

# *The Gist of It*

## Notes from the Governance Task Force

**Spring is here – finally!** This, the fourth issue of “The Gist of It”, brings you up to date on the activity and thinking of your Governance Task Force (GTF).

- First, we review the discussions and results of the Governance Workshop held at the Annual Meeting in January.
- Second, we present our latest thinking, in detail, on how the ministries of the church would be organized.
- And, finally, we include an index to past and current topics in the issues of *The Gist of It*.

With this and past issues of *The Gist of It*, we believe we have presented a relatively complete picture of the proposed Governance and Ministry structures for our congregation, with clear delineation of the authority and responsibility retained by the Congregation, delegated to the Governing Board, and further delegated to the Ministry structure. Future issues of *The Gist of It* will concentrate on plans for approving and implementing a “trial run” of the proposed structure.



# Annual Meeting Workshop

The GTF appreciates the participation and engagement of the congregation in the Annual Meeting workshop. There were three topics included in this discussion. The first was intended to remind people of the reasons for the changes that we are discussing. The second was to gather input from the congregation on the powers that the congregation wishes to reserve to itself. Finally, we played a version of “pin” the ministry activity in the ministry area. This activity helped us all gain confidence that there will be a place for all of our important ministry areas in the new structure.

In addition to the list of the congregation’s reserved powers that we published earlier, there were a handful of suggestions voiced for possible addition to that list. These suggested items included: 1) the power to dissolve the congregation, 2) the power to remove/recall members of the Governing Board, 3) the power to petition to call a congregational meeting, and 4) the power to either approve or create a strategic plan. We on the GTF will be considering these suggestions and others as we prepare the final list to be proposed.

The results of the ministry activity mapping event were compiled. There were eight new ideas identified and five activities that we currently do, but had not been included in the pile of “stickies.”

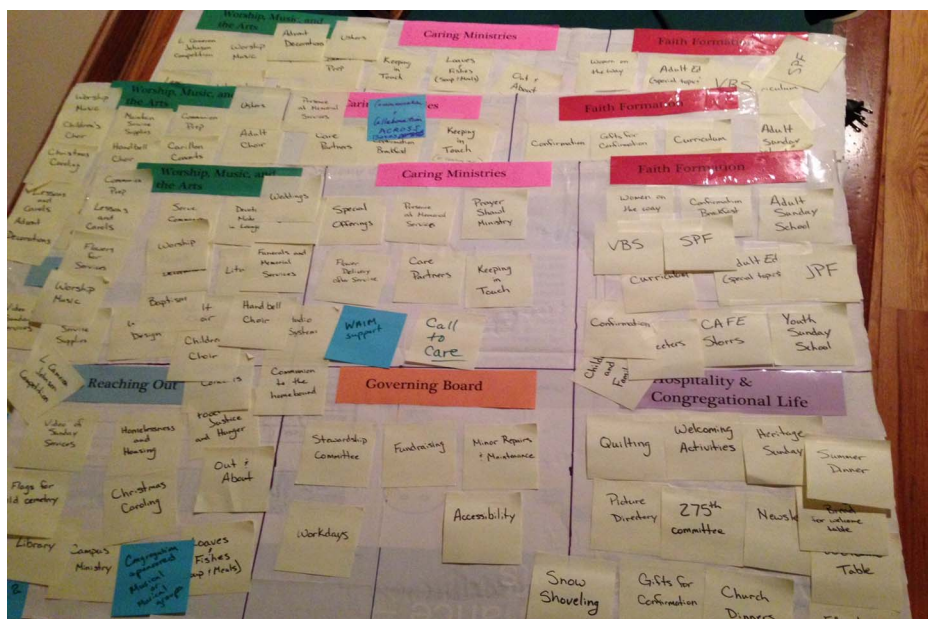


Figure 1: Ministry Activities “Pinned” to Ministry Areas

It is probably no surprise that there was very good alignment among the three groups in the ministry area of Worship, Music, and the Arts, with over 90% agreement on which ministry activities belonged in this ministry area. There was much less alignment in the area of Reaching Out where agreement was just over 50%.

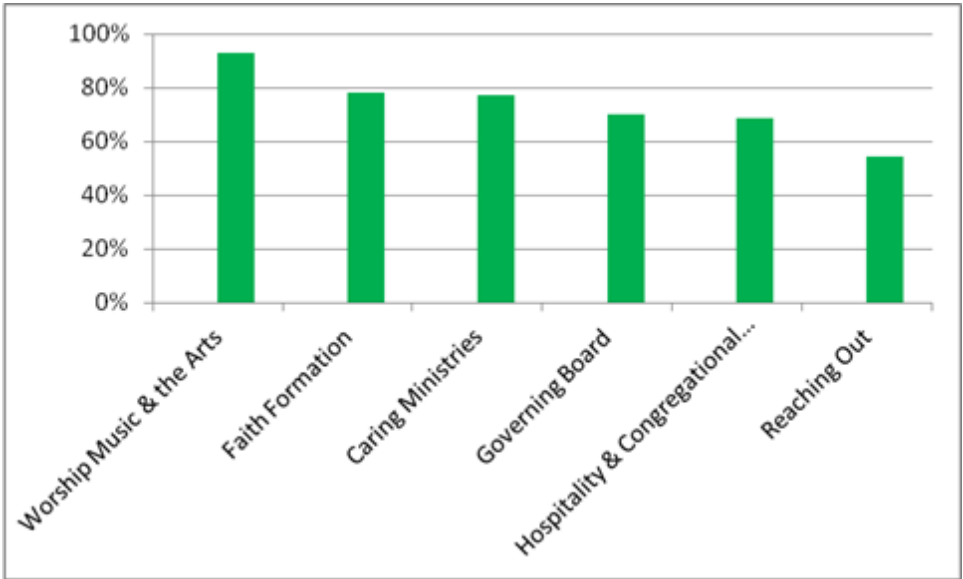


Figure 2: Agreement on Alignment between Ministries and Ministry Areas

We believe that the forum was successful both in helping members of the congregation develop a better “feel” for the direction that we are going, and as information gathering for our work moving forward.

### Being in touch with *Your Governance Task Force...*

We continue to be *eager* for your questions and quandaries, comments and concerns, fears and feedback, kudos and keep-up-the-good-works....

- Sue Irvine: [susanirvine0@gmail.com](mailto:susanirvine0@gmail.com), 860-429-1456
- David Jordan: [djeldredge40@gmail.com](mailto:djeldredge40@gmail.com), 860-429-8909
- Stacy Malecki: [rmalecki431@earthlink.net](mailto:rmalecki431@earthlink.net), 860-487-4538
- Bill Ross: [bill.ross@business.uconn.edu](mailto:bill.ross@business.uconn.edu), 860-498-0481
- Erin Scholes: [erinrachel410@gmail.com](mailto:erinrachel410@gmail.com), 847-507-1354
- Matt Emery: [matt@storrscongchurch.org](mailto:matt@storrscongchurch.org), 860-429-9382

# The Ministries of our Church

The GTF has previously defined the proposed governance structure for the church in prior issues of *The Gist of It*. After extensive review of practices at other UCC churches, together with consideration of our own particular needs and culture as a congregation, the GTF presents this proposal for how the ministries of our church could be conducted. We recognize that this ministry side of the equation will require testing and adaptation before we “get it right”. This proposal presents a starting point, one we anticipate could continue to evolve through a trial phase and beyond.

## Responsibility and Authority

The responsibility and authority for the ministries of the church ultimately rest with the **Governing Board** guided by the congregation-approved **Vision of Ministry**. The Governing Board exercises this responsibility and authority through established policy and delegation of responsibility and authority through the **Senior Minister** to the **Lead Ministry Coordinators**. The Senior Minister and Lead Ministry Coordinators will annually evaluate the ministries of the church and report the results to the Governing Board along with recommendations and suggested goals for the coming year.

## Fiscal and Program Years

The **fiscal year** shall be the calendar year, January 1 to December 31. Budget approval by the congregation and budget control by the Governing Board would be on that basis. Congregationally-elected officers would serve from annual meeting to annual meeting according to their terms. Congregational vision and goals would be approved on this same basis.

The **program year** shall be July 1 to June 30. Ministry goals and organization would be on that basis. Lead Ministry Coordinators would be appointed annually by the Governing Board, on recommendation of the Senior Minister, with terms aligned with the program year.

## Areas of Ministry

The active ministry areas of the church would be reviewed annually by the Governing Board, based on congregational input and the annual evaluation, presented by the Senior Minister. Initially, the areas of ministry will consist of five Core Areas, plus Administrative Support. The five Core Areas are:

- ♦ **Worship, Music, and the Arts**
- ♦ **Reaching Out through Missions, Service, and Social Responsibility**
- ♦ **Faith Formation and Education**
- ♦ **Caring for Each Other**
- ♦ **Hospitality and Congregational Life**

## Lead Ministry Coordinators

Each area will have one or more distinct lead ministry coordinators. Lead ministry coordinators may be either paid or lay staff. Initially, the following lead ministry coordinators would be appointed:

### ***Worship, Music, and the Arts***

- ♦ Director of Music Ministry (paid)
- ♦ Worship Coordinator (lay)

### ***Reaching Out through Missions, Service and Social Responsibility***

- ♦ Outreach Ministry Coordinator (lay)

### ***Faith Formation and Education***

- ♦ Minister for Faith Formation and Discipleship (paid)

### ***Caring for Each Other***

- ♦ Caring Ministries Coordinator (lay)

### ***Hospitality and Congregational Life***

- ♦ Congregational Life Coordinator (lay)

### ***Administrative Support***

- ♦ Office Administrator (paid)
- ♦ Building and Grounds Coordinator (lay)
- ♦ University Student Ministries Coordinator (lay)

Responsibilities of lead ministry coordinators would include:

- ♦ Defining and staffing ministry teams in their area
- ♦ Delegating responsibility and authority to their ministry teams, as appropriate
- ♦ Coordinating the activities of ministry teams within their areas
- ♦ Reporting on the performance and effectiveness of ministry teams
- ♦ Developing proposals for budgetary and off-budget support
- ♦ Approving expenditures and managing budget allocations

As needed, the Senior Minister may convene the Lead Ministry Coordinators on an occasional basis to address matters of coordination (scheduling, staffing, etc.), communication, collaboration, new initiatives, etc.

## Ministry Forums

The Governing Board and Lead Ministry Coordinators (including the Senior Minister) would jointly hold at least two **Ministry Forums** annually. These forums would be open meetings designed to share information about current activities, celebrations, concerns, and to do “discernment” about topics of mutual interest. The objective would be to express views rather than make decisions. One of the forums (probably in early spring) would be to share team evaluations of the past year and discuss goal setting for the coming program year.

## Ministry Teams and their Formation, Ministry Fair

Based on Board directives and goals for the coming year the Lead Ministry Coordinators, in consultation with the Senior Minister, would define proposed sets of ministries and ministry teams for their areas. A ministry “team” for a particular ministry or task might be an individual, or it could be a group of people with an identified leader. In early spring the Lead Ministry Coordinators would canvas the congregation on their interest in particular ministries and suggestions for adding and/or deleting ministries. This interaction with the congregation may take place in conjunction with one of the Ministry Forums. Shortly thereafter (post Easter) the Lead Ministry Coordinators would hold a **Ministry Fair** for the whole church to describe the ministries of the church, present opportunities to serve as a team member or leader, and solicit suggestions for new ministries. Everyone will be given the opportunity to volunteer for one or more ministry teams. There is no limit on the number of ministries an individual may volunteer for.

Based on the results of the canvas of the congregation and the ministry fair as well as past ministry teams, the Lead Ministry Coordinators would then define and staff the ministries of the church for the coming year. The size of teams would not be limited arbitrarily, however volunteers for teams oversubscribed for the assigned responsibility may be encouraged to select other opportunities for service.

There may be proposed ministry teams for which there is insufficient interest. In those cases, the Lead Ministry Coordinators in those areas, in consultation with the Senior Minister, would evaluate the necessity for those teams and cancel those that are not essential. For those deemed essential, the Lead Ministry Coordinator would solicit volunteers and/or refer that ministry to the Senior Minister to assign those responsibilities to appropriate staff members.

Once formed, the ministry teams will confirm their responsibilities for the year and work with their Lead Ministry Coordinator to coordinate timetables, budgeted expenditures, and reporting.

## *The Gist of It* index

***Issue 1*** was published in July, 2014 and included the following topics:

- ◆ Where are we in the process (of governance change)?
- ◆ GTF's Draft Philosophy of Governance Statement with discussion
- ◆ A Chart of the planned SCC Governance Structure

***Issue 2*** was published in October, 2014 and included the following topics:

- ◆ A Draft of The Reserved Powers of the Congregation
- ◆ Understanding the Distinction between Governance and Ministry
- ◆ A Draft Chart of Current Church Activities and whether each is Governance or Ministry

***Issue 3*** was published in December, 2014 and included the following topics:

- ◆ The Composition and Organization of the Governance Board
- ◆ What does the Governance Board do and not do?
- ◆ A Draft Ministry Team Structure with discussion

***Issue 4*** (this issue) is published in April, 2015 and includes the following topics:

- ◆ Results of The Annual Meeting Forum
- ◆ A Detailed Description of The Ministries of our Church
- ◆ This Index to the First Four Issues of *The Gist of It*

**Storrs Congregational Church UCC**  
2 North Eagleville Rd.  
Storrs Mansfield, CT 06268

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE PAID  
STORRS, CT 06268  
Permit No. 33