



Creative ways of doing ministry

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One of the first things that impressed me about the Presbytery of Milwaukee is all of the creative ministry happening here! It lives out the value of *“risk-taking for the gospel”* that is a key ingredient of our mission statement.

At the MidCouncil Leadership Conference last fall, I came across a 1 page resource called *“A Church Guide for Choosing Your Next Adventure.”* Of its 11 ministry ideas, I discovered that we not only have examples for most already, but we have a few they hadn’t thought of. (To be fair, the guide says of itself that *“It is meant to assist in imagining possibilities”*, not be an all inclusive list.)

Here are their possibilities along with our examples. (Note: as the handout says *“Numbers for conversational reference only and do not indicate a ranking, preference, or hierarchy of any option over another.”*)

1. **Called and Installed Pastor/Transitional Pastor** aka *“All the Bells and Whistles”*
Please forgive me not listing all of you here!
2. **Part-time Installed Pastor** aka *“Sure, I’ll help out”*
Faith Springs with Rev. Katie Ebels
3. **Merge with Another Church** aka *“Two shall become one flesh”*
There may be one in the works
4. **Federate with another denomination** aka *“with our ecumenical powers combined”*
Beloit United: PC(USA) & NACCC
Good Shepherd Trinity: PC(USA) & ELCA
Grace United: PC(USA) & UCC
5. **Yoke with another church** aka *“Circuit Rider”*
Apostle and Greenfield Ave are trying this out
6. **Parish Model** aka *“What’s old is new again”*
There was one in our presbytery years ago, but I don’t remember its name.
7. **Pastor-on-loan** aka *“Moon-lighting”*
Rev. Lori Patton serving First Ottawa, “on loan” from Bethesda
8. **Nesting** *“aka, Pfft, who needs a building”* aka *“The way Paul did it”* We do this one in 3 ways!
Heritage and Living Hope sold their buildings and now worship in long-term care facilities.
First Waukesha sold their building and worships in St. Matthias Episcopal Church
Grace Milwaukee does this in reverse by nesting 2 other non-PC(USA) worshipping communities
9. **Field Ed Model** aka *“Mutual Learning”*
Carroll University Chaplain/Parish Internship program (this year partnered with West Granville)
10. **Commissioned Pastor / Commissioned Ruling Elder** aka *“Yup, ruling elders can do that”*
CRE Cathy Manthei at First Richfield
11. **Celebration of the completion of your ministry** aka *“Well done, good and faithful servants”*
In recent years, Horicon and Vernon



But we also have ...

12. **Completely lay led** aka *"Yup, ruling elders can do even more!"*
Calvary, many of whose elders learned to preach and were authorized to celebrate communion
13. **Co-pastors** aka *"We don't have to be married to lead a congregation together"*
Covenant
14. **Totally online worship** aka *"Zoom suits us just fine"*
Second Racine
15. **Owners become renters** aka *"You can take care of the building now"*
Greenfield Avenue sold their building to long time renters, but still worship there
16. **New worshipping communities** aka *"let's give this a try"*
San Jose Fellowship (also an immigrant fellowship)
Kairos Collective
17. **Mission, mission, mission** aka *"faith in action"*
Food for the Journey – collaborative mission across several churches
Tippecanoe – a small church with a huge mission presence
All of the churches giving so generously to mission opportunities in their communities as well as many that have hands on mission partnerships

Once I started writing this out, there is even more than I originally realized! And I'm sure I'm forgetting others – please let me know what they are if any come to mind.

If your congregation is reimagining its future and one or more of these inspire you, contact the churches already trying out new ways of being. If you'd like to read the original handout with fuller explanations of the options, [click here](#).

Oh, what wonderful things the church is doing and daring in Jesus' name here in the southeast corner of Wisconsin!

Grace and Peace.

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