

## **The Vital Congregations Initiative - Riverside Presbytery - A Summary**

The Vital Congregations Initiative (VCI), a project of the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the PCUSA, is producing a comprehensive notebook detailing resources for the entire process (available December 2019)

Riverside Presbytery has hired a VCI Coordinator, The Rev. Rob Stewart, who is working with a few VCI Facilitators who are also members of this presbytery. As a Team, they will lead and guide pastors, pastoral leaders, Sessions and congregations through this process of revitalization and renewal.

Focusing on what makes a Vital Church, we'll be engaging spiritual practices leading to re-envisioning how to be the Church. We will emphasize deepening relationships and (re)connecting churches with their communities. Through a process of Bible study, assessing assets, interacting with our neighborhoods and praying, we will discern the future into which God is leading us as individuals, congregations and a presbytery.

Here is a summary of what happens in congregations and Riverside Presbytery in the VCI over the 2-year process in 2020 - 2021.

### **Resources: Year 1 + Where we've been; Who we are & What we do. The Past and Present**

1. Bible Study : Seven Marks of Vital Congregations (7 weeks - Lent)
2. Pastor / Leader Cohort Gatherings - 12 Sessions (monthly, beginning January)
3. Congregation Assessment: 3 Sessions : Checking Your Marks
  - Telling your Story - (past history)
  - PCUSA Survey of Worshippers (members and attendees) - (present ministry)
  - Revitalization Assessment - (into what future is God calling us?)
4. Neighborhood Analysis Exercise – survey the neighborhood, needs and engagement
5. MissionInsite — Community Data (from PCUSA)
6. “Show Your Marks” Campaign (two months – video, storytelling, testimonies)
7. *Presbytery Assessment : 3 Sessions*

### **Resources: Year 2 + Where God is leading; Who we are becoming, The Future**

1. Pastor / Leader Cohort Gatherings - 12 Sessions (monthly) by Dr. Wm. P. Brown
2. Bible Study : Rethinking Seven Marks of Vital Congregations (7 weeks)
3. *Full Vital Congregations Toolkit (for Presbytery)*
4. Plotting the Course – Congregation's Action Plan - guided by Coordinator and Facilitator
5. Week of Prayer
6. “Show Your Marks” Campaign Report
7. Final Debriefing and Assessment – Congregation
8. Final Debriefing and Assessment – Church Leadership
9. *Final Debriefing and Assessment – Presbytery*

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