

SAMPLE CONTENT FOR BROCHURE: PLANNING FOR GROWTH AND VITALITY WORKSHOP FOR THE SMALL CONGREGATION

LOCATION, DATE AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

This is an opportunity to learn some specific turnaround and growth strategies for smaller congregations. We use a team approach throughout the workshop. Each team develops an action plan for growth and vitality based on its insights from the workshop and directly building on the strengths of its congregation.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

All small congregations (150 or fewer members) in _____ *insert district/area/cluster* _____ are invited to attend. To determine if this workshop is right for your congregation, consider a few common characteristics of small congregations:

- 150 or fewer members
- Common for one or more of the following to be present:
 - Informal structures for supporting lay leadership.
 - Full time minister as only professional staff (or moving from part-time to full-time ministry).
 - Minister cares for most members in times of need and attends most activities.
 - Clergy or key lay leader maintains a direct pastoral relationship with each member, coordinates the work of a small leadership circle, conducts most of the worship, and leads small group and adult religious education programs.
 - Governing board arranges much of the day-to-day life of the congregation.
 - Members know most people's names and notice if someone new is present at the worship.
 - Congregants may be giving double messages about the role they want the clergy to play—such as, to be pastoral and yet lead us into growth.
 - Communication is mostly informal.
 - Few procedures or policies are written down because "everyone knows."

If this sounds like your congregation, we hope you'll consider attending. Ideally, participating congregations will agree to send a team of four leaders to the workshop (teams should be no smaller than three members). We have room for a maximum of 10 teams—priority will be given to those who register first.

Choose your team with care! Include key lay leaders who represent significant segments of the congregation (for example, the board, religious education, membership, social responsibility, worship, and so on). It is highly recommended that the religious educator and parish minister (if you have one) attend as part of the team. At least a couple of your team members should have good communication skills, as much important work happens when your team returns home to share what it has learned with your congregation.

HOW WILL YOU BENEFIT?

This program uses a multifaceted approach to help congregations identify current strengths and determine some strategic directions for further growth and vitality. Using a planning method that will help you guide your work with your congregation after the workshop, we focus on the following three growth strategies:

1) Build a Mission and Ministry Focus:

- Placing one's mission and vision (outward focus) at the core of all congregational activities.
- Connecting one's personal ministry with the shared ministry of the congregation.
- Developing dynamic, responsive programming that meets the needs of members and to reach out to those in the community.

2) Ensure Adequate Resources and Ministry Infrastructure:

- Creating a strong ministry for membership
- Supporting personal and shared ministry
- Knowing when to add another worship service, and determining the format
- Staffing for growth and vitality
- A comprehensive plan and mission-based budgeting

3) Know What it Takes to Make the Change:

- Learning how congregations grow and change.
- Developing strategies to lead healthy change.
- Companioning people through difficulties and losses.

TIMING AND EXPECTATIONS

Registration, a warm welcome, and a light meal will be provided at 6:00 P.M. on Friday _____*insert exact date*_____. The program starts promptly at 7:00 P.M.

The weekend requires a significant commitment of time and energy. Participants are expected to attend the workshop from 6:00 to 9:30 P.M. on Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on Saturday, and 9:00 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. on Sunday. (There may be a dinner and cabaret, which forms a fun and useful part of the program, or, if the event is held at a host church, an optional all-fellowship event on Saturday evening.) If you can't attend the entire weekend, please consider not registering. All team members with e-mail addresses will receive pre-workshop materials and exercises a month before the workshop—please copy the materials for those on your team without e-mail and complete the exercises before you arrive.

WORKSHOP FACILITATOR

This workshop will be led by... *(insert info provided by the UUA's New Congregation and Growth Resources office).*

WORKSHOP SPONSORS

The _____ District in collaboration with the UUA's New Congregation and Growth Resources Office is sponsoring this weekend. We thank _____ for graciously hosting us in their congregation for the weekend and coordinating onsite requirements.

COSTS

There is a single registration fee of \$___ for teams of four or \$___/person for teams of three—this covers the costs of food, accommodation (if not at a church), and materials for participants. Please make checks out to _____ . The District and UUA's New Congregation and Growth Resources Office share expenses related to the facilitator.

Register by _____ *(6 weeks before the event)*

Please send registration (form on back) to: _____ *(Name and address of registrar)*

It's fine to send in your registration by e-mail and then follow it up with the check.

QUESTIONS?

For registration questions, please contact the registrar, _____ *(Name and contact info).*

For specific questions about the workshop, please contact the facilitator _____.

GETTING THERE

The _____ Conference Center/ UU Church is located at _____. *(Offer written directions and map.)*

WHERE TO STAY?

(If held at a church) Home hospitality is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please be sure to check off home hospitality on the registration form if required and be sure to register by _____ at the very latest!

You may wish to stay at a local hotel or B&B (paying for your own costs). If this is your preference, please book your accommodations well in advance to ensure availability. Some possibilities include: (list hotels & B&Bs).

**REGISTRATION FORM — PLANNING FOR GROWTH AND VITALITY FOR THE SMALL CONGREGATION —
DATE**

COMPLETE AND RETURN BY _____ (DATE)

TO: REGISTRAR'S NAME/ADDRESS _____ OR VIA E-MAIL _____

Fees: \$___/team of four or \$___/person. Check payable to: _____

NAME OF CONFERENCE CENTER/CONGREGATION _____

Attendees (put team contact person in #1)

1. Name _____
Address _____
E-mail _____
 Vegetarian Home Hospitality Special Needs _____
Phone _____
2. Name _____
Address _____
E-mail _____
 Vegetarian Home Hospitality Special Needs _____
Phone _____
3. Name _____
Address _____
E-mail _____
 Vegetarian Home Hospitality Special Needs _____
Phone _____
4. Name _____
Address _____
E-mail _____
 Vegetarian Home Hospitality Special Needs _____
Phone _____