

## **PRG Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What does PRG mean?**

- PRG stands for Post-COVID Re-Entry Group, in short PRG. 'Post' pandemic suggests that it's all over and we can go back to the status quo. However, we are still in a pandemic and will be impacted by this in a variety of ways for a long time. We are aware that we cannot declare an end to the pandemic, and believe that we need to continue our effort to be vigilant. At the same time, we believe that our churches are at the critical juncture to prepare for the Post-COVID era. As we ask for the churches to continue their deliberations in setting the safety guidelines for its ministries, we ask the churches to use this time to rethink and prepare to relaunch ministries in this new-normal. We are here to make 'Progress (PRG)' and will commit to support the efforts of the churches.

### **Are you asking us to form a new team?**

- The answer is 'yes' and 'no.' We do want to relieve the committed members of the HCT, as we appreciate their hard work. We suggest that the church invites 2-3 members of the HCT to be part of the PRG team, so there is continuity and safety measures can continue. We ask the pastor, in consultation with the lay leader, to recruit key leaders of the church to envision and plan for the future of the church. The pandemic has brought us challenges, proving just how resilient and adaptable our churches can be. Now is the time to envision new dreams and ministry plans on a new blank sheet of paper. We strongly encourage each church to be progress-oriented and dream of new ways to engage, instead of recoiling back to March, 2020. We recommend a member of the Trustees be part of PRG, as they can bring knowledge of responsibilities pertaining to the church facilities.

### **I'm in a small church and are you asking me to form a new team?**

- We understand that forming a new team can be difficult. We do acknowledge that it may be the best option for a church administrative council to serve as the PRG team. Remember to include former HCT members and people who can bring new voices and thoughts to the table.

### **What is the difference between HCT and PRG?**

- PRG teams will continue to plan and execute safety measures for the churches. However, we ask that the churches will soon adapt their conversations to reflect, rethink, and reshape their vision to effectively provide ministry in the Post-COVID era. If the church did not have a clear vision, this will be a time to develop a vision, which is aligned to the Mission Statement of the United Methodist Church, 'Making Disciples of Jesus Christ, for the Transformation of the World' and the vision of the Virginia Annual Conference 'to be disciples of Jesus Christ, who are Lifelong Learner, who Influence others to Serve.'

### **When does PRG start?**

- Majority of the decisions made by local PRG will take place, starting July 1st, 2021. We ask church leaders to start praying for members of the PRG. Through prayer we believe God will reveal who God has equipped to serve on this team. We also ask churches to announce that HCT will be concluding their work June, 2020. Please find a time to recognize and celebrate the hard work of the HCT members. Ask 2-3 members to continue serving as members of the PRG. June should be the time when PRG teams start meeting to develop a cohesive group identity and make plans. June is a time for PRG teams, with the guidance of their HCT team to develop safety measures for the church ministry, starting on July 1st, 2021.

### **What does DS Review mean instead of DS approval?**

- Until July 1st, churches will need approval from their DS to advertise and execute any changes in their ministry plan. According to our guidelines, churches need to submit a plan 14 days prior to the ministry event date or start of a new change. After the submission of the plan, churches are to wait till they receive an approval from their District Superintendent.
- Starting on July 1st, we ask the churches to submit a plan to their DS for review two weeks prior to its implementation. Once the plan is submitted, churches can start the advertisement and execution of the plan without waiting to hear back from the DS. Remember, however, that the DS has the ability to provide guidelines, suggestions, or requirements in order for events to proceed. If the DS sees a huge deviance from mitigation and safety measures, they have the prerogative to send the plan back to make appropriate changes.

### **Timeline for plans for review?**

- Be real and don't submit plans at 5:30 pm on Friday for Sunday Morning. Please give the District Superintendent a good two weeks prior to the change or event.

### **What if pastors are not comfortable with the decision of the PRG?**

- There will be moments when pastors will have to serve as the balance or safety valve as we resume activities but maintain safety as a priority. Pastors will have the authority to delay the execution of the plan.

### **Pastors, please share information with one another in the connection.**

- We understand that many pastors who might be in areas where internet connection is unstable. We ask you to share the information with them. We need each other, especially in these moment

\*Disclaimer: If the number of positive COVID cases and variance of the virus reaches an unsustainable level, the Annual Conference will retrieve the decision making authority.

**If we didn't get to your question, we are not ignoring you. We hear you and will be sharing them with the response team. Questions will be addressed by Wednesday or the following webinar.**