

# \$10 Club | New Room Society



## New Faith Communities

North Carolina Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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nccumc.org

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# NEW ROOM SOCIETY

## Newsletter

May 2018

### Something From Something

By Rev. Greg Moore



One of the first things they teach Pastors in Theology 101 is how God creates.

The students all open their Bibles to Genesis 1, and they read the story of creation, where God makes swimmy things that swimmith and creepy things that creepeth, and while pondering the mystery of creation, the class is introduced to the doctrine of Ex Nihilo.

Don't be scared off by the Latin. It simply means, "from nothing." The idea is that God creates everything from scratch. Actually, from before scratch, because there is nothing to scratch together to form creation. God takes nothing, the doctrine states, and makes something. Ex Nihilo.

With all due respect, we in the Office of New Faith Communities beg to differ.

Genesis 1 doesn't begin with nothing. It begins with God. More than that, it begins with Trinity (God continually refers to Godself in the plural in the primal creation story... "let *us* make humankind in *our* image.").

Everything that God makes is not made from nothing but from the Divine Something that is everything. In other words, God does not create Ex Nihilo (from nothing) but Ex Communio (from the Divine Communion of God's very self.).

This is critical to our work in New Faith Communities; because it offers us the deepest truth about how new faith communities are created. No church, Bible study, discipleship group or missional effort is created from nothing. They are all created from a communion of Saints who are participating in the life of Jesus together.

Churches don't come up from out of nowhere. They come from churches who are birthing churches...communions birthing communions...disciples creating disciples.

The truth is that the Office of New Faith Communities will never start a new church. Conferences don't birth churches. Churches birth churches.

**Our biggest need right now is to partner with existing communions to help develop the imagination and practices required to create new faith communities.**

We believe that God has much in store for the North Carolina Conference and that many new things are on the verge of coming to life among us. But God won't do that work without us. Emmanuel insists on being God with us, incorporating us into the Divine work of creating life together.

If you or your congregation would like to discern if you are called to this work, please contact our office. We would love to partner with you to help you hear what God might be calling you to.

God is up to something among us. And whatever God creates will be birthed from the something that God has already made of us. That's how this old story works...something always coming forth from Something.

**Please support our planters with your prayers for communion to be celebrated in new ways in their lives and in their communities.**

Charles Albright

Chris Jenkins

Wesley Neal

Kyle Burrows

Brent Levy

Nick Rich

Jason Butler

Arthur Manigault

Jamie Thompson

Hernica Cannon

Rafael Martinez

Edgar Vergara-Millan

Daniel Childs

Cleve May

Michael Williams

Paul Dunham

Mary Frances McClure

Tyler Williams

Annette Ethridge

Kiley McGrady

Randy Evans

Robby Mills



New Faith Communities  
North Carolina Conference  
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## New Room Society

An order of laity and clergy dedicated to embodying apostolic hospitality for new people to be gathered into communion with Jesus Christ

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To GIVE or JOIN,  
please visit our website at:  
[nccumc.org/newfaithcommunities/  
category/newroomsociety](http://nccumc.org/newfaithcommunities/category/newroomsociety)

# NEW ROOM SOCIETY



# Featured Members



**My name is:** Daniel Childs  
**Hometown:** Chapel Hill, NC

**Favorite John Wesley Quote:** “And, to crown all, there will be a deep, an intimate, an uninterrupted union with God; a constant communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, through the Spirit; a continual enjoyment of the Three-One God, and of all the creatures in him!” -John Wesley, Sermon 64, ‘The New Creation’

**What are you called to create?** I’m called to create a community of new disciples who are growing together in companionship with the Triune God. Our community will pursue that life of companionship in the Wesleyan way. We will practice traditional means of grace in ways that are simple, accessible, and compelling--especially to those earnestly desiring to know God but unfamiliar with the Christian faith. And we will trust the Spirit to guide us through these ‘ordinary channels’ in the ways of life with the living God. We will be a community shaped by sacramental union, authentic friendship, and honest prayer. We will be a community committed to laughing together, weeping together, partying together, and serving together. Through these shared practices we expect this community to form and nurture followers of Christ in a life of ever-deepening companionship with God.



**My name is:** Jamie Thompson  
**Hometown:** Kinston, NC

**Favorite John Wesley quote:** “I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to; and sure I am that His blessing attends it.”

**What are you called to create?** Alongside the good folks of Pink Hill United Methodist Church in our small-town, rural area, I feel called to create a coalition that would be organized by a diverse group of people for the purpose of strengthening and developing our community. The vision is for this alliance to give decision-making power and voice to people from different pockets of our community, including women and men of assorted faith/denominational affiliation, race, age, and socio-economic status, and to work together to make our community more whole- spiritually, socially, physically, and economically. We will work to strengthen our relationships across dividing lines, to name the gifts and passions that are often invisible, and to organize and mobilize folks to create something together.



**My name is:** Rafael A. Martinez  
**Hometown:** Manzanillo, Cuba

**Favorite John Wesley Quote:** “I look upon the world as my parish...” – Journal, June 11, 1739

**What are you called to create?** The increase of the Hispanic population in our area is significant; therefore, I am very motivated with the support being offered by Greater Heights UMC church in Clayton, the pastor, Matthew Evans, and the UMC Conference in North Carolina, in the formation of a new Hispanic Methodist faith community in Clayton. We intend to form a group that follows Wesleyan principles; based on biblical scriptures, with the knowledge of our tradition of faith; learning to use our reasoning according to the moment in which we have to live without losing our roots, with an updated message and full of vitality. In addition to seeking and motivating others to engage in personal devotion to foster a live experience in each one of us, our main tool will be the study of the Bible. We will use the Bible to engage in the practice of personal prayer, join in fellowship, interact with the community, and worship God in all ways possible, with our heart, mind and soul.

# Resurrection People

By Rev. Dr. Marty Cauley

Christians love Easter. I mean why not? There are fresh flowers, signs of rebirth, and celebratory hymns sung loudly in full churches. However, I've noticed that very few of these worshippers attend the Good Friday services that were just a couple of days prior to the Easter celebration. In actuality, Easter is only possible if Good Friday occurs first. There must be death before there can be resurrection.



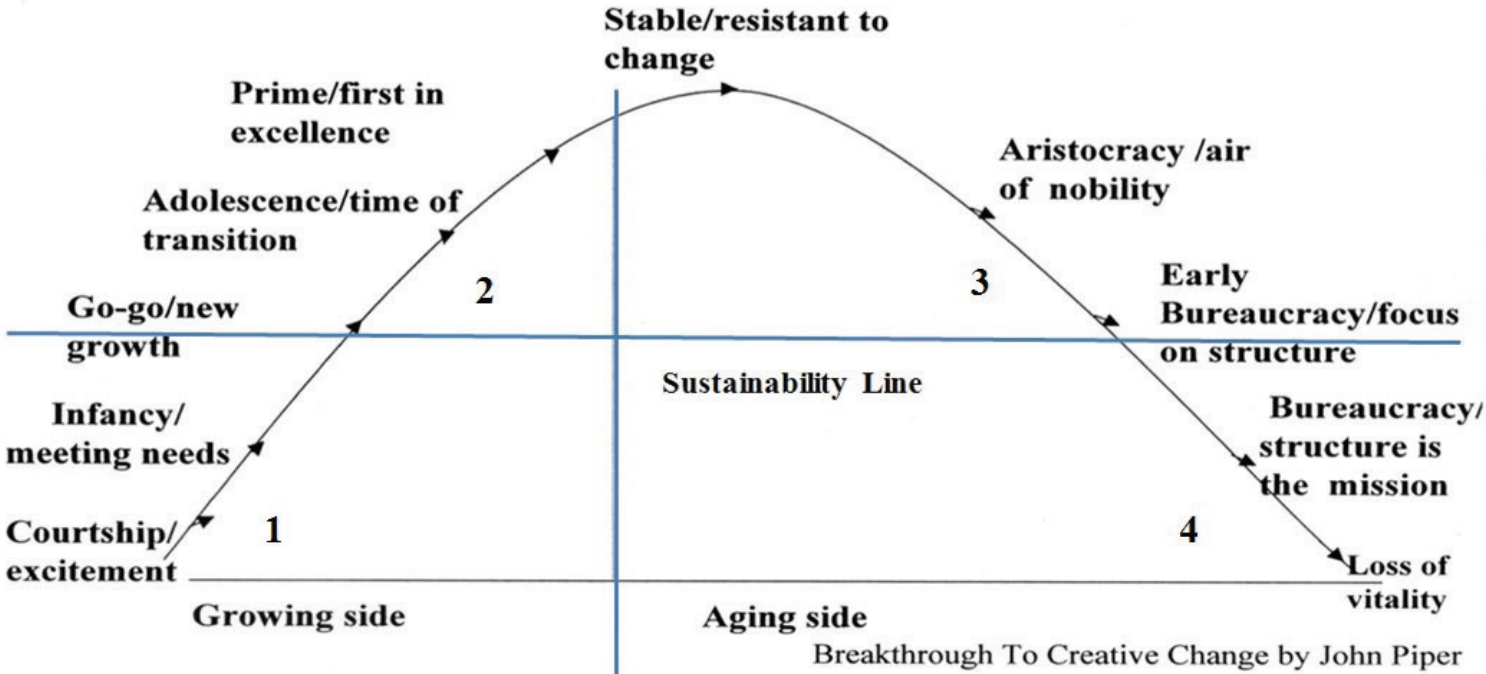
As a culture, we simply do not talk about death. In some very real ways, we pretend it doesn't exist until it disrupts our lives and we are forced to face it. As a cancer patient who receives treatments every other week, I'm fully aware of my mortality. As such it provides me the opportunity to make the most of my time and the legacy I will leave behind.

Across the US, 96 churches close every week. Most of these congregations take no care to insure that the witness they have had for Christ will continue to live. Instead, they allow decline and desperation to guide their decisions. Like most people, these churches pretended they would never die, so they made no plans for their legacy to live on.

There is another way because we are resurrection people. The office of New Faith Communities is working with the office of Church Transformation to provide opportunities for a resurrection model for the church where the assets of churches facing the end of their life cycle can invest in the future for the building of the Kingdom of God by investing in new churches and initiatives to invite new people into communion with Christ. The Wesleyan witness can continue because these faithful Christians believe in a future with hope and the Savior who wants to invite all to the table.

Death is inevitable; hope is optional. Let us be resurrection people who allow our hope to live on and our legacy to continue.

## Life Cycle of Congregational Change



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