

Frequently Asked Questions about the New Beginnings Plan

What were the factors considered in determining this plan?

The following core values guide the New Beginning Team:

- Our Sunday experience is the heartbeat of our church.
- All we do must be done with excellence and with the highest quality.
- We must be forward-thinking and vision-focused.
- We must reach new people, or we will decline and die.
- All forms and styles of worship and music are valid and important.

Why are we making changes to our Worship Services?

In 2019, New Creation UMC participated in the Next Level Innovations (NLI) process. Our NLI Report identified several areas for recommended innovations or improvements designed to help take our church to the next level of effectiveness. The congregation voted overwhelmingly in favor of those recommendations in November 2019. Some of these recommendations included innovations in communication, hospitality, worship, mission and vision alignment, and staffing structure. We had begun to see positive momentum in a number of these areas before the pandemic.

Four months later, the COVID pandemic came along and highlighted the urgency that these innovations had already identified. It also forced us to begin making other adaptations to sustain the health of our ministry. The pandemic has changed the world and the church.

Now, as we emerge from the pandemic, we have a historic opportunity to embrace an exciting future. This plan helps us to boldly take advantage of this opportunity to position our church for a future of growth and fruitfulness rather than decline.

When will this plan take effect?

New Beginning Sunday will be Sunday, September 12, 2021. The innovations described in this plan will be launched on that day. Supporting plans and preparations for our New Beginning are already underway.

Who made these decisions?

The New Beginning Team made these recommendations. This Team was commissioned by our Senior Pastor and selected from the membership of New Creation Church Council, the body elected by the church membership to serve as the key ministry and administrative leaders of the church. The Team is a representative group, primarily composed of key staff and lay leaders with the most connection to the Sunday experience, including worship and Sunday school. The Team is a group of well-respected and connected leaders. The New Beginning Team was comprised of the following members:

Randy Duncan, Senior Pastor
Spencer Black, Associate Pastor
Steve Geiger, Lay Leader
Becky Burley, Lay Leader
Jeremy Crum, Dir. of Communications & Connections
Mary Davis, Praise Team Director
Gail Irwin, Associate Director of Kids Ministry

Roger Ladd, Chair of Church Council
Kathy Williamson, Chair of SPRC
Karen Stricker, Chair of Worship Committee
John Thomas, Chair of Discipleship Committee
Michael Strickland, NLI Representative
Ali LeGrand, Young Adult Representative
Emma Irwin, Youth Representative



New Creation
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How long are we committing to this New Beginning Plan?

We commit to this path for the 2021-2022 program year beginning Sunday, September 12, 2021. At the end of that program year (around Summer 2022), we will evaluate the fruits and effectiveness to determine any adjustments or next steps.

What considerations were made about our ministries with kids and youth?

Our ministry to kids and youth is one of our top priorities. We want every child and young person to know and love God and learn and grow in their faith. Reaching kids, youth, and their families in our modern culture is also very challenging. We have to continually evaluate and adapt our methods to make the most significant impact on their lives. We have learned from experience and feedback that concentrating our ministry with our kids during the 11:00 hour provides the most effective way to engage our current families and to attract new families with kids. New Creation Kid's Ministry provides an age-appropriate experience in a safe, fun, and engaging environment while parents can also participate in worship. As we have already implemented this strategy over the last six months, we have seen more kids and families engaged than before.

Youth ministry is also very challenging in today's world. Our youth are busier than ever. Again, we have learned from experience and feedback that concentrating our ministry and discipleship with our youth on Sunday nights and at other times during the week is the most effective strategy to reach today's youth.

What about the Modern Service formerly held in the Fellowship Hall?

We are one church offering two worship service options. We believe focusing our energy and resources on creating two quality worship services is the best stewardship of our staff and volunteer resources. Our 11:00 service will be designed to blend elements of modern worship with other more traditional elements to reach as broad an audience as possible. Our sanctuary is a sacred space where all are welcome and can experience the presence of God. The plan enables everyone to gather together in a greater sense of community and unity to worship and commune with God.

What about live streaming?

Live streaming will continue as an integral part of our overall strategy to offer engaging worship and to reach out to our community at large. In our desire to reach beyond our walls and stay connected with those unable to attend in person, we will continue to live stream both of our Sunday services through all of our digital and social media platforms.

What about Sunday School?

We celebrate all small groups regardless of when they choose to meet. Sunday morning's hour of discipleship is set aside to support our Sunday morning discipleship classes and future groups who decide to meet at a time adjacent to our worship services. We are also seeking to grow our discipleship ministry by forming small groups and studies that meet on other days and times during the week.

Will there be any staffing changes as a result of these changes?

To help facilitate the New Beginning Plan, the Staff-Parish Relations Committee has made minor adjustments to three existing position descriptions in our Music and Arts department. The Director of Worship Arts/Music will oversee and coordinate all of our music ministries. This person will also direct the Praise Team and be the primary worship leader for the 11:00 a.m. service. The New Creation Choir Director will lead the relaunched New Creation Choir. This person will provide primary leadership for the 8:30 a.m. service and lead the New Creation Choir when they participate in the 11:00 a.m. service. The Accompanist/Organist will accompany the New Creation Choir, the 8:30 a.m. service, and also traditional elements of the 11:00 a.m. service. The goal is to have these positions filled in early August.