

Are you a thriving congregation? Interested in being part of a research study?

What?

Princeton Theological Seminary will launch a local study of 6 **local thriving congregations** in 2023. Phase 1) January-April 2023 will work in tandem with student researchers; Phase 2) May-August 2023 congregations will launch an innovative ministry initiative with a **\$2,000 mini-grant**.

Who?

We are looking for diverse Protestant congregations within a 20-mile radius of Princeton, NJ, with approximately 150-400 members.

How?

Congregations will need to identify a minimum of 2 people (1 lay leader, 1 clergy) to lead the project team and submit the application for consideration using this [link](#), by the deadline Nov. 29, 2022. Accepted applicants will be contacted by Dec. 15, 2022.

Why?

Many congregations know how to thrive, but don't know how to continue to thrive. We will reflect on each congregation's identity and strengths to be used as a resource for thriving in the design and implementation of an innovative project.

When?

If accepted, beginning January 2023, your project team will be open to host student researchers for a worship service, a congregational event, and interviews. Project teams would attend an April 2023 Project Pitch Party and 2 leaders would attend the Congregational Conference at PTS Sept. 14-16, 2023, (lodging and meals covered).

FAQs

Why is Princeton Theological Seminary doing this research?

In conjunction with the Thriving Congregations grant funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc., PTS has been studying thriving congregations since 2019, refining approaches and developing models to prepare congregations to lead in a changing ministry landscape and to use their resources to continually thrive.

How do I decide if I should apply?

Share this information with your congregation and discuss if it sounds interesting and is possible for your congregation. If so, identify a minimum of 2 people (1 lay leader, 1 clergy) to lead the project team, an average of 3-5 hrs./week. We are looking for a diverse group of 6 Protestant congregations within a 20-mile radius of Princeton, NJ, with 150-400 members.

How do I know if my congregation is thriving?

Listed are the marks of thriving congregations. We are looking for congregations that have many of these traits:

- Clearly articulated and broadly shared sense of congregational purpose
- Central focus on God and on meeting the needs of the community, not on themselves and their own survival
- Dynamic preaching
- Warmth of relationships among the members
- Shared leadership and shared sense of religious meaning for their work
- Meaningful engagement with the congregation's community
- Healthy conflict leading to personal and communal growth
- Robust Christian education and formation opportunities for all ages
- Meaningful and creative corporate worship
- Widespread participation in core Christian practices
- Financial and spatial resources sufficient to sustain the mission

How long will it take to complete the application?

The application will take about 30 minutes to complete. Before you begin, think about how your congregation is thriving and have specific examples regarding your congregational vitality and when your congregation tried new things. Fill out the application for consideration using this [link](#) by the deadline Nov. 29, 2022. Accepted applicants will be contacted by Dec. 15, 2022.

Who from PTS will be involved with this?

Rev. Dr. Gordon Mikoski, Principal Investigator, Rev. Dr. Erin Raffety, Empirical Research Consultant, and Carol Meyer, Program Coordinator and a team of student researchers.

Who would I contact if I have further questions?

You can contact us with questions at thriving.congregations@ptsem.edu.

