



*This application for launching a new U.M. church was originally designed by Anna Workman, Director of Congregational Development, Virginia Annual Conference. Adapted for use in the Arkansas Conference.*

# Application

## For Launching A New United Methodist Church

*Churches growing new churches..  
who grow new churches...*

Notes: Typically this application is completed by a strong, health, growing congregation that is preparing to “give birth” to a new congregation. The District Superintendent and the Conference Minister for New Church Starts shall have responsibility for reviewing plans for launching a new congregation and for providing recommendations to the Bishop and Cabinet. (see ¶259.1)

Timeline: Typically for a pastor to be appointed to a new church start, this completed application needs to be in the hands of your District Superintendent and the Conference Minister for New Church Starts and Congregational Advancement **by October 15.**

District \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town \_\_\_\_\_

City/town for proposed church plant \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person submitting information \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Senior Pastor of sponsoring church, if applicable

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
District Superintendent

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
District Board of Church Building and Location

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Conference Minister for New Church Starts and Congregational Advancement

### The United Methodist Book of Discipline, Section VII, ¶259.1

“A new local church or mission congregation shall be established only with the consent of the bishop in charge and the cabinet and with due consideration of the conference entity assigned the responsibility for congregational development. The bishop shall designate the district within whose bounds the church or mission congregation shall be organized. The district superintendent of that district, or his or her designee, shall be the agent in charge of the project and shall recommend to the district board of church location and building (¶2518) the method of organization, and whether a specific site shall be selected or an area of organization be designated. The district superintendent shall avail him/herself of existing demographic, lifestyle and ethnographic information in the process of establishing a new congregation and its location, or shall recommend to the board of trustees of a selected local church that they share their facility with the proposed congregation. If there is a city or district missionary organization, or if funds for the project are anticipated from a conference organization, those bodies shall also be asked to approve the method of organization and location for a new congregation. (see also ¶259.2 through 259.9)

**I. General Information**

What date is set to start this launch? \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Launch Options**

Please check the Launch Option to be used:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ Mother/Daughter Launch
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Parachute” Launch
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Mission Launch
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Reclaim Discontinued Church Facility
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_ Satellite
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please describe)

Do you believe that this church will have an average attendance of 350 or more within ten years? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

We believe that this new church will have an average worship attendance of \_\_\_\_\_ within ten years.

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

**B. Targeted Population**

- 1. Describe briefly the community in which the congregation will be launched (such as people, environment, economy, etc.)

Attach the two page report from the Research Office of the General Board of Discipleship (available free from the internet, and the six page Link to Lead report from Percept web site (prepaid for by Arkansas Conference contract.).

2. Is it a single or multi-family living area? \_\_\_\_\_

- 3. What is the population within the prime parish area (as defined by Percept’s “Ministry Area Profile or by the Research Office of the General Board of Global Ministry)? Note: information about how to secure this data is available from the Office of Conference Minister of New Church Starts and Congregational Advancement.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What will the projected population be in:

5 years? \_\_\_\_\_

10 years? \_\_\_\_\_

20 Years \_\_\_\_\_

5. How much has the community grown in the last year? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is the predominant age of the population in the area? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the predominant economic class in the area? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is the predominant ethnic group in the area? \_\_\_\_\_

9. How many churches of other denominations are in the prime parish area? \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Envisioned Membership**

1. What percentage of the population is unchurched? (see Percept report) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What percentage of the population favors The United Methodist Church? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What methods will be used to attract potential disciples?  
 (Check ones projected to be used)
- Door to door survey? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Direct mail? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telemarketing? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mass advertising such as newspaper, movie theatre, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Servant ministries (small acts of kindness strategy)? \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please list)? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Does the sponsoring church (and/or District Board\_\_\_\_) believe that:
- 125 adults will make up the attendance within 24 months of the appointment of a pastor? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
  - there will be sufficient members to financially support the congregation within 3 – 5 years? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
  - that the targeted area will sustain growth for the next ten years? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**D. Meeting Location (choose appropriate section)**

1. Has the District Board of Church Location and Building approved the site for a temporary location? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
2. Is the site capable of accommodating 200 worshippers? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
 Is the site capable of accommodating 100 cars? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
3. Please describe the facility (school, storefront, theater, existing church facilities, funeral home chapel, etc.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_
4. Has a commitment for its use been secured? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
5. Is there reasonable expectation that the congregation can remain at this location until the first unit is built (three to five years)? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
 What days and hours will you have access? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Is the meeting location within the area of the targeted population? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
7. Is the location handicapped accessible? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
8. Has liability insurance been secured? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**E. Future Construction Land/Site Information**

1. Is the site at least five (3) miles from other United Methodist Churches? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
2. If not, why is this congregation being launched (Note: If needed, please use an additional sheet of paper to answer this question)?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the distance to the nearest United Methodist Church? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does the District own the land? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
5. Is it clear of debt? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
6. If a debt is owed, how much? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
7. What are the dimensions of the site? \_\_\_\_\_ Ft. x \_\_\_\_\_ Acres
8. Are public utilities available to the site? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
9. Does the site drain well? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
10. How many buildable acres does the site contain  
 (Note: at least 7 buildable acres are recommended)? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Is potable water available? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

12. Is city sewer available? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Is the site approved for septic tank? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

13. Does this site have immediate access to a major thoroughfare with excellent visibility and accessibility to residents of the primary area as they conduct daily activities? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

14. How is the land zoned? \_\_\_\_\_

15. Is the site near the center of the community the congregation will ultimately serve? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

16. Does the project of building a church on this site meet with the District Comprehensive Plan? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**G. Purpose Statement**

Has the sponsoring church or agency developed a preliminary statement of purpose and vision for this new church? (Please attach copy). \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**H. Pastor Selection**

Does the District Superintendent believe capable pastoral leadership can be secured? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**I. Parsonage**

If a housing allowance is being provided, can adequate housing be found for the amount provided? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If a parsonage is being provided instead of a housing allowance, answer the following five questions:

- 1. Has a parsonage been secured? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- 2. If not, will one be ready before the new pastor arrives? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- 3. Will the parsonage meet Conference parsonage standards? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- 4. If an existing parsonage is to be reclaimed for use, will it be refurbished? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- 5. If a house is to be rented/leased, will it be adequately furnished? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**J. Office**

- 1. Will an office be provided outside of the parsonage? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- 2. Will at least part-time secretarial help be available? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- 3. Will there be a budget for a computer, copier, FAX, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**K. Adjoining United Methodist Churches**

Have all nearby United Methodist Churches been involved in the planning of this new church? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Describe the extent of their involvement and support:

**II. MEMBER START-UP**

**A. Area Profile:**

1. Will a survey of the prime parish area be made to identify the most advantageous methods of evangelism and to secure persons who will be the "prime movers" of the new church?  Yes  No
2. If a "survey" has not been done, are there plans to do one?  Yes  No  
If "yes", date to be completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: If a survey has been done, please send a copy of the results with this application.)
3. If a survey is not made, what other plans will be used to gain area profile information?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B. Telemarketing:**

1. Do you plan to use a telemarketing process for the launch Sunday event?  Yes  No

**C. Membership Expectation:**

1. Do you believe that at least 125 adult members will make up the membership within 24 months of the launch?  Yes  No
2. Will the service area sustain growth for the next ten years?  Yes  No

**D. Meeting Place:**

1. Have you been able to find a definite meeting place for the congregation until a first unit can be constructed? (three to five years)  Yes  No
2. If not, how will this be handled \_\_\_\_\_

**III. FINANCING**

**A. Financial Plans:**

1. Is there a projected preliminary financial plan for this new church?  Yes  No  
If "yes," please attach a copy of the plan to this application.

**B. Summary of Anticipated Expenses:**

1. Cost of the worship site? \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
    \_\_\_ rent? \_\_\_ lease? Terms: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Cost of pastor's housing? \_\_\_ parsonage? \_\_\_ allowance? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
3. Pastor's total compensation package for one year? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Salary \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Utilities, Travel, Education \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_
4. Cost of sound, keyboard, projector, etc for worship? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
5. Cost of office equipment, promotions and other start-up costs? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Total Estimated Expenses for first 12 months?** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Summary of Anticipated Funding**

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

1. Contributions from the members of the new congregation? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
2. Pledged support from pastor's family, friends, supporters? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
2. Pledged support from "Mother" church? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
3. Pledged support from the local District? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

4. District Board of Church Building and Location? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
5. Annual Conference Catch the Vision Fund Grant? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
6. Annual Conference Parish and Community Fund Grant? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
7. Other Conference Grants from \_\_\_\_\_? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
8. Annual Conference Equitable Compensation Grant? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
9. Annual Conference New Church apportionment funds? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
10. **TOTAL anticipated cash income for first 12 months?** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

11. Anticipated "in kind" gifts such as free housing, land, office space or worship space? (list)

12. Place a check by above items for which, in fact, you have cash or written pledges in hand.

**NOTE:**

A.. It is recommended that before a new church "charters" it have a minimum of 125 adult members and also, the potential of becoming financially self-sufficient within 3-5 years after the first worship service.

B. If in the process of completing this application, it is determined that a population is in need of ministry but cannot reach the benchmark of 125 average attendance within 24 months, and 125 adult members quickly thereafter, and have the financial resources to become financially self-sufficient within 3-5 years after the initial worship service, then proceed with the following application for a "New **Mission** Congregation."

C. A **mission** congregation may be launched in sparsely populated areas needing a faith community, and/or in areas whose population does not have the economic means of supporting a self-sufficient congregation within 3-5 years. The sponsoring church may wish to ask the District Board of Church Building and Location and District Superintendent to assist in finding a place for the mission congregation to meet. Limited funding for rental space may be available from the Annual Conference and District Boards and Agencies. The Bishop and Cabinet will appoint a pastor who may be less than full time. Also, limited pastoral compensation may be available from the Commission on Equitable Compensation. Typically, housing arrangements (if any) for a mission congregation pastor shall be the responsibility of the local sponsoring church or the District.



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## **APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO START A NEW MISSION CONGREGATION**

Timeline: Typically for a pastor to be appointed to a new church start, this completed mission application, along with the "Application for Launching a United Methodist Church" needs to be in the hands of your District Superintendent and the Conference Minister for New Church Starts and Congregational Advancement **by October 15.**

1. In which district is the mission congregation to be located? \_\_\_\_\_
2. When did the District Board of Church Location and Building approve the launching of the mission?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What will be the name of the mission congregation? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the targeted population to be served: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - A. Has a survey been done to determine the potential number of persons to be served? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
  - B. How many people live in the target area? \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Does this mission congregation have the potential of at least 25 adults worshipping weekly? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
6. Please identify the sponsoring agency (local church, or District agency) to which the mission congregation will be in a covenant relationship and will make regular reports.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Is qualified pastoral leadership available for the Cabinet to appoint to serve this mission? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

- 8. Projected Time line:
  - A. Date this application submitted: \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. Date cabinet will be asked for approval: \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Date and/or Conference year pastor to be appointed: \_\_\_\_\_
  - D. Date mission congregation services are to begin: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Please share additional information that will help in the decision-making process concerning this mission congregation:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved Representative of Sponsoring Church, if Appropriate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title of Approved Representative of Sponsoring Church, if Appropriate

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Superintendent Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, District Board of Church Location and Building Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Conference Minister of New Church Starts & Cong. Advancement Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approved Representative of Conference Agency, if Appropriate Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title of Approved Representative of Conference Agency, if Appropriate

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*Equipping leaders with both knowledge and skills to move toward successful church starts.*