

# Welcome!

## *Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California and Nevada*

*We are committed to starting and nurturing new Disciples churches in this Region. We have a goal of starting 40 new churches<sup>1</sup> by the year 2020 and are blessed to have 23 new churches since 2004. We strive to provide the support and resources necessary to make these churches sustainable and vital witnesses of our shared mission.*

### **STEP ONE: BECOMING A CONGREGATION “UNDER CARE”**

The first step toward becoming a new Disciples church is to come “under care” of the Region. Once “under care” it is usually 2-7 years before a new church is sufficiently established and stabilized to be “charted” – or to become a congregation with full standing in the Region.

Each new church will have a unique path during these initial years of development, but this document is intended to clarify the steps that are common to most, if not all, of our new churches.

To come “under care” of the Christian Church (DOC) in Northern California and Nevada:

- There must be an initial meeting with Regional Staff (Regional Minister Rev. Dr. LaTaunya “Toni” Bynum and/or Minister of New Church Movement Rev. Kyung-Min “Daniel” Lee)
  - Church pastor/planter and/or key leaders of new church must be present
  - Prepare to share the vision for the new ministry
  - We’ll discuss mutual expectations
    - What is expected/needed/desired from Region?
    - Who are the Disciples? Expectations for living in covenant with other Disciples congregations.
  - The new church pastor/planter and/or key leader(s) will be encouraged to begin the Discernment and Assessment process designed by Hope Partnership of NCM. This is a tool designed to promote the success and long term sustainability of new churches.
  - We will review next steps.
  
- Next, the new church must meet with New Church Movement (NCM) Committee at a regularly scheduled committee meeting.
  - Church pastor/planter and/or key leaders of new church must be present
  - New church should bring a formal letter, signed by the leadership of the new church, requesting under care status
  - The Committee will expect to learn the vision, mission and values of the new church as well as a general description of the target demographic or cultural context.
  - The Committee will look for indications that the Holy Spirit is at work in this ministry and will likely ask some clarifying questions.
  
- At the conclusion of this meeting, the NCM Committee will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee (Regional Board) whether to take the new church “under care”.
  
- The Executive Committee (Regional Board) votes on recommendation of NCM Committee

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<sup>1</sup> “New church” in this context could be a newly organized group of believers, or an existing congregation that seeks to affiliate with the CC(DOC). The term “new church” will be used throughout this document and refer to both situations.

## STEP TWO: AS A CONGREGATION “UNDER CARE”

Once accepted as a congregation “under care” of the Region, there are a number of items that must be taken care of within the first 3-9 months of this new relationship. The following checklist is a guide for this process

### Congregation that is “under care”

- File Articles of Incorporation at the California (or Nevada) Secretary of State’s office
- Request a Tax ID # from IRS (this can be done over the phone)
- Contact Disciples Mission Fund (DMF) in order to receive a pin number, remittance forms, and special day offering materials. We recommend that all congregations give at least 10% of their income to support the mission of the wider church.
- Request Tax Exemption Certificate from the Office of General Minister and President
- File for letter of Exemption with the California State Franchise Tax Board
- Request all staff of the new church to enroll Pension Plan through Disciples Pension Fund
- Continue congregational study of Disciples history and polity
- Attend Disciples New Church Planter training and ongoing training opportunities
- Attend next Regional Annual Gathering (every April) in order to be recognized by the entire Region
- Name a person to serve on the NCM Committee
- Provide an annual report on progress, including financials, to the NCM Committee.

### Additional Items

- Region helps locate/facilitate nesting church locations [if relevant]
- ~~Provide information on the Pension Fund Health care offer~~ (Discontinued in September 2016)
- Provide information from the General Church, Hope Partnership
- Provide information regarding ethnic constituency groups (CPOHM, NAPAD, Haitian Ministries, etc.)
- Provide information about other congregations in Geographic Area for networking and building relationship

### STEP THREE: BECOMING A CONGREGATION WITH FULL STANDING

When it is time to move out of the “under care” status and become a fully recognized Disciples congregation in full standing, there are a few more steps to complete. The following checklist is a guide for this process.

- Congregation votes to request full standing.
- Congregation writes a letter to the NCM Committee requesting full standing
- Leaders from the congregation must meet with the NCM Committee at a regularly scheduled committee meeting for an interview regarding the congregation’s readiness for this important step.
- The Committee makes a recommendation to grant full standing to the Executive Committee (Regional Board).
- The Executive Committee (Regional Board) makes a recommendation to the Annual Gathering of the Region.
- The Annual Gathering votes to grant full standing.