

Memorandum of Understanding 3M Legacy Church Agreement

In the Greater Ohio District, we love all our congregations and respect each one deeply. However, churches will close their doors. In some cases, the best we can do is provide compassionate care which will enable them to close gracefully, with dignity and a sense of Kingdom accomplishment. When a church reaches the end of its life cycle the doors should be lovingly and respectfully closed, while celebrating a good life lived.

With that said, closed churches may present an opportunity for new leadership and the birth of a new congregation. While congregations cannot always be resurrected, the facilities, property, and locations (after proper research and assessment) may provide a perfect opportunity for new birth under a church planting pastor. Some closing churches can become **Legacy Churches**. These congregations can celebrate their past mission and ministries while believing the close of their church will bring new life through a new congregation. These Legacy Churches can directly enable the multiplication of mission, disciples, leaders, and even new congregations through the birth of a new Wesleyan Church at the location and facilities they have provided.

YOU have chosen to become a Legacy Church! However, as District leaders, we want to make sure you understand what this means. Therefore, we provide this Memorandum of Understanding and *3M (Multiplying Missional Movements) Legacy Church Agreement*.

As faithful Wesleyans and Kingdom-minded followers of Jesus, the remaining members of a closing church will make the decision to help advance God's Kingdom and multiply missional movements in our District. These members literally become engaged in multiplication! They are saying, "Yes! We want to welcome a new planter and his/her team into our community to multiply mission, disciples, leaders, and more congregations."

As you do this, you should understand and agree to the following:

- 1)** We understand our remaining membership has voted to close our church and to give our facilities and remaining funds to a church planter and his/her team who will be supervised by district leadership.
- 2)** This has been approved by our remaining members and has, or will be, approved by the District Board of Administration. We understand we are, or soon will be, officially closed.

- 3) While we will do our best to maintain our former property and may be permitted to use the facilities for meetings and Bible studies, we understand there is no longer a formal church body, and we are simply doing our best to minister to those left until a church planter is found and a new church is started.
- 4) We understand there is no longer official church leadership or a Local Board of Administration. The church is now in the hands of the District Superintendent and the District Multiplication Leader (DML). The DML will stay in contact with the remaining members of the former church to keep them informed and encouraged throughout the replanting process. The DML/or District Superintendent will be available to meet with and speak to this group of people upon request.
- 5) Since the church is now closed, we understand there is no membership in said church. However, those wishing to maintain membership in the Wesleyan Church do not need to be concerned. While the former church has been closed, it has been recategorized as a replant. This enables the church to close, and the current members are now members of a replanting church. Our membership will remain intact in the Wesleyan Church, and we will become members of the new church at the appropriate time. We acknowledge, church plants do not formally organize right away. Some plants do not have formal membership, a Local Board of Administration, or Annual Local Church Conferences for several years after they begin.
- 6) We understand this is a new church under new leadership. We no longer have a “plan or vision” outside of the plan and vision shared by the church planter. The God-given vision, ministries, and outreach shared by the church planter is not to be denied or debated. While the church planter will have an advisory team, and will be under the supervision of the DML, there will not be a Local Board of Administration for some time. His/her vision IS the direction of church. If we disagree with the direction of the church planter and his/her team, we will leave peacefully and seek to worship in an environment which better aligns with our preferences.
- 7) However, we also understand this as an amazing opportunity to become involved in something new, fresh, exciting, and missional. As former members of a declining church, we look forward to the rebirth of mission, ministry, and multiplication in the place where we once worshipped and impacted our community. We are enthused about watching God reach the lost in radical new ways. We fully understand the apostolic gifting of the church planter and we can’t wait to see what God is going to do to advance his Kingdom in our community!
- 8) We understand, as a church plant in the Greater Ohio District, the new church will be viewed as such and will be eligible for all the benefits and resources of any other church plant in the district and in the Wesleyan denomination. This includes coaching, training, matching funds, denominational grants, etc.

- 9) We understand the DML will begin his work as soon as the church is officially closed. His job is to find the right person for planting in our community. The planter will be assessed, trained, and coached. It may be a several months before the planter is chosen and he/she has boots on the ground in our community. However, the goal is to make sure our planter is the right person and fully prepared for the launch of the new church.
- 10) We will pray diligently for the DML. We understand it is not easy to locate and secure people with the apostolic gifting of a church planter. Finding the right person and making sure that person is fully trained is imperative to the success of this replanting effort. Our goal is to be patient, understanding and encouraging as the DML works on our behalf.
- 11) We know the DML and District Superintendent will be praying for us. The process of becoming a Legacy Church was a radical step in a direction that was not previously considered. It was a difficult decision to move into a new mode of mission and ministry. We know the district leadership team will not take this lightly and will work diligently to help us see a vibrant new congregation in our present location.

Signed: (Members signing on behalf of the church body)

Date: _____

District Superintendent: _____

Date: _____

District Multiplication Leader: _____

Date: _____

INERTIA3M: MULTIPLYING MISSIONAL MOVEMENTS

*REDISCOVERING THE MISSION OF GOD
 REVITALIZING THE LOCAL CHURCH
 REPRODUCING MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES
 RESOURCING KINGDOM MULTIPLIERS*

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