

# Intergenerational Approach to “Connecting Children in Worship and Prayer”

SC United Methodist Conference  
Lilly Grant Initiative



# Goal

“Connecting Children in Worship  
and Prayer”

The goal is to impact 60 churches over 5 years, 500 children, and reach over 7000 congregational members.

# Looking for 12 Churches...

This presentation is to help churches understand how the grant works, the commitment and learn next steps if you are interested in participating in Cohort One.

Applications for Cohort 1 are due by March 1, 2025. Toni Taylor and Nona Woodle would like to assist you in the application process.

# Grant Outcomes

1

1. Create a culture of belonging for all children and adults

2

2. Increase the number of children participating in worship and prayer opportunities.

3

3. Learn new ways children can participate and lead in worship with a focus on integration of the arts.

4

4. Move to more intergenerational worship, mission and ministry experiences.

# Who leads the grant?

Children and  
Intergenerational  
Worship Leadership  
Team:

**A BIG THANK YOU!**



Members: Rev. Meg Sweeney Cook, Toni Strawther, Dawn Fairley, Kim Bryant, Cari Treece, Johannah Meyers, Rev. Michael Jarrell, Rev. Christopher Greene, Rev. Suzanne Walker, Rev. Martin Quick, Briana Brooks, Rev. Nona Woodle, Toni Taylor, Evan Barker and Rev. Millie Nelson Smith.

This grant focuses on developing church leadership, clergy and laity, through a cohort model to lead a cultural shift in how we experience worship.

# Why Participate in a Cohort?



(Note: churches do not receive money to participate)

# A Church might participate:

If you are interested in working with other churches to collaborate and learn:

- new ways to lead intergenerational worship experiences
- develop programs that teach children how to read, write and speak prayers, homilies, stories and scripture with confidence leading worship & prayer
- utilize artists to support the integration of the arts into children's ministry areas; music, instruments, dance, culinary arts, etc.
- add Messy Church to your intergenerational worship experiences
- provide intergenerational story exchanges that promote developing relationship and empathy.

**What is “in it” for my church?**



# How does this grant work?



# SC UMC LILLY GRANT

## TIMELINE

### Year 1

- Children and Intergenerational Worship Leadership Team created
- Grant Specialist hired
- Grant specialist plans, schedules and facilitates training
- Story Exchange training
- Messy Church USA start up training
- Portico training
- Workshop (1 speaker)
- Book Study

### Year 2

- 12 churches selected for cohort 2
- Grant specialists facilitates training
- Cohort 1 will facilitate cohort 2 first story exchange
- Cohort 1 churches mentor one of cohort 2 churches
- Children's Worship Day Camp
- Workshop (1 speaker)
- Book Study

### Year 3

- 12 churches selected for cohort 3
- Grant specialists facilitates cohort 1 training for cohort 3
- Cohort 2 facilitates cohort 3 first story exchange
- Cohort 2 churches mentor one of cohort 3 churches
- Children's Worship Camp
- Story Exchange training (50 additional children/youth)
- Family Spiritual Retreat
- Workshop (1 speaker)
- Book Study

### Year 4

- 12 churches selected for cohort 4
- Grant specialists leads the training for cohort 4
- Cohort 3 facilitates cohort 4 first story exchange
- Cohort 3 churches mentors one of cohort 4 churches
- Children's Worship Camp
- Story Exchange training (50 additional children/youth training)
- Family Spiritual Retreat
- Workshop (1 speaker)
- Book Study held
- Full Day Children in Worship Conference

### Year 5

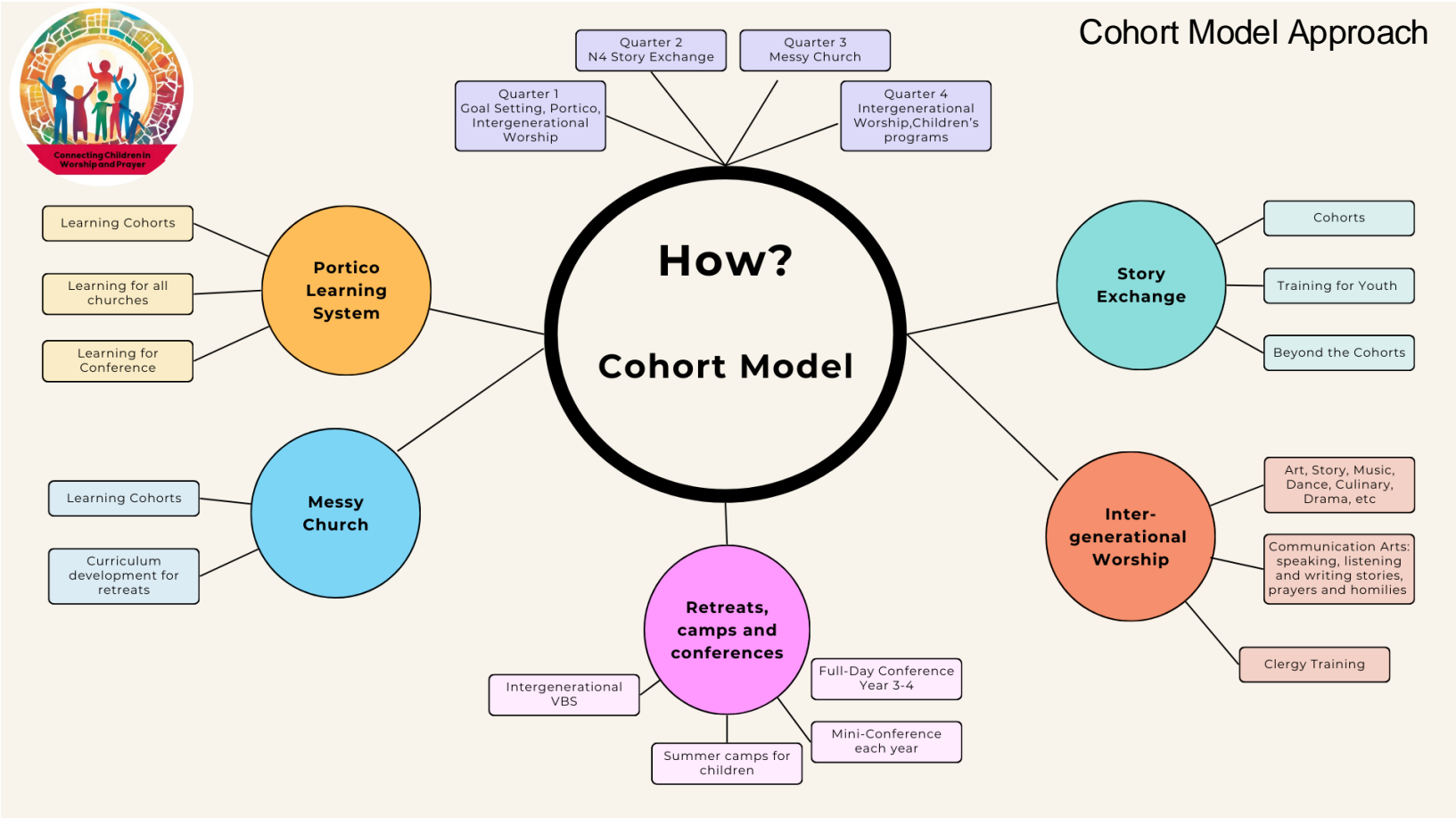
- 12 churches selected cohort 5
- Grant specialists leads training
- Cohort 4 facilitates cohort 5 first story exchange
- Cohort 4 churches mentor one of cohort 5 churches
- Children's Worship Camp
- Story Exchange training (50 additional children/youth)
- Family Spiritual Retreat
- Workshop (1 speaker)
- Book Study

# 12 Churches Selected Annually as a Cohort

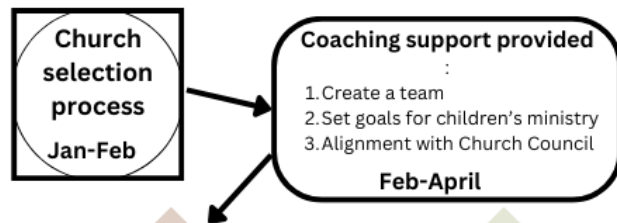
Cohort 1  
Deadline to apply is  
March 1, 2025

60 Churches over 5  
Years will provide  
Conference leadership  
in Interdisciplinary  
worship, which  
connects children to  
worship and prayer.

## Cohort Model Approach

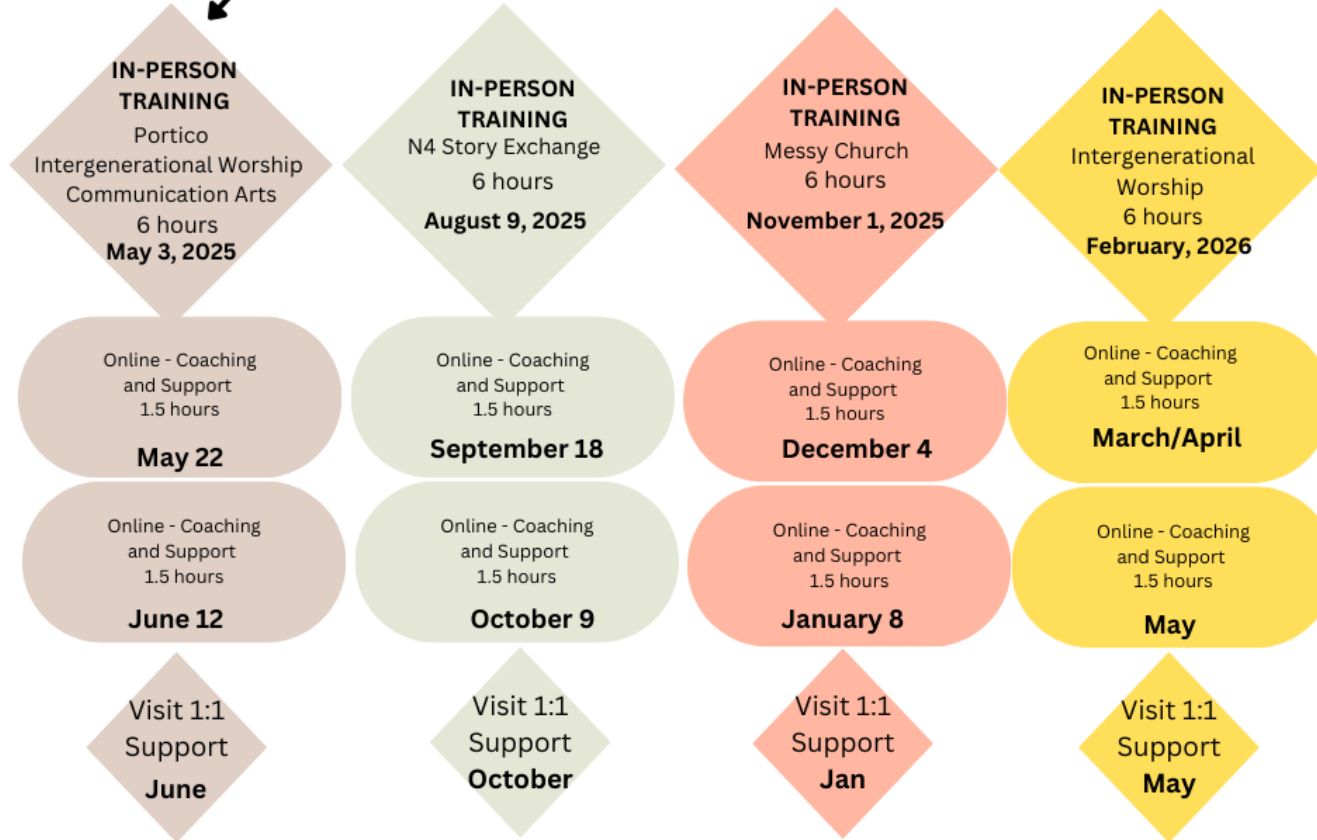


\$36,000 training value for each church



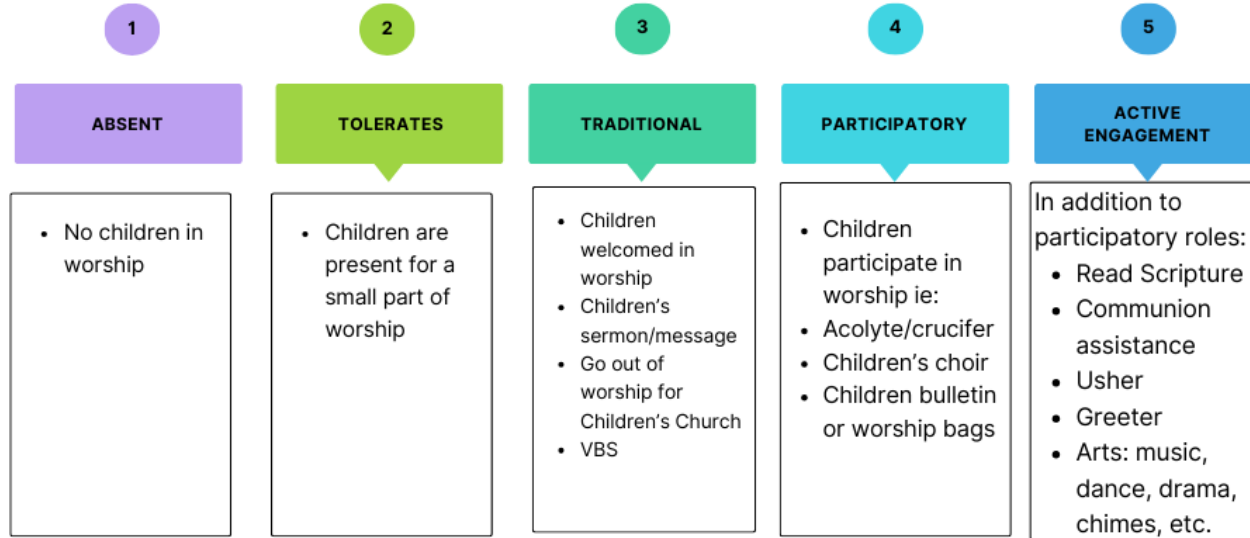
# Cohort Training Overview

How much work is involved in a Cohort?



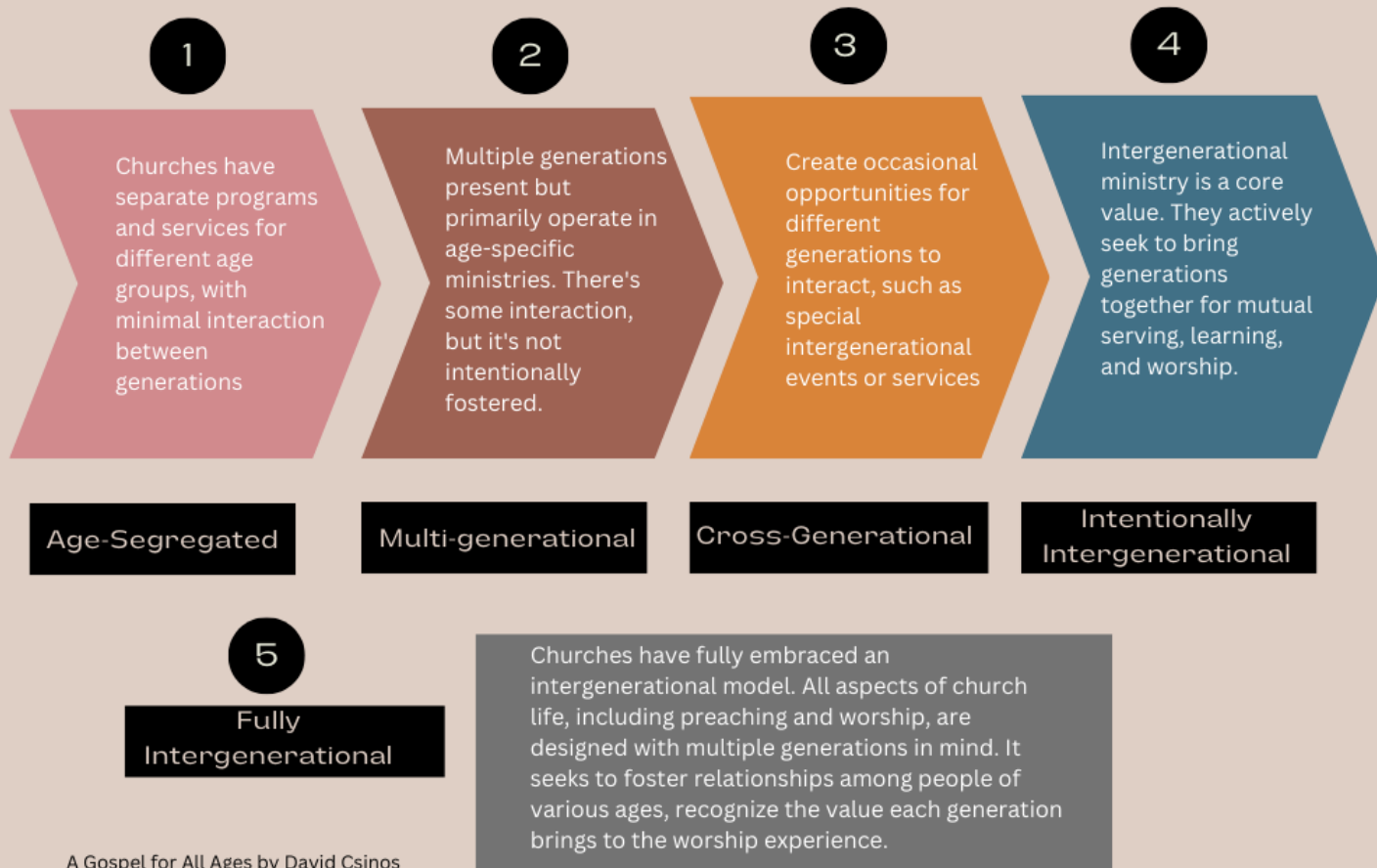
# SC United Methodist Conference Children in Worship Continuum

Where is your  
church?



**Reflection:**  
**Where is your church on the continuum?**

# Intergenerational Continuum



Where is your church?

Is YOUR church excited and  
committed to a year of learning  
and transformation?

Are you ready for something positive?



# Interested in partnering with other churches?



A United Methodist Church may partner with other churches who are in Full Communion with the United Methodist Church. (The United Methodist Church will be the “lead” church)

## **Full communion relationships**

- The African Methodist Episcopal Church
- The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- The African Union Methodist Protestant Church
- The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
- The Union American Methodist Episcopal Church
- The Uniting Church of Sweden
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- The Moravian Church of North America
- The Episcopal Church (pending final approval in 2027)

Each church creates a team of clergy/laity committed to a year of work as a part of a cohort to set goals, implement and evaluate.



Clergy



Worship Leader



Children's Ministry



Church Council



Youth or other leader

# Who Will Be on Your Team?

# Apply for a Cohort: Next Steps:

1. Contact Toni Taylor or Nona Woodle to discuss with clergy, staff, and laity to provide understanding and clarity on outcomes and commitment of the grant.

2. Grant leader will provide coaching and support for the application process.

3. Following the selection of churches for each cohort, we provide coaching and support for the goal setting process.



# In Summary

This grant represents a strategic investment in uniting and revitalizing the United Methodist community through intergenerational worship, fostering belonging, and inclusivity for all members, especially children.

Our connectional system is an advantage, allowing the leverage of collective wisdom, innovative approaches, and partnerships to bring voice to our children in worship, ultimately contributing to the Lilly Endowment's overall aim "to help children come to know and love God and grow in faith".

# Please reach out to:

- Toni Taylor ([ttaylor@umcsc.org](mailto:ttaylor@umcsc.org) )
- Nona Woodle ([nmwoodle@umcsc.org](mailto:nmwoodle@umcsc.org) )

Website: <https://www.umcsc.org/children/>



Thank You!