



Discernment Worksheet

Congratulations! You are embarking on a journey of discernment around starting a New Episcopal Community. Many of the questions below you'll be working on as you discern. You can count on doing a lot of erasing/deleting and revising – that's what Discernment is all about! Others you'll only be able to answer toward the conclusion of your discernment time. Don't rush to answer all the questions at once, and don't answer them the way you would on a grant application - this worksheet is to help YOU turn your vision for new community into reality.

We've prepared a resource for you called the *What to Expect when you're Starting a New Episcopal Community* guide. We invite you to refer to it as you discern..

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/new-episcopal-communities/training/>

Section 1: Discerning your Team

Read pages 5-6 of the "What to Expect" Manual. As you gather your Discernment Team, answer these questions:

Who is on your discernment team?

What is your invitation to your discernment team members?

Who is the "primary instigator" of your ministry? What is this person's job description?

Section 2: The 4 W's

WHY? Read pages 7-8 of the “What to Expect” Manual.

Can you refine your team’s answer to “why” into one or two sentences?

Was there a passage or story from Scripture that kept bubbling up and your team discussed your “why?”

How has your answer to “why?” influenced your discernment of Next Steps?

WHO? Read pages 8-9

Who will your New Episcopal Community intentionally engage? How did you and your discernment team come to this decision?

How many one-to-one conversations did you and your team have with people from the demographic you are trying to reach? How did these conversations go? What did you learn?

WHERE? Read pages 10-12

Where did you discern your New Episcopal Community will be located?

What were the signs that this place is fertile ground for a New Episcopal Community?

How many one-to-one conversations did you and your team have with residents/neighbors/business owners, etc. in the neighborhood you’ve discerned? How did these conversations go? What did you learn?

Will your New Episcopal Community have a building? Will it be rented or owned by the diocese? How did you discern the answer to this question?

WHAT? What model did you and your team discern for this New Episcopal Community? How did you come to this decision?

What experiments did you run to see if this model works? What happened?

What leadership skills are needed to get this model of community off the ground?

What are the resources that will be needed to launch this model of community?

Section 3: Discerning a Point Leader

Who is the point leader for your New Episcopal Community?

Has the leader attended a Discerning Missional Leadership Retreat? What did the leader learn about themselves through the retreat experience and feedback?

Section 4: Building a Support Structure

Read pages 24-26 of the “What to Expect” guide.

Which Diocesan Staff persons oversee the discernment of this new community?

How often do you and your team check in with the Diocese? For how long, and at whose initiation? How do you set the agenda?

What have your conversations regarding future (or current) funding for this new community yielded?

What trainings offered by the Office of Church Planting and Redevelopment (or other sources) have you attended? What useful insights did you take away?

Do you have a church planting coach?

If you are the point leader of this potential new community, have you and your family (or close friends) had a conversation about how church planting will affect your everyday life?

Section 4: Devising Next Steps

What conclusions have you reached during this period of discernment? Will you be continuing on to plant a New Episcopal Community in this context?

If not, what learning will you take with you to whatever is next for you in ministry? What seeds were planted within your discernment team?

If you are planning to continue:

Read page 26 in the “What to Expect” manual, and begin working on your ministry plan.

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