

Congregational Development Guidelines
2017-2018
Louisiana Annual Conference
The United Methodist Church

Contents

Mission, Core Values, and Purpose	2
The Conference Ministry of Congregational Development.....	3
Six Key Components of Creating a New Congregation	4
An Important Message about Funding.....	6
Guidelines for Becoming a Church Planter	7
Qualification Checklist for Partnering Congregations.....	9
New Church Planter Covenant Agreement.....	11
Strategies and Benchmarks for Launching a New United Methodist Faith Community	13
Salary Grant Agreement	18
Reporting Guidelines for Church Planters	20
Guidelines for Congregational Development Grants.....	22
Congregational Development Grant Agreement	24
Guidelines for Transformation Grants	26
Checklist for New Church Legal and Financial Matters	28
Sample Articles of Incorporation for a New Church	30

Mission, Core Values, and Purpose

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

A primary way we accomplish this mission is to create Vital Congregations, faith communities who are...

- leading others into abundant life in Christ,
- engaging in our communities,
- learning, living, and telling the gospel story,
- and reaching out to and drawing in people from all walks of life.

We do this by living our core values:

- integrity,
- accountability,
- unrelenting love for all people,
- courage and risk,
- and holding nothing sacred but the mission.

The Conference Ministry of Congregational Development

The Conference Congregational Development Ministry seeks to live out the mission by helping to foster an apostolic spirit and by working to create a culture of church planting in the Louisiana Annual Conference. Of particular importance is helping to cultivate an expectation that healthy churches multiply to create new faith communities. Our specific responsibility is to identify and equip church planters, to partner in planting new faith communities, and to help in the transformation of existing faith communities. Our aim is reaching new people with the loving grace of Jesus Christ in order to make disciples for the transformation of the world.

The purpose of the Conference Ministry of Congregational Development is to support the mission of the Annual Conference in the following ways:

1. identifying and training potential planters to establish and lead new faith communities,
2. identifying and training potential partner churches to reach new people by creating new faith communities,
3. assisting existing congregations in transformation ministries for the purpose of reaching new people,
4. assisting the District Superintendents in their work of starting new faith communities and transforming existing congregations to reach new people, and
5. coordinating the wise and strategic use of Conference resources in order to most effectively make disciples of Jesus Christ through new and transformed faith communities.

The Congregational Development ministry relies on a strong partnership between the District Superintendents as missional strategists for their respective districts, the Bishop as the spiritual and temporal leader of the Conference, and the Director of Transformation and New-Church Development as the administrator of the Conference's vision for new-church starts and transformation projects.

The Congregational Development Team supports this ministry by participating in the approval of grants and projects as outlined in these Guidelines. The Team also participates in the process of identifying and assessing potential church planters. Additionally, the Team works with the Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development to provide financial oversight and to prepare a budget for the ministry of church starts and transformation.

Six Key Components of Creating a New Congregation

The Louisiana Conference is committed to having all six of the following key components in place prior to launching a new church or faith community:

1. the right planter
2. the right mission field
3. the right partner congregation(s) or mother church
4. the right strategy
5. the right timing
6. the right funding plan

We resist the temptation to attempt to plant when less than all six of the above key components are in place.

The Right Planter is the product of discernment, assessment, and training. We are looking for planters who have some track record of “starting something” in their past, and we value the wisdom that “past behavior is the best predictor of future performance.” We will be more focused on the church planter rather than church planting. We are seeking people with apostolic gifts and entrepreneurial skills, people who will seek to build relationships first, and people passionate about living and sharing the love of Jesus Christ.

Our system often mistakenly drives us toward considering the location first. We must not be deceived by an attractive location. While location can be a disqualifier, it shouldn’t be the leading concern. Instead, we will invest in finding and equipping the right planter for the right mission field.

The Right Mission Field is critical for starting a new church or faith community. We will look for a mission field that is compatible for a church planter. Affinity between the planter and mission field is essential.

Church planting is an incarnational ministry—Christ must become flesh in the context of the mission field; therefore, we listen deeply to the mission field and seek to meet the needs it presents.

We listen to the mission field to determine the style of worship, the focus of the ministry, and the scope of the project.

The Right Partner Congregation or Mother Church is a driving factor in most thriving new church plants today. Evidence demonstrates that the “mother-daughter” model has the best chance of success. Since the most important element a mother church brings to a new start is its DNA, we are looking for healthy mother churches that have a consistent record of bringing new people into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Potential Mother Church assessment and training, completing the online “Readiness 360” assessment tool, strong and demonstrated sense of connectionalism, and working with the Conference Ministry of Congregational Development are requirements of all potential mother churches.

The Right Strategy is essential. All new church projects—even mother/daughter models—must have a compelling and well-founded strategy and benchmarks to allow the planter and church planting partners to know they are on track toward fruitful results.

The Right Time is critical. Starting too soon can be as dangerous as starting too late. We must take into account reversals and trends in housing markets, economic conditions, availability of resources, prioritizing of investments, and other market-driven factors. God-timing is even more critical. We are committed to prayerful discernment of the signs and seasons that indicate God’s readiness to lead.

The Right Funding is a vital consideration. Jesus’ words of caution in Luke 14:28 about a person wanting to build a tower but failing to count the cost has a particular resonance with church-planting ministries. Funding from the Conference must be committed for an extended period of time for any project, and the project itself must be capable of generating necessary income to become self-sufficient within three to four years, except in cases of starting faith communities in economically disadvantaged communities. To go into a project with only the “hope” of sufficient resources down the road is short sighted. Church planters, launch teams, District and Conference leaders, and partner churches each have a role to play in creating and committing to a faithful funding plan.

The Congregational Development Ministry is entrusted with significant funds in order to extend the Kingdom of God and reach out to new people with the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Good stewardship requires careful budgeting and a process for responsibly administering grants, and the use of Conference funding requires transparency and accountability by both the new-church planting project and the Conference Congregational Development Ministry; therefore, the Congregational Development Ministry will not shortcut the grant procedures and guidelines.

IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT FUNDING

It is the policy of the Conference Congregational Development Team to invest in people and projects that show the greatest potential to reach out to and invite new people into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Congregational Development Team and the Ministry of Congregational Development DO NOT fund the purchase of land or buildings or the extensive remodeling of existing buildings through its budgeted/apportioned funds. The build-it-and-they-will-come (or “attraction model”) of church planting is a significant financial drain on Conference resources and is not currently a fruitful means of disciple making. Rather, investments in people and projects will be handled through a system of grants and benchmarks focused on the mission of the Church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Because the Ministry of Congregational Development funds large projects over the course of 3 to 7 years, nonrecurring and reserve funds are essential to ensure the ability to carry projects through to completion. Additionally, these nonrecurring and reserve funds are used to meet significant compensation and project obligations when those expenses arise before apportionments are received. Furthermore, these nonrecurring and reserve funds may be used, in limited circumstances, as part of a funding strategy involving the repurposing of buildings for new uses and for other capital investments approved by the Congregational Development Team for projects with metrics that are highly predictive of success.

In all circumstances, the use of Congregational Development funds must be directly and primarily related to reaching out to and inviting in new people.

Grants and agreements must be in writing with all required approvals.

The Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development may approve expenditures related to (1) recruitment and training events, (2) routine expenses of the Congregational Development Ministry, (3) small exploratory grants designed to identify and test potential projects, and (4) small urgent needs of approved projects. All such expenses will be reported to the Conference Congregational Development Team at their quarterly meetings. However, the salary and project grants described in this document are subject to the approval of the Congregational Development Team and will be considered **ONLY** at their quarterly meetings.

Guidelines for Becoming a Church Planter

The Discernment Process

1. Complete the [two online surveys](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/new-church-starts/discerning) from Path 1.
<http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/new-church-starts/discerning>
2. Be recommended by your DS in writing to the Director of Transformation and New Church Development (“Director”) to attend the New Church Leadership Institute or other approved discernment event.
3. Planter and spouse attend the approved event. The planter is expected to participate in the cost of attending the event.
4. Write a self-reflective essay.

The Assessment Process

1. Go through assessment interviews with the Conference Congregational Development Team.
2. Complete any other assessment tools that may be determined by assessment interviews and/or the Director.
3. In the event an existing church is planning a mother-daughter or multisite project to be led by a person already under appointment at the parent/partnering church, the potential planter must still go through this discernment, assessment, and appointment process in order to receive Conference funding for the project.

The Appointment Process

1. If the assessment process deems a potential planter is ready to plant a new faith community, she/he will be placed in the “Planters Pool” from which the Cabinet makes appointments.
2. When the Bishop and Cabinet discern that the right planter is ready for the right mission field, an appointment is made.
3. The planter’s compensation package and housing will be determined among the planter, the District Superintendent, and Director. The Cabinet will give approval. The Conference Congregational Development Team will approve the schedule for stepping down the salary grant.
4. If appointed, the planter (and key members of a launch team, if applicable) will then go through Church Planters Boot Camp or other approved preparation event.
5. Note: When the appointment/project begins and the planter has submitted a budget for its use, the Conference Congregational Development Team may provide a “Start-Up Grant”

of up to \$10,000 for initial needs and miscellaneous expenses. The Congregational Development Team may adjust the amount of the grant depending on the particular needs of the project and other sources of funding available.

6. The planter completes “Strategies and Benchmarks for Launching a New United Methodist Faith Community.”
7. Strategies and benchmarks must be agreed upon between the planter, the mother church (if applicable), District Superintendent, and the Director.
8. The Planter must sign a ministry covenant acknowledging she/he has read, understands, and agrees to follow all the policies and procedures for starting a new faith community.
9. The planter will be assigned a ministry coach, selected in consultation with the planter.

Qualification Checklist for Partnering Congregations

New Congregation, Shared Campus
Multisite or Second Campus
Mother-Daughter Plant
New Worshiping Community
Other Expressions of Faith Communities Reaching New People

To receive Conference funding, the following process must be completed. The factors described below are among the best practices to ensure the greatest potential of success so that we are being wise stewards of the resources we have available.

- ___ Meet with the District Superintendent to discuss plans and receive approval to move forward.
- ___ Submit written preliminary proposal to Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development.
- ___ Pastor, District Superintendent, and Director will determine whether the potential planting congregation needs to first engage in overall strategic planning, conversations, visioning programs, or other process related to congregational vitality.
- ___ Participate in Readiness 360 and/or other approved assessment tools and demonstrate high readiness to plant.
- ___ Church leadership team studies relevant demographics from MissionInsite, researches the community, and prepares a report describing the mission filed and demonstrating the missional need.
- ___ Consult with the District Superintendent to determine what role the *Discipline* describes for the District Board of Church Location and Building in the particular situation and plan accordingly.
- ___ Receive preliminary approval from the Conference Congregational Development Team.
- ___ Discuss with the District Superintendent and Director any appointment needs or considerations. Obtain Cabinet approval to proceed if the project will require a new appointment or change in appointment.
- ___ Church leadership team and pastoral leadership studies and discusses congregational-development books from the approved list of resources.

- ___ Planting pastor satisfies the “Guidelines for Becoming a Church Planter.”
- ___ Planting pastor secures coaching for the duration of the investment period and for one year following. In some circumstances, the Director may require congregational coaching.
- ___ Planting pastor and Senior Pastor of sponsoring/mother church are both required to participate in an approved “Boot Camp” or other approved training experience.
- ___ Submit detailed plans and benchmarks to the Director and District Superintendent using “Strategies and Benchmarks for Launching a New United Methodist Church.” The plan must not only include how new people will be invited and gathered, but also a plan for disciple-making and equipping new people for ministry. The Director, District Superintendent, planting pastor, and leadership team meet, discuss the plan, edit if necessary, and jointly approve the plan.
- ___ Submit ministry plan, benchmarks, and financial plan to the Congregational Development Team for approval.
- ___ Receive Cabinet approval.

NEW CHURCH PLANTER COVENANT AGREEMENT

The following Covenant Agreement must be executed upon the appointment of the new church planter to the mission field. Other provisions may be added depending on the particular circumstances of the project.

I _____, a newly appointed new church planter, and
_____, the Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development (the “Director”) for the Louisiana Conference of the United Methodist Church confirm that we are in agreement on the following:

- 1)** I understand Conference Congregational Development Ministry will be diligent in seeing that my family and I will have ample and appropriate spiritual, emotional, and professional support in place for our well-being and to experience the success of the project. These may include covenant/accountability groups, spiritual directors, training events, counseling, days off, vacation, etc.
- 2)** I understand the need for a Ministry Coach and will work constructively with the coach agreed upon between myself and the Director.
- 3)** I have read, understand, and agree to adhere to the policies, procedures, and expectations as detailed in the Congregational Development Guidelines.
- 4)** In recognition of the investment made in me as a United Methodist church planter, I agree that if for any reason I should leave The United Methodist Church, I will not attempt to create or plant any other new church or worshipping entity within 60 miles of the current new church start location to which I am appointed, for a period of one year from the date of ending my appointment as a United Methodist pastor.

- 5) I understand that, in the event of #4 above, the last paycheck or any form of severance from the Louisiana Conference of The United Methodist Church and any of its entities will be delivered to me upon the return of all personal and church items (paid for by the Conference), as well as all access codes to websites, bank accounts, etc., as well as keys to storage units, properties, and meeting locations, all of which are property of The Louisiana Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Signed on the _____ of _____, 20_____

New Church Planter

Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development

District Superintendent

Strategies and Benchmarks for Launching a New United Methodist Faith Community

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PLANTING PASTOR

This is to be used for planning in draft form and is to be finalized by the Planting Pastor after she/he has attended “Boot Camp” (or other approved preparation event) no later than the first August of the appointment or at another time designated by the Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development (the “Director”). Where narrative answers are requested, please use the additional pages as needed.

Geographic Description of Area to be Planted _____

Municipality of Church to be Planted _____ Today’s Date _____

TYPE OF PROJECT & MISSION FIELD

A. Type of Project

Please check **all** that apply:

1. “Mother-Daughter” Launch
2. “Parachute Drop” Launch
3. Reclaim Discontinued Church Facility
4. Extension/Multisite Campus
5. Other (a “hybrid” of the above-listed initiatives; please describe)

I anticipate that this new church will launch weekly worship with _____ adults and _____ children.

I anticipate that this new church will average _____ adults and _____ children one year post-launch.

I anticipate that this new church will have an average worship attendance of _____ within three years.

Do you believe that this new church will be financially self-supporting within 3 to 5 years?

___ Yes

___ No

B. Mission Field Data

1. Based on what you have discovered so far, describe briefly the community in which the congregation will be launched and the mission field in which the new church will be planted (such as people, environment, economy, etc.). Attach FullInsite Report of target area from MissionInsite.
2. In addition to your observations, please include demographic material from MissionInsite or other demographic providers.
3. How much has the population grown in the last year? _____
4. What is the predominant age of the population in the area? _____
5. What is are the top five Mosaic Segments (Mission Insite) in the area?

6. What is the predominant ethnic group in the area? _____
8. What United Methodist congregations and churches of other denominations are in the mission field? (Attach List)
9. Given the above considerations, describe in detail the piece(s) of the “mission field” that you envision targeting through the creation of this new congregation. Create a profile that represents the persons you believe God is calling this new church to reach.
10. Describe your plan for learning the needs of the people of the mission field in the first 60 days.
11. Describe in detail your plan for meeting people, joining groups, forming relationships, connecting to people in the community in the first sixty days.
12. Describe in detail your plan for meeting people, joining groups, forming relationships, connecting to people in the community beyond the first sixty days.

MINISTRY FUNDING AND STEWARDSHIP

Summary of Anticipated Ministry Expenses

(not including pastoral compensation)

1. Projected cost of the worship/office site (if known): _____ rent? _____ lease?
Terms: _____ \$ _____
2. Cost of sound, keyboard, projector, equipment, etc. for worship: \$ _____
3. Cost of office equipment, promotions and other start-up costs: \$ _____
4. Compensation for any staff (please provide details): \$ _____
5. Total Estimated Expenses for first 12 months: \$ _____
6. Are you committed to tithing? ____ Yes ____ No Are you committed to conveying tithing as an expectation for your Launch Team? ____ Yes ____ No

Summary of Anticipated Income

(not including expected Conference funding)

What level of financial support do you anticipate receiving from the following funding sources during the first twelve months? (Estimate projected amounts.)

- Contributions from the active participants of the new congregation? \$ _____
- Pledged support from pastor's family, friends, and supporters? \$ _____
- Pledged support from "mother" or partner church(s)? \$ _____
- Other income \$ _____

Describe sources: _____

TOTAL anticipated cash income for first 12 months (total of above amounts)?

\$ _____

Upon project approval, the Conference Congregational Development Team provides a \$10,000 "Start-Up Grant" to be used for initial equipment needs and miscellaneous expenses. The Congregational Development Team may adjust the amount of the grant depending on the particular needs of the project and other sources of funding available. The planter must provide a budget for the use of the Start-Up Grant before funds are released

PARTICIPATION BENCHMARKS

What is the effective date of your appointment? _____

Please complete the chart below and include in it the benchmark dates and participation milestones for your pre-launch strategy and beyond. This will help in measuring the projected growth of the new church.

Milestone Event/Ministry	Projected Implementation Date	Number of adults present	Explanatory Comments
First Launch Team Meeting			
First "Member/Guest" Event			
Final "Member/Guest" Event			
Relational Groups Formed Prior to Preview Season		(number of groups)	(List Groups Here)
First "Preview" Service			
Final "Preview" Service			
Relational Groups Formed Prior to Launch		(number of groups)	(List Groups Here)
Launch Day			
Average Attendance of the four Sundays			

following Launch Day			
Average Attendance Six Months after Launch			
Average Attendance One Year after Launch			

Do you understand that continued funding is tied to the church’s ability to “bear fruit” in the mission field through reaching the above goals? ___Yes ___No

Do you understand that continued funding is tied to meeting benchmarks, particularly benchmarks related to meeting and gathering new people into the community you are forming? ___Yes ___No

Do you understand that the work of forming relationships and your presence in the community is of paramount importance in church planting, both before and after launching worship? ___Yes ___No

Do you understand the importance forming a discipleship system in order for people to respond to God’s prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace? _____ Yes _____ No

Will you create a community willing to invite others into participation and willing to eventually give birth to new faith communities? ___Yes ___No

Signed _____ Date _____
Planting Pastor Named to Start the New Church

Signed _____ Date _____
Senior Pastor of Sponsoring/Partnering/Mother Church

Signed _____ Date _____
Lay Leader or Lay Representative of the Sponsoring/Partnering/Mother Church

Signed _____ Date _____
District Superintendent

Signed _____ Date _____
Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development

Salary Grant Agreement

The following Salary Grant Agreement must be executed upon the appointment of the new church planter to the mission field. Other provisions may be added depending on the particular circumstances of the project.

A salary grant will be provided to _____ United Methodist Church to supplement the salary of _____, the church planter assigned to this project.

Initial Salary Grant (YEAR 1)

The first-year salary grant from the Conference Ministry of Congregational Development is in the amount of \$_____. This first-year salary grant is for the period beginning on July 1, 20___, through December 31, 20___. The grant funds will be allocated as shown on the approved Conference compensation worksheet

The salary grant from the Conference Ministry of Congregational Development will decrease in the following manner:

YEAR 2: \$_____ for the 12-month period beginning on January 1, 20___, through December 31, 20__.

YEAR 3: \$_____ for the 12-month period beginning on January 1, 20___, through December 31, 20___. (75% of the full original annual grant amount)

YEAR 4: \$_____ for the 12-month period beginning on January 1, 20___, through December 31, 20___. (50% of the full original annual grant amount)

YEAR 5: \$_____ for the 12-month period beginning on January 1, 20___, through December 31, 20___. (25% of the full original annual grant amount)

1. If either the Cabinet or Conference Congregational Development Team votes to terminate Conference sponsorship of the project, the salary grant ends on the last day of the pastoral appointment.
2. When Conference funding decreases, new faith community or the partnering/mother church (if applicable) is expected to contribute the difference so that the pastor's salary does not decrease.
3. Where there is a partner/mother church, the grant will be paid to the partnering/mother church.
4. With the written consent of the District Superintendent and the Director of Transformation and New-Church Development, the new faith community or partnering/mother church may raise the salary, but any raises are the responsibility of the new faith community or partnering/mother church. Increases in health insurance premium and pension during the grant period are the responsibility of the new faith community or the partnering/mother church.
5. There are other projects in the Louisiana Conference waiting for funding. If a partnering/mother church or the faith community receiving this grant is able to assume more of the financial responsibility, it is encouraged contact the Director of Congregational Development.

Signed on the _____ of _____, 20_____

New Church Planter

Partnering/Mother Church Pastor (if applicable)

District Superintendent

Partnering/Mother Church SPRC (if applicable)

Congregational Development Team

Director of Congregational Transformation
and New Church Development

Reporting Guidelines for Church Planters

Church planters will submit regular written reports to the Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development, who will determine the due date and specific content. Submitting the reports is the responsibility of the planter and insures accountability and responsible stewardship of Conference resources. Timeliness and thoroughness is expected and essential.

The questions below, based in part on *Ten Most Common Mistakes Made by New Church Starts*, by Jim Griffith and Bill Easum (2008), provide a basic guideline for what church planters will be asked to report. The Director will indicate which of these (or others) need to be included.

1. How are you paying attention to God's Spirit? How are you practicing the means of grace? How is it with your soul? How are you making the Great Commandment primary in your personal life and in your spiritual leadership?
2. What roadblocks and opposition have you encountered? Who is praying with you and for you concerning these issues? What support do you feel you need?
3. How are you continuing to learn about your mission field? What new contacts have you made in investigating your mission field (list names and dates)? What new information have you learned about the people of the area? How does your strategy match the people and culture of the mission field? How is your learning about the mission field altering your plans and methodology?
4. Prelaunch: What is the size of the launch team? How has the size of the launch team increased? What specifically have you done recruit new people into the launch team since the last report? What are your specific plans for recruiting more people in the month to come? How are you equipping them for ministry? What size do you hope to reach before you launch?
 - a. List the names of people you have met and invited to become a part of the project since the last report (include dates).
 - b. For each name, indicate what contact information you have.
 - c. For each name, indicate your plans for your next contact.
5. Post-launch: How are you continuing to connect with new people as a priority of your planting ministry? What specifically have you done to meet and invite new people since the last report? What are your specific plans for meeting and inviting new people in the month to come? What are you doing to empower your leaders and participants to invite new people into the faith community?
 - a. List the names of people you have met and invited to become a part of the project since the last report (include dates).

- b. For each name, indicate what contact information you have.
 - c. For each name, indicate your plans for your next contact.
6. What is your discipleship plan for people who are entering into the life of the faith community? How are people connecting with God and each other in ways outside of Sunday worship? How are leaders being equipped to care for those who are coming? How are you organizing ministries, groups, and pastoral care so that they are not dependent solely on your presence?
7. What is the financial health of the project? What is your financial plan for addressing your expected growth? How are you teaching about stewardship?
- a. Attach a financial report showing year-to-date income and expenses.
 - b. What out-of-the-ordinary expenses do you foresee?
8. What pressures are you feeling to add new ministries before you have the right available leaders in place? What new ministries are needed? What is your plan for discerning the right timing and benchmarks for adding needed ministries?

Guidelines for Congregational Development Grants

New-Church Plants
Mother-Daughter Projects
Multisite
Other New Faith Communities

These grants are given to church-planting projects (either to a new faith community or to a mother church) for the express and sole purpose of reaching new people. For the Congregational Development Team to award the grant, there must be a demonstrated and accountable probability that the use of the funds and the plan proposed will result in inviting and welcoming new people into the new faith community.

For approved Congregational Development Projects, the Conference Congregational Development Team provides a “Start-Up Grant” to be used for initial equipment needs and miscellaneous expenses. See “Benchmarks and Strategies for Planting a New United Methodist Faith Community” for more information. This application is not necessary for a Start-Up Grant.

Grants are awarded only when the planter (and partnering/mother congregation, when applicable) has completed the discernment and approval process.

Grants are considered only at the quarterly meetings of the Congregational Development Team.

The Congregational Development Team and the Ministry of Congregational Development DO NOT fund the purchase of land or buildings or the remodeling of existing buildings through its budgeted funds.

- ___ 1. Meet with the Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development (the “Director”) to discuss plans and receive preliminary approval to move forward.
- ___ 2. Receive approval from the District Superintendent.
- ___ 3. The planter of the new faith community (or pastor of a mother church or other designated leader) prepares a description of the proposed use of funds or project to include the following, if applicable:
 - a. description of the plan or expected use of funds
 - b. amount requested for over how many months/years
 - c. documentation showing the rationale for the amount requested
 - d. description of how the use of funds will further the mission and ministry of the faith community in reaching new people
 - e. description of the mission field targeted, with data from MissionInsite
 - f. the expected results related to the reaching new people in the mission field

- g. a system for following up with new people who respond
- h. a disciple-making system that will serve new people who respond
- i. expected benchmarks (e.g., weekly contacts, launch goals, leadership goals, growth targets, etc.)
- j. a plan for how the project will be funded when the grant ends

___ 4. For grants over \$10,000, a “Stakeholders Meeting” (conference call, video conference, or face-to-face) needs to take place with the Director, District Superintendent, pastor(s), and key laity to discuss expectations, modify the plan as needed, and agree upon benchmarks for the project.

___ 5. The Director and District Superintendent give preliminary approval.

___ 6. Prior to determining whether the grant should be awarded, the Congregational Development Team may require more information or make recommendations on further training, study, or preparation that may contribute to the results.

___ 7. The Conference Congregational Development Team approves the plan and determines the funding that will be provided.

___ 8. The Pastor, District Superintendent, Chairperson of the Congregational Development Team, the Planting Pastor, key lay representatives, and others (as determined by the Director) sign a “Congregational Development Grant Agreement” clearly stating the funding amount, use, and term. The understanding will state that continued access to undistributed funds is dependent on satisfying expectations and benchmarks.

Congregational Development Grant Agreement

The following Congregational Development Grant Agreement must be executed prior to the disbursement of funds. Other provisions may be added depending on the particular circumstances of the project.

A ministry grant will be provided to _____ (a United Methodist Church or a new United Methodist faith community) for the following purpose:

The total grant is in the amount of \$ _____, and will be paid in the following manner/installments:

The attached grant application contains the following:

- _____ documentation that the grant application guidelines have been followed
- _____ clear statement of the intended use of the funds
- _____ clear benchmarks and measures

We understand that the planting pastor is accountable to the Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development for reporting on performance related to benchmarks and measures and any other information related to the overall spiritual health and vitality of the new faith community.

We further understand that, regardless of the total amount of the grant approved, the funds may be disbursed in increments as determined by the Congregational Development Team. Continued disbursement is dependent on meeting the stated benchmarks and measures. If benchmarks are not met, or if there is no reasonable expectation that they can be met, the Conference Congregational Development Team or Cabinet may vote to end the grant. During the term of the

grant, benchmarks and measures can be modified only for good cause consistent with prayerful discernment on the circumstances of the project or needs of the mission field and with the approval of the Director, the District Superintendent, and Conference Congregational Development Team.

We further understand that the funds are for the sole purpose of reaching new people through the planting or growth of the described ministry of The United Methodist Church and may only be used in the manner expressed in the grant application. Any use of the funds outside the terms of the grant will result in an end to the grant, and the church will refund to the Annual Conference the amount not used in accordance with the grant.

Signed on the _____ of _____, 20_____

New Church Planter

Partnering/Mother Church Pastor (if applicable)

District Superintendent

Director of Congregational Transformation
and New Church Development

Representative of Lay Leadership

Representative of Lay Leadership

Conference Congregational Development Team, Chairperson

Guidelines for Transformation Grants

These grants are given to a local church or a partnership of local churches for the express and sole purpose of reaching new people. For the Congregational Development Team to award the grant, there must be a demonstrated probability that the plan proposed will result in inviting and welcoming new people in a way that significantly impacts church mission and ministry.

The Congregational Development Team and the Ministry of Congregational Development DO NOT fund the purchase of land or buildings or the extensive remodeling of existing buildings.

The proposed plan may be initiated by a pastor or district superintendent.

- ___ Meet with the District Superintendent to discuss plans and receive approval to move forward.

- ___ Submit a brief written preliminary proposal to Conference Director of Congregational Transformation and New Church Development.

- ___ Pastor, District Superintendent, and Director determine whether the congregation needs to first engage in overall strategic planning, conversations, visioning programs, or other process related to congregational vitality.

- ___ Pastor (or the District Superintendent, if applicable) prepares description of the proposed project to include:
 - a. basic description of the plan
 - b. description of the mission field targeted, with data from MissionInsite
 - c. the expected results
 - d. a system for following up with new people who respond
 - e. a disciple-making system that will serve new people who respond
 - f. an estimate of the cost
 - g. how success will be measured

- ___ The Director and District Superintendent confer, review the proposal, and make suggestions for revision as necessary.

- ___ The Director and District Superintendent agree to a plan for supervision, accountability, and benchmarks.

- ___ The Director and District Superintendent meet with lay leadership to discuss and revise the plan if necessary.

- ___ After approval from the Director and District Superintendent, the Church Council votes to affirm the plan.

- ___ The Conference Congregational Development Team approves the plan and determines the funding that will be provided.

- ___ After the execution of the plan, the Pastor, Director, and District Superintendent review the effectiveness of the plan and prepare a report for the Cabinet and Congregational Development Team.

Checklist for New Church Legal and Financial Matters

This checklist is for a new church that is not a campus of an existing church and which is not a successor to an existing church that is being relaunched.

Once the appointment has been projected, preparations are to be made for the payment of salary and benefits for the church planter. These include:

1. Determine the legal entity that will be the salary paying unit by agreement among the District Superintendent, Director of Congregational Development of the Annual Conference and the Conference Treasurer.
2. If the District is to be the salary paying unit, adding the church planter to the District payroll and creating the compensation agreements between the appointed church planter is the responsibility of the District Superintendent.
3. If the Annual Conference is to be the salary paying unit, the Conference treasurer is responsible for adding the church planter to the Conference payroll and creating the appropriate compensation agreements.
4. If the new church is to be the salary paying unit, the new church must be formed as a legal entity for tax and financial purposes before it is chartered as a United Methodist Church. The Church Planter and District Superintendent are responsible for creating the legal entities in collaboration with the Conference Treasurer and Congregational Development Officer.
 - a. A corporation is formed and registered with the Louisiana Secretary of State. This corporation should be formed with the assistance of a lawyer and in accordance with the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. The articles of incorporation for the new church should be reviewed and approved by the Conference Chancellor. The initial officers of the Corporation for a new church shall include the District Superintendent and the Conference Congregational Development Officer and may include the District Treasurer, Chair of the District Trustees and District Lay Leader. To find an attorney, consult the Conference Treasurer, District Superintendent or Conference Chancellor for a referral.
 - b. Once the new church is incorporated, file a request for an Employer Identification Number EIN with the Internal Revenue Service.
 - c. With the Federal EIN, Register with the Louisiana Department of Revenue to obtain a Louisiana Tax Account Number.
 - d. Once the corporation has been formed and registered with the IRS, Louisiana Secretary of State and Louisiana Department of Revenue, to assure your tax-exempt status with the IRS, apply to the General Council on Finance and Administration for a General Exemption Ruling for the New Corporation.
 - e. Set up bank account(s) for the new church corporation following the procedures recommended by the Conference Treasurer and in accordance with the United Methodist Book of Discipline. The appointed pastor or church planter shall not be

a signatory on any bank or financial accounts set up for the new church. The District Superintendent and Conference Congregational Development Officers shall be signatories on any bank accounts for the new church and will remain on the accounts until the church is chartered.

- f. In consultation with the Conference Treasurer, select a payroll service to manage the compensation payments and payroll tax filing responsibilities for the new church.

Sample Articles of Incorporation for a New Church

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

STATE OF LOUISIANA

OF

PARISH OF _____

_____ **UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

(NON-PROFIT CORPORATION)

BE IT KNOWN, that on this _____ day of _____, 20____, personally came and appeared before me, the undersigned Notary Public, the incorporating parties listed below, all of full age of majority, who declared to me, in the presence of the undersigned competent witnesses, that this corporation is being organized, pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statutes 12:201-12:269 (195), as amended), as a not-for-profit corporation, under the following articles of incorporation:

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this not-for-profit corporation is “_____”
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH” (herein sometimes called “_____”)

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

This not-for-profit corporation is organized and it shall be operated exclusively for religious and charitable purposes. The corporation may conduce all activities associated with religious or charitable function, including but not limited to the ownership of land and other property in connection with those activities. The corporation is specifically authorized to receive

donations and to make distributions to The United Methodist Church and other organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). Notwithstanding any other provision in these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any activities unless permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or (b) by a corporation to which contributions are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

ARTICLE III
DURATION

The duration of this not-for-profit corporation shall be in perpetuity, or such maximum period as may be authorized by the laws of the State of Louisiana.

ARTICLE IV
LOCATION

The initial location and municipal address of this corporation is _____
*[insert office address here]*_____.

ARTICLE V
REGISTERED AGENT

The name of the initial registered agent for the corporation is _____
*[insert name and office address of District Superintendent here]*_____.

ARTICLE VI
INCORPORATOR

The full name and address of each incorporator of this corporation is as follows is
[insert name and office address of pastor of new church here].

ARTICLE VII
NO CAPITAL STOCK

This corporation shall be a not-for-profit corporation and shall have no capital stock. Under no circumstances shall any of the net earnings or assets of the corporation inure or be distributed to the benefit of its members, director, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and or make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof.

ARTICLE VIII
DISSOLUTION

In accordance with the discipline, rules, and by-laws of The United Methodist Church (“the *Discipline*”), upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Trustees of The Louisiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all asset of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner or to such organizations(s) under section 501(c)(3) of the of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Louisiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be distributed to the Louisiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, or otherwise deposited with the District Court of the parish in which the principle office of the corporation is then located, and the Court shall distribute the funds to the Louisiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

ARTICLE IX

VOTING

Each future member of the Council, Charge Conference, or other governing body of _____ United Methodist Church, shall have one vote, in accordance with the *Discipline*.
A member may vote personally or as otherwise approved by the *Discipline*.

ARTICLE X

GOVERNING BODY AND OFFICERS

The Discipline shall control in all matters concerning establishment of the governing bodies and officers of the church. Unless otherwise provided by the governing body of _____ United Methodist Church, in accordance with the Discipline, the appointed pastor shall be the president and administrative officer, and as such shall be ex officio member of all conferences, boards, councils, commissions, committees, or task forces. The powers of this corporation shall be exercised by a majority of the members of a Council or other designated board (herein called "Directors") which Council shall consist of _____ United Methodist Church, such Council to be elected or chosen at the annual meeting of the Charge Conference, or other special meeting called to conduct business.

The following persons shall be initial Directors of _____ United Methodist Church, and members of the Charge Conference, who shall serve until their successors are elected, according to the *Discipline*, or until their resignation:

1. *[insert name of pastor here]*
 [insert office address here]

2. *[insert name of District Superintendent here]*
 [insert office address here]

3. *[insert name of Director of Congregational Development here]*
[insert office address here]

ARTICLE XI

OFFICERS

The initial officer of _____ United Methodist Church are:

[insert name of pastor here] – President

[insert name of District Superintendent here] – Secretary-Treasurer

All other officers shall be designated and appointed by and serve for the term provided by the governing body of _____ United Methodist Church, in accordance with the *Discipline*, until their successors are elected or appointed or until their resignation.

ARTICLE XII

LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY

The Incorporators, members of the Charge Conference, officers, and directors of this corporation claim the benefits of the limitation of liability of the provisions of La. R.S. 12:12C (1968, as amended 1987), and all other laws, to the fullest extent allowed by law, as fully and completely as though such provisions were recited here in in full.

THIS DONE AND PASSED in the presence of the undersigned competent witnesses and Notary Public, in the Parish of _____, after due reading of the whole.

WITNESSES:

INCORPORATOR:

[Print name here.]

[Print name here.]

[Print name here.]

SWORN AND SUBSCRIBED before me this ____ day of _____, 20__.

[Print name and number of Notary Public here]
NOTARY PUBLIC

ACCEPTANCE BY REGISTERED AGENT

I hereby acknowledge and accept appointment of registered agent, for and on behalf of
_____ United Methodist Church.

[Print name here]
Registered Agent

SWORN AND SUBSCRIBED before me this ____ day of _____, 20__.

[Print name and number of Notary Public here]
NOTARY PUBLIC

