

## Congregation Connectors Training: Next Steps

### Action Plan Steps

- Become familiar with all potential toolbox resources
- Get your questions answered as best as possible:
  - If you have questions about Congregational Connectors, contact Cheryl Lafferty at [Connectors@SEPA.org](mailto:Connectors@SEPA.org)
  - If you have questions about the toolbox website, contact Bob Fisher at [rfisher@sepa.org](mailto:rfisher@sepa.org)
  - If you have questions about the Campaign in general, contact Ellen Daneke at [esdaneke@aol.com](mailto:esdaneke@aol.com)
- Meet with your congregational leaders (Pastor, Staff, Council, Executive Committee) to develop a plan and timeline for your church
- Create your own unique process for communicating, informing and inspiring your faith community around the Forward Together in Faith (FTIF) vision
  - See sample timeline on back side ... but remember this is just an example! You don't have to follow this guide and we encourage you to be creative in doing what works in your congregation.
- With church leadership, agree to the method for gathering responses. This can happen as a whole church commitment to the appeal, by gathering individual responses, or both.

## **SAMPLE TIMETABLE**

### February/Early March:

- Work with your pastor(s) and church leaders to set dates for an intentional public phase to share the appeal vision, and the date in May/June by which they hope to announce a congregational pledge amount.
- Get printed materials delivered to members (mailings, bulletin inserts, newsletter, email blast)
- Begin adding a FTIF section to your monthly Newsletter and/or Enewsletter so the congregation can hear stories and progress of the campaign on a regular basis. See the toolkit for sample newsletter articles to use.

### March:

- Hold a “Launch Sunday” to introduce the FTIF campaign during worship. On Launch Sunday have the Congregational Connector do a sharing or announcement during worship to introduce the appeal emphasis. Have a handout in the bulletin for people to take home and read. Offer a special Fellowship Hour where you can show one or more of the overview videos and have time for people to ask questions.
- Show the Bishop’s Greeting Video before, during, or after worship on a Sunday.
- Use the “Dan on the Street” video to address the idea of “What is a Synod?”
  - This could be shown before worship or during the offering if your congregation has projection. Otherwise, show this during an adult class or fellowship gathering. This is especially good to use before Synod Assembly (and if possible before delegates to assembly are chosen) so people gain a better understanding of synod.

### April:

- Invite your pastor, or lay leader, to do a sermon series that integrates the appeal theme and components into the messages. (This might be a good theme for post-Easter Worship or a small group devotional).
- Host a congregational forum to go deeper into the appeal vision and desired outcomes. Show the Appeal video and use the discussion guide for these opportunities.
- Invite one of the Forward Together in Faith Ambassadors to come and share their story during worship, or some other identified event.

### May:

- Offer one or two special congregational gatherings to engage members in conversation around “What are the challenges we face in being the church today?” or by showing one of the Discussion Videos and using the accompanying discussion guide.
- With your Pastor(s) and church leadership, determine how the congregation is going to make their financial response to the campaign. (Individually, as a collective church body, or both. Each congregation will be invited by the Bishop to consider a certain range of gift response.)

May/Early June:

- Have a Campaign Sunday before summer hits, allowing members of the congregation a chance to become a financial part of the Campaign. Have leaders announce the congregational donation/pledge that leaders and council have agreed to. Invite individuals to also donate as they are able to support the Campaign.
- If you and your church leadership do not feel that asking for a financial commitment is feasible by June, continue to include articles, faith sharing moments, and discussion times in your church activities throughout the summer to build awareness and excitement. Invite another Ambassador to come and share their story with you. Have the delegates from Synod Assembly take intentional time to share what they learned about the Campaign at Assembly.

**THEN**

- Plan a special Campaign Sunday for October 2016 when the church will announce the congregational donation/pledge that leaders and council have agreed to and individual members are invited to make a financial contribution to be part of the Campaign. Announce this Sunday in advance, and have a special time in your worship for the pledge announcement and giving invitation.