

These definitions are not all-inclusive,  
however, relate to terms used in this document.

**Definitions of Churches – For the purpose of our life together as an Annual Conference it is important that we find a set of common definitions for churches as we work together. The following attempts to provide those definitions:**

**Lead Church** - high potential church:

A Lead church is a congregation with high potential because it is in the

- right location
- has people and resources
- is experiencing growth (numerical and/or spiritual)
- their ministry is healthy and includes elements of:
  - evangelism
  - disciple making
  - equipping
  - christian education
  - social justice
  - outreach ministries
  - acts of mercy
  - commitment to the United Methodist connection
  - mission and vision is always evolving
  - evidence of transformation

They have adequate facilities, land, and parking for future expansion. Healthy stewardship patterns are demonstrated over several years. They are seen as a lead congregation for their region of the Annual Conference or the Annual Conference as a whole. They contribute to the health of the whole Annual Conference.

**New Faith Community:**

A newly formed body of United Methodists brought together to meet the spiritual and social needs in a community or among a particular population group. The primary elements of a new faith community are:

- they have developed a core congregation
- they have a plan that includes vision, location, assessment and evaluation
- they are committed to work together
- in service to the community
- have vital worship for those seeking transformation in their lives through Jesus Christ.

They are headed toward vital congregational life and ministry as a United Methodist chartered congregation. This would also include **Congregational Restarts**. Parenting congregations and the Annual Conference assist in exploring funding to aid this process.

**Transformational Church (Viable Church)**

Transformational churches are in process toward a:

- ✚ clear vision and strategic plan,
- ✚ Biblically grounded understanding of the mission of the church,
- ✚ capable and equipped disciples
- ✚ people of faith involved in prayer, study, and service,

