



Gathering Together • Nurturing Innovation • Strengthening Communities  
Reuniéndonos Juntos • Animando Innovación • Fortaleciendo Comunidades  
다같이 모이기 • 공동체를 강화하기 • 혁신을 키워나가기

## Invitation To Connect

*NOTE: This planning guide is intended to be completed with the assistance of a Synod Networker. As you read through the Planning Guide and enter into discussion with members/partners of your ministry, we invite you to connect with your Networker to ask questions about the process, what it might mean for you and your partners, and in what ways the Synod can assist. To find out who your Networker is, contact Amaury Tañón-Santos at [Amaury.Tanon-Santos@synodne.org](mailto:Amaury.Tanon-Santos@synodne.org), or 732-476-4880 (Cell).*

### Purpose of the Guide

This guide is a tool for discernment and planning to be used by those considering becoming a Synod Network. Completion of the “Planning” section of the guide will help the Synod Council Networks Team understand the partnership’s identity, the purpose you have discerned, and the ways in which God may be calling you to carry that out.

The “Evaluation” section of the guide should be updated as your Network progresses. Evaluating the impact of your Network and providing recommendations can assist future Synod Networks.

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### The Synod and Its Mission

The Synod of the Northeast is a regional community of PCUSA presbyteries and their congregations committed to serving as supportive mutual partners. It is the responsibility of this regional community to walk alongside its presbyteries, offering the kinds of resourcing presbyteries are unable to provide alone. The Synod exists to serve its presbyteries through resourcing, guidance and the ability to gather partners on a larger scale. Drawing upon its regional size and diversity, the Synod provides valuable resources and opportunities for its presbyteries. The Synod also provides creative and less encumbered space for innovation. With governance simplified and without the intense relational and governance demands faced by most presbyteries, the Synod can be a place where creativity might be allowed to flourish.

### The Missional Purpose of the Synod of the Northeast

This is the vision God has placed in our hearts, that together we will become witnesses to the ever-expanding community of Christ, following his way: “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)

We are a regional community of presbyteries and congregations learning to respond to God’s call to become agents of divine justice, transforming the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the Northeast into a community of hospitality and welcome for all. We recognize that we have not always lived into the gift of our great diversity. We have not always fully welcomed all those within the communities we serve, including people of different racial or ethnic identities, economic classes, genders, abilities, sexualities, immigration statuses, or those who are marginalized in other ways. Finding deep joy in our differences, we commit to equipping the saints for a courageous and steadfast witness of love and hope; learning, growing, worshipping and working together.

## NETWORKS

A network is a group of individuals, churches, and/or presbyteries recognized by the Synod Council, committed to gathering and working together with a common purpose that embodies the overall mission of the Synod.

### Purpose

*Networks in the Synod of the Northeast form and gather **because**:*

- they share a common purpose
- they have something to share with one another that will strengthen their common ministry
- they are stronger together than they are apart
- they are brought together by the Holy Spirit
- they together have experience, knowledge, and passion to offer the church at large.

*Networks in the Synod of the Northeast form and gather **to**:*

- provide for mutual support
- gain fresh perspectives for ministry
- maintain regular connection/communication between members
- resource others in the Synod and beyond.

### Structure

- The network will determine its own leadership, arising from within the group, and will set its own agenda.
- The network will appoint a liaison who will relate to the Synod Council through the Networks Working Group and assigned Synod Networker. This is a mutual relationship, facilitating communication, assessment, and regular reporting.
- The network will be established for no more than a two-year period, which may be renewed through re-application.
- In accordance with the Book of Order directives for diversity and in faithfulness to the Synod's common missional purpose, networks will be encouraged to seek diversity in their make-up.
- Network members are accountable to one another for the ministry and mission to which they have committed.

### Communication

- Each network will regularly communicate with the Synod community through their assigned Synod Networker so that individuals, congregations, and presbyteries can pray for, engage in the work of, and be inspired by the network.
- Network description, goals, and contact information will be provided by the network liaison to be posted on the Synod website and shared within the Synod community.

## Funding

*Note: Some networks will not need funding; others may not need it initially but recognize later that they need financial support for particular network activities*

- Funding will be available through the Synod to support the mission and goals of the network, including gatherings and the cultivation of resources and faithful practices to be shared.
- Regular accounting of how the funds are being used and who is managing them will be shared with the Networks Working group through the network liaison.

## Responsibility of Synod Council

- The Synod Council will encourage requests for networks and will assist in facilitating new networks and network activities through its appointed Networks Working Group.
- The Networks Working Group will report and make recommendations to the Synod Council for its approval, presenting pertinent information, including new network applications and the status/ accomplishments of existing networks.
- A Synod Networker will be assigned to each network to support the building and maintaining of a healthy network.

## Process

- To be considered as a network of the Synod of the Northeast, a Synod Network Planning Guide must be provided to the Synod Working Group through a Synod Networker.
- Synod Network Planning Guides may be revised as needs change and new ministry opportunities arise.

## Planning

- Primary Purpose (What do you believe to be the core purpose of the Network?)

- How will you accomplish this purpose?

- Give a brief description of the proposed Network and background information. (Who, What, when, where and why? How has the Holy Spirit worked to bring this Network together?)

- How does this Network embody the Synod's Mission (as described above)?

- What makes this a Synod Network rather than a Presbytery Network? (For example, how does it enable relationships and mission opportunities that are not possible within one presbytery?)

- What are some benchmarks or outcomes along the way that will demonstrate that this Network is on the right track?
  - At 6 months

- At 12 months

- At 18 months



- Steps to implementation: List the specific steps required to establish and implement the ministry of this Network, showing the planned dates for each step, and the person or people responsible for each step. **Where applicable, how might the Synod assist through communication, connection, and consultation?**

<i>Task/Activity</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Person(s) Responsible</i>

• Network Contacts

*Network Liaison (primary contact)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church/Presbytery: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duties: \_\_\_\_\_

*Network Member*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church/Presbytery: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duties: \_\_\_\_\_

*Network Member*

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Church/Presbytery: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Church/Presbytery: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duties: \_\_\_\_\_

*Network Member*

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Phone 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church/Presbytery: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duties: \_\_\_\_\_

*If there are additional Network Members, please continue listing in the same format on separate attachment.*

- Will any specific materials, supplies, and resources be required?

Material or Supply & Quantity	Person Responsible for Obtaining	Date Needed	Donated, Owned or Purchased?	Cost/Value

- If funding is desired, complete a proposed budget indicating all anticipated income and expenses. (See Regional Networker for sample budgets.)

Proposed Budget: Attach a detailed line item budget indicating the amount requested from the Synod and amounts to be contributed either in direct church/ministry contribution or through in-kind contribution. Detail in-kind contribution (such as donated space, office supplies, utilities, etc.). Also, indicate how funds will be managed and who will be directly responsible for oversight.