



Spring 2015 Cohort Information Session

Next Faithful Step Staff Team:

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NORTH GEORGIA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WELCOME TO THE NEXT FAITHFUL STEP INITIATIVE

The *Next Faithful Step Initiative* is a congregational, team-based journey designed to further equip congregations for a more fruitful congregational and community life. Next Steps, a partnership of North Georgia's Connectional Ministries, Congregational Development, and Episcopal Offices, seeks to strengthen congregations and principled leaders in our annual conference for long term growth and missional engagement. Through three phases, Next Steps engages clergy and lay teams as partners in effective ministry. Trained coaches come alongside congregational leaders to help congregations effectively fulfill their mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Phase One: Shared Learning

What is it? In Phase I, each church establishes a balanced, diverse, and multi-generational lay team of at least six (and as many as 10% of worship attendance) that meets with teams from cohort congregations for seven Saturday learning sessions. Appointed clergy attend a Thursday session just for pastors. It is imperative that the lead pastor and at least six laity attend all sessions. Associate pastors are encouraged to attend with the lead pastor. The laity team may include paid staff, but must include key leaders as well. These learning sessions are designed to help each team learn key concepts and best practices to develop as congregational leaders. As a result, your congregation will set in motion a team of leaders to help it take its next faithful step.

What to Expect:

Each session will consist of teaching, spiritual reflection, interaction with the ideas and concepts, and group sharing. Participants are required to read a book each month in order to contribute to each session's topic. **Each church (clergy & lay) team is required to meet at least once between sessions to debrief the session, discuss the readings, and to see how each person is progressing toward applying the learned concepts.**

- **Cost:** Each church (or congregational leader) is asked to purchase their books for Phase I.
- Any web links or videos will be available at www.ngumc.org/nextstepsspring2015 for viewing.

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What's Next?

Phase II includes 360° Evaluations, Hospitality Reports, On-Site Evaluations and Discovery of the Next Faithful Steps.

Phase III includes Congregational Discernment and working with a trained coach to implement the discerned action plan. There will be additional costs for congregations in Phases II & III based on each congregation's Next Faithful Step Action Plan.

SCHEDULE: PHASE I

- **Laity Sessions** will be held on Saturdays at a central church location. Gather at 8:30am for fellowship, light breakfast snacks, and coffee. Learning sessions will run from 9:00am to Noon.
- **Clergy Sessions** will be held on Thursdays from 10:00am to 1:00pm and will rotate among the cohort churches.

Session One: August 8, 2015 - "Getting Started"

Read: *Handouts - See Appendix - Session One*

Watch: *Ted Talk - "Start With Why" by Simon Sinek*

Take: *Online MissionInsite Church Life Survey*

Clergy and Laity Joint Session: *8:30am - Gathering; 9:00am-12:00Noon - Session; August 8, 2015 at Bold Springs UMC, 7625 Bold Springs Church Rd, Monroe, GA*

My Church Team's Gathering: _____

Session Two: September 2015 - "Making Disciples"

Read: *Power Surge: Six Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church by Michael Foss*

Watch: *Ted Talk - "Leaders Eat Last" by Simon Sinek*

Laity Session: *September 19 at Bold Springs UMC - 8:30am - Gathering; 9:00am-12:00Noon - Session*

Clergy Session: *September 17 at 10:00am - 1:00pm at _____*

My Church Team's Gathering: _____

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Session Three: October 2015 - "Preparing for the Next Faithful Step - Part 1"

Read: Renovate or Die: 10 Ways to Focus Your Church on Mission by Bob Farr with Kat Kotan - Chapters 1-8

*Laity Session: October 17 @ Bold Springs UMC - 8:30am - Gathering;
9:00am-12:00Noon - Session*

Clergy Session: October 15 at 10:00am - 1:00pm at _____

My Church Team's Gathering: _____

Session Four: November 2015 - "Preparing for the Next Faithful Step - Part 2"

Read: Renovate or Die: 10 Ways to Focus Your Church on Mission by Bob Farr with Kat Kotan - Chapters 9-17

*Laity Session: November 19 @ Bold Springs UMC - 8:30am - Gathering;
9:00am-12:00Noon - Session*

Clergy Session: November 21 at 10:00am - 1:00pm at _____

My Church Team's Gathering: _____

Session Five: JOINT SESSION - January 2016 - "Vision"

Read: Handouts - To Be Provided - www.ngumc.org/nextstepsspring2015

*Joint Laity and Clergy Session: January 23, 2015 at Bold Springs UMC at
10:00am-1:00pm*

Other Scheduling Notes:



The Next Faithful Step Initiative is a congregational, team-based journey designed to further equip congregations for a more fruitful congregational and community life. Trained coaches come alongside congregational leaders to help congregations effectively fulfill their mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

1 Learning Process

Start Here



Congregational Information Sessions



Shared Learning Process



- Congregations will read and discuss materials with a process team from the Annual Conference
- Local Congregation Orientation at the Local Church
- Coach leads presentation on expectations and next steps
- Congregations can opt in or out of the rest of the process at this point



2 Planning Process



360° Evaluations

- Churches prepare portfolio for On-Site Evaluation weekend
 - Includes church history and community demographic study
- Mystery Worshipers visit and prepare comprehensive Hospitality Report
- On-Site Evaluation Weekend with Interviews
 - Work Toward "Next Steps" Prescriptions and Action Plan



Defining the Next Faithful Steps

- "Next Steps" Prescriptions



Discovery Process with Church Leadership

- Roll out and presentation of prescription



3 Implementation of Action Plan



Congregational Discernment



- Presentation of "Next Steps" to Congregation
- Prayer and Discernment Time for Congregation
- Congregation votes on whether or not to move forward with action planning



Work with Coach to Implement Action Plan



Take the Next Faithful Step!



The Next Faithful Step Initiative is designed to be a two-year process that is tailored to the needs of a specific congregation or clusters of congregations.

APPENDIX: THE RESOURCES

Web Resources

- **General Resources:** www.ngumc.org/nextsteps
- **Cohort Specific Resources:** www.ngumc.org/nextstepsspring2015

Print or E-Book Resources

Purchase required and recommend resources here:

- At www.ngumc.org/nextstepsspring2015 - Click link for "Resource Store"
- <http://astore.amazon.com/thenexfaiste-20>
- <http://www.cokesbury.com/forms/ProductDetail.aspx?productGroupName=Next+Faithful+Step+Initiative+VSL+Recommended+List>

People Resources

Contact the Staff Team with questions or for more information:

- Rev. Jasmine Smothers - jasmine.smothers@ngumc.net
- Office: 678.533.1446 or jbush@ngumc.org - Mrs. Judy Imig-Bush, Administrative Assistant

Session One Resources

- **Ted Talk: "How Great Leaders Inspire Action"**
 - http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action
- **Online MissionInsite Church Life Survey**
 - <https://maps.missioninsite.com/Survey.aspx?ParentPage=MI>
- **Six Minute Book Review and Chapter One**
 - Handouts Provided Here: www.ngumc.org/nextstepsspring2015

Session Two Resources

- **Ted Talk: "Leaders Eat Last"**
 - http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action
- **Power Surge: Six Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church** by Michael Foss
 - <http://astore.amazon.com/thenexfaiste-20>
 - <http://www.cokesbury.com/forms/ProductDetail.aspx?productGroupName=Next+Faithful+Step+Initiative+VSL+Recommended+List>

Sessions Three and Four Resources

- **Renovate or Die: 10 Ways to Focus Your Church on Mission** by Bob Farr with Kat Kotan
 - <http://astore.amazon.com/thenexfaiste-20>
 - <http://www.cokesbury.com/forms/ProductDetail.aspx?productGroupName=Next+Faithful+Step+Initiative+VSL+Recommended+List>

Session Five Resources

- **Handouts to be provided**
 - www.ngumc.org/nextstepsspring2015