

Restructure Plan and Temporary Suspensions

Background on Motion: *With the adoption of a new Faith Vision in June 2023 the Church Council has been exploring what it can look like to fully live into this vision. At the same time, we recognize that our current structure was created at a time when we were a different church. We are not that same church anymore.*

Our desire is to create a structure/system that supports who we are now and allows us to live more fully into our vision. We're recommending a short-term suspension of those elements of the constitution and bylaws that mandate numbers of people, frequency of meetings and 'statutory' process. The short-term suspension does not dismiss or cancel our Bylaws and Constitution but relaxes our responsibility to them. They remain our guiding documents. Our current boards, committees and council would continue their work, with flexibility to explore living out our vision, unless and until the vision leads to something new. We will be able to see which pieces are working and which can be adjusted. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws can only be instated with a congregational vote.

To aid in this process, and to engage the congregation, we are proposing a Restructuring Task Force.

Proposed Steps:

February 2024 – June 2024 – Examine and Consider

1. *Appoint a Restructuring Task Force to focus on overall process and communication (reporting to Church Council)*
2. *Hold Congregational Conversations in as many different ways as possible*
 - *Create opportunities for boards, groups, teams and individual members of the congregation to give their answers to the following questions:*
 - *Why do we ...*
 - *Could we ...*
 - *Set up an ongoing communication plan that specifically addresses the emotional challenges of change*
 - *Consider how changes will define what is over and what isn't*
 - *Treat the past with respect and identify what will/could be the same*
 - *Acknowledge that there will be a sense of loss as well as a sense of excitement*
 - *Address how endings ensure continuity of what really matters*
3. *Learn from Others*
 - *Book study by Church Council members and everyone interested in the congregation about church organization and structures*
 - *Visiting experts – invite and provide opportunities for presentations with Q/A*
 - *by members of congregations that have been successful and unsuccessful in changing their church structure*
4. *Illuminate new ideas and restructuring proposals*
 - *Keep a running list of proposed changes and ideas that are floating in discussions and share regularly with the congregation*
 - *Develop a proposal for new restructuring systems to be presented at the June Semi-Annual Meeting for a six-month trial period until the January 2025 Annual meeting*

June 2024 – January 2025 – A Trial Period to Explore and Reflect

1. *Continue all of the communication tools established in the first six months and add those that might be needed*
2. *Designate Church Council to establish a set of questions that will help them lead an ongoing reflection on restructuring changes with a monthly review and shared reflection with the congregation*
3. *Encourage and support experimentation beyond the original June 2024 proposal.*
4. *Grant grace to all and applaud challenges and even failure.*
5. *Gather initial information about what is working, what is not, and continued revisions for presentation at the January 2025 Annual meeting with specific recommendations for proceeding and a clear description of the new beginnings.*
6. *Set ongoing conversations with examination and exploration for 2025 because this work is just the beginning.*

Potential Motion: Approve creation of a Restructuring Task Force and temporarily suspend:

Constitution

Article III - Section 1

Article VII - Section 1, Section 2

Bylaws

Article III - Section 1, Section 3 b

Article VII - Section 1 c 8, 9, Section 1 d, Section 2 (all of it), Section 4 f,g

from the February 2024 Annual Meeting until the 2025 Winter Annual Meeting for the purpose of examining and exploring alternate and potentially new ways to live into the recently adopted Church Vision.