



2016 Annual Conference Special Offering

Fresh Expressions

The 2016 Annual Conference Mission Offering seeks to ignite a Fresh Expressions movement in the Tennessee Conference.

How do we define this new movement?

There will be a wide spectrum of outreach under the umbrella of our Fresh Expressions movement in the Tennessee Conference. Some of the common characteristics would include:

- Reaching people who are not currently connected to a church.
- Groups usually meet outside the walls of the church – including in homes, neighborhood gathering places, retirement centers, and community clubhouses; rarely meeting on Sunday.
- Generally smaller in size, ranging from 10-30 people.
- They will have a strong focus on building a missional community.
- Are led by Christian laity and comprised of people who share a similar interest or connection. Examples of these would be a camera club, running group, knitting circle, gardening club, hotel employees, bloggers, veterans, school teachers, etc.

As new communities start to form, they begin with intentional listening and a genuine interest in learning about one another. They may be seen as a complement to a traditional church but are not meant to replace or rebrand a church. These groups are outreach extensions to reach people in non-traditional ways.

Fresh Expressions originated in 2004 through the UK by the Church of England to reach people who were not attending church. It began as a response to a changing culture. By 2010, the US movement had begun and several UM Conferences, including Florida, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky, already have laity leading groups and are excited about the people they are reaching through their Fresh Expressions movement.

How will your offering be used to reach new people?

This year's Annual Conference Offering will provide seed funds for leaders of these lay led faith communities that will seek to begin new relationships with people not currently engaged in a traditional church. The New Church Development/Missional Faith Communities team (under Congregational Development) will administer our contributions.

Our conference and districts will be investing resources to help you learn more about the Fresh Expressions movement beginning with Vision Training Days. We will help you envision how you might become a pioneering leader in this movement. The funds from the offering will be providing grant opportunities for groups needing funds to cover initial costs as they organize. Applications will be made available on our website following our initial training after Annual Conference 2016.

We encourage you to begin exploring more stories and insightful articles about *Fresh Expressions US* by clicking on the link <http://freshexpressionsus.org/category/stories>.

Let us generously support the 2016 Annual Conference Special Offering: *Fresh Expressions*. Contributions can be made during the annual conference sessions and through online giving or checks made payable to TNUMC any time:

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