



EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT  
PARTICIPATING IN GOD'S MISSION

## Let's Get Missional: Reorganizing ECCT and Why it Matters

We are the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (ECCT) and we are in the middle of reorganizing ourselves. Why bother? It's simple. It's so that each of us can be formed more fully to follow Jesus as his disciples and so that each of us can go out into the world more fully as his apostles. Yes: each of us — from the littlest child to the office worker to the teacher to the retired machinist or sailor or professor — each of us in our Baptism says, “yes” to being a part of God’s mission of reconciliation and restoration. Each of us is called to respond to the Holy Spirit, who is moving among us.

We are reorganizing ECCT based on a charge from our Annual Convention that met last November in Cromwell. Convention adopted the recommendations of TREC-CT 2.0 (our Taskforce for Reimagining the Episcopal Church in Connecticut). They’d been listening to us and studying our current organization for more than a year to find ways that we could be more faithful to God’s mission and ways that would allow us to support each other across ECCT.

In order to help us all get onboard with the changes to come soon, your TREC-CT 3.0 (“T3”) Transition Team is sending out a series of emails to everyone on our send lists. You may read them yourself or use them as a basis for discussion in the parish.

Need something to enliven Coffee Hour? This is it!

This week we take a look at three new ECCT features: Ministry Networks, Regions, and Region Missionaries.

### MINISTRY NETWORKS:

A Ministry Network is defined as two or more individuals or groups ...

- who are engaged in God’s mission;
- and, who are collaborating;
- and, who are from more than one parish or worshipping community within the Episcopal Church in Connecticut.

We’ve had lots of ministry networks in Connecticut over the years — just think of our Episcopal Church Women (ECW) or our various groups that form to focus on restoration and reconciliation in specific areas, such as the Social Justice and Advocacy Committee, the Prison Ministry Network, or collaborative efforts to provide regional food pantries. (These are just a few examples; there are many different Ministry Networks already going strong.) Ministry Networks may even include people who aren’t Episcopalians. Imagine that ...

Ministry Networks will keep on forming as folks from different parishes or organizations unite around a certain ministry. One such example would be when several parishes and/or individuals work together to sponsor a refugee family within our state. Another might be when several individuals decide to create an ongoing Ministry Network to support and resource all local efforts at sponsoring refugee families. We



hope that we'll be very fertile ground for combining and recombining people in these networks over the years for all kinds of ways to be with God in our neighborhoods.

And so we can have the wisdom of their experience in our governance, there will be nine seats on the Mission Council for people from various Ministry Networks. The bishops will nominate them and they will be elected at Annual Convention.

Regions

### **REGIONS:**

In the 1920s, Connecticut parishes were divided into 14 Deaneries and asked to work on common projects. Some Deaneries are working fairly well; many others are not. ECCT has now been re-divided into six Regions based on geography and character. Imagine a line drawn west to east through the middle of the state. Then each half is divided vertically three times. Voila! Six new Regions. (For a more accurate picture, link here to a map of the Regions.)

Of course, each Region will be considerably larger than any Deanery was in the past. In fact, some of those Deaneries that were working well have decided to continue as Ministry Networks. The intention behind this reorganization into the six Regions is that there will be lots of opportunities for mutual support of local mission and for collaboration within each Region — people working across traditional parish boundaries.

In order to help the Regions work effectively, there will be a Region Missionary selected by each Region. This person will be a coordinator, a resource, and a source of inspiration and nuts-and-bolts help for various aspects of God's mission that will be bubbling within each Region.

Each Region will govern itself, and will choose its own structure for that. It's possible that parishes may elect to transfer their association from one Region to another, with the approval of the Mission Council.

Again, so we can have the perspectives and wisdom of people committed to a Region approach to ministry, two persons from each Region will serve as participants in our Mission Council — 12 total. One will be a lay person and the other will be a clergy person. The membership of the Region will raise them up locally.

### **REGION MISSIONARIES:**

These are the folks raised up by each Region to enable good missional work to happen at the Region level — to help us all to reach out effectively into our neighborhoods. These persons will receive half-time funding from ECCT so that they may more fully do the work of being rich resources to enable good ministry to happen. They'll be able to work within each Region and as a team will be able to work across Regions.

The Region Missionary will be either a lay person or a clergy person from ECCT who will work to help collaborative ministry within and beyond any existing structures or boundaries.



## SO – WHAT’S IT TO US, AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

These new structures seem so different from the way we used to do things! Why should we bother making these changes?

- Remember that good old churchy cliché — The seven last words of a dying church are, “But we’ve always done it that way!”
- We are hoping that these new structures will redirect our fertile, Spirit-driven energy into even more ministry outside the parish walls and into the neighborhood. This trusts that God is the One driving our ministry, and that it is very good.
- We are also hoping that the Ministry Networks, Regions, and Region Missionaries will bring new energy, hope, and perspective to parishes.
- We also want to make it easier to learn to work across traditional parish boundaries and overcome traditional parish competition, so that “things which were cast down [might be] raised up, and things which had grown old [might be] made new, and that all things [may be] brought to their perfection by Him through whom all things were made...” [from a Collect for the Church, used on Good Friday and at ordinations]

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QUESTIONS? More info is at [episcopalct.org/t3/](http://episcopalct.org/t3/)

T3 team members are working with local leaders in each Region to determine Convocation details including exact times, location, and format. The information will be publicized once those are set.

T3 (TREC-CT 3.0 Transition) team members: The Rt. Rev. Ian T. Douglas, the Rt. Rev. Laura J. Ahrens, the Rev. Sandra Cosman, the Rev. Adam Yates, Brad Babbitt, the Rev. Canon Tim Hodapp, Canon Karin Hamilton, the Rev. Marilyn Anderson, the Rev. John Burton, Clint Dixon, the Rev. Jack Gilpin, Jane Hale, the Rev. Rowena Kemp, the Rev. Ron Kolanowski, Cathy Schrull, Shirley Wick, Valzie Peterkin, Deacon Diane Peterson, Deacon Don Richie. Communication subgroup: The Rev. Marilyn Anderson, Canon Karin Hamilton, Cathy Schrull (chair).