

Hand to Plow Process

Hand to Plow is not a program of the Annual Conference; it is a process being employed by the Annual Conference to come alongside local congregations to help them make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

- **Phase One**

- Every pastor and congregation of the Annual Conference will have opportunity to participate in a peer learning group. There will be 9 sessions for clergy and 5 sessions for laity. Prior to attendance it is expected participants will have completed any pre-work that has been assigned which includes but is not limited to reading, discussion, and information collection.
 - This will be open to all congregations in the Upper New York Annual Conference.
 - Each congregation must be represented as follows:
 - Pastoral Leadership (Lead and Associate pastors)
 - In the case of multiple staff, all staff responsible for the delivery of disciple-development in the congregation
 - At least, not limited to, 5 lay persons from the congregation
 - For churches with fewer than 25 in average worship attendance 3 or more lay persons will be the benchmark
 - Pastors may participate without a lay team with the approval of their District Superintendent.
 - Participants are asked to attend all sessions; session participation is factored into selection for consultations.
 - Local congregations will provide for the cost of textbooks and travel for both clergy and laity.
 - The Upper New York Annual Conference will provide participant workbooks for clergy and laity.
 - Cost is \$150 per congregation
- Congregations not moving to Phase Two but having completed Phase One will be invited to engage in an additional year long learning process that continues to develop the ideas, information and processes explored in the first year.
 - Clergy will have 9 sessions
 - Laity will have 5 sessions
 - Cost is \$150 per congregation

- **Phase Two**
 - The Cabinet in consultation and conversation with The Director of Vital Congregations will review applications from Congregations and select congregations for a Consultation.
 - The selected congregations will engage in a weekend long, Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, consultation. The consultation is to include:
 - Pre-work done by the congregation
 - Focus group interactions
 - One-on-one interviews with pastor, and lay persons
 - Friday evening focus group (open to entire congregation)
 - Focus group with Church/Administrative Council on Saturday morning
 - Teaching time for all in the congregation on Saturday
 - Sharing of Sunday worship with a member of the consultation team preaching.
 - Offering of three to five recommendations for the congregation to consider.
 - After the consultation the congregation will have 30 days through prayer and listening sessions to determine their willingness to adopt the Consultation Report.
 - There will be three Town Hall meetings lead by laity during the discernment period.
 - The Consultation Report will be voted on by a church conference.
 - It is a yes or no vote, no additions or substitutions
 - Vote of professing members
 - Must be present to vote
 - Cost is on a sliding scale fee based on average worship attendance (\$1000-\$1900).
- **Phase Three**
 - Each congregation that adopts the Consultation Report will be assigned a coach to journey with the congregation as they work with the prescriptions. (The cost of the Coach is to be shared between the Upper New York Annual Conference and the local congregation.)
 - Pastor and congregational leadership will attend a training on developing a ministry plan
 - The Director of Vital Congregations will provide additional information resources, and ongoing support through the implementation phase.
 - The congregation will work with the coach and the Director of Vital Congregations to develop an internal process of ongoing evaluation of vitality.