



# PATHWAYS

— *for fruitful & healthy ministry* —

FOR GROWING CONGREGATIONAL  
HEALTH & FRUITFULNESS

[www.gnjumc.org/pathways](http://www.gnjumc.org/pathways)



## FOR GROWING CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH & FRUITFULNESS

### **Why engage in growing congregational health and fruitfulness?**

Healthy and fruitful congregations equip and empower people to be disciples of Jesus Christ in their homes and communities around the world. Healthy, growing congregations are inviting, offer transformational worship, engage disciples in mission and outreach, empower and equip lay leadership through small groups, and inspire generosity.

### **How does congregational health further the mission?**

United Methodists of Greater New Jersey are called to recruit and equip transformational leaders to make disciples and grow fruitful congregations for the transformation of the world. Healthy congregations will invest in intentional discipleship systems to invite, connect, engage, nurture, and send out disciples.

### **Who should participate in congregational development training and planning?**

The Pathways for Congregational Health and Fruitfulness process is for any congregation that is willing and ready to evaluate, assess, reflect, discern, plan, and live into their spirit-filled purpose of making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Congregational health and fruitfulness are best achieved when a congregation has the capacity to maintain its buildings and properties and carry out its mission with the support of its leadership and ministry budget. If these are current challenges significantly impacting your congregation, consider starting with the Pathways Sustainability Module.

### **Biblical Foundation**

But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. - Matthew 13:23

### **The Ideal Pathways Team**

Ideally, to engage in the Pathways process, a church needs to form a team of 6-12 people, in addition to the pastor(s). Team members must be active professing members of the congregations with decision making authority and/or can positively influence key stakeholders and decision makers to support the creation and implementation of the plan.

### **What participants will learn?**

The team will learn the principles and practices that are essential for healthy and fruitful congregations in the areas of mission and vision statements, core values, intentional discipleship systems, and the five core ministries: worship, new disciples, small groups, outreach and missions, and generosity. Through a process of self-discovery, the group will envision its preferred future reality, name the priorities, set goals, and create a plan that will lead to change.

## **Desired Outcomes from the Pathways Congregational Health and Fruitfulness Process**

Congregations that complete the Pathways process will:

1. Learn about the main components of an Intentional discipleship system: core values, mission and vision statements, and discipleship path.
2. Understand key principles and practices of healthy and fruitful congregations around the five-core ministry: worship, new disciples, small groups, outreach & missions, generosity.
3. Discern and articulate an intentional discipleship system for their congregation.
4. Set at least one SMART goal for each of the five core ministries, in alignment with their discipleship system.
5. Create a communication and implementation strategy for their Pathways Plan.
6. Receive coaching, consulting, and follow up by a GNJ assigned facilitator.
7. Grow in congregational health and fruitfulness as they work together to make disciples for the transformation of the world.



## FOR GROWING CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH & FRUITFULNESS

Healthy and Fruitful congregations live out their God-breathed mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Led by the Holy Spirit, they connect people with God, each other, and the community.

In the life of a disciple, vital faith is sanctification, which is the constant process of growing in our salvation in the love of Jesus Christ. In the life of a congregation, sanctification includes the process of regularly adapting, refining, and improving ministry.

A Healthy and Fruitful Congregation:

- Invites and welcomes all people in the community
- Cultivates a deeper relationship with God, through Jesus Christ
- Gives birth to hope and purposeful living
- Honors and celebrates the diversity present in the congregation and the community
- Engages both the mind and heart of participants through inspirational worship and preaching and other liturgical elements
- Lifts God-sightings and positive stories about growth and transformation taking place in the community and around the world
- Equips and sends disciples into the world to make a difference in the community

### **Biblical Reflection**

*“Listen then to what the parable of the Sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.” – Matthew 13:18-23*

### **Small Group Questions**

Discuss the following questions with your team:

- This passage begins with the directive to listen, after reading this scripture, what might you need to specifically listen to or hear during this work?
- What are the ways in which you personally sow seeds of faith in your church, in your community, in your circle of friends, family and acquaintances?
- The farmer is very generous in sowing the seeds. How might you as a congregation be more generous in sowing seeds?



## Growing Intercultural Competency

*“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.” – Revelation 7:9*

The Pathways for Congregational Health and Fruitfulness begins here because growing in our intercultural competence is critical to our mission of making disciples for the transformation of the world. Intercultural competence allows us to be in relationship and ministry in our complex and diverse mission field, so our congregations reflect God’s intended diversity already present in our communities.

Intercultural competency is the skill and ability to understand the cultural norms and behaviors of another person or group and shift our way of thinking and behaviors based on the identified differences and commonalities to effectively connect with the other person or group. Scripture is filled with images of intercultural competence, from God calling Abraham to go from his home to become a “father of many nations” (Genesis 12), to the Holy Spirit breaking out on all cultures, nations, and peoples at the first Pentecost (Acts 2).

For most congregations, the challenge is not a desire for diversity; rather, there is often resistance to making the changes needed that make such diversity more likely. Churches typically realize their need for greater diversity, even in locations where the surrounding population is virtually from one race.

All congregations have gaps between the makeup of their churches and communities, whether it’s race, age, gender, education, economic status, or a range of other differences. If we are to develop the attitudes and actions that are necessary to live as authentic disciples of Christ in a complex and diverse world, we need to effectively interact across differences.

### Fruitful congregations

- Are aware of and open to sharing their values and culture with others
- Acknowledge discomfort when encountering human differences of any kind (i.e., race, color, theological perspective, language, social-economics, political views, etc.)
- Have a growing understanding of the different cultural backgrounds present in the congregation and community and value them as crucial to the core identity of persons and groups
- Understand that individuals and the church culture are not the standards when assessing appropriate and inappropriate behaviors
- Are committed to a spirit and mindset of constantly learning about other persons and groups

Congregations that have a healthy and growing understanding of intercultural competency live out most, if not all, of the following practices:

- Embrace, value and celebrate human differences
- Use different relationship building skills to reach out to persons from diverse backgrounds
- Recognize limited knowledge of certain cultural groups and are intentional about creating learning and relationship building opportunities about/with them
- Understand that culture changes over time for both persons and groups
- Affirm that stereotypical attitudes and discriminatory actions dehumanize and encourage violence against people from different cultures

Culturally competent congregations embrace and celebrate differences in others and remain open to learning different relationship building skills to reach out to all people in the congregation and the community.

For more resources on growing intercultural competency, visit:

The General Commission on Religion and Race at <https://www.r2hub.org>

## Planning to Grow Intercultural Competency

### *Conferencing to Understand and Discern*

Review your evaluation for intercultural competency in the Assessing Your Cultural Competency Awareness section. Your congregation's awareness assessment is \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

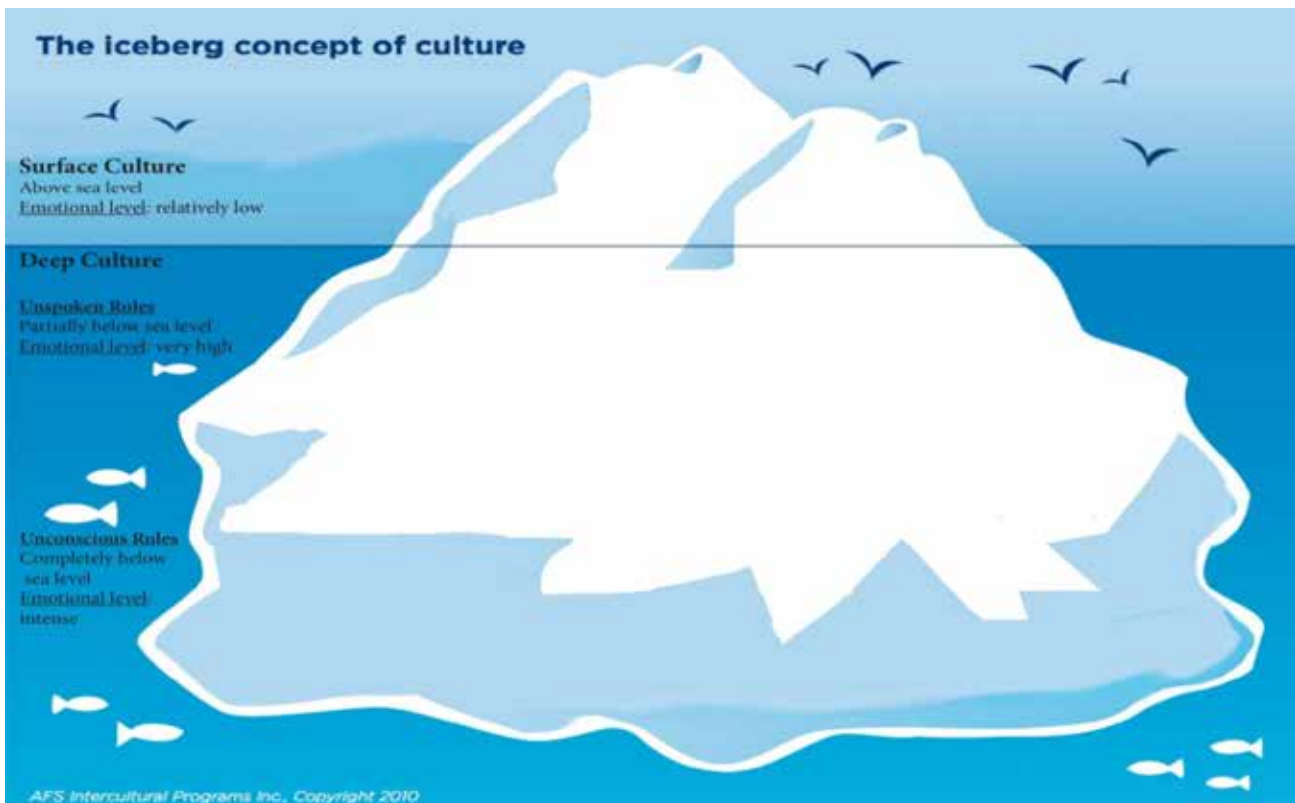
Based on your assessment and new learnings on intercultural competency, discuss the following questions as a team:

1. What principles and practices are we already doing well that we can strengthen?
2. What principles and practices do we need to learn and engage differently based on what we have learned about intercultural competency?

Based on the learnings from the discussion above, consider the "iceberg" culture below and the list of words/phrases that make up culture and map your congregation's culture.

1. Identify the known components of the surface culture for your congregation and list them above the line in the iceberg image (i.e., racial makeup, languages, worship style, genders, etc.)
2. Identify the known components of the deep culture for your congregation and list them underneath the line (i.e., values, beliefs, practices, etc.)

As you work on your congregation's culture iceberg, remember that intercultural competency is about embracing a learning orientation. To be able to build relationships with others different from us, we must begin with who and where we are.



### List of Different Cultural Dimensions of a Congregation

Race	Rules for Social Interaction
Ethnicity	Ways of Relating to Others
Gender	Problem Solving Practices
Language	Decision-making Practices
Dress	Emotional Response Patterns
Concept of Time	Expectation from people in the community
Values	Perceptions of health, illness, and disability
Behavior	Patterns and roles in relations to age, gender & status

### *Aspiring and Envisioning God's Hope for Your Congregation*

Now, based on your evaluation, intercultural competency assessment, and conferencing, discuss as a team, what is your congregation's vision for cultural competency? (Remember, visioning aims to articulate a preferred future reality)

### *Taking Action to Transform*

Lastly, what are one to three SMART goals that will help your congregation become more like who God is calling you to be through intercultural competence?

A SMART goal includes the following.

- Specific – it is clear, everyone can understand what you want to do.
- Measurable – It has something you will accomplish and often has a number associated with it.
- Achievable – it is a stretch, but you can achieve it in a certain period of time.
- Relevant – it is core to your ministry and something people will connect with.
- Time – it has a due date.

1. Review the cultural iceberg for your congregation as a team. Make sure you include all the surface/deep culture components identified by your team members.
2. Choose one or two items in the deep culture section (underneath the line), that you feel need to be strengthen/improved in your congregation.
3. Set at least one SMART goal related to the deep culture items that you identify in step 2.

Sample goal: Discern and implement decision-making practices for all our congregation's ministry teams that create consensus, so that the diversity of perspectives in our faith community are considered in our decisions.  
Pastor & Council Chair | Dec. 31, 2023.

**GOAL 1:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

**GOAL 2:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

**GOAL 3:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?





# DEVELOPING AN INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP SYSTEM

*“If you try to build the church, you will rarely get disciples.  
But if you make disciples, you will always get the church.” – Mike Breen*

*“Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” - Matthew 28:18-20 (NLT)*

## MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS AND CORE VALUES

### Mission Statement

A mission statement provides clarity of purpose. In simple terms, churches make disciples – that’s what we do. Matthew 28:18-20 clarifies the reason churches exists, “...go, therefore, make disciples of all nations...”

As United Methodists we believe that the mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We also affirm that local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs. Therefore, we don’t need to spend lots of time trying to determine what God is calling our congregations to do – our mission is given by God. Our role is to joyfully embrace it and boldly act on it.

Our shared mission as United Methodists is “making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

### Core Values

A value is a principle or standard about what is most important, both for individuals and congregations. They explain who we are – our identity. Values usually do not change overtime. They are the constant, passionate, biblical core beliefs that drive the ministry of a congregation. Some examples of congregational core values include evangelism, hospitality, education, fellowship, service, diversity, innovation, prayer, justice, etc.

All congregations have core values. However, many have not taken the time or effort to identify and articulate them. Therefore, they lack clarity about their identity that’s critical to thrive in ministry.

To identify and articulate or update your congregation’s core values, discuss as a team the following questions:

1. What makes us different/unique from other congregations?
2. What spiritual/ethical principles are most important to us as a congregation?
3. What is it that attracts people to our congregation (or turns them away)?
4. Why are we at this congregation?
5. What are people in our church and the community looking for in our congregation?

Based on your learnings from the questions above, list the 3-5 core values that shape your congregation's identity.

Value	Why is this value important for your congregation?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

### Vision Statement

Vision is a picture of the place where God is calling your congregation to be. It is the desired future reality you are working towards. Mission is what your church does (make disciples), and vision is how your congregation is going to carry it out. While all United Methodist congregations share the same mission, each congregation's vision will be unique, in part, because of their location, the spiritual gifts and skills present in the congregation, and the needs in the community. Once a vision is discerned, make sure it is easily understood, so that the congregation support it and people invest themselves to make it so.

To discern and articulate or update God's vision for your congregation, discuss as a team the following questions:

1. What does your congregation and community look like today?
2. What are the most pressing challenges impacting your congregation and community?
3. What are the hopes and aspirations of people in your congregation and community?
4. What are the gifts, skills, and other resources available in your congregation and community?
5. What would your congregation and community look like if the gifts, skills, and resources available intersected to pursue the hopes and aspirations of people and to address the challenges at hand?

In two or three sentences, what is your congregation's vision statement?

## DISCIPLESHIP SYSTEM

Acting on your core values, mission, and vision requires focus and intentionality. Having an intentional discipleship system provides your congregation a clear process to equip and empower disciples to mature and grow in faith.

Intentional discipleship is both personal and corporate. When both are emphasized and taken seriously, growth and maturing of disciples will occur.

- **Personal Discipleship:** Being a follower of Christ and maturing as a disciple is a lifelong journey. Every disciple needs to have an own intentional plan for spiritual growth.
- **Corporate Discipleship:** While disciples own their growth as disciples, the role of the church, as a corporate body, is doing everything we can, based on a common vision, to equip and empower disciples by providing opportunities for disciples to grow and mature in faith and witness.

Healthy and Fruitful congregations develop and implement an intentional discipleship system that provides a clear path for fulfilling the mission of the church by equipping and empowering disciples to grow and mature in faith and witness in the world.

### Why a System?

Having an intentional discipleship system means that as a congregation, you know and have planned out the ways that people new to the faith enter the congregation's discipleship pathway and move through it on their way to growth, maturity, and fruitfulness. As you develop your congregation's discipleship system, recognize that you have a unique context of ministry. Therefore, use the language and terms that best work for your congregation and community.

### Start with your Why

“When you know your ‘why’, your ‘what’ and ‘how’ have more impact.” – Michael Jr., Comedian

Watch the video: Start with Why, Simon Sinek (Short [edited] Version) <https://youtu.be/TDi4hzRIrgc>

**(Re)**discovering your why as a congregation is the first step towards creating an intentional discipleship system in your church. Not fully understanding the why of discipleship weakens our ability to make disciples, and it ultimately weakens our witness to the world. When we connect with the Why of discipleship, we grow in our faith in connection with others, become more generous, think, and act beyond ourselves, and invite others into this new way of life in Christ.

Discuss the following questions with your team:

1. Why are we disciples of Jesus Christ (Romans 3:21-24 | (John 3:16-17)?
2. Why do we make disciples of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20)?
3. Why do we share our faith with others (Romans 10:14-15)?
4. Why do people need our congregation (Hebrews 10:25b | Hebrews 4:12 | Proverbs 27:17)?
5. What do we uniquely offer that people in the community are seeking (1 Corinthians 12:1-19 | Romans 12:6a)?

## STEPS TO DEVELOP AN INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP SYSTEM FOR YOUR CONGREGATION

Watch the video: Pathway to Discipleship

<https://www.gnjumc.org/newdisciples/newdisciplesvideos/>

To clarify your church's discipleship goal and system, work on the following six steps:

### **STEP 1: Start with a clear definition of what a disciple is (the goal)**

Agreeing on your congregation's definition of a disciple is important to start the process of inviting people to join you. People need to be able to know what the end game of discipleship is about. What a mature disciple looks like in your context. A clear definition of what is a disciple also provides a shared goal for all your discipleship strategies, programs, and initiatives.

Here are a few examples to start the discussion:

General Rule of Discipleship from Wesley' General Rules (Book of Discipline, 2016 Par 1117.2)

*"A disciple is a witness to Jesus Christ in the world who follows his teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship, and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."*

United Methodists of Greater New Jersey's Definition

"A Holy Spirit-led follower of Christ whose passion every day is to know, grow in, live, and share the life of Jesus with others."

Discuss the following questions with your team:

1. Based on the biblical witness and our Wesleyan tradition, what do we hope people experience by being involved in our congregation?
2. What do we hope they learn?
3. What do we hope they become and do?

Now, based on the learnings from the questions above, what is your congregation's definition of a mature disciple?

When you are done drafting your definition of a disciple, ask:

Does our definition of a disciple directly support our vision statement?

If the answer to this question is no, engage in conversation as a team and make the necessary adjustments until you reach clarity and alignment.

## STEP 2: Break down your definition

Identify the different components of your definition as distinct paths to discipleship (typically three to five large categories. Examples: worship, grow, serve, acts of devotion, etc. From the definitions above: compassion, justice, worship, devotion or know, grow, live, share).

When you are done identifying your paths (categories), look at the components you identified and ask:

- Are these categories aligned with a biblical conception of discipleship (Acts 2:42-47)?
- Are these the key desired components of a life of discipleship in our ministry context?
- If emphasized, will these categories (paths) help people move forward and grow in their discipleship in our context?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, engage in conversation as a team and make the necessary adjustments until you reach clarity and alignment.

Category	Why does it matter?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

## STEP 3: List your activities

In the space below, make a list of all activities, initiatives, events, and opportunities that your church offers in a typical year. Include worship service(s), small groups, youth programs and mission opportunities. Be sure to indicate the frequency of each activity (weekly, monthly, yearly).

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If the answer to any of the main questions above is no, engage in conversation as a team and make the necessary adjustments until you reach clarity and alignment.

**STEP 6: Craft a clear and simple message**

Although a life of discipleship is nuanced and personalized, it is important that your church be able to talk about your discipleship system clearly, simply, and often so that new worshipers know how they can engage it. Ideally, a newcomer will be able to attend church one Sunday and have a basic understanding of what it means to be involved in your church and practice a life of faith.

A clear and simple message about your congregation's discipleship system should be the answer folks are encouraged to give when someone asks them "What's your church about?"

Below, find a sample partial Pathways Plan that includes mission and vision statements, core values, and a discipleship path.

## SAMPLE IN-PROGRESS PATHWAYS PLAN



# CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH & FRUITFULNESS PLAN

ANYWHERE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,  
TOWN, STATE

### Our Mission

Transform the world by making disciples of Jesus Christ.

### Our Vision

Our vision is to be a multi-generational faith community that welcomes all people and together experiences the love of Jesus Christ, grows in our faith, and transforms our community through our witness and service, so that hopes abounds, diversity is celebrated, and all can live to their full God-given potential.

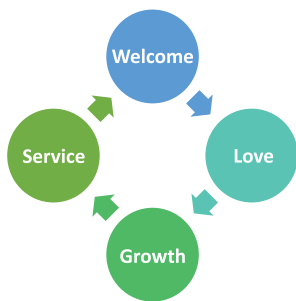
### Our Core Values

- Faith – Jesus Christ is our source of faith, value, hope and purpose
- Love – we are focused on loving God and our neighbors as Christ loves us
- Family – we aspire for our ministries and programs to be accessible and relevant to multi-generational families, including children and youth
- Service – we make a positive difference in our community through our hands-on missions and service.
- Fellowship – we support and encourage one another in love, grace, and responsible mutual accountability

### What is a disciple?

A passionate follower of Christ that every day is growing in love, faith, and service.

### Our Discipleship Path



- Welcome – disciples invite people into a relationship with Christ and welcome them into the congregation's fellowship.
- Love – disciples are focused on loving God and loving their neighbors following the example of Jesus.
- Grow – disciples prioritize growing in their faith through Bible study in small groups and other spiritual disciplines.
- Service – disciples invest their spiritual gifts and skills in service toward the needs of people in need and the most vulnerable.

Anywhere United Methodist Church is focused on welcoming all people, loving God, and our neighbors, growing in our faith, and serving the community.

#### Welcome

Summer & Fall Festivals  
A Friend for Christ  
New Members Classes

#### Love

Worship Svc  
Prayer Hour  
Prayer Chain

#### Grow

Mid-week Bible Study  
Youth Fellowship  
UMW  
Kids Club

#### Service

Community Kitchen  
Food Pantry  
Choir  
Diaper Drives



# GROWING IN THE FIVE CORE AREAS OF MINISTRY

There are five core areas of ministry essential for a congregation's health and fruitfulness: worship, small groups, new disciples, missions, and generosity. How your congregation lives out these core ministries needs to be directly interconnected with your vision and discipleship system.

Congregations that focus their time, leadership, and resources on adapting, refining, and improving in these five core areas grow in health and fruitfulness in their ministry in the community.

It is strongly recommended that congregations set at least one SMART goal every one to three years for each of the five core areas of ministry.

## GROWING WORSHIP

Worship, at its core, is about the wonder of adoring the Creator of the universe. It is an encounter with the living God through the risen Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

In fruitful congregations:

- People regularly experience God's presence in worship
- Worship gatherings are inclusive and celebratory
- Worship inspires people toward a deeper faith and service in the community
- Worship effectively connects across generations
- In worship experiences, people testify about God's transformation in their lives

Congregations that offer vital worship often implement most, if not all, of the following practices:

- The worship experience is invitational, interactive, intergenerational, interesting, and inspiring.
- The worship experience is done with excellence, and it reflects the growing diversity in styles of preaching, music, and prayer.
- The worship experience includes preaching that consistently helps disciples grow in their theological understanding and apply the scriptures/faith to daily living.
- The worship experience regularly includes an invitation for participants to make a decision for Christ and fruitful discipleship.
- The worship experiences are planned with a team approach that includes both clergy and laity.

Fruitful congregations grow their average worship attendance by at least one worshiper over a three-year period.

For more resources on growing worship, visit [www.gnjumc.org/worship](http://www.gnjumc.org/worship)

## PLANNING TO GROW WORSHIP

### *Aspiring and Envisioning God's Hope for Your Congregation*

First, review your evaluation for worship practices in the Assessing Congregational Health and Fruitfulness section. Your congregation's worship vitality assessment is \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Based on your evaluation, vitality assessment, new learnings, and what you have discovered about worship in your context, discuss as a team what your congregation's vision for worship is. (Remember, visioning aims to articulate a preferred future reality)

## CONFERENCING TO UNDERSTAND AND DISCERN

Now, based on your newly articulated or revised vision for worship, discuss as a team the following questions:

1. What are we already doing well that we will build on?
2. What do we need to do differently or stop doing to help us move closer to our vision for worship?
3. What aren't we doing that we need to do in the future to help us move closer to our vision for worship?

## TAKING ACTION TO TRANSFORM

Lastly, what are one to three SMART goals that will help your congregation become more like who God is calling you to be through worship?

A *SMART* goal includes the following.

- Specific – it is clear, everyone can understand what you want to do.
- Measurable – It has something you will accomplish and often has a number associated with it.
- Achievable – it is a stretch, but you can achieve it in a certain period of time.
- Relevant – it is core to your ministry and something people will connect with.
- Time – it has a date by which time it will be accomplished.

Below, list your goal(s) for growing worship, including the actions you will take to accomplish each goal and who will be the champion for the goal (a champion is someone who gathers a team together to work and accomplish a goal).

Sample Goal: Incorporate 3-5 new songs to our worship experience that reflect more contemporary styles of music for each liturgical season in the Christian calendar, so that our worship better reflects the growing diversity in our congregation and community. Nov 30, 2024 | Worship Director.



**GOAL 1:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

**GOAL 2:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

**GOAL 3:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

## MAKING NEW DISCIPLES

Making new disciples involves a way of life that demonstrates our meaning, significance, and purpose in God, as individuals and as the church; and faith sharing that invites people into a relationship with Jesus Christ, and community through the church.

Fruitful congregations:

- Understand the differences between being inward (friendly) and outward (welcoming).
- Create a culture of radical hospitality and follow up with visitors and regular congregants.
- Create an intentional system and process to help new disciples grow in their faith.
- Equip disciples to share their faith stories and invite others to the church.
- Encourage disciples to do life together, not just worship, meetings, and bible studies.

Congregations that make new disciples often implement most, if not all, of the following practices.

- Disciples and leaders grow in their knowledge and practice of intercultural competence.
- Create and implement an intentional discipleship system to welcome, follow up and incorporate visitors/guests into the life of the congregation, for both in-person and online attenders.
- Create and implement an intentional congregational care system and processes to ensure participants and members feel loved, valued, and cared for.
- Regularly equip and encourage disciples and leaders to share their faith with others and invite people to the church.
- Active church members can name at least one person that they have invited into faith, outside their family, in the last 3 years.
- Congregants identify and actively pray for persons to come to faith.

Fruitful congregations have at least one new profession/reaffirmation of faith for every 20 worshipers each year.

For more resources on growing new disciples, visit [www.gnjumc.org/newdisciples](http://www.gnjumc.org/newdisciples)

## PLANNING TO MAKE NEW DISCIPLES

### *Aspiring and Envisioning God's Hope for Your Congregation*

First, review your evaluation for the practices of making new disciples practices in the Assessing Congregational Health and Fruitfulness section. Your congregation's new disciples vitality assessment is \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Based on your evaluation, vitality assessment, new learnings, and what you have discovered about making new disciples in your context, discuss as a team, what is your congregation's vision for making new disciples? (Remember, visioning aims to articulate a preferred future reality)

## CONFERENCING TO UNDERSTAND AND DISCERN

Now, based on your newly articulated or revised vision for making new disciples, discuss as a team the following questions,

1. What are we already doing well that we will build on?
2. What do we need to do differently or stop doing to help us move closer to our vision for making new disciples?
3. What aren't we doing that we need to do in the future to help us move closer to our vision for making new disciples?

## TAKING ACTION TO TRANSFORM

Lastly, what are one to three SMART goals that will help your congregation become more like who God is calling you to be through making new disciples?

A SMART goal includes the following.

- Specific – it is clear, everyone can understand what you want to do.
- Measurable – It has something you will accomplish and often has a number associated with it.
- Achievable – it is a stretch, but you can achieve it in a certain period of time.
- Relevant – it is core to your ministry and something people will connect with.
- Time – it has a date by which time it will be accomplished.

Below, list your goal(s) for making new disciples, including the actions you will take to accomplish each goal and who will be the champion for the goal (a champion is someone who gathers a team together to work and accomplish a goal).

Sample Goal: Create and implement an intentional congregational care system and process so that our guests, participants, and members feel loved, valued, and cared for. Jun 30, 2023 | Lay Leader & Pastor

### GOAL 1:

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?

What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

## GOAL 2:

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CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?

What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

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## GOAL 3:

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CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?

What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

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## GROWING SMALL GROUPS

Small Groups intentionally seek to build relationships and Christian community, help disciples mature in their faith, and engage disciples in their calling and purpose in life.

Fruitful congregations:

- Offer small groups that cultivate deeper relationships with God and amongst disciples and engage participants in mission together using different methods and technologies.
- Design specialty small group experiences that are suitable for new disciples and people outside the church.
- Invest in relevant and meaningful small groups experiences for children, youth, and young adults.
- Recruit and equip new small group leaders whose diversity reflects your congregation and community.

Congregations that grow small groups often implement most, if not all, of the following practices:

- Consistently offer small groups throughout the year, including in person, online and hybrid options.
- Regularly encourage all members and participants to be part of a small group experience.

- Yearly offer at least one small group experience for new disciples and people outside the church (i.e., grieving, parenting, recovery, etc.)
- Offer small groups that are relevant and meaningful to children, youth, and young adults.
- Small groups are mostly led by laity.
- Small group experiences prioritize conversation among participants over sharing of information by the group leader.
- Have a clear small group strategy and program for at least the next six months.

Fruitful congregations have at least 50% of worshipers regularly participate in a small group experience.

For more resources on growing small groups, visit [www.gnjumc.org/smallgroups](http://www.gnjumc.org/smallgroups)

## PLANNING TO GROW SMALL GROUPS

### *Aspiring and Envisioning God's Hope for Your Congregation*

First, review your evaluation for small groups practices in the Assessing Congregational Health and Fruitfulness section. Your congregation's small groups vitality assessment is \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Based on your evaluation, vitality assessment, new learnings, and what you have discovered about small groups in your context, discuss as a team what your congregation's vision for small groups is. (Remember, visioning aims to articulate a preferred future reality)

## CONFERENCING TO UNDERSTAND AND DISCERN

Based on your newly articulated or revised vision for small groups, discuss as a team the following questions:

1. What are we already doing well that we will build on?
2. What do we need to do differently or stop doing to help us move closer to our vision for small groups?
3. What aren't we doing that we need to do in the future to help us move closer to our vision for small groups?

## TAKING ACTION TO TRANSFORM

Lastly, what are one to three SMART goals that will help your congregation become more like who God is calling you to be through small groups?

A *SMART* goal includes the following.

- Specific – it is clear, everyone can understand what you want to do.
- Measurable – It has something you will accomplish and often has a number associated with it.
- Achievable – it is a stretch, but you can achieve it in a certain period of time.
- Relevant – it is core to your ministry and something people will connect with.
- Time – it has a due date.



Below, list your goal(s) for growing small groups, including the actions you will take to accomplish each goal and who will be the champion for the goal (a champion is someone who gathers a team together to work and accomplish a goal).

Sample Goal: Offer a small group experience for newlywed couples in the community that reaches at least five couples, so that they build a strong foundation in their marriage. Sept. 01, 2023 | Christian Ed Coordinator

**GOAL 1:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

**GOAL 2:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

## GOAL 3:

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CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?

What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

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## GROWING OUTREACH AND MISSIONS

Outreach and Missions is being the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in the community and around the world. It involves engaging our communities in the places of greatest need and demonstrating God's mercy through ministries that meet daily needs.

Fruitful congregations

- Implement hands-on outreach and mission based on relationships that lift the hopes, goals, and gifts of the people in the congregation and the community.
- Collaborate on local mission initiatives in partnership with other churches and organizations.
- Participate in regional and international mission initiatives/trips and/or fund missionaries through the Global Ministries to amplify their reach and impact in the world.
- Offer outreach and missions engagement opportunities for all ages, and even intergenerational opportunities.
- Share stories of transformation so that more disciples are passionate about their call to engage in mission and reflect on how they have seen God at work in their lives, congregation, and community.

Congregations that excel in their outreach and mission often implement most, if not all, of the following practices:

- Engage in at least one hands-on mercy and justice initiative/ministries initiative, planned, and hosted by the congregation. (i.e., food pantry, thrift shops, recovery groups, employment training, etc.)
- Recruit volunteers of all ages and train them to serve with excellence, compassion, and cultural competence.
- Send volunteers to participate in regional or international hands-on mission projects at least once every two years.
- Give at least 10% of their income to missions or support a missionary, in addition to shared giving.
- Regularly share stories of transformation during worship to encourage disciples to a life of active service in the community.

Fruitful congregations have at least 60% of the worshipers participate in hands-on mission in the community.

For more resources on outreach and missions, visit [www.gnjumc.org/mission](http://www.gnjumc.org/mission)

## PLANNING TO GROW OUTREACH AND MISSIONS

### *Aspiring and Envisioning God's Hope for Your Congregation*

First, review your evaluation for outreach and mission practices in the Assessing Congregational Health and Fruitfulness section. Your congregation's outreach and missions vitality assessment is \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Based on your evaluation, vitality assessment, new learnings, and what you have discovered about outreach and missions in your context, discuss as a team what your congregation's vision for outreach and missions is. (Remember, visioning aims to articulate a preferred future reality)

## CONFERENCING TO UNDERSTAND AND DISCERN

Based on your newly articulated or revised vision for worship, discuss as a team the following questions,

1. What are we already doing well that we will build on?
2. What do we need to do differently or stop doing to help us move closer to our vision for outreach and missions?
3. What aren't we doing that we need to do in the future to help us move closer to our vision for outreach and missions?

## TAKING ACTION TO TRANSFORM

Lastly, what are one to three SMART goals that will help your congregation become more like who God is calling you to be through outreach and missions?

A SMART goal includes the following.

- Specific – it is clear, everyone can understand what you want to do.
- Measurable – It has something you will accomplish and often has a number associated with it.
- Achievable – it is a stretch, but you can achieve it in a certain period of time.
- Relevant – it is core to your ministry and something people will connect with.
- Time – it has a due date.

Below, list your goal(s) for growing outreach and missions, including the actions you will take to accomplish each goal and who will be the champion for the goal (a champion is someone who gathers a team together to work and accomplish a goal).

Sample Goal: Share one story of transformation coming from one of our hands-on mission programs during our worship experience at least once every two months, so that disciples are inspired to generosity and service in the community. Jan. 1, 2023 | Mission Coordinator & Pastor

**GOAL 1:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

**GOAL 2:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

**GOAL 3:**

CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

## GROWING GENEROSITY

Generosity focuses on God's abundance and prioritizes offering to God the best of our time, talents, and resources for ministry and mission in the community and the word.

Fruitful congregations:

- Through preaching, teaching, and stories of transformation in worship and small groups, inspire disciples of all ages toward generous giving and living.
- Promote proportional giving as an opportunity for disciples to express their faith and invest in the vision of the church, rather than a means to cover the budget.
- Expect leaders to practice proportional giving, with a goal toward tithing.
- Model faithful stewardship and generosity through the church's finances.
- Intentionally plan for the future of the congregation's ministry.
- Thank disciples who give to the church intentionally and regularly.

Congregations that are growing in generosity often implement most, if not all, of the following practices:

- Have an intentional yearlong stewardship plan to help disciples grow in their generosity, not just during the yearly stewardship campaign.
- Teach about generous giving and living during the new disciples/membership classes.
- Teach stewardship to all age groups in the congregation.
- Include stories of impact and transformation during worship that inspire people to give to support the vision of the congregation.
- Share a detailed narrative financial report to all members and participants at least once a year to model healthy transparency and accountability.
- Have an intentional plan to thank members and participants who give to the church, at least twice a year.

Fruitful congregations raise enough monies to fully fund the operations and ministries of the congregation, and over time build reserve funds to help them in times of greater needs.

For more resources on generosity, visit [www.gnjumc.org/stewardship](http://www.gnjumc.org/stewardship)

## PLANNING TO GROW GENEROSITY

Aspiring and Envisioning God's Hope for Your Congregation

First, review your evaluation for generosity practices in the Assessing Congregational Health and Fruitfulness section. Your congregation's worship vitality assessment is \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Based on your evaluation, vitality assessment, new learnings, and what you have discovered about generosity in your context, discuss as a team what your congregation's vision for worship is. (Remember, visioning aims to articulate a preferred future reality)

## CONFERENCING TO UNDERSTAND AND DISCERN

Based on your newly articulated or revised vision for generosity, discuss as a team the following questions:

1. What are we already doing well that we will build on?



2. What do we need to do differently or stop doing to help us move closer to our vision for generosity?
3. What aren't we doing that we need to do in the future to help us move closer to our vision for generosity?

**TAKING ACTION TO TRANSFORM**

Lastly, what are one to three SMART goals that will help your congregation become more like who God is calling you to be through generosity?

A SMART goal includes the following.

- Specific – it is clear, everyone can understand what you want to do.
- Measurable – It has something you will accomplish and often has a number associated with it.
- Achievable – it is a stretch, but you can achieve it in a certain period of time.
- Relevant – it is core to your ministry and something people will connect with.
- Time – it has a due date.

Below, list your goal(s) for growing generosity, including the actions you will take to accomplish each goal and who will be the champion for the goal (a champion is someone who gathers a team together to work and accomplish a goal).

Sample Goal: Establish an intentional plan to thank members and participants who give to the church, at least 3 times a year, to express our gratitude and motivate people to grow in their generosity | March 1, 2024 | Finance & Stewardship Chair, in consultation with the Pastor

**GOAL 1:**

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CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?  
 What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

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## GOAL 2:

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CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?

What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

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## GOAL 3:

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CHAMPION: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the actions your congregation will take to fulfill this goal:

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Due: \_\_\_\_\_

How will this goal help us grow our intercultural competency?

What will be different if our congregation accomplishes this goal?

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## FINALIZING YOUR PATHWAYS FOR CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH AND FRUITFULNESS PLAN

Now that you have evaluated, assessed, and strategically discerned and planned to grow your congregation to the next level of health and fruitfulness, it is time to review your plan for clarity and alignment, prioritize your goals and actions, and create a communication strategy to ensure you have a clear path to begin implementing your Pathways Plan for Congregational Health and Fruitfulness.

### REVIEW YOUR DISCIPLESHIP SYSTEM

Take one more look at your new or revised discipleship system, and discuss as a team the following questions:

- Is our definition of “a disciple” aligned with the biblical witness and our Wesleyan tradition, our vision, and is relevant to our missional context?
- Does our discipleship system provide a clear path for people to grow and mature in their faith as individuals and members of our congregation?

- Do the programs offered by our congregation intentionally support our discipleship system? If not, do we have clarity about what needs to be stopped, done differently, and/or started to achieve clarity and alignment?

Based on your conversation, make any necessary adjustments to your discipleship system plan.

## REVIEW YOUR GOALS AND ACTIONS

Now, take one more look at your new or revised goals and actions for the five core areas of ministry, and discuss as a team the following questions,

- Is our vision for each of the five core areas of ministry aligned with our discipleship goal and system?
- Do the goal(s) set support our vision for each of the five core areas of ministry, and are they SMART?
- If you have set multiple goals for each of the five core areas of ministry, do you have clarity of a realistic timeline, which goals you will start working on first and who is responsible?

Based on your conversation, make any necessary adjustments to your goals and actions.

## CREATE A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Key to an effective Pathways plan is creating a solid communication strategy. As you develop your communication strategy, remember to start with the Why. People will be more resistant to the what and how if they don't first know the why. Start with why the visioning and planning process was engaged and why it is important for the congregation. Share the process used, the discernment the team engaged in, and what best practices the team is learning about. The clearer you are about the why, the more people in the congregation will feel part of the process.

Discuss as a team the following questions:

- What new learnings need to be shared with the congregation?
- What changes in ministry/activity offerings might need to be shared with the congregation?
- Who should be the communicator(s)?
- What is the message?
- How will it be communicated? How often?
- When will the congregation launch its Pathways plan for congregational health and fruitfulness?
- What potential push-back might there be from the new learnings and changes in ministry?
- Who would the push-back come from?
- How will the initial information address the push-back from the beginning?

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

You are almost ready to finalize your Pathways plan for congregational health and fruitfulness. Now, let's make sure you have completed all the essential components for your Pathways plan.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluation and Assessment of Congregational Ministry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Design an Intentional Discipleship System
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set *SMART* goals and actions for each of the five core areas of ministry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Create a Communication Strategy for your Pathways plan.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Agree on a launch date for your Pathways plan.

## NEXT STEPS AND FOLLOW UP

A plan is only a plan if it is not implemented. The most important question after finalizing your Pathways plan will be: “what’s next?.” As a team, and in partnership with your congregation’s Church Council, ask the question “what’s next?” until you have a clear and actionable plan for implementation.

Once you finalize your *Pathways* plan for congregational health and fruitfulness

- Communicate the plan to key stakeholders and the congregation at large for alignment and buy-in.
- Ensure the Church Council allocates the necessary financial resources to implement the plan.
- Set a schedule for a monthly team check-in with your facilitator to celebrate progress, coaching and resourcing, and accountability.

## SAMPLE FINISHED PATHWAYS PLAN



# CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH & FRUITFULNESS PLAN FOR 2023-2024

ANYWHERE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,  
TOWN, STATE  
LAUNCH DATE: JANUARY 1, 2023

### Our Mission

Transform the world by making disciples of Jesus Christ.

### Our Vision

Our vision is to be a multi-generational faith community that welcomes all people and together experiences the love of Jesus Christ, grows in our faith, and transforms our community through our witness and service, so that hopes abounds, diversity is celebrated, and all can live to their full God-given potential.

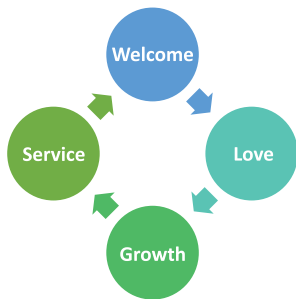
### Our Core Values

- Faith – Jesus Christ is our source of faith, value, hope and purpose
- Love – we are focused on loving God and our neighbors as Christ loves us
- Family – we aspire for our ministries and programs to be accessible and relevant to multi-generational families, including children and youth
- Service – we make a positive difference in our community through our hands-on missions and service.
- Fellowship – we support and encourage one another in love, grace, and responsible mutual accountability

### Who is a disciple?

A disciple is a passionate follower of Christ that every day is growing in love, faith, and service.

### Our Discipleship Path



- Welcome – disciples invite people into a relationship with Christ and welcome them into the fellowship of the congregation.
- Love – disciples are focused on loving God and loving their neighbors following the example of Jesus.
- Grow – disciples prioritize growing in their faith through the study of the Bible in small groups and other spiritual disciplines.
- Service – disciples invest their spiritual gifts and skills in service to provide to the needs of people in need and the most of vulnerable.

Anywhere United Methodist Church is focused on welcoming all people, loving God & our neighbors, growing in our faith, and serving the community.

#### Welcome

Summer & Fall Festivals  
A Friend for Christ  
New Members Classes

#### Love

Worship Svc  
Prayer Hour  
Prayer Chain

#### Grow

Mid-week Bible Study  
Youth Fellowship  
UMW  
Kids Club

#### Service

Community Kitchen  
Food Pantry  
Choir  
Diaper Drives

## GOALS TO GROW OUR CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH AND FRUITFULNESS

### *Growing Intercultural Competency*

1. Discern and implement decision-making practices for all our congregation's ministry teams that create consensus, so that the diversity of perspectives in our faith community are consider in our decisions. Pastor & Council Chair | Dec. 31, 2023.

### **Growing Worship**

1. Include an intentional moment in the message during worship experience that allows people to make a decision for Christ at least once a month, so that guest and participants can strengthen their relationship with God and grow in their discipleship. Jan. 1, 2023 | Pastor
2. Incorporate three to five new songs to our worship experience that reflect more contemporary styles of music for each liturgical season in the Christian calendar, so that our worship better reflects the growing diversity in our congregation and community. Nov. 30, 2024 | Worship Director.

### **Growing New Disciples**

1. Create and implement an intentional congregational care system and process so that our guests, participants, and members feel loved, valued, and cared for. June 30, 2023 | Lay Leader & Pastor
2. Incorporate a session on Cultural Competence to our New Members Class, so that persons joining our congregation grow in their understanding and practice of hospitality and inclusion. Jan. 1, 2024 | Lay Leader & Pastor

### **Growing Small Groups**

1. Offer a small group experience for newlywed couples in the community that reaches at least five couples, so that they build a strong foundation in their marriage. Sep 01, 2023 | Christian Ed Coordinator

### **Growing Outreach and Missions**

1. Launch an emergency food pantry that serves 20-30 families in the community, so that we improve our residents' quality of life by mitigating food scarcity in our area. March 1, 2024 | Community Outreach Coordinator.
2. Share one story of transformation coming from one of our hands-on mission programs during our worship experience at least once every two months, so that disciples are inspired to generosity and service in the community. Jan 1, 2023 | Mission Coordinator & Pastor

### **Growing Generosity**

1. Establish an intentional plan to thank members and participants who give to the church, at least three times a year, to express our gratitude and motivate people to grow in their generosity | March 1, 2024 | Finance & Stewardship Chair, in consultation with the Pastor

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