



New Worshiping Communities Manual

Pittsburgh Presbytery

Pittsburgh Presbytery
New Worshipping Communities Commission
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Why Start New Worshiping Communities

In Pittsburgh Presbytery we invest in the creative, risky, and joy-filled work of bringing New Worshiping Communities to life. This means we choose to dedicate human and financial resources in support of emerging faith communities and their leaders. This means we are listening for the Spirit to lead us, and we are eager to find collaborators in both existing congregations and in unexpected places across our county. We worship and serve a God who wants to be a blessing to the nations and who goes looking for lost sheep, coins, and people, calling them back into communion with God, with one another, and with the world. Part of being adopted into the family of God is participating in God's activity in the world.

Jesus was sent to be the incarnate love of God. He came to seek and save the lost, not to be served but to serve and give up his life. "Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (John 20:21-22). At the very end of his earthly ministry, Jesus sent the disciples into the world just as God had sent him. He sent them and still sends us today with his peace and in the power of the Holy Spirit. He sends us proclaiming, "The kingdom of God has come near to you" (Luke 10:9). Filled with peace and the Holy Spirit, early followers of Jesus spread the gospel through a web of relational networks and saw exponential growth in a very short period of time. Therefore, if we are today's stewards of the love of God by our very nature; if we are in fact a people sent by Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit... THEN... to whom and where is God sending us?

Consider the United States of America as a field ripe for the harvest of new disciples. There is an enormous need in post-Christian America to plant new indigenous faith communities that will meet the Holy Spirit out beyond the spaces we have known as church. In addition to post-Christian Westerners, there are non-European immigrant populations coming to the US in massive numbers. We believe that the call of God is a call to do life together. If we truly want to participate in faith with the post-Christian West and the growing immigrant populations, we must create new worshiping communities that encounter God as God is known locally, opening our understanding of scripture and opening our lives to community and relationships with God's people.

Church planting is also one of the greatest ways to renew and revitalize established churches because it connects congregations to the work of God in their neighborhoods, while fanning into flame the missional Spirit of God in the local congregation. That excitement washes back into the life of the established church.

The planting of new worshiping communities will require fresh and innovative strategies and partnerships within our presbytery. We will likely not be parachuting into strategically predetermined neighborhoods with fully equipped ministers with a pre-packaged agenda. Rather, together we will be looking and listening for the wind of Spirit blowing and seeking to hoist our sails into that gust of God's Spirit. We will be identifying emerging local leaders in our churches, seminaries, and neighborhoods who are evangelists and apostles already at work building community and then asking one another how Pittsburgh Presbytery can come alongside the work of God in our midst. This kind of missional leadership is about being prayerful, present, watchful, and attentive. It will necessitate adaptive and discerning leaders, attentive to the rumblings of God in our church and in our neighborhoods. This will require a connectional spirit among all our churches, together seeking the peace of our neighborhoods. It will require us to let Christ build the kingdom of God while we make disciples and see more heaven on earth as Christ's kingdom comes near through his sent ones, Pittsburgh Presbytery, participating in the work of God.

New Worshiping Community Definition

A New Worshiping Community is...

Brief Definition

- **New**
 - Seeking to make and form new disciples of Jesus Christ
 - Taking on varied forms of church for our changing culture
- **Worshiping**
 - Gathered by the Spirit to meet Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament
 - Sent by the Spirit to join God's work for the transformation of the world
- **Community**
 - Practicing mutual care and accountability
 - Developing sustainability in leadership and finances

Long Definition

New

- **Seeking to make and form new disciples of Jesus Christ** - *NWCs witness in word and deed (1 John 3:18), continuing Jesus' own mission of discipling, feeding, teaching, healing, welcoming, crossing boundaries, and proclaiming God's coming realm. Those with new and renewed faith join the Spirit's transforming work in the world.*
- **Taking on varied forms of church for our changing culture** - *Living out the Gospel demands ministry which engages today's cultures (John 1:14). New ways of joining Christians together for contextual ministry will use current and historic ways of "being church" as springboards for creative innovation (Matt 9:17).*

Worshiping

- **Gathered by the Spirit to meet Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament** - *We seek to hear, come to believe, and are equipped to live the promises of God revealed in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. NWCs welcome new members of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27) through Baptism and are nourished by Christ's spiritual presence in the Lord's Supper.*
- **Sent by the Spirit to join God's mission for the transformation of the world** - *The Spirit impels us outward, so that worshipers participate in the redemption of the world in Christ (Col 1:20). Therefore, the primary beneficiaries of the NWC are not its own members, but rather its community and world.*

Community

- **Practicing mutual care and accountability** - *We commit ourselves to love one another (John 13:34) in relationships of mutual care and accountability, as faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Entrusting ourselves and the church to the Holy Spirit, we seek to grow to maturity in faith and life.*
- **Developing sustainability in leadership and finances** - *As distinct yet connected expressions of the body of Christ, NWCs have local leadership arising from their own community of faith (Exodus 18:21). Pastoral leadership, facilities, and programs are all appropriately structured in order to demonstrate good and faithful stewardship.*

Responding to Christ's gift and call, we do all these things only by God's grace, seeking—above all else—to glorify God through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Vision

The vision of the New Worshiping Communities Commission (NWCC) is that the churches of Pittsburgh Presbytery will unite in their dedication to living out the Great Commission. At the core of that commitment is a passion to share the good news of Jesus in word and deed and to gather together in new worshiping communities. These new communities will engage people in the saving love of Jesus Christ, encourage them to put their trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord, stimulate their growth as disciples who love one another, and participate in God's work for justice, equity, and reconciliation in the world. This vision will connect with the denominational initiative, 1001 New Worshiping Communities.

The NWCC intends to lead Pittsburgh Presbytery to dedicate itself to the work of starting new worshiping communities by:

- Cultivating among the churches of the presbytery a missional climate which values growth, dependency on the Spirit, and risk-taking
- Advocating in the presbytery for the dedication of financial resources to assist new worshiping communities during their start-up period
- Seeking the Holy Spirit in discovering new immigrant groups and other groups not currently being served by our congregations to discern potential opportunities for starting new worshiping communities
- Working with new worshiping communities to become sustainable in leadership and finance
- Helping congregations gain a desire to participate in the denominational commitment to start 1001 new worshiping communities by initiating new worshiping communities or partnering with others to support new worshiping communities
- Recruiting congregational partners for each new worshiping community
- Identifying leaders who have a vision for starting new worshiping communities and nurturing their growth

Discernment of Person & Place

Each NWC will emerge in a unique way. Some will come from a move of the Spirit in a particular individual with a sense of call to a particular place or people group. Others may come from the need to put a NWC in a particular location that is discerned by the NWCC. Some will come from a decision of an established congregation to expand or rebirth its ministry. Whatever the case, special care and attention will be taken to assist the leaders to discern the genuine nature of the call and the reasoning behind the desire to initiate a particular NWC.

- **Person** - Upon coming to the NWCC, a prospective NWC leader will begin to engage in a discernment process with the commission that will include a Discerning Missional Leadership assessment (DML). They will also be connected with a liaison from the commission to help discern the nature of the call. The NWCC will engage a coach to guide the discernment process.

- **Place** - The sense of call to a particular place is an important consideration in starting a NWC. When identifying a place special consideration will be taken in discerning why that place has emerged as a possible landing place for the NWC. This will include taking time to get to know the community, its people, its businesses, its community organizations, and its existing churches.

Core Values & Benchmarks

Core Values

In order to carry out its vision, each new worshiping community will hold the following core values:

- New worshiping communities have as their chief purpose the development of new disciples of Christ (disciple-making)
- A new worshiping community offers a ministry that is shaped to reach a particular community (contextual)
- A new worshiping community offers vibrant, culturally relevant worship experiences (worshiping)
- The participants in a new worshiping communities continue to grow spiritually and numerically each year (propagating)
- Both the leader and the new worshiping community participants are actively engaged in ministry within the community (engaged)
- The new worshiping community provides a variety of opportunities for discipleship and leadership development (formational)
- New worshiping communities will develop strategies for sustainability and propagation (sustainable)
- New worshiping communities are connected with the wider church through a congregation or presbytery in a relationship that includes care and accountability (connectional)
- New Worshiping communities will be passionate about justice in their communities and in the world (just)

Benchmarks

Getting started:

The Leadership Team uses *Starting New Worshiping Communities*, a discernment process of the PCUSA, to develop an identity statement, identify a target community, and establish a mission plan.

The NWC will work to meet the definition of a new worshiping community on p. 4 of this manual. By the end of its first full year of gathering, a new worshiping community will show:

1. Oversight

- Monthly meetings of the Task Force (leadership team) for prayer, discernment, and planning
- Regular meetings of a financial team, accountable to the Task Force
- Monthly progress reports submitted to NWCC
- New benchmarks for year two

2. Sustainability

- A disciple-making strategy which includes Bible study, prayer, community-building, worship, and stewardship, with target dates for implementation

- At least 75% of participants actively engaged in ministry through use of their time and talent
- Active engagement in the local community
- A stewardship program which emphasizes generous giving and financial sustainability
- A projected 2-year budget
- Participants supporting 25% of the community's budget
- Partnerships with at least 2 congregations
- An application for a Seed Grant submitted

3. Outreach

- An outreach strategy conducted by leader and participants which includes reaching at least 100 people per month through email, social media, mail, and advertising, and at least 25 people through direct personal connection
- The number of people participating in the life of the community adequate to sustain the ministry, and the number of participants continuing to grow
- 10% of the community giving directed toward mission, including Pittsburgh Presbytery Shared Benevolence.
- A visibility strategy developed and implemented
- Appropriate opportunities/events in the community

Covenant

This is a sample covenant. An actual covenant will be developed in conversation between the NWC Commission and the leaders of a New Worshiping Community.

This covenant is between Pittsburgh Presbytery (through the NWC Commission) and _____
(name of new worshiping community).

Pittsburgh Presbytery (through the New Worshiping Communities Commission) will:

- Provide some start-up funding for the NWC
- Provide orientation and training with the NWC Manual of Pittsburgh Presbytery
- Support the NWC in requesting funds from the synod and Mission Development Resource Committee of the Presbyterian Church (USA) <https://resources.newchurchnewway.org/grants>
- Act as session for the NWC until such time as the NWC is ready to become an organized congregation
- Provide training opportunities, including ethical training, for leaders
- Engage a coach for the NWC for at least one year
- Encourage congregations of Pittsburgh Presbytery to develop partnerships with the NWC
- Participate in the development of a task force for each NWC, providing at least one commission member to serve as a member of the Task Force
- Provide payroll services for the staff of the NWC until the congregation is organized or until such time as the new worshiping community is prepared to assume that responsibility
- Maintain and administer the portion of the income that covers staff salaries
- Hold appropriate liability insurance for the NWC
- Authorize and supply leadership if necessary for the administration of sacraments
- Make decisions regarding geographical area and schedule for NWC starts
- Appoint NWC pastors and evangelists
- Approve hiring of non-ordained staff
- Approve NWC budgets
- Provide general oversight for all NWCs and task forces
- Provide financial training on how to develop a budget and create budget reports
- Pray for the NWC
- Develop a presbytery-wide culture of support and welcome for new worshiping communities

The Task Force will:

- Consist of 5-9 members of which at least one is a representative of the NWC commission and the others are members of the worshiping community. The organizing leader will serve as a member.
- Operate under the authority of the NWC commission
- Meet on a regular schedule
- Provide leadership until the NWC becomes organized as a congregation
- Participate in the *Starting New Worshiping Communities* discernment process <https://resources.newchurchnewway.org/resource/discerning>
- Work with a coach approved by the NWC commission
- Develop an identity statement and a strategy for the new worshiping community using *Starting New Worshiping Communities* as the guide
- Develop an evangelism strategy to be conducted by the NWC which includes reaching at least 100 people per month through email, social media, mailings, and advertising, and at least 25 people per month through direct, personal connection

- Provide monthly reports of attendance, finances, and mission to the NWC commission
- Initiate grant applications to synod, MDRC, and other sources of support
- Provide prayer support and spiritual leadership for the NWC
- Work with the NWC leader(s) to recommend hiring of non-ordained staff
- Work with the NWC leader(s) to provide for the evaluation of the staff
- Recommend observances of sacraments to the NWC commission
- Submit an annual budget proposal and progress report to the NWC commission
- With the NWC leader(s), administer the budget approved by the NWC commission
- Recommend an appropriate time and strategy for organizing as a congregation
- Develop and implement a plan for outreach
- Offer leadership development opportunities for the NWC
- Disband when the NWC becomes an organized congregation
- Participate in 1001 New Worshiping Communities Core Team Training (<https://resources.newchurchnewway.org/classes/core-leadership-team-training>)

The New Worshiping Community will:

- Work toward becoming sustainable in leadership and finance
- Engage the community through evangelism and service
- Reach out to un-churched and de-churched people, inviting them into relationship with Jesus Christ
- Participate in an outreach program which includes reaching at least 100 people per month through email, social media, mailings, and advertising, and at least 25 people through direct, personal connection
- Appoint a treasurer
- Submit an annual budget proposal and the monthly NWC report to the NWCC.
- Provide vibrant, contextual worship experiences
- Offer a disciple-making process that includes Bible study, prayer, Christian community, and stewardship
- Offer discipleship opportunities for adults, children, and youth
- Contribute at least 10% of its budget to mission, including the general benevolence fund of Pittsburgh Presbytery
- Participate in a stewardship program emphasizing generous giving
- Evaluate and revise the community's mission every three years
- Consist of participants who are actively involved in ministry
- Consist of participants who develop transformative relationships with Jesus Christ
- Consist of participants who are passionate about God's justice

The NWC leader(s) will:

1. Work with NWCC to develop the NWC
2. Attend the Discerning Missional Leadership Assessment (DML) within the first year
3. Attend at least one training event per year, including the 1001 Accelerator Training, within 12 months of the NWC receiving a Seed Grant.
4. Attend ethics seminars at Pittsburgh Presbytery
5. Administer sacraments as authorized by the NWC Commission
6. Meet with the task force
7. Provide pastoral oversight as prescribed by the Book of Order (PCUSA)
8. Cultivate excellence in leadership of worship, stewardship, discipleship, outreach, and mission
9. Be accountable to the NWCC
10. Meet monthly with a coach

Signatures:

NWC Leaders(s) Date

Task Force Chair Date

NWC Commission Member Date

Strategy for Starting New Worshiping Communities

Each New Worshiping Community is different. The order in which the activities are carried out may vary. These are guidelines rather than a recipe for starting new worshiping communities. This strategy assumes that groups will be using the *Starting New Worshiping Communities* resource from PCUSA. <https://resources.newchurchnewway.org/resource/discerning>

Phase 1: Discerning

Who will do it?	Potential NWC leader, discernment group, partner congregation or NWC Commission
Resource:	<i>Starting New Worshiping Communities</i> (pp. 4-24)
Outcomes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A decision to move forward ● A discernment group (a group of people willing to pray and explore possibilities for a potential NWC, who may not plan to be part of the new community on a long term basis) ● An understanding of the expectations of the presbytery and denomination ● A covenant with Pittsburgh Presbytery (see p. 9 of this manual)
Process:	<p>Gather a discernment group that will commit to meeting regularly for Bible study, prayer, and discernment using <i>Starting New Worshiping Communities</i>, pp. 4-24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consult with the NWC commission as early as possible in the process ● Covenant with a NWC coach (coordinated by NWCC) ● Identify a discernment team ● Explore the definition of “new worshiping community” (p. 4 of this manual) ● Complete the DML process ● Review the NWCC manual with your liaison ● Develop and sign a covenant with Pittsburgh Presbytery (p. 9 of this manual)

Phase 2: Gathering A Team

Who will do it?	NWC leader and discernment group with support from NWC Commission
Resource:	<i>Starting New Worshiping Communities</i> (pp. 25-35)
Outcomes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Leadership Team● Covenant● Seed grant application
Process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Meet weekly for prayer and discernment● Consult with the NWC commission● Walk prayerfully around the community with the discernment team● Use the guide to discern the leadership needs of your proposed community● Develop a leadership covenant (see p. 34 of <i>Starting New Worshiping Communities</i>)● Apply for a Seed Grant

Phase 3: Values

Who will do it?	Leadership Team with support from NWC Commission
Resource:	<i>Starting New Worshiping Communities</i> (pp. 36-42)
Outcome:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Statement of core values of your community
Process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Study theology of mission● Identify the core values of the leadership team

Phase 4: Vision

Who will do it?	Leadership Team with support from NWC Commission
Resource:	<i>Starting New Worshiping Communities</i> (pp. 43–63)
Outcome:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Vision statement for the NWC
Process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Design and carry out neighborhood exegesis visits using the SNWC guide.● Identify the “who” (people God is calling you to engage)● Develop a statement that clearly articulates the overall vision for the NWC

Phase 5: Embedding, Experimenting, Evaluating

Who will do it?	Leadership Team with help from the NWC Commission
Resource:	<i>Starting New Worshiping Communities</i> (pp. 64-76)
Outcome:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Activities designed with the intended constituency in mind● Investment grant application
Process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Meet with NWC Commission● Spend time in the community● Design and carry out experiments in engaging the community● Evaluate the activities● Review year 1 Benchmarks (see pp. 7 of this manual)● Apply for an Investment Grant if appropriate

Phase 6: Mission Plan

Who will do it?	Task Force with assistance from the NWCC
Resource:	<i>Starting New Worshiping Communities</i> , pp. 77-94
Outcome:	Growth grant application if applicable Mission plan for the NWC which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Leadership and decision-making structures● Worship● Finances● Benchmarks● Accountability● Outreach● Community gathering
Process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Meet with NWC Commission and COM● Brainstorm ideas for putting the values into practice● Draft a mission plan● Set benchmarks● Apply for Growth Grant if appropriate

Guidelines for Organizing as a Congregation

1. NWC has been worshiping regularly for at least 1 year.
2. The number of people participating in the life of the community is adequate to sustain 75% of the budget. This number has been sustained for a year.
3. Organizing pastor (or other spiritual leader) has been in place for at least 1 year.
4. Potential elders have been trained in leadership and church governance.
5. Task force meets regularly and, with the pastor, effectively provides spiritual, financial, and strategic leadership for the community.
6. Vision has been effectively communicated to the community.
7. Community membership qualifications and processes have been developed.
8. Community holds appropriate liability insurance.
9. Financial procedures are in place and operating effectively with appropriate accountability and ownership.
10. Pastor/leader has received ethical training by the presbytery. Background checks for all leaders have been completed.
11. 10% of community giving is directed to mission.
12. Community is incorporated as a non-profit organization.
13. NWC shows evidence of consistently setting and reaching benchmarks.
14. Bylaws have been approved by the Task Force.
15. PIN number has been obtained from PCUSA.
16. Plan of union (for union congregations) has been approved by governing bodies.
17. Congregation has elected officers.
18. Congregation has obtained EIN# from IRS using form SS-4, *Application for Employer Identification Number*.
19. Pastor has been called by the congregation (if appropriate); call forms are signed; the pastoral call has been approved by presbytery.

NWC Task Force Responsibilities (For NWC Commission Members)

Members of the NWC Commission serving on NWC Task Forces:

1. Will be the primary representatives of Pittsburgh Presbytery on the Task Force
2. Will attend Task Force meetings as voting members
3. Will attend worship services and other programs of the NWC when possible
4. Will stay up-to-date on NWC strategy through attending training events and reading relevant resources
5. Will take an active role helping the Task Force develop NWC strategies that reflect current NWC principles
6. Will pray regularly for the NWC
7. Will report to the NWC Commission at each commission meeting
8. Will assure that the NWC provides financial, attendance, and mission reports to the commission at least quarterly
9. Will assure that covenant and benchmarks are developed, adopted, and annually reviewed and revised and that progress toward meeting the benchmarks is regularly evaluated
10. Will provide pastoral support to the project

NWCC Contact Information

Co-Chairs:

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Staff Liaison:

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