



PRESBYTERY OF THE CASCADES  
0245 SW Bancroft St.  
Portland, OR 97239  
503.227.5486  
[www.cascadespresbytery.org](http://www.cascadespresbytery.org)

March 5, 2019

Dear Presbytery of the Cascades Congregation,

Our presbytery was recently named as one of fourteen pilot presbyteries for the Vital Congregations Initiative organized by the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the PC(USA). This ambitious project seeks to support individual congregations and presbyteries in a process of assessment and discernment as we strive to be more faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ in our changing communities and culture.

We are especially excited to commit to this initiative since its approach does not just focus on churches that feel a need for revitalization. Rather, the initiative provides tools and a process to help congregations connect around a common life, shared mission, and unified vision.

Our hope is that over the next year, the majority of our congregations will become involved in some capacity. We believe that there will be a variety of resources that can support churches in different ways, depending on their needs, commitment, and energy. We also believe that through shared involvement, churches will find broad and meaningful connection with others in the presbytery as we grow together in shared mission.

At this time, we would like to invite you to consider how you and your congregation might be involved. **We have need for 6-8 churches that are enthusiastic and ready to commit to the first wave of the Vital Congregations Initiative.** This small cohort of churches and leaders will be trained and supported by national staff in the coming months as they launch the overall program. There is a deadline that has been provided by the denomination for this initial cohort, so **we would need to hear of your interest by Friday, March 22nd.** This pilot group would need to be able to commit their pastor and one church officer to serve as a leader for their church. Ideally, one or both of these people would be able to participate in a training program to be held **May 6-9 in Denver, CO.**

If joining the initial cohort feels unrealistic for your church, we would still invite you to read more about the initiative and prayerfully consider if and how it might serve your congregation since there will be additional opportunities to get involved in the coming months. You can find more information about the Vital Congregations Initiative by [CLICKING HERE](#).

Contact one of us by Friday, March 22 if you are interested in the first wave:

The Rev. Brian Heron, Presbyter for Vision and Mission

[brian@cascadespresbytery.org](mailto:brian@cascadespresbytery.org)

The Rev. Clark Scalera, Advocate for Congregations & Clergy

[clark@cascadespresbytery.org](mailto:clark@cascadespresbytery.org)

We do hope this letter finds you well. As always, if there are ways we can be of encouragement, or can support the ministry of your congregation, please let us know!

With gratitude,

Brian and Clark