

Requirements for the Chartering of a Congregation

The Tri-Presbytery New Church Development Commission (TPNCDC) on behalf of the Presbyteries of Cherokee, Greater Atlanta, and Northeast Georgia, desires to organize strong, viable Christian communities that strengthen the mission and ministry of the denomination by offering their own gifts and kinship to the PCUSA.

Therefore, the TPNCDC uses the following guidelines to determine what shall be accomplished prior to a church's chartering, which takes place during a special Service of Constitution of the PCUSA:*

- a. The organizing church has demonstrated successful and current participation in the mission strategies outlined in the following NCDC policies: Procedure to become an NCD and NCDC New Church Covenant.
- b. The organizing church shall have been worshipping together as a New Church Development (NCD) of the TPNCDC for at least six months;
- c. Signatures of at least 100 active/confirmed members of the organizing church have been added to a petition asking that the organizing church be constituted as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as follows (G-7.0201):

We, the undersized, in response to the grace of God, desire to be constituted and organized as a church to be known as _____. We promise and covenant to live together and to work together in ministry as disciples of Jesus Christ, bound to him and to one another as a part of the body of Christ in this place according to the principles of faith, mission, and order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (*signatures follow*)

The organizing church also identifies concrete ways in which it feels called to support the mission of its sister congregations in the PCUSA through offering of spiritual gifts and partnership.

- d. A proposed annual budget has been adopted that shows a goal of 10% of the gifts of the members be devoted to local and global mission; including participation in per capita mission giving to the presbytery in which the organizing church is located;
- e. The Leadership Team and Organizing Pastor covenant to be active mission partners in the life and ministry of their community and their sister churches in the Presbytery;
- f. The leadership of the organizing church shall have participated in its Annual Advisory Meeting with the Oversight Advisory Team (OAT) within the past 6 months and received recommendation from the OAT and the NCDC to charter;

In addition, in preparation for the Service of Constitution:

- g. The new church Leadership Team has demonstrated or planned for the nomination of elders-elect, women and men, of the congregation who will be ordained and/or installed during the chartering service;
- h. The members of the congregation, Leadership Team and Organizing Pastor have discerned whether the Organizing Pastor(s) will be installed as the Pastor(s) of organizing church during chartering, or whether a Pastor Nominating Committee shall be formed with the guidance of the Presbytery COM and the NCDC, to search for the first installed

* In particular circumstances, some requirements may be amended by the NCDC.

- Pastor of the congregation. In either case, the Pastor-elect shall complete appropriate steps with the presbytery in order to become the installed pastor of the congregation;
- i. The organizing church works with the local presbytery to update or create By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation consistent with the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) (samples shall be provided by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery);
 - j. A date and time shall be chosen at least 3 months in advance for the organizing church's worship Service of Constitution, in collaboration with the congregation's liaison, who will also work with the congregation to plan this celebration. Ordinarily, this service takes place during or following the congregation's regular worship on the Lord's Day. A sample chartering service is available in the PCUSA's Book of Occasional Services, and Orders of Worship from recent Services of Constitution are available from the NCDC.

The organizing church is invited to share in celebratory ways the church's journey through special presentation. One special tradition occurs at the annual NCDC New Church Development Celebration, in which the entire gathered body rejoices in their sister church's constitution, and asks God's blessing upon them in the journey ahead.