



Ministry Plan Guide

Crafting a ministry plan will help you and your team take the beautiful vision you've discerned and take steps toward making it a reality. Most New Episcopal Community leaders are highly intuitive, nimble, and conscientious of where the Holy Spirit is leading. A ministry plan is not meant to stifle creativity and flexibility - rather, it's meant to enhance these gifts by providing a platform for your team to co-create its vision, check in with one another, and nurture commitment among your community members and diocesan supporters.

There is a sample ministry plan template starting on page 48 of the *What to Expect when you're Starting a New Episcopal Community* guide. This example is quite detailed and may help you think about the various components that go into a New Episcopal Community:

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

However, the template above isn't the only way to craft a ministry plan. Yours might look more like a spreadsheet, a colorful "flow" illustration, or a mass of sticky notes that gradually get shifted into a recognizable pattern. The size and shape of your plan are up to you - whatever helps you take the steps needed to see your New Episcopal Community come to life!

Components of a strong Ministry Plan:

Most ministry plans will need these most basic components:



Outcomes: The difference you want your new community to make in the world, and in God’s Kingdom. How will you ultimately define “success?”

Goals: The means by which you will guide your new community toward making the difference it wants to make in the world. A strong goal balances flexibility with the helpfulness of making a plan - they set direction but don’t define the only path.

Budget: How much money does the point leader need in order to do this work? What are other goals that require money to reach? What are our revenue streams? What does “sustainability” mean for this new community, and what are the factors influencing our budgeting timeline?

Next Steps: What are the tangible, broken down series of next steps you and your team will need to take in order to work toward your goals? When will you get started on each step? What resources, energy, leadership and other tangibles are needed to take the steps?

Accountability: What are the relationships of accountability that will be managed along the way (among our team, with the Diocese, supporting parishes, financial partners, etc.)

How far into the future should I plan?

3-year ministry plans

It takes years to build the foundation that you will need to launch a healthy, resilient New Episcopal Community (see page 33 of the *What to Expect* guide for a discussion on defining sustainability). Consider thinking about your ministry plan in 3-year increments. We've observed that the 3 year mark is a good time to review your ministry so far, and decide whether to continue (or if the ministry's fruit was seasonal). 3 years in is also when many developers feel their energy begins to shift (usually toward putting more structure in place around what they've planted).

Of course, you do not need to have every step of the journey mapped out on Day One. Rather, have a plan that helps you know where you are going, with the flexibility to adapt and adjust along the way.

Breaking down your big picture vision into smaller goals will help actionable steps become clearer. Your 3-year plan can be divided into one-year sections, and even into 90-day micro strategies.

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