

Prospect United Methodist Church
Discernment Meeting – **SAS**
(Simplified and Accountable Structure – Mission Possible for the Small Church)
March 3, 2024

Present: Paster Lee, Jeanette Baker, Melissa Brown, Filomena Butler, Alex Carros, Wendy Carros, Gloria Cassidy, Esther Contois, Kathy Dube, Barbara Fasci, Debby Fasci, Heidi Flower, Carla Heister, Tim Krauss, Gerry Lee, Susan Lee, Ohyeun Lee, Lynn Limeburner, Elaine Myhill, Mali Nunley, Jackie Palance, Sue Powers, Beth Provost, Mary Rogers, Colleen Shover, Laura Taylor, Sue Thayer, Don Titus, Mattie Verzino, Christa Zaldivar

Opening Prayer - Pastor Lee

Our strengths and challenges

- A small church is a small number of people who can band together as a family, and sometimes conflicts become “family” conflicts. We need to learn how to work out our conflicts in a healthy way.
- Our strengths - perseverance and ability to overcome challenges, laity, music, nurturing and outreach. We’ve endured change, and we’re financially OK.
- Our challenges - **conflict resolution, leadership training and embracing change.** We need to work on communicating better with each other. We’ve been afraid to address issues and not dealing with problems as they happen as opposed to waiting until they blow up. We should keep an open mind to all changes and learn to compromise.
- We need to learn how to grow our evangelism, reach out in our community, deal with the outside world’s lack of spiritual faith and how to hold ourselves accountable.

Accountable Leadership Cycle. We’ll be committing to do this by addressing issues in a timely manner.

- The first step is to discern and research—the purpose of today’s meeting.
- The next step will be to plan goals that can be measured by evaluating the data that Matti has been collecting, and then planning how to go forward with what we know.

Leadership Board -

- Will combine and perform functions of Council, Trustees, Finance, and SPR into one governing board.
- Will be comprised of nine people.
- Will have a training phase, and will have at least 1/3 men and 1/3 women.
- Will be a governing body, not a “doing” body (i.e. will oversee Building Maintenance Team)
- Will be responsible for communicating to the congregation, to hold “town hall” meetings to disseminate info, to run efficiently and to make decisions quickly.
- Any Board member will be responsible for all four functions.
- Must be a “professing member” of PUMC
- In the eyes of the church each body (council, trustees, finance SPR) will still exist, but the “nine” will be performing as the Leadership Board. The Chair of the Leadership Board (recommendation) performs duties as roles being done now, embodied as Chair of Board. Titles will disappear and called Leadership Board, but will exist on paper.

Leadership Board and Nominations

The Nominating Committee (Laura, Matti and Jackie) will identify and prudently select possible Leadership Board nominees. They will need guidelines..

Motions and Voting

1. A motion was made for PUMC to move forward with SAS. Motion seconded. The majority voted to accept.
2. A motion was made to form an ad hoc body of church members to shepherd the transition (Heidi, Gerry Lee, Beth, Jackie, Sue Powers, Melissa and possibly Mary). Motion seconded. The majority voted to accept.

Misc.

- Simsbury UMC is adopting SAS in their church. Two members, Gene Ott and Deb Clifford, have offered to act as our coaches as we transform / our church.
- Tim will notify the DS by letter our intentions for change.

Upcoming

- We’ll need to discuss how to do ministry with less than half-time pastor.
- How do we SAS?
- These changes are expected to go into effect this summer. The next phase will include training the Nominating Committee. Training for the Leadership Board will start this fall, and the Implementation Phase, begins Jan 1, 2025.
- The next meeting will be held on Sunday, March 24 (Palm Sunday) after service.