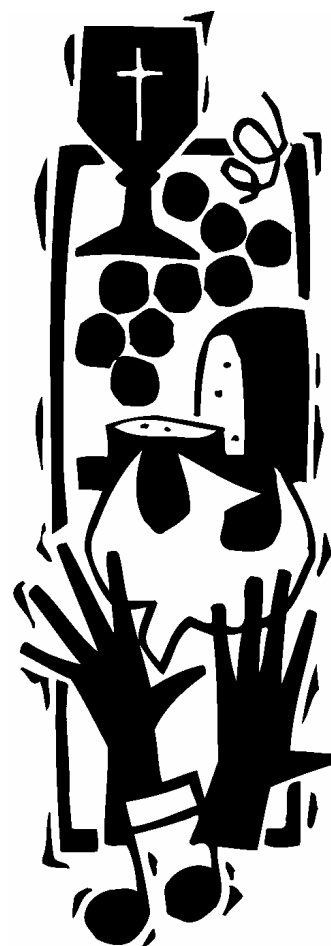


# Grow Your Church Week



## *Growing Disciples – The Basics of Congregational Development*

**Office of Congregational Development**  
New England Conference of the United Methodist Church

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# What is Church For?

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

*Matthew 28:19-20*

Vision is your church's world changing, life altering purpose.

Mission is your church's compelling method of reaching that vision.

Core Process is your church's detailed description of how that mission will be accomplished.

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What is your church's vision?

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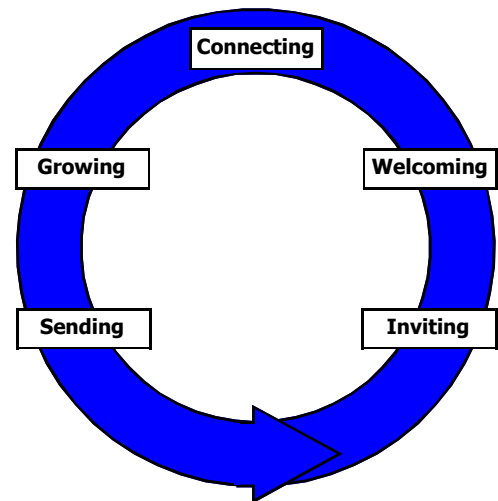
What is your church's mission?

# Discipling System

Discipling System is a basic process of an individual's journey from unbelief to discipleship and service in the name of Christ.

Discipleship by osmosis (hanging around) produces good church folks who are comfortable with church culture and community.

Discipleship with an intentional process of spiritual maturing produces Christians committed to ministry and radically following Jesus Christ.



# Inviting

- Personal invitation to church
  - Lifestyle witness to faithful living
  - Congregational invitation & marketing
  - Institutional witness to faithful living
- How does your church equip its folks to invite others to church?
  - How are people being shaped for faithful living and prepared for authentic faith sharing?
  - How does your congregation invite new people?
  - What is your church doing to witness to the Gospel in public?

## Welcoming

- Welcoming facility
  - Welcoming people
  - Welcoming culture
  - Welcoming programs
- How easy is your church facility to find and navigate?
  - How is your church training your people to be intentionally friendly to new people?
  - Does your church "feel" welcoming and friendly?
  - Are your ministry programs keyed to community needs?

## Connecting

- Connecting with other people
  - Connecting with church's vision
  - Connecting with God
- How do people build new relationships in your church?
  - How are new people intentionally oriented to your church' vision and mission?
  - How do you purposefully lead people into an authentic relationship with God and Christ?

## Growing

- Growing in knowledge
  - Growing in connection
  - Growing in faith
  - Growing in giftedness
  - Growing in calling
- What short-term and long-term programs are offered for each stage of spiritual growth?
  - How are people nurtured in the spiritual disciplines?
  - How do people learn about and use their gifts and calling for ministry?
  - How are small groups formed and multiplied?

## Sending

- Into evangelism
  - Into acts of compassion
  - Into acts of justice
  - Into spiritual leadership
  - Into vocation
- How does your church create a climate where everyone from 2<sup>nd</sup>-time visitors to lifelong members are inspired to serve?
  - How are you constantly developing new opportunities for serving your community?
  - How does your church develop leaders and consecrate people into their God-gifted vocations?

# Your Discipling System

Answer these questions on another piece of paper using words, scripture, hymns, diagrams, metaphors, phrases, doodles, whatever.

1. What is the beginning of your discipling system?
2. What are the 3-5 key points of intentional discipling in your church?
3. Who needs to be brought into a conversation about articulating an intentional discipling system in your church?

# Resources for Growing Disciples

## On Inviting & Welcoming:

- [www.ignitingministry.org](http://www.ignitingministry.org) - United Methodist marketing and welcoming ministries
- *Becoming a Contagious Christian* by Bill Hybels & Mark Mittelberg - also see their web page for study resources and ideas at [www.contagiouschristian.com](http://www.contagiouschristian.com)
- *Conspiracy of Kindness* by Steve Sjogren – [www.servantevangelism.com](http://www.servantevangelism.com)
- *Tell It Like It Is: Reclaiming the Practice of Testimony* by Lillian Daniel

## On Spiritual Gifts:

- Wanda Stahl, NEUMC Director of Spiritual Formation
- *Discover Your Spiritual Gifts* by C. Peter Wagner
- *Equipped for Every Good Work: Building a Gifts-Based Church* by Dan Dick & Barbara Miller
- *SpiritGifts* by Patricia Brown
- Online spiritual gifts assessment at [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org) - select "my spiritual journey" tab and "spiritual gifts" button

## On Growing Disciples through Small Groups:

- *Covenant Discipleship: Christian Formation through Mutual Accountability* by David Lowes Watson
- *Companions in Christ* curriculum from [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com)
- *Leading Life-Changing Small Groups* by Bill Donahue
- *Guide for Covenant Discipleship Groups* by Gayle Turner Watson
- *The Purpose-Driven Church* by Rick Warren
- [www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups](http://www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups)
- *Serendipity Bible for Groups* – discussion questions for every Bible passage
- [www.serendipityhouse.com](http://www.serendipityhouse.com) - resources, curriculum, and discussions on small groups