

# Everyday Faith Partner Agreement

## Between The United Methodist Publishing House and [Congregation Name]

### Purpose

This agreement describes the collaborative partnership between The United Methodist Publishing House and [Congregation name] for the purpose of developing resources and strategies congregations can use to equip parents and caregivers to disciple their children in their everyday lives. Both parties commit to working toward an innovative relational model of ministry that supports parents/caregivers and their children as they grow in faith.

### Parties Involved

1. **The United Methodist Publishing House** (hereafter referred to as “UMPH”)
2. **[Congregation name]** (hereafter referred to as “Congregation”)

### Terms of Agreement

#### I. UMPH Responsibilities

- a. **Convene a cohort of congregations:** UMPH will facilitate regular virtual gatherings for a cohort of congregational leaders to learn together, encourage, and support one another as we try new approaches for family ministry, shift church culture and expectations, and test resources with families.
- b. **Provide training and listening opportunities:** UMPH will arrange for and cover initial costs involved with training congregational leaders in new approaches to family ministry, and in gathering families to listen and learn from them.
- c. **Provide resources:** UMPH will offer samples of materials families can use at home to grow faith in their everyday lives. Additional resources may be developed during the process. For example: a framework for measuring spiritual growth in families, for effectively shifting congregational mindsets regarding family ministry, or for connecting with families to deepen relationships. Congregations will have first access to these resources and play a key role in shaping them.
- d. **Support and Motivate:** UMPH will celebrate wins, problem-solve challenges, and reward engagement with additional incentives such as Cokesbury gift cards or children’s Bibles for families. Our goal is for this partnership to be well worth your time and effort and a blessing to your congregation and ministry.

#### II. Congregation Responsibilities

- a. **Convene a team to engage this work:** One key leader (senior pastor or children/family ministry staff member) will convene a team of 1-4 other church leaders (staff or volunteer) who will work together to fulfill the below congregational responsibilities, ensuring enough buy-in and bandwidth for the process.

- b. Actively contribute to cohort meetings:** The key leader will attend online meetings once a month for the duration of the partnership, with the option to send a teammate in their stead for any additional check-in meetings or in the event of an unexpected illness or emergency. Cohort meeting participants will openly share their experiences, ideas, successes, challenges, questions, and concerns while committing to share the air space and be encouraging and supportive to other cohort members.
- c. Attempt to shift congregational culture:** The aims of this partnership include an understanding that effective family ministry today requires new approaches and mindset shifts, specifically, a deepening of support and relationships with and among families with children as an intentional missional focus of the congregation. The team participating in the partnership will therefore attempt to engage congregational buy-in for new ways of approaching ministry with families.
- d. Build relationships with families:** The congregation will gather families to listen and learn about their needs and perspectives, try innovative methods of deepening relationships with and among parents and caregivers, and prioritize relationships and discipleship.
- e. Measure and communicate results:** The congregation will conduct assessments, check-ins, and otherwise solicit feedback from families to determine effectiveness. The congregation will ensure families receive materials to test and encourage their feedback about those materials. They will communicate insights and findings back to UMPH and their fellow cohort participants so all may benefit from their learnings.

### **III. Duration and Review:**

- a.** This agreement is for a one-year period beginning in March 2025, with flexibility to conclude in December 2025 if goals have been achieved, or to continue for the full year if not.
- b.** Midway through the process, both parties will review the partnership to assess progress and address any challenges to ensure the partnership continues to be mutually beneficial and supportive.
- c.** At the conclusion of the initial partnership phase, an evaluation will be conducted by both parties and the congregation may be invited to further participate in the project or similar projects, at the discretion of UMPH and depending on the interest of the congregation.

### **IV. Signatures:**

[Name], Representative of UMPH

[Date]

[Name], Representative of Congregation

[Date]

## **Proposed Schedule**

*for monthly meetings and teamwork to be done between meetings*

**March 2025:** Introductions, expectations, trajectory, starting points

Teamwork: Assess capacity for change and set goals

**April** (After Easter): Training: Family-Centered Ministry

Teamwork: Vision-casting for family-centered ministry

**May:** Listening to families and strategies for relationship-building

Teamwork: Schedule date(s) for listening session(s) and invite parents/caregivers

**June:** Measuring Spiritual Growth & Communicating success

Teamwork: Begin measuring spiritual growth and communicating success

**July/August:** Evaluate where we are and what is needed for next steps based on listening sessions, work so far

Teamwork: Follow through on action items from summer meeting(s)

**September:**

Teamwork: Launch new programs/approaches and distribute resources for families to test at home

**October and beyond:** Reflecting on the experience, gathering feedback, measuring effectiveness, and continuing to try new things. Additional training/resources as needed.