



Summary Sheet for the Vital Congregations Revitalization Initiative

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theology-formation-and-evangelism/vital-congregations/>

The Vital Congregations Revitalization Initiative is a program developed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency that works alongside mid-council leadership and leaders of existing congregations to assess, discern, and live into transformative actions that increase vitality. Through intentional spiritual practices and relational connections, this two-year process takes congregations deeper into following Jesus Christ, making disciples, and being the vital community of Christ throughout particular communities and the world. *Vital Congregations* hinges on seven discerned marks of vital congregations: lifelong discipleship formation, intentional authentic evangelism, outward incarnational focus, empowered service leadership, spirit-inspired worship, caring relationships, and ecclesial health. The Presbytery of Philadelphia is inviting small and mid-size congregations, whose membership does not exceed 300, to join us in this effort sponsored by our Ministry and Leadership Incubator.

Cost: \$600 *plus* travel to the Vital Congregations Training for pastor(s) and identified congregational leader(s)

- The \$600 includes scoring surveys and assessments through Vital Congregations
- Estimated cost to attend training is \$1,113 *per participant*; includes travel, lodging, meals, and programming for three days; grants of varying amounts are available through Vital Congregations and other sources; applications can be made available upon request
- Presbytery has earmarked \$15,000 to cover the cost of the facilitators, related training and annual stipends, and participation of identified Presbytery leaders

Key Dates (those pertinent to a church session are highlighted):

- Wednesday, September 25th at 1 p.m.: Informational Gathering at Presbytery Office with Vital Congregations
- November 1, 2019: Letter of intent from Presbytery to Vital Congregations
- November 25, 2019: 20 Presbyteries announced by Vital Congregations to participate in second-wave
- December 1, 2019: Letter of intent to participate from churches submitted to Presbytery
- February 1, 2020: Presbytery information due to Vital Congregations
- April 24-26, 2020: Training for Facilitators in Austin, TX
- April 27-30, 2020: Training for Presbyteries and Identified Congregational Leaders in Austin, TX (congregational leaders include identified pastor(s) and one officer per church, e.g. clerk of session)

Time Frame for Congregations: Two-year commitment; September 2020 through September 2022

Program Outline

- (Year 1) *Relational*: Authentic Relationships and Honest Assessment and Discernment of Congregations
- (Year 2) *Incarnational*: Revitalizing Church in 3 Actions, discern the appropriate track for congregation: *Re-forming* (re-envision and adaptation), *Missional Clustering* (revitalization for new communities of worship/ministry), *Death and Resurrection* (exploring death and legacy of congregation as moving towards new possibilities)

Next Steps for Congregational Participation

- Review Vital Congregations content available at website above. Share content with session and other potential leaders to foster regular conversations about how this program will pertain to your congregation, related witness, and potential to move towards vitality. Attend the informational gathering on **September 25th**.
- Identify congregational leaders and or committee who will help lead this program in your congregational context. These names should be shared with the Presbytery and included in the letter of intent.
- Draft a letter of intent to participate addressed to the Presbytery of Philadelphia and emailed to gklimovitz@presbyphl.org or <https://presbyphl.org/ministry-incubator/vital-congregations/> Letters should include signatures from both the Pastor/Head of Staff and Clerk of Session. Submit by **November 30, 2019**.