

MOUNT CROSS CHURCH COUNCIL AD HOC COMMITTEE  
REIMAGINING CHURCH COMMITTEES REPORT DECEMBER 2023

**KEY FINDINGS ON THE 2023 STATUS OF COMMITTEES:**

- COMMITTEES ARE DOING THE WORK OF THE CHURCH: 1) CARRY OUT THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH; 2) HELP US LIVE OUR BAPTISMAL PROMISES; 3) PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS TO SERVE; AND 4) OFFER EXPERIENCES OF THE SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY.
- WE RECOGNIZE THE ESSENTIAL PURPOSE OF ALL EXISTING COMMITTEES/TEAMS AND DO NOT RECOMMEND ANY FOR ELIMINATION OR MERGER.
- CHURCH COUNCIL HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE SUCCESS OF COMMITTEES AND NEEDS TO INCREASE INVOLVEMENT AND OVERSIGHT: 1) LIAISONS SHOULD PROVIDE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TO ASSIGNED COMMITTEES AND BRING NOT ONLY SUMMARIES OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES/ACTION TO COUNCIL BUT ALSO REPORT ANY NEEDS OR EXISTING PROBLEMS; AND 2) THE TOTAL BODY OF THE COUNCIL SHOULD ALSO BE ACTIVE IN GENERAL WITH COMMITTEES. Examples: the needs of the Welcome Team and Fellowship Committees
- UPDATES /IMPROVEMENTS ARE NEEDED –
  - DEFINITION/DESCRIPTION OF MISSION/PURPOSE OF EACH COMMITTEE OR TEAM SHOULD BE REVIEWED EACH YEAR AND UPDATED AS NEEDED. COMMITTEE GOALS SHOULD BE PREPARED BY COUNCIL LIAISONS ALONG WITH THE COMMITTEE/TEAM LEADERS FOR USE IN CHURCH MATERIALS.  
This information should be used consistently in the Church Council Handbook, Annual Reports, and other communications about the work of committees at Mount Cross.
  - COUNCIL NEEDS TO CAREFULLY REVIEW THE UPDATED MISSION AND GOAL DESCRIPTIONS OF ALL COMMITTEES/TEAMS TO IDENTIFY ANY GAPS IN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY. IF GAPS IN RESPONSIBILITY ARE FOUND, COLLABORATING WITH COMMITTEES AND LIAISONS, THE COUNCIL SHOULD MODIFY THE ASSIGNED MISSION(S) SO THAT ALL RESPONSIBILITY GAPS ARE COVERED.  
Example- Presently there seems to be no clear assignment for oversight of the church kitchen.
  - COUNCIL SHOULD OVERSEE THE UPDATING AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE COUNCIL HANDBOOK SECTION ON COMMITTEE/TEAMS. THIS SECTION TO ALSO CONTAIN NEW INFORMATION PERTAINING TO ANY OTHER CHANGE(S) MADE BASED ON THE ADOPTION OF CHANGES SUGGESTED BY OR DEVELOPED FOLLOWING THIS REPORT.

Important to include updated guidelines for the conduct of committee business and meeting, formatting meeting agendas, communications to the Church Council, and providing information to the congregation.

- PROVIDE COMMITTEES WITH UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR THE CONDUCT OF COMMITTEE BUSINESS – MEETING AGENDAS, COMMUNICATION TO CHURCH COUNCIL, AND INFORMATION TO THE CONGREGATION
- CHURCH COUNCIL TO OVERSEE THE UPDATING OF THE CHURCH BY-LAWS TO CORRESPOND TO THE MOUNT CROSS CONSTITUTION IN REGARD TO COMMITTEES WITH ELECTED OR APPOINTED POSITIONS.  
Example – Audit Committee
- COMMITTEES/TEAMS CURRENTLY WITH TOO FEW OR NO VOLUNTEER MEMBERS NEED COUNCIL ASSISTANCE IN RESOLVING THIS SITUATION.  
The council needs to assist to identify priorities and gaps in current efforts, and focusing available the resources of the church in the most effective ways.
- THERE NEEDS TO BE A SYSTEM FOR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN COMMITTEES/TEAMS FOR PURPOSES OF SCHEDULING, THEMES, AND GOAL SETTING. THIS WILL LIMIT THE POSSIBILITY OF DUPLICATING OR WORKING AT ODDS.  
For purposes of scheduling, selecting themes, and deciding the nature of an event, regular direct interaction between groups would be useful.
- A CONSCIOUS EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO MAKE VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION AVAILABLE IN A WIDE VARITEY OF TIMES, DATES AND WAYS IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE WORK LOAD OF OTHERS SERVING ON COMMITTEES AND ACHIEVE THE GOAL OF TOTAL CONGREGATION INVOLVEMENT.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHURCH COUNCIL ACTION TO ENHANCE THE ROLE OF COMMITTEES:**

- UNDERTAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO MATTERS NOTED ABOVE.
- HAVE COMMITTEES/TEAMS IDENTIFY PROJECTS AND/OR TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR MISSION THAT CAN BE PERFORMED OR ACCOMPLISHED INDEPENDENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP. THIS REMOVES THE REQUIREMENT THAT A VOLUNTEER MUST ATTEND A REGULAR MEETING IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE.  
There are groups that by their very nature may not be suited to this such as the Personnel Committee, Audit Committee, etc. For other committees there are possibilities that cover a range from a single person’s task to a sub-program. (See A NEW LOOK AT HOW COMMITTEES MIGHT WORK below)
- SCHEDULE A “ALL WHO SERVE” GATHERING ON A REGULAR BASIS 2 TIMES A YEAR. THE CHURCH COUNCIL SHOULD FACILITATE THIS TO MAKE CERTAIN THE SESSIONS ARE BOTH USEFUL AND ENCOURAGING ASPECTS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE.  
This would be the “all committees gathering” referred to earlier in the report. Such a gathering could allow sharing between less obviously related groups that might also be helpful.

- HIGHLIGHT TASK/PROJECTS OR UNDERTAKINGS THAT ARE ASSOICATED WITH COMMITTEES/TEAMS THAT CURRENTLY DO NOT REQUIRE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP OR COULD BE TREATED IN THIS MANNER.  
Set a goal to have this type of oppportunity available as broadly as possible. Many no doubt exist and have just not been identified as such. This may aid those who are new to this approach. This is a good project for Council Liaison along with Committee Chair or leadership.
- TIME AND TALENT FORM FOR 2023 GENEROSITY CAMPAIGN NEEDS REVIEW TO SEE IF THIS SIMPLIFIED VERSION WAS HELPFUL IN RECRUITING MORE VOLUNTEERS.
- PLAN A RALLY DAY TYPE ACTIVITY TO INFORM AND RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS IN EARLY 2024.  
This is an oppportunity for committees and teams to present their ministries and how volunteers can get involved in the ministry in a small task or committee membership.
- INSTRUCT COMMITTEES TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE CHURCH OFFICE FOR SPACE USE AND CALENDERING.
- THROUGH CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS, COMMITTEES TO INFORM THE CONGREGATION AS TO THEIR MINISTRY HAPPENINGS ON A REGULAR BASIS.
- VOLUNTEERS SHOULD RECEIVE AN ANNUAL THANK YOU. THIS COULD BE A FUN ACTIVITY OR A SIMPLE THANK YOU BUT A NECESSARY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

+++++

**Allison Johnson, Chair**

**Gayle Johnson**

**Susan Prosser**

**Elliott Ripley**

**Pastor Julie Morris**

**Submitted December 2023**

## **A NEW LOOK AT HOW COMMITTEES MIGHT WORK**

**Committee** – a group holding regular meetings with specific membership – oversees the mission of the committee and decides the primary functions and activities, oversees budget and funding, and communicates with the Church Council and the congregation. May directly undertake functions and/or serve as support to those functions performed by others within the congregation.

**Committee Functions** - can stand alone under the Committee “Umbrella” that will not require that volunteer participants be members of the Committee nor attend regular Committee meetings unless by interest of their own. There will often be a committee member who serves as a link to the function but the Committee Chair may serve instead as the link to all active functions. A function can range from one participant to several or a group of volunteers and will vary from committee to committee.

### **EXISTING UMBRELLA FUNCTION EXAMPLES –**

**CARE TEAM CARD MINISTRY** This program matches willing volunteer individuals and/or families with Mount Cross members for the purpose of regular contact with notes or greeting cards. A Care Team member coordinates both the list of recipients and the assigned volunteers. A substantial number of those serving as volunteers are NOT members of the Care Team and make their own decisions about how many members they would like to be paired with and their manner of interacting with their “partner(s)”.

The volunteer coordinator makes contact and builds a relationship with the volunteers and the volunteers often build a relationship with the card recipients.

**PROPERTY COMMITTEE VOLUNTEER CHURCH WINDOW WASHING** - A regular Church Workday volunteer early in her experience with the “once-in-a-while Saturday work days” decided that she would take it upon herself to routinely wash the church windows that can be accessed without a ladder. This is a splendid example of something that does not require a fixed date or time and can be conducted to meet the church’s needs and a variable schedule.

The Property Committee has more of these kinds of tasks but so do other committees that would not require the same type of labor. This example depicts one person undertaking a single task which might inspire someone else to offer to help or take on a second task that could be done in tandem and create a relationship between members.

**HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE – SINGLE ALL CHURCH FUNCTION** – Using the annual Worship in the Park and Church Picnic as an example. The Hospitality Committee in collaboration with the Worship and Music Committee and the Church Council would first agree on a Sunday for the event early in the beginning of a new calendar year. The Hospitality Committee would then delegate a member to watch the city park reservation system to make the reservation for the desired park on the chosen date. Once the date and location is locked down, the assigned tasks can be separated among various committees and can be “tasked” out.

The Hospitality Committee's aspect of responsibility for the church picnic can be tasked to a specific group uniquely interested in hosting this function with responsibility for décor, food, beverage and games/entertainment. The Committee can elect to have a member take the lead or seek a unique group including a lead to take on this task. Nothing bars members of the Hospitality committee from volunteering to help with the picnic if they wish. This **Church Picnic Task Group** would make periodic progress reports to the Hospitality Committee which could include requests for funds, supplies and further assistance; suggested publicity, and ultimately provide an assessment of the event with future suggestions. When the event has concluded, the task group for this purpose ends their assignment.

Ad Hoc Reimagining Committee, December 2023