

PROPOSAL TO RESTRUCTURE SRVUMC'S GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

SRVUMC is in the process of creating and adopting a strategy to meet the challenges facing us over the next few years. The process will include the adoption of a vision and mission, and a strategy to implement the mission to achieve the vision. For the process to be successful, dedicated, committed and accountable leadership is required.

We believe that it will be difficult for the Administrative Board, as currently structured, to effectively lead the church as we move forward over the next few years. According to Dan Hotchkiss, author of *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*, the criteria for measuring the effectiveness of a church's governance is as follows:

- A unified structure for making Governance decisions. The board represents the membership by articulating vision and mission, evaluating programs, and ensuring responsible stewardship of resources.
- A unified structure for making operational (ministry) decisions. Program leaders (paid and unpaid) work harmoniously to create effective programs with the support of a structure that delegates authority and requires accountability.
- A firm and well-marked boundary, with active mutual communication and accountability, between governance and ministry. (p.58)

Hotchkiss says this about the role of the governance:

"Articulating mission is a central role of governance. Major choices about goals and strategies also belong to governance, as does deciding who will be responsible for implementing them. Governance requires delegating power to those who direct the daily work, and holding them accountable for their performance. Governance means seeing that the congregations' money, property and people are kept safe. Governance connects the congregation's work with the concerns of various stakeholders: its members, future members, donors and volunteers; its wider community; its family of related congregations; and its ancestors in faith.... Governance is holding the whole institution and its work in trust, voicing its intentions, making its biggest decisions, and taking responsibility for its performance.

Ministry is what the rest of the congregation does – achieving the inward and outward results the congregation exists to achieve." (pp. 65-66)

Hotchkiss believes that churches that successfully change their structure to be more responsive and adaptive most frequently assign governance authority to a

board of six to eight. Streamlined boards are better able to engage in serious discernment work. The congregation exercises its overall control not by making a few large decisions but by making a few large ones well. An essential part of the board's responsibility is to choose wisely which few subjects merit congregational attention, and to host a rich, reflective dialogue among the members on those subjects. (p.70)

The process is now underway to develop a strategic process to guide SRVUMC over the next 3-5 years. A theology task force composed of members of the congregation and the co-pastors, spent a couple of months looking at the question: *What does it mean to be 'a disciple of Jesus Christ' in this SRVUMC community, situated in this place, at this time?* Currently an impact task force (6-8 people) is considering the questions: *What does transformation of the world look like for us, here, now? What partnerships will help us reach our goals?*

The final phase will be to form constituency task forces (senior adults, middle age adults, young adults, youth, children) to consider the question: *How will we engage/encourage/direct/nurture our people toward this life of faith and discipleship?* This phase is expected to be complete by mid-summer. The goal will be to outline concrete programs/projects, and to set measurable outcomes.

This strategic process should be directed and guided by a streamlined governing body that meets frequently and as needed during the development phases and the implementation period. The current Ad Board structure, which meets regularly only every two months, is too large to effectively "engage in serious discernment work". Those who serve on a revamped, smaller Church Council should understand their service as a ministry and will need to be dedicated and committed to the process, and available to meet as needed. The Council will also be responsible for seeing that those who are charged with implementing the church's mission are held accountable, including members of the Council.

Los Altos UMC, the largest church in the Conference with around 2500 members, reorganized its governing body a couple years ago, as have other churches. Their Church Council consists of administrative staff members, pastors, the "core" committees, council chair and the chairs of six "practice committees."

The "core" committees, Staff Parish, Trustees, Finance, and Nominations and Leadership, are specified by the UMC Book of Discipline and are responsible for governing the core administrative functions of the church. The "practice" committees provide strategic ministry leadership in six core practices of faith and sponsor and guide various ministry teams related to each practice. These committees reflect the *Five Practices of Fruitful Living* described by Bishop Robert Schnase: Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith

Development, Risk-Taking Mission and Service (Bold Service and Social Justice); and Extravagant Generosity (Joyful Generosity). LAUMC added one more: Foundation for Growth.

We believe the LAUMC model, as modified, may work for SRVUMC. The key will be getting committed people to serve. The revised proposal for a revamped Church Council for SRVUMC would be composed as follows:

Council Chair

Chairs of Governance Committees: Trustees; Staff Parish, Finance; and Nominations & Leadership Development

Chairs of Practice Committees: Radical Hospitality; Passionate Worship; Intentional Faith Development; Bold Service and Social Justice; and Joyful Generosity

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Church Council Responsibilities

- Sets strategic direction for the church
- Oversees the church's governance and administration – establishes policies, procedures, communication strategies, accountability, etc.
- Ensures that SRVUMC's ministries are accomplishing our purpose, vision and mission
- Coordinates and facilitates long range planning for SRVUMC's buildings, facilities, staffing, lay leadership, and governance to ensure a robust infrastructure that can support SRVUMC's mission and vision
- Ensures that investments in our infrastructure are coordinated, complementary, and forward-looking

Description of the Church Council Positions

Nominations and Leadership Development Committee

- Oversees the identification and development of volunteer leadership
- Invites, connects, equips and sustains volunteer leaders who are diverse, committed, and accountable

Finance Committee

- Manages and safeguards the financial assets of the congregation, excluding land and buildings (managed by the Board of Trustees)
- Provides financial direction (e.g., budget) and controls (e.g., audit)
- Communicates the church's financial condition to the Church Council
- Develops and administers a coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies and procedures for the church

Staff Parish Relations Committee

- Acts as a liaison between staff, clergy, and the congregation
- Ensures that the church is a fulfilling place to work

- Reflects on the roles and responsibilities of ministry and administrative staff; takes ownership for church staff organizational design

Board of Trustees

- Provides for care and maintenance of church property (real, personal, intellectual)
- Holds title to church property, buildings, and equipment
- Manages and receives property for the church

Radical Hospitality

- Invites, welcomes, and cares for all who enter SRVUMC's community of faith
- Supports the welcoming ministries of SRVUMC
- Ensures that all SRVUMC activity, ministry, and support teams understand how to extend the welcome of Christ to newcomers

Passionate Worship

- Provides a vision and framework for the worship life of SRVUMC
- Empowers worship leaders to bring passion to every aspect of worship
- Encourages the congregation to be passionate worshippers
- Encourages worship in all aspects of church life, including worship that occurs in places other than the SRVUMC campus

Intentional Faith Development

- Supports opportunities for people to grow in their faith and deepen their personal relationships with God
- Guides and facilitates a range of programs, classes, and small groups intended to support the spiritual growth and development of all age groups and constituencies

Bold Service and Social Justice

- Provides a vision and framework for SRVUMC's service and social justice activities
- Maintains SRVUMC's connections with UMC mission organizations (e.g., UMVIM, UMCOR)
- Maintains SRVUMC's relationships with community service/aid organizations
- Provides guidance and support for SRVUMC hands-on mission and service teams

Joyful Generosity

- Creates a compelling vision of how money and generous giving enable fulfillment of SRVUMC's mission and purpose
- Encourages joyous, generous, and consistent giving as an essential practice of Christian discipleship that strengthens the ministries of the church