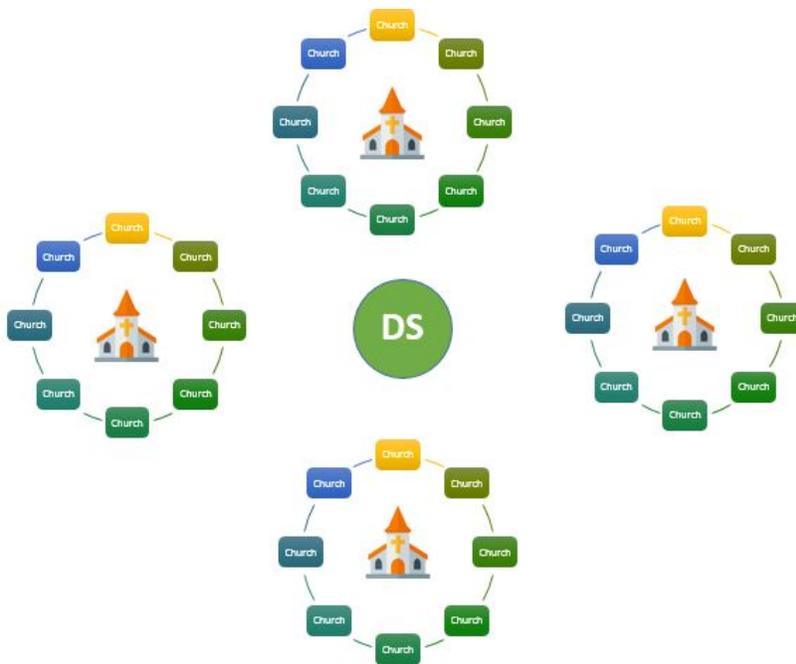


CHURCH TO CHURCH: GROWING AS DISCIPLES

WHY NETWORKS? The Great Plains Conference is establishing a supervised system of networks to accomplish our unified mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. This configuration puts the emphasis firmly on the mission field as churches in a network collaborate to address the ministry needs within their contexts. In doing so, networks provide us with an opportunity to embrace our Wesleyan roots to find a 21st century solution to addressing unique challenges within the contexts of our diverse communities.



HOW IT WORKS

So, how exactly does this work? It starts with a district superintendent determining how each network is configured. Each network will be assigned a pastoral leader who will select a laity leader.

The goal within the network is for laity and clergy participants to learn from each other and to support colleagues while holding each other accountable.

By working together, network participants will help each other develop strategies for reaching the mission field. They also will strengthen the effectiveness of clergy and the vitality of each church.

Through collaboration, the networks will continually strengthen congregations by bolstering the gifts and graces of laity and by helping pastors grow in their calls.

By doing so, this system empowers clergy and laity in their missional contexts to be more fruitful in their engagement in the mission field.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Develop measurable spiritual growth in congregations through increased discipleship practices in worship, small group participation, evangelism, stewardship and missional engagement.
- Provide encouragement for congregational and pastoral leadership.
- Develop and achieve a higher level of leadership and collaboration between laity and clergy.
- Experience the strength and relationship of our Wesleyan connection.

ROLE OF NETWORK CLERGY AND LAITY LEADERS

Administration

- Meet with leaders at least 6 times per year
- Stay in touch with leaders between meetings
- Provide leadership in administrative matters, including church conferences, as needed by the DS

Missional Strategy

- Help identify and recruit potential leaders
- Work to assess missional field
- Use ministry resources



Connections

- Build collaborative relationships to foster hope and vitality
- Assist network pastors/leaders among laity with questions of best practices in ministry
- Assure the sacraments are celebrated appropriately

ROLE OF NETWORK CHURCH PASTOR AND LAITY LEADERS

- Attend network meetings
- Communicate regularly with network leaders
- Participate fully in the life of the network
- Submit reports in a timely manner

ROLE OF CHURCHES IN THE NETWORK

- Prayerfully participate in missional conversations
- Utilize the network leaders as the initial contact for questions of practice, policy and polity
- Look for innovative ways to collaborate and share resources for reaching the mission field

ROLE OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

- Determine network configurations and provide training
- Communicate with network leaders
- Communicate with network leaders' SPRCs concerning role and time requirements of a network leader



- Provide clear boundaries for network leaders' authority
- Point network leaders toward appropriate, contextual, mission-field resources
- Keep focus on engaging the mission field to make disciples of Jesus Christ
- Available for potential church and congregational issues