

The *Gist of It*

Notes from the Governance Task Force

✱ **IMPORTANT** ✱

Upcoming Events with GTF

Your Participation is Needed...

We are VOTING soon on whether to start a trial run!

August 9th & August 23rd

Drop-in Question Answering Sessions

Bring this Gist with you, and folks from the GTF will be available to answer questions. An opportunity for casual conversation in a small-group or one-on-one context...

August 30th — Town Hall Forum

Another opportunity to hear GTF present the information in this issue of The Gist of It and for a gathered assembly of the congregation to dialogue and discuss.

September 27th

Congregational Meeting

*As described inside, a special meeting of the congregation will be called, at which the **congregation will vote** on whether to start a trial run of the proposed paradigm for ministry leadership and governance.*



Introduction

Warmer days have arrived! We hope you will find time to savor the joys of the summer months. We also hope you can take a few minutes to engage on where we are in the governance process.

The Governance Task Force (GTF) has been meeting regularly and has conducted multiple events seeking congregational input. We have consulted often with the Church Council, reviewed the experiences of other congregations, and occasionally sought the advice of Dan Hotchkiss, author of *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*. We keep the SCC congregation informed through this publication, *The Gist of It*.

Wait... Remind me what this is about...

As you probably know, the GTF was established by the Church Council at its meeting of March 4, 2014. The task force was charged to:

- Review and evaluate board and committee structure as well as current practice in terms of their effectiveness and ability to support governance and ministry structure proposed.
- Review and compile existing Council policies and formulate new policies as needed to support the governance and ministry structure proposed, and which ensure a firm and well-marked boundary between governance functions of the Council and the ministry functions of the staff.
- Meet regularly with the Council to affirm proposed changes and to provide the congregation with periodic updates on progress.
- Develop a proposal for a one-year trial of the new structure to commence one week after the 2015 Annual Meeting of the church. Proposal will include any changes to existing policies or bylaws needed to enable the program, these changes to expire if not renewed after the trial year.
- The Governance Task Force is to serve from March 4, 2014 through conclusion of the one-year trial run of the new structure.

Where are we now in the process?

The GTF is pleased to tell you that we have a plan for the trial run of the new governance and ministry structure. This fifth issue of *The Gist of It* will briefly review the governance and ministry structure and will show a timetable from the trial run proposal that the GTF submitted to the Council.

The full proposal includes items already described in earlier issues of *The Gist of It*, such as the philosophy of governance statement (Issue 1), reserved powers of the Congregation (Issue 2), the composition and role of the Governing Board (Issue 3), the composition and role of the Leadership Discernment Committee (Issue 3), and a plan for the ministries of our church, including Lead Ministry Coordinators, Ministry Teams, and plans for Ministry Forums (Issue 4).

You can review all of *The Gist of It* issues as well as the *Interim Report to the Council* which includes the “Governance Structure Trial Run Implementation Plan” on the SCC website: storrscongchurch.org (look for the button on the home page labeled ‘Governance’). The Interim Report is also available in hard copy through the church office.

Timetable:

A Proposed Plan for Implementation

The Governance Task Force (GTF) proposes that the trial run be phased in: beginning in September 2015 with the formation of a subset of ministry teams, establishing at the annual meeting in January 2016 a Governing Board as constituted under the proposed framework, fully forming the rest of the ministry structure by July 2016, and formally approving and implementing-for-the-long-term the new governance structure through bylaws restatement at the annual meeting in January 2017.

The timetable presented below lists the key steps in the process, with assignment of responsibility and congregational involvement along the way:

- **May 5, 2015:** Church Council gives formal approval to the major concepts of the new governance and ministry structure developed over the past year by the GTF. The Council affirms that the congregation will be the body to approve initiation of a trial run. **COMPLETED**
- **May 2015:** The GTF develops a comprehensive description of the proposed new governance and ministry structure for the church. **COMPLETED**
- **June 7, 2015:** Church Council reviews and approves the Trial Run Implementation Plan and agrees to call a congregational meeting, probably in September, to review the implementation plan and approve a trial run. **COMPLETED**
- **August 9, 23, 30 2015:**
 - The GTF holds workshops to present and discuss the proposed new governance and ministry structure for the church and the proposed trial run timetable.
 - The GTF works with ministers to plan for Lead Ministry Coordinators and initial ministry teams.
- **September 1, 2015:**
 - Church Council calls a congregational meeting to approve the trial run, and approves the slate of Lead Ministry

Coordinators (pending congregational approval of Trial Run).

- Council forms the Leadership Discernment Committee to develop a slate of Governing Board members and other officers to present for election at the Annual Business Meeting.

- **September 27, 2015:** **Congregation votes** on initiating trial run.
- **September 2015:**
 - Senior Minister and Lead Ministry Coordinators form ministry teams effective October 1, 2015.
 - GTF and Leadership Discernment Committee discuss strategy for nominations to implement trial Governing Board in January 2016 and develops job description for Governing Board members.

Then, assuming affirmative vote at September 27th meeting:

- **October and November 2015:**
 - The GTF develops policies essential to the formation and early functioning of the Governing Board.
 - The GTF will review the SCC bylaws and identify temporary changes needed to authorize implementation and functioning of the trial run. The GTF will develop motions for the Annual Budget Meeting to continue the trial run, including bylaw amendments as necessary.
 - The GTF will meet with Lead Ministry Coordinators, Senior Minister and Council to evaluate the trial run to date and work with the Finance Board in budget planning.
- **November 3, 2015:** Church Council reviews and approves necessary bylaw amendments and adds them to the Call for the Annual Budget Meeting.
- **December 6, 2015 (Annual Budget Meeting):** The congregation approves bylaws changes necessary to implement a “full” trial run commencing after the Annual Business Meeting in January. The GTF attends and is prepared to answer questions.

Continues ... →

- **December 2015 and January 2016:**
 - The GTF completes initial “Board Policy Book”, monitors nominations process and advises as necessary.
 - The GTF will work with prospective Governing Board members for orientation.
- **January 31, 2016 (Annual Business Meeting):** The congregation approves the slate for Governing Board members, Leadership Discernment Committee members, and other officers. The GTF attends and is prepared to answer questions.
- **February 7, 2016 (approx.):** The Governing Board appoints a Bylaws Revision Committee consisting of the GTF, augmented as appropriate.
- **February to June 2016:** The GTF monitors the progress of the trial run and consults as necessary and begins work on bylaw revisions to implement the new governance and ministry structure.
- The GTF participates in the Ministry Forum and Ministry Fair.
- **July 2016 to January 2017:**
 - The GTF will continue to monitor the progress of the trial run and consult as requested, including surveying the congregation and holding a congregational forum.
 - GTF will complete a draft of new bylaws and present this revision to the Governing Board for approval at Annual Business Meeting in January 2017.
- **January 29, 2017 (Annual Business Meeting):** The **congregation votes** on the bylaw revisions and thereby (if affirmative) formally adopts the new governance and ministry structure for the long-term. The Governing Board and congregation disbands the GTF.

Reviewing the Proposed Framework

For your review, we've included here

- the powers that the congregation formally retains for itself in the new governance structure,
- the make-up of the Governing Board and officers, and
- the proposal for structuring the ministries of our church.

The Bylaws and Powers Reserved by the Congregation

The Bylaws of the Storrs Congregational Church shall specify the governance and operation of the church. Through the bylaws the Congregation reserves certain powers to itself and delegates the authority and responsibility for all other matters to the Governing Board.

Those powers reserved to the Congregation (assembled in a duly-called annual or special meeting) shall be (no person or body shall have the power to do these things save a meeting of the Congregation itself):

- to elect a Pastoral Search Committee
- to extend the 'call' to a candidate to fill a called pastor position
- to request the resignation of a called pastor
- to elect members of the Governing Board and other officers of the congregation
- to remove/recall members of the Governing Board and other officers
- to approve the annual operating budget
- to approve expenditures from 'off-budget' accounts in excess of \$10,000
- to approve capital campaigns
- to adopt a vision of mission
- to approve a long-range and/or strategic plan
- to adopt official positions of the congregation on matters of social justice, national policy, etc.
- to approve buying, selling, or mortgaging property
- to amend or revise the church's Bylaws
- to dissolve or change the denominational affiliation of the Storrs Congregational Church

The Governing Board and Other Officers

The Governing Board shall consist of eleven (11) voting members, along with the called ministers as voices-without-vote. The Governing Board will have two officers: the Chair and Vice-chair, chosen by the Governing Board from among its members each year. The Chair and Vice-chair would also serve as Moderator and Vice-moderator, respectively, for congregational meetings.

The Governing Board may at its discretion appoint sub-committees to assist in its work; anticipated sub-committees could include Finance, Properties, and Personnel. The Treasurer will advise the Governing Board on financial matters. The Clerk will record and file official minutes of Governing Board and congregational meetings.

The Governing Board acts on the congregation's behalf and in service of the congregation's mission in all matters that the congregation has not reserved to itself.

In addition to the Governing Board, the Treasurer, Collector and Assistant Collector, Clerk, and Historian will serve as elected officers of the church. Each will be a member or associate member of the church, will serve a two-year term, and may serve multiple consecutive terms. The Collector and Assistant Collector would ordinarily serve staggered terms. Responsibilities of these officers will be those normally associated with their offices.

The Ministries of our Church

The responsibility and authority for the ministries of the church ultimately rest with the Governing Board guided by any Vision of Ministry policies or strategic planning outcomes adopted by the congregation.

The Governing Board exercises this responsibility and authority through established policy and delegation of responsibility and authority to the Senior Minister and through the Senior Minister to the Lead Ministry Coordinators. The Senior Minister, with the assistance of the 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.

The **fiscal year** shall be the calendar year, January 1 to December 31. Congregationally-elected officers shall serve from annual meeting to annual meeting according to their terms. Congregational vision and goals will be approved on this same basis. The **program year** shall be July 1 to June 30. Ministry goals and organization will be on that basis. Lead Ministry Coordinators will be appointed annually by the Governing Board upon recommendation of the Senior Minister, with terms aligned with the program year.

The active ministry areas of the church will 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 and the proposed lead ministry coordinators are:

- *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 a lead ministry coordinator shall include:

- Defining and staffing ministry teams
- Delegating responsibility and authority within her/his ministry area, as appropriate
- Coordinating the activities of teams and volunteers within her/his area
- Reporting on the performance and effectiveness ministries in her/his area
- 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.

Be in touch with *Your* Governance Task Force...

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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 was published in April, 2015 and includes the following topics:

- ◆ Results of The Annual Meeting Forum
- ◆ A Detailed Description of The Ministries of our Church with a proposal for how ministry leadership would happen in the new framework

Issue 5 (this issue) is published in Summer 2015 and includes:

- ◆ A timetable for a trial run and (assuming the trial run proves successful) longer-term implementation
- ◆ A review of the major aspects of the proposed new framework

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