



THE PRESBYTERY OF
LOS RANCHOS

New Worshiping Communities Guidebook

Compiled by the New Worshiping Communities Network Team
(of the Strategic Coordinating Team)

Approved by Presbytery, February 22, 2025

This packet provides the roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships for New Worshiping Communities in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.

Table of Contents

<i>New Worshiping Communities (NWCs) in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Culture and Values of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Roles and Responsibilities: Groups Providing Leadership, Support, and Oversight for NWC.....</i>	<i>4</i>
Leadership Groups:	4
Role of the Presbytery.....	6
The Role of a NWC Partnership Team/AC	7
<i>From NWC to Organized Church: Readiness Benchmarks.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>PLR Recommended Timeline for NWC to Charter.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Reporting Guidelines.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Guidelines for Reporting to PLR's Director of Operations.....</i>	<i>13</i>
Corporate Status and Checking Accounts	13
Reporting	14
Expenses	14
Weekly Reconciliations	15
Income and Expense Summaries and Meeting Minutes	15
<i>Formation of Presbytery Administrative Commission working with a NWC</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>STRATEGIC COORDINATING TEAM: Requests for Funding and Grants.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Overview of PC(USA) Mission Program Grants</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>NWCs and Worshiping Fellowships</i>	<i>22</i>

Welcome!
New Worshiping Communities (NWCs) in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos
www.losranchos.org
(Revised 12/5/24)

Dear Partner in Ministry,

Welcome! Thank you for supporting or starting a New Worshiping Community in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos. In either role, you play a vital part in making new disciples and exhibiting the kingdom of God to the world.

As you will see, this packet represents many hours of work on the part of people who believe God is using our Presbytery and denomination to pioneer fresh expressions of church in our time.

Whether you are a pioneer leader of a New Worshiping Community (NWC) or a member of a group that supports one, the materials in this packet will help you understand your role and responsibilities. They will also help you understand the various forms of support and accountability involved in nurturing a New Worshiping Community to its fullest potential, and even to becoming an “organized congregation” of the PC(USA).

As you know, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to being a church, so it makes sense that there is no such approach for starting a church. Therefore, the documents attached address a wide variety of needs that may or may not pertain to your group at the moment, but most likely will be needed by you down the road. They are compiled here in one place so you may be aware of them whether you are on the first step of your journey or well on the way towards chartering.

As always, please remember that the New Worshiping Communities Network Team of our Presbytery stands at the ready to answer your questions and support you in your ministry, as do I. Please never hesitate to call on us.

With you in Christ,

Rev. Tom Cramer
Executive Presbyter
tcramer@losranchos.org
Presbytery of Los Ranchos
<http://www.losranchos.org/>

Culture and Values of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos*

OUR CULTURE

The hallmark of the Los Ranchos Presbytery culture will be as a learning community that fosters effective missional congregations. The primary activity of our Presbytery will be to equip, serve, resource and challenge congregations and their leaders to become more missionally effective based on the following three values:

OUR VALUES

Faithfulness: *We hold each other mutually accountable for fulfilling our ordination vows, upholding our theological tradition and pursuing the Great Ends of the Church.*

Fruitfulness: *We are committed to pursuing honestly and actively what will further the Kingdom of God in breadth and depth using whatever tools are necessary. We will consistently measure and monitor our effectiveness.*

Fellowship: *We covenant to live out the Christian life together by pursuing trusting, healthy, edifying relationships expressed in missional partnership between our presbyters, congregations and members (pg. 5).*

** As Envisioned in "Flipping the Presbytery from 'The Meeting' to 'the Mission,'" approved by Presbytery, May 19, 2009.*

Roles and Responsibilities: Groups Providing Leadership, Support, and Oversight for NWC

This document answers the following questions:

What groups of the Presbytery support an NWC's journey?

How does an NWC become ready to organize/charter as a congregation?

How many years does a NWC have to "organize" as a congregation of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos and the PC(USA)?

NOTE: For the purpose of the NWC Partnership Teams, the term "Partnership" is to be understood in an ecclesiastical context and expresses no legal responsibilities or liabilities of the team members as partners or as members of a legal partnership. Each team member assumes only those responsibilities expressly assumed herein.

Leadership Groups:

NWCs Network Team

(A sub-committee of the SCT.)

Administrative Commission (AC)

(Commissioned by the Presbytery with specific specific powers and decision-making authority. Members from the Partnership Team may also serve on behalf of the Presbytery on the AC if so elected by the SCT.)

Partnership Team

(Representatives from Steering Committee/Leadership Team + Representatives from a Partner Congregation.)

Steering Committee/LeadershipTeam

(Members of the NWC recognized as leaders of the NWC.)

1. **SCT's New Worshiping Community Network Team:** On behalf of the Presbytery, this team provides oversight and support to all NWCs in Los Ranchos. It reports to a team of Presbytery Council called the Strategic Coordinating Team (SCT). Through, or on behalf of the SCT, it recommends policy, official "recognition" of leaders and NWCs, receives reports from NWCs, oversees the work of outside services and consultants, and serves as the Presbytery's primary connection to emerging and continuing NWCs. It is comprised of SCT members elected by the Presbytery,

representatives of NWC Partnership Teams/ACs, and other persons with skills helpful to supporting and developing NWCs. Each "recognized" NWC shall designate a representative from its Partnership Team/AC to serve on the NWC Network Team. The responsibilities of the NWC designated person are as follows:

- Report on the activities, initiatives and concerns of the NWC
- Interpret NWC financial, year-end and mid-year reports to Network Team
- Communicate the resources available from PLR and 1001 to NWC
- Report on progress of NWC toward financial sustainability
- Report on progress of NWC toward chartering as a PLR congregation
- Interpret and present NWC requests regarding grants, congregational partnerships, community status, dissolution and other items of impact
- Interpret and present minutes from NWC leadership meetings (administrative commission, partnership meetings and other formal leadership meetings)

Note: In the event that an NWC does not have a Partner Congregation or Partnership Team, that role shall be carried out by the NWC Network Team.

2. **Administrative Commission (AC):** Normally consists of between five (5) to seven (7) Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders commissioned by the Presbytery and elected by the SCT that acts with specific powers and decision-making authority on behalf of the Presbytery (please see: "EXAMPLE of Presbytery Commissioning of an Administrative Commission working with a NWC"). Elders from the NWC Partnership Team may serve on the AC if so elected. An AC's duties in relationship to the NWC are parallel to that of a Session of an organized congregation.

Note: Members of the AC should possess the desire and expertise to assist the NWC in carrying out its mission and moving towards becoming an organized congregation within the PC(USA). The members should be sufficient in number as to be representative of the groups involved.

3. **NWC Partnership Team/AC:** Consists of representatives from the NWC Steering Committee/Leadership Team **and** elders from an established PLR congregation, or, when necessary, congregations, that guides the NWC in its journey toward becoming an "organized congregation of the PC(USA)." These elders shall be appointed by their Session but may or may not currently serve on Session.
 - a. Members of the NWC Partnership Team/AC should have the ability to think creatively and discern the will of God's Spirit, as well as to interpret the ministry and mission of the NWC to the Presbytery and funders.

- b. The NWC Partnership Team/AC shall **appoint a representative** to the SCT's NWC Network Team to (1) serve as the primary contact between the NWC Partnership Team/AC and the SCT, sharing the news and needs of the NWC to the NWC Network Team, and (2) assisting the NWC in preparing and providing reports to the Presbytery in a timely manner.

Note: It is **strongly** encouraged that elders from a **single** congregation serve on the NWC Partnership Team, identifying that congregation as the NWC's "Partner Congregation," as opposed to representatives from multiple congregations.

4. **NWC Steering Committee/Leadership Team:** Consists of leaders of the NWC, recognized by its own fellowship, as having authority to make decisions on behalf of the NWC.

Role of the Presbytery

The Presbytery, through the groups and representatives described above, provides oversight and resources for New Worshiping Communities. Resources include teaching missional practices, establishing healthy relationships with other congregations and councils of the PC(USA), and providing the legal structure through which the NWC will operate and move toward organizing as a congregation. The following are important areas of Presbytery oversight of which NWC Partnership Teams/ACs should pay special attention:

1. **Employees:** Prior to the chartering of the NWC as a PC(USA) congregation, both ordained and lay staff of the NWC shall be employed by the Presbytery, including appropriate terms of call for any Minister of the Word and Sacrament (including designation of housing allowance, participating with the Board of Pensions, etc.), use of Presbytery personnel handbooks, compliance with Presbytery policies (i.e. ethical conduct), staff reviews, and other matters of personnel management. As the NWC moves toward an independent charter, the Presbytery assists the NWC in developing its own policies and practices at appropriate times that provide human resource accountability. This can be accomplished with the support of the NWC Network Team, the Stated Clerk, or other identified resources within the Presbytery and PC(USA).
2. **Ordained Leadership:** If there is ordained leadership of the NWC, either Ministers of the Word and Sacrament or Commissioned Pastors, the Committee on Ministry (COM) oversees this relationship and any terms of call. COM may appoint a liaison to the NWC Partnership Team/AC in order to assure the appropriate care and oversight of the Pastor/CRE in relationship to COM requirements. The hope is to find new ways of organizing a congregation that satisfies & honors established practices.

3. **Property and Risk Management:** Between the time when the NWC is recognized as an official NWC of the Presbytery and becomes an independently chartered church, the Partner Congregation or the Presbytery is responsible for all risk management for the NWC, including that proper insurance coverage is in place. The NWC will be billed for its portion of coverage. If at any time the NWC considers the purchase or lease of property, the NWC shall be referred to the Presbytery Trustees. All leases and purchases are contracts in the name of the Presbytery and must have the Trustees' approval and signatures to be binding. The NWC is not normally a corporate entity until the NWC is organized as an official congregation in the PC(USA) and recognized by the State of California.
4. **Chartering:** When the Presbytery is assured that a NWC has the necessary attributes to thrive as a viable missional congregation in relationship with other congregations and councils of the PC(USA), it may be organized as "a congregation of the PC(USA)" by act of the Presbytery. The Book of Order requirements to be received as a congregation are described in G-1.02.

The Role of a NWC Partnership Team/AC

Supporting the mission and development of the New Worshiping Community by:

1. Assisting the NWC in discerning and implementing its identity and mission. (Utilize "Starting New Worshiping Communities: A Process of Discernment" published by the PC(USA) as a guideline for this process.)
2. Monitoring the NWCs progress in doing its mission. This can be accomplished by holding the goals and objectives of the NWC in front of its leadership for review and revision. **Please note:** The NWC Partnership Team's/AC's role is to help NWC's leaders reflect on the work they are doing but not to do the work for them.
3. Interpreting the mission of the NWC on a regular basis to the wider Church. This will give the Church opportunity to express gratitude for God's work as well as respond to articulated needs.
4. Appointing a representative to the SCT's NWC Network Team to (a) serve as the primary contact between the NWC Partnership Team/AC and the SCT, (b) assist the NWC in preparing and providing statistical reports as requested by the SCT's Network Team on a semi-annual basis, usually February 28 and July 15, consistent with the NWC Statistical Report Template, and (c) assist the NWC in preparing and providing to the SCT an annual report consistent with the New Worshiping Committee Annual Report Template, due on February 28 (for the prior year).
5. Any duties that may be assigned by Presbytery, particularly where the NWC Partnership Team/AC is empowered as an Administrative Commission.

6. Develop the organizational structure by assisting the NWC leadership team/steering committee in training and assuming leadership that encompasses the duties and responsibilities of a Session of Elders in the PC(USA) (refer to The Book of Order: Form of Government section G-3.02 and following for a complete description of the duties, character and responsibilities of Ruling Elders). The hope is finding new ways of “being” a Session in the PC(USA) in new and varied forms that are consistent with our polity.
7. Encouraging the NWC in establishing sound stewardship and giving practices. This will be evident as the NWC practices generosity in support of local mission, world mission, and denominational support (general mission giving to the PC(USA) and the Presbytery). This can also include assisting the NWC in identifying grants and other sources of funding for the sustainability of its mission. Again, the hope is we will find new ways to resource local congregations consistent with our polity.
8. Assisting the NWC to establish sound accounting practices, including but not limited to bookkeeping, budgeting, receiving and counting contributions, the establishment of checking accounts, and making reports on an appropriate scale for the requirements of the NWC.

Note: Prior to the time when the NWC can become an independent chartered PC(USA) congregation, any such accounts will be held in the name of the NWC's Partner Congregation or the Presbytery. Day-to-Day financial management may be provided by the NWC Partnership Team/AC early in the development of the NWC, with the intent that the NWC will ordinarily be able to manage its own finances more directly when they have appropriate leadership.

When the NWC Partnership Team/AC believes the NWC is ready to organize as a congregation (including by reference to the New Worshiping Community Readiness Benchmarks), the NWC Partnership Team/AC along with the SCT Liaison and the Stated Clerk, will assist the NWC in assembling all appropriate documents required by the *Book of Order* and the State of California and otherwise complying with the requirements of G-1.0201. Together they will ensure all documents are filed with the appropriate entities in a timely manner.

From New Worshiping Community (NWC) to Organized Church: Readiness Benchmarks

*"Congregational life is not an end in itself. It serves to benefit
the members in their mission to uphold the Great Ends of the Church."*

~Companion to the Constitution of the PC(USA)

This section answers the following questions:

- When is a NWC ready to organize as a congregation?
- What commitments does it make?
- What characteristics does it exhibit?
- How many years does a NWC have to "organize" as a congregation of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos and the PC(USA)?
- What does an NWC do if it does not organize as a congregation?
- What happens if an NWC fails to participate in NWC Network Team meetings or report properly to the SCT as described in this Guidebook?

When is a NWC ready to organize as a congregation?

A New Worshiping Community is ready to be organized as a congregation of the PC(USA) in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos when the following characteristics are in place:

1. The new congregation has a defined and articulated mission, a plan to carry it forward, and demonstrated its ability to carry out its mission.
2. The new congregation has leadership, both lay and/or clergy, trained and equipped to lead the mission.
3. The new congregation has a sustainable structure of support (both financial support and strategic use of passion and abilities of those gathered) to be the foundation for the articulated mission.
4. The new congregation is committed to the larger covenant community of the PC(USA) as demonstrated by its financial support of and relational participation in the denomination's mission and ministry.
5. The new congregation demonstrates that it is a training-and-sending community, including a community that develops the capacity to establish other NWCs.
6. The new congregation in consultation with the Stated Clerk has satisfactorily completed all denominational and state requirements for incorporation.

When the NWC and its Partnership Team/AC believe it can demonstrate its readiness to become *an* organized congregation within the PC(USA), they will provide a written and detailed description that includes sufficient answers to the following questions.*

1. Your Identity: How does the leadership team define Jesus, Church, witness, gospel, disciple and other key elements of your NWC? How is this demonstrated in your NWC?
2. Your Vision: To whom is your NWC called to bear witness and why are you the appropriately gifted community to do this work? How has this changed since you began? How are you continuing to discern God's work in your context and exploring other populations you might engage in witness?
3. Continued Experimentation: How are you continuing to start new ministry "experiments" based on the evolving vision of the "whom" you're called to engage? How are you creating a community of creativity and mission in your context?
4. Developing Missional Leadership: How are you developing disciples who are missionally minded and equipped to be sent? How are you discerning and employing the unique leadership gifts of your NWC.
5. Developing Ministry Plans: How do you evaluate past ministries and mission in order to shape current and future mission and ministry? What are your current plans? What actions have you taken to become a church that can start other churches?
6. Describe your ongoing plan for financial sustainability. Please attach all statistical reports from the last year with this narrative.

*These questions are based upon the tasks in "Starting New Worshiping Communities: A Process of Discernment" published by the PC(USA). Answers should demonstrate how you have progressed from your original discernment.

PLR Recommended Timeline for NWC to Charter

How many years does a NWC have to “organize” as a congregation?

PLR makes every effort to partner with a NWC as it moves toward chartering as an organized congregation of the PC(USA). There are times, however, when it becomes clear that God has other plans for a faith community, specifically in fulfillment of the “Readiness Benchmarks” described on Page 9 of this *Guidebook*. In this situation, after seven (7) years of partnership with the presbytery, the SCT will work with the NWC to conclude its ministry or as it seeks to find a more suitable partner. In the eighth year, the formal relationship with the Presbytery shall be dissolved. No administrative or financial support shall be expected from the Presbytery after dissolution.

What does a NWC do if it does not organize as a congregation within seven (7) years of being recognized by the Presbytery?

After dissolution, the NWC may proceed as God calls (e.g., become a ministry partner of an established congregation, become an unaffiliated worshiping fellowship, etc.), but it shall no longer have a financial, administrative, or ecclesial connection to the Presbytery.

What happens if an NWC fails to report properly or in a timely way to the SCT through the NWC Network Team?

A significant expression of partnership is being accountable to each other. If a NWC does not provide representation to the SCT Network Team meetings for three (3) consecutive months (excluding absences that are excused by the Specialist for Congregational Vitality and NWC) or fails to provide reports as described on Page 12 of this *Guidebook* (without an appropriate reason), it shall start the process of dissolving the partnership with the presbytery.

REPORTING GUIDELINES for NEW WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES (NWC)

One of PLR's missions is to provide stimulation and guidance in the creation and formation of new worshiping communities within the boundaries of the Presbytery. The information provided in these reports will help the Presbytery's leadership teams proactively support, encourage, and provide fiduciary oversight for existing NWCs, as well as facilitate the creation of healthy new endeavors.

All reports are to be emailed to: nwcforms@losranchos.org

The Annual Report for NWC and the Statistical Report for NWC are Presbytery forms that can be found on the PLR Website under New Worshiping Communities – NWC Resources: <https://losranchos.org/resources/>

Annual Report for NWC:

Due February 28th (covers January - December of previous year)

Include also the “Statistical Report for NWC” (for same time period)

The following reports are to be submitted:

Balance Sheet

Income Statement

Dedicated Account Statement (if applicable)

Weekly Giving and Attendance

Minutes of Partnership Team and/or Administrative Commission Meetings

Statistical Report for NWC: February 28 and July 15

The following reports are to be submitted with the Statistical Report:

Balance Sheet

Income Statement

Dedicated Account Statement (if applicable)

Weekly Giving and Attendance

Minutes of Partnership Team and/or Administrative Commission Meetings

Guidelines for Reporting to PLR's Director of Operations

When officially recognized by the Presbytery, New Worshiping Communities (NWC) become ministries of the Presbytery (except in the case where a single congregational partner assumes these responsibilities – see below). It is the dual responsibility of the Presbytery and the NWC to comply with (1) ecclesiastical guidelines established by the Presbytery, and (2) state and federal laws governing the activities of corporations.

The ecclesiastical guidelines are described in the documents that guide NWCs in their journey toward becoming organized congregations. Please see “Roles and Responsibilities of Groups Providing Leadership,” “Readiness Benchmarks for Chartering,” “Statistical Reports,” and the “Annual Reporting Form.”

This document, however, provides additional instructions for generally accepted accounting principles required of corporations and how to comply with them. First, however, some important background information:

In cases where elders from a single congregation serve as the Presbytery's representatives on a NWC's Partnership Team, that congregation may serve as the “corporate parent” of the NWC. In these cases, the congregation's Session provides oversight and corporate compliance, just as it would any of its other ministries.

In cases, however, where elders of multiple congregations serve as the Presbytery's representatives on a Partnership Team, and no single congregation serves as the “corporate parent” of the NWC, then the Presbytery will serve as the “corporate parent” of the NWC. In these cases, NWCs will be required to make some reports (see “Reporting” below) directly and regularly to the Director of Operations rather than to a Session of a congregation. These reports shall be made independently of the reports submitted to the SCT, consultants, or Administrative Commissions.

Corporate Status and Checking Accounts

PC(USA)'s non-profit Umbrella: PC(USA) is a non-profit corporation, a 501(c)3. NWCs, by way of recognition as a ministry of PLR, are privileged to operate under the corporate umbrella of the PC(USA) as a non-profit corporation, just as are established congregations.

Tax ID#: NWCs that are not ministries of a single congregation have permission to use the Presbytery's Tax ID #. To do so, NWCs must first be recognized as a ministry of PLR and granted status as a DBA of PLR. This is accomplished through a request to Trustees, whose approval and recommendation is then forwarded to the Presbytery.

Checking Accounts: Once recognized as a ministry of PLR, NWCs will work with the PLR Business Manager to establish GAAP bookkeeping standards for the ministry operations. Once established, the NWC can petition the Trustees for a “DBA

Checking Account (Doing Business As).” This usually takes about three months to complete. The trustees will order the DBA and complete the process of filing, recording and posting the public notice for the 30 days required prior to the DBA being issued. All checking accounts held by NWCs should be of this type, unless a single congregation is serving as the NWC’s “corporate parent.”

Reporting

Along with the “Statistical Reports” mentioned above, the following items shall be submitted to Director of Operations, Gary Pado (gpado@losranchos.org), on a regular basis if the NWC is not overseen by a church session directly:

- Annual Budget (to be approved by the NWC’s Steering Committee in November or December of each year and is to be shared with the Director or Operations or Partnering Congregation’s session)
- Weekly/Monthly reports of offerings and other miscellaneous income or special offerings received
- Quarterly and annual financial activity reports, including Income Statement and Balance Sheet
- Monthly bank statements shall be mailed directly from the bank
- Payroll reporting, if applicable
- Expense Reports and cash disbursements
- Mission Giving report of projects sponsored with amounts donated
- Steering Committee schedule and minutes of each meeting
- Reports of any changes in members of the Steering Committee
- Membership and attendance/participation reports for gatherings
- Notification of any proposed contract agreements for items such as equipment leases, or other loan activity
- Notification of annual renewal of leases for worship/office space

Expenses

Cash expenses shall be reported monthly with the weekly offering reports. It is preferable for all expenses to be processed through the petty cash or the general checking account as a reimbursable expense but some regular cash expenses may include:

- Love gifts
- Printing and copying of bulletins
- Flowers and decorations
- Music licenses or sheets
- Coffee and snack service on Sunday mornings
- Extra cash expenses incurred for special events (Easter and Christmas, etc).
- Benevolences to those in immediate need

The above expenses/activities are a regular part of a healthy NWC's life. All of the mentioned events/activities must be recorded and accounted for in all reports to the Leadership groups Steering Committee and the Presbytery Office. Summary reports should be made to the participants of the NWC so they may understand their community's basic finances.

Weekly Reconciliations

A weekly reconciliation of offering receipts shall be maintained. A copy of that reconciliation should be submitted to the Presbytery Office weekly or monthly, at a minimum. Records of all receipts should be kept and reconciled each week. The reconciliation should include detail of receipts by offering envelopes (checks and cash documented and copied) plus loose cash. Contribution records must be kept for each individual donor, the records must include the amount and designation for each of the gifts given to the NWC. Copies of all checks (and cash as noted on giving envelopes) must be kept and filed in each donor's contribution record account.

Expenses that are paid directly out of cash receipts are discouraged. Should this happen it also must be documented with actual receipts for any and all expenses paid out. For proper accounting and recording purposes it is recommended that all expenses should be processed through the general checking account as a receipted reimbursable.

Income and Expense Summaries and Meeting Minutes

For proper reporting to the congregation and the Presbytery, a summary of income and expense reports should be presented to, reviewed, and approved by the Steering Committee at each meeting. A copy of the regular meeting minutes with the financial report should be submitted to the Presbytery Office following each meeting as it would be distributed to the Steering Committee members.

All of the procedures and recommendations mentioned in this discussion are addressed as proper procedures with checks and balances to be put into place and monitored. They are consistent with PLR's "Readiness Benchmarks" for being chartered as an organized congregation of the PC(USA).

FORMATION OF Presbytery Administrative Commission working with a New Worshiping Community

Presbytery will vote to form an Administrative Commission (AC) for the **[Name of NWC]**. The AC will provide administrative and strategic support to guide the work of this NWC until it becomes an organized congregation of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos or until a formal relationship is dissolved.

Composition: The AC shall be composed of five (5) to seven (7) members, with as nearly equal as possible representation of ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament, with the following requirements:

- a. **Nomination and appointment:** Members shall be nominated by the Strategic Coordinating Team (SCT) and appointed by the Presbytery.
- b. **Eligibility:** All AC Members shall be those who are eligible to serve as Commissioners to the Presbytery. This includes minister members on the rolls of Presbytery or Ruling Elders on the rolls of a member congregation of Presbytery. The AC may include members from the NWC's leadership team/steering committee, but they may not be the majority. The AC may invite non-ordained participants for advisory purposes who may serve with voice but not a vote. Non-ordained participants are not considered AC members and shall not count toward the total membership.
- c. **Representation:** The membership shall reflect, as much as possible, the principles of representation described in the Book of Order. The number of ministers of the Word and Sacrament shall not exceed the number of Ruling Elders on the Commission by more than one.
- d. **Terms of Service:** Terms shall not exceed three years, and no member shall serve more than two consecutive terms without a break in service. Should a member resign or need to be replaced due to term limits, the SCT shall obtain a replacement as described in (a) above.

Powers: The AC shall be vested with all deliberative and decision-making powers ordinary to the Session of a chartered congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA), as described in the Book of Order. Consistent with the ordinary polity of an administrative commission of Presbytery, actions taken by the AC in the operations and planning of the NWC shall be as effective and binding as if Presbytery itself had taken them.

The AC shall use as its guiding documents those approved by the Presbytery for guiding the organization of NWCs including:

- "From NWC to Organized Church: Readiness Benchmarks,"
- "Roles and Responsibilities: Groups Providing Leadership, Support and Oversight for NWC,"

- “Statistical Report for NWC” and “Annual Report for NWC” - both forms are found on the PLR Website under New Worshiping Communities – NWC Resources:
<https://losranchos.org/resources/>

Fiduciary Obligations:

- a. The AC shall hold regular, stated meetings according to a schedule established at its first formal meeting. Minutes will be kept for all stated and specially called meetings and shall be submitted biannually to the SCT for review.
- b. The AC shall report the decisions made by AC to the Stated Clerk to be reported to the Presbytery regularly.
- c. The AC shall keep financial records of its work, obtaining assistance from the Presbytery office as necessary. Financial records shall be submitted quarterly for review to the SCT. Alternatively, the SCT may authorize the AC to submit an independent review of the financial records, comparable to that required of congregations by the Book of Order.

STRATEGIC COORDINATING TEAM REQUESTS FOR FUNDING AND GRANTS

(Approved 12/7/23)

The mission of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos is “to cultivate vital congregations and partnerships that embody the love and justice of Jesus Christ.” A significant role of the Strategic Coordinating Team (SCT)—the Presbytery Team that administers grants and authorized expenses—is to stimulate and broker missional partnerships and networks between congregations. Please also consider the “Culture and Values of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos” (see page 3) when submitting your application. *SCT does not usually give grants to support personnel or facility improvements.*

FUNDING REQUEST FORM

Available to members of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos seeking financial support for leadership development, continuing education in the form of conferences or retreats. No advance payments shall be provided, and all authorized expenses will require receipts for reimbursement, according to *PLR Reimbursement Policies*. Upon request, please also provide a letter of recommendation.

GRANT

To support projects with missional impact and especially those that build ministry partnerships or informal networks. Grants are normally awarded for *new* projects, but they may be used to support established projects that show promise to increase a faith community's witness to the love and justice of Jesus Christ. Projects may involve leadership development, evangelism, social justice, peacemaking, poverty eradication, church planting, Christian formation and discipleship, racial-ethnic ministries, or worship. Applicants shall be members of, or be in partnership with, Presbytery of Los Ranchos faith communities.

APPLICANT'S COMMITMENT

By applying for a Funding Request or a Grant, applicants commit to:

1. Provide information about matching dollars, or in-kind contributions, either from their faith community's resources or from other partners on their application form.
2. Share their ministry and the learning experiences gained in executing the project (for example, provide information that can be shared to the Presbytery website and social media about the project so that others can learn and provide another level of partnership).
3. For Funding Requests: Abide by ***PLR Reimbursement Policies*** and complete an ***Expense Reimbursement Form*** to be submitted with matching receipts (these will be provided upon approval of your

- application by the SCT).
4. Submit a final report detailing accomplishments, challenges, and uses of funds (see "SCT Grant and Authorized Expenses Evaluation Form").

HOW TO APPLY FOR SCT GRANTS OR FUNDING REQUESTS:

Please contact us for more detailed information on Synod and Presbyterian Mission Agency Grants and funding opportunities. All applications are posted on the Presbytery website: www.losranchos.org
Submit completed applications to SCT, Presbytery of Los Ranchos, attn: Debbie Haley;
dhaley@losranchos.org.

Overview of PC(USA) Mission Program Grants

The Presbyterian Mission Agency – Presbyterian Church (USA)

Grants for New Worshiping Communities

- **Seed Grant Application / Guidelines**: provides \$10,000 to help start a 1001 community for the first year of ministry. Requirement: NWC must be recognized as a ministry of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.
- **Investment Grant / Guidelines**: provides \$30,000, eligible after 18 months from receiving the Seed Grant. Requires a matching grant from the Presbytery, Synod, congregation or in-kind support. SCT recommends a disbursement schedule of six (6) quarterly payments.
- **Growth Grant / Guidelines**: provides an additional grant of \$30,000 after a period of 18 months after receipt of the Investment Grant. Requires a matching grant from the Presbytery, Synod, congregation or in-kind support. SCT recommends a disbursement schedule of six (6) quarterly payments.
- **Health Insurance Grant / Guidelines**: provides up to \$3,000 for new worshiping community leaders.

*For more information and Grant Proposal Submission & review Dates, email:

nwcgrants@pcusa.org

Loans for Capital Projects: The Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP) is a nonprofit corporation of The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that was created to provide low-cost loans to churches, governing bodies and related entities of the denomination for capital projects. The Church Loan Program is part of the Coordinated Loan Program of PILP, thereby providing a coordinated lending service for all related churches and presbyteries. For information about General Assembly Church Loans, please contact the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (800) 903-7457 or <http://pilp.pcusa.org/>

For information about Mission Program Grants, please contact:

Office of Mission Program Grants, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396, (800) 728-7228

<https://pcusa.org/about-pcusa/contact-us>

Grants and funding are only part of the story: Obtaining a grant or other funding is one step toward the success of your project. To make funding work, you'll need to connect with people to properly plan, organize and execute the project. Here are some other P.C. (USA) offices and programs that can help:

1001 New Worshiping Communities Initiative

In June 2012, the 220th General Assembly declared a commitment to a church wide movement that results in the creation of 1,001 worshiping communities over the next 10 years. At a grassroots level, hundreds of diverse new worshiping communities have already formed across the nation. The Presbyterian Mission Agency is coming alongside to offer such resources as assessments, apprenticeships, residencies, cohorts, training, coaching as well as grants, to inspire and equip the wider church to participate in the creation of 1,001 new worshiping communities by 2022.

The Office of Evangelism helps people, churches and presbyteries share the life of Jesus with each other, their communities, and the world, and to nurture disciples and develop leadership for the future.

NWCs and Worshiping Fellowships of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos

Potential New Worshiping Community: An umbrella term that refers to potential or newly developing New Worshiping Communities that are not yet recognized as a NWC of the Presbytery. Potential New Worshiping Communities should provide one leader to serve on the NWC Network Team to represent their faith community and get support from this team.

New Worshiping Community (NWC): A community started after July 2012 having the potential of developing into an organized congregation and is open to this possibility if God so leads.

1. Tustin Taiwanese Presbyterian Church - Taiwanese (Tustin)
2. Ministerio en Tustin -Spanish (Tustin)
3. Church of Amazing Grace International-Swahili/English (Fullerton)
4. Encounter- English/Spanish and other languages as needed (Fullerton)
5. Esperanza Viva - Spanish (Norwalk)
6. Arabic Presbyterian Church (Mission Viejo)
7. Iglesia Cristiana de Las Americas-Spanish (Boyle Heights)
8. Irvine Taiwanese Presbyterian Church (Taiwanese, meets in Laguna Hills)

Worshiping Fellowship (WF): A community which formed originally as a NWC of the presbytery with explicit expectations for congregational chartering, but the relationship has since been dissolved, and continues independently of the presbytery's governance, grants, and other financial support.

Acknowledged NWC Pioneer Leader: An acknowledged leader who is currently gathering people with intention of forming a recognized NWC of the presbytery.

Congregation: A "congregation" refers to a formally organized community chartered and recognized by a presbytery as provided in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)]. Each congregation is governed by this Constitution. The members of a congregation put themselves under the leadership of the session and the higher councils (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly). The session is responsible to guide and govern the life of the congregation. The session leads the congregation in fulfilling its responsibilities for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the glory of God.

As of January 2025, the Presbytery of Los Ranchos consists of **42 congregations**.