

Developing a Stronger Multiplication Culture A Guide for Churches

The Purpose of this guide is to help leaders of a church to help their congregation develop a stronger multiplication culture. Churches will meet the eligibility requirement for a Church Development grant upon completing the process that follows.

Instructions: The church’s pastor and Church Council are to complete this process together. Others in the church are encouraged to also participate. To get the best results, set a goal of having 20% of your church’s average weekly worshiping attendance participate.

When working through the “Reflection Questions,” it is best to divide into smaller groups if you have ten or more people involved in the process. Then come back together as a large group to share key insights. Designate someone to record the answers for the “Record in your MAP” sections.

A church can go through these sessions as quickly or slowly as it wishes; however, going too slowly will likely result in a lack of momentum and interest.

SESSION 1: MULTIPLYING VALUES

Definitions:

Multiplying culture refers to a church culture in which members expect the majority of the church’s energy to be focused on reaching and discipling persons outside the church. New leaders are being raised up, new groups are forming, new faith communities are being established—whether that be new worship services, Fresh Expressions, new campuses, or new churches.

Values refers to the beliefs we collectively hold that determine how we spend our time, money, energy, and resources as an organization.

MAP refers to a **Multiplication Action Plan** that your church will be developing. (It is required for churches seeking a grant.)

IAP refers to an **Individual Action Plan** that each participant is encouraged to develop. If each person practices multiplying behavior, then the church will develop a multiplying culture.

A. OUR CULTURE

1. How is our church presently reflecting a multiplying culture? What specific activities are we doing, or have we done, that have intentionally disciplined persons outside our church?

2. On a scale of 1-10, ten being highest, to what degree does our church reflect a multiplication culture? (Together determine a number.)

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

3. What would it take to raise our score? What would that look like? What activities would be happening inside the church? Outside the church? What wouldn't be happening? What might we need to stop doing?

B. OUR VALUES

4. What values does our church presently have that support us having a strong multiplying culture? List them:

5. What values do we need to embrace or strengthen in order to have a stronger multiplication culture? (These are aspirational.)

C. OUR HOMEWORK:

Record in your MAP the tangible steps your church can take to strengthen its underlying values so that a multiplying culture is more likely to happen.

Record in your IAP at least one thing you personally will do to help your church develop a stronger multiplication culture.

SESSION 2: THE MULTIPLIER

Definition: **The Multiplier** refers to the Holy Spirit.

A. SCRIPTURES

1. What scriptures do you think of that encourage a multiplying culture?

2. Why do you think Jesus' final commands in Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8 were to *go*?

B. OUR MOTIVATION

3. To what extent does our church *go*? List some examples. What seems to keep us from *going*? What aspirations does our church have to *go* even more? Why?

C. THE MULTIPLIER: THE HOLY SPIRIT

4. How does our church make sure its *going* is empowered by the Holy Spirit? What practices does our church intentionally take to allow the Holy Spirit, the Multiplier, to lead our efforts? Give some specific examples.

5. What could we do?

D. OUR HOMEWORK:

Record in your MAP the tangible steps that your church is taking in order to allow the Holy Spirit, the Multiplier, to lead its ministry of multiplication. What more could it do?

Individually read Acts 1:8 again and take time to pray and listen for the ways the Holy Spirit is leading you to intentionally connect with people outside the church this next week.

Record in your IAP what specific step you will take before this group's next meeting.

All participants: Invite your congregation to pray for this process. Pray that the Holy Spirit would speak through this process. Pray for discernment and understanding. Pray for courage to change behaviors and hearts.

SESSION 3: OUR MULTIPLYING MISSION

Definitions:

Mission refers to our church's purpose for existing; it's why we're here.

The United Methodist Church's mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Multiplying DNA refers to the fact that the original essence of The United Methodist Church was multiplication. Its predecessor denominations were founded by circuit-riding pastors who established new faith communities across the U.S. until over a third of the nation's population was Methodist (mid 1800s). It was a church on the *go!*

A. PRIOR HOMEWORK REFLECTIONS

1. What have we heard from the Multiplier (Holy Spirit) since we last met?
2. Have each person share what they did since Session Two to intentional connect with persons outside our church. How did it go?

B. OUR MISSION & FOUNDING

3. How does multiplication fit into our church's mission?
4. How was our church started? Who started it? When? Why?

C. OUR DNA & THE GOOD NEWS

5. Why do you think our denomination and perhaps our church has lost its multiplying DNA that was so much a part of it in the 1800s? What steps can we take to reclaim it in our denomination and our church?
6. On a scale of 1-10, ten being highest, to what degree do we truly care about sharing the Good News with those outside our church?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

7. What would it look like if our number were higher?

D. OUR HOMEWORK:

Record in your MAP specific steps your church could take to reclaim our multiplying DNA. Also, record ways you could intentionally grow your members' desire to share the Good News with those outside.

Record in your IAP why the Good News is good news to you. Write how you will share in it this week. You could share with someone how you've seen God at work in your own life this last week, month, or year. Or, you could ask a person to share with you about a meaningful point in their faith journey. Or, you could do something else. Be creative!

SESSION FOUR: OUR MULTIPLYING VISION

Definition: **Multiplying vision** is a picture of what we sense God is calling our church to help give birth to. If our mission is to *go*, then our vision will indicate who we'll be going to, how we'll be connecting with them, and the anticipated results. A vision always has a problem at its center, which our efforts will hopefully help resolve.

A. PRIOR HOMEWORK REFLECTIONS

1. What have we heard from the Multiplier (Holy Spirit) since we last met?
2. Have participants describe how they shared the Good News since Session Three.

B. MULTIPLICATION VISION

3. What is our church's multiplication vision? Who are we sensing God is calling us specifically to reach? What's the problem that we're hoping to help resolve for them?

Who: _____

The problem: _____

4. What's our short-term multiplication vision (the next 1-3 years)? What's our long-term vision (5 or more years)? (Obviously this may take weeks if not months to discern.)

Short-term Vision: _____

Long-term Vision: _____

5. How did we arrive at these visions? To what degree have we studied our community well enough to validate these visions, such as using the following tools: prayer walking, community leader interviews, demographics (e.g. MissionInsite), windshield tours of the community? Do we need to do some more study?

6. To what degree have we fasted and prayed regarding our multiplication vision? What signs have we seen that indicate that the Multiplier (Holy Spirit) has brought us this vision?

D. OUR HOMEWORK:

Record in your MAP your multiplying vision. Include the problem that is being addressed, who specifically the outreach is focused on, and why it's important. Differentiate between your short-term and long-term visions if you're able.

Record in your IAP which tool in #5 above you will use to better understand your neighborhood this coming week/s. Consider doing this with one or more others from your group. (Go to <https://www.inumc.org/ministries/church-development/resources-tools/missioninsite/> for tool guides.)

SESSION FIVE: OUR MULTIPLYING METHODOLOGY

Definitions:

Multiplying methodology refers to the model of outreach that is being used. There are a variety including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Fresh Expressions** is a model that follows Jesus' example in Luke 10. It was developed by the Anglican and Methodist churches of England especially to reach the growing percentage of the population unlikely to attend a church building. It focuses on taking the church to people groups, listening to them, building relationships with them, and allowing discipling and unique forms of church to organically develop in their natural, normal settings (rather than a church building and a worship service and church programs). The most popular forms are **Dinner Church**, built around a meal (similar to what Jesus and the early church did), and **Messy Church**, an intergenerational activity, Bible-based gathering that includes a meal (Think VBS for families).
- **Vital Merger or Adoption** happens when a church joins with one or more other churches to form a new church. Typically, in a **Vital Merger** it is best for three or more churches to come together with a vision of establishing a new church that will more effectively reach their community. It typically will take on a new name and meet in a neutral location with a new apostolic* leader. Through the **adoption** model one or more churches decide to join another, stronger church—adopting its name and vision, and functioning under its leadership and authority. In essence, they give the keys to their building to the stronger church and allow it the freedom to make changes.

- **Campus or Multi-site** ministry involves a church establishing another congregation in a different location with the intention of reaching those living there, acknowledging that most in the community would be unlikely to attend the original location. The various campuses typically share staff, including preaching, and share a common vision, church culture, and ministry systems (e.g. hospitality, children’s and youth ministries, worship planning, stewardship, missional outreach, etc.).
- **Nested** church is an option for a host church to provide space for a new congregation (many times of a different ethnic group or culture). It can function as a separate congregation simply sharing space and hospitality opportunities, or it can actually be a part of the host church. In that case, its staff and finances are part of the host church’s. It is important for the host church and nested congregation to have a clearly written letter of understanding and a facility-use agreement.
- **New Church** happens when a church, district or conference establishes another church with the intention that it ultimately becomes a separate, self-reliant congregation.

There are three forms of organization—all equally legitimate:

- **Spiritual neighborhoods** are places where Christian community is experienced in natural, organic ways, easily accessible to unchurched persons. There is no expectation for membership or that persons would necessarily move on to a church. They typically are led by laity. Methodologies for this could include the following: Fresh Expressions, including Dinner Church and Messy Church.
- **Faith Communities** are organized groups of people coming together on a regular basis to worship, be involved in intentional discipleship, Christian community, and service to others. It functions as an extension of an existing church. It may or may not include a regular practice of baptism and/or communion, and participants may or may not be members. Leadership may be clergy or laity under the supervision of clergy. Methodologies for this could include the following: Fresh Expressions, campus or multi-site, and nested congregations.
- **New Churches** are faith communities that function as fully constituted (chartered) churches. They receive members, pay conference tithes, and follow the organizational structure described in *The Book of Discipline*. The leadership is a pastor appointed by the Bishop and is credentialed by the Board of Ordained Ministry. The methodology for this is the obviously the “new church” model.

***Apostolic** refers to a leader who is passionate about reaching new people by starting new faith communities (similar to those early church leaders in the book of Acts).

[Note: Church Development’s Multiplication Team can provide help in further exploring the above models and additional ones.]

A. PRIOR HOMEWORK REFLECTIONS

1. What have we heard from the Multiplier (Holy Spirit) since we last met?
2. Have participants share their experiences using the tools to better understand their neighborhoods.

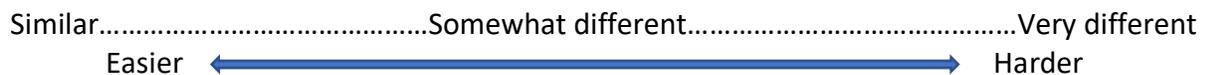
B. OUR MULTIPLICATION METHODOLOGY

3. In the last session we looked at our vision. Part of the vision includes how we’ll reach those to whom God is calling us to connect with Jesus. Which of the above methods and organizations do we feel best fit our multiplication vision? Why?

Methodology: _____

C. OUR TARGET GROUP

4. It’s not a surprise that reaching a culture that is similar is much easier than reaching one that is different. The greater the differences—different part of town, ethnic group, income level, educational level, language, etc.—the greater the challenge. How great a cultural difference is there between our church members and those God is calling us to reach? Place an X on the continuum below.



5. Imagine that all of us are in the target group. How do we feel about this strange church reaching out to us? How can our church overcome distrust and suspicions?

D. OUR HOMEWORK:

Record in your MAP the outreach model that best supports your multiplication vision. Explain why it’s the best model for your church to use.

Record in your IAP where you see yourself being involved in your church’s multiplication efforts—a supporter on the sidelines, cheerleader, leader, helper, some other role. Your role may vary depending on the particular multiplication element. For example, you may lead a prayer effort, but be a cheerleader for a new campus effort.

SESSION 6: COMMUNICATING MULTIPLICATION

A. PRIOR HOMEWORK REFLECTIONS

1. What have we heard from the Multiplier (Holy Spirit) since we last met?
2. Have participants share where they see themselves being involved in our multiplication efforts.

B. COMMUNICATING WITHIN OUR CHURCH

3. How are we intentionally projecting a multiplying culture within our congregation?
4. What behaviors, rituals, and rites have we incorporated into the life of our congregation that reinforce a multiplication culture? Which are most fruitful? What would be the most strategic to add?
5. Someone once said “vision leaks”; therefore, it’s important to remind folk of our church’s vision every month. How frequently are we casting our vision for multiplication? To what degree is that adequate? How could we improve?
6. Stories of recent life transformation of persons connected to the congregation are particularly powerful. Who in your church’s sphere has such stories? How are you sharing them with the congregation? If you don’t have such stories, how are you setting an expectation for them? Praying for them?

Record in your MAP strategic ways that your church can better communicate its desire for a stronger multiplication culture and provide copies of the MAP responses from sessions one through six for all the participants. They should review them and bring them to session seven.

Record in your IAP a prayer to God sharing your commitment to helping your church develop a deeper multiplication culture.

SESSION SEVEN: DEVELOPING YOUR MAP

Definition: **Multiplication mentor** refers to a person who has been vetted and trained by Church Development to help facilitate churches in developing a stronger multiplication culture.

A. PRIOR HOMEWORK REFLECTIONS

1. What have you heard from the Multiplier (Holy Spirit) through this process? What are the implications?
2. Give participants an opportunity to share their written prayers if they wish.

B. DEVELOP YOUR MAP

3. Take time as a group to review your responses from the “Record in your MAP” sessions 1, 2, 3, and 6. Then (in smaller groups if you have more than ten people) choose three or four responses that you feel would have the greatest potential to help your church develop a stronger multiplication culture. As a group, prioritize which three or four your church should pursue. Write them on your MAP.
4. Determine what individual or group should be given responsibility to work on each one as well as a projected timeline.
5. Determine how you’ll hold yourselves accountable to follow through.
6. Decide whether or not you’d like your church to hire a multiplication mentor. [Details are available from the Church Development Multiplication Team.]

CONGRATULATIONS: You’ve completed this guide!

YOUR NEXT STEP: You are now ready to have a free on-site consultation with a member of your Church Development Multiplication Team. Contact Ed Fenstermacher at 260 433-0782 or email him at ed.fenstermacher@inumc.org to schedule your consultation.

The purpose of the consultation is to help you do the following:

- Review your MAP with someone with multiplication experience
- Connect you with a multiplication mentor, if you’re interested
- Explain the application process for Church Development grants, if desired
- Provide additional resources, such as the “Starting New Places” booklet from Path 1, information about the Exponential Conference, mentoring cohort groups, etc.

MAP: Multiplication Action Plan Worksheet

Church Name: _____ Initial date: _____

Names of those participating in this process: _____

Record your answers to the “Record in your MAP” sections here.

Session One: Record the tangible steps your church can take to strengthen its underlying values so that a multiplying culture is more likely to happen.

Session Two: Record the tangible steps that your church is taking in order to allow the Holy Spirit, the Multiplier, to lead its ministry of multiplication. What could it do?

Session Three: Record the specific steps your church could take to reclaim our multiplying DNA. Also, record ways you could intentionally grow your members’ desire to share the Good News with those outside.

Session Four: Record your church’s multiplying vision. Include the problem that is being addressed, who specifically the outreach is focused on, and why it’s important. Differentiate between your short-term and long-term visions if you’re able.

Session Five: Record the outreach model that best supports your multiplication vision. Explain why it's the best model for your church to use.

Session Six: Record strategic ways that your church can better communicate its desire for a stronger multiplication culture and provide copies of the MAP responses from sessions one through six for all the participants. They should review them and bring them to session seven.

Session Seven Action Steps: Record three to four action steps from sessions 1, 2, 3, and 6 that your church should pursue. Identify the person or group responsible and timeline.

1. _____

Person/group responsible: _____ Timeline: _____

2. _____

Person/group responsible: _____ Timeline: _____

3. _____

Person/group responsible: _____ Timeline: _____

4. _____

Person/group responsible: _____ Timeline: _____

Record how will we hold ourselves accountable to fulfill the above action steps:

Will we hire a multiplication mentor? _____

IAP: Individual Action Plan Worksheet

Name: _____ Initial date: _____

Session 1: I will do the following to help my church develop a stronger multiplication culture:

Session 2: I will intentionally connect with people outside my church this week by...

Session 3: The Good News is good news to me because...

This week, I plan to share in the Good News by... _____

Session 4: I am going to get to know my community better this week by...

Session 5: The role/s that I see myself playing in our church's multiplication efforts is...

Session 6: Lord hear this prayer where I commit myself to helping my church develop a stronger multiplying culture...
