

PROCEDURE FOR RECEIVING A WORSHIPPING FELLOWSHIP:

New Church Development Commission of Cherokee, Greater Atlanta, and Northeast Georgia Presbyteries (Tri-Presbytery NCDC)

Definition of a WORSHIPPING FELLOWSHIP: A Worshipping Fellowship is a recognized new church of the Presbyterian Church (USA) through which at least 30 persons regularly gather for Christian worship, study, prayer, discipleship, mission, and support. The Fellowship may remain as a Fellowship, work with its host church toward becoming a part of the host church, or work with the NCDC toward becoming a recognized New Church Development and chartered church

A group that desires to become a Fellowship of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in a Presbytery shall follow the procedures outlined as follows:

The group must approach the Presbytery through the New Church Development Commission (NCDC) and request status as a "FELLOWSHIP." The Fellowship may elect its own officers, incorporate as a 501 (c)3 group as an entity of the PCUSA and be self-determined in its actions.

These actions are subject always to the review and control of the Oversight Advisory Team (OAT), a committee of the NCDC. The Fellowship, in doing its ministry shall follow the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Covenant of New Churches of the NCDC. It shall keep minutes of its meetings and accounts of all monies and goods received and disbursed. Pastoral leadership shall be a Commissioned Lay Pastor commissioned by the presbytery or a Minister of Word and Sacrament who is a member or recognized affiliate member in good standing of the presbytery. The Fellowship will be encouraged to contribute to Presbyterian basic mission. The lay leadership shall operate as if it were a Church session with the pastor moderating.

The NCDC recognizes as important the following practices for a new church Worshipping Fellowship:

Exceptions to the following criteria may be requested in consultation with the OAT and, where necessary, with approval from the NCDC.

1. Has an Pastoral leader who is an ordained Presbyterian minister or Commissioned Lay Pastor who is a permanent or affiliate member of the Presbytery in which the congregation resides.
2. Is able to contribute an agreed upon amount to a host church towards expenses where applicable
3. Requests in writing to be designated the status of Fellowship through the NCDC
4. Indicates that the leader and the congregation consider themselves a new sister church of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

5. Shows an understanding of Christian, Presbyterian and reformed belief and polity, and indicates the group's commitment to the supervision of the Presbytery through the NCDC.
6. Agrees with the Presbytery through the NCDC on a plan to implement the requirements of the Presbyterian Church (USA) including the following:
 - Including both women and men as leaders and officers of the new church and as elders, and, if called, deacons in the congregation when/if a new church is chartered.
 - Instituting a two or three year rotation of officers.
 - Adjusting the size of the body of officers to the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s recommendation for sessions.
 - Agreeing to women and men as candidates to become pastors.
 - Demonstrating through a budget and budget projections the Fellowship's ability to pay its pastoral leadership fairly and reasonably as approved by the NCDC and the Committee on Ministry (COM). In some cases, approval may be given to have the pastor serve without compensation.
7. The recognized Fellowship shall:
 - Present an annual Ministry Report to the NCDC and participate in an annual Advisory Meeting of the OAT.
 - Keep and share appropriate records of leadership team meetings, attendance, members, finances, etc.
 - Agree to work with a liaison from the OAT, who may occasionally attend, ex-officio, the meetings of the steering committee and accompany the progress of the Fellowship.
 - Determine a name in consultation with the NCDC.
 - Encourage pastoral and lay leadership to attend meetings and gatherings of the presbytery.