



## Vital Congregations

### **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**