

Proposed Changes to the Northwoods Governance Structure

Why? We began this discussion because many of you came to either the Committee on Ministry or the Board and expressed opinions on the current governance structure. You told us that you thought we were top-heavy in leadership, that we had too many elective positions, and that we were using too much of our church volunteer capacity on the Board and CoM and didn't have enough volunteer capacity left to carry out many of the very important functions that keep the church alive and vibrant.

How? The Board and CoM met together, with Kenn Hurto from the UUA, to discuss what's working and what's not working. We had a strong agreement on the things we want to do better (things you've been telling us) and the things we think are working, that we want to keep. We then appointed a smaller group to work on the concepts, with 3 members from the Board, 2 from the CoM, and 2 who are not on either the Board or the CoM. Again, we came to a very quick agreement on what changes need to be made, and a subset of the subset worked on making the Bylaws revisions to support the changes. Simultaneously, the Membership Committee had been considering some changes to the membership sections of the bylaws, and those may be included in the recommended changes. We'll keep you posted on that.

What?

- **NEW SINCE LAST WEEK:** We have talked about changing the definition of who votes in congregation meetings, possibly to include having made a non-anonymous donation. The purpose of this is not to increase donations, but to limit the vote to members who are clearly active, and have a "quorum" which is more realistic. This may or may not make it to the changes to be voted on, on February 7th, *depending on your input*.
- The Board will remain at 8 elected voting members, plus the Minister as a non-voting member. This is not a change.
- The Board and the Committee on Ministry will be combined, eliminating 5 leadership positions.
 - The CoM will be renamed "The Ministry Council" and will report to the Board.
 - The Ministry Council will retain the four Shared Ministry committees we have now: Spiritual Life, Congregational Life, Educational and SEE Justice. Each of these committees will have a Chairperson appointed by the Board. (For the first cycle, elected members of the current Committee on Ministry who have terms remaining will fill the Shared Ministry committee chair positions, if they chose.)
 - One of the Board members will be the Ministry Council Trustee—who will oversee the Ministry Council, and a Foundational Trustee—who will oversee the Foundational Ministry teams. These two Board members were previously "Trustees at Large".
- We propose instituting a Healthy Congregation Committee, which will incorporate the current Conflict Resolution responsibilities, but will focus on a bigger picture of keeping congregational health.

The Healthy Congregations Committee is charged with strengthening the congregation by acting to maintain its health on multiple levels. They are the holistic health practitioners of the congregation. They are committed to maintaining and strengthening the health of the Congregational Body. They promote the health of the congregation as a whole by stewarding the Covenant of Right Relations and educating

the congregation in its use. They restore relationships between congregants through conflict resolution. They work with standing committees and teams to improve church function.

There will be 3 members; one elected by the congregation, one appointed by the board, and one appointed by the minister.

- We recommend that the church Treasurer become the Finance Committee Chair. This is the way most nonprofits operate their Finance Committee.
- We've added Shared Ministry Procedure manuals, to push some decision making down to the committee/team level. The Board will oversee policy, and committees will be responsible for procedures.

These are the major changes. As always, there are word changes here and there, that you will be able to see in the Bylaws.

Please come to one of the town hall meetings and join in the active discussion!!