

Fresh Expressions FL has had a wonderful year! Our team has grown as we continue to build up the movement through training and supporting Fresh Expressions adventurers in Florida and beyond. We now have Fresh Expressions Cultivators in every district.

As our District Cultivators empower passionate leaders to build new communities in every district of the FLUMC, we are witnessing the Holy Spirit move in the lives of people who otherwise would not be exposed to the Gospel. From recovery groups to online churches to pub communities, Christians across the state are expanding their definition of church and exploring new ways of reaching new people in ordinary places.

This year, the Florida Conference partnered with the Western North Carolina Conference, the North Georgia Conference, and United Theological Seminary to create the Adventurers Leadership Academy. This immersive, year-long, cohort-based training process certifies lay and clergy leaders to cultivate fresh expressions of church and develop innovative approaches to ministry. Applications for next year's ALA are open now.

In the FLUMC, we have a team of experienced leaders who provide training and resources for congregations interested in Dinner Church and Messy Church. These are a simple and replicable approaches to Fresh Expressions that center around a shared meal and creative activities, respectively. This year, the Dinner Church/Messy Church team has hosted four workshop weekends throughout the Conference and will host one more in late June.

Since 2020, many innovative ministries turned to digital spaces as a realm for cultivating community and found that it is possible to experience a depth of connection, care, and spiritual engagement online that was previously unheard-of. In the last year, fresh expressions of church came into being in online forums, on livestreams, and even in virtual reality.

This year Fresh Expressions FL premiered a new logo and a redesigned website. The new logo uses the symbol of an open hand holding a seedling. It bears a two-fold meaning: the hands of Fresh Expressions adventurers bringing new life to those they reach through new ways of being the church and the hand of God holding us and bringing renewal and life to all of creation. Our website is filled with information and resources to help leaders reach those outside the doors of the traditional church.

We are thankful for the support of Bishop Ken Carter, who offers us with guidance and inspiration every step of the way. This year, he proposed a Conference-wide goal for each congregation to launch or revitalize one fresh expression of church by Annual Conference 2023 and a larger goal of 500 fresh expressions of church by 2025. We envision that the future of the church will be a blended ecology of traditional churches and fresh expressions.