

## The Value of Peer-Learning Communities



- Peer-learning communities help each participant to see beyond their own immediate experiences, memories, and fears
- Sharing in peer-dialogue produces ideas we would not arrive at on our own
- Participatory learning has deeper and longer-lasting effects
- Peer-learning fosters accountability and continuity, which is a key for moving from words to action
- Peer-learning communities provide mutual support, which is an invaluable asset for tackling challenging tasks



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American Baptist United Mission giving  
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The Lansdale-Woodmansee Mission Grant*

**T**he New Testament attests to a wonderful mystery: God has chosen to use churches – ordinary gatherings of ordinary people – in the most extraordinary work of bearing the transforming power of the gospel into the world. We have been called to a mighty work!

And yet our churches today find themselves in a challenging situation. Our world has changed! The setting in which we do our ministries is different from the one in which most of our churches were formed, and for which most of our churches are equipped and structured. We find ourselves asking the same questions: “What is the future of our church?”; “How can we survive?”; “Is there hope for us to regain the vitality we once knew?”

Take heart! God has not only chosen to use churches in the extraordinary work of bearing the transforming power of the Gospel into the ever-changing world, He has also promised to empower us for that work through the Holy Spirit. In the words of E. Stanley Ott, “Wherever you find yourself as a church, know this for sure: God has an exciting, life-building vision for the whole church and for your congregation. Ask for the faith to believe it, the grace to see it, and the courage to act on it.”

E. Stanley Ott, Twelve Dynamic Shifts for Transforming Your Church (Grand Rapids: Eerdman’s, 2002, p. 4.)

*The EMPOWERED program is designed to help your congregation realize this promise!*

### How to become a part of the EMPOWERED program:

Contact Rev. Tom Beers (to find out about how to become a part of EMPOWERED and what resources are available to prepare your congregation to participate.

**Program Fee: \$150.00**

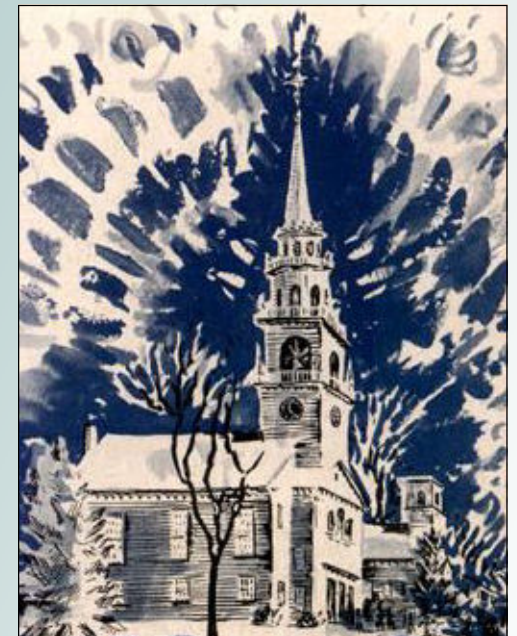


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# EMPOWERED!

## Creating New Vitality for Your Congregation



**I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.”**

**Philippians 1:6**

A ministry of the Philadelphia Baptist Association

What is EMPOWERED? Some Themes for the Sharing/Learning Events: EMPOWERED Covenant:

Empowered is an exciting new resource to equip and guide your congregation in:

- Articulating a clear, shared, and compelling picture of the preferred future to which God is calling your congregation
- Shaping your vision to best draw upon the existing strengths of your congregation and how to best respond to the current context of your community
- Laying out a specific and effective plan for how to realize the vision
- Preparing your leadership to be agents of on-going change, to ensure renewing and long-term vitality
- Moving from words, ideas, and vision statements to implementing real change and growing vitality

EMPOWERED takes place through intentional, peer-learning groups of 3-5 churches, who covenant to work together in study, prayer, discussion, and action, under a guided curriculum over the course of one year.



Delegations from EMPOWERED churches (Pastors and 6-12 church leaders) will participate in four Covenant-group Intensive Sharing/Learning workshops throughout the year. Between the Intensive Sharing/Learning workshops, delegations will use the resources they have gained to lead their congregations forward in consciousness-raising, consensus-building, skill development, leadership development, and implementing change.

- The life-cycle of congregations
- What it means to be a Great-Commission Church in your context



- Rediscovering the New Testament promise and challenge for the church
- How to get “un-stuck” from old patterns that have been leading nowhere
- How to broaden your vision, and sharpen your focus
- How to effect lasting change in a congregational system
- How to manage resistance and conflict in the face of change
- How to get beyond ideas to implement change
- What is the role of worship in your church’s mission, and how to foster authentic inspiring worship



Each participating congregation will sign a covenant to:

1. Commission the Pastor(s) and delegation to participate in the program, leading the church-wide effort to discern God’s calling for the congregation, and to begin living into God’s preferred future.
2. Be accountable to participate in all aspects of the program for one year, with full energy and intentionality.
3. Abide by rules of good and respectful dialogue in all interaction with the other churches partnering in the program, always honoring the Baptist principle of the autonomy of the local congregation.



EMPOWERED covenants must be signed by the Senior Pastor, principle governing body of the Church (e.g., Church Council, Board of Deacons, Cabinet, etc.), and be ratified by the congregational membership.

Rev. Beers will provide participating churches with a sample covenant, and/or assistance in drafting their own covenant.