

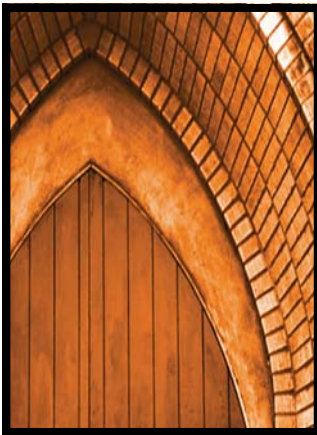


UPCOMING EVENT!

ACTS 16:5 INITIATIVE

“The churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.”

A presbytery-wide process for congregational transformation and missional impact



The Acts 16:5 Initiative is the doorway to a transformational process for congregations seeking renewal and redevelopment. The Acts 16:5 Initiative invites congregations to engage in a deliberate process of transformation that is missional and communal—serving both the congregation and the surrounding community.

Regardless of size, whether a congregation is presently a dynamic, vigorous fellowship or is struggling to sustain its present level of vitality, every congregation may use the Acts 16:5 Initiative as a means of considering present and future ministry, and of moving by God’s grace into a new chapter of life and ministry.

The Acts 16:5 Initiative provides congregations with guidance and support through a two-year learning process. **You can learn more when Peace River Presbytery launches this initiative with a two-day workshop October 29-30 to be held at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Venice.**

What is the Acts 16:5 Initiative?

The Acts 16:5 Initiative is a strategy whose aim is to encourage congregational transformation by trusting God to bring about growth in faith and numbers.

The Initiative, created and supported by The Vital Churches Institute, involves learning and applying a transformational vision for ministry through the process of ministry design that fits a congregation’s defining vision. The initiative also addresses complex issues that are either problems needing solutions or possibilities for new ministry.

The Acts 16:5 Initiative provides congregations with guidance and support through a two-year learning process. The Vital Churches Institute acts as a “coach” by offering content, encouragement, counsel and graceful accountability as each congregation grows in vitality by God’s grace and works to accomplish mission goals.

The Acts 16:5 process brings together three key factors that influence transformation and development in a congregation: (1) a biblically based vision, (2) a commitment to a process of transformation, and (3) time.

WHAT IT INVOLVES

The Acts 16:5 process involves leadership from pastor, Session and congregation. All will be asked to commit to a two-year process of ministry assessment and new ministry development.

The pastor and an Acts 16:5 team of six participants will attend five equipping events and meet a minimum of eight times a year, working to develop specific ministry proposals for their congregation. The pastor also will meet twice a year with other area pastors involved in the Initiative for mutual encouragement and accountability.

A presbytery leadership team will guide this transformational process by organizing the Acts 16:5 workshops, and supporting and encouraging the participating churches as they discern God’s will for their ministry.



**Stan Ott,
The Vital Churches
Institute**

Stan Ott is president of The Vital Churches Institute. He served as senior pastor at the Pleasant Hills Community Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for 18 years from 1989 until 2006.

Stan has taught the principles of congregational vitality and leadership through The Vital Churches Institute to thousands of people throughout the United States and abroad. The Vital Churches Institute has three primary endeavors: the Acts 16:5 Initiative to presbyteries and congregations supporting congregational transformation; a publishing ministry, Vital Faith Resources, which specializes in materials that support congregational vitality and personal discipleship; and Building One Another, a weekly e-mail letter of encouragement.

Stan has degrees from Georgia Tech, Purdue University, and McCormick Theological Seminary. Publications he has written include “Twelve Dynamic Shifts for Transforming Your Church,” “Transform Your Church with Ministry Teams” and “The Vibrant Church: A People-Building Plan for Congregational Health.”

SPEAKING FROM THE HART

Insanity is doing the same thing over and over expecting different results. For 50 years the Presbyterian Church has experienced numerical decline. The hard reality for us to face is that the denomination has lost members only because 11,000 local congregations have lost members, including over half the congregations in Peace River. I believe Presbyteries and the larger church have a responsibility to work in partnership with congregations to do the hard work of understanding this new day, and help grow healthy, faithful, and fruitful reformed churches.

The move from membership focus to Missional focus (i.e. missio Dei) is radical for any congregation, but, in a post-Christian and post-modern world, it is essential. In the 1950s and 1960s, Presbyterians churches grew

because the culture encouraged folks to come. New church buildings in the new suburbs didn't hurt, and for a generation or two, if we built it, they did come. One reason our denomination and each congregation continues to lose members is that we have not changed our thinking from a fellowship/membership model to a worship/discipleship/apostolic/Missional model for being a church. The 21st century reality and culture no longer reinforces and supports our values.

I am excited about Acts 16:5 and look forward to what God has in store for us.

Graham Hart, General Presbyter

MESSAGE FROM THE DESIGN TEAM

In only six weeks we will be continuing a journey, a journey that began long ago and now continues, recommitting ourselves, our churches, our Presbytery to once again being missional, sharing our message of Christ with the community around us. And that is what Acts 16:5 is all about, building on what God has already done in our churches and then doing even more. Please act now and make a commitment to join us at Trinity in Venice on October 29 and 30. We will hear a message about growth, about mission, about leading our churches to not just survive but to once again thrive. Mark your calendars and come as we join The Rev. Dr. Stan Ott and others in Acts 16:5.

*Clint Cottrell
Pastor, Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church
Moderator, Acts 16:5 Design Committee*

WANT TO PARTICIPATE?

CONTACT YOUR PASTOR!

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