



# The Acts 16:5 Initiative

**So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers. ~ Acts 16:5 (NIV)**

**There is still time!** Acts 16:5 will kick off on **Monday, March 5, 2012 with the Official Launch at Chestnut Level Presbyterian Church at 3:30pm.** Think about enrolling even if you previously thought this wasn't an option for your church. Why?

Some churches are on the INCLINE, meaning showing ongoing vitality and growth. Others are in the RECLINE condition meaning vitality is static or slipping. Finances may be less than healthy. And some are in DECLINE.

## **Acts 16:5 Official Launch Information**

**Monday, March 5, 2012 3:30pm- 9:00pm at Chestnut Level Presbyterian Church**

**Cost to attend:** \$10.00 for Dinner

**Workshop Content:** Free to those still considering! A part of the Acts 16:5 contract for those beginning. (Thanks to your Mission Dollars at Work!)

**Sponsored by:** Donegal Presbytery Vitalization Division & Council

**Registration:** Contact the Presbytery of Donegal Office for more information.

**Why do we keep pushing Acts 16:5??** (A question someone asked recently.) Because our world – global, nationally, generationally, in the church – is changing in ways that are turning us all upside down. Phyllis Tickle says that every 500 years comes along a great rummage sale for the church, and this is *now*. For us, the end of top-down regulation. The end of programs that work. The end of technical fixes to a crashing structure. And the profound, prayer-filled assurance that the God of grace and hope is with us. Acts 16:5 is different than a “church growth” program. Stan Ott, the leader, knows that there is no prescribed solution. What there is a need for, for all of our congregations, is a structured process to coach the development of genuine spiritual leaders, with skillsets to participate in the “adaptive change” where God is at work. And which results in measurable action plans that move the faithful mission of the congregation forward. On a real timeline.

**Hard to describe? Yes. Is Acts 16:5 essential for faithful ministry? Our counsel to you:**

Do the leaders of your congregation have a plan you are following to thrive as a congregation? To grow as a “God-shaped” church reaching out to the neighbors God has given to you? *YES??* Tell us about it, and we will join you to partner in prayer for you and to discover how we can connect.

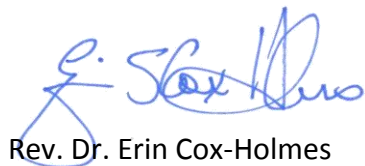
Do you not have a plan *in place that you are following?* *NO?* In not, are you dipping so far below critical mass that you need the presbytery to discern with you the best care for a “slipping slowly away” congregation? Is so, as we develop our Sonar Discernment process, we will partner with you to discern how God is moving in your changes, loss, decline, and potential new things.

If you have no plan, are not thriving in missional engagement, and are not slipping below critical mass for viable ministry, then you need to reconsider. Acts 16:5 is for you. Money is not a reason not to come in. Maintaining a bunch of other stuff is not a reason. Through the generosity of the Synod of the Trinity, we are able to offer substantial subsidization for congregations for whom the monthly fee is prohibitive.

And, in fact, denominational turmoil is NOT a reason not to enter Acts 16:5. **In an act of grace, the Vital Church Institute has agreed to let us offer two 18 month contracts. You may engage for 18 months, and then evaluate if it is God’s call to you to continue. And, here in Donegal, we are determined to maintain our unity as the Body of Christ. This includes the offer to continue in fellowship in the Acts 16:5 Initiative with any of our congregations who may seek dismissal to another reformed body. God’s mission and the faithful engagement of our congregations is too important to risk to divisions.**

Eight of our congregations have chosen to sign on. We believe God is calling more to participate. **Speak to Nan Best or Erin Cox-Holmes. Let us guide you in the pre-training steps so that you won’t be left behind when March’s start happens.**

Our congregations will have more vibrant ministry as we become involved with this process. Our presbytery will be stronger as we grow in faith and witness as sisters and brothers reaching into our communities. Christ’s name will be honored as we become more fervent in bearing the Good News.



Rev. Dr. Erin Cox-Holmes  
Executive Presbyter  
Presbytery of Donegal



Nan Best  
Associate for Healthy Congregations