Our approach today in building relationships must be authentically driven by our desire to create courageous space for everyone. It has to be more organic, permission-giving, natural, and curious in its orientation. If a planter/innovator needs a systematic approach for one-on-ones, I would argue that she/he does not have the entrepreneurial spirit necessary to fully step into this unique calling. This activity should be already wired into planters/innovators and is a natural expression of relational engagement.

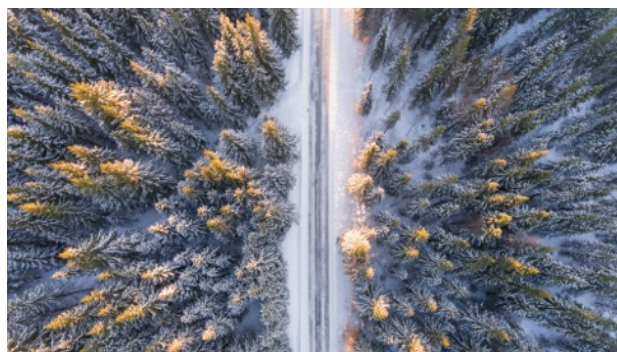
As culture emerges, and as our landscape changes before our very eyes, we have to reshape our approach continuously. Over the last couple of years, we have reset our course in order to create necessary periods of formal and informal evaluation, so that we can pivot. This allows us to become more adaptive; more innovative, in our approach. Considering our current challenges, how else can we set expectations and appropriate benchmarks? Both are driven by context and the emotional temperament of human beings that are establishing new relationships. You have to deeply know your context and the people that make up your community, in order to translate and provide a living expression of the gospel.

In support of our new church projects, two years ago we instituted a five-year funding model, which you will see highlighted in the next section (with more details in the Appendix). But, what are the targets in each of these years, or “seasons” of planting and innovating? What should be a baseline approach to our work; one that is adjustable depending on the problems unique to a particular context? Our goal is to establish a rhythm of multiplication with our new churches across the Greater Northwest Area, which means we have become more adaptive in our work and



understand how each building-block “season” is essential to the next one.

Cultivating authentic Christian community demands important foundational steps that are necessary, in order to build meaningful relationships that build meaningful relationships. This is framed through discipleship (the foundation of planting churches that plant churches) — vital, spiritual growth. Aligned with the 5-year funding plan, here are some seasons to consider:



Year/Season 1: Intersecting Culture and Visioning

The first year is divided into two 6-month moves. In the **first six months (July 1 through December 31)** you should be concentrating the majority of your energy toward immersing yourself in context, observing, engaging, and listening; to slow down and practice being present. These efforts should be framed around **building relationships** with people who are no longer or have never been involved in church — “Nones and Dones.” These intentional, meaningful, practice-being-present conversations will be the bedrock of an emerging vision.

If you are launching a church out of an existing church (either replicating the DNA for a new church, or as a part of a multisite project), then it would be important for you to immerse yourself in that church setting to better understand the values and behaviors that make up the healthy DNA. However, it is vital that you spend a good part of that time out in the community, engaging people who are NOT a part of Christian community; operating in discovery mode. This is a season to be curious, through observation and deep listening.

The **second six months (January 1 through June 30)**, if you have not already begun, you should begin to pull together those people with whom you have been in conversation. In this process, you are identifying folks who would be a good fit to be on a visioning team. Through these collaborative voices, you begin to dream together about the identified problems that could be addressed by a community of faith in your context. There is a continued rhythm of building relationships, which then gets multiplied through these initial folks who consider themselves “all-in.” During this second six months you are balancing community engagement with collaborative visioning, as you move toward repeated and intentional gatherings (visioning, topical discussion, theological reflection, forms of worship, acts of service, etc.).

Year/Season 2: Gathering and Growing

In this season, you are continuing to focus on building new relationships, some of which are multiplied by empowering your visioning/leadership team to engage their networks — developing leaders that develop leaders. This is the initial pulse of multiplication. At the same time, you have moved to a more intentional and regular rhythm of gathering people in community. In this season you are investing in people in different ways, which should be happening under an apparent discipleship system. Remember, our focus is not to just gather people in community. We are about fostering discipleship for the transformation of the world, starting right in our own communities.

In order to do this work, we need partners. This season calls you to deepen your connections in the community — take note of your assets and your needs — in order to come along side other organizations (non-profits, NGOs, other churches, etc.) in work that finds alignment. In a quest for financial sustainability, leveraging partnerships, developing new and creative revenue streams, and setting a stewardship plan into motion are an absolute necessity.



Year/Season 3: Culture, Identity, and continued Growth

You may have heard me describe vision as “what can be” and mission as “what we are called to do.” As we peer out on the horizon of the future, the idea is to recognize the intersection of vision and mission; where “what can be” intersects “what we are called to do.” When we aim for this future point on the horizon, we are able to establish healthy DNA and shape the values and behaviors that spring from authentic discipleship. Shaping the culture of your new church, new faith community, or new place, in a manner that reflects what the Body of Christ is supposed to look like in our world, is an ongoing process. How will people identify your church in your community? How will your church influence culture and change the circumstances that shape our lives?

This is a season of building community that matters. It will happen through your ongoing worship or intentional gathering experiences. It will happen through your



emphasis on social justice. It will happen by elevating the gospel above the noise of the world around us. It will happen in how your community of faith engages the greater community in which it finds itself. It will happen through the partnerships you establish with other groups/churches. It will happen through the personal priorities you set and how those personal priorities are lived out corporately in community. To quote a ministry partner, Brian Zehr, “Culture is everything.” Considering that our dominant culture today is American consumer culture, it is more important than ever that we create a culture in our churches that subverts our consumer tendencies — that are counter-cultural in meaningful ways.

Year/Season 4: Deepening Roots and Growing Outward

Movements are not hard to start. Movements that last are much harder to create. This is why an adaptive and innovative approach to adding building blocks upon a solid foundation is all the more important. As you have continued to invest in, teach, and lead people, where are you taking them? Organisms (and organizations) that are alive, grow and multiply. They grow outward and deepen their roots and foundation.

If we are not careful, we will replicate much of what we already have, especially within a consumer culture. Much of the successful “attractional” movement in America has done well to produce wide churches that represent large numbers, yet these same communities may only represent inches in spiritual depth. In other words, a lot of people are gathered and feel good about the social connections and experience, but their spiritual depth is superficial and shallow. Community engagement and social justice appear only as surface activities, rather than a response to the gospel message and example of Jesus.

The focus should be to become deep and wide. Deep in the sense of spiritual growth, and wide in the sense of a gathered community always reaching beyond itself and into the greater community. Again, this means to deepen our understanding of

God, while responding to God in such a way that moves us from the theoretical and contemplative to action — a different life and different way of living; again, both individually and corporately.

This may be reflected in the successful development of new ministries. Or, launching new small group gatherings, expanding learning opportunities. Or, expanding partnerships that generate new transformation in the wider communities. This focus cultivates new and necessary resources (spiritual, financial, human, intellectual, and physical) that support and grow your ministry.

Year/Season 5: Multiplication and Continued Growth

Of course, living organisms multiply. This is how Methodism spread across the land during the birth of America, seeding incredible growth and multiplication. Throughout the centuries we lost this core value, which is supposed to be reflected in our connectional heritage. Much of our work in the Greater Northwest Area focuses on reestablishing this important characteristic back into the DNA of our new churches. And this requires innovation.

Upon the foundation of building relationships with people who build relationships, and developing leaders who develop leaders, and launching ministries that launch ministries, a natural rhythm of multiplication provides evidence of vitality. The mission of “making disciples” demands both an individual and corporate response. In other words, as a person that responds to Jesus’ rabbinic invitation of “follow me,” I have a responsibility to participate in this mission, multiplying participants in Christian community.

Simultaneously, a vital church should also be launching new churches, new faith communities, or new places for new people, multiplying opportunities for others to engage in Christian community in other neighborhoods and areas.

In this season of continued growth, new churches should be doing two things. First, new churches should be **preparing** to multiply by repeating these “seasons” through a new project, launched in a new area/location. This could be represented by helping birth a new church that remains connected through a Syndeo Cohort (The Syndeo Project is covered in the following pages), but becomes a separate, chartered church. Or, it could be that the church works to launch other multi-sites that are a part of the existing church, falling under the budget, ministry, and administrative structures of the main campus.



Second, new churches should be positioned to charter by the end of their fifth year, which is our target for the multiplication cycle. This means that the new church must be financially sustainable and have a core leadership team/structure in place. The goal is to establish a community of faith in a specific neighborhood, area, or region that continues to thrive, and to create new opportunities for people to find grace, peace, and hope. Chartering at the end of the fifth year readies the church to give birth to a new church in its sixth year, supported by new funding streams, within our conferences.

NOTE: These “seasons of innovating in our context,” while conceptually mapped over our 5-year baseline funding model, also offer a framework for launching new faith communities and new places for new people.

Baseline Funding Model & Sustainability Plan

Our approach to funding new church projects is predicated on financial and participation trends that have been documented over the life cycle of existing projects in our area. The trends show that it takes a five-year commitment of funding for a new project to move toward financial sustainability in preparation of chartering. For these five years, the data revealed that from 2010 to 2015, it required (on

Shown in the image below, The New Church Development Baseline Funding Model represents “projections” that support financial sustainability and multiplication. It is provided in greater detail in the Appendix of this document, which includes assumptions and considerations.

Projected 5-year Funding Plan for New Church Projects							
Year	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total Conference Funding
BoCD Funds	70,000	80,000	100,000	70,000	30,000	0	350,000
Stop loss			250,000				
*From 2010-2015 it cost us an average of \$345,000 to plant a “successful” church in the PNW							
Projected 5-year Stewardship Plan/Goal							
Year	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total Estimates
(stewarded) Est. Income	8,700	48,000	72,000	96,000	144,000	192,000	560,700
Total Funds	78,700	128,000	172,000	166,000	174,000	192,000	910,700
Shared Ministry				Full share			
Giving %	0	2%	3.50%	6.25%	10%	14%	
Amount	0	2,560	6,020	10,375	17,400	26,880	63,235
							6.94%
*Shared Ministry Giving paid during this funding cycle could be used in our Forward Step initiative to foster multiplication							
Projected 5-year Available Funds for Ministry/Work							
Year	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total Estimates
(available) Funds	78,700	125,440	165,980	155,625	156,600	165,120	847,465
(fixed costs) Salary/P&I	57,500	57,500	62,500	62,500	67,500	67,500	375,000
(fixed costs) Housing	15,000	15,000	16,000	16,500	17,000	17,500	97,000
Gross Net	6,200	52,940	87,480	76,625	72,100	80,120	375,465

average) approximately \$350,000 in funding to yield a financially sustainable church.

Some of the important highlights of this baseline funding model is that it also requires the planter to raise \$8,700 in her/his first 12 months. The strategy behind requiring our planters/innovators to raise funding as a learning opportunity that helps the planter and emerging leadership team recognize the importance of a ministry plan and strategy. These initial funds can be raised by various creative methods, to include the planter's/innovator's personal network, Kickstarter or Go Fund Me campaigns, partnering strategies, and other related methods similar to missionaries. This requirement will help shape and drive the necessary work that church planting requires in the 21st century. Creative development of stewarded resources, by way of giving, funding partners, and other developed revenue streams, are essential to how we foster sustainability in our context and season.



Developing a giving narrative that shapes good stewardship is absolutely essential, from day one.

Additionally, the new funding model projection also has a built-in shared ministry giving plan, which ramp up the new church toward paying full apportionments. This provides a basis for **a giving narrative** the planter can integrate into teaching and when continually casting vision. It also does one important thing: **encourages multiplication**. How? Because the entire amount of shared ministry giving is set aside in a separate fund at the conference level, and if the new church choses to multiply in the sixth year, every bit of this shared giving (estimated at \$63,235 in our projection model) is then applied in support of the new expansion site — reinvested in the multiplication of the new church/new site.

If a new project is approved, it will be supported through this baseline funding model. If the new project is birthed out of an existing church or partnering churches, the funding support will be adjusted, based on the contributions of the partnering church or churches. In review, the two most beneficial highlights of this baseline funding model are as follows:

- 1. The planter/innovator is required to engage in the development work from a fundraising position early in the process, in order to work strategically toward a sustainable and multiplying project.**

2. **The funding model allows for a built-in shared ministry-giving plan, which provides the planter/innovator a platform to shape a giving narrative toward better stewardship that encourages multiplication.**

NOTE: For more details on the Five-Year Baseline Funding Model & Sustainability Plan, **which includes assumptions and considerations**, please see the Appendix section. Our hope is to **reduce the amount of funding** necessary to launch and grow a church from mission to chartered, by become more efficient in our work.

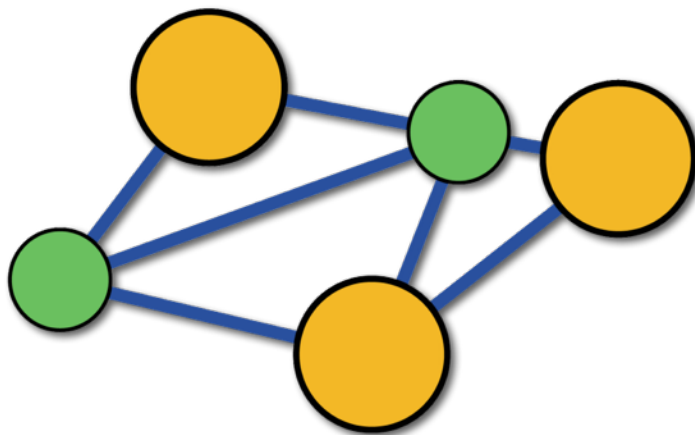
Multisite is the New Black

A few years ago, I was invited to participate in a research interview conducted by Dr. Warren Bird of the Leadership Network. There were two other pastors from my conference, involved in the interview and our topic focused on multisite church planting and the unfolding processes of multiplication. During the creative conversation, I remember humorously thinking, **“Multisite is the new black.”** It’s not rocket science, after all — we are better together than in ministry silos.

My interests (driven by the problem of sustainability when reaching “Nones and Dones”) sparked a deep desire to recapture our United Methodist connectional heritage, while multiplying in effective and efficient ways. This exploration resulted in the 2010 early development of The Syndeo Project, which, today in our Greater Northwest Area, has morphed into a cohort-based model, where new and repurposed churches partner through a renewed covenant and operate as a cohort-based movement. This strategy aids in multiplication and applies vital multisite strategies. You will learn more about this in the next section.

The interview and discussion with Dr. Bird provided a wonderful space to ask bold questions and wrestle with real-life circumstances that related to multiplication in church planting. Here are some research discoveries that Dr. Bird shared in a follow-up report (“Leadership Network/Generis Multisite Church Scorecard”):

1. **An impressive 85% of surveyed multisite churches are growing — and at the strong rate of 14% per year.**
2. **Campus viability starts at 75-350 people, depending on your model.**



We are better together than in the ministry silos and Christian bubbles we often unintentionally (and sometimes intentionally) create.

3. **The typical multisite church is just four years into the process, and 57% plan to launch an additional campus in the next 12 months.**
4. **One in three (37%) churches started a multisite campus as the result of a merger.**
5. **The vast majority (88%) of churches report that going multisite increased the role of lay participation.**
6. **The vast majority (87%) of campus pastors are found internally — trained and hired from within the church.**
7. **Multisite campuses grow far more than church plants, and likewise multisite campuses have a greater evangelistic impact than church plants.**
8. **Nearly half (48%) of multisite churches directly sponsor new churches.**
9. **The recommended distance between campuses is a travel time of 15-30 minutes.**
10. **In rating what campuses do well, spiritual growth and volunteering are near the top, and newer campuses do better at reaching the unchurched.**

The Syndeo Project: A Strategic Foundation

There are a number of foundational directions that drive our work of new church development in the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area, particularly around vital multisite strategies. One bedrock strategy, which allows us to reduce our exposure to risk, while encouraging bold steps of faith in starting new churches and revitalization work, is that of The Syndeo Project.

The Greek word *syndeo* means “connection” or “to connect.” The Syndeo Project model simply represents the opportunity to celebrate our connectional heritage as United Methodists by rebuilding this all-important characteristic back into the DNA of new and vital churches. Often, a lack of financial resources, limited on-the-job training, and loneliness become the greatest challenges to starting a new church or growing a young church. The Syndeo Project model sets into motion a more organic and intentional approach to establishing and sustaining new church projects that work to accomplish the mission to which Christ has called each of us.

The Greek word *syndeo* means “connection” or “to connect.”





Contained in a cohort model, new church and/or repurposed projects partner together to enter into a renewed covenantal relationship to operate as a cohort-partner church, sharing a similar vision, missional focus, resources, and collaboration in leadership discernment and decision-making. Such a collaborative approach to new church development aids in removing the competition mode we often operate in as United Methodists, and instead yokes the strengths and giftedness of individuals for the betterment of the greater movement. Each church would then become like a campus of the project initiative, working in collaboration with one another as a Syndeo partner church (a cohort formed through a renewed covenant), yet remaining on its own charge.

A photo featuring one of Valley & Mountain's (Seattle, WA) two worshipping congregations, led by Rev. John Helmiere. Valley & Mountain chartered in 2016 and is helping launch a new church out of it's DNA. They multiplied in their 6th year.

The unique advantage of the Syndeo Project model is that each partner church will likely represent a different point in the process of moving to a viable and thriving church. Because of this, each appointed pastor to the cohort is then exposed to (and participates in) each of these different points in the planting and/or growth cycle.

By yoking the giftedness and passion of cohort pastors toward a common goal, the practice of engaging multistage communities offers a richer experience of learning and growing for each. Additionally, the Syndeo Project model creates a space for new and future church plant candidates to participate safely and gain exposure to the necessary decision-making and vision-casting of new church development and vitality, at various locations and regarding a variety of ministry initiatives. Such a collaborative approach informs new sites birthed out of the cohort's movement, led by a planter who was first appointed to the cohort as a whole.

"A shared vision, common mission focus, concentrated wake, responsible stewardship, and the power of the connection all yield the building blocks and foundation for planting vibrant United Methodist Churches."

The cooperative work of the Syndeo Project model is invaluable concerning the training and ongoing growth of the participating pastors and key staff members. A shared vision, common mission focus, concentrated wake, responsible stewardship, and the power of the connection, all yield the building blocks and foundation for planting vibrant United Methodist Churches.

Identifiable Benefits:

The Syndeo Project model is extremely valuable for cohort participants, but is also equally efficient in sharing resources, both financial and tangible, that cultivate sustainability. Specific benefits include:

- 1. Cohort members are no longer “in the trenches” alone, but instead operate collaboratively; led by a named lead mentor/vision-caster/facilitator planter/innovator**
- 2. Builds into the DNA that each community of faith is a part of something much larger**
- 3. Presents new opportunities to cast an overarching vision**
- 4. Removes the “competition” tension that commonly exists among pastors and congregations**
- 5. Yokes the strengths and giftedness of cohort pastors**
- 6. Yokes the collective resources of all partner communities of faith**
- 7. Creates a process for improving discernment and training for church planting candidates, exposing them to multiple stages and settings**
- 8. Informs a natural environment for accountability among campus pastors and staff**
- 9. Models better stewardship in how we disburse our conference funds toward planting new churches**
- 10. Saves funds, time, and valuable energy**
- 11. Presents a win-win for all parties involved**
- 12. Reclaims the power of the connection**

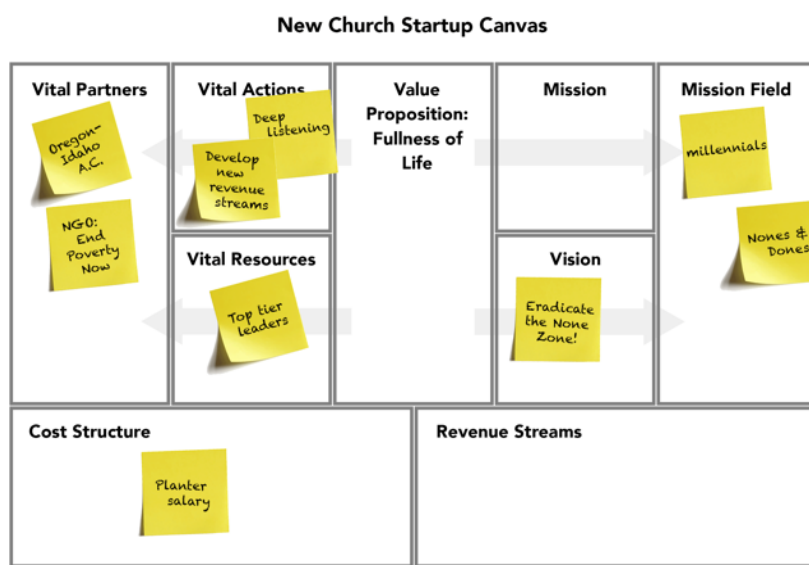
NOTE: A formalized *syndeo* cohort under the Syndeo Project model utilizes the accepted (modifiable) covenant agreements located in the Appendix of this document — one for cohort pastors and one for cohort partnering churches/projects.

The New Church Startup Canvas

Our current reality involves engaging a dominant American consumer culture with tools, experience, and learning that have not previously existed in the toolboxes of most church leaders. Creating financially sustainable, new expressions of what church can look like in the 21st century challenges church planters to pivot from pastor to innovator. In the innovator role, church planters must lean into an identified entrepreneurial spirit, while learning to develop more expertise in business, organization, and community development. Much of this begins by deconstructing successful business plans and models that exhibit innovation and creativity, when it comes to intersecting existing (and creating new) culture.

We have learned to use buzz words like “vision” without ever really knowing how to move from a written statement into the practical implementation, evolution, and vital existence of a movement — something that makes a difference and changes things. At its core, the church is supposed to represent this kind of safe space where grace, hope, and redemption are encountered, watering the seeds of transformation. But the truth is, many pastors often struggle to talk about what grace, hope, redemption, reconciliation, and a host of other theological words, look like in practical terms.

At the same time, gathering resources that give visible presence of this love is an essential skill that pioneers have to demonstrate. Theological entrepreneurs express the risk-taking spirit that points toward a hopeful vision — what can be. They work creatively to harness ideas and opportunities that reveal how our theology intersects culture in ways that put theory into action — ways that shift us from playing it safe to the risky, leading-edge action we find in the biblical narrative. What I am offering here is not a theological argument. Instead, it is a theological exercise.



New Church Development/Repurposing: Ministry Model

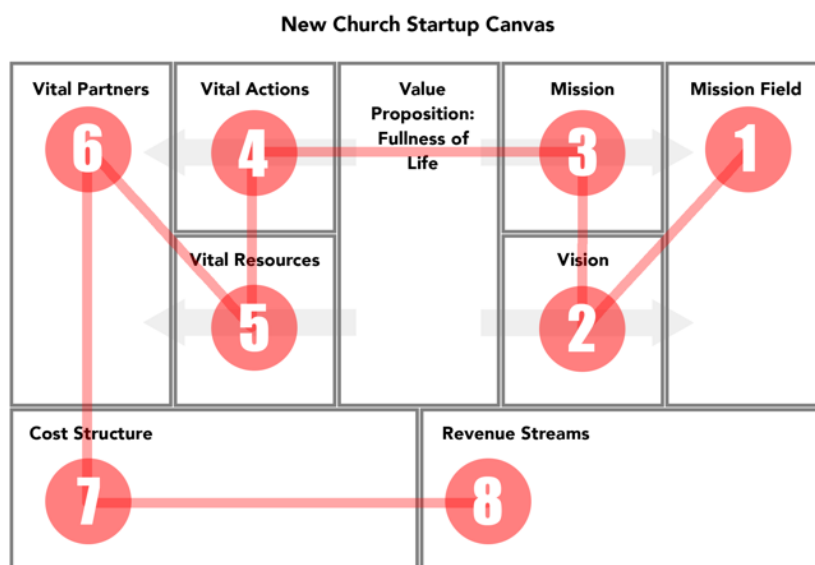
The New Church Startup Canvas, modeled after Osterwalder's Business Model Canvas, can provide and prioritize the essential information needed for developing a more robust and adaptive ministry plan

A few years back, around 2008, and based on his post-graduate dissertation in 2004, Alexander Osterwalder developed a unique way of not only mapping out the basic components of a business model, but also ways to creatively develop new models from a blank canvas. In fact, what he offered entrepreneurs in the startup world was called the “business model canvas.” This canvas carved out nine separate spaces, each labeled according to an essential component of most business models.

These blank sections included at the center a “value proposition” (the product or service), flanked on the left by “key partners” (network of strategic partners), “key activities” (the most important things that must be done to make things work), and “key resources” (physical, intellectual, human, and financial resources). Flanked to the right of the value proposition you find “customer segments” (the people or groups the business aims to reach and serve), “customer relationships” (the types of relationships the company establishes with customer groups), and “channels” (how the company communicates with and reaches the customer groups). These six sections sat on top of the two final sections, “cost structure” (costs incurred to operate) on the left, and “revenue streams” (cash generated from customer groups) on the right.

The canvas encourages entrepreneurs to take sticky notes (or record on a white board or napkin) and begin to list out named components and strategies within each section, allowing for the notes to be removed, rearranged, edited, and seen together in the larger picture of the business model. Initially, this provides a way to collect up and give shape to the building blocks of a more detailed business plan. For the theological entrepreneurial church planter and savvy pioneering pastor, it provides an exercise through which to see the larger organizational picture of how the church cultivates, supports, measures, and accomplishes its mission.

To facilitate this creative process, I took Osterwalder’s business model canvas and morphed it into what I am calling the “New Church Startup Canvas” (Note: Osterwalder’s model has also been adapted by Ash Maurya into the “Lean Canvas,” for a varied approach to new business startups). I have appropriately changed some



New Church Development/Repurposing: Ministry Model

of the section titles to reflect the non-profit business organization that I feel best represents a community of faith. These categories allow space to both name and develop the essential components of an effective ministry model that can then be translated into a working plan.

This can allow leaders to hover at a 30,000 ft view, while also narrowing down the practical steps that have to take place in each vital area of operation. Seeing the organization in this way should drive how priorities are set, relationships are cultivated, leaders are developed, the mission field is engaged, and how metrics are shaped. Below is my version of the New Church Startup Canvas for church planters and pioneering pastors, followed by an explanation and instructions for each building block.

NOTE: To read the entire “New Church Startup Canvas Overview,” which explains each section of the canvas, how to utilize the canvas, and how the data collected is then plugged into the format of our Ministry Development Plan, please see the Appendix (*NOTE: At the writing of this new 2017 edition of Northwest Adventure, a more in-depth and practical New Church Startup Canvas “How To” booklet on the was been produced and published and should be available the fall of 2017).*

Intercultural Competence: Why This and Why Now?

By Kristina Gonzalez

“As many of you as were baptized in Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise.” — Galatians 3:27-29, NRSV

In his chapter entitled *Intercultural Competence in Religious Organizations* found in the *SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, George Yancey writes this:

Christians often use the phrase “neither Jew nor Gentile” to indicate the idea that God does not favor one racial/ethnic group over another. However, this passage was provided as the early New Testament evangelist Paul criticized Jewish Christians who attempted to force non-Jewish Christians into accepting their Jewish culture. Paul argues that instead of requiring other Christians to assimilate into Jewish culture, they should be encouraged to develop a faith based on their

own culture. Christians generally view this passage as a measure of individual acceptance when in fact it is a statement about cultural acceptance. It can even be argued that this passage is a call to develop intercultural competence.⁵



Intercultural competence: Why this and why now, indeed. Let me tackle the second question first. *Why now?* At no time in the history of modern humanity has there been one culture, and at no time in the foreseeable future will there be one culture. Culture is complex and deeply embedded in each of us by the families and communities in which we were raised. Our cultures effect how we think about ourselves in relationship to other people, the planet and all that inhabit it. Our cultures inform what constitutes respect, appropriate communication, decision-making and governance. Our cultures shape, at least initially, our concepts of beauty, hospitality, risk, gender and gender roles, family, faith and so on. Our cultures are largely hidden except when experienced in contrast to cultures unlike our own.

The Christian church has made terrible mistakes over centuries in conflating religion and culture, with dehumanizing results. We know that the early Christians added to their numbers through threat and intimidation, and through cultural and literal genocide. We need not go far back in the history of the United States (this being written with a US audience in mind) to see the way in which the church was used to force Indian people to conform to European agrarian societal norms and values. The boarding school movement that was started in the United States and duplicated in Canada and Australia devastated indigenous communities. It cast the boarding school generation and beyond into a downward spiral that is only now being healed through acknowledgement of historic trauma and through recapturing of language and culture.

But we are no longer in danger of such reprehensible acts, correct? Well, perhaps not on the scale of the boarding school movement where church and state came together in an attempt to force conformity, assimilation and deference. But do contemporary Christians operate as George Yancey suggests in the passage above, offering

⁵ Deardorff, Darla K., *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2009), 377.

opportunities for people from distinct cultural groups to ‘develop a faith based on their own culture?’ Perhaps the radically inclusive Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in San Francisco, or the community-directed ministries of Church and Community Development for All People in Columbus Ohio are bright expressions of faithful Christian ministries that flex with their membership.

Arguably, the majority of Christian congregations tend to deliver a qualified message of welcome. ‘We are glad you’re here! Come join us ... but leave your distinctiveness at the door!’ Is this a condemnation of the Christian church, or is it a reflection of a society that willfully refuses to dive into the deep water of cultural differences?

Which brings us to the first question, why this? Intercultural competence is a skill. It is arguably *the* leadership skill for this moment in history of the church. [...]

NOTE: Take time to read the full essay “Intercultural Competence: Why This and Why Now?” on page 52 (**by Kristina Gonzalez**), contained in the Appendix.

Shaping Change: Organizing Principles for Discipleship

By Shalom Agtarap

Here you are, in the cycle between the past and the future, choosing to spend your miraculous time in the exploration of how humans, especially those seeking to grow liberation and justice, can learn from the world around us how to best collaborate, how to shape change.⁶ -adrienne maree brown



As soon as I read these words, I imagined United Methodists — tradition-bearers of every stripe, really — breathing a huge sigh of relief. The kind of deep sigh that comes with being known. We who love God and strive to love our neighbor are in this time of exploration because the past is truly gone, no matter how many of the antiques remain, and as frustrating as it is, we cannot see the future with clarity. In a time where institutions are morphing, even crumbling all around us, we seek what it means to follow the Christ who liberates so that all of creation might experience Life. Said another way, you and I seek to bring the reign of God on earth as it is in heaven; which is ultimately, a process that requires shaping change.

⁶ adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* (AK Press, 2017)

To that end, the book, *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* is a helpful guide, a field manual of sorts, to this *strange* yet *necessary* work of being a disciple of Christ in a new age in the Pacific Northwest.

I say strange, because many of us, familiar or unfamiliar with the traditions of the church, still associate church with a building, some members, and an activity on Sunday. To move outside of that, to move beyond that, can feel strange. *How do you talk to people who have no affiliation with your local church? What if they carry traumatic experiences associated with other religious traditions; how do you differentiate yourself? How do you share faith with neighbors when they've never known you are a follower of Jesus? And even more, how do you invite them into this life when you aren't excited about your own spiritual practices?*

And, this work is necessary because we have only ever been relationship-based. Just as God's very shape is relational, the body of Christ — the church — innovates to express faith in community, a necessary part of discipleship. It is what we do. [...]

NOTE: Take time to read the full essay "Shaping Change: Organizing Principles of Discipleship" on page 56 (by **Shalom Agtarap**), contained in the Appendix.

The Art of Theological Entrepreneurship

When it comes to a central characteristic that is typically sought in potential church planters, having an entrepreneurial spirit rests high on the list. Based on context and circumstances, pastors and/or community leaders often find themselves operating as social entrepreneurs, standing in the gap for communities in ways that local, state, or national agencies may be unable (or unwilling) to do.

Regarding new church development, church planters need to be willing to take big risks, which from a business/financial position is traditionally classified as being entrepreneurial, and often perceived as counterintuitive to the pastoral office. The challenge is that most pastors-turned-church-planters do not have a business background and lack the beneficial foundation from which to lean into this valued characteristic. Because of this, it is necessary to think about how to engage one's entrepreneurial spirit from a theological position. I am calling this approach "*theological entrepreneurship*."



In his book *Christian Social Innovation: Renewing Wesleyan Witness*, Greg Jones, who serves as the senior strategist for leadership education at Duke Divinity School, speaks of “social innovation” — our desire to discover and develop responsive strategies that lead the church in to renewal. This also highlights our efforts to align the work of new church development with that of strategic deployment on the Annual Conference level. Consequently, the Greater Northwest Area Cabinet bolsters what we are referring to as “disruptive innovation,” which encourages pastors and lay leadership to question the status quo and respond from an entrepreneurial position and a prayerful posture.

Engaging the dominate American consumer culture requires tools, experience, and learning that have not previously existed in the toolboxes of most church leaders. In our 21st century post-Christian context, the art of theological entrepreneurship can present new gateways, windows, and doorways that lead us to a different expression of being church. In this challenging work, I see two distinct roles that are central to being a church planter. A church planter is both a **pastor** and a **innovator** (see expanded descriptions in Appendix essay). [...]

NOTE: Take time to read the full essay “The Art of Theological Entrepreneurship” on page 59 (**by William Gibson**), contained in the Appendix.

Considering Language, Culture, and Identity

Paying attention to how we communicate, gather information, form what we believe and how we perceive others is a critical task. There are a number of voices that influence us throughout our lives, shaping who we are and what we believe — our identity. Nowhere is this more important to consider than how it relates to Christian identity formation within American consumer culture.

Over the most recent years, cultural linguistics has drawn on many disciplines and areas. Its applications have enabled fruitful investigation of the cultural grounding of language in several applied domains, like World Englishes, intercultural communication, and political discourse analysis. Such investigation helps us understand the deep dialogic layers of culture and identity formation. Cultural linguistics maintains a close connection to semiotics, cognitive linguistics, and its exploration of the role of culture as a source of conceptualizing personal and communal experience.



The attention given to the intersection of language and culture helps guide critical awareness of the dialogic formation of Christian identity in our American consumer context. Language — in all the many ways we communicate — is a map. Using this map effectively is essential to accomplishing our theological task, which assists in the discernment of Christian truth in ever-shifting cultural contexts. **Intercultural competence** involves understanding and responding, appropriately, to the distinct combination of cultural variables, which include: age, ethnicity, experience, gender, gender identity, tradition, beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, race, religion, socioeconomic status, and geographic affinity.

This work is not about becoming culture. On the contrary, it is about discovering the streams and channels that allow you to successfully intersect culture in order to elevate the gospel message above the noise of society. Pay attention to how people communicate, gather information, form what they believe, and perceive others. This may first involve some serious self-reflection. But, no matter what, discover your contextual map and use it, as Paul described in his letter to the Corinthians, “to find common ground with everyone...” (1 Cor. 9:22b, NLT), doing whatever it takes to help others *experience* faith, hope, and love. [...]

NOTE: Take time to read the full essay on page 62 “Considering Language, Culture, and Identity” (by William Gibson), contained in the Appendix.

Primary New Church Development Strategies

While there are a number of strategies for planting new churches, we are listing the primary strategies we hope to pursue in the Greater Northwest Area. Below, you will see an explanation of each so that you can determine which best fits your plan (which may also represent a combination of strategies). If your strategy/model is not listed, it does not mean that it would not be considered. Path1 provides 14 models/strategies for church planting in our denominations. However, we have selected from that list and modified a couple of the strategies in order to best fit our ministry context.

1. Multisite/Expansion/Cohort strategy:

A new church meeting at a new site remains part of a sponsoring church or cohort, even as it may develop a distinct staff and ministry team system. Multisites vary in pastoral and staffing strategies. They typically have a site pastor, who may or may not be the lead preacher/teacher/communicator at the site.



2. Intentional Multicultural strategy:

This strategy results in an intentionally multicultural church plant that worships as one integrated body to create a unique cultural expression and reflects all groups involved. This is what the kingdom of God is supposed to look like, so why not intentionally plant churches that are integrated and inclusive? This strategy reflects the work of the Holy Spirit to bring together as one in Christ a multitude of cultural, racial, and ethnic groups.

3. Partner Church/Multiple “Parent” strategy:

An existing United Methodist congregation (or, perhaps, several churches) serves as an anchoring, sponsoring, or partnering force in launching a new church. This could be a cluster of partnering churches or a combination of partner churches and another entity (e.g., a United Methodist campus ministry, retirement home, or church agency).

4. Church within a Church strategy:

In a world of very expensive real estate, many new churches will share space with other churches (both partner churches and other collegial congregations). Existing congregations choosing to share property may find that new churches may better serve their immediate neighborhoods, especially when the new church specializes in a certain racial-ethnic culture or a certain generation or social group.

5. Refocusing/Repurposing/Closing strategy:

Currently, as *our* church experiences decline, there are often more churches being closed (or on the verge of having to close) than there are new churches being planted. What if we intentionally chose to explore these settings as opportunities to refocus/repurpose a church/congregation as a part of something new? In this strategy, the new church begins to address the needs and culture of a community and



population that may have changed significantly (or when the church has declined because of the lack of community engagement).

6. Vital Merger strategy:

Most of the time, mergers do not truly create new churches. Two declining churches typically agree to share one facility and decline together rather than alone. However, a strategy exists that can require both of the merging churches to sell their buildings, pool the funds, move to a temporary location, find a new name, receive a trained planter, cultivate a new compelling vision, and proceed as a new church. In this strategy, leadership of the planter is critical.

7. House Church strategy:

This may well be the oldest strategy for church planting, certainly reaching back to Asia Minor in the first century, and also to frontier America when the population was very sparse. House churches are typically small, limited to the number that can fit in a home or a small meeting place. They are often lay-led, with clergy visiting to bring the Sacraments. House churches may organize into networks, akin to circuits of very small congregations.

8. Classic Missionary strategy:

This was the primary strategy of our church several years ago, often referred to as a “parachute drop.” However, as results indicate, it produces the least success and fruitfulness of all church planting strategies. And while we have all but “dropped” it from our list of options, there are occasions — based on circumstances, experience of the planter/launch team, or geographic locations — in which this strategy may be an appropriate option.

Administrative Matters & Information

In addition to more broad themes and directions that have been shared in this orientation document, there are a number of administrative matters and additional support that are provided as a part of the Appendix section, or as informational content below.



THE SYNDEO PROJECT COVENANT AGREEMENTS:

These covenant agreements are available as the accepted (yet modifiable) platforms from which to enter a formal relationship. These agreements represent two separate covenants: **1) Cohort Pastor/Consultant Pastor Covenant**, and **2) Partnering Church/Project Covenant**.

NOTE: Please see full sample copies in the Appendix section of this document.

ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS:

Are you interested in new church or new ministry development, or do you feel called to plant a church? To help you discern this specific call to ministry, we have an assessment process in the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area. This process includes eight phases and the timeline runs congruent with the appointment year. Project development and recruitment usually begin each year after September 1 and extend through the end of the year. Each phase ramps up intentional phases of the process.

The nine phases include: 1) Recruiting, 2) Inquiring, 3) Initial Screening, 4) Initial Assessment, 5) In-depth Screening, 6) Assessment Interviews, 7) Assessment Follow-up, and 8) Recommendations for Deployment, 9) Administrative Follow Up.

NOTE: For more information and details on each phase, including a proposed timeline and insight to the development process of our boards and committees, please see the Assessment document in the Appendix section of this document.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY:

Potential planters may be required to take a Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), which is a useful instrument that has been validated cross-culturally.

Cultural competence involves understanding and responding, appropriately, to the

distinct combination of cultural variables, which include: age, ethnicity, experience, gender, gender identity, tradition, beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, race, religion, socioeconomic status, and geographic affinity. Cultural competency evolves over time, beginning with an understanding of one's own culture, ongoing interaction with people from various cultures, and extending through one's own expansion of knowledge.

COACHING SUPPORT AND RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS:

Each planter will be assigned a professional, experienced coach, likely in year two and if they receive funding and other resources from their conference. If you have a preferred coach in mind, the Office of Congregational Development will interview/vet the candidate to ensure the coach is a good fit for our strategic initiatives and contextual challenges.



Coaches have a specific role in the development process. They are to “coach” the planters. We have outlined the specific roles of the coaches and how they are to relate to the project in relationship to the primary roles of the District Superintendent, Board Liaison, and Office of Congregational Development (collectively, part of the stakeholders). While the following list provides an overview of the primary roles, there may be situations that overlap. Primary roles are as follows:

- **District Superintendent:** ***Supervisory and Oversight***
- **Professional Coach:** ***Coaching***
- **Board/Committee Liaison:** ***Communications***
- **Developer:** ***Resourcing and Mentoring***

NOTE: See a complete descriptions for details on each role and how they relate to one another in the supporting “Roles & Relationships” overview in the Appendix section of this document.

MINISTRY PLAN DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES:

Planting churches is an incredible adventure that requires special gifts, skills, and stamina. However, all of these items cannot find fruitfulness without a compelling vision and a comprehensive ministry plan. To help you identify the personal tools and support an emerging vision, the Office of Congregational Development (OCD)

requires each potential planter to go through an assessment process. If you have not yet contacted the OCD or been assessed for this work, please contact Rev. Dr. William D. Gibson (wgibson@greaternw.org) before submitting a new church development proposal.

Our boards and committees across the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area require a consistent format for all proposals of new church development projects, which will foster ministry plan development. The purpose of this new format is twofold: 1) We want to provide a framework that offers the managing stakeholders (District Superintendent, Cabinet, boards/committees, and the OCD) clarity in understanding the vision, intent, leadership, growth, metrics, and expectations; and 2) We want to foster the development of a good ministry plan that will support the fruitfulness and multiplication of the project.

NOTE: For a copy of the **Ministry Plan Development Guidelines**, please see the Appendix section of this document.

MEASURING MINISTRY QUARTERLY REPORTS:

Planters are required to provide quarterly reporting on the fruitfulness of and learning from their new church development project. The new metrics for measuring new church development projects, while centered on a couple of numerical indicators, primarily rest on narrative and inquiries that reveal how the numbers inform the narrative and how the narrative informs the numbers.

Benchmarks are set in consultation with the District Superintendent, Director of Strategic Faith Community Development, and the assigned Coach. The established benchmarks will be aligned with the the strategic initiatives of the district and the contextual ministry focus of the project. Meeting benchmarks is essential to the ongoing funding support and growth of the new church. Adjustments are determined based on results and data; therefore, timely quarterly reports are required from each new project/planter/launch team.

NOTE: For a copy/example of the Measuring Ministry Quarterly Report, please see the Appendix section of this document.

FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR A NEW CHURCH PROJECT:

Our Treasurer's Office has provided a detailed outline for how new church projects are to handle their money, to include setting up and managing accounts, providing financial reports, conducting audits, and getting a tax ID number.

NOTE: Please refer to the Appendix section of this document for these details and instructions.

REQUIRED SABBATICAL FOR PLANTERS:

There are instituted requirements for each planter to take a sabbatical leave of four to six weeks, following their fourth appointment year. The work of planting new churches is extremely challenging and tends to drain pastors/planters at a rapid pace. This required sabbatical leave should be planned between years four and five of the appointment cycle. Additionally, boundaries are extremely important in this work. Planters are expected to shape healthy boundaries within their congregations and projects, keeping adequate time for family and personal spiritual formation. Additionally, planters are expected to have a regular, weekly rhythm of sabbath, which further allows for renewal, rest, and an example for the congregation.

OFFICE OF CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT:

The Office of Congregational Development is committed to developing vital congregations that are financially sustainable and foster multiplication. We are here to resource your efforts in ways that are contextually appropriate for your ministry setting. Through these efforts, we make available Western Jurisdictional training geared contextually for our unique ministry context.

Strategic Training:

Trainings events include: **Step One**, which is an entry point training that assists in the discernment and exploration of church planting in our jurisdiction; **LaunchPad**, which is a planning training for the planter/innovator and her/his launch team/leaders; and other regional and national gatherings, such as **Exponential West** and the **National Church Planters Gathering**.

New “Multiplying Ministries” Program:

For the 2016-2017 appointment year, and in cooperation with the Seattle and Tacoma Districts of the PNW Conference, which also included DS-selected pastors from the Oregon-Idaho Conference, we introduced a pilot training program that is designed to reinforce our strategic multisite direction across the Greater Area. This program was led by Brian Zehr of Intentional Impact and is a cohort-based training that includes the voices of **existing church planters/innovators** and **high-capacity pastors in more traditional appointments**.

We call this training **Multiplying Ministries**, which focuses on three areas: **1) Fostering cultural shift, 2) Developing spiritually grounded leaders, and 3) Re-establishing an expectation of multiplication in our churches.** The program extends over eight months and includes six cohort all-day sessions and six follow-up coaching calls. Each participant is required to have a strategic goal targeted for development/implementation within her/his ministry setting and aligning with the strategic initiatives of the districts in which she/he is appointed. Based on the results of the pilot program, we are making this training available across the Greater Northwest Area for the 2017/2018 appointment season. Participants will be invited by the Developer and District Superintendents.

MissionInsite Support:



We are able to provide our planters and pastors across the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area with the latest demographic data of appointed communities. This tool is extremely helpful in providing various snapshots and data of neighborhoods, communities, and regions, which can support ministry plans, discipleship systems, and mission field engagement. MissionInsite empowers faith-based and nonprofit organizations with the tools they need to visualize and cultivate their current and prospective members, donors and volunteers and solve their most difficult challenges.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

For more details, contact **Patrick Ferguson**, Assistant for Leadership & Congregational Development, at pferguson@pnwumc.org or at 206.870.6802 (direct line).

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Appendix Section

This Appendix Section includes the following supporting documents:

- **The New Church Startup Canvas Overview** (full overview) | Page 43
- **Intercultural Competence: Why This and Why Now?** (full essay) | Page 55
- **Shaping Change: Organizing Principles of Discipleship** | Page 59
- **"The Art of Theological Entrepreneurship"** (full essay) | Page 62
- **"Considering Language, Culture, and Identity"** (full essay) | Page 65
- **New Church Development Baseline Funding Model** (including assumptions/considerations) | Page 69
- **The Syndeo Project: Cohort Pastor/Consultant Pastor Covenant** | Page 71
- **The Syndeo Project: Partnering Church/Project Covenant** | Page 78
- **Assessment & Development Process: A Brief Overview** | Page 82
- **Roles & Relationships for District Superintendents, Liaison, Coach, and Office of Congregational Development** | Page 84
- **Ministry Plan Development Guidelines** | Page 87
- **Measuring Ministry Quarterly Report** (example) | Page 92
- **Process for "Chartering" (Organizing) a New Church** | Page 97
- **Greater Northwest Area Standard Coaching Contract (GNW)** | Page 100
- **Financial Development Resources for a New Church Project (PNW)** | Page 108
- **BONUS: Development of Christian Community process** (bonus assimilation material) | Page 113
- **Suggested Reading List** | Page 114
- **Additional Resources from Discipleship Ministries and Path1** | Page 117

NOTE: Each document included in the Appendix Section is available as an individual document from the Office of Congregational Development. Please contact **Patrick Ferguson** (pferguson@pnwumc.org) for more information.

The New Church Startup Canvas Overview

By William D. Gibson

Director of Strategic Faith Community Development

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Before I begin to lay out what the related startup canvas is all about, it is important to first revisit the concept of “theological entrepreneurship.” Much more detail can be found in an essay titled, “The Art of Theological Entrepreneurship,” in the appendix of the new church development process booklet, *Northwest Adventure* (July 2016 Edition).

Our current reality involves engaging a dominant American consumer culture with tools, experience, and learning that have not previously existed in the toolboxes of most church leaders. Creating financially sustainable, new expressions of what church can look like in the 21st century challenges church planters to pivot from pastor to innovator. In the innovator role, church planters must lean into an identified entrepreneurial spirit, while learning to develop more expertise in business, organization, and community development. Much of this begins by deconstructing successful business plans and models that exhibit innovation and creativity, when it comes to intersecting existing (and creating new) culture.

We have learned to use buzz words like “vision” without ever really knowing how to move from a written statement into the practical implementation, evolution, and vital existence of a movement — something that makes a difference and changes things. At its core, the church is supposed to represent this kind of safe space where grace, hope, and redemption are encountered, watering the seeds of transformation. But the truth is, many pastors often struggle to talk about what grace, hope, redemption, reconciliation, and a host of other theological words, look like in practical terms.

At the same time, gathering resources that give visible presence of this love is an essential skill that pioneers have to demonstrate. Theological entrepreneurs express the risk-taking spirit that points toward a hopeful vision — what can be. They work creatively to harness ideas and opportunities that reveal how our theology intersects culture in ways that put theory into action — ways that shift us from playing it safe to the risky, leading-edge action we find in the biblical narrative. What I am offering here is not a theological argument. Instead, it is a theological exercise.

I suppose the natural pushback to what I am proposing would largely be the argument that a church should not be a “business.” But let me break it to you as delicately as I can. A business is an organization involved in making a proposition to a consumer base, in order to generate a profit. Businesses are also social non-profit enterprises or state-run agencies with specific objectives that improve lives and/or communities. So, businesses are classified as both for-profit and non-profit organizations. A church is classified as a non-profit organization.

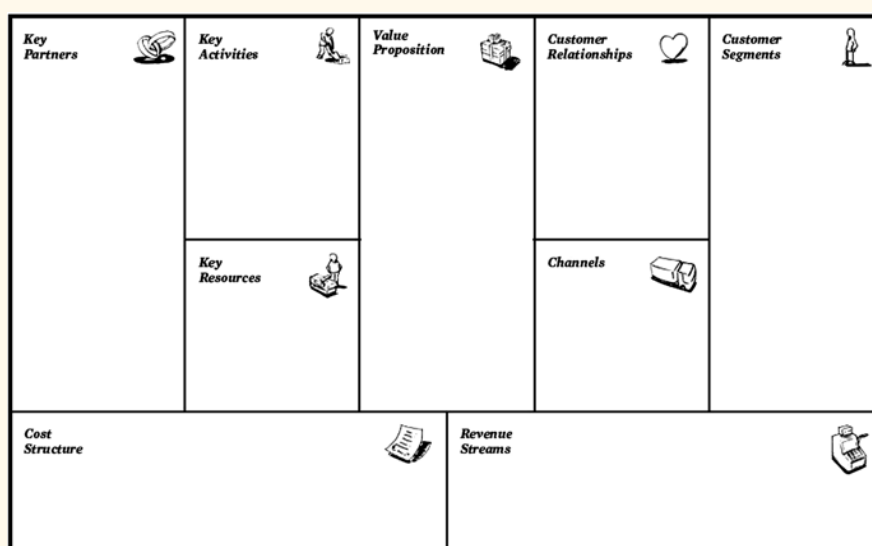
Churches have real financial obligations within the greater communities they serve. If the power company calls to let the pastor know that they are going to cut the power off unless the church pays the power bill, and the pastor says, “But we love Jesus,” the power company is going to cut off the church’s power. Whether or not we love Jesus is a non-issue when it comes to our financial responsibilities associated with operations.

This should go without saying; however, I feel I need to expand upon it anyway. Churches have financial responsibilities for operating in their neighborhoods and communities, even if they don't see themselves as a for-profit business. They are business organizations, where cashflow is the practical lifeblood of the very work they hope to accomplish, represented by making disciples for the transformation of the world.

People want to know that the church is operated by capable leaders. They want to know that the church is financially stable and is going to be around for a long time, working to cultivate peace, hope, reconciliation, and transformation in people and their greater communities. They want to see the church making a difference in the world, starting right where it's planted. This means there are some very serious responsibilities the church is entrusted with. Consequently, it should be operated in a responsible, effective, and efficient manner, through a ministry model that successfully finds its intersection of the vision (what can be) and the mission (what we are called to do).

Prior to ministry, the inner entrepreneur in me found engagement through a number of new business startup projects. I became fascinated with emerging business models and the work of developing new products, services, partnerships, plans, brands, teams, distribution channels, communication strategies, funding sources, and customer groups — the components of a successful business model. This fascination remains deeply intertwined in how I engage the work of new church development. However, finding a common language — a map — through which to bring these concepts to pastors/planters has always been a challenge.

A few years back, around 2008, and based on his post-graduate dissertation in 2004, Alexander Osterwalder developed a unique way of not only mapping out the basic components of a business model, but also ways to creatively develop new models from a blank canvas. In fact, what he offered entrepreneurs in the startup world was called the "business model canvas." This canvas carved out nine separate spaces, each labeled according to an essential component of most business models (see below).



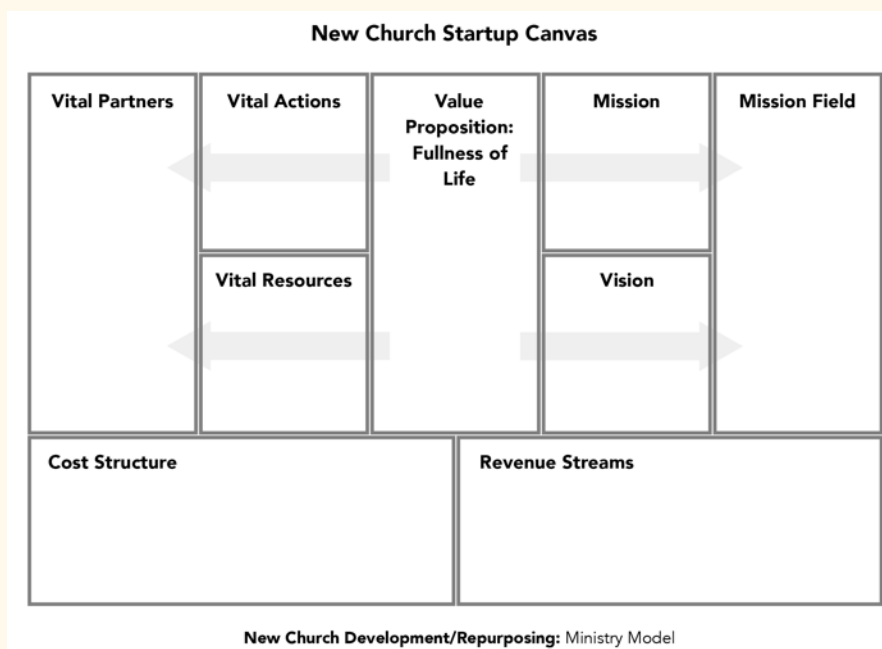
The Business Model Canvas

These blank sections included at the center a "value proposition" (the product or service), flanked on the left by "key partners" (network of strategic partners), "key activities" (the most important things that must be done to make things work), and "key resources" (physical, intellectual, human, and financial resources). Flanked to the right of the value proposition you find "customer segments" (the

people or groups the business aims to reach and serve), “customer relationships” (the types of relationships the company establishes with customer groups), and “channels” (how the company communicates with and reaches the customer groups). These six sections sat on top of the two final sections, “cost structure” (costs incurred to operate) on the left, and “revenue streams” (cash generated from customer groups) on the right.

The canvas encourages entrepreneurs to take sticky notes (or record on a white board or napkin) and begin to list out named components and strategies within each section, allowing for the notes to be removed, rearranged, edited, and seen together in the larger picture of the business model. Initially, this provides a way to collect up and give shape to the building blocks of a more detailed business plan. For the theological entrepreneurial church planter and savvy pioneering pastor, it provides an exercise through which to see the larger organizational picture of how the church cultivates, supports, measures, and accomplishes its mission.

To facilitate this creative process, I took Osterwalder’s business model canvas and morphed it into what I am calling the “New Church Startup Canvas” (Note: Osterwalder’s model has also been adapted by Ash Maurya into the “Lean Canvas,” for a varied approach to new business startups). I have appropriately changed some of the section titles to reflect the non-profit business organization that I feel best represents a community of faith. These categories allow space to both name and develop the essential components of an effective ministry model that can then be translated into a working plan. This can allow leaders to hover at a 30,000 ft view, while also narrowing down the practical steps that have to take place in each vital area of operation. Seeing the organization in this way should drive how priorities are set, relationships are cultivated, leaders are developed, the mission field is engaged, and how metrics are shaped. Below is my version of the New Church Startup Canvas for church planters and pioneering pastors, followed by an explanation and instructions for each building block.



Value Proposition: Fullness of Life

The **value proposition** of the church represents the value offered to the target audience, and it may be articulated differently, depending on the context. For the Christian movement, and in keeping with Jesus' teaching, I believe a starting point can best be encapsulated in the phrase, "fullness of life." At the very core of our humanness rests an uncontrolled desire to embrace all that we feel life is supposed to represent, even when we do not fully know what that might entail. The value proposition of the church should be discovered through every way the church engages its community, inside and outside perceived circles, which should find alignment with the biblical narrative, while also considering cultural and linguistic competency.

What have you learned about your mission field and the target audience within it that would shape the language you use to offer the value proposition? What is the demographic makeup of your mission field? What are the problems they face? Which problems (if any) are you helping to solve? If the church did not exist in the community, would it be missed by the folks you desire to encounter? What value does the church have in proposing the value of "fullness of life"? In what ways are you and the church representing "fullness of life" and reflecting the image of Christ?

It is also important to note that "fullness of life" is not connected to the idea of prosperity. Instead, it represents the fullness of Christ's presence in every aspect of an individual's life and how that life (personal) impacts and enhances the lives of others (communal). The **value proposition** can be considered through how it is characterized (biblically) and how it is shaped and perceived (culturally). These areas find multiple points of convergence.

Characterization of the **value proposition**, "fullness of life," includes the following:

1. Grace and hope
2. Love
3. Joy
4. Peace
5. Patience
6. Kindness
7. Goodness
8. Faithfulness
9. Self-control

Formation of the **value proposition** can be described through the following:

1. Scripture
2. Tradition
3. Experience
4. Reason
5. Hospitality
6. Justice and reconciliation
7. Disruptive innovation, creativity and design
8. Branding, positioning, and communication strategies
9. Customization and contextualization
10. Audience perception

Mission Field:

The **mission field** represents the different people groups and organizations, which make up the target audience, the community of faith aims to reach and serve. Without a clear understanding of who the church desires to reach, a number of challenges will develop in the formation of vital partners and in determining vital actions. In order to cultivate relationships within the **mission field**, the church can group the target audience into segments (millennials, Gen-X, ethnic, etc.) in order to better understand common needs, common behaviors, priorities, and other attributes. This will help leaders further develop the vision, while also determining which segments of the target audience will shape how the value proposition is offered.

Who is it to which the church is offering value? What are the things you do not know about your mission field/target audience? What are the things we assume about our mission field? How are you collecting data and testing your assumptions? How the mission field is naturally divided into segments of people groups? Who represent those most in need (have nots)? Who represent the most affluent (haves)? How culturally and ethnically diverse is the mission field? Is there a special niche represented within the target audience? What groups or organizations have successfully developed relationships with your target audience? How can you learn from and/or partner with these groups/organizations?

As you reflect on your **mission field**, think about how the categories below can help you categorize, prioritize, and understand your people groups:

1. Demographics
2. Outside the community of faith
3. Inside the community of faith
4. Outside our social circles
5. Inside our social circles
6. Multicultural
7. Multigenerational
8. Unchurched (Nones)
9. Disconnected (Dones)
10. Geographical
11. Sociological
12. Theological

Vision:

What can be. The **vision** represents how the community of faith communicates with and reaches the target audience to deliver the value proposition. Deep listening to God and to the people groups within the mission field gives shape to a vision. Being able to effectively articulate your **vision** is central to cultivating new relationships, challenging leaders and members to respond, and starting a movement.

What are the hopes and dreams of people groups within the mission field? What are the hopes and dreams of those currently gathered as the community of faith? Where do you find intersecting points between the community of faith and the mission field? How big is your dream? How big do you perceive God to be? How are you engaging in deep listening opportunities with your target audience? Where do you see Jesus already at work in the greater community? How do you see the biblical narrative connected to “what can be” within

the mission field? Through what means are you communicating the vision, inside the community of faith and within the greater community? In what ways is the **vision** communicated through acts of hospitality?

Under the following categories, think about and list out how a compelling **vision** is cultivated, shaped, and delivered inside (within the community of faith) and outside (within the mission field):

1. Derived from deep listening
2. Big, bold, and compelling — makes a difference; changes things
3. Teaching/preaching
4. Hospitality
5. Communication strategies
6. Challenge to action

Mission:

What we are called to do. The **mission** represents how the community of faith relates to the mission field in the process of making disciples. The official mission statement of The United Methodist Church, as revised in 2008, is as follows: “The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

The **mission** defines the type of relationship the church desires to establish with the mission field and people groups within. This relationship is defined in a number of ways, creating multiple entry points for people to engage in Christian community. The methods of engagement are shaped by clearly understanding the mission field and people groups the church hopes to reach.

What type of relationship (if any) do the people groups desire the church to establish with them? What kind of relationships have been established? Who is missing from the circles that make up the community of faith? Why are there people missing from those circles? How do the people groups that are missing from the church communicate with one another and the world around them? What are the priorities of the missing people groups? Through what innovative and creative ways can the church intersect and engage their mission field?

Within the categories listed below, think about and name the many ways the church can be effectively in relationship with its mission field by participating in the **mission**:

1. Discipleship and Spiritual formation
2. Social justice
3. Personal/individual (disciple/member) response to the mission
4. Corporate/communal (church/community of faith) response to the mission
5. Greater community transformation — community organizing and community development
6. Expected multiplication — disciples/leaders, church/new campuses

Vital Actions:

Vital actions represent the most important things a community of faith must do to make its ministry model work. Every community of faith has a number of essential actions that push the ministry forward in order to find measurable success/fruitfulness. These actions are both a result of considering the value proposition of

“life in all fullness,” while also giving shape to how the value is perceived by people groups. **Vital actions** generate costs on various levels and when you are able to work toward accomplishing the mission more effectively and efficiently a cost advantage can be realized. I am an advocate for lean startup strategies that allow for good stewardship and maximum fruitfulness.

How are you testing the demographics and assumptions you have of your mission field? What actions does the value proposition require? How are you cultivating and casting a compelling vision? How are you leveraging and teaching the biblical foundation of the mission? How are you doing community organizing and development? How are you establishing new revenue streams? How will you support the mission through training and other resources that help leaders grow? How are you designing the ways your target audience engages the community of faith and vice versa? What expertise is needed/missing? How visible and accessible is your discipleship system? In what ways can your target group engage with you in the mission field?

Vital actions should embrace innovation and creativity when considering how the value proposition of “fullness of life” shapes activities. And, they should also enhance the ability of your people groups to more clearly understand its value through the reflection and teachings of Jesus.

Think about your **vital actions** categorically, based on the following areas:

1. Mission and vision
2. Develop discipling systems
3. Mission field engagement strategies
4. Leadership development
5. Research and learning
6. Cultural analysis/linguistics
7. Problem-solving
8. Platform/network/community development
9. Design and Communications

Vital Resources:

Vital resources are the most important assets required to make the ministry model work. Every successful ministry model is made up of vital resources that both shape and offer the value proposition of “fullness of life.” There are different vital resources that are needed for different ministry models.

Therefore, the vision (what can be) that represents what it looks like for the church to carry out its mission (what we are called to do) will help determine the kinds of resources necessary. Consequently, naming these resources will also reveal the necessary vital partnerships.

When we think of physical assets this can include such things as buildings and equipment. Intellectual assets, while including things like brands, partnerships, and copyrights, within the business community, should emphasize assets related to knowledge, expertise, and know-how, within the church. Human assets speak of people — leaders, pastors, teachers, etc., and financial resources represent funding, revenue streams, and lines of credit.

What are the key resources that the emerging vision dictates? What resources are required to cultivate and support the ongoing mission? What are the added revenue streams that can be created to support the vision and mission? What kind of partnerships will need to be established? Who are the identified leaders and what kind of gifts/expertise are necessary in the varying seasons of the unfolding ministry plan? Who can help you approach this work creatively and from a perspective that is outside of your own expertise?

Think through and list out your **vital resources**, based on the following five categories:

1. Spiritual resources
2. Physical resources
3. Intellectual resources
4. Human resources
5. Financial resources

Vital Partners:

Vital partners represent the network of partners that make the ministry model work. These relationships are essential to its development and effectiveness. They are especially important when building capacity; optimizing your ministry model; understanding economy of scale; encouragement in risk-taking innovation, while limiting exposure to financial risk; and supplementing action and activities.

Who are those **vital partners** that help shape your strategies? What partners assist you in administrative matters? Who helps to expand the financial capacity needed to accomplish the mission? What group or entity helps you expand your platform? Who assists you in recruiting, developing, and deploying leaders?

It is essential that you find and name your **vital partners** in the following categories. Take time to list out these **vital partners** and what resource (physical, intellectual, human, and financial) they contribute to the equation. Knowing your **vital partners** does not only provide clarity on effectiveness, but it can also help give shape to the budgetary framework that supports your ministry model.

Your **vital partners** can be named by thinking through the following categories:

1. Strategic alliances
2. Collaboration: other churches and organizations
3. Joint ventures to develop new ministry models
4. The Syndeo Project cohorts
5. Districts and conferences
6. Coaches and mentors
7. Leadership teams

Cost Structure:

The cost structure represents all costs incurred to operate the ministry model. This building block helps you see the most important costs that are incurred while engaging the greater community with the emerging ministry model. These expenses can be calculated easily, once you define your vital resources, vital actions, and vital partners. Your ministry model can be more cost-driven, depending on the primary people groups

targeted within the mission field, and the resulting strategies employed. Within new church development, lean startup strategies, which leverage existing relationships, share resources, and create space for the multiplication of leaders, are essential.

What strategies will allow you to create and maintain the leanest possible cost structure? What costs are a result of adding value to the way you are offering the value proposition? What expenses are related to fixed cost, such as rent/mortgage/lease, utilities, salary, insurance, etc.? What are the expenses that are variable, related to seasons and windows of opportunity? How are you gaining cost advantages through economy of scale or economy of scope?

Under each of the categories below, think about and list your operational costs:

1. Cost-driven
2. Value-driven
3. Fixed costs
4. Variable costs

Revenue Streams:

The **revenue streams** represent the funds generated in the process of reaching and serving the mission field/target audience. If you are unable to define your **revenue streams**, through stewardship, partnerships, grants, etc., you will not be able to adequately support the mission to which the church is called.

Revenue streams can be transactional, one-time gifts, or recurring payment as a part of a larger giving campaign. In order to support the kinds of strategies required for new expressions of church in the 21st century, you will need to develop multiple **revenue streams** as a part of your ministry model.

Is your vision compelling enough to encourage the target audience to give to the cause? How can the target audience see gifted funds actually creating change and transformation in the lives of people and their communities? What are the ways your target audience typically give? Who are the vital partners that can help expand your financial capacity to accomplish the mission? How much does each revenue stream contribute to the overall funding of the ministry plan? What are other creative business models that find natural affinity to your vision and mission? How can you include these models in your efforts to develop new revenue streams?

When you think about your **revenue streams**, think about the categories below and list out the existing and new possibilities:

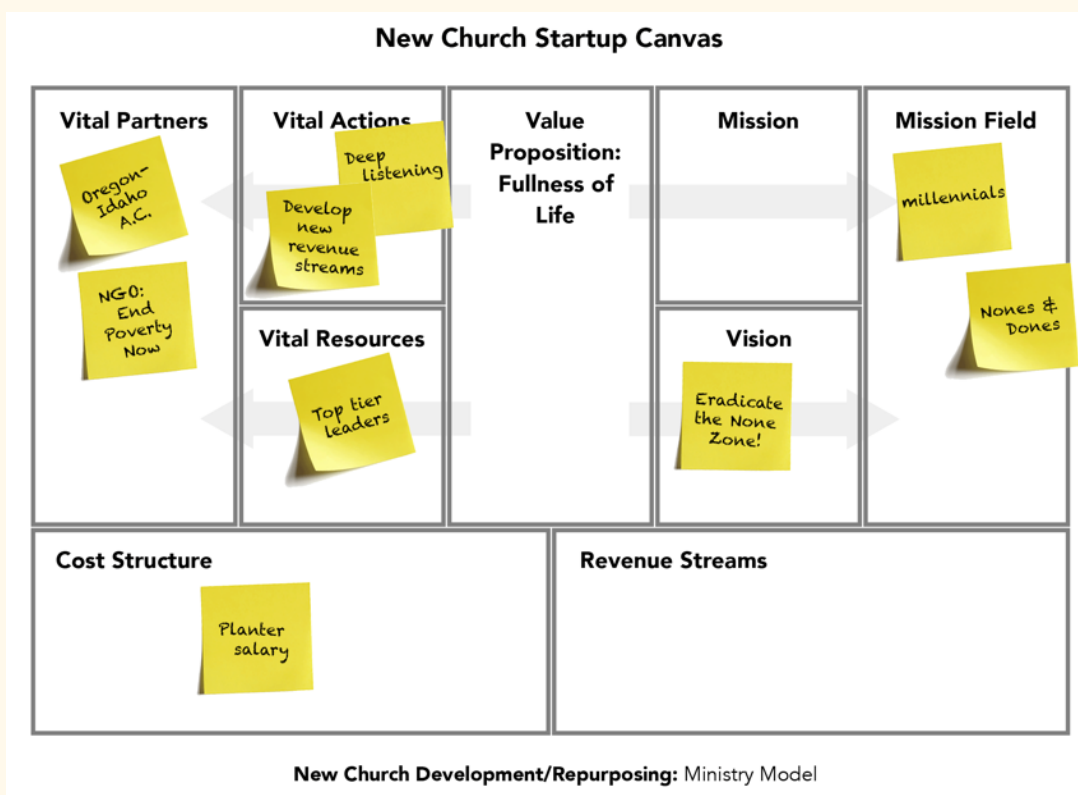
1. Strategic funding sources
2. Regular giving
3. Leasing/renting
4. Business development
5. Asset-based community development
6. Personal and corporate network resources
7. Asset sale

How do you use the New Church Startup Canvas?

My idea behind morphing the Osterwalder's business model canvas into the New Church Startup Canvas is to create a space where you can learn and leverage ideas that help you foster your entrepreneurial spirit. As I have already mentioned, the current reality the church faces in a dominant American consumer culture demands tools, experience, and learning that previously has not existed in the toolboxes of most church leaders, especially pastors/church planters. Therefore, it is important to examine, map out, and reorganize the non-profit business organization of the church.

If you are able to spend some time at the 30,000ft view, considering all nine building blocks of the startup canvas, you can begin to problem-solve more effectively and efficiently. This will help you prioritize the strategies of a new ministry model.

First, print out a large copy of the startup canvas, or plot it on a poster board or dry-erase white board. Begin to consider each building block, make a list, and place a Post-it note with the identified item, within the appropriate block. Continue until you have exhausted your lists and have the canvas appropriately filled. You can rearrange, prioritize, and consider what is missing or what should be removed. Categorizing in this way will help begin to give shape to an emerging ministry model.

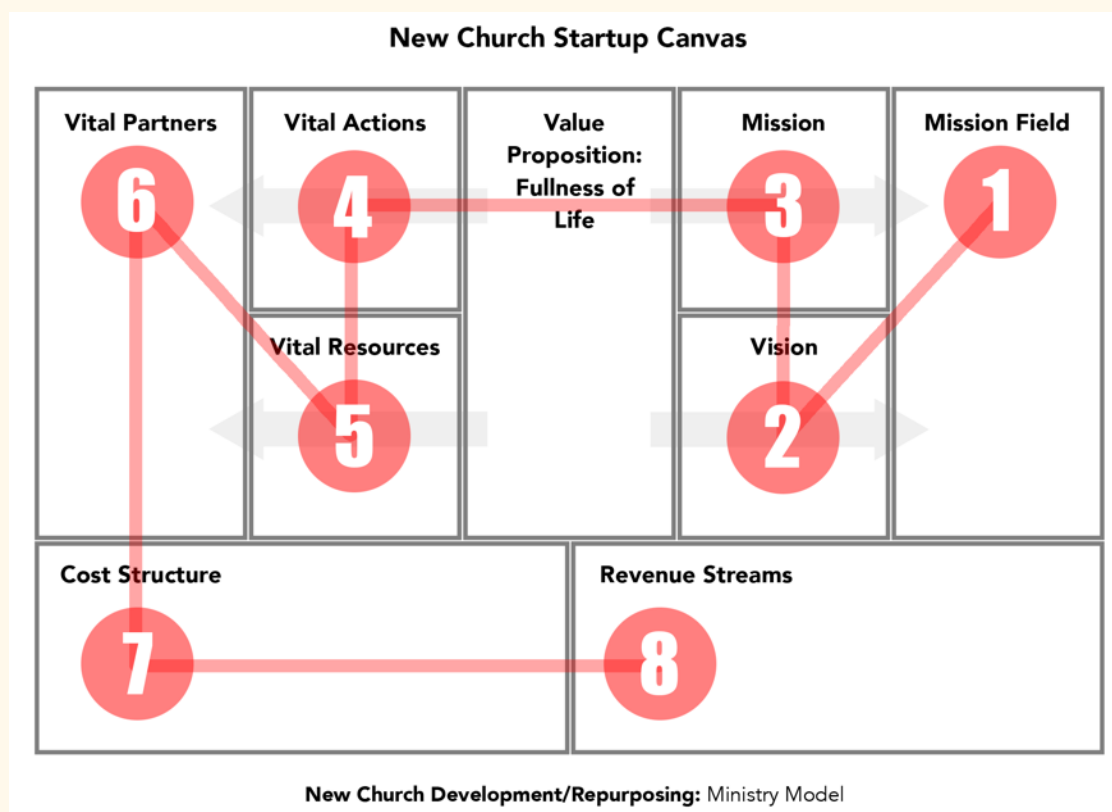


The above illustration shows the beginning of this brainstorming, categorizing process. When you exhaust each list under each of the nine building blocks, your canvas should be well covered.

As you consider your emerging ministry model, you will have a better sense of many patterns between the building blocks and how they give shape to your strategies and priorities. For instance, the activity of deep listening, within your mission field/target audience, will give shape to how you cultivate and communicate a

vision. How you collect and cast vision can also help you understand various components of the mission, consequently helping you identify the vital actions that need to take place. Identifying the vital actions will help you determine what resources are needed and what partners are necessary.

As you begin to record all of these tasks and partners, you will be able to identify your cost structure and how it impacts or demands your revenue streams. The illustration below shows the above description as a pattern on the startup canvas. Each pattern may be different, based on a number of factors, such as your mission field, the data you collect, the assumptions you test, the actions determined, the revenue streams needed, etc.



While the value proposition of “fullness of life” does not change, it does influence and shape both the development (vital actions, resources, partners, and cost structure) and engagement (mission, vision, mission field, and revenue streams) of the ministry plan. This exercise, made available through the **New Church Startup Canvas**, will help you see the mission and ministry of the church from a crisp vantage and through a new lens.

In a 21st century, post-Christian context, where fresh, new expressions of “what church can be” are essential, the startup canvas will help you consider your entrepreneurial spirit from a theological position, which can lead to sustainability and multiplication.

What are the next steps?

Once you have spent time considering each of the nine building blocks of the startup canvas, and see how they related to and inform one another, you will have much of the information needed to begin developing (or

enhancing) a more robust ministry plan for your ministry or new church project. You will also discover what you are missing, your areas of weakness, underused assets, big dreams, real obstacles, and a much clearer picture of your mission field. All of this information can then be used to set your priorities for next steps.

What's missing from your emerging ministry model? How important are those missing pieces, considering your identified mission field/target audience? What strategies will you employ to develop and deploy the leaders needed to implement your plan? Where are your financial deficiencies? How will you create new revenue streams to expand your financial capacity? Who are the most important partners needed that you currently do not have?

There will be a number of questions and answers that will result from engaging the New Church Startup Canvas. This important information can provide the details needed to construct a strategic ministry plan. To assist you in this process, you should utilize the current "Ministry Plan Development" guidelines, which can be found in the Appendix of the latest new church development process booklet, *Northwest Adventure*, on pages 51-55. You can download a copy of the *Northwest Adventure* at this following link: http://greaternw.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/GNW_NCD_Process_Booklet_072016-copy.pdf

In order to discover, shape, plant, and multiply the kinds of new church and new ministry projects that will thrive in our 21st century, post-Christian context, which is dominated by an American consumer culture, you will need to pivot to the **pioneer** role. The greatest initial challenge will be whether or not you can discover the practical application of theological entrepreneurship in your unique context. Be bold. Take risks. Embrace innovation.

For additional questions, contact:

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Intercultural Competence: Why This and Why Now?

By Kristina Gonzalez

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As many of you as were baptized in Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:27-29 NRSV

In his chapter entitled *Intercultural Competence in Religious Organizations* found in the *SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, George Yancey writes this:

Christians often use the phrase “neither Jew nor Gentile” to indicate the idea that God does not favor one racial/ethnic group over another. However, this passage was provided as the early New Testament evangelist Paul criticized Jewish Christians who attempted to force non-Jewish Christians into accepting their Jewish culture. Paul argues that instead of requiring other Christians to assimilate into Jewish culture, they should be encouraged to develop a faith based on their own culture. Christians generally view this passage as a measure of individual acceptance when in fact it is a statement about cultural acceptance. It can even be argued that this passage is a call to develop intercultural competence.⁷

Intercultural competence: Why this and why now, indeed. Let me tackle the second question first. *Why now?* At no time in the history of modern humanity has there been one culture, and at no time in the foreseeable future will there be one culture. Culture is complex and deeply embedded in each of us by the families and communities in which we were raised. Our cultures effect how we think about ourselves in relationship to other people, the planet and all that inhabit it. Our cultures inform what constitutes respect, appropriate communication, decision-making and governance. Our cultures shape, at least initially, our concepts of beauty, hospitality, risk, gender and gender roles, family, faith and so on. Our cultures are largely hidden except when experienced in contrast to cultures unlike our own.

The Christian church has made terrible mistakes over centuries in conflating religion and culture, with dehumanizing results. We know that the early Christians added to their numbers through threat and intimidation, and through cultural and literal genocide. We need not go far back in the history of the United States (this being written with a US audience in mind) to see the way in which the church was used to force Indian people to conform to European agrarian societal norms and values. The boarding school movement that was started in the United States and duplicated in Canada and Australia devastated indigenous



⁷ Deardorff, Darla K., *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2009), 377.

communities. It cast the boarding school generation and beyond into a downward spiral that is only now being healed through acknowledgement of historic trauma and through recapturing of language and culture.

But we are no longer in danger of such reprehensible acts, correct? Well, perhaps not on the scale of the boarding school movement where church and state came together in an attempt to force conformity, assimilation and deference. But do contemporary Christians operate as George Yancey suggests in the passage above, offering opportunities for people from distinct cultural groups to 'develop a faith based on their own culture?' Perhaps the radically inclusive Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in San Francisco, or the community-directed ministries of Church and Community Development for All People in Columbus Ohio are bright expressions of faithful Christian ministries that flex with their membership.

Arguably, the majority of Christian congregations tend to deliver a qualified message of welcome. 'We are glad you're here! Come join us ... but leave your distinctiveness at the door!' Is this a condemnation of the Christian church, or is it a reflection of a society that willfully refuses to dive into the deep water of cultural differences?

Which brings us to the first question, why this? Intercultural competence is a skill. It is arguably *the* leadership skill for this moment in history of the church.

Intercultural competence is about leaning in. It is about listening with one's whole mind, body and spirit. It is about suspending one's own cultural judgments in an attempt to understand how other people think about the world and operate in it given their history, experiences, beliefs and behaviors – their culture – in contrast to one's own. It is about curiosity and exploration, not for the purpose of changing one another but for the purpose of knowing the world more fully, and connecting more deeply. It is about seeking a more complete understanding of God's rich creation, which is better revealed in community. This is Holy Spirit work, and we know it when we experience it.

Honing skills in intercultural competence is critical for all aspects of faithful ministry:

- Offering the good news of Jesus Christ to those who have not heard the message or are disconnected from it.
- Developing disciples that live their faith in their homes, workplaces, houses of worship, and communities.
- Developing community ministries that transform lives and systems.

'Obvious,' you might respond. But if it is obvious, why aren't we living it? Perhaps there is more to this than meets the eye.

Founders in the field of intercultural communication widely agree that intercultural competence is developmental. Individuals and organizations from all cultural groups tend to acquire intercultural skills in much the same pattern. The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, developed by Dr. Milton Bennett, describes a six-stage framework for advancing in intercultural skills. Each stage includes a developmental task designed to move us into increasingly complex understandings of our own and other cultures. The model provides guidance for how we might work effectively with groups to increase personal and organizational intercultural skills in a manner that invites curiosity, even among those for whom this subject is anathema. Here is how it works in short form.

When we first encounter cultural differences, we tend to deny that these differences have any impact on our lives. We tend to avoid interacting with persons who appear or sound different from our 'norm.' We may discount changing demographics as temporary, choosing to remain insulated in our own cultural group. The development task in this stage of Denial is to provide low challenge opportunities to see the world with new eyes – demographic studies, children at play in the local school yard, changes in products at the grocery store.

As we become more aware of differences, we typically see new cultures as threats to our own. Perhaps a favorite store has changed its apparel to cater to a different aesthetic or signs pop up in different languages, and the changes become personal and unavoidable. 'Us and them' language is common; conformity is required of the newcomer. In the extreme, persons in Defense may be susceptible to recruitment into hate groups, which are present in every region of the United States. (See the Southern Poverty Law Center Hate Map at <https://www.splcenter.org/hate-map>). The task in Defense is to identify commonalities between cultures to engender greater tolerance. Sometimes our Christian faith and mission can be this bridge.

Another aspect of this developmental stage is Reversal where we idealize another culture. Perhaps we have received an outpouring of hospitality on a mission trip, and we judge the entire culture from that experience. In both Defense and Reversal, our understanding of other cultures is quite limited and stereotyped.

When we begin to move out of Defense, we tend to over-rely on commonalities, missing the differences that make a difference. The stage of Minimization – minimizing differences - tends to be comfortable for the majority culture but forces conformity in non-dominant cultures. Relationships tend to be surface in this stage of development, because we are consciously or unconsciously avoiding acknowledging the values, beliefs and behaviors that make us who we are.

Minimization is where most organizations function. This is the realm of political correctness, which while an improvement over Defense still stifles our capacity to engage at deeper levels. In this stage of development, we typically know less about our own culture, and have a tendency to expect that everyone will be comfortable if invited to operate as 'we' do. In other words, we unconsciously project our values and behaviors onto others, sometimes not even knowing that we are living out of a set of learned and practiced thoughts and behaviors typical of our own cultural group. The developmental task, then, is to know our own culture better to avoid projecting our cultural values onto others.

As we learn more about our own culture, we can more effectively embrace that other cultures, while different, are as complex and nuanced as our own. We are better able to draw contrasts between cultures, and set aside judgments based on our own way of operating in the world. We tend to be interested in general ways in which different cultures communicate, make decisions and govern, to name a few. In this stage of Acceptance, we tend to notice and acknowledge differences as simply different, but we may not yet know how to effectively work with differences. The developmental task is to practice perspective shifting to more deeply understand other worldviews.

As we gain knowledge and experience, we can better shift our perspectives in more complex situations, and even choose to behave differently in cultures other than our own, but from a deep understanding of why societies function as they do. In this stage of Adaptation, we tend to be more creative in our attempts to include, and we tend to find mutually adaptive solutions that are more satisfying across cultures.

Finally, when we have done this work consistently, we may enter a stage of Integration where our movements in and out of cultures, our own and others, are fairly seamless. The task in Integration is to remain grounded to avoid cultural confusion.

As we move through these stages of development, we are increasingly able to engage with progressively complex cultural concepts and increasingly challenging topics (racism, white privilege and other power dynamics, adaptive processes). We tend to see differences as opportunities and seek differences with little outside encouragement.

Did you think about which stage of development describes you? One more point. Research shows that we tend to think of ourselves as more developed in our intercultural skills than is accurate. Sigh.

Intercultural competency is a skill. It is developmental. We can lead more effectively when we are intentional about our own intercultural development, and when we meet others where they are in their understanding of cultural differences and commonalities. Knowledge of the tasks associated with each stage of development helps us design intercultural encounters that balance support and challenge, and invite diversity of thinking and behaving. Effective intercultural learning helps us to live the phrase 'neither Jew or Gentile' as Paul instructed, within diverse and multicultural settings.

Why intercultural competence and why now? Because we must.

Shaping Change: Organizing Principles of Discipleship

By Rev. Shalom Agtarap
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Here you are, in the cycle between the past and the future, choosing to spend your miraculous time in the exploration of how humans, especially those seeking to grow liberation and justice, can learn from the world around us how to best collaborate, how to shape change.⁸ — adrienne maree brown

As soon as I read these words, I imagined United Methodists – tradition-bearers of every stripe, really – breathing a huge sigh of relief. The kind of deep sigh that comes with being known. We who love God and strive to love our neighbor are in this time of exploration because the past is truly gone, no matter how many of the antiques remain, and as frustrating as it is, we cannot see the future with clarity. In a time where institutions are morphing, even crumbling all around us, we seek what it means to follow the Christ who liberates so that all of creation might experience Life. Said another way, you and I seek to bring the reign of God on earth as it is in heaven; which is ultimately, a process that requires shaping change.



To that end, the book, “Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds” is a helpful guide, a field manual of sorts, to this *strange* yet *necessary* work of being a disciple of Christ in a new age in the Pacific Northwest.

I say strange, because many of us, familiar or unfamiliar with the traditions of the church, still associate church with a building, some members, and an activity on Sunday. To move outside of that, to move beyond that, can feel strange. *How do you talk to people who have no affiliation with your local church? What if they carry traumatic experiences associated with other religious traditions; how do you differentiate yourself? How do you share faith with neighbors when they’ve never known you are a follower of Jesus? And even more, how do you invite them into this life when you aren’t excited about your own spiritual practices?*

And, this work is necessary because we have only ever been relationship-based. Just as God’s very shape is relational, the body of Christ — the church — innovates to express faith in community, a necessary part of discipleship. It is what we do.

When little kids sing (at the top of their lungs):

“I am the church,
 you are the church,
 we are the church together;

⁸ adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* (AK Press, 2017)

all who follow Jesus
 all around the world
 yes, we're the church together!"

Then we teach others to enter the song; we declare that it's all about relationship and anyone who follows Jesus will be oriented this way as well.

When Jesus shaped changed, he did it through community and collaboration. He sought liberation for those on the margins so they could be reintegrated into community because he knew it was all about relationships.

Relationship to God was in direct correlation to relationship with neighbor.

As relationship was established, the capacity to be in relationship with even more people, even those who were not of Jesus' flock⁹ became possible. This is our work today: to build capacity in being in relationship with people so that the life-giving ways of Christ can be shed abroad our hearts, our neighborhoods, in larger society and in the places where decisions impact the lives of marginalized communities.

The principles of emergent strategy, as you'll discover in this book, are some of the best tools for our work:

- Small is good, small is all. (The large is a reflection of the small.)
- Change is constant. (Be like water.)
- There is always enough time for the right work.
- There is a conversation in the room that only these people at this moment can have. Find it.
- Never a failure, always a lesson.
- Trust the People. (If you trust the people, they become trustworthy.)
- Move at the speed of trust. Focus on critical connections more than critical mass – build the resilience by building the relationships.
- Less prep, more presence.
- What you pay attention to grows.¹⁰

I am excited for the work of shaping change in the Pacific Northwest because ultimately, it is the work of discipleship. As Christ draws us into deeper relationship, we will outwardly express our faith in more collaborative, community-inducing ways. We will experiment, not as a last-ditch effort before we die, but because innovation is the very nature of God. We will learn amazing things about science, the tech industry, and organic gardening as we live as disciples alongside our neighbors. Our hearts will also be broken as we learn about the difficulties of returning citizens, newly released from prison, and we will mourn with families who lose their children to the epidemic of gun violence.

This work is not for the faint of heart but we are promised joy along the way.

I look forward to seeing the emerging patterns of community and collaboration as we continue in this grand adventure of discipleship, reimagining the Gospel in new containers, with new leaders, and new followers.

⁹ John 10:16, NRSV

¹⁰ *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds.*

As we set out, I offer the words of Maya Angelou who imitates Christ in saying, *do not be afraid*.

Each new hour holds new chances
For new beginnings.
Do not be wedded forever
To fear, yoked eternally
To brutishness.

The horizon leans forward,
Offering you space to place new steps of
change.¹¹

¹¹ Maya Angelou, *On the Pulse of Morning: The Inaugural Poem* (New York: Random House, 1993).

The Art of Theological Entrepreneurship

By William D. Gibson

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When it comes to a central characteristic that is typically sought in potential church planters, having an “entrepreneurial spirit” rests high on the list. Based on context and circumstances, pastors and/or community leaders often find themselves operating as social entrepreneurs, standing in the gap for communities in ways that local, state, or national agencies may be unable (or unwilling) to do so. When it comes to new church development, church planters need to be willing to take big risks, which from a business/financial position is traditionally classified as being “entrepreneurial,” and often perceived as counterintuitive to the pastoral office. The challenge is that most pastors-turned-church-planters do not have a business background and lack the beneficial foundation from which to lean into this valued characteristic. Because of this, it is necessary to think about how to engage one’s entrepreneurial spirit from a theological position. I am calling this approach *theological entrepreneurship*.

Think of a theological entrepreneur as someone who works to creatively harness ideas and opportunities that reveal how our theology intersects culture in ways that put theory into action — ways that shift us from playing it safe and turn us to the risky, leading-edge action we find in the biblical narrative. Think of it like dreaming big then working to practically make the dream into a reality, through strategies that are aligned with our mission. In the church these efforts are supposed to center on all the many facets of disciple-making in a specific missional context, which is deeply rooted in a grounded vision of God. And, from our Wesleyan heritage, this means it cultivates personal piety and social holiness in ever-shifting cultural contexts.



When you address this concept from a strategic position, theological entrepreneurship happens through acute listening to real people within a specific context, ministry plan development, gathering and connecting stewarded resources (people, financial, and creative support), and establishing appropriate metrics that reinforce growth, sustainability, and multiplication. Such efforts operate within our church polity and work synergistically with civic/community programs, services, and new business models.

Those who struggle with the challenges of sustainability and multiplication, particularly as the church wrestles to define itself in the 21st century, also typically struggle to fully connect the concept of entrepreneurship with “church.” Consequently, a different narrative is engaged; one which points to what is impossible rather than possible.

The over-arching narrative of church planting in the 21st century, especially within The United Methodist Church, is one that says unchurched and disconnected people (especially millennials) are extremely resistant to commitment, specifically in terms of personal participation and financial giving, and who adamantly resist

the church. It is true that more folks outside the church might appear less committed and more frustrated, but it is not because they do not want to be a part of something that makes a difference. In fact, more millennials desire to make a significant contribution to humanity (and there are currently more millennials than any other demographic group). What is required is a compelling vision backed up by strategic action.

The larger problem is a failure on the church's part (as a whole) to make a significant difference in the communities we serve. The lack of a bold, compelling vision, which intersects the mission, greatly reduces the possibility of engagement by anyone, whether they are inside or outside the church. When we do not know how to creatively connect entrepreneurial strategies that reveal the theological narrative, we can become stifled by uncertainty — the emotional intersection of “fear of failure” and “risk-taking” faith. The problem becomes exponential within our dominate American consumer culture and it muffles our ability to lean forward in innovative ways.

Greg Jones, who serves as the senior strategist for leadership education at Duke Divinity School, in his book *Christian Social Innovation: Renewing Wesleyan Witness*, speaks of our desire to discover and develop responsive strategies that lead the church in to renewal, as “social innovation.” This also highlights our efforts to align the work of new church development with the that of strategic deployment on the Annual Conference level. Consequently, the Greater Northwest Area Cabinet bolsters what we are referring to as “disruptive innovation,” which encourages pastors and lay leadership to question the status quo and respond from an entrepreneurial position and a prayerful posture.

By definition, being entrepreneurial means to demonstrate a risk-taking spirit that points toward a hopeful outcome — what can be. And, it demands a willingness to constantly work the problem. Culture is always emerging; however, our attitude of what church can be in ever-shifting contexts is often tempered by the fear we mask, justified by a narrative of preserving what we know, and hidden behind the excuse of impossibility. There is nothing entrepreneurial about such a position.

To say that planting churches in our 21st century American consumer context is extremely hard would be an understatement. It demands innovation, creativity, nerves of steel, a unique ability to create something where nothing exists (on every level), a willingness to reconcile strategic risk with bold steps of faith, an understanding that success does not come without failure, and a deep spiritual maturity that is rooted in Scripture. If we are unsuccessful in managing our personal anxieties and insecurities, we will retreat to the safety of a failing narrative and end up pointing the finger at anything or anyone except ourselves.

In this challenging work, I see two distinct roles for the art of theological entrepreneurship that are central to being a “church planter.”

A church planter is both a **pastor** and a **innovator**.

As a pastor, the planter (appointed as the pastor in charge) represents the pastoral office through Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service. This means that the pastor shares the Word of God through teaching, preaching, counseling, pastoral care, spiritual formation, leadership development, and community engagement. It means that she/he celebrates Holy Communion and Baptism, pointing to God's invisible grace through these visible symbols of reconciliation and love. It means that she/he is responsible for ordering the church in relationship to administrative and spiritual practices that are reflected both individually and

corporately, expressly connectional in our Methodist heritage. And it means she/he reflects the servant posture of Christ, in this work to the world. This role is theological, yet supported by the entrepreneurial.

As a innovator, the planter represents a second and completely different role; one that is often missed when assessing the desired “entrepreneurial spirit.” In this role the planter is a developer on the local church level, which means that she/he develops something out of nothing in every form of what represents Christian community. The pioneer role fosters a business savvy approach to the practical action that is represented in a strategic missional plan. The planter has to boldly embrace the risks associated with developing the infrastructures for a local church to be an institutional center for transformation in a greater community. This begins by way of intersecting culture — being relational in the community and focused on intentional listening. It means pulling together resources and establishing partnerships that firmly connect an emerging vision and new community of faith with the movement and needs of the greater community. Such effort involves developing and implementing strategic initiatives that create growth, sustainability, and multiplication in ministry (to plant churches that plant churches and develop ministries). This will include pooling resources, recruiting, training, creating non-traditional revenue streams, establishing partnerships (ministry, financial, community, etc.), being a visionary, and representing a prophetic voice. This role is entrepreneurial, yet supported by the theological.

Engaging the dominate American consumer culture requires tools, experience, and learning that have not previously existed in the toolboxes of most church leaders. In our 21st Century post-Christian context, the art of theological entrepreneurship can present new gateways, windows, and doorways that lead us to a different expression of being church.

For additional resources/books related to language, culture and identity, see our suggested readings at the back of this Appendix.

Considering Language, Culture, and Identity

An Overview by

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Paying attention to how we communicate, gather information, form what we believe, and how we perceive others, is a critical task. There are a number of voices that influence us throughout our lives, shaping who we are and what we believe — our identity. Nowhere is this more important to consider than how it relates to Christian identity formation within American consumer culture.

Over the most recent years, cultural linguistics has drawn on many disciplines and areas. Its applications have enabled fruitful investigation of the cultural grounding of language in several applied domains like World Englishes, intercultural communication, and political discourse analysis. Such investigation helps us understand the deep dialogic layers of culture and identity formation. Cultural linguistics maintains a close connection to semiotics, cognitive linguistics, and its exploration of the role of culture as a source of conceptualizing personal and communal experience.

Connected to our senses, to include vision, hearing, touch, smell, and feeling states, human language is given shape through visual, oral, and written stories. In fact, we tend to make decisions based on how we feel; therefore, when images and stories engage our emotions, we respond, sometimes in unhealthy ways. Imagery, as a prominent role in the expression of language and culture, has been rightfully elevated in recent years, consequently impacting how we perceive and share our human experience in the world.

The theory of cultural linguistics is deeply rooted in a dialogic understanding of how we communicate as human beings, set our priorities (based on perceived boundaries), find freedom in interpretation (civil, theological, cultural, etc.), set our moral guides, and measure cultural competence. It examines the relationship between language and culture and how different ethnic groups perceive the world and their circumstances. The consideration of this discipline is vital to the work of new church and new ministry development and congregational revitalization, particularly in America, where consumer culture is the dominant stream.



What are we saying? What are we hearing? How do we respond? Are we on the same page?

Here are some ways to think of cultural linguistics related to our theological task:

1. The relationship between language and cultural identity: This is especially important when navigating a dominant American “consumer” identity in the United States. Considerations within American consumer culture include personal and corporate positions of the sociological, psychological, philosophical, and theological. Stanley Hauerwas claims that in America the story people own is a story they have inherited, been told, and chosen when they didn’t have a story to tell. Hauerwas explains that Christians learned how

to be Americans before they were Christians and that one must understand one's own Judeo-Christian heritage and identity in order to live faithfully today as a Christian in America.

2. The way cultural concepts are embedded in language: How do we tell our story and how does our story relate to other stories and traditions? Leonard Sweet argues that the language of culture today is that of "narraphor" — a story made with metaphors that helps us understand the world, ourselves, and God better.
3. What goes into an utterance — the uninterrupted chain of spoken or written language: An utterance represents the relationship of content and context, as an ever-emerging occurrence that encapsulates many voices (as seen in Mikhail Bakhtin's work). It is a layered expression that sustains meaning from a single point of view.
4. The parameters a communicator must attend to with her/his audience: Knowing one's context is required for effective communications within such context. How is information gathered? In what ways does interpretation happen? How are people setting their priorities? Discovering answers, by way of intersecting culture, is the way toward elevating the gospel message.
5. The dialogical foundation of thinking and speaking: This becomes the bedrock for how we are formed and shaped as human beings. Cultural formation is one of the single most important realities to attend to when understanding people, customs/traditions, language, community, beliefs, etc. There are many layers represented in the formation of one's life and experience.
6. The importance of cultural competence: Cultural competence involves understanding and responding, appropriately, to the distinct combination of cultural variables, which include: age, ethnicity, experience, gender, gender identity, tradition, beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, race, religion, socioeconomic status, and geographic affinity. Cultural competency evolves over time, beginning with an understanding of one's own culture, ongoing interaction with people from various cultures, and extending through one's own expansion of knowledge.

The practical connection of theology and culture can be understood in the following ways:

1. Scripture, Tradition, Experience, and Reason: This is how John Wesley described the formation of theology (it is dialogic). The complexities of Christian identity and theological formation prove evident in the dialogic nature of one's existence within culture and the world. Taking this into account, especially considering unchurched and disconnected people, acknowledges the numerous perceptions and interpretations of Christianity in America.
2. There are a number of disconnects from Christian language within any given 21st Century ministry context: Do people understand what we are saying and what we mean when we use Christian language? How do we contextually bridge the language gaps between the church and culture? How do we effectively communicate the practical application of Jesus' teachings in the world in which we live? For example, what does redemption or reconciliation or grace look like expressed in our ordinary lives? And, why do they matter? We have to effectively communicate Jesus' teachings — his methods and message — for application, and not only reflection or conversation. Social justice and spiritual formation cannot become mutually exclusive of one another. Instead of a disconnect, we must work in the overlap — the *mandorla* — of spiritual formation and social justice. For Wesley, this meant an polyphony of acts of piety and mercy;

reflected through personal piety and social holiness. Words have to turn into actions and actions must reflect a living expression of our discourse and teachings.

3. We must recognize the many layers of dialogic interplay related to meaning and its dramatic expression in the biblical narrative: What is the situation? — circumstances and events; Who is the storyteller? — author, reader, hearer (point of view); Who are the characters? — theological and historical context of people. How then does the biblical story intersect our personal and corporate story, not for manipulation but for transformation? We have to be translators of our own culture and the biblical narrative.

The importance of language and culture in relationship to the work of new church development and congregational revitalization:

The attention given to the intersection of language and culture helps guide critical awareness of the dialogic formation of Christian identity in our American consumer context. Language — in all the many ways we communicate — is a map. Utilizing this map effectively is essential to accomplishing our theological task, which assists in the discernment of Christian truth in ever-shifting cultural contexts. It requires us, as followers of Jesus, teachers, and leaders in the church, to join the same journey of unlearning and relearning (see Matthew 5 through 7) to which we invite others.

If we do not tend to the scope of cultural linguistics, we miss the mark on the role culture plays in conceptualizing an experience — in our case an *experience* of God. Peeling back the multiple layers of how we communicate — what we say, what we hear, how we respond, how we find common ground, etc. — rests at the foundation of successfully sharing the Good News through every communication channel available. Language, culture, and identity play a significant role in:

- Discernment and assessment
- Casting vision and ministry plan development
- Worship design and leading worship
- Preaching, teaching, and effective communication strategies
- Hospitality and an effective assimilation process
- Formative discipleship systems and mission field engagement
- Reaching unchurched and disconnected people (not other “church” people!)
- Multiplication in ministry and financial sustainability
- Leadership development, equipping, and training
- Spiritual formation and social justice
- Pastoral care, mentoring, and coaching
- Leading people where they do not want to go (a mark of leadership excellence!)
- Anything else we can think of in relationship to what it looks like to **be church** in a changing world

The consideration of cultural linguistics is critical to new church development and vitality. If we choose not to engage this discipline in the areas outlined here (and others as they emerge), we improve our chances of failure in a day and time when the dominate culture demands more of the church. As leaders in the church, together, we must intentionally engage with folks that live in our communities who do not see the church as a valued part of their journey. We must have actual conversations; be curious, listen well, and never assume a problem or solution.

This work is not about becoming culture. On the contrary, it is about discovering the streams and channels that allow you to successfully intersect culture in order to elevate the gospel message above the noise of society. Pay attention to how people communicate, gather information, form what they believe, and perceive others. This may first involve some serious self-reflection. But, no matter what, discover your contextual map and use it, as Paul described in his letter to the Corinthians, "to find common ground with everyone..." (1 Cor 9:22b, NLT), doing whatever it takes to help others *experience* faith, hope, and love.

For additional resources/books related to language, culture and identity, see our suggested readings at the back of this Appendix.

New Church Development Baseline Funding Model

Projected 5-year Funding Plan for New Church Projects

Year	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total Conference Funding
BoCD Funds	70,000	80,000	100,000	70,000	30,000	0	350,000
Stop loss			250,000				

*From 2010-2015 it cost us an average of \$345,000 to plant a "successful" church in the PNW

Projected 5-year Stewardship Plan/Goal

Year	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total Estimates
(stewarded) Est. Income	8,700	48,000	72,000	96,000	144,000	192,000	560,700
Total Funds	78,700	128,000	172,000	166,000	174,000	192,000	910,700

Shared Ministry

Giving %	0	2%	3.50%	6.25%	10%	14%	Full share
Amount	0	2,560	6,020	10,375	17,400	26,880	63,235
							6.94%

*Shared Ministry Giving paid during this funding cycle could be used in our Forward Step initiative to foster multiplication

Projected 5-year Available Funds for Ministry/Work

Year	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total Estimates
(available) Funds	78,700	125,440	165,980	155,625	156,600	165,120	847,465
(fixed costs) Salary/P&I	57,500	57,500	62,500	62,500	67,500	67,500	375,000
(fixed costs) Housing	15,000	15,000	16,000	16,500	17,000	17,500	97,000
Gross Net	6,200	52,940	87,480	76,625	72,100	80,120	375,465

New Church Development Baseline Funding Model (Projection) Assumptions & Considerations

The following information is intended to offer clarity to the budgeted examples of the New Church Development Baseline Funding Model. The funding model is indeed a “baseline” to work from. Funding for each project may require special considerations, adjustments, reductions, and even increases, depending on a number of factors — partnering funding, project context, experience of the planter, ethnic ministry, geographic location, etc.

Labels & Categories:

Conference Funds = Funds represented as being approved by the Board of Congregational Development in support of a new church project and a ministry plan that clearly communicates goals and realistic benchmarks. We are naming the baseline funding commitment to be \$350,000 per project, over a 5-year funding plan. This plan distributes funds in a bell curve pattern, where the maximum disbursement of funds happens in year 3, when our plants have typically needed the most funds available.

Stop Loss = The “stop loss” designation is the maximum amount of conference funds we are willing to put at risk on any given project. This amount is \$250,000. The stop loss is exercised by year 3, if the project is not meeting appropriate benchmarks, or the board, DS, and Office of Congregational Development determines that the project is not viable for various reasons.

Est. Income = The estimated stewarded revenue stream that is made up of a combination of personal fundraising efforts of the planter (personal network), giving from the emerging community of faith, developed partnerships/relationships, and other sources cultivated by the planter and developer.

Total Funds = The sum of the Conference funding added to the projects estimated “stewarded” revenue stream.

Shared Ministry Giving % = A incremental increase of shared ministry giving, based on a percentage of total funds, which acts as a “ramping up” toward the future payment of apportionments. This is designed to get our new church plants moved toward sustainability (and chartering) at a healthy pace, while helping the pastor/planter shape the giving narrative. We would like to target chartering for year 6.

Amount = The dollar amounts associated with the designated percentage in each year. Note that a second strategy of shared ministry giving by our new plants (beyond preparation for paying apportionments) is to provide an incentive that supports our expectation of multiplication. How this works (in theory) is that the total amount of shared ministry giving over the course of the 5-year plan/goal (6 year lifespan) will be available in full to the church in year 6 to support moving toward planting an expansion site. In the budgeted example, the \$63,235 paid would then go to support the efforts of launching the expansion site. We are also looking to utilize the conference’s “Forward Step” program to continue such incentives for future sites, after the church has chartered.

Funds = Total available funds (BoCD funding plus estimated income) in each year and over the 5-year plan.

Salary/P&I = Total costs of salary/pension & insurance, based on a salary of \$42,500.

Housing = Total costs of housing allowance for the planter.

Gross Net = The estimated gross net funds that a planter has to work with in the designated year and over the 5-year funding plan. The end goal of the 5-year funding plan is to show how the initial \$350,000 of conference funds can be pressed out in support of programming, which is designed to impact the work of ministry in the greater community. You will notice that the top line (BoCD Funds) of the budget provides the total of \$350,000 of conference funding, while the bottom line (Gross Net) shows the total of \$375,465. We believe the greater the gross net number (above the original \$350,000), the healthier the “pace” at which the church is exemplifying vitality.



THE SYNDEO PROJECT

recapturing our connectional heritage in the UMC



THE SYNDEO PROJECT: COHORT PASTOR / CONSULTANT PASTOR COVENANT AGREEMENT

(NOTE: This is a working draft of the Covenant Agreement and will be modified and amended by the cohort members, and/or District and Conference leadership, as necessary.)

This covenant represents an intentional covenant relationship that binds together a cohort (defined as “The Syndeo Project”) consisting of cohort members (defined as “cohort pastors” and “consultant pastors”) for the purpose of operating in a connected manner that exemplifies kingdom-oriented work as geographically identified Syndeo cohorts (defined and named in connection to district areas). Within the bounds of The Greater Northwest Episcopal Area (Alaska, Oregon-Idaho, and PNW Conferences), this cohort will be represented by cohort members and partnering churches, of which each church would represent a “campus” or “location” of the cohort. Such kingdom-oriented work will first consider the cohort as a whole, and then consider the partnership church ministry, but notwithstanding that the natural emergence of vision from the local church context will inform the overarching focus and initiative of the cohort.

Vision/Mission of the Cohort

The overarching vision/mission of The Syndeo Project is to live our connection to the degree that we are able to more effectively participate in the mission to which Christ has called the church — to “go and make disciples” — lived out in the world as an expression of what it looks like to follow Jesus, make disciples, and transform the world. The partnering churches/communities of faith will share a common vision, target group (primarily turning attention to the unchurched, disconnected, and marginalized), discipleship system, mission field engagement strategies, and leadership development processes. However, nuances in how the cohort vision is implemented in each partnering church’s setting will be determined by the community and context.

Pastoral Member Expectations

Critical to the success of The Syndeo Project model is that each cohort member has to exemplify the higher standard of the call to pastoral ministry. This means living out the humility of Christ in every area and aspect of one’s life. Participation as a cohort pastoral member will carry high expectations. They include the following:

1. TRUST & CONFIDENCE: Each pastoral member commits to being completely open and honest, holding all conversations and discussions in confidence (safe space), unless otherwise agreed upon by the cohort. This expectation rests at the center of re-establishing our connectional heritage, and consequently determines the fruitfulness and success of The Syndeo Project. Each cohort pastor will be required to often “lead people where they do not want to go,” which is a mark of leadership excellence. People do not like transformation, change, and doing things differently. You are required to lead by example, by stepping into this new direction, in order to recapture our heritage as Methodists.

2. AUTHORITY: Each pastoral member, whether lay, licensed, commissioned, or ordained, remains the pastor-in-charge of their member church (or remains in their current staff role in the local church or extension ministry, if they are a consultant pastor), yet operates with equal authority and voice on the cohort team, serving under appointment by the Bishop. At the same time, each appointed pastor-in-charge will be responsible for the administrative responsibilities of their respective church/charge.

3. LEAD VISIONARY & CONVENER: While authority rests with each pastor-in-charge for every church/charge who is a member of the cohort, one pastoral leader will be named/commissioned as the Lead Visionary & Convener of the cohort. This person’s responsibility is to elevate the overarching vision of the cohort, which bubbles up from the cohort pastors and churches/community of faiths, and to convene and facilitate the strategic meetings/gatherings of the cohort. The Lead Visionary & Convener will also be the primary voice in reporting to the Office of Congregational Development, with other Lead Visionaries & Conveners from across their respective conferences.

4. SUPPORT & CONTRIBUTION: Each pastoral member commits to support the cohort as a whole, first and foremost as the collective “church” (The Syndeo Project, which is assigned and named specific within an area of a district), and agrees to contribute without reservation to the overarching mission/vision of the cohort. Furthermore, each pastoral member agrees to be all-in regarding individual contributions within the cohort, living out our connection and covenant. Per the Book of Discipline, and with regard to cohorts featuring new churches, the District Superintendent is the “authorizing agent” for those projects and, consequently, will offer council and direction should there be any need to work through challenges, differences of opinion, or strategic cohort initiatives so that there is alignment within the district. Additionally, the Office of Congregational Development, primarily represented by the conference developer, will provide strategic support, mentoring, and resourcing.

5. PRESENCE: Each pastoral member commits to being fully present at all face-to-face meetings, videoconferences, and designated gatherings, to include being fully engaged in the ministry as a whole, for both the cohort and within each local church context (balancing time and energy, while considering the cohort to represent the church as a whole). For the cohort pastors, this may amount to face-to-face meetings on a regular basis, with rhythm based on the season of ministry. Consulting pastors (if any) should expect to commit

to a minimum of four face-to-face meetings per year, plus occasional video conferences. However, consulting pastors are invited to be engaged in all the meetings and video conferences. Cohort pastors of established churches/communities of faiths will agree to give more time toward the collaborative process of planting new churches with the pastor-in-charge of that new church (as they engage and as they are organized and planted by the cohort — multiplication). Cohort members of newer church plants should expect to spend more balanced time developing and building community within their ministry setting/context.

6. ONENESS: Each pastoral member commits to operate as one unit (The Syndeo Project), whereas the cohort represents a compilation of the church, which shares common threads in vision, related to ministry in the local church context (“campuses” or “locations”). Each cohort partner church may look different in its own contextual/cultural setting (e.g., worship experience and supporting ministries); however, each pastoral member agrees to see the collected efforts of the cohort as **one**.

Cohort Expectations

In addition to individual member expectations, there will be expectations of the collective cohort for each cohort member to consider the following:

- 1. LEADERSHIP & TEACHING:** The cohort as a whole expects that each pastoral member actively participate in shared leadership of the cohort. This also includes participating in opportunities to demonstrate and live this out in partnering church settings that are different from one’s current appointment. Active leadership in this way helps remind and reinforce members/attendees on the local church level that they are a part of something much larger. Within this framework, cohort members of more established communities of faith are expected to collaborate on teaching/preaching exchange opportunities that allow for creative teaching outside of the member’s home church — a 21st century intentional circuit model. This helps widen the number of voices that shape people in the disciplining process, while also continuing to remind members/attendees that they are a part of something much bigger. Such a teaching/preaching exchange will require advance worship planning.
- 2. COLLABORATIVE GIFTS:** The cohort as a whole expects each pastoral member to effectively offer her/his area of giftedness for the greater benefit of the cohort. This will foster much more effectiveness and efficiency in ministry.
- 3. SHARED RESOURCES:** The cohort as a whole expects each pastoral member to share all available resources the pastor and/or the partnering church has available to help accomplish the overarching vision of the cohort. Such resources can be defined as (but not limited to): electronics, multimedia equipment, curriculum, furniture, and financial. (Note: The sharing of financial resources will deepen cohesiveness, but may not immediately come when established churches are involved in this effort to recapture our connectional

heritage.) All resources remain the property of the partner church, yet are made available to the cohort as shared resources as needed and justified. All financial gifts/giving will follow normal protocol through finance committees/teams, as will tracking by the trustees regarding borrowed equipment, furniture, etc. The bottom line is to cultivate such a high degree of trust and cohesiveness that the members and attendees automatically see themselves as one church with many campuses or locations, and sharing resources is assumed.

4. BRANDING & COMMUNICATIONS: The cohort as a whole expects each pastoral member and each partnering church to share in the brand identity of The Syndeo Project mark/logo, as used in all communications of the cohort and the partnering churches, to include (but not be limited to): website, collateral materials, business cards, letterheads, and apparel. Such sharing may be limited in some areas and/or may fully embrace every area. How we communicate the connection aspect of this initiative is critical to rebuilding such a posture into the DNA of existing and new churches/communities of faith that represent The United Methodist Church in the 21st century. Each Syndeo Project cohort, in cooperation with the DS and the conference developer, will establish these communication and branding strategies, customized to each cohort/setting.

5. GOALS & OBJECTIVES: The cohort as a whole expects that each pastoral member and each partner church work in collaboration toward identified goals, as determined by the cohort members. Such collaborative work will always be in alignment with the overarching vision/mission of The Syndeo Project. The trajectory should point to becoming an institutional center (self-sustaining) for transformation within the greater communities served by the church. This means that the development and ongoing creative adjustments of a solid ministry/business model that fosters financial sustainability is vital to fruitfulness and multiplication. As we recapture our connectional heritage, we are rebuilding an **expectation of multiplication** back into our churches. In other words, we are developing churches that plant churches that plant churches.

Conference & District Expectations

The expectations related to the conference and the district levels within the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area are as follows:

1. ADMINISTRATIVE: While each pastoral member and each partnering church enter into a covenantal relationship to operate as one entity (The Syndeo Project), each church remains on its own charge within the district. Each pastor-in-charge will be responsible for all administrative duties that are required on both the district and the conference levels to include (but not limited to): charge conference, statistical reports, apportionments, pastoral and staff salaries, and pension and insurance.

2. APPOINTMENTS: The cohort members will work directly with the Bishop and the Cabinet in the process of appointments related to future partnerships (added cohort pastors/planters) with The Syndeo Project, regarding work in connection to the objectives and goals of the Office of Congregational Development.

3. DISCERNMENT, TRAINING, & IMPLEMENTATION: The cohort team also will become an outlet that can actively participate in the discernment process for those who feel called to plant a church. The Syndeo Project model allows selected pastors to be appointed to the cohort in process of planting a church and becoming a pastor-in-charge of a new plant as a part of the cohort. Team members commit to working with the Office of Congregational Development in developing and implementing a ministry plan for planting churches across the GNW, that is adaptable and flexible, and offers the best possible route toward increased and measured success.

Operational Polity and Agreement

While each pastor and partner church will remain on its own charge, reporting to the appropriate district and conference in connection with our current administrative requirements, the cohort will operate under the current polity of The United Methodist Church.

General ministry initiatives, which fall into the category of expectations of the church within its greater community, will happen as discerned on the local church level. However, the ministry activities of each partner church will inform the unfolding and ever-emerging vision related to The Syndeo Project cohort.

Meetings and video conferences will be facilitated on a rotational basis by the assigned/ commissioned Lead Visionary & Convener for the cohort team. Supervisory oversight remains with the District Superintendent, the Bishop, Cabinet, and Office of Congregational Development, as to reflect our current polity and administrative structure outlined in *The Book of Discipline*.

Decisions will be made by way of holy conferencing and prayerful discernment, and always will be measured first against the vision/mission of The Syndeo Project cohort. However, all decisions and the ever-emerging vision always will be informed by the local church context. Should it be necessary, a majority-vote process can be available in the decision-making process, with guidance from the appropriate District Superintendent and the conference developer.

Additionally, compensation for each pastor will be handled on the local church level by the SPRC (or leadership team of a new church start) of each partnering church. For each pastor who is in process with the cohort to plant a new church, salary will be set in accordance with the Office of Congregational Development, per the five-year baseline funding model, set and approved by the Board of Congregational Development.

Annual Assessment and Amendments

As The Syndeo Project cohort evolves and grows in relationship to the ministry objectives of the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area, there will be an annual assessment meeting to discuss any changes or amendments that might need to be made to the cohort covenant agreement. This meeting would happen prior to each annual conference so that such changes and amendments would be implemented to match the appropriate appointment year.

Termination provisions from this covenant agreement (for both the pastoral member and the partnering church) will take place during the annual assessment and in accordance with the appointment process.

Covenant Signatures

This Covenant agreement is entered into with prayer and discernment, that the ministry of The Syndeo Project cohort would exemplify the connectional foundation of The United Methodist Church, in alignment with the ministry to which Christ has called us all, represented in the church. By signing below I hereby enter into covenant as described hereto with those other persons identified by signature, and upon being ratified, therefore will be recognized as The Syndeo Project cohort.

Signed by:

_____	_____
Signature	Signature
_____	_____
Print Name / Cohort Pastor	Print Name / Cohort Pastor
_____	_____
Signature	Signature
_____	_____
Print Name / Cohort Pastor	Print Name / Cohort Pastor

Signature

Signature

Print Name / Cohort Pastor

Print Name / Cohort Pastor

Signature

Signature

Print Name / Cohort Pastor

Print Name / Cohort Pastor

Authorized by:

Signature of Resident Bishop,
Greater Northwest Episcopal Area

Name of Resident Bishop,
Greater Northwest Episcopal Area

Signature of District Superintendent

Signature of Dir. of Strategic Faith Comm Dev.

Name / District

Name / Greater NW Episcopal Area



THE SYNDEO PROJECT

recapturing our connectional heritage in the UMC



THE SYNDEO PROJECT: PARTNERING CHURCH COVENANT AGREEMENT

(NOTE: This is a working draft of the Covenant Agreement and will be modified and amended by the cohort members, and/or District and Conference leadership, as necessary.)

This covenant agreement represents an intentional covenantal relationship that binds together a cohort (defined as “The Syndeo Project”) consisting of cohort communities (defined as “partner churches”) for the purpose of operating in a “connected” manner that exemplifies kingdom-oriented work as The Syndeo Project—the cohort. Within the bounds of Greater Northwest Episcopal Area, this cohort will be represented by cohort members and partnering churches, of which each church would represent a “campus” of the cohort. Such kingdom-oriented work will first consider the cohort as a whole, then consider the partnership church ministry, but notwithstanding that the natural emergence of vision from the local church context will inform the over-arching focus and initiative of the cohort.

Vision/Mission of the Cohort

The over-arching vision/mission of The Syndeo Project is to live out our “connection” to the degree that we are able to more effectively participate in the mission to which Christ has called the church — to “go and make disciples” — representing the mission of The United Methodist Church, which is “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

Partnership Benefits and Expectations

In living out our connection as “campuses” of The Syndeo Project, the partnership benefits and expectations are as follows:

1. LEADERSHIP & TEACHING: Partner churches will actively share leadership related to the cohort. Active leadership in this way helps remind and reinforce members/attendees of partner churches that they are a part of something much larger. Within this model, cohort members of more established communities of faith are expected to collaborate on “pulpit exchange” opportunities that allow for creative teaching among participating partner churches — a twenty-first century intentional circuit model. This helps widen the number

of voices that shape people in the discipling process, while also continuing exposing members/attendees to the cohort pastoral members.

2. SHARED RESOURCES: Partnering churches as a whole expect to share all available resources available to help accomplish the over-arching vision of the cohort. Such resources can be defined as: electronic/multimedia, equipment, curriculum, furniture, financial. All resources remain the property of the partner church, yet are made available to the cohort as shared resources, as needed and justified. All financial gifts will follow normal protocol through finance committees/teams, as will tracking by the trustees regarding borrowed equipment, furniture, etc.

3. COLLABORATIVE GIFTS: Partnering churches expect to effectively offer collective area of giftedness for the greater benefit of the cohort (addiction, homeless, youth, children's, young adult, hospitality ministries, etc.).

4. BRANDING & COMMUNICATIONS: Partnering church are expected to share in the brand identity of The Syndeo Project mark/logo, as used in all communications, to include (but not be limited to): website, collateral materials, business cards, letterheads, apparel, etc. Such sharing may be limited in some areas and/or fully embrace every area. How we communicate the "connection" aspect of this initiative is critical to building such a posture into the DNA of new faith communities that represent The United Methodist Church in the 21st century.

5. GOALS & OBJECTIVES: Partnering churches are expected to work in collaboration toward identified goals, as determined by the cohort members and partnering church leadership. Such collaborative work will always be in alignment with the over-arching vision/mission of The Syndeo Project.

Operational Polity & Agreement

While each partner church will remain on its own charge, reporting to their District and the appropriate Conference in connection with our current administrative requirements, the cohort will operate under the current polity of The United Methodist Church.

General ministry initiatives, which fall into the category of expectations of the church within its greater community, will happen as discerned on the local church level. However, the ministry activities of each partner church will inform the unfolding and ever-emerging vision related to The Syndeo Project.

There is no one person in charge of the cohort; however, there may be a designated "Lead Visionary & Convener" of the cohort pastors and partnering churches. Overall authority remains with the Bishop, Cabinet, and Office of Congregational Development, as to reflect our current polity and administrative structure.

Decisions will be made by way of holy conferencing and prayerful discernment of the cohort pastors and consultant pastors, and will, again, always be measured first against the vision/mission of The Syndeo Project. However, all decisions and the ever-emerging vision will always be informed by the local church context. Should it be necessary, a majority-vote process can be available in the decision-making process. Additionally, the cohort would work closely with Rev. Dr. William D. Gibson, Director of Strategic Faith Community Development, who would cast the deciding vote should ever the cohort have an even number of members and was at an impasse.

Additionally, compensation for each pastor will be handled on the local church level by the SPRC of each partnering church. For each pastor appointed to the cohort that is in process with the cohort to plant a new church, salary will be set in accordance with the Office of Congregational Development, per the baseline 5-year funding plan.

Annual Assessment and Amendments

As The Syndeo Project evolves and grows in relationship to the ministry objectives of each Annual Conference, there will be an annual assessment meeting to discuss any changes or amendments that would need to be made to the cohort covenant agreement. This meeting would happen prior to Annual Conference so that such changes and amendments would be implemented to match the appointment year.

Termination provisions from this covenant agreement (for both the pastoral member and the partnering church) will take place during the annual assessment and in accordance with the appointment process.

Covenant Signatures

This Covenant agreement is entered into with prayer and discernment, that the ministry of The Syndeo Project would exemplify the “connectional” foundation of The United Methodist Church, in alignment with the ministry to which Christ has called us all, represented in the Church. By signing below we hereby enter into covenant as described hereto with those other persons identified by signature, and upon being ratified, therefore are recognized as The Syndeo Project.

Name of Partner Church: _____

Signed by:

Pastor Signature

Lay Leader Signature

Print Name / Cohort Pastor

Print Name / Lay Leader

Church Council Chairperson Signature

Other Signature

Print Name / Church Council Chairperson

Print Name / Other

Authorized by:

Signature of Resident Bishop,
Greater Northwest Episcopal Area

Name of Resident Bishop,
Greater Northwest Episcopal Area

Signature of District Superintendent

Signature of Dir. of Strategic Faith Comm Dev.

Name / District

Name / Greater NW Episcopal Area

ASSESSMENT & DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

A Brief Overview

Prepared by
Rev. Dr. William D. Gibson
Director of Strategic Faith Community Development
wgibson@greaternw.org

The following information offers a brief overview of the current assessment process for the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area (Alaska, Oregon-Idaho, and PNW Conferences). This process includes 8 phases. The timeline runs congruent with the appointment year. Project development and recruitment begins each year after September 1st and extends through the end of the year. Each phase ramps up intentional phases of the process.

Assessment Process Phases:

1. Recruiting

Recruiting the right kind of church planters/innovators for our unique context can be a challenge. Our current strategy is to recruit, as necessary, gifted and qualified clergy and laity from outside our conference, while simultaneously recruiting and raising up planters/innovators from within our conferences.

2. Inquiry

The inquiry phase is the entry point of initial conversations that allows personal passion to be expressed by a potential planter/innovators, while allowing the Office of Congregational Development (OCD) to share a vision for a church planting movement in the Greater Northwest Area (GNW).

3. Initial Screening

The initial screening involves an interview with the OCD by way of phone, Skype, or in person. This allows the OCD to gain insight to the potential planter's/innovator's story, gifts, and passion, while allowing the OCD to more clearly express the demands, process, and strategies currently being employed in our context.

4. Initial Assessment

The initial assessment involves the potential planter/innovator engaging an assessment tool. Beginning in 2017, we have switched from using the online planter assessment offered through Lifeway Research, Inc. (recommended by Path1), because this assessment is not compatible with our cultural context in the west. We are now using a combination of assessment tools, suggested by the Center for Creative Leadership, and our own understanding of needs in our setting. After the candidate completes the assessment, the OCD receives the results, which is then used to frame in-depth screening.

5. In-depth Screening

After the candidate has completed the assessment tools, the OCD follows up with probing questions related to the assessments findings. This part of the process encourages deeper reflection and discernment of the candidate, which includes writing a 500 word reflective essay, and allows the OCD to coach the potential planters toward the next phase.

6. Assessment Interviews

Finally, candidates will be interviewed by a small assessment team consisting of representatives from the appropriate boards and committees, GNW Cabinet, Office of Connectional Ministries, and the Developer. Following interviews the team will make recommendations on the potential of each candidate.

7. Assessment Follow up

The OCD will have the opportunity to follow up with the candidate to discuss feedback and next steps.

8. Recommendations for Deployment

The OCD, in conjunction with the appropriate boards and committees, will then make recommendations for a candidate's deployment in the field, with a particular project. This phase involves the work of the GNW Cabinet and Bishop, along with the development of a compelling vision and ministry plan for a specific setting. Cooperative work with the District Superintendent, as the "chief missional strategist" of the district, is a key part of the deployment phase. Appropriate boards/committees approve funding during this phase.

9. Administrative Follow Up and Training

Upon the deployment of a planter/innovator for a particular appointment/project, there will be administrative considerations, particularly related to working with churches that have been designated as "paying agents." This will include training and counsel from the appropriate Conference Treasurer's Office. An appropriate orientation will also be conducted with the planter/innovator.

Assessment Timeline:

Throughout the assessment phases, there is a guiding timeline, which runs congruent with the appointment process. This timeline has allowed for intentional due diligence, through recruiting, adequate assessment, discernment, projected projects, funding, and possible deployment for appointment. This guiding timeline (adjusted as necessary) is as follows:

Sept-Dec:	Recruiting and initial assessment phases; Phases 1-4
December:	Participation in designated assessments; Phase 5
January:	Interviews of all candidates by the assessment team and follow up; Phases 6 & 7
February:	Recommendation of projects for final funding approval (GNW); Phase 8 Recommendations for deployment to GNW Cabinet; Phase 8
Apr-May:	Administrative follow up and necessary training for "paying agent" churches (GNW); Phase 9

Conference Boards and Committees

Roles & Relationships of the District Superintendent, Liaison, Coach, and Office of Congregational Development

Prepared by
 Rev. Dr. William D. Gibson
 Director of Strategic Faith Community Development
 wgibson@greaternw.org

The purpose of this document is to outline the primary roles of the District Superintendent, board/committee Liaison, Coach, and Office of Congregational Development, as they relate to supporting our church planters/plants in the Greater Northwest Episcopal. While the following descriptions provide an overview of the primary roles, there may be situations that find overlap. It is our hope that this document can provide clarity for each role as we work to become more effective and efficient in our efforts to plant and grow new churches. Primary roles are as follows:

- **District Superintendent:** **Supervisory & Oversight**
- **Professional Coach:** **Coaching**
- **Board Liaison:** **Communications**
- **Office of Cong. Dev.:** **Resourcing & Mentoring**

See the following descriptions for details on each role and how they relate to one another.

The District Superintendent: Supervisory & Oversight Role

Per The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (BOD), the District Superintendent is the “chief missional strategist” of the district. This is especially important in the work related to new church development. In paragraph 419 of the BOD, it states, *“the district superintendent shall oversee the total ministry of the clergy (including clergy in extension ministry and ministry beyond the local church) and of the churches in the communities of the district in their mission of witness and service in the world.”* The paragraph continues with, *“In the framework of their supervisory responsibilities, superintendents shall offer support, care, and counsel to clergy concerning matters affecting their effective ministry”* (BOD, 419.6). *“The superintendent shall seek to be in regular contact with the clergy on the district for counsel and supervision, and shall receive written or electronic reports of the clergy’s continuing education, spiritual practices, current ministry work, and goals”* (BOD, 419.7).

In relationship to new church development, and in cooperation with the boards/committees and Office of Congregational Development (OCD), the district superintendent facilitates the implementation of work-based learning, while providing support that enables the planter to engage in project activities. The DS will work in cooperation with the boards, Coach, and the OCD in support of our church planters, taking the lead in the supervisory and oversight role.

The Professional Coach: Coaching Role

A professional coach that is assigned by the Office of Congregational Development shall work to support identified goals, related to a specific new church development project and with a specific church planter. Coaching is task oriented and focuses on concrete issues, such as learning how to think strategically and developing skills. Coaching is a short-term role, designed around a specific project that is identified by the boards/committees and the OCD. It is performance driven and involves the enhancing of current skills or the acquiring of new skills. While the coach and church planter relationship shall be created and maintained with the protection of confidentiality, the coach will be required to provide feedback to the DS, boards/committees, and the OCD on areas in which specific goals and benchmarks have been set for the new church development project. Discussions between the coach and the managing stakeholders (DS, boards/committees, and OCD), and the church planter, will be focused on identified goals and not behavioral changes.

The coach, church planter, and the managing stakeholders will operate under the relationship boundaries outlined in this document. Identifying specific goals and benchmarks, length of coaching contracts, confidentiality, and hopeful outcomes are just some of the parameters that will help communicate results during the coaching process. Such examples include: Helping the church planter discover, clarify, and align with the approved project/ministry plan; Encouraging self-discovery; Elicit planter-generated solutions and strategies; and hold the planter responsible and accountable. The coach will provide monthly written reports to the managing stakeholders that will offer insight on how the coaching sessions are progressing toward identified goals and benchmarks, both personal and project related. It is important that the coach provide such input to the managing stakeholders to ensure progress, while at the same time maintain appropriate confidentiality.

The Board Liaison: Communications Role

While a new church development project is being funded and resourced by the Board of Congregational Development, a BoCD Liaison will be assigned to the church planter. The objectives of the liaison are: To improve communications and clarity between the boards/committees, the church planter, the district superintendent, and the OCD; to offer a different set of eyes on the project and provide report-backs as necessary, based on timelines and parameters of any funding/resourcing; to enable early identification of any problems or concerns raised and to support effective discussion/action to resolve such issues; and to enable early identification of developments or opportunities where the boards/committees involvement/action would advance success.

The efforts of the liaison is to foster good communications and clarity in how the boards/committees relate to the church planter and the new church development project, specific to funding and resourcing, goals and benchmarks, and progress or decline in efforts. This work can allow the planter and the managing stakeholders to continually learn and build personal and professional capacity to accomplish the mission of the church. The liaison will check in occasionally with the church planter in order to provide encouragement, answer questions, address expectations, run interference on issues, and report valuable feedback to the managing stakeholders, all in an effort to cultivate good communications.

The Office of Congregational Development: Resourcing & Mentoring Role

The Office of Congregational Development will be the primary contact for resourcing all of our church planters and new church development projects, through training, best practices, program assistance, and strategic implementation. The Director of Strategic Faith Community Development will lead this resourcing and interaction. Specific to determining appropriate resources to support a planter/project will be the activity of mentoring. Mentoring is a long-term role, engaged to cultivate stronger planters and viable projects. While coaching is task-oriented, mentoring is relationship oriented. The focus is to provide a safe environment where the planter can share whatever issues affect her/his professional and personal success. Although specific learning goals or competencies may be used as a basis for creating the relationship, its focus goes beyond these areas to include things such as work/life balance (Sabbath), self-confidence, self-perception, clarity of call, and how the "personal" influences the "professional."

Mentoring is also development driven. Its purpose is to develop the individual, not only for the current project/plant, but also for future ministry vocation. This makes the role of the mentor distinctively different than that of immediate supervisor. Consequently, the mentor will work in close cooperation with the district superintendent, particularly in determining the needs of the planter and the best strategies to encourage success. The OCD, specific to the mentoring role, will be proactive in interacting with the district superintendent, the board/committee liaison, and the coach, to best advance movement toward overall objectives, "next steps," appropriate resources, vital assessment, and a rhythm of multiplication. The OCD will provide administrative support to the planter/plant related to approved funding and designated resources, as necessary.

Ministry Plan Development

New Church Development Projects

Prepared by
 Rev. Dr. William D. Gibson
 Director of Strategic Faith Community Development
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Thank you for your interest in engaging in a new church development project. Church planting is an incredible adventure that requires specific gifts, skills, passion, and stamina. However, all of these items cannot find fruitfulness without a compelling vision and a comprehensive ministry plan. To help you identify the personal tools, and support an emerging vision, the Office of Congregational Development (OCD) requires each potential planter to go through an assessment process. If you have not yet contacted the OCD or been assessed for this work, please email William Gibson (wgibson@greaternw.org) before submitting a new church development proposal.

Instructions:

Beginning January 1, 2016, the OCD and our boards/committees are requiring a consistent format for all proposals of new church development projects, which will foster ministry plan development. The purpose for this new format is two fold: 1) We want to provide a framework that offers the managing stakeholders (District Superintendent, boards/committees, and OCD) clarity in understanding the vision, intent, leadership, growth, metrics, and expectations; and 2) We want to foster the development of a good ministry plan that will support the fruitfulness and multiplication of the project.

Additionally, as an underlying work, it is the hope of the managing stakeholders to cultivate a sense of **theological entrepreneurship**. Think of a theological entrepreneur as someone who works *"to creatively exploit opportunities that reveal how our theology intersects culture in ways that put theory into action. This action centers on making disciples in a specific missional context and is deeply rooted in a grounded vision of God, which cultivates personal piety and social holiness. It happens through ministry plan development, gathering stewarded resources (people and financial support), and establishing appropriate metrics. These efforts operate within our church polity and work synergistically with civic/community programs and services"* (my working definition). Theological entrepreneurship represents a willingness for "disruptive innovation" that fosters a "build-measure-learn" movement that is risk-taking and accountable to the mission of making disciples.

It is the hope of the OCD to encourage a common language with the potential planter/planting team, to advance a more comprehensive ministry plan, and to raise the bar of expectation. In doing so, we have created a common format that will be delivered in the form of an Executive Summary. You must use this format and headers, which is outlined as follows:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: (Insert Title)

- Overview
- Mission Field
- Supporting Vision

- Key Considerations
- Key Strategic Goals
- Community Impact
- Contact Information

As you will notice in the remainder of this document, each main section has a list of prompting questions or instructions. These questions/prompts should become **subheadings of the sections**, which will assist in organizing your plan. **It is extremely important that each question be addressed in the proposal.**

The use of photos/images or other graphic elements (charts/graphs, illustrations, etc.) are appropriate and helpful, particularly in communicating your vision.

In order to force critical and concise thinking, particularly in naming opportunities, goals, and strategies, **each individual question is limited to no more than a 100-word response.** Please narrow your work. This will help you communicate the necessary movement from “bold vision” to “practical steps.”

In a separate document, prepare a proposal, using the following format and questions as your prompt.

NOTE: All new church development projects follow the appointment cycle and will begin on July 1 of each year, unless there are special circumstances. Therefore, the sooner you complete this work the quicker all managing stakeholders (which includes the Cabinet for deployment) can assess and respond to your proposal during the evaluation process.

Ministry Plan Format & Questions:

Please answer the following questions in each category/heading. Remember, each question/prompt is limited to 100 words in your response (with the exception of listing the qualifications of yourself and your leadership team).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Document Title: “EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: (Insert Your Title Here)”

OVERVIEW:

- In brief, describe the vision you have for a new church/community of faith.
- How have you discovered where God is already stirring in the greater community, which would give rise to such a vision?
- Tell us why you feel compelled to respond to God and the unfolding vision?
- In what ways do you believe you are gifted and equipped to lead this new initiative?
 - *NOTE: Please also include your resume or CV as an addendum to this proposal*
- Tell us who is a part of your launch team and why these leaders have committed to join you in this effort?

MISSION FIELD:

- Tell us about your mission field.
- Explain your impressions of the cultural context of this new project.
- Who is your target audience and why?
- What is your proposed **strategy** for intersecting this mission field?

NOTE: While there are a number of different strategies for planting new churches, we are listing the primary strategies we hope to pursue in the GNW, with an explanation of each, so that you can determine which best fits your plan (which might represent a combination of strategies). If your strategy/model is not listed, please provide explanation when you answer the above question (see Fresh Expressions (freshexpressionsus.org) for consideration). Below are the strategies to consider and name:

1. **Multisite/Expansion/Cohort strategy:** A new faith community meeting at a new site remains part of a sponsoring church or cohort, even as they may develop a distinct staff and ministry team system. Multi-sites vary in pastoral and staffing strategies. They typically have a site pastor — who may or may not be the lead preacher/teacher/communicator at the site.
2. **Intentional Multiethnic strategy:** This strategy results in an intentionally multi-ethnic church plant that worships as one integrated body to create a unique cultural expression and reflect all groups involved. This is what the kingdom of God is supposed to look like, so why not intentionally plant churches that are integrated and inclusive? This strategy reflects the work of the Holy Spirit to bring together as one in Christ a multitude of cultural, racial, and ethnic groups.
3. **Partner Church/Multiple "Parent" strategy:** An existing United Methodist congregation (or, perhaps, several churches) serves as an anchoring, sponsoring, or partnering force in launching a new church. This could be a cluster of partnering churches or a combination of partner church(es) and another entity (e.g. a United Methodist campus ministry, retirement home, or church agency).
4. **Church-Within-A-Church strategy:** In a world of very expensive real estate, many new churches will share space with other churches (both partner churches and other collegial congregations). Existing congregations choosing to share property may find that new churches may better serve their immediate neighborhoods, especially when the new church specializes in a certain racial-ethnic culture and/or a certain generation or social group.
5. **Refocusing/Repurposing/Closing strategy:** Currently, as our church experiences decline, there are often more churches being closed (or on the verge of having to close), than there are new churches being planted. What if we intentionally chose to explore these settings as opportunities to refocus/repurpose a church/congregation as a part of something new? In this strategy, the new church begins to address the needs and culture of a community and population that may have changed significantly (or when the church has declined because of the lack of community engagement).
6. **Vital Merger strategy:** Most of the time, mergers do not truly create new churches. Two declining churches typically agree to share one facility and decline together rather than alone. However, a strategy exists that can require both of the merging churches to sell their buildings, pool the funds, move to a temporary location, find a new name, receive a trained planter, cultivate a new compelling vision, and proceed as a new church. In this strategy, leadership of the planter is critical.
7. **House Church strategy:** This may well be the oldest strategy for church planting that exists, certainly reaching back to Asia Minor in the first century, and also to frontier America when the population was very sparse. House churches are typically small, limited to the number that can fit in a home or a small meeting place. They are often lay-led, with clergy visiting to bring the Sacraments. House churches may organize into networks, akin to circuits of very small congregations.

8. **Classic Missionary strategy:** This used to be the primary strategy of our church several years ago, often referred to as a “parachute drop.” However, as results indicated, it produces the least success and fruitfulness of all church planting strategies employed. And while we have all but “dropped” it from our current list of options, there are occasions, based on circumstances, experience of the planter/launch team, and/or geographic locations, where this strategy may be an appropriate option.

- Why do you believe this is the best strategy for your project?
- Where will you launch this new church/community of faith?
- Have you conducted a MissionInsite study of the area? If so, what does this information reveal to you? How do you interpret the data?

SUPPORTING VISION:

- Who will be your partners/supporters in this ministry?

NOTE: Expand on the Stakeholders, Leadership team, Non-profits, Community partners, etc.

- Expand on the timeline of your strategic plan for at least the first three years.
- How will you engage your mission field?
- What does your discipleship system look like?

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- How will you measure growth and fruitfulness? How will you know you are succeeding?
- What are the benchmarks you will use to determine this (e.g. worship attendance, missional engagement, small groups, new disciples, stories of transformation, etc.)?
- What is your stewardship/funding strategy for the first three years? What other sources are you pursuing in your efforts to raise funds for your initial planning/launch phase(s)?
- What are your leadership development strategies? Who are you investing in and why?
- Describe your plan for multiplication (leaders, groups, disciples, other sites/plants, etc.).
- What is your plan for securing a coach during the first year of this project? What about in year two and three?
- What training do you hope to pursue to help you prepare for the different stages/phases of church planting?
- What does your projected budget look like over the first 5 years?
- How much funding are you requesting for this project?

NOTE: Explain the usage and distribution of funds.

KEY STRATEGIC GOALS:

- Provide a list of your strategic goals for this project.

KEY STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

- Provide a list of what you see as strategic outcomes for this project.

COMMUNITY IMPACT:

- Describe the community impact and transformation you see as a result of moving forward with this project.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

- Please provide your contact information, to include: Name, Address, Phone, Email, etc.

Questions & Submitting Your Proposal:

Again, thank you for your interest in new church development and for your willingness to share your vision. Upon completion of this proposal, please email this proposal to William Gibson (wgibson@greaternw.org) so that it can be reviewed and distributed to the managing stakeholders.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Rev. Dr. William D. Gibson
Director of Strategic Faith Community Development
Office of Connectional Ministries
The Pacific Northwest Conference of The United Methodist Church
The Greater Episcopal Area
816 South 216th Street #2, Des Moines, WA 98198
1.800.755.7710 Ext. 334
Email: wgibson@greaternw.org

"Measuring Ministry"

New Church Development Quarterly Report

This Quarterly Report is for the following dates: **[ENTER DATES HERE]**

Name of New Church Development Project: **[RESPONSE HERE]**

Planter(s): **[RESPONSE HERE]**

District Superintendent: **[RESPONSE HERE]**

Coach: **[RESPONSE HERE]**

BoCD Liaison: **[RESPONSE HERE]**

Instructions:

Please complete the Quarterly Report by entering your responses below. In the narrative portions of the report feel free to provide image/photos or other examples (as appropriate) that will help paint a better picture of your responses. Please be as detailed as possible in the numbers section, as you will be asked to link the numerical data to the emerging narrative.

Please email this report to Patrick Ferguson (pferguson@pnwumc.org) as soon as possible. Patrick will forward them to your District Superintendent, your coach, and your BoCD liaison. It is important that you provide these reports, as they are directly linked to the work of all managing stakeholders and all funding and resources.

Previous Quarter Report (NARRATIVE):

1. Describe the top life-giving moments that offer you hope and confirmation of the unfolding vision.

2. Tell us about a challenging situation (or situations) that has caused you to rethink and modify your strategies.

3. Share with us a particular outing or intentional time with your family that was renewing in multiple ways.

4. How are you doing? How are you allowing God more room in your life and journey?

5. What major component from your strategic plan did you implement or continue during this quarter, and what have been the results?

6. Provide the names and stories of three new people you have engaged during this quarter and how you were able to provide pastoral care, counsel, encouragement, and/or empowerment to these people.

7. Provide the names and stories/updates/evaluations of new (or potentially new) people for your core group or launch team.

8. Briefly share a story (or more) of transformation you have observed in the community during this quarter. This can be related to an individual, a family, or a ministry initiative (if it has not already been shared in this report).

9. Tell us of the new relationships you have established this quarter with community partners, as a part of your efforts to lead your new church (non-profits, community businesses, civic organizations, etc.).

10. Overall, how would you assess the current progress, setbacks, or stagnation? How do you believe your answer informs your “next steps” on this journey?

11. Please provide us a prayer list so that we know how best to be praying for you and specific circumstances or needs.

Previous Quarter Report (NUMBERS):

1. Provide the weekly worship/gathering attendance for this quarter (list each of the 12 weeks):

Worship/Gathering Attendance	
Week 1:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 2:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 3:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 4:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 5:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 6:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 7:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 8:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 9:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 10:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 11:	[RESPONSE HERE]
Week 12:	[RESPONSE HERE]
WEEKLY AVERAGE:	[RESPONSE HERE]

1b. What correlation can you identify with your average attendance and parts of the narrative measurements you have provided in the previous section of this report?

[RESPONSE HERE]

2. How many people from your new church/community of faith have been engaged in ministry in the greater community (outside the walls of the church) during this quarter?

Number of people engaged in ministry:	
Total number for all combined weeks:	[RESPONSE HERE]

2b. What is your impression of this engagement (is it superficial, meaningful, life-giving, etc.)? (Please elaborate)

[RESPONSE HERE]

2c. What correlation can you identify with number of people engaged in ministry and parts of the narrative measurements you have provided in the previous section of this report?

[RESPONSE HERE]

3. What has been the average giving over this past quarter?

Average giving over the past quarter:	
Total average for all combined weeks:	[RESPONSE HERE]

3b. Are you seeing the desired response to your stewardship/giving strategies? (Please elaborate)

[RESPONSE HERE]

3c. If not, what new strategies will you initiate? (Please elaborate)

[RESPONSE HERE]

3d. What correlation can you identify with average giving over the past quarter and parts of the narrative measurements you have provided in the previous section of this report?

[RESPONSE HERE]

4. How much money have you invested in ministry, missions, outreach, or causes that have had a direct impact on the transformation of the greater community you serve (excluding rent/mortgage, power, admin, maintenance, etc.)?

Money invested in the community:	
Total for all combined weeks:	[RESPONSE HERE]

4b. What correlation can you identify with total money invested in the community and parts of the narrative measurements you have provided in the previous section of this report?

[RESPONSE HERE]

4c. What kind of creative steps have you taken that would cultivate strategies that foster sustainability for your new church (fundraising (not fundraiser), partnerships, collaboration, multiplication, etc.)?

[RESPONSE HERE]

Process for “Chartering” (Organizing) a New Church

Prepared by
Rev. Dr. William D. Gibson
Director of Strategic Faith Community Development
wgibson@greaternw.org

The work of new church development is engaged in order to actively participate in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. As a result, the goal is to establish a community of faith in a specific neighborhood, area, or region that continues to thrive, and to create new opportunities for people to find grace, peace, and hope. As this community of faith becomes a vital congregation, we will move to organize the new church into a charge conference, representing the basic governing body of the newly organized church, within the connexional system of the UMC.

The organization of the charge conference is central to the chartering process of a new United Methodist Church. The charge conference directs the work of the church, provides general oversight to the administrative or church council, reviews and evaluates the mission and ministry of the church, sets salaries for the pastor and staff, elects the members of the church council, and recommends candidates for ordained ministry. Additionally, the charge conference provides a way for members, who have been received while the new start was organized as a mission congregation, to be transferred from the general church membership roll of the annual conference to the roll of the new church. These members become “charter” members of the newly organized and constituted church.

Below is an outline of the process, by which we will constitute and organize new churches, as prescribed by the *Discipline* of the UMC.

Steps to Chartering New Churches:

1. Financial Sustainability:

As a new church looks to organize and constitute, it has to show financial sustainability. As a guide, the numerical size of the congregation should consist of approximately 75 to 125+ in average worship/participation. There should be an appropriate number of leaders for UMC approved board/leadership structures, systems of governance, and good financial protocols in place.

There must be a budgetary plan in place supported by an appropriate number of committed giving units, which support the ministry focus of the church’s work in the greater community it is “charged” to serve. Except in rare occasions, which require approval, the budget must support the salary, pension and insurance, and general operating expenses (rent/mortgage, utilities, insurance, maintenance, etc.). The budgetary plan must also accommodate the projected payments of apportionments, which will ramp up over a period of four years in the following targeted percentages (percentages of annual budget):

Year 1 – 3% (first full year organized, beginning January 1)

Year 2 – 6.5%

Year 3 – 10%

Year 4 – 14% (representing an approximate full share)

2. Review by Office of Congregational Development, District Superintendent, and Conference

Treasurer:

The Developer and District Superintendent will meet with the planter/pastor-in-charge, along with the new church's leadership team, to ensure the new church meets the outlined parameters for financial sustainability and shows promise and hope for multiplication on the horizon. The Conference Treasurer will review current financial data and the budgetary plan of the new church (financial data and budget provided in advance of the meeting).

If approved, the Developer will prepare a recommendation for the appropriate boards and committees. Upon affirmation, the board/committee will make a recommendation to the Cabinet that the new church be constituted and organized.

3. Recommendation to the Greater Northwest Cabinet:

On behalf of the appropriate board/committee, the Developer, in cooperation with the District Superintendent, will bring the recommendation to the Cabinet for approval and next steps. The District Superintendent and Developer will share a brief celebratory report.

4. District Superintendent Convenes Stakeholders:

Upon approval by the Cabinet, the District Superintendent will convene the stakeholders (planter/pastor, church leadership, Developer, board liaison, etc.) per paragraph 259.5 of the *Discipline*. The purpose of this meeting is to organize members into a chartered (organized) local church. Those who have been previously received into membership, through the annual conference secretary and held on the general church roll, will be transferred to the rolls of the local church, becoming charter members.

The "constituting church conference" will then be called to order by the District Superintendent and will receive nominations from the floor for the proposed church council (see paragraph 259.8). These leaders will likely be represented in part (or in full) by the previous leadership team of the new church while it operated as a mission congregation. When the members of the church council have been chosen, the District Superintendent shall declare the new church properly constituted.

5. District Superintendent Calls to Order the Charge Conference:

After adjourning the constituting church conference, the District Superintendent shall call to order the "charge conference" of the pastoral charge. Membership of the charge conference is represented through the elected leaders of the constituted church conference (see paragraph 259.9). The charge conference will then elect "such officers of the church as the *Discipline* requires, including trustees of church property, and shall organize its structure as provided by the *Discipline*. Upon the election of the officers and when the appropriate structure is established, the church is duly organized. The charge conference may take action, at its discretion,

authorizing and directing the newly elected trustees to incorporate the newly organized church in accordance with local laws and the provisions of the *Discipline*." (Paragraph 259.10)

6. Charter Certificate is Prepared:

Upon being officially chartered (organized), a certificate of charter will be prepared by the Cabinet and signed by the Resident Bishop.

7. Celebration with the Congregation:

The newly chartered church will organize a celebration gathering, which should be in the form of a worship service. Following a time of worship, where the District Superintendent (or Bishop) will preach, a certificate of charter will be presented to the planter/pastor-in-charge, received on behalf of the entire congregation.

Conference communication staff members will cover this event, and a celebratory story will be published and shared through all available conference and area media sources.

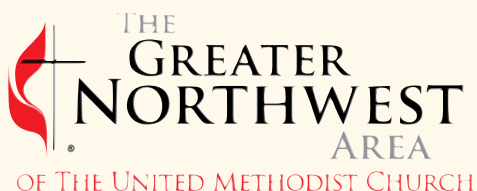
8. Cabinet Supervision (Hand-off from board/committee supervision):

The chartering process will represent an intentional hand-off from board/committee/Office of Congregational Development supervision to the Cabinet, who will then take over all associated supervisory oversight for the newly organized church, under the direct supervision of the District Superintendent.

9. Administrative Accountability to the Annual Conference:

The newly organized church then begins paying apportionments (as outlined in step 1), holds annual charge conferences, completes full annual statistical reporting, and continues to be in ministry to and with its greater community in ways that foster continued multiplication, both individually and corporately.

Multiplication efforts of newly chartered churches will be supported by the Office of Congregational Development, under the guidance of the District Superintendent, the "chief missional strategist."



Coaching Contract NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

COACHING CONTRACT FOR PLANTER: **Enter Planter Name Here**

NewChurch DevelopmentName:	Click here to enter text.
Planter(s):	Click here to enter text.
District Superintendent:	Click here to enter text.
Coach:	Click here to enter text.
Board/Committee Liaison:	Click here to enter text.

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW:

The purpose of this document is to outline the primary roles of the Coach, District Superintendent, Board/Committee Liaison, and the Office of Congregational Development (all collectively the “managing stakeholders”) as they relate to supporting our church planters/plants in the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area (GNW). While the descriptions on the following pages provide an overview of primary roles, there may be situations that find overlap. It is our hope, especially related to our coaching strategies, that this document offers clarity for each role as we work to become more effective and efficient in our work to plant and grow new churches and to develop solid leaders.

We welcome any input from coaches on the approach to support our planters, and in how this support is shaped for our unique cultural context. We look forward to a fruitful relationship, which we initiate through the parameters set forth in this document. Welcome to the team!

Rev. Dr. William D. Gibson

Director of Strategic Faith Community Development

Office of Congregational Development

The Greater Northwest Episcopal Area

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206.870.6802 Ext. 334 | wgibson@pnwumc.org | greaternw.org

GREATER NORTHWEST CONTEXT:

Our ministry context in the GNW provides all the elements of an awesome adventure, as together we work on creating new places for new people. When we talk about organizing a new United Methodist church, we are talking about a specific kind of new project, which has the following characteristics, according to Path1 New Church Starts at Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church:

1. They are theologically Wesleyan
2. They worship frequently and celebrate the sacraments
3. They have effective systems for developing disciples
4. They teach and practice biblical stewardship
5. They are missional and work toward community transformation
6. They receive new members
7. They will embed multiplying DNA in all ministries and will plant another new church in 3 to 5 years
8. They will remain connected and accountable to The United Methodist Church

Within the guiding characteristics above, our ministry context demands creativity and innovation in reaching unchurched and disconnected people. The GNW is one of the vast “None zone” where religiously unaffiliated “Nones” and disconnected “Dones” represent large numbers in the United States.

In supporting the work of church planters and leaders in this ministry context, we have characterized the roles in the sections that follow below, specifically related to the coaching process and the coaching relationship to the project and other managing stakeholders.

CONFERENCE BOARD/COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Primarily responsible for the oversight and supervision of the planter and the new church development project during the defined funding cycle, within the bounds of the conference.
2. Appoint a coach and maintain regular contact.
3. Receive monthly reports from the appointed coach, through the Office of Congregational Development, about the progress of the plant and the growth of the planter and connect as necessary with the coach and planter to give feedback, process any ongoing issues, and ensure a healthy coach/planter relationship is maintained.

4. Maintain regular contact with the planter.
5. There will be ongoing contact with the planter on the progress of the ministry as well as the relationship of the church planter with the other partners. Process the monthly progress reports and any requests for training/funding.

THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT ROLE: SUPERVISORY & OVERSIGHT

Per The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (BOD), the District Superintendent (DS) is the “chief missional strategist” of the district. This is especially important in the work related to new church development. In paragraph 419 of the BOD, it states, “The district superintendent shall oversee the total ministry of the clergy (including clergy in extension ministry and ministry beyond the local church) and of the churches in the communities of the district in their mission of witness and service in the world.” The paragraph continues with, “In the framework of their supervisory responsibilities, superintendents shall offer support, care, and counsel to clergy concerning matters affecting their effective ministry” (BOD, 419.6). “The superintendent shall seek to be in regular contact with the clergy on the district for counsel and supervision, and shall receive written or electronic reports of the clergy’s continuing education, spiritual practices, current ministry work, and goals” (BOD, 419.7).

In relationship to new church development, and in cooperation with the appropriate conference boards/committees, the Office of Congregational Development, the DS facilitates the implementation of work-based learning, while providing support that enables the planter to engage in the project activities. The DS will work in cooperation with the board/committee, coach, and the Office of Congregational Development in support of our church planters, taking the lead in the supervisory and oversight role.

THE PROFESSIONAL COACH ROLE: COACHING

A professional coach who is assigned by the appropriate board/committee or the Office of Congregational Development shall work to support identified goals, related to a specific new church development project and with a specific church planter. Coaching is task-oriented and focuses on concrete issues, such as learning how to think strategically and develop skills. Coaching is a short-term role, designed around a specific project that is identified by the board/committee and the Office of Congregational Development. It is performance-driven and involves the enhancing of current skills or the acquiring of new skills. While the coach and church planter relationship shall be created and maintained with the protection of confidentiality, the coach will be required to provide feedback to the DS, board/committee, and the Office of Congregational Development on areas in which specific goals and benchmarks have been set for the new church development project. Discussions between the coach and the managing stakeholders (DS, board/committee, and Office of Congregational Development) and the church planter will be focused on identified goals and not behavioral changes.

The coach, church planter, and the managing stakeholders will operate under the relationship boundaries outlined in this document. Identifying specific goals and benchmarks, length of coaching contracts, confidentiality, and hopeful outcomes are just some of the parameters that will help communicate results during the coaching process. Such examples include: helping the church planter discover, clarify, and align with the approved project/ministry plan; encouraging self-discovery; elicit planter-generated solutions and strategies; and hold the planter responsible and accountable. The coach will provide monthly written reports to the managing stakeholders, through the Office of

Congregational Development, that will offer insights on how the coaching sessions are progressing toward identified goals and benchmarks, both personal and project-related. It is important that the coach provide such input to the managing stakeholders to ensure progress, while at the same time maintain appropriate confidentiality.

THE BOARD/COMMITTEE LIAISON ROLE: COMMUNICATIONS

While a new church development project is being funded and resourced by a conference board/committee, a board/committee Liaison will be assigned to the church planter. The objectives of the liaison are: to improve communications and clarity among the board/committee, the church planter, the district superintendent, and the Office of Congregational Development; to offer a different set of eyes on the project and provide report-backs as necessary, based on timelines and parameters of any funding/resourcing; to enable early identification of any problems or concerns raised and to support effective discussion/action to resolve such issues; and to enable early identification of developments or opportunities where board/committee involvement/action would advance success.

The efforts of the liaison is to foster good communications and clarity in how the board/committee relates to the church planter and the new church development project, specific to funding and resourcing, goals and benchmarks, and progress or decline in efforts. This work can allow the planter and the managing stakeholders to continually learn and build personal and professional capacity to accomplish the mission of the church. The liaison will check in occasionally with the church planter in order to provide encouragement, answer questions, address expectations, run interference on issues, and report valuable feedback to the managing stakeholders, all in an effort to cultivate good communications.

THE OFFICE OF CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ROLE: RESOURCING & MENTORING

The Office of Congregational Development will be the primary contact for resourcing all of our church planters and new church development projects, through training, shared practices, program assistance, and strategic implementation. The Director of Strategic Faith Community Development will lead this resourcing and interaction. Specific to determining appropriate resources to support a planter/project will be the activity of mentoring. Mentoring is a long-term role, engaged to cultivate stronger planters and viable projects. While coaching is task-oriented, mentoring is relationship-oriented. The focus is to provide a safe environment where the planter can share whatever issues affect her/his professional and personal success. Although specific learning goals or competencies may be used as a basis for creating the relationship, its focus goes beyond these areas to include things such as work-life balance (Sabbath), self-confidence, self-perception, clarity of call, and how the “personal” influences the “professional.”

Mentoring is also development-driven. Its purpose is to develop the individual, not only for the current project/plant, but also for future ministry vocation. This makes the role of the mentor distinctively different from that of immediate supervisor. Consequently, the mentor will work in close cooperation with the DS, particularly in determining the needs of the planter and the best strategies to encourage success. The Office of Congregational Development, specific to the mentoring role, will be proactive in interacting with the DS, the board/committee liaison, and the coach, to best advance movement toward overall objectives, next steps, appropriate resources, vital assessment, and a rhythm of multiplication. The OCD will provide administrative support to the planter/plant related to approved funding and designated resources, as necessary.

THE CHURCH PLANTER'S ROLE:

The planter has four overall responsibilities:

1. Assume primary responsibility, under the authority and supervision of the DS, for the ministry growth of the new church project.
2. Take the initiative in setting and meeting goals and benchmarks for developing/ planting the new church in the prescribed ministry context (together with the coach, Office of Congregational Development, and their leadership team).
3. Maintain healthy relationships and interactions in a timely manner with various partners and managing stakeholders.
4. Be proactive at setting boundaries, engaging in proactive self-care, and keeping Sabbath.

Planting churches within a dominate American consumer culture requires tools, experience, and learning that have not previously existed in the toolboxes of most church leaders. In our 21st century post-Christian context, the art of theological entrepreneurship can present new gateways, windows, and doorways that lead us to a different expression of being church. It is important that the church planter is open to new learning and a willingness to engage in disruptive innovation with the coach and other managing stakeholders.

The GNW is committed to supporting and fostering proactive and productive relationships between the planter(s), the managing stakeholders, and especially the coach. In their Path1 article, “Coaches and Mentors: Every Church Planter Needs Them,” Jim Griffith and Don Nations explain, “The presence of a good coach does not guarantee the success of a church plant, nor does the absence of such a coach guarantee the failure of a church plant. The presence of a coach does, however, increase the likelihood of success. Additionally, a coach can help the church-planting system refine its efforts and improve its process.”

In an effort to provide clarity for all managing stakeholders, and to demonstrate our commitment to quality coaching and support of our new church development projects and church planter(s), we have provided the following initial GNW coaching agreement. While the noted sections are required for clarity, there is a section for added and/or negotiated terms for the coach to include in the agreement/contract.

GNW Coaching Agreement

Client: GNW Office of Congregational Development — **Planter:** Name of Client
Coach/Company: Name of Coach

The purpose of this instrument is to provide a framework for developing your coaching contact. Every coaching situation and relationship is unique. This instrument is meant to be flexible and allows you to custom design a contract/agreement appropriate to your unique relationship. It will ordinarily be wise for both the coach and client to do some independent work and then come together to discuss and design the final agreement and mutual expectations.

Coaching is for individuals who are emotionally and psychologically healthy and who want to make changes and move forward in their lives. Coaching is not advice, therapy, or counseling. The coach is not a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker, or other medical or mental health professional. In coaching, clients are responsible for their decisions.

Coaching takes a little time to develop. Consequently, think of the process in quarterly sections, which are represented in three-month seasons.

Coaching is a collaborative conversation that helps you gain clarity and insights. It is focused purely on your agenda. It is not about giving advice or making suggestions. Coaching helps you discover the right way to progress.

How Meetings Work:

The coach and client will set dates for regular monthly calls. On the scheduled date and time, the client will call the coach or meet at a predetermined location. Primary Number: Phone # of Coach or skype: Skype handle

Calls will be once a month, no more than one hour each.

Coaching needs to be consistent. The coach will hold a place for the client in his/her schedule, and the client can reschedule the coaching session with 48 hours' notice. Two hours' notice will be accepted in special circumstances, such as illness or family emergency.

If the coach has a conflict, the coach will email or text you. In case of an emergency, the coach will text or call you as soon as possible. If you have a conflict or emergency, call or text the coach at Phone # of Coach.

The coach will be distraction-free during the coaching session, and it is expected that the client will make a concerted effort to be distraction-free as well.

Between coaching sessions, you may feel free to email the coach at email address of coach.

Missed Session:

It is the client's responsibility to initiate the coaching call. The coach will be ready at the designated time. The coach will wait 10 minutes past the agreed-upon time. If the client does not call within the 10 minutes, the hour will be charged to the client, and the coach will move on to other tasks.

Cancellation:

Terminating the coaching relationship can be done at each three-month interval.

The coach reserves the right to terminate the coaching relationship at any time if needed, and if the coach terminates, the coach will return a prorated amount of the client's payment.

Terms:

Payment will be \$125 per month for 12 months of coaching, for a total of \$1,500. This includes one one-hour coaching sessions per month.

A payment of \$1,250 will be made for one day-long onsite consultation with the planter and her/his launch team. The client also will pay travel costs, airfare, hotel, and local transportation, as necessary.

The client may also engage the coach through email and quick phone calls as necessary between monthly calls/visits, at no additional cost to the client.

Other terms: Insert terms here

The total cost for this contract/agreement is \$2,750 per year. The first payment of \$1,500 may be sent, along with a signed copy of this contract/agreement, to the indicated address. The remainder of the fee (\$1,250, plus expenses) is due upon completion of the onsite consultation.

Checks can be made payable to: Name of Coach.

Payments can be mailed to: Address of Coach.

Confidentiality:

The coaching relationship is built on trust. The coach agrees to keep all conversations and information, with the client private and confidential. No personal ideas, information or thoughts expressed will be shared with anyone except with the client's permission. The exception is if the client presents a threat to themselves or to others. For more details about the interaction between the coach and the Office of Congregational Development, revisit THE PROFESSIONAL COACH Role: Coaching section of this document.

Liability:

The client is responsible for his/her own decisions, actions, and results. The client agrees to hold the coach free from all liability for any action, advice, consultation and results, or adverse situations resulting directly or indirectly from coaching-related communications between the parties, including but not limited to any losses caused by any negligence on the part of the coach. The client agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the coach from and against any and all liability or expense, including defense costs and legal fees incurred in connection with claims for damages of any nature whatsoever, including but not limited to bodily injury, death, personal injury, financial or business losses, workers' compensation, past or future lost earnings, damage to reputation, or property damage arising from the coach's performance or failure to perform obligations hereunder. The coach shall not be liable for any damages, loss, cost, or expenses, including incidental or consequential damages, of the client. The client's sole remedy against the coach shall be the replacement cost of coaching services.

Feedback:

If, at any time, the client feels that his/her needs are not being met or they are not getting what they want out of the coaching, they will tell the coach, so the coach can discuss the client's needs and adjust the coaching program, as needed. If during the process of coaching, the coach feels that he/

she is not a good fit for the client, the coach will recommend termination and help the client find a different coach.

Prep Form:

The coach will send a client a prep sheet, consisting of possible topics and a coaching direction for the session. Before each call, the client will spend a few minutes filling out and/or reflecting on the form and determining what the client would like to talk about during the call. The prep form should be emailed to the coach at email address of coach 48 hours before the coaching session begins.

Signatures:

AGREED TO AND ACCEPTED This _____ Day of _____ 20__

Name & Signature of Authorizing Agent for GNW
Address: P.O. Box 13650, Des Moines, WA 98198
Phone: 206.870.6802

Name & Signature of Planter

Name of Coach

Address: _____
Phone: _____

Signature of Coach

New Chruch Steps

<u>STEP</u>	<u>Timing</u>	<u>Process</u>
1	At Inception	<div><div>1</div><div>Obtain a GCNO number - Unique ID number in the UMC thru GCFA. Used for EZRA stats also</div><div>2</div><div>Conference staff will obtain in cooperation with church planter and NFC staff</div><div>3</div><div>GCFA calls multi-sites "satellites". All satellites must have a "parent church"</div><div>4</div><div>Other than multi-sites are called a "new start". GCFA requires all new starts to have either a "parent" church or a charge which is in essence a paying agent or sponsor church, but not an official parent church</div><div>5</div><div>BOCD support will be arranged between the Conference Treasurer and the "paying agent"</div></div>
2	Within first 3 months	<div><div>1</div><div>Go to irs.gov and search for "apply for EIN#". This is your unique federal tax ID number</div><div>2</div><div>When applying note as zero "0" employees. Otherwise the IRS will expect tax filings related to payroll</div><div>3</div><div>Open a bank account. You will need an EIN#</div><div>4</div><div>Prove non profit status via group letter ruling. EIN # needed. Contact Treasurer staff for "how to"</div><div>5</div><div>Prove non profit status before your own EIN# using the parent church or the Conference via cover letter</div></div>
3	Ready to Incorporate 2nd year or later	<div><div>1</div><div>With a basic Leadership Team in place you could be ready to incorporate. This requires more admin work.</div><div>2</div><div>Start with at least 3 corporate officers. President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Include DS as board member</div><div>3</div><div>Requires Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws - work with Conference treasurer for examples</div><div>4</div><div>When you're ready to take on your own P/R you will need a UBI # (unique state ID number)<div>This is to report hours worked for L&I , pay L&I taxes and have a valid independent non profit business license</div>Contact the Treasurers office for assistance in how to file incorporation papers and obtain a UBI#</div><div>5</div><div>You will need to begin quarterly wage reporting under your EIN# to the IRS</div><div>6</div><div>You will need a distinct accounting system to track gifts received, expenses, and operate with a budget</div></div>

Outline of the Financial Development for a New Church Start

- These organizational steps are driven by the need to handle money.
- The first step a new ministry needs to take is to secure a GCFA Number by request through the Conference Treasurer's office
 - This puts the ministry into the denominational system and begins the statistical tracking process
- The New Church pastor can then apply online for an EIN (Tax #) in preparation for banking purposes.
 - This is done at <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=102767,00.html>
- In order to open a bank account an EIN number and a treasurer should be in place.
 - Banks may require a Board resolution to do this. It is critically important that the pastor not use personal accounts to operate their ministry. There is great risk to them personally and to the ministry to do this.
 - The Conference Treasurer's office can assist with the issuing of the IRS Determination Letter establishing the ministry as a legitimate 501(c)3 organization. The group ruling letter application can be obtained from the GCFA website (www.gcfa.org).
 - Registering with the Secretary of State office may require incorporation, articles, and by-laws. Legal advice should be sought.
- Once money is being given on a regular basis, you will need to recruit a financial secretary to count and deposit the funds and report to the treasurer, who you will need to recruit to handle disbursements.
- When people are being paid honorariums a 1099 form must be filed for anyone who is paid \$600 or more during the year. This is required under Federal Tax Law. Persons you hired may need to be classified as employees, which will require withholding and filing of Appropriate IRS forms.
 - If they are working regularly for the ministry, they need to also have state labor insurance paid as well. This included pastors, musicians, janitors, etc. Get a UBI from the state where the ministry is taking place.
 - Cash payments or under the table payments are not acceptable.
 - Those working in childcare can be classified as volunteers with stipend.
 - ♣ If they are minors the state may require a minor work permit for the ministry.
 - ♣ Guidelines and training should be developed to ensure a safe environment for both the children and the childcare volunteers.
- Chartering of a new church is outlined in the Discipline paragraph 259 (**NOTE: See the Chartering document in this guide booklet**).

Once a new ministry has established its own bank account, has a Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and their own EIN and GCFA number, they may submit a developed budget to the Director of New Church Starts (BoCD) that contains at least two sections: Operations and Program. The budget should show both income and anticipated expenses.

The local church will continue to be the salary paying unit until the end of the tax year in order to keep W-2 information correct and clear records for tax purposes. Part of the Board of Congregational Development' support for your project is intended for program expenses. It would be best if those funds weren't used for the Pastor's salary or other expenses. The 20% reduction in salary support each year should be made up through tithes, offerings, and outside financial support. This will preserve program funds for the critical needs of the new faith community.

Program expenses and donations to the ministry will be transferred to the local church once the stipulations in paragraph #2 are met. Unspent balances will carry over into subsequent years and be part of the local church budget.

The BoCD staff will be tracking gifts to the new ministries and be able to provide giving data for gifts that come through the Conference Office.

An annual local church audit as outlined in The Discipline will be required of new church starts once they enter this stage of their development.

Once your ministry begins to meet regularly in your home or some other space, we need to have an address and description of the space in order to ensure that our insurance carrier is properly notified and coverage is provided. If you rent space and need a certificate of insurance showing your coverage, please contact the Treasurer's office or our broker directly.

OBTAINING A WA BUSINESS LICENSE

Once you have registered the business and confirmed that the business name you indicated in that process is available you can obtain a business license as follows

Go to: www.bls.dor.wa.gov

This will ultimately generate a UBI# which is the WA corporate ID # (the states version of the Federal EIN#) that you'll use on future state filings and issues as well as opening a WA State L&I account to pay payroll taxes.

1. Click on Apply, then click Get a WA State business license.
2. Walk thru the questions and let me know if any issues pop up. For most churches especially new churches many of the activities they ask about are not applicable. This registration is mostly about searching for taxable income for the state based on the activities of the corporation. Most churches are not doing activities that generate business & occupation taxes due to the state. By example running a Christian book store and selling books to members and the public would generate business tax owed as a retailer.
3. Be very careful about the employee questions. As with the Federal EIN# once you claim you have employees the governing agency will expect payroll tax reports and submissions.
4. A note here about clergy. Although taxed as self-employed individuals at the federal income tax level, they are treated as traditional employees for state purposes. Meaning that the church, as well as clergy, pays into the state's L&I workers compensation account for on the job injury compensation and medical costs.
5. A note here as well about "ESD" accounts for unemployment insurance. Church employees including clergy and lay staff cannot file at the state or federal level for unemployment benefits. Because of this neither the church nor the employee pays into the insurance fund.

III. PURPOSES

The purposes for which this corporation is formed are:

A. To carry out such ministries of The United Methodist Church as may be delegated to it by the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, including but not limited to all matters relating to Conference property, District parsonages, abandoned church property; to safeguard and protect the interest and rights of the Annual Conference including all matters relating to property and rights to property.

B. To engage in other activities exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

C. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

For the dissolution clause.....

In the event of a voluntary dissolution, the net assets will be distributed as follows: The net assets after satisfying the liabilities of the corporation shall be distributed entirely to The Trustees of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

REGISTER THE CORPORATION IN WA

Go to: www.sos.wa.gov/corps

1. Click on Start a Business and then select Non-Profit business
2. I suggest the on-line process even though it's \$20 more than using a paper form because it confirms the corporate name is available in real time.
3. When you start the application it will assign a number to your application and you start by selecting the corporate name. Enter the name and then click lookup. It will instantly confirm whether that name is available or not. You might need to add UMC or United Methodist Church to claim an unused name.
4. The form might ask for a UBI number – the WA state business license number. Leave it blank but if you have to put something in that field enter “applied for”. If you have to have a UBI we’ll cross that bridge then. It’s like the chicken and egg issue - which comes first. Register the business or get a business license.
5. I’ve attached a copy of the paper form with the answers for some of the questions like “effective Date” and “Tenure”.
6. I’ve attached the wording that you should type on separate pages and submit as they request as additional information for purposes and what if dissolution happens.
7. Include 3 as directors as well as the DS – using the Conference address and phone number for the DS. For the three directors from the church do not include the pastor and think of individuals who will fill the roles of President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
8. I suggest that the one who will be Treasurer will become the Registered Agent (use the church address) and the incorporator.

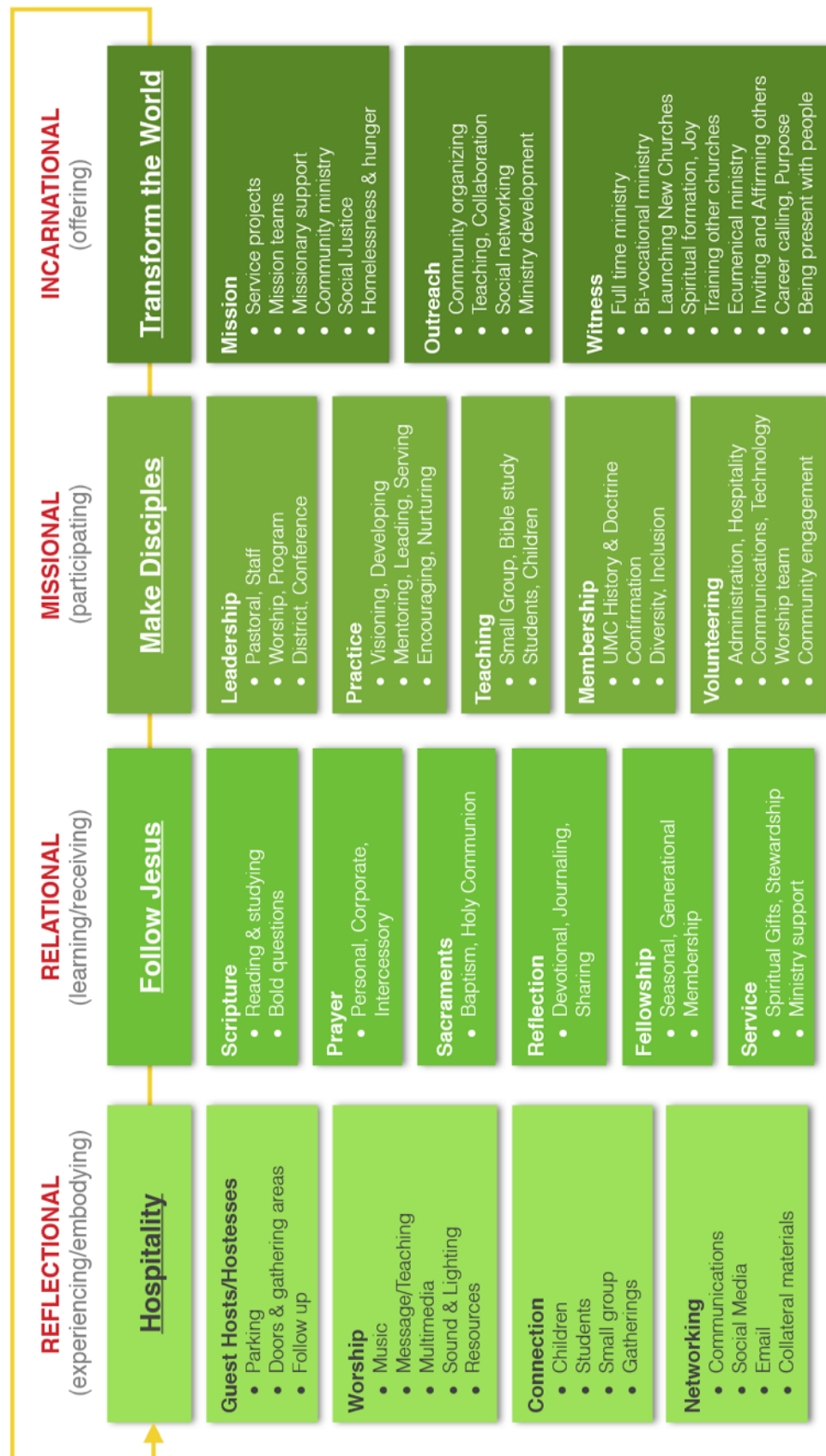
Development of Christian Community

HOW?

First Time Guest

Fully Devoted Follower of Christ

The development of Christian community is a reflection of Evangelism and Discipleship becoming one.



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Suggested Readings

The following is a list of recommended books/materials that may be helpful in your work. It is not an exhausted list and is updated regularly. Some books are from the business world, while some are the latest, useful books related to new strategies for the church.

Theological/Culture books

Christian Social Innovation: Renewing Wesleyan Witness

By L. Gregory Jones (2016)

Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory

By Tod Bolsinger (2015)

American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon

By Stephen Prothero (2003)

Consuming Religion: Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture

By Vincent J. Miller (2008)

Speaking Christian: Why Words Have Lost Their Meaning and Power — and How They Can be Restored

By Marcus J. Borg (2011)

From Tablet to Table: Where Community is Found and Identity is Formed

By Leonard Sweet (2014)

Working With Words: On Learning to Speak Christian

By Stanley Hauerwas (2011)

The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches are Transforming Mission ...

By Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen

Business/Entrepreneurship books

The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create ...

By Eric Ries (2011)

Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration

By Ed Catmull (2014)

All Marketers Are Liars: The Power of Telling Authentic Stories in a Low-Trust World

By Seth Godin (2005)

Buyology: Truth and Lies About Why We Buy

By Martin Lindstrom (2010)

Bright-sided: How Positive Thinking is Undermining America

By Barbara Ehrenreich (2009)

The Art of Choosing

By Sheena Iyengar (2010)

Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything

By Steven D. Levitt & Stephen J. Dubner (2009)

More Than Multisite: Inside Today's Models and Methods for Launching ...

A Barna Report (2016)

Theological/Culture books (continued)

Messy Church: Fresh Ideas for Building a Christ-Centered Community
By Moore and Leadbetter (2017)

The Bad Habits of Jesus: Showing Us the Way to Live Right in a World Gone Wrong
By Leonard Sweet

NUDGE: Awakening Each Other to the God Who is Already There
By Leonard Sweet

Culture Care: Reconnecting with Beauty for Our Common Life
By Makoto Fujimura

Race & Place: How Urban Geography Shapes the Journey to Reconciliation
By David P. Leong

The Gospel According to Disney: Faith, Trust, and Pixie Dust
By Mark I. Pinsky

Weird Church: Welcome to the Twenty-First Century
By Estock and Nixon

Business/Entrepreneurship books (continued)

The Start-Up J Curve: The Six Steps to Entrepreneurial Success
By Howard Love (2016)

A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix
By Edwin H. Friedman

On Managing Yourself
HBR's 10 Must Reads
By Harvard Business Review

On Strategy
HBR's 10 Must Reads
By Harvard Business Review

Contagious: Why Things Catch On
By Jonah Berger

Think Like a FREAK: The Authors of FREAKONOMICS Offer to Retrain your Brain
By Levitt and Dubner

Disney U: How Disney University Develops the World's Most Engaged, Loyal, and ...
By Doug Lipp

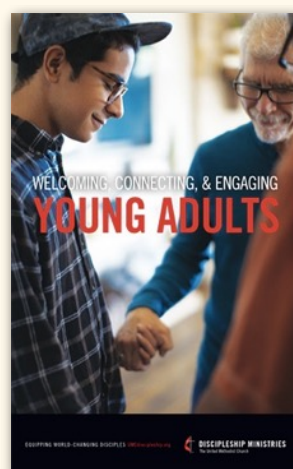
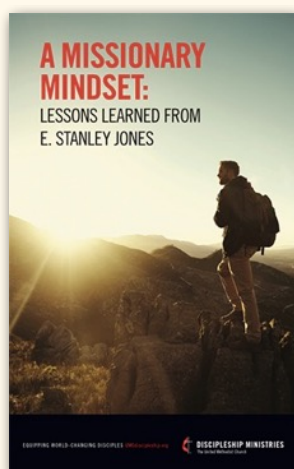
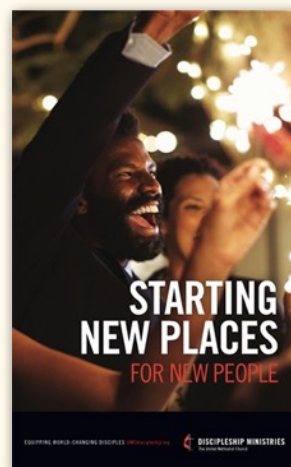
Orbiting the Giant Hairball: A Corporate Fool's Guide to Surviving with Grace
By Gordon MackKenzie

CONSUMED: How Markets Corrupt Children, Infantilize Adults, and Swallow Citizens Whole
By Benjamin R. Barber

Best Practices Are Stupid: How to Out-Innovate the Competition
By Stephen ?. Shapiro

Additional Resources from Discipleship Ministries and Path1

The following documents/booklets are available for download at <http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/about/resource-booklets> or by way of email (or our website resource page) from the Office of Congregational Development. While some of this information has been filtered into this orientation booklet for contextual application, you may also find additional, helpful information for your project/ministry.





Office of Congregational Development
Greater Northwest Episcopal Area
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