

A New Lay Organization Plan for Hancock UCC

Approved January 31, 2010

INTRODUCTION

It is proposed that we revisit the organization of the committees and boards of Hancock United Church of Christ in order to better align our decision making with the 2008 Strategic Plan and meet the following five important goals.

- 1. GOAL: Create a greater sense of community and cooperation among committees at Hancock UCC.**
- 2. GOAL: Better use our clergy leadership while maintaining their relationships with leaders and the church family.**
- 3. GOAL: Better use our lay leadership by creating a Strategic Planning Subcommittee of the Standing Committee which will alternate (with the current existing Standing Committee) meeting with the Moderator and Clergy on a monthly basis.**
- 4. GOAL: Better use our lay leadership by the adoption of a two person Moderator/Vice-Moderator leadership model.**
- 5. GOAL: Provide continuity of lay leadership through the church program year by officer, lay minister and committee assignments on program year (as opposed to the current calendar year) basis.**

We are currently governed by nearly two-dozen committees that function for the most part autonomously, and independently of one another. Some are mandated to exist by our bylaws, while others have been created by the Moderator or Standing Committee as need has arisen. In theory, all committees report to the Standing Committee, though with its 25 members, the Standing Committee is too large to function efficiently as a strategic body. In practice, therefore, it is the Moderator who functions as a solitary executive. This is a task undesirably large for any single volunteer: making it less likely that the goals of the Strategic Plan will be met as well as making it extremely difficult to find a person willing to serve as Moderator. (The 2008 Strategic Plan is available on our website www.hancockchurch.org and in the Church office.)

ACTION PLAN

1. GOAL: Create a greater sense of community and cooperation at Hancock UCC.

ACTION: Group all existing committees within one of six Ministries:

- **Ministry of Worship**
 - Board of Deacons*
 - Music and the Arts Committee*
 - Worship Planning Team
 - Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (under development)

- **Ministry of Financial and Human Resources**
 - Finance Committee*
 - Endowment Committee*
 - Stewardship Committee*
 - Personnel Committee

- **Ministry of Physical Resources**
 - Prudential Committee*

- **Ministry of Christian Fellowship**
 - Membership Growth Committee*
 - Parish Life Committee*
 - Nominating (and Leadership Development) Committee*
 - Pastoral and Congregational Care Team (under development)
 - Communications Team (under development) and the Computer Committee

- **Ministry of Christian Education**
 - Children's Christian Education Committee*
 - Youth Christian Education Committee
 - Adult Christian Education Committee
 - Library Committee
 - Teaching Parish Committee

- **Ministry of Mission and Outreach**
 Christian Service Committee*
 Feeding 5000 Committee
 Hancock Environmental Action Team

*asterisked committees are “bylaw committees”

ACTION: Committees within the same Ministry will meet on the same night each month. A large group activity (worship, fellowship, faith-sharing led) will begin the evening, followed by individual meetings.

OUTCOME: Increased communication among committees with common interests.

OUTCOME: Small group fellowship activities leading to getting to know one another better, and increased likelihood of cooperation between committees.

2. GOAL: Better use our clergy leadership while maintaining their relationships with leaders and the church family.

ACTION: Assign a Minister to each Ministry. That Minister will lead the large group activity, attend each meeting for a portion of the time as needed, and remain available to each committee.

OUTCOME: Energized Ministers connected and meeting with committees.

OUTCOME: Ministers spend many fewer evenings each month in meetings, freeing time for teaching and leadership of other activities.

OUTCOME: Clear accountability for the Ministries and the Ministers in their relationship with one another.

3. GOAL: Better use our lay leadership by supplementing our broadly representative Standing Committee with a Strategic Planning Subcommittee to ensure appropriate focus on our Strategic Planning Goals.

ACTION: Supplement the large Standing Committee with the formation of a smaller and yet still representative Strategic Planning Subcommittee consisting of the Chairpersons of the Deacons, Finance, Prudential, Membership, Christian Service, Children's Christian Education, the Treasurer, Clerk, and two Members-at-Large.

ACTION: Amend the Bylaws to provide that Standing Committee shall meet every other month; provided that none of the other rights, duties or obligations of Standing Committee shall be altered or affected. The Strategic Planning Subcommittee of the Standing Committee shall in turn meet with the Clergy and the Moderator on alternating months and shall function as an advisory committee to ensure that the goals of the Strategic Plan are being pursued.

OUTCOME: Maintain a broadly representative Standing Committee with all of its current authority while (i) providing additional strategic planning assistance to the Moderator, (ii) focus for the committees on the Strategic Plan and (iii) encouragement for sharing ideas and multi-committee goals and projects.

OUTCOME: The smaller Strategic Planning Subcommittee will be better able to focus on pursuit of Strategic Plan goals, measure our progress in the achievement of Strategic Plan goals, as well as make recommendations about new or modified Strategic Plan goals to the Standing Committee as needed between Strategic Plans.

OUTCOME: Minutes of the Standing Committee and Strategic Planning Subcommittee shall be made available to entire congregation in a timely fashion

4. GOAL: Better use our lay leadership by making the Moderator position a two person Moderator/Vice Moderator responsibility

ACTION: Amend the By-Laws to provide for a Moderator and Vice-Moderator model pursuant to which (following the initial transition period) for the first 18 months the elected Church member shall serve as Vice Moderator and then for the following 18 months such Church member will serve as Moderator. The Moderator shall work with the clergy and the nominating committee to provide input on the selection of the “incoming” Vice-Moderator. (Given the plan (set forth below) to move the adoption of officers and committees until June, transitionally the next Moderator would have an 24month term starting this January with the first Vice-Moderator being elected in May 2010 and serving until January 2012 as Vice Moderator when this person shall become Moderator and the new Vice Moderator shall be elected).

ACTION: Provide the Moderator with a second in command to assist in fulfilling the responsibilities of the Moderator as well as providing an incoming Vice-Moderator with a period to become familiar with the Moderator’s responsibilities before assuming the Moderator’s role. Tradition of having alternating genders would be continued but as now would not be a rule (general expectation being that we would have both genders represented by the Moderator/Vice-Moderator at any given time).

OUTCOME: Provides a smooth continuity of leadership without placing the entire burden on one person.

OUTCOME: Lightens the load for the Moderator, making it less daunting for busy people to agree to serve.

OUTCOME: Permits the church to draw on the strengths of two persons rather than one. Having the existing Moderator being part of the selection team for the incoming Vice Moderator will help ensure compatibility.

5. GOAL: Align the timing of officers and committee members terms with the annual program year by

**approving officers and committee members at a
Spring Meeting of the Congregation annually in May,
with terms beginning June 1.**

ACTION: Amend the By-laws to require a Spring Meeting on the third Sunday of May each year to receive the report of the Nominating Committee and to approve officers and committee members, with new terms beginning June 1.

ACTION: The Ministers and the Moderator will host a leadership training event in spring or in the early fall.

OUTCOME: No more changing leaders in mid-year (other than the Moderator) as our terms of service match Hancock's effective programming year which runs from September through the following June.

OUTCOME: Meetings and committee work are better organized and more efficient as committee chairs are trained and oriented to the work of achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan.

OUTCOME: This organizational change will not be implemented until June 2010 to provide for more time to process the proposed change.