



A New Path
TOGETHER

Objectives

- Welcome new leaders to work of respective commissions
- Share learnings from Governance Task Force's work
- Invite participation in the process of envisioning different ways of organizing congregational work



Today's plan

- Sharing our “big why” for being here
- Exploring the landscape and clarifying terms
- Break
- Discovering possibilities (while slurping the soup)
- Naming next steps



Table conversation:

1. Why are you here and what unique gifts do you bring to this space and work?
2. What are your hopes for today? For First Mennonite Church? For your community?

“Religious insights provide the handhold that people need to criticize injustice, rise above self-interest, and take risks to achieve healing in a wounded world.

—*Dan Hotchkiss*

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The logo consists of the text 'A New Path' in a green sans-serif font above the word 'TOGETHER' in a larger, bold, dark green sans-serif font. A stylized, light brown hand is shown from the bottom left, with its index finger pointing upwards and to the right, appearing to hold or guide the path.

COAVES AND FISHSTICKS BY JOHN EDWARDS



How did we get here?

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Governance and Ministry

RETHINKING BOARD LEADERSHIP

Dan Hotchkiss

Foreword by Anthony B. Robinson

SECOND EDITION

Shifting waters

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Shifting waters

- It's not 1950 anymore — we see stability differently now
- Demographic shifts (e.g. SAH parents, retirees)
- Congregational size and age
- People ***ACTUALLY*** tried to get on committees



Governance

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Governance

Purpose: deploy congregation's power in a way that is both effective and legitimate

Top-level tasks: articulate mission; select strategy; make sure it happens; ensure money, people, property protected

Governance

Outcomes: minutes, policies, mission statements, goals, strategic planning documents

Requires: delegating power to those who direct daily work & holding them accountable; representative groups with orderly discussions

Governance

Holds whole institution and its work in trust and sees that congregation lives in harmony with its values

Ministry

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A stylized graphic of a hand holding a path, with the text 'A New Path TOGETHER' overlaid. The hand is brown and appears to be holding a path that leads upwards and to the right. The text 'A New Path' is in a green, sans-serif font, and 'TOGETHER' is in a bold, dark green, sans-serif font.

Ministry

- The rest of what a congregation does
- Practical work of changing lives
- Achieves inward and outward results the congregation exists to achieve

Ministry

Requires: writing job descriptions, setting goals, conducting evaluations, hiring and firing staff

Includes: decisions about WHAT to do and HOW to do → made by program leadership or designated ministry decision maker

Governance

Committees & task forces

Ministry

Ministry teams

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Governance

Committees & task forces should:

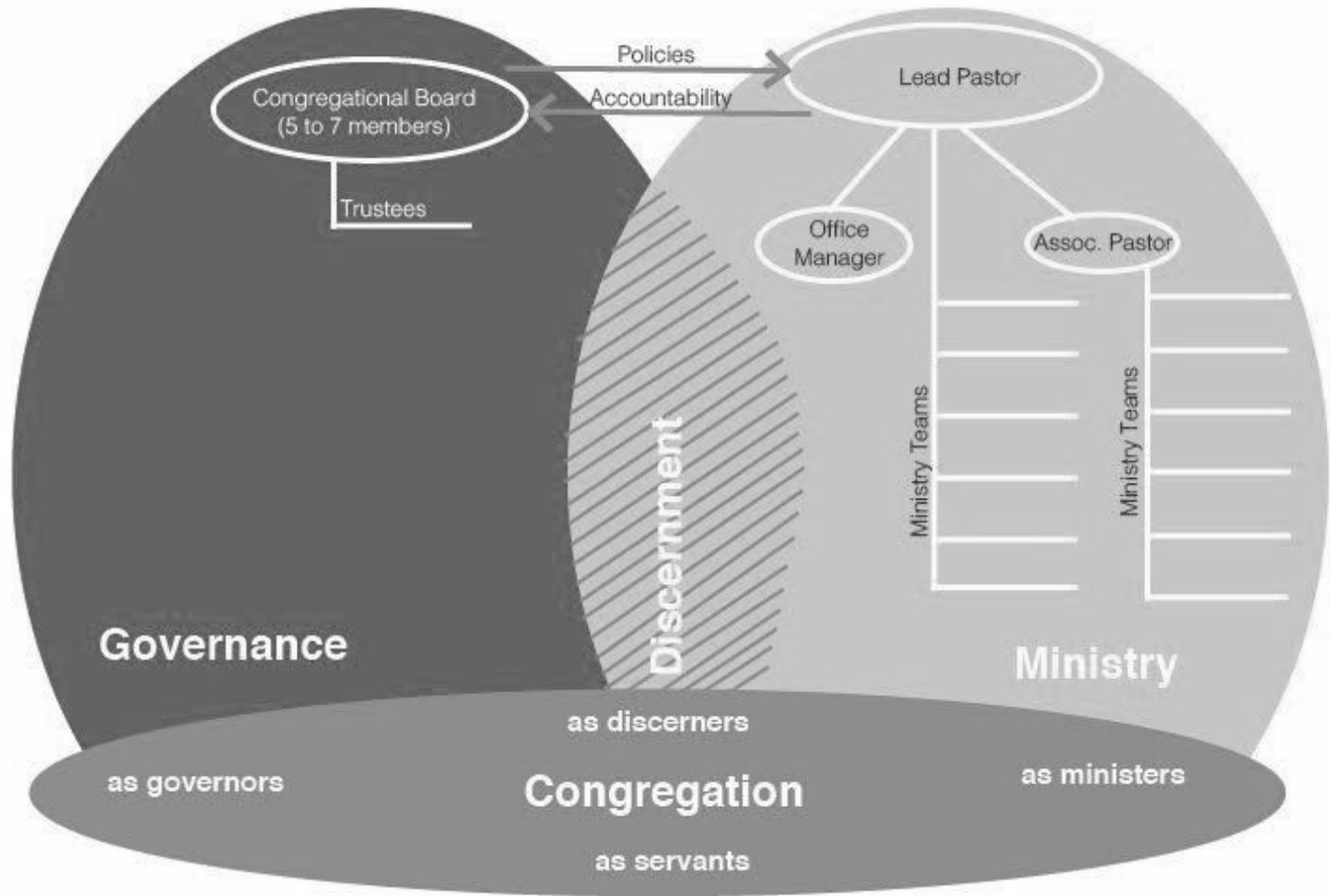
- Help board have well-informed conversations & decisions
- Be separate from ministry teams
- Be temporary & appointed in light of IMMEDIATE board needs
- Report back to board frequently & keep work on short timeline

Ministry

Ministry teams:

- Produce practical results
- Invite people into mutually supportive & inspiring friendships
- Shouldn't have "the" as part of title (b/c this limits others)
- When separated from committee work, can serve w/o the burden of too wide a scope of decision making





Examples

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“Our Gifts Discernment Committee didn’t really discern, call, and nurture gifts. We managed a spreadsheet of people who turned us down. People even started avoiding eye contact with me after church and at potlucks.”

— Marathana Prothro,
Former Chair of Gifts Discernment, Shalom Mennonite Church

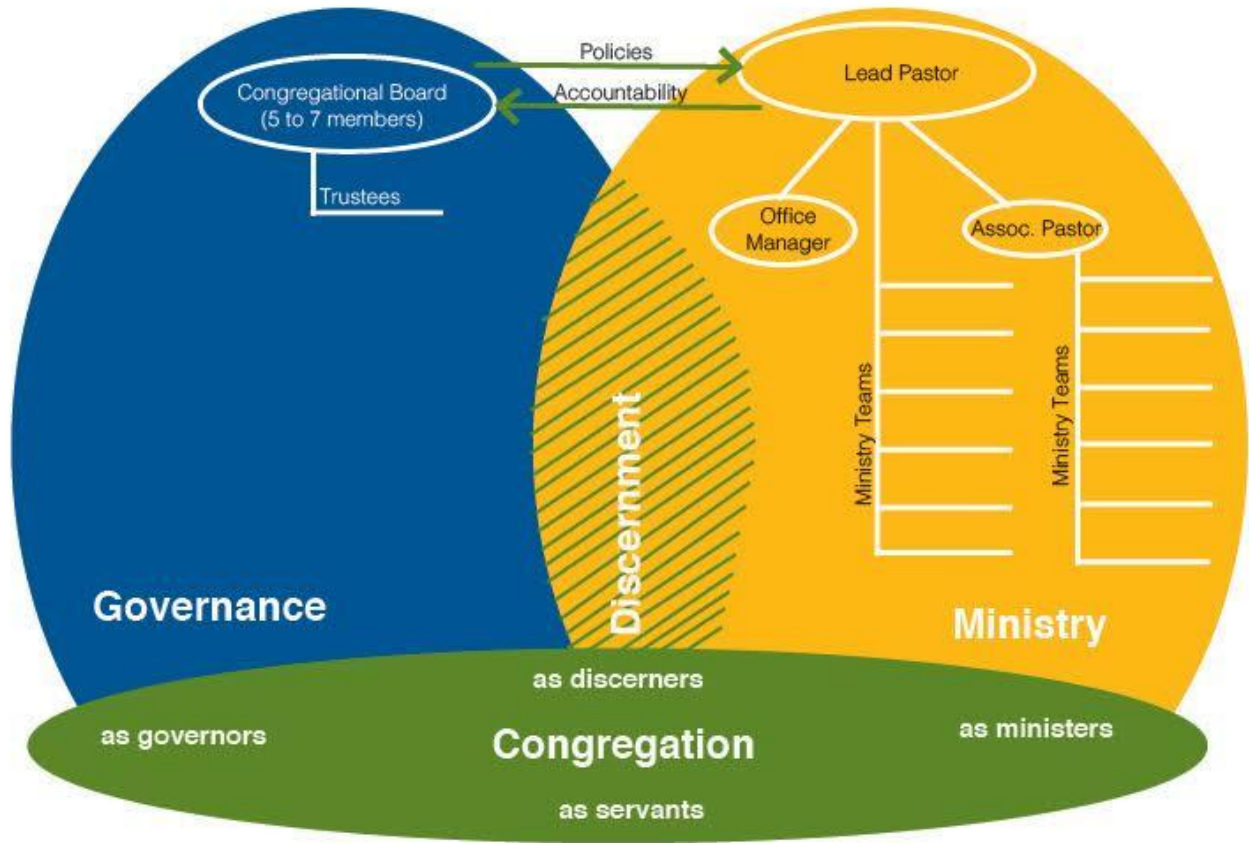


Shalom Mennonite Church, 25-ish

- Membership hits 125-ish mark
- Transitional pastor in place
- Committees and coordinating council
- “Gifts discernment” was a nightmare

Shalom Mennonite Church

- Formed a Structure Inquiry Task Force
- Researched, reported, listened, drafted, reported, tweaked, jumped in
- Suspended bylaws for one year
- Started experimenting in small ways



Shalom Mennonite Church Structure Proposal

“We started to look and see how to do things differently to keep people from being tired to revitalize our core group.”

— Anita Amstutz, pastor
Albuquerque Mennonite Church

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Albuquerque Mennonite Church, 18-ish

- Doubled membership in three years
- 10-15 people did most of the work
- Structure based on committees and a council

Albuquerque Mennonite Church

- Eliminated all committees
- Created three “leaves” based on unique congregational strengths and passions
- Congregation grew
- Adapted and added structures to support essential ministries (see handout)

“I would encourage others to be who you are, only be more of yourself. Look at your assets, look at yourselves, and then look forward. You can’t do what you aren’t, and you can’t do everything.”

— Ken Gingerich, AMC member



And closer to home...

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— Ken Gingerich, AMC member



Break:

*Return seated with
your leadership group*

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Vision: Healing & Hope

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy, and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

FMC Five Priorities

1. Following Jesus
2. Nurturing faith
3. Connecting
4. Worshipping
5. Gifts Expression

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A stylized illustration of a hand in shades of brown and orange, pointing upwards from the bottom left towards the word 'TOGETHER'.

Aligned reflection

- Focus ONLY on the question at hand for each time period
- NO evaluative comments (or corrections)
- Everyone at table must contribute
- Note taker rotates with questions

The questions:

- What information do you still need?
- What possible barriers do you see?
- What new opportunities does it help you imagine?

Question 1:

What information do you still need?

Question 2:

What possible barriers do you see?

Question 3:

What new opportunities does it help you imagine?

Conversation for your first meeting:

- What are you doing?
- What of your work is governance?
- What is ministry?
- What is discernment?
- Reflect on alignment you see with Five Priorities.

*Will be shared with you for future reference



Lunch conversation:

What opportunities do you see for embodying new ways of doing and being?

Look at Five Priorities, the strengths around your table and opportunities you named. Find overlap and begin to identify together two to 3 things you commit to pursuing.

*Work on flip chart paper around room



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Together, we sense...

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And so it begins...

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With special thanks

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- Kerry Bush –
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- Grace
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- Terry Schey –
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