



# **Session and Ministry Reorganization Plan**

April 26, 2016

FREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Session and Ministry Reorganization  
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FREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Organizational Study  
**Mission and Vision Statements**



## MISSION STATEMENT

- Creating space for people to become life-long followers of Jesus
- Relentlessly pursuing the transformation of our neighborhood, Sacramento and the world

## VISION STATEMENT

To Be Determined

FREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Organizational Study

**Identified problems: What are we trying to fix?\***



The following observations have been collected from individual elders and staff members over the last two years.

1. Session's agenda is filled with business and management issues, leaving little time and energy for big picture vision, discernment, prayer, and oversight. The Biblical role of elder is being crowded out with operational issues.
2. The roles of staff and elders are unclear. When a program staff member is assigned an elder, both the elder and the staff member are uncertain how to work together. In this dynamic duo, who leads who? Does the elder "approve" the staff member's ideas or does the staff member "approve" the elder's ideas? Who initiates communication? What is the authority level of the staff member? What is the authority of the elder/committee chair? Who leads this dance? If we aren't sure, both dance partners step on each other's toes and the beauty and joy of the dance is lost.
3. More volunteers are needed in active hands-on roles. In today's world, people have less time to give. Asking church members to commit to standing committees actually competes with their commitment to more hands-on ministry involvement. If volunteers have only one night to give, how do we want them to use it? How do they want to use it? Are there more effective ways to steward the time of church members? Would we and they be better served by moving members from committees to active ministry teams? How do we increase volunteerism at Fremont?
4. The committee structure and staff structure create parallel and redundant lines of authority. For example, when our High School Ministry Director wants approval for an event, does he take the idea to his assigned elder, who takes it to the Student Ministry Committee? Who takes it to the Session? Or does he take it to his staff supervisor, who takes it to the senior staff? This needs to be clarified. Currently, program staff members have a supervisor (employment chain) and an elder (committee chain) and are not always clear about when to use each.
5. We need greater emphasis on the larger church. Both staff and Session are currently structured as representational bodies. That is, each person represents a department or sub-ministry. This can foster a competitive spirit in which each person advocates for and defends the needs and desires of their own department ("silos"). We need greater emphasis on the larger church as a whole. A big-picture non-department leadership body could be helpful.
6. Decision making is slow. A more accountable and defined role for decision making on day to day tasks is needed.

FREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Organizational Study  
**Why Change? What are the Benefits?\***



Increased Volunteerism – Today’s environment of two income families, a challenging world economy, and highly structured childhood activities to name a few issues, puts significant time strains on individuals and families. The Team approach allows people to make commitments to projects rather than to standing committees. We live in a dying world that desperately needs to know the Savior. This Team approach enables people to more flexibly engage in a specific efforts / projects with set goals and durations, enabling more people to find ways to make fulfilling contributions to the Mission of Christ.

Increased Resources Allocated to the Body of Christ and His Mission – The Elders of the church currently oversee all activities of the church. They continue to do so in the new structure. The role of leading teams will shift to members of staff and volunteer ministry leaders. The role of managing the administrative functions (e.g. finances, administration and personnel) will remain directly under the Elder’s oversight. This will enable Elders to focus more on the spiritual issues of discernment, guarding the faith, and directing the mission of the church (i.e. It returns us to our roots and the role of Elders in the book of Acts).

Session – The current Session of Fremont includes 15 ruling elders and 1-3 teaching elders. The new structure of 9 ruling elders and 1-3 teaching elders will enable a more effective and efficient decision-making process and the opportunity for a more close-knit leadership community to be developed in the Session.

More Opportunities for Volunteer Involvement – The Team approach places people together for projects. Some will be longer in duration while others will be shorter. Their functions will vary. This flexible approach to pursuing the mission of the church should increase volunteer fulfillment and will increase resource effectiveness.

Speed of Decision Making and Increased Definition for Responsibilities – The new structure creates a more accountable and defined role for decision making on day to day tasks. It also leaves day to day operations and projects in the hands of the Program Staff under the oversight of the Session. The world we live in is very dynamic and is becoming more so every day. Timely and effective decision making is important for us to effectively pursue the mission of Christ.

\* *Adapted from a study prepared by Ward Presbyterian Church (August 2009)*

FREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Organizational Study  
**Recommended Roles and Responsibilities**



Fremont is led by elders, guided by the staff, and gifted through the membership.

### Elders/Session

*The ministry of the Session is one of spiritual oversight.*

Active elders serving on the Session function primarily as discerners and guardians of the church. They are not expected to oversee specific projects or ministry areas in their capacity as elders. They function as overseers for the entire organization. The Session evaluates the effectiveness and direction of Fremont according to its mission, resources, and doctrine. They also enable the ministry of others by providing important “resources” for ministry through oversight of Finance and Personnel. Elders are elected to the Session by the congregation to a three-year term.

### Deacons

*The ministry of the deacons is one of sympathy and service.*

The Deacons visit the sick, provide financial assistance to people in need, prepare the Lord’s Supper for worship services, host memorial service receptions, and generally provide ministries of help and compassion. Deacons are elected by the congregation to a three-year term. The Deacons are accountable to the Session.

### Program Staff

*The ministry of the Program Staff is one of leadership and programming.*

The Program Staff is a group of management-level staff members led by the Pastor/Head of Staff. The purpose of this group is to determine programming, give vision to the various ministries of the organization, supervise staff, and oversee the day-to-day operations of the church and its ministries. Session approves the hiring of all Program Staff members, with the exception of called associate pastors and senior pastor, who are hired by the congregation.

### Senior Staff

*The ministry of the Senior Staff is one of leadership, coordination and communication.*

The Senior Staff is a subset of the Program Staff and consists of the Pastor/Head of Staff, Associate and Assistant Pastors and Executive Minister. Each member of the Senior Staff is responsible to implement the overall vision of the church through the ministry activities of the Program Staff and Ministry Teams under their oversight and to communicate the activities of the Program Staff and the Ministry Teams to the Session on a regular monthly basis.

*(continued)*

## **Recommended Roles and Responsibilities (continued)**

### **Professional and Support Staff**

*The ministry of the Professional and Support Staff is one of service and support.*

The Professional and Support Staff are hired to provide administrative, financial and facility support to the programs and ministries of Fremont.

### **Ministry Teams**

*The ministry of Ministry Teams is one of implementation.*

The ministries of Fremont are administered by leadership teams who coordinate the vision and priorities of each ministry and implement the ministry under the direction of the respective Program Staff member and the volunteer Ministry Team Leader. The overall activities of the Teams are coordinated at the Program Staff level.

### **Ministry Focus Groups**

*The ministry of Ministry Focus Groups is to coordinate the broad ministries of the church in each of the three main areas of focus: Discipleship, Community Engagement and Member Care.*

All the ministry teams, team leaders and staff members of a defined ministry group shall meet semi-annually with the Session to develop broad strategy, create synergy and implement broad ministry that supersedes the boundaries of any one ministry team.

### **Leadership Retreats**

*Leadership Retreats are semi-annual gatherings of the Session, Senior Staff and Program Staff for vision, planning, coordination and relationship development.*

The above leaders gather for a weekend retreat in the Fall and a daylong retreat in the Spring.

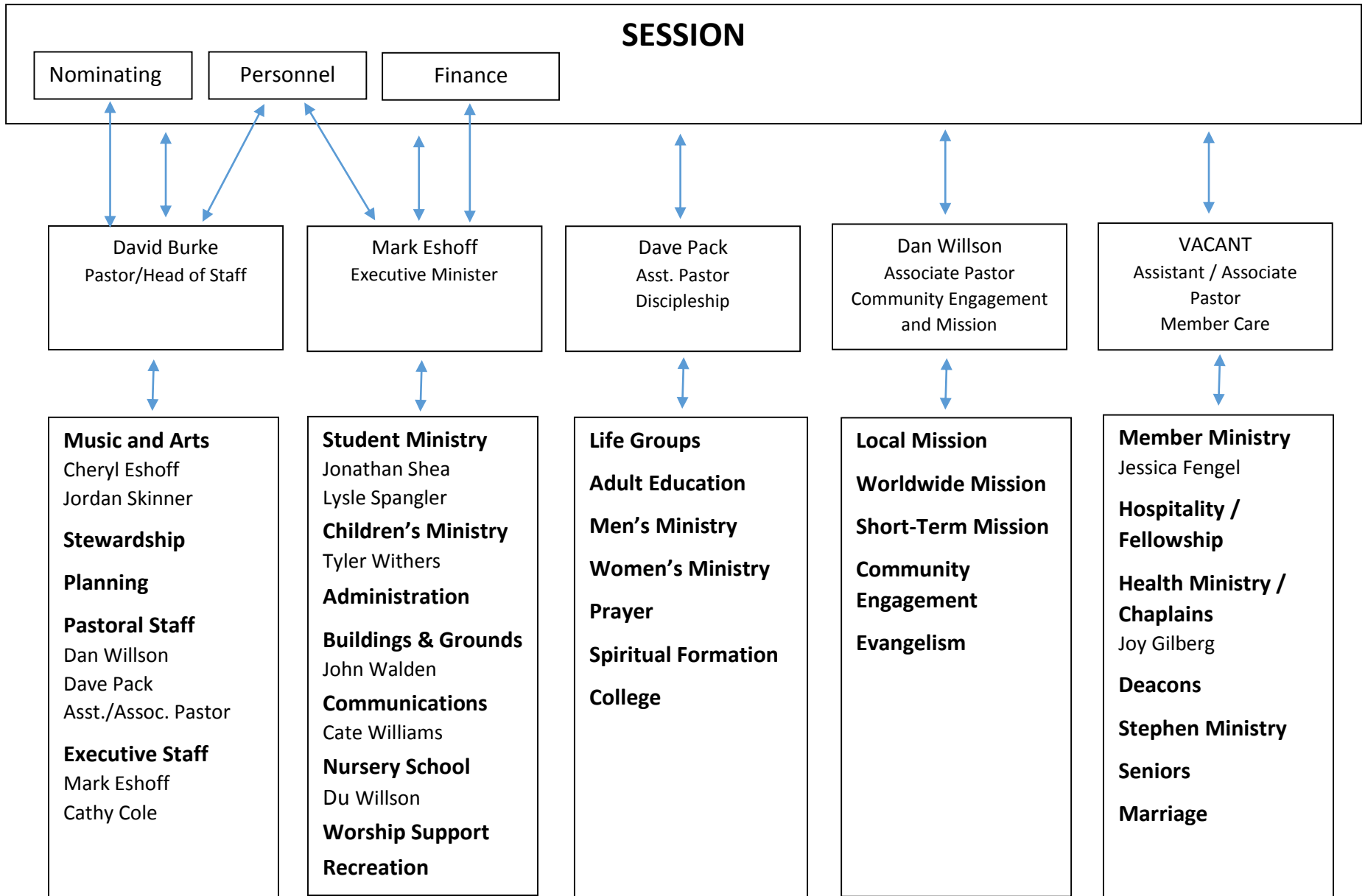
### **Leadership Community**

*The Leadership Community is an annual gathering of church leaders for the purpose of vision casting, information, and training.*

The leader of every ministry team joins the Session, Senior Staff, and other Program Staff members for an open exchange of ideas and information.



**Session / Staff / Ministry Team Relationships**





## The Role of Session

### SESSION RESPONSIBILITIES

Set the overall vision, direction and priorities of the church

Take responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the whole congregation and for each individual member

Develop strategy to increase the effectiveness of the church as a whole

Direct special church-wide efforts to further the overall goals of the church (ie. discipling, community engagement and care) through regular Ministry Focus Group meetings and strategic planning

Engage with various ministry leaders to encourage cross-coordination and leverage of ministry efforts

Train and disciple both potential and developing leaders

Connect with members of the church throughout the year, especially those who are not specifically involved, and seek to provide encouragement, support and spiritual nurture where needed

Pray for the church, both individually and as a group

Stay informed and aware of program and ministry effectiveness through communication from senior staff members to insure that the goals of the church and Session are being fulfilled

Provide spiritual guidance and support to ministry areas or teams when needed

Provide support to staff and/or team leaders when special needs arise, such as staff vacancies or unusual challenges

Approve the hiring of program staff members and approve all ministry team leaders, all of whom will be responsible to implement the programs and ministries of the church in the most effective manner possible



## **ELDER / MEMBER OF SESSION**

**DATE:** July 2016

### **OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY**

The Bible identifies the responsibilities for elders in the life of any church to include

- Being shepherds and overseers of the flock (Acts 20:17-38)
- Providing effective leadership over the affairs of the church, including preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17-18)
- Overseeing and managing God's household (Titus 1:7)
- Shepherding of God's flock, watching over them, and leading by example (1 Peter 5:1-4)
- Praying for the sick (James 5:14).

The EPC Book of Order (BOO) identifies the role of an elder to watch over the spiritual welfare of the congregation, to represent the mind of Christ, and to be a life model for congregation (BOO 9-8). At Fremont, elders fulfill these responsibilities by serving as an ongoing part of the leadership community of the church. When called by the congregation, ruling elders may also serve in an active role on the Session.

### **RULING ELDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The EPC BOO identifies the following specific responsibilities of a Ruling Elder in G 9-10, whether an Inactive Ruling Elder or Active Ruling Elder on active service on Session (Session Elder):

- Study and learn the Word, teach the Word
- Be an undershepherd – visit the sick, bereaved, lonely, aged, shut-in, all those with pastoral need
- Develop the spiritual life of children
- Connect with inactive members
- Encourage new members in their spiritual development
- Show care for the congregation
- Watch for moral failure – warn, admonish, reclaim, discipline

*(continued)*

## **SESSION AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The EPC Book of Order (G 18-1) specifies that the entire life of the local church is under the oversight and supervision of the Session. The Session is called to establish its own rules of governance and oversee/supervise the life of the church (BOO 16-10). BOO G18-3 identifies the following specific authority and responsibilities of Session, which is made up of Active Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders:

- Oversee the time and place of worship, special services, music, special offerings, and the sacraments without infringing on the responsibility of the Pastor as set forth in the Book of Order
- Organize itself within the bounds of the EPC Constitution and lawful acts of the higher Church Courts for the advancement of the gospel and mission of the local congregation
- Initiate the ministry of evangelism
- Oversee the discipleship ministries of the church, leading members to maturity in Christ
- Monitor the spiritual conduct of members
- Make baptism a priority and provide instruction on baptism
- Receive members and manage membership
- Establish a budget
- Oversee educational programs
- Oversee the work of the Deacons
- Train and examine those elected to the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon
- Establish policy regarding use of the facilities
- Provide worship leadership when there is no Pastor
- Advance the mission and ministry of the church
- Order special offerings, days of prayer, days of fasting, days of worship, or other matters that benefit the spiritual life of the congregation
- Do whatever is necessary for the spread of the gospel, edification of members, the well-being of the congregation, the advancement of the kingdom, and the growth in grace of all.

At Fremont, the Session shall fulfill these responsibilities in the following ways:

- One Session Elder and one inactive elder selected by the Session, preferably from the outgoing class or a recent class, shall serve on the Nominating Committee to assist in identifying potential spiritual leaders in the life of the church and to assure that the priorities of the Session are being considered in that discernment.
- One Session Elder shall serve on the Personnel Committee to assist in the support, nurture, direction and accountability of church staff members.
- One Session Elder shall serve on the Finance Committee to oversee the financial activities of the church, including the establishment of a recommended budget that will be approved by the full Session.
- All members of Session will:
  - Set the overall vision, direction and priorities of the church
  - Take responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the whole congregation and for each individual member

*(continued)*

## **SESSION RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)**

- Develop strategy to increase the effectiveness of the church as a whole
- Direct special church-wide efforts to further the overall goals of the church (ie. discipleship, community engagement and care) through regular meetings with Ministry Focus Groups and strategic planning
- Train and disciple both potential and developing leaders
- Meet with various ministry leaders to encourage cross-coordination and leverage of ministry efforts
- Connect with members of the church throughout the year, especially those who are not specifically involved, and seek to provide encouragement, support and spiritual nurture where needed
- Provide spiritual guidance and support to ministry areas or teams when needed
- Pray for the church, both individually and as a group
- Stay informed and aware of program and ministry effectiveness through communication from senior staff members to insure that the goals of the church and Session are being fulfilled
- Provide support to staff and/or team leaders when special needs arise, such as staff vacancies or unusual challenges
- Approve the hiring of program staff members and approve all ministry team leaders, all of whom will be responsible to implement the programs and ministries of the church in the most effective manner possible

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

The Session will oversee the programs and ministries of the church through Senior Staff members, who will provide leadership, coordination and facilitation of the necessary teams and staff. Matters of concern in any of the following areas of ministry needing Session guidance or approval shall be brought to the Session by the following Senior Staff members and matters of import discussed or decided by the Session shall be communicated on a regular basis to the respective ministry areas by these staff members:

- Pastor / Head of Staff – Worship, Music and Arts, Personnel, Stewardship, Planning
- Associate Pastor for Community Engagement and Mission – Worldwide Mission, Local Mission, Short-term Mission, Community Engagement, Evangelism
- Assistant Pastor for Discipleship – Life Groups, Adult Education, Spiritual Formation, Men’s Ministry, Women’s Ministry, College Ministry, Prayer
- Associate/Assistant Pastor for Member Care – Member Ministry, Deacons, Member Care, Hospitality, Fellowship, Health Ministry, Chaplains, Stephen Ministry, Seniors, Marriage
- Executive Minister – Administration, Finance, Building and Grounds, Children’s Ministry, Student Ministries, Worship Support, Communications, Recreation, Nursery School.

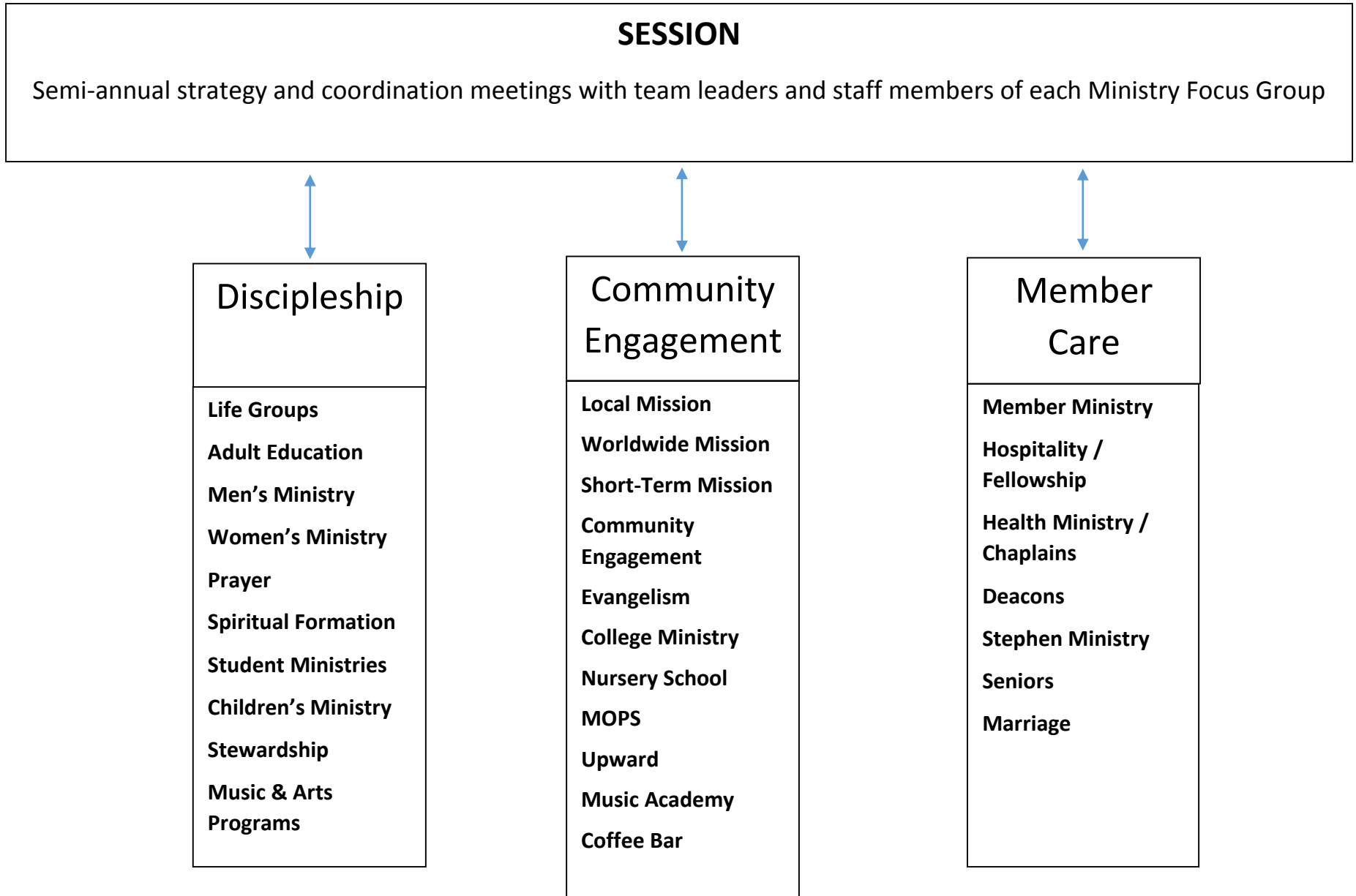
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## **QUALIFICATIONS OF AN ELDER**

The following qualifications of an elder are found in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1:

- Above reproach, blameless
- Faithful to his/her spouse
- Temperate, not overbearing
- Self-controlled, not quick-tempered
- Respectable
- Hospitable
- Able to teach
- Not given to drunkenness
- Not a lover of money or given to pursuing dishonest gain
- Manages his/her family well in a manner that is worthy of full respect, with obedient children who believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient
- Not a recent convert
- Good reputation with outsiders
- Not violent
- Loves what is good
- Upright
- Holy
- Disciplined
- Committed to God's Word, holds firmly to sound doctrine, able to refute those who oppose God's Word

## Leadership Strategy and Implementation: MINISTRY FOCUS GROUPS





## **DISCIPLESHIP**

Develop an intentional plan to make disciples that incorporates life groups, adult education, retreats, prayer, service opportunities and other spiritual formation activities

Develop a self-administered measure of Christian maturity to aid in personal spiritual growth

Coordinate discipleship activities with a planned new Leadership Development program

Review staff plans for a coordinated scope and sequence plan for children's and youth education from age 0 through grade 12

## Ministry Focus Group - Suggested Goals

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Assess current mission relationships - both local and worldwide

Research local agencies for potential partnerships for future ministry

Research the demographics of the area within a 3-mile radius of the church

Survey the needs of those living within a 3-mile radius of the church

Develop goals and strategy for church-wide outreach efforts

Increase the breadth of member involvement in community engagement leadership and overall participation

Develop regular opportunities for church-wide service to the community

Develop strategic opportunities to partner in community-wide outreach or service with other churches





## **MEMBER CARE**

Evaluate the care process implemented as a result of the Compassion and Care Summit

Identify where the cracks are in general member care at Fremont

Is there a need for a counseling center at Fremont?

How do we follow up on members leaving quietly “through the back door”?

How do we address some of the marital challenges of which we might become aware?

How do we address some of the spiritual challenges that are keeping people away from regular attendance?

Should we implement a congregational visitation program (by elders) at Fremont (non-crisis visitation)?

**Sample Ministry Team Summary Report – Mark Eshoff**



<b>MINISTRY TEAM</b>	<b>RECENT PROGRAMS</b>	<b>MINISTRY SUCCESSES</b>	<b>UPCOMING PROGRAMS</b>	<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
<b>Children’s Ministry</b>	Bible Sunday	23 kids received Bibles in 10:30 worship	VBS registration is under way	Recruiting leadership for VBS	Adding 4 year olds to VBS this year.
<b>Jr. High Ministry</b>			Discipleship Class for grades 5-9 beginning April 24 <sup>th</sup> will allow those kids to be confirmed and baptized	Several volunteer leaders have had to back out in the last few weeks. More leaders are sorely needed.	Major gains in regular communication of upcoming events has been realized. Nicole Dorway is assisting in that effort.
<b>High School Ministry</b>	Mexico Rewind	250 people in attendance	Senior Trip	Transition from Lysle to interim leadership (in the eyes of the students)	HS Search process has been methodical, but the team is still hopeful and focused.  Volunteer HS Team has assumed a bunch of responsibility for program throughout the summer.
<b>Nursery School</b>	Gifts from the Heart Fundraising for scholarships and teacher development	Enrollment for next Fall is completed with the school virtually filled up (again).			

<b>Worship Support - Ushers</b>	Modern Worship Usher Training	Good attendance at Usher Training, which created an opportunity to review and update procedures and reset the priorities for ushering.	A new program for recruiting new Modern Worship ushers will be instituted in the next month.	Difficulty in recruiting for both worship services.  Attendance pads versus Connection Cards	Need a Security Response Plan, which is a work in progress.
<b>Worship Support – Communion Serving</b>	Last Supper Service			Will need to add a third team of servers should we add an additional worship service at 9:00 in the Fall.	
<b>Worship Support – Sanctuary Decorating</b>	Easter Decorating			Encouraging consistent team participation when the full team only works a few occasions during the year.	
<b>Worship Support – Technical Ministries</b>		Volunteers have been reliable and faithful			
<b>Administration</b>					
<b>Buildings and Grounds</b>	Patio Project completed				
<b>Coffee Bar</b>	Art Event				
<b>Bookstore</b>					
<b>Recreation</b>	Upward Stars Development Program			Scheduling and leadership of Upward Summer Camp.	
<b>Communications</b>		Proactive approach to prioritizing Sunday announcements has been successful	Developing further communications guidelines for inside and outside promotion of ministries/events	Must hire a new Publications/Communication Coordinator by May 27th	This ministry will eventually be separated from Hospitality/Fellowship

FREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Organizational Study  
**Session Meeting Schedule**



Session will continue to meet on the third Tuesday of every month. The meeting schedule will include normal items such as ministry updates and ministry decisions, but might also include the following:

**January**

Review and approval of the General Fund Budget

**February**

Meeting with Discipleship Ministry Focus Group

**March**

Session Prayer

**April**

Meeting with Community Engagement Ministry Focus Group

**May**

Meeting of the Leadership Community

**June**

Meeting with Member Care Ministry Focus Group

**July**

Leadership Development/Equipping Training

**August**

Meeting with Discipleship Ministry Focus Group

**September**

Session Prayer

**October**

Meeting with Community Engagement Ministry Focus Group

**November**

Strategic Planning / Leadership Retreat Follow-up

**December**

Meeting with Member Care Ministry Focus Group

FREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
 Organizational Study  
**Implementation Plan and Timeline**



Concept Proposal	November 2015
Session Motion	November 2015
Formulate List of Questions	December 2015
Develop Organization Task Force	February 2016
Develop Mission/Vision Statements	March 2016
Develop Case for Change	March 2016
Develop Staff/Session/Ministry Team Structure	March 2016
Develop Revised Staff Structure	March 2016
Develop Session Responsibilities and Meeting Schedule	March 2016
Complete First Draft of Plan	March 2016
Task Force Review of Plan	March 2016
Present Update to Session	March 2016
Define Session Retained Responsibilities	March 2016
Approve Final Plan	April 2016
Begin Development of Teams (where needed)	April 2016
Complete Job Description Changes	May 2016
College of Elders Meeting	May 2016
Confirm Elder Assignments to Session Committees	June 2016
Grapevine Article on Leadership Reorganization	June 2016
Congregational Forums (2)	June 2016
Congregational Meeting to Approve Reduced Session Size	July 2016
Begin Operating in New Structure/Relationships	July 2016
Session Meeting	July 2016
- Review normal historical agenda and how issues will be handled differently in new structure	
- Review new reporting and communicating protocols	
- Review Ministry Focus Group Goals	

*(continued)*

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (continued)**

Nominate/Train/Examine/3 New Session Members	Fall 2016
Organization Task Force Evaluation/Report	Fall 2016
Congregational Meeting to Elect New Session Members	October 2016
Strategy Task Force Evaluation/Report	January 2017
Disband Organization Task Force	January 2017
Elect 3 Session Elders	Fall 2017
Elect 3 Session Elders	Fall 2018
Final Implementation Complete	January 2019

# FREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Organizational Study

### Questions and Answers



#### **What is the problem we are trying to solve?**

See Identified Problems: What Are We Trying to Fix?

#### **How does the proposal solve these?**

The new organization provides singular and clear lines of authority and responsibility. It also frees up the elders to explore other more broad responsibilities of elders that they have had little time or opportunity on which to focus.

#### **How much upheaval will this cause?**

The major change will be to the activities of the Session itself. It will be challenging to adopt a new mode of leadership. It will be particularly difficult to determine what elders should do next, if not manage programs or operations. Many ministry areas are effectively operating with this model already. Some will require time to adjust to ministry without direct elder involvement. The hoped for result is more involvement by members and attenders of Fremont in the hands-on activities of ministry. The new organization will effectively require that. It will also require that identification and development of gifted and effective volunteer Ministry Team Leaders to provide the necessary coordination and implementation of the ministry priorities. Personnel, Finance and Nominating Committee will require little or no change.

#### **What other research from other churches or due diligence has been accomplished?**

Input on successful organizational models has been received from the pastors of Ward Presbyterian Church (MI), Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church (WA), Community Presbyterian Church (Danville, CA), Cherry Creek Presbyterian Church (CO), Colonial Presbyterian Church (MO) and Hope Church (VA). In addition, the Presbytery of the West (now Presbytery of the Pacific) received a presentation by the elders of Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church on the advantages of a decentralized leadership model, using staff and volunteer leadership to accomplish ministry, very much like what is being recommended now at Fremont.

#### **What is the impact on the budget?**

Other than the addition of an associate/assistant pastor, which is already included in the budget, it is initially assumed that additional financial requirements will be minimal, with the exception of some expenditures for leadership development resources that would likely be covered by the current Discipleship/Community Engagement Fund.

#### **How can we avoid unintended consequences?**

We anticipate that the organizational plan will be thought through carefully and thoroughly. Nevertheless, it is likely that the full implementation and adjustment process could take over a year. Continual evaluation and communication will be necessary to keep the organization efficient and effective as leaders and volunteers adjust to their roles.

### **What does “spiritual leader” mean? Does it involve different spiritual gifts?**

God gives many gifts that are needed in the leadership of any church ministry. So, the definition of the term “spiritual leader” could mean different things to different individuals, depending on the gifts they have been given by the Holy Spirit. However, elders are called to be members of Session to together provide spiritual oversight of the congregation. Details of that responsibility can be found in the job description for Elder/Member of Session.

### **What happened to our two strategic directives?**

The priorities of Discipleship and Community Engagement are reflected in the recommended mission and vision statements, in the organization of the staff and in the organization of the strategic Ministry Focus Groups (see Plan).

### **What is a spiritual shepherd?**

In the Biblical examples, the analogy of a shepherd is used many times. In this context a spiritual shepherd would be responsible for watching over the congregation (flock), protecting the congregation and making sure members of the congregation did not become lost, all in relation to their spiritual well-being. A shepherd also leads the flock to water (living water) and adequate food (bread of life and faithful teaching and preaching).

### **Why are we Presbyterian?**

In 1868, the seeds of Fremont began as a children’s ministry Bible study sponsored by Westminster Presbyterian Church. We are Presbyterian because we embrace our history, we are committed to Reformed Theology, and we deeply believe that the Presbyterian form of government is most consistent with the organization found in the Bible and in the early church. This form of government, centered on the ministry and leadership of elders (“presbuteros”) has also proven its effectiveness over the many years of church history.

### **Are the elders in charge of Nominating Committee, Personnel Committee and Finance Committee not considered spiritual leaders?**

Absolutely not. All elders called to leadership in the church, no matter where they are called to serve on the Session. Each should fulfill the qualifications of elders found in I Timothy 3 and in Titus and assume the responsibilities of elder oversight found in the Bible and in the Book of Order. Spiritual leadership is critical in leading the ministries of Nominating, Personnel and Finance.

### **If it doesn’t work, can we go back?**

The Session has the right to organize itself and the church in whatever way they see called to do so. Our sincere hope is that this organizational change will have such positive results in the life of Fremont, we will never even consider reverting back. As a result, we will enter the process with a strong commitment to facilitate the change in the best way possible. It is important to acknowledge that this change will take several years to implement fully, and we remain committed to fully supporting and facilitating that process.



**What strategy will we implement to communicate with the congregation?**

The Plan will be shared with the College of Elders at a meeting, which could be scheduled in conjunction with a Session dinner in May or June. The overall goals of the Plan will be announced to the congregation via the Grapevine and other means in conjunction with the call for a congregational meeting to reduce the size of Session. Two congregational forums, one after each worship service, will be held in late June. The congregational meeting will be held in mid-July.

**How do we better identify and utilize volunteers**

This is a critical part of the success of Fremont's health no matter which organizational plan we implement. Work is currently in place to better involve our members and non-members in direct ministry.

**What will be the impact on the Pastor/Head of Staff?**

There will be a potential increased need for teaching ministry and time planning and implementing meetings with Ministry Focus Groups. In addition, a regular monthly ministry update will need to be prepared for the Session

**What will be the impact on the Executive Minister?**

Increased time will be needed to equip, facilitate and coordinate the activities of the ushers and the Buildings and Grounds teams. The eventual addition of a leadership development program will also create additional demand on his time. His role as Moderator of the Presbytery of the Pacific has not consumed a significant amount of time and it is not anticipated that that will change. In addition, a regular monthly ministry update will need to be prepared for the Session

**What will be the impact on the Associate Pastor for Mission and Congregational Care?**

There will likely be increased time to intentionally shepherd both individual team leaders and mission teams, as well as provide overall teaching and leadership to build a more missional culture at Fremont. In addition, a regular monthly ministry update will need to be prepared for the Session

**What will be the impact on the Assistant Pastor/Minister for Small Groups and Congregational Life?**

There will likely be increased time to intentionally shepherd both individual team leaders and ministry teams, as well as provide overall teaching and leadership to build a culture of discipleship at Fremont. In addition, a regular monthly ministry update will need to be prepared for the Session

**Are there other possible strategies to enable elders to be more effective?**

After significant consideration, this model seems clearly to be the most commonly used model in Presbyterian churches Fremont's size or larger. We are not aware of any other model that has been more effectively implemented in Presbyterian churches.

**What process will we implement to get this organization in place?**

See Implementation Plan and Timeline (page 17)

**Can our staff handle the expanded responsibilities?**

Virtually all the members of the Program Staff have expressed enthusiasm for the organizational concept. The implementation will undoubtedly bring some challenges in some areas, but the clarity of leadership that the organization provides will create clear pathways and resources to address those challenges. Most importantly, this ministry model will highlight the critical necessity that every staff member ensure that an active and effective team and team leader are in place to implement each respective ministry.

**Are their weaknesses that this will expose?**

There could be. Our goal is to provide the most effective organizational structure to enable future ministry at Fremont. There are weaknesses in every staff member. But the hope is to provide the necessary equipping and support to each staff member who has leadership responsibilities in order to enable them to be as successful as possible. Should that effort be unsuccessful, staff replacements could be considered.

**How will the General Fund Budget be created and managed?**

As in the current structure, the budget process will be managed by the Executive/Budget Committee of Session. Input will be requested from each ministry team and will be summarized in an overall budget request. The Budget Committee will recommend a budget to the Session, who will approve the budget by ministry area. Each member of the Program Staff along with each Ministry Team Leader will be responsible to manage the budget provided to them by the Session. Concerns of the Finance Committee or Session will be communicated to the respective Program Staff member and Team Leader by the Senior Staff member responsible to supervise that ministry area.

**How will the existing ministries be transferred to the new ministry groups and Senior Staff members?**

Few changes are recommended in the current staff/ministry relationships (see Ministry Relationships chart). For those ministries that will experience change, members of Session currently responsible for those specific ministry areas are encouraged to meet with the respective Senior Staff member, Program Staff member and Ministry Team Leader or Ministry Team to coordinate any needed transition issues.

**How will new teams be created in segments of the church that do not currently have teams?**

The recruitment of team leaders and team members will be a high priority of the Program Staff and Senior Staff responsible for those areas. In some cases, assistance may be required from the members of Session. Most staff members are currently in the process of developing new teams in those areas.

**How will Session members assist each other with the necessary changes?**

Session members have already begun working on implementation in their various ministry areas. Mutual help and support from other Session members will be needed, along with the understanding that different ministry areas will be able to fully implement the plan at differing rates, depending on the circumstances of each ministry area.

**How will we assure that the staff is realigned to meet priorities where necessary?**

See the Relationships Chart. Clear and constant communication between Session, Senior Staff, Program Staff and Ministry Team Leaders will be crucial to effectively manage the transitions and make sure all the necessary issues are addressed. Some realignment of Senior Staff responsibilities will help to make their leadership and management responsibilities more in line with the overall organization of the church.

**How will Session set goals for the church?**

Session will have a better opportunity to discuss the overall goals of the church at its monthly meetings, given the reduction in detailed ministry level business that must be accomplished and assuming that staff and ministry team leaders can resolve most issues at the ministry team level. In addition, Session will meet semi-annually with the three keys Ministry Focus Groups, which will aid them in evaluating the fruitfulness of the current priorities.

**What will be the structure of future Session meetings?**

Sessions responsibility to manage the overall direction of the church and the spiritual wellbeing of the members will assume a new priority. Broad ministry coordination will also be accomplished through occasional (semi-annual) meetings with Ministry Focus Groups. The Moderator of Session is responsible to structure the Session meetings in ways that accomplish Session's overall purpose.

**How will Session ensure that the Nominating Committee provides that skill sets needed by Session?**

Two active ruling elders on the Session will serve each year on the Nominating Committee. This representation is intended to facilitate the identification and call of those individuals that God (and the Session) feel would be important to the positive leadership of the Session.

**How will we train current and future Session members?**

Important to the healthy development of leaders in the life of any church is the identification and equipping of potential leaders before they are called to serve in a leadership role. A Leadership Development Ministry is in the planning stages and would be an important part of the needed training. In addition, it is the responsibility of the Session to provide orientation, training and examination of all officers that are identified by the Nominating Committee prior to any public announcement of their nomination. This process is currently led by Senior Staff but is accomplished through both current and inactive elders.

**How will the Session be kept aware of the numerous ministry programs?**

Senior Staff will be responsible to provide to the Session a monthly update of all ministries under their oversight. That information will be provided to Senior Staff on a regular basis by the respective Program Staff member or the Ministry Team Leader.

**How will the Session weave prayer through all of its activities?**

A renewed focus on prayer can only enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Session leadership. It will be up to the individual members of Session and the moderator to follow through on this priority.

**How will Session ensure that all the necessary questions are being asked and answered?**

This will be accomplished by constantly communicating questions and concerns to the appropriate parties. There are surely some questions that have yet to be addressed. This Q&A document will be regularly updated as needed.