



There are many culture-based New Faith Communities throughout the Conference. Casa de Dios, a Hispanic New Faith Community in Syracuse is now worshipping around 100 each week and is actively growing leaders to launch a second site elsewhere in the months to come. The “Karenni Good News and New Hope UMC” in Mattydale, NY, have 80+ worshipping each week with 25-30 children and youth. This congregation uses the former Mattydale UMC building, and is sharing their space with two other New Faith Communities. The Nepali UMC is one of these NFCs—they have 70+ people every week, including many young children as well.

There are many more examples that will be shared as the “New Places for New People” Partners campaign continues. If you would like to share about your experience with a New Faith Community send your story to

[news@unyumc.org](mailto:news@unyumc.org).

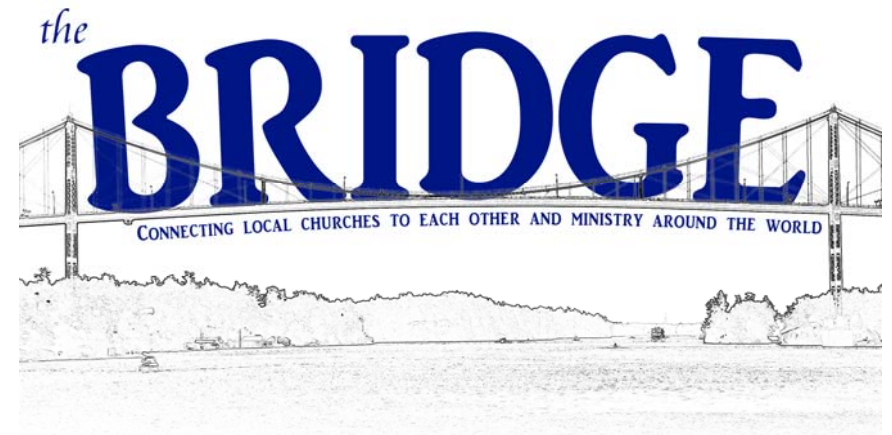
If you and your church become a “New Places for New People” Partner, imagine the number of unchurched people who will become disciples! The possibilities are endless. Checks for this campaign from churches should have Advance Special # 664 in the memo line. Individuals should put “New Places for New People” in their memo line.

The “New Places for New People” Partners campaign begins today and will end Nov. 1, 2019. People and churches can give gifts before, during, or after Annual Conference. You will be recognized at Annual Conference if you have a button!

Visit <http://bit.ly/newplacesfornewpeople> for toolkit resources to help promote the “New Places for New People” Partnership—this page will be regularly updated as more resources are developed.

*The Bridge is a Conference Communications Ministry tool that delivers to local churches news and stories of ministry from around the Upper New York Conference and the world. For more news and stories visit:*

**[www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)**



The Upper New York Conference’s vision is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be God’s love with our neighbors in all places.

## A look inside!

Upper New York makes New Places for New People a priority

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# Upper New York makes New Places for New People a priority

**By Shannon Hodson, Writer/Editor**

New Faith Communities (NFCs), are one of the best ways to introduce people to God in fresh new ways—sometimes in public settings like cafes, outdoor settings, and even laundromats; other times in peoples' homes. New Faith Communities welcome people who may not initially be comfortable in the “church” setting. Additionally, NFCs help ethnic-minorities connect to God through building groups of people from a similar cultural background to gather together for prayer, fellowship, and worship.

There are currently close to 100 NFCs in Upper New York (UNY). A lot of the funding comes from the New Beginnings Fund—a fund that was set up at the time of the formation of the UNY Conference and has been fed by the income of the sales of closed church properties. For a variety of reasons, in recent years, the income of sold churches has not kept up with need. Because of this the Conference Leadership Team has approved a plan to create a new campaign fundraiser called “New Places for New People” Partners.

Upper New York Area Resident Bishop, Mark J. Webb and the Rev. Dave Masland, Director of New Faith Communities, are inviting individual persons (lay and clergy) to prayerfully consider becoming a “New Places for New People” Partner by giving a gift of at least \$100. Every person who gives at least \$100 will receive a button that proclaims: “I am a ‘New Places for New People’ Partner.”

Every church in UNY is challenged by Bishop Webb and Rev. Masland to become a “New Places for New People” Partner by giving a gift of at least \$500. Congregations that gives at least \$500 will receive a certificate saying: “New Places for New People” Partner Church.

Of course, if individuals or churches feel inspired to give something more than the entry level “Partner” gift, they can. Visit <http://bit.ly/newplacesfornewpeople> to read more about the “New Places for New People” Partnership campaign, including higher giving levels.

The appointive cabinet believes so highly in the work of planting NFCs as of the date of this article they have already given nearly \$3,000 in cash gifts and are pledging to give more going forward.

Why consider becoming a “New Places for New People” Partner? Because your help will aid in the growth of already successful NFCs and will help plant even more NFCs.

UNY has many success stories of growing New Faith Communities, creating hundreds of disciples of Jesus Christ for transformation of the world.

Here are just a few examples of New Faith Communities success stories in UNY.

Speaking about FoundationUMC in Vestal, NY, Rev. Masland said, “A little more than two years ago, the Rev. John Martin planted FoundationUMC in Vestal. Their very simple church has attracted many unchurched people. They do three things... worship, life groups, and monthly church-wide mission projects. They find new people coming almost exclusively through personal invitation from active members. Many people who have been out of church for 20-30 years have found their way back to Christ through Foundation. Nearly 20 persons have been baptized in the past year. Life Groups are where people get very honest about their doubts, questions, sins, and spiritual lives, receive God’s forgiveness, and deepen their commitment to following Jesus. The average worship attendance since January (2019) has been 128!”



Rev. John Martin added, “On any given Sunday at Foundation, we have five distinct generations (Gen Z, Millennials, Gen Xers, Boomers, and Builders) worshipping alongside one another all striving to embody the fullness of God’s Kingdom in and throughout our community. This diversity of experience, perspective, and gifting has truly empowered our church to provide a profound witness to those who are not yet a part of us.”

The mission of the UNY Conference is “being God’s love to our neighbors in all places.” Most often, that means being the church outside of the church. New Faith Communities are sprouting in this format!

Pennsylvania Avenue UMC in Pine City, NY has three locations where five distinct New Faith Communities meet as part of what they refer to as Fresh Start outreach. Two of these five groups meet right at Pennsylvania UMC one on Saturday and one on Sunday, but three of the groups meet in other locations. One is at the Glen Theatre in Watkins Glen, NY. There is a contemporary worshipping congregation

that meets there Sunday mornings, welcoming about 35 people from the community and tourists in the summer season. A second is also in Watkins Glen, at the Fresh Start Church House; referred to as the early weekend worship service, this group of about 15 people meets on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. The third is Fresh Start Miracle Mile, in a former Ponderosa restaurant; there is a contemporary worship here on Sunday mornings with about 90 in attendance and numerous activities throughout the week.

In the neighborhood of Lake UMC (near Rochester, NY), there is a relatively new lower-to-middle-income apartment building. Pastor Ray Poling launched a New Faith Community called “Elevation Celebration” for people in this apartment complex. They meet in the complex’s public gathering place. On recent weeks, they have had 40-50 new people coming for great food, community building, and conversation about God’s love and grace.

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