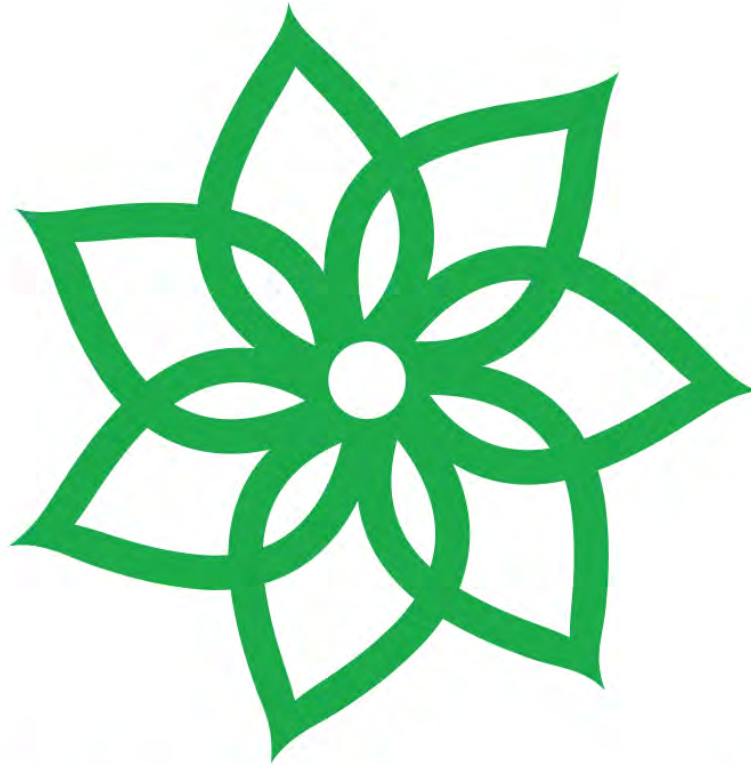




Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
**Presbyterian Mission**



# Vital Congregations

BASIC INFORMATION PACKET

## Vital Congregations Vision

*I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?  
See, the home of God is among mortals. ... See, I am making all things new.*

*Isaiah 43:19  
1 Corinthians 3:16  
Revelation 21:3-5*

### Vision:

**By the power of the Holy Spirit, and in authentic relationships with mid councils, we seek to equip, nurture and support church leaders to empower their congregations to renew, recover and live more fully into faithful discipleship to Jesus Christ.**

### Purpose:

*The purpose of the Vital Congregations Initiative is to work alongside mid council leadership, and leaders of existing congregations, in a process that seeks to help assess, discern and live into transformative actions that increase vitality. Through intentional spiritual practices and relational connections, this two-year process takes us deeper into following Jesus Christ, making disciples and being the vital community of Christ throughout particular communities and the world.*

### Values:

- **Courage, conviction and commitment to faithful discipleship**
- **Prayerful discernment**
- **Reliance upon Scripture**
- **Persistence — emboldened/enacted faith**
- **Honest assessment**
- **Resilience**
- **Intentional pursuits of reconciliation**
- **Hopefulness in change**

### What we believe:

- **A re-turn to God and re-forming of God's people is necessary.**
- **This is a crucial time of awakening throughout our neighborhoods, nation and world.**
- **The Holy Spirit's power is changing, re-forming and revitalizing the Church.**
- **It is necessary to rediscover faithful discipleship in a 21st-century context.**
- **God is calling the Church to transform and transcend cultures and contexts.**
- **We must move from inward institutions to neighborhood relationships and mission.**

**What this initiative is:**

**The hope is this is the beginning of intentional, authentic relationships between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Agency and mid council leaders and pastors to:**

- **Come together as the people of God**
- **Pray: re-turn to faithfulness in God**
- **Inspire openness to the Holy Spirit's transformation/change**
- **Honestly assess, discern and act**
- **Resource, equip and support leaders and pastors**
- **Practice missional evangelism and faithful discipleship**
- **Equip vital congregations and develop a praxis of sustainability and ongoing assessment**
- **Capture congregational stories and develop new measurements of vitality**

**What this initiative is NOT:**

- **A universal program instructing churches and assuring vitality and sustainable life**
- **Another plan that promises an immediate fix**
- **A guarantee of revitalization for every congregation**
- **An attempt for the PC(USA) to tell churches what to do**
- **An institutional survival guide for membership numbers and buildings**
- **An encouragement to tweak, yet remain the same**
- **A return to glory days gone by**
- **A guidebook on calling the young pastor**

**Overview: The Vital Congregations Initiative is a two-year covenant relationship between presbyteries and the PC(USA) to prayerfully walk with pastors and existing congregations in intentional efforts of revitalization. Year 1 seeks to (re)build authentic relationships of faith. Churches will embark on an honest assessment, capturing their unique stories, confessing their realities and discerning the Spirit's call to action. From 7 Marks of Vital Congregations, churches will determine a course between 3 Actions: *1) Re-forming churches — re-envision and change how we are church together through the 7 Marks of Congregational Vitality; 2) Missional Clustering churches — revitalization by clustering congregations into new communities of worship & ministry; 3) Death and Resurrection churches — revitalizing by grace and gratitude in the death and legacy of a congregation, in witness to the resurrection.* Year 2 is about joining Christ in the new thing taking place, allowing the wonder of God to transform, and faithfully living into change. Through 7 Marks and 3 Actions, we pray that God will revitalize the church in missional action and faithful discipleship in Jesus Christ throughout our neighborhoods, our nation and the world.**

- **Year 1: Relational: Authentic Relationships and The Honest Assessment and Discernment of Congregations**
- **Year 2: Incarnational: Revitalizing Church in 3 Actions: Re-forming, Missional Clustering, Death and Resurrection**

## 7 Marks of Vital Congregations

1. **LIFELONG Discipleship Formation** vs. *Complacent "Christian" piety, simply teaching good morals, or offering the latest programs.*
  - "The righteousness that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness of God based on faith." Philippians 3:9b
  - From the cradle to the grave seeking to be formed for right living with God and with all people.
  - Faith – seeking understanding, cultivating wisdom and actively following Christ; not an extra-curricular or merely head-knowledge.
  - Discipleship awakened and engaged in issues facing today's culture: injustice, inequality, divisive segregation, oppression, suffering, abuse of creation.
  - Discipleship formed and strengthened in the community of Christ and permeates daily practices and daily living.
2. **Intentional Authentic Evangelism** vs. *"Jesus freaks"; "Christian" hypocrisy; A committee.*
  - "We have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God." 2 Corinthians 4:7
  - Intentionally sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, not just acts of kindness.
  - Authentically sharing Christ because it is intrinsic to self-identity; overflow of Christ in our life.
  - Relational, not programmatic or systematic
3. **Outward Incarnational Focus** vs. *Inward institutional survival; closed communities of assimilation/exclusion.*
  - "The gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it." Matthew 7:14
  - Outward exploration, awareness, and focus on neighbors and neighborhood.
  - Beyond relationship with those who are like us, the incarnate Christ dwells among the lowly and least, the stranger and the suffering, the marginalized and majority.
  - Missional focus on where Christ is already living and present, and calling us to dwell.
4. **Empower Servant Leadership** vs. *the pastor's job; monopolized leadership; hiring the young energetic pastor; burning out good volunteers.*
  - "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers." Matthew 9:37–38.
  - Identify, nurture and support the use of spiritual gifts of all people to serve; not monopolized cliques of power.
  - All voices and people are necessary, and it is noticeable when people are absent/missing.
  - Nurture and encourage those specifically called and gifted for pastoral ministry.
5. **Spirit-Inspired Worship** vs. *Self-gratifying worship, stale ritual divorced of meaning, or consumer entertainment worship*
  - "These people draw near with their mouths and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their worship of me is a human commandment learned by rote." Isaiah 29:13
  - Worship is about God. We get to come on holy ground, encounter God and experience wonder.
  - Worship is active participation in the living relationship of the triune God, thus *all* should feel welcome just as they are to come.
  - Worship challenges, teaches, transforms, encounters, convicts and sends people out different.
6. **Caring Relationships** vs. *Any other Social Club; façades, hypocrisy, and judgment of "church" and "religion."*
  - "By this everyone will know that you are disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35
  - Sharing in God's true agape moves us beyond half-hearted programmatic participation, lukewarm faith and pretending.
  - Instead of a closed, judgmental community, people find freedom to share stories, encounter the Savior and ask for help.
  - Welcome and hospitality are not left to a committee, but, imperfectly, we strive for *all* people find identity, purpose and belonging in the household of God.
  - Confront conflict, seek reconciliation in all divisions, find ways to embrace all diversity, seek to be peacemakers and bridge-builders together.
7. **Ecclesial Health** vs. *Unhealthy dysfunction; toxic environments; obsolete and irrelevant buildings*
  - "The body does not consist of one member but of many. God has so arranged the body that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another." 1 Corinthians 12:14, 24b–25
  - Understanding of: Why are we a church community? How are we a church community in practice? Prayer permeates all life together.
  - Clarity in mission, core values to ministry, passion and joy in being the church. Our budget reflects these values, vision and ministries.
  - Fiscally responsible: Stewardship and tithing are taught, transparency in spending, continual assessment/discernment of a sustainable budget.
  - All are aware of how decisions are made, stakeholders in the process and procedures, valued voices in the envisioning, open to changes, continual assessment of the "why" and "how" we are church together.
  - Nurturing and supporting the health of pastor(s), staff, and all called to lead; fighting against burnout.

**PC(USA) PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY  
THE VITAL CONGREGATIONS INITIATIVE**

**PRESBYTERY LETTER OF INTEREST**

**INVITATION**

An invitation for all presbyteries interested in engaging in covenant relationship to God and to one another, as we share in the vision for Vital Congregations: *By the power of the Holy Spirit, and in authentic relationships with mid councils, we seek to equip, nurture and support church leaders to empower their congregations to renew, recover and live more fully into faithful discipleship to Jesus Christ.* The Office of Vital Congregations for the PC(USA) invites you to share your interest in joining with other presbyteries in the Two-Year Vital Congregations Initiative.

*The purpose of the Vital Congregations Initiative is to work alongside mid council leadership, and leaders of existing congregations, in a process that seeks to help assess, discern and live into transformative actions that increase vitality. Through intentional spiritual practices and relational connections, this two-year process takes us deeper into following Jesus Christ, making disciples and being the vital community of Christ throughout particular communities and the world.*

We invite you to review the information, share the vision among your presbytery leadership and pastors, and prayerfully fill out the Letter of Interest Form. All letters need to be submitted by Nov. 1, 2019. The office of Vital Congregations, in consultation with the PC(USA) Staff Team and the Vital Congregations Team, will prayerfully discern a maximum of 20 presbyteries to begin this journey. *Please note:* The maximum of 20 presbyteries ensures honoring intentional covenantal relationships and the needs of each particular presbytery. Discernment of presbytery selections will be based upon the established relationships between mid council leadership and the PC(USA) Staff and/or Vital Congregations Team, as well as the preparedness of each presbytery indicated in the Letter of Interest.

The Second Wave of Presbyteries selected will be contacted by Jan. 14, 2020. We will begin the Preparation and Vision Sharing Year together. All important dates and special Vital Congregations events are included in this information packet. *Please note: we will inform and continue to build relationships with all presbyteries who submit a Letter of Interest, as we plan to launch a new wave through the process annually.*

We hope this process together will strengthen the people of God, in the mission of God, so that all might know vital life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. We look forward to receiving your letter, and to growing in relationship together.

IN Christ,

**The office of Vital Congregations (Theology, Formation & Evangelism Department, PMA).**

**Letter of Interest**

Application Checklist

- ✓ Letter of interest, including:
  - What attracts you to this initiative?
  - What do you hope to gain out of this experience?
- ✓ Completed application

**Application deadline to be considered for the Second Wave – 2020 is Nov. 1, 2019.**

**Vital Congregations Initiative, PC(USA)  
Interest Application**

**Name of Presbytery** \_\_\_\_\_

**Presbytery Leader(s) name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Presbytery Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Office Hours:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email of Contact Person:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Person(s) Preparing Letter of Interest:** \_\_\_\_\_

**No. of Congregations:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pastors:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions. Each answer should not exceed 300 words.**

1. What attracts you to the Vital Congregations Initiative? What would the "Vital" conclusion to the initiative look like for you?
2. What is the level of interest from church pastors, committees and congregations in participation? Describe hopes, expectations, questions or concerns people have.
3. Is your presbytery willing to invest human and financial resources for two years in this initiative? Will you be willing/able to provide and support a minimum of two candidates to be trained as facilitators?
4. What do you consider the top two to three largest obstacles/issues in your presbytery? How do you think the vision of Vital Congregations will help address these?
5. What steps have you already taken to share the vision of vitality and the work of revitalization in your presbytery?
6. What existing ways do your pastors currently gather?

**Cover Letter**

**Please submit a cover letter with your application that includes a brief description of your presbytery: leadership, churches, mission, geographical makeup, all diversity, strengths, weaknesses, existing relationships with the Presbyterian Mission Agency and any other information you feel is helpful.**

**Signature of person(s) preparing Letter of Interest application:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of presbytery leadership:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Application deadline to be considered for the Second Wave – 2020 is Nov. 1, 2019. Email your completed application and cover letter to:**

**[VitalCongregations@pcusa.org](mailto:VitalCongregations@pcusa.org)**

## 2019-2020 Important Dates and Deadlines

### November 1, 2019: Letters of Interest Due

- Presbyteries can find Basic Information Packet with the Letters of Interest process on the Vital Congregations website.

### November 25, 2019: Presbyteries Contacted and Announced

- Presbyteries are contacted by VC PMA Staff and VC Pastor Team Liaison
- Letter from Office of VC with: Important dates/ deadlines; Handbook of Preparation; VC Manual; VC Immediate Toolkit will go out.

### December 2, 2019

- **Registration Information for VC Gathering is live 12/02/19!** Fliers are prepared and sent with registration information.
- Grant application is sent.
- Presbyteries will receive a Doodle Poll for quarterly meetings for Facilitators and Presbytery leaders.

### February 1, 2020: Presbytery information due to the Office of Vital Congregations.

- List of churches participating in the Initiative (begins on pp. 12 of Preparation Handbook)
- Names and information of Facilitators from the presbytery.
- Presbyteries identify whether they plan to begin in January or Fall Track 2020.

### March 1, 2020:

#### **1. Cut-off Deadline to Register for VC Gatherings.**

- All church pastors, one church officer, and presbytery leadership are to register for East and West Coast Gatherings. This will be a training and planning event for all presbyteries participating in the Initiative.
- Deadline to submit Doodle Polls to VC Office
- Deadline to submit grant applications.

### April 2020: Austin, TX

#### **1. Facilitator Training: April 24-26, 2020**

- A minimum of 2-Facilitators should be registered for Facilitator Training

## **2. April 27-30, 2020 Presbyteries Gather** (Location: Austin?)

- One Gathering for the presbyteries preparing to walk through the Initiative. Event is for Pastors, Presbytery leadership, and Clerks of Session to: learn about the 2-year initiative, plan for their particular churches and contexts, get ideas & training on the 2-year Initiative. The theme will center around Wonder & the Word – God as the transforming refuge of the Church, and the connectional gift of the Community of faith.
- 3 regional “makeup” gatherings will be held, if requested. These gathering will be facilitated with local leadership and the VC office.

## 2021 Launch of Initiative

- Presbyteries who feel called and ready, have determined and informed the Office of Vital Congregations whether they will begin the January 2020 or Fall 2020 (church calendar) Track, and will be officially celebrated in the Initiative launch at General Assembly in June 2020 Baltimore.



## Vital Congregations Facilitators

*Facilitator – “to make easy” or “ease a process.” What a facilitator does is plan, guide and manage a group event to ensure that the group's objectives are met effectively, with clear thinking, good participation and full buy-in from everyone who is involved. Your key responsibility as a facilitator is to cultivate this group process and an environment in which it can flourish.*

### Objective:

Presbyteries should identify and elect a minimum of two members to be trained by the PC(USA) for the role of *Vital Congregations Facilitator*. These facilitators should be trusted leaders among the presbytery with gifts for helping congregations. Facilitators should be objective – without conflict of interest in assisting churches. They will be trained, by the Office of Vital Congregations, and utilized at the discretion of presbyteries in consultation with pastors, or a session for churches without a pastor. They will also be supported/mentored by a liaison from the PC (USA) Vital Congregations Team, and have quarterly video meetings with other facilitators around the country.

### Rationale:

In order to support congregations who are walking through the Vital Congregations Initiative, presbyteries should have trained leaders who can help congregations in the assessment, discernment and planning stages. These leaders should not be “sent in” from the PC(USA), but should be called from the contexts in which they live. These leaders should be equipped to support congregations and pastors in faithful and difficult conversations and help them navigate the challenging and hope-filled work of being a more vital congregation. They will serve as trained support to presbyteries, pastors and congregations long after the two-year initiative.

### Facilitators should be able to help:

- Share the vision of Vital Congregations
- Assist pastors and/or session of church
- Ask good, sometimes difficult, questions
- Mediate conflict resolution and reconciliation
- Facilitate assessment dialogues for churches
- Facilitate the process of discernment and decision-making
- Engage in problem-solving, visioning and planning

### Gifts:

- Faithful
- Positive attitude; encouraging
- Lead and navigate group dynamics
- Relational and trustworthy
- Good communication skills; honesty
- Adaptive leadership: assertive/visionary/democratic/inspiring
- Pastoral/peacemaker
- Emotional intelligence

### Calling upon facilitators:

We envision that facilitators will be used for two key points in the two-year initiative:

- 1) *Year I – during the Assessment Review and Discernment stage for congregations*
- 2) *Year II – as congregations envision and map a plan for action.*

These facilitators will be deployed at the discretion of the presbytery in consultation with pastors (if a is present) and the PC(USA) office of Vital Congregations. Examples:

- Facilitators gather with pastors and session members of congregations discerning a plan to do missional clustering in various ways.
- Facilitators walk with a congregation without a pastor who needs assistance with conflict resolution and reconciliation.
- Pastors and congregations want assistance from a facilitator in looking at the mark of vitality — Outward Incarnational Focus — and discern ways they can engage their neighborhoods.
- Facilitators gather with pastors and sessions of congregations faced with difficult conversations.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

1. *Q: How many facilitators are needed?*

A: Presbyteries should have a minimum of two facilitators for the Vital Congregations Initiative. However, Presbyteries may elect more than two depending on presbytery size, the number of churches without pastors, ethnic-cultural diversity and languages.

2. *Q: What do facilitators cost?*

A: Presbyteries should cover all costs associated with the Facilitator Training Conference by the PC(USA). In addition, presbyteries may elect to pay their facilitators a stipend for the two-year initiative. Finally, we encourage the reimbursement of mileage and meals as these facilitators serve.

3. *Q: What is the time commitment of a facilitator?*

A: For each presbytery the demands of a facilitator's time will be dependent on how and when they are utilized. Facilitators will spend four days being trained by the Vital Congregations Office of the PC(USA). Facilitators will be given quarterly video meetings, country, to share ideas, discuss case studies and pray together.

## Vital Congregations Estimated Cost Sheet

Note\*\*\* The following estimate is based on current available information and could change based on final cost for production of resources, and travel expenses at the time of events. The total estimated budget of \$13,177 is based on one (1) presbytery with two (2) facilitators, and 15 churches with 200 members.

<b>Note*** The following is an estimate based on current available information and could change based on final actual cost for production of resources, and travel expenses at the time of events.</b>				
<b>Estimated Survey Cost:</b>				
		<b>No. of Participants Per Church</b>		<b>No. of Churches</b>
		200		15
		<b>Cost Per Church</b>		<b>Cost Per Presbytery</b>
Cost/Survey: Printing & Scoring	\$ 3.00		600.00	\$ 9,000.00
Shipping Cost/Congregation	\$ 17.00		\$ 17.00	\$ 255.00
			<b>\$ 617.00</b>	<b>\$ 9,255.00</b>
<i>Research &amp; Development estimated cost to print and score surveys for one (1) congregation with 200 members: \$600.00</i>				
<i>Estimated shipping cost of surveys to one (1) congregation: \$17.00</i>				
<i>Estimated total survey cost for one (1) congregation: \$617.00</i>				
<b>Estimated total cost of surveys for 15 churches in one (1) Presbytery: \$9,255.00</b>				
<b>Estimated Facilitator Training Cost (Per event):</b>				
		<b>Facilitator Training: Only</b>		
No. of Facilitators Per Presbytery		2		
Estimated Travel	450.00	900.00		
Estimated lodging for 2 nights	330.00	660.00		
Estimated Meals	112.00	224.00		
Strengthfinder 2.0	20.00	40.00		
	<b>\$ 912.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,824.00</b>		<b>\$ 1,824.00</b>
<b>Estimated Resource Cost:</b>				
Estimated resource cost for one (1) church - 2 items per church		31.00	465.00	
Resource: Facilitator Manual - two (2) per Presbytery		12.00	24.00	
Estimated resource cost for Presbytery - 1 item: Digital		-	-	
		43.00	489.00	
				<b>\$ 489.00</b>
<b>Total estimated cost for training &amp; resources</b>				<b>\$ 2,313.00</b>
<b>Grand Total Estimated Budget</b>				<b>\$ 11,568.00</b>
<b>NATIONAL GATHERING ATTENDANCE</b>				
Pastors Attending National Gathering:				
Estimated Travel			450.00	
Estimated lodging for 3 nights			495.00	
Estimated Meals - For 3 days			168.00	
			<b>\$ 1,113.00</b>	

Per Pastor

Estimated cost per person to fly into Austin, TX.

Estimated Rate per night is \$165.00. Number of nights = 5, if facilitators stay over for the national gathering.

Current per diem is \$56.00 per day for 4 days (M-T).

# Group Travel and Registration Grant Application



Vital Congregations

*This is an Adobe form-fillable document. Please save the file to your computer before completing the document.*

## Requirements

- Presbytery must be accepted into program.
- Travelers in the group must be a leader in a participating congregation
- The travel grant check must be made payable to the presbytery
- The grant agreement must be signed by the Executive Presbyter or authorized Presbytery financial representative
- Presbytery must officially be a part of the Preparation Year of the Vital Congregations Initiative

**Range of Award:** \$1,000 - \$5,000

## Documents to include with this form when submitting:

- Group Travel and Registration Grant Application
- Delegation Information Spreadsheet
- Budget reflecting expenses and other sources of travel funding

## This application is for the following type of grant (check all that apply):

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel  | <input type="checkbox"/> Registration  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lodging | <input type="checkbox"/> Stated Supply |

### Sponsoring Presbytery

Name of Presbytery

Street Address

City, County, State, Zip Code

### Contact Person

Name

Phone (Day)

Email

## The signer named above should answer the following questions:

Is this organization a 501(C)(3)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

This organization is subject to the laws of what state or U.S. Territory? \_\_\_\_\_

Does the organization requesting a grant maintain general liability insurance? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Who will be signing the grant agreement if the group is selected for award? (Grant Agreement must be signed by the Executive Presbyter or authorized Presbytery financial representative. It will be sent through DocuSign.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

Please tell us about your fundraising goals. What percentage of funding is the organization planning to receive from other sources to assist with the cost of this event?

\_\_\_\_\_% Presbytery    \_\_\_\_% Synod    \_\_\_\_% Local Church    \_\_\_\_% Individual Participants

## Describe the Church Leaders in the Group

Years in Service	Teaching Elder	Commissioned Ruling Elder	Ruling Elder		Teaching Elder	Commissioned Ruling Elder	Ruling Elder
More than 40				White / Caucasian			
More than 30				African-American			
More than 25				Hispanic			
More than 20				Asian			
More than 15				Native American			
More than 10				Other			
More than 5				Gender			
Less than 5				Male			
				Female			
				Other			

## Describe the Worshiping Communities

How many churches total are in your presbytery? \_\_\_\_\_

How many churches from your presbytery will be represented at this event?

	Rural	Urban	Suburban
How many leaders are planning to attend?			

**Funding for grants is limited. In order to evaluate and prioritize the needs, we are trying to get a better sense of resources available.**

What is the average annual budget for these churches? \_\_\_\_\_

	Less Than \$100,000	Less than \$200,000	Less than \$300,000
How many churches participating in this program have annual budgets that are :			

Is there anything else you want to tell us about the needs of the Presbytery and the participating congregations?

**Office of Mission Program Grants**

Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), Presbyterian Church (USA)

100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/1001-2/mission-program-grants/>

(888) 728-7228, Ext. 5230 / 5251

Fax: (502) 333-7251

[Tim.Mccallister@pcusa.org](mailto:Tim.Mccallister@pcusa.org), [Mary.Oxford@pcusa.org](mailto:Mary.Oxford@pcusa.org)

## **PRESBYTERY GRANT FOR CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION (OCTOBER 2014)**

Date Prepared \_\_\_\_\_

Synod \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Presbytery \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name \_\_\_\_\_

Web Site Address \_\_\_\_\_

**INTRODUCTION:** This grant is intended to provide funding to presbyteries in support of their efforts to develop a process for helping congregations to begin and continue a transformational way of life. Transformation is the process of intentionally moving into a new reality and way of being that helps congregations envision what God is calling them to be for their community and for the Kingdom of God. All churches are in some state of being transformed and presbyteries must have resources available to assist them.

The readiness assessment gives the presbytery an opportunity for self-examination as it begins the challenging task of leading transformational change. Such self-assessment is critical as the presbytery develops its process for encouraging and supporting congregational transformation.

**GRANT FUNDING AMOUNTS:** Presbyteries may request a one-time grant of ordinarily up to \$50,000. The first year lump sum payment will be for up to \$30,000 and assuming satisfactory progress has been made toward meeting stated goals; a second year lump sum payment of up to \$20,000 will be disbursed. A dollar-for-dollar match provided through presbytery and/or synod is required but waivers will be considered on a case-by-case basis, upon request. This grant is not intended to provide funding for congregational-level transformation efforts.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This application is available from the [Mission Program Grants Office website](#). E-mail as an attachment the completed proposal (Parts 1 and 2) to [Tim.McCallister@pcusa.org](mailto:Tim.McCallister@pcusa.org) and [Mary.Oxford@pcusa.org](mailto:Mary.Oxford@pcusa.org) at the Mission Program Grants office. Proposals will be reviewed according to the cut-off and review dates schedule contained within the Manual of Administrative Operations and on the Mission Program Grants website.

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### **PART 1: ASSESSMENT OF PRESBYTERY READINESS TO LEAD CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

*The format of this document allows the writer to add typing space as needed to fully respond to each question.*

1. Has your presbytery clearly articulated its vision for congregational transformation?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes (Please attach a copy.)  
\_\_\_\_ No  
\_\_\_\_ In the process of clarifying that vision  
*Comments regarding your process (Required):*
2. What tools have been most helpful to you (or do you expect to use) in shaping your vision for transforming the congregations within your presbytery? (Rank in numerical order of importance, with 1 as most important and 7 as least.)  
\_\_\_\_ Prayer  
\_\_\_\_ Bible study  
\_\_\_\_ Study of demographic and congregational trends  
\_\_\_\_ Purposeful conversations with congregations and pastors  
\_\_\_\_ Purposeful conversations with Presbytery groups  
\_\_\_\_ Guidance from a consultant

\_\_\_ Other (Please describe):

3. Transformation is a process rather than a product, a journey rather than a destination. How you will communicate that understanding of transformation to presbytery leadership and congregations? *(Required)*:
4. Has your presbytery identified and recruited a representative team to lead your transformation effort?
- \_\_\_ Yes (Please attach a copy.)
- \_\_\_ No
- \_\_\_ In process

*Comments regarding your process (Required):*

5. To what extent has your presbytery established congregational transformation as a priority? (Check all that apply.)
- \_\_\_ Presbytery Council has agreed.
- \_\_\_ Committee on Ministry has indicated an understanding of the need.
- \_\_\_ Presbytery has agreed to make transformation a priority and confirmed a leadership team.
- \_\_\_ The presbytery budget includes significant support for transformation.

*Comments (Required):*

6. Has your presbytery considered how it will deal with the inevitable conflict that accompanies significant change?
- \_\_\_ Yes, and we have a plan in place.
- \_\_\_ Yes, and we are developing a plan.
- \_\_\_ Not yet, but we are aware of the possibility of conflict.
- \_\_\_ No, we are not anticipating major conflict.

*Comments (Required):*

7. Which of the following do you consider most critical for congregational transformation? (Rank in numerical order of importance, with 1 as most important and 9 as least.)
- \_\_\_ Evangelism
- \_\_\_ Leadership development for transformation
- \_\_\_ Mission
- \_\_\_ Pastoral commitment
- \_\_\_ Congregational commitment
- \_\_\_ Strong faith component
- \_\_\_ Familiarity with theory of transformation
- \_\_\_ Outside consultant
- \_\_\_ Other (Please describe):

8. Does your plan include an outside consultant? If so, identify them and the qualifications that prompted you to choose them. If your plan includes a consultant but you have not yet chosen one, what qualifications are you seeking and how do you propose to find the consultant? Comment on your presbytery's follow-up plan for continuing the transformation process after the end of the consultant's contract.

**Note:** While your presbytery may have the expertise to develop and implement the transformation process, if you wish to seek an outside consultant, contact The Rev. Dr. Kathryn Threadgill in the Vital Congregations Office, (888) 728-7228, X5514 or [kathryn.threadgill@pcusa.org](mailto:kathryn.threadgill@pcusa.org).

9. Has your presbytery considered how it will evaluate and assess their progress towards congregational transformation?
- \_\_\_ Yes, and we have a plan.
- \_\_\_ Yes, and we are developing a plan.
- \_\_\_ Not yet, but we understand the need.
- \_\_\_ No, our priority is to get transformation happening; we will worry about evaluation later.

*Comments on your plan or understanding of the need (Required):*

Please indicate below the names, roles and signatures of those who participated in responding to this readiness assessment. If additional lines are needed, please attach a separate sheet.

Name

### Role

Signature

[illegible]



# PRESBYTERY GRANT FOR CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

## PART 2: APPLICATION FOR MISSION PROGRAM GRANT FUNDING

The following vision of the church may prove helpful in determining the areas around which a transformation process might develop. It is with this future in mind that the Mission Development Resources Committee will evaluate your proposal.

Churches as a result of your work with them, will:

- Have strong, competent, and spiritually mature leaders whose roles are prayer and discernment for the congregations and who will lead their faith communities into deeper spiritual practices;
- Be worshiping congregations that reflect the cultures and ethnicities of their neighborhoods;
- Engage in building relationships and share their faith with others;
- Embrace their God-given missional opportunities with passion and equip people to meet those challenges in adaptive and innovative ways;
- Be places where welcoming strangers and showing hospitality is the norm;
- Accomplish great things by connecting and collaborating with partner communities.

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*The format of this document allows the writer to add typing space as needed to fully respond to each question.*

Please answer the following questions.

1. What is your presbytery's vision for successful congregational transformation? What is the history and results of the transformation work in your presbytery?
2. Describe the strategies you will use to develop a process for promoting continual transformation. Your response should consider, but is not limited to, the following questions:
  - a) What are the needs, strengths and weaknesses of the congregations and their contexts for ministry and mission?
  - b) How will you assess the effectiveness of your pastors and sessions?
  - c) What is the vision of the presbytery for your pastors, sessions and congregations?
  - d) How will you prepare and support your pastors, sessions and congregations as they transform?
  - e) What training opportunities are needed and available?
  - f) Will you network or link congregations for mutual support during transformation?
  - g) How will you determine if your efforts are effective? How will you adapt if they're not?
3. How will this transformative work be continued beyond the life of the grant?
4. What is your plan for the education of the Committee on Ministry and the presbytery-at-large?
5. Include a balanced income and expense budget that describes how the grant will be used and how you will financially support the effort beyond the life of the grant.

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### SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED INCOME FOR PRESBYTERY TRANSFORMATION GRANT FUNDING

<u>Presbytery</u>	<u>Synod</u>	<u>PMA</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

The responses to the assessment and application were reviewed and approved by the appropriate mission strategy body of this presbytery and/or synod as fulfilling the policies governing Mission Program Grants. Presbyteries and synods participating as funding partners and giving oversight and assistance, date and sign below. Synod review and approval of this proposal is not required by the Mission Development Resources Committee if the synod is not providing funding.

**NOTE: If any signing below is a current member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, please inform the Office of Mission Program Grants Staff.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

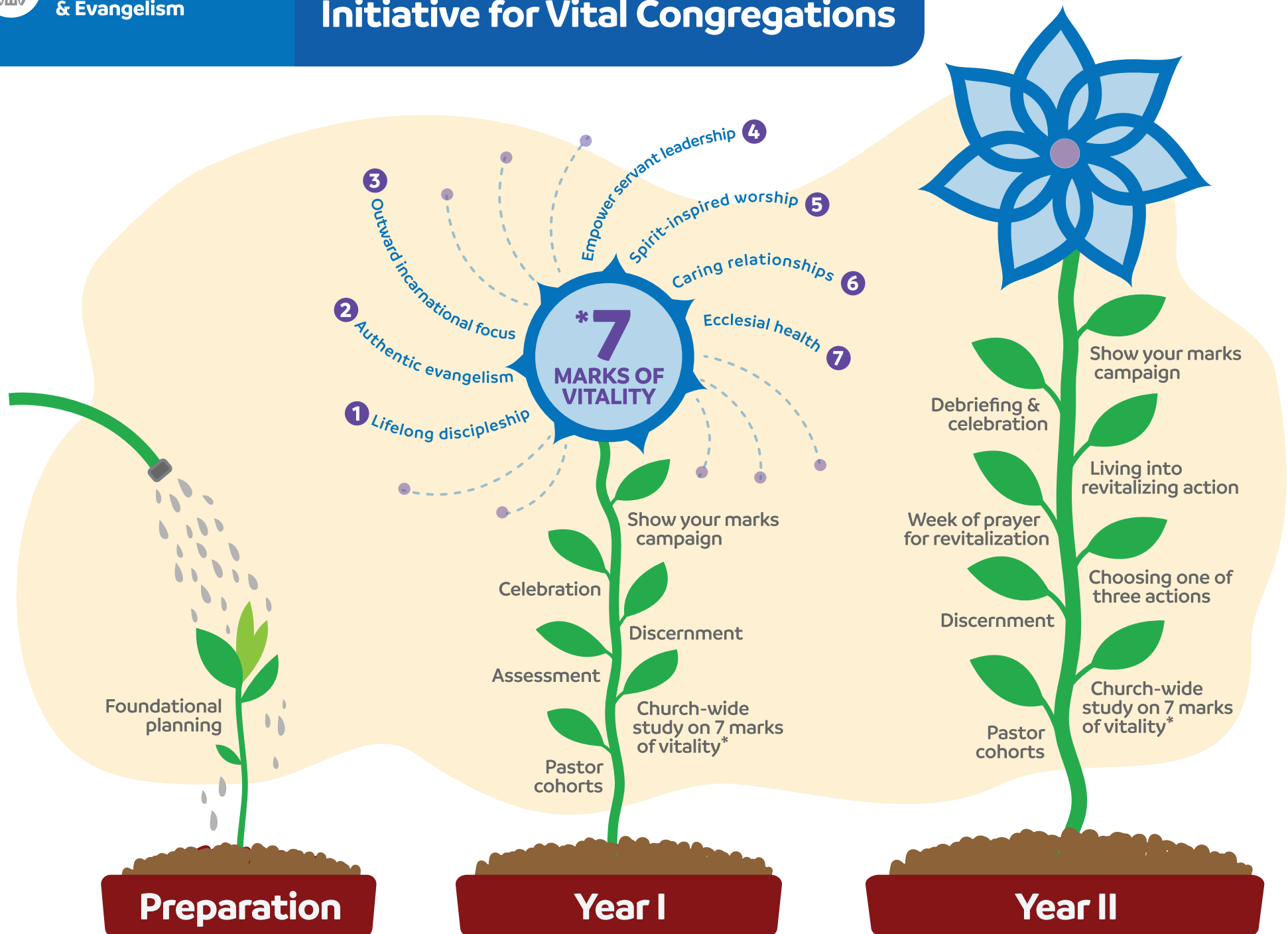
\_\_\_\_\_  
Presbytery Executive or Designee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Synod Executive or Designee



# Two-year Revitalization Initiative for Vital Congregations



# *Seven Days of Prayer*



**FOR VITAL CONGREGATIONS**

[presbyterianmission.org/vitalcongregations](http://presbyterianmission.org/vitalcongregations)

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# A Seven-Day Cycle of Prayer

*Based on the Seven Marks of Vital Congregations*

Living God, we give you thanks and praise  
for the new things you are doing among us ...

SUN	SPIRIT-FILLED WORSHIP for the transforming presence of Christ
MON	LIFELONG DISCIPLESHIP for your call to follow the way of Jesus
TUE	OUTWARD INCARNATIONAL FOCUS for the gift of your Word made flesh
WED	INTENTIONAL AUTHENTIC EVANGELISM for the good news of your holy realm
THU	SERVANT-LEADER DEVELOPMENT for Jesus' example of humble service
FRI	CARING RELATIONSHIPS for your great love for all the world
SAT	ECCLESIAL HEALTH for our common ministry in Jesus' name

*Other joys and thanksgivings may be added.*

Living God, by the gifts of your Spirit,  
help us to bear witness to the risen Lord ...

SUN	SPIRIT-FILLED WORSHIP proclaiming the good news of salvation
MON	LIFELONG DISCIPLESHIP growing in the image of Christ
TUE	OUTWARD INCARNATIONAL FOCUS offering your grace to others
WED	INTENTIONAL AUTHENTIC EVANGELISM sharing the hope that is within us
THU	SERVANT-LEADER DEVELOPMENT loving and serving one another
FRI	CARING RELATIONSHIPS extending your compassion to all
SAT	ECCLESIAL HEALTH building up the body of Christ

*Other concerns and petitions may be added.*

Living God, in the great mystery of our faith,  
receive us each night and revive us each day,  
that we may be dead to sin and alive to you;  
through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

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