



How to Become a Matthew 25 Church

Below are suggested steps to sign on to Become a Matthew 25 Church. These steps can be used with your session/congregation, mid council or group.

Pray

In Romans 12:2, we read: ***“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect”*** (NRSV).

Several years ago, as a response to the Las Vegas shooting, Rev. Dr. Charles Wiley wrote:

We believe that growing closer to God and being filled with the Holy Spirit is good for us, although not necessarily that it will make us healthy, wealthy, and wise. The Study Catechism (q. 121) tells us that “Through prayer God frees us from anxiety, equips us for service, and deepens our faith.” In times where many people are experiencing profound anxiety for a whole variety of reasons, prayer helps us to center our lives around communion with God (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/presbyterians-believe-thoughts-prayers/>).

Presbyterians are people of prayer, and so we begin by praying for your church, your mid council and your organization for the discernment of God’s most Holy Spirit. We pray for your church leaders that as we seek ***“the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect”***, we also include joining the Matthew 25 Vision in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Is God calling you and your people to go deeper in one, two or three areas addressed by the Matthew 25 Vision?

- ✦ **Building congregational vitality** by challenging congregations and their members to deepen and energize their faith and grow as joyful leaders and disciples actively engaged with their community, seeing new disciples engaged in ministry and longstanding believers develop in faith as the gospel of Jesus Christ is shared in word and deed.
- ✦ **Dismantling structural racism** by fearlessly applying our faith to advocate and break down the systems, practices and thinking that underlie discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression of people of color.
- ✦ **Eradicating systemic poverty** by acting on our beliefs and working to change laws, policies, plans and structures in our society that perpetuate economic exploitation of people who are poor.

Prepare

Here are suggested ways that you may begin introducing the Matthew 25 Vision to your church, mid council or group. You may:

- ✦ Begin by downloading the **Matthew 25 Brochure** (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/Matt25-big-brochure-2021.pdf>), which provides a general overview of the movement within the church and distribute it accordingly among your people.
- ✦ Download the **Matthew 25 Frequently Asked Questions** document ([https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/FAQs3.21.Final .pdf](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/FAQs3.21.Final.pdf)), which addresses several concerns asked of the Vision.
- ✦ Lead a **Bible Study on Matthew 25** (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/M25-BibleStudy.pdf>), which provides an introduction to the Scripture underlying the Matthew 25 vision for prayer and reflection. This Bible Study is ideal for groups or individual study. Once you do, you'll discover that Matthew 25 is the last of Jesus' teaching before suffering the cross. You'll gather his sense of urgency.
- ✦ Invite the Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett, President and Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, a Mission Agency Director or Program Leader, or your regional Mission Engagement Advisor (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mission-engagement-support/mes/>) to come, speak, present or preach on the Matthew 25 Vision with your group.

Proceed

Once your church, mid council or group has voted to Become a Matthew 25 Church in one, two or three areas that the Matthew 25 Vision entails (**Building Congregational Vitality, Dismantling Structural Racism, and or Eradicating Systemic Poverty**), you may sign-up here:

- ✦ **Congregations**, sign-up here: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/become/>
- ✦ **Mid Councils**, sign-up here: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/matt-25-resources/ministries/matthew-25/become-a-matthew-25-presbytery-or-synod/>
- ✦ **Groups and Organizations**, sign-up here: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/become-a-matthew-25-group/>

Sample Presbytery Motion

The PC(USA) Matthew 25 Initiative

Over the past couple of years, our denomination has cast a new vision of itself as a church that takes Matthew 25 seriously and lives it out in the world. Congregations are being asked to consider becoming "Matthew 25 Churches," to make a loving commitment to radical and fearless discipleship and to embrace one of three areas of focus: Building Congregational Vitality, Dismantling Structural Racism and Eradicating Systemic Poverty.

To date, ___ congregations in our presbytery and the (NAME) YAV Site have joined the Matthew 25 Initiative: (list congregations)

MOTION to Presbytery Meeting on (date):

That the Presbytery of (name) become a Matthew 25 Presbytery.

Becoming a Matthew 25 Presbytery means that:

- 1) We pledge to encourage 20% or more of our congregations to become Matthew 25 churches and embrace these areas of focus (Building Congregational Vitality, Dismantling Structural Racism and Eradicating Systemic Poverty).
- 2) We promise to keep track of the impact of our ministry and share our stories with the PC(USA) from time to time.

[If the Presbytery votes in favor of this motion, (Name) Presbytery will be joining (number) other presbyteries that have already signed on to the Matthew 25 Invitation.]

Proclaim

Matthew 5: 14-16 reminds us that: ***“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven”*** (NRSV).

An important part joining the Matthew 25 Vision is sharing your story of impact as you address **Building Congregational Vitality, Dismantling Structural Racism, and or Eradicating Systemic Poverty**. As you live out your commitment, we ask you to share the impact that your mission has made - how your congregation is growing in faith, how you’ve discovered new passions and vitality, how new disciples are being energized and developed ... so like in the early church, your renewed faith will fan the flames and encourage other congregations and the community at large to also embrace our common mission.

Please share your stories here: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/matthew-25-sharing-our-stories/>.

The Presbyterian News Service regularly publishes Matthew 25 stories. If you have not done so, please subscribe to receive these impactful testimonies here: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/e-newsletter-subscriptions/presbyterian-daily-news-digest/>. You may also subscribe to other PC(USA) e-newsletters here: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/newsletter-subscribe/>.

May God bless you in your discernment, engagement and partnership in this important vision given to us by Jesus Christ, himself.