

## **Information and Mandates for Elders, Deacons and Committees**

### **CHURCH OF THE SERVANT**

#### I. Mission Statement

We are a community of Christ's servants, a home for God's children, and a prism for God's light in liturgy and life.

We are called to be a reconciling community in Christ, one that

- proclaims the good news of salvation
- celebrates God's healing grace
- nurtures the growth and gifts of God's people, and
- restores the joy of God's reign.

As children of the light, we desire

- to worship with a liturgy that is catholic and celebrative, and calls all members to participate;
- to prepare God's people for service and create a fellowship where the burdened and suffering will find support and comfort, where the alienated will be accepted, where those seeking God will be shown the way, and where those who have ministries will be affirmed; and to present Christ to others by showing God's love in Jesus for the world and promoting justice and peace for our neighbors near and far.

#### II. Council Organization and Mandates

##### A. Membership

The council consists of three divisions: elders, deacons, and administrative elders/ deacons. The council ordinarily meets every other month and includes in its meetings the pastor and other program staff. The three council divisions meet monthly or more often.

##### B. The Elders

###### 1. General Mandate

- a. Protect the sanctity of the sacraments by presiding over the communion, maintaining contact with the worship committee and have regular discussions regarding communion.
- b. Maintain doctrinal purity in the preaching of the Word and oversee the life and doctrine of the pastor and other ordained ministers who are members of the congregation.
- c. Set aside time at monthly meeting to reflect on and promote the overall spiritual well-being of the congregation, including reports on parish care work and ideas for households.
- d. Oversee the nurture and education of all members.
- e. One elder attends classis meetings and reports back to the elders.

###### 2. Responsibility for individual members

The following list of verbs describe the kinds of things that elders should concern themselves with: nurture, pray, encourage prayer for, admonish, support, welcome, discipline, visit, heal, care for, minister to, and have compassion on all the members.

- a. Nurture and encourage those who are active members of the Parish through visitations and particularly its pastoral care team. This involves:
  - (1) recruiting, facilitating, encouraging and assisting pastoral care teams to attend to Parish members' needs;
  - (2) contacting each Parish member at least once a year through visitation, notes, letters, phone calls, email, or face-to-face conversations.
  - (3) visiting each individual Parish member at least once during the three year elder term.
  - (4) encourage Parish members to belong to a Household
  - (5) pray for the Parish members
- b. Approve membership transfers and hear professions of faith.
- c. Approve list of members nominated for elder and deacon.

C. The Deacons

1. General Mandate

- a. Inspire faithful stewardship in the congregation, giving God offerings of wealth, time, and ability and making benevolence a quality of life.
- b. Be ministers of mercy and inspire the congregation to be merciful.
- c. Show compassion to the needy with both encouraging words and joy-bringing deeds.
- d. Be prophetic critics of waste, injustice, and selfishness in our society, and be sensitive counselors to the victims of such evils.
- e. Do benevolence both within and outside our congregation.
- f. Promote evangelism of the Gospel of Christ.

2. Regular Tasks of the Deacons

- a. Enable COS and its members to bear faithful witness through word and deed to our neighbors and the world, about the good news of salvation found in Jesus Christ.
- b. Overseeing all Ministry of Outreach concerns:
  - (1) identify opportunities for witness;
  - (2) encourage and equip for an active response;
  - (3) provide support for that witness;
  - (4) coordinate its work with other COS committees, churches, and organizations;
  - (5) educate the congregation about missions; and
  - (6) report to council and annually present to council its plans and budget needs
- c. Be in regular contact with those doing pastoral work in the congregation-- the pastor, the minister of congregational life, the minister to youth, the elders--to be informed about needs arising within the congregation.

- d. One deacon is the representative to the classical diaconal conference, attends the quarterly meetings, and reports back to the deacons.
- e. Make decisions about the use of benevolence funds and arrange benevolent collections for emergency needs.
- f. Keep informed about local diaconal activities and make use of denominational resources.
- g. Jointly with the Finance Committee, promote and collect annual pledges from the congregation. (4/02)

D. Administrative Committee

The administrative committee consists of two elders, two deacons, and the pastor; the office administrator participates as needed in an advisory role. The council president, who may be either an elder or a deacon, serves as committee chairperson. The committee also includes the council clerk, who may be an elder or a deacon, and the Human Resources Elder. The committee is appointed annually by the council and appoints its own recorder. The committee is responsible to the council.

The committee shall

1. Monitor congregational vision and strategy for the council divisions, committees, ministry groups, and the congregation as a whole.
  - a. At least annually review the congregational vision and mission statement (last adopted on October 25, 1992) and evaluate its effectiveness in the life and ministry of the congregation.
  - b. Coordinate an annual report and budget recommendations via council to the congregation.
  - c. Monitor and assist in communication and coordination between council divisions, ministry staff, committees, and the congregation.
2. Monitor and assist in the administration of the congregation.
  - a. Annually review the organizational structure of the staff and evaluate its effectiveness in the life and ministry of the church.
  - b. Develop and maintain an annual master schedule for the congregation, council and its own work.
  - c. Recruit membership in congregational committees as needed in cooperation with those committees and ministry staff.
  - d. See to it that council divisions, committees, and committee functionaries have mandates or position descriptions.
  - d. Monitor and assist the Human Resources Committee in evaluating position descriptions, performance assessments, and salary recommendations for the senior pastor and other ministry staff.
  - e. Monitor and assist the Senior Pastor with communication and coordination of duties between the council divisions, senior pastor, ministry staff, committees and the congregation.

- f. Monitor and assist the Human Resources Committee in developing position descriptions for support staff members, and monitor and assist the office administrator in the evaluation and day-to-day supervision of support staff.
  - g. See to it that membership records are maintained and that records are kept of council and division meetings.
  - h. Monitor and assist in the work of the Christian education committee.
  - i. Monitor and assist in the work of the finance committee.
  - j. Monitor and assist in the work of the facilities committee.
  - k. Recommend to council and/or appoint ad hoc task forces as necessary.
3. Serve as the executive committee of the council.
- a. Act on council's behalf between council meetings.
  - b. See to it that the basic legal and constitutional requirements are met.
  - c. Monitor the council's classical, denominational, and ecumenical connections.
  - d. Arrange and conduct congregational meetings as necessary.
  - e. Act as a sounding board and advisory group to the pastor.
  - f. Prepare the agenda for the regularly scheduled council meetings and call special meetings of council as necessary.
  - g. Oversee council correspondence, delegating this work to council divisions and committees as appropriate.
  - h. Develop and maintain a procedure for the nomination, election, selection, and appointment of elders and deacons as well as the council's three divisions.

### III. Committee Mandates

#### A. Worship Committee

The chief mandate of the COS worship committee is to enable the people of COS to join together in the "catholic and celebrative worship" which our mission statement puts at the center of our life together. To this end, the committee, under the supervision of council, has the task of planning for, carrying, and reflecting on the morning, evening and special services of the church calendar. The committee also coordinates and evaluates the work of the music, art, dance, and drama ministry groups.

Some of the regular tasks of the committee include planning the annual calendar of services, seeing to the staffing and scheduling of the services, writing and editing the various liturgies used, overseeing provisions for the sacraments, and presenting an annual plan and budget needs to council.

B. Education Committee

The education committee has chosen Ephesians 4:12-13 as its vision: "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (NIV).

The mandate of the COS education committee is to oversee, develop, plan, and promote adult and children's education, children's worship, and the youth (grades 7-12) fellowship groups. The committee reports to council and presents an annual plan and budget needs.

C. Outreach Ministry (see deacon mandate)

D. Facilities Committee

The mandate of the Facilities committee is to:

1. approve needed repairs and replacements to the building and grounds;
2. advise Finance Committee of needs for inclusion in the COS budget;
3. advise Administration Committee of administrative decisions needed concerning the facilities;
4. suggest ways to enhance efficiencies in operating the facilities;
5. suggest ways the facilities can be used to enhance the effectiveness of the building's use.

E. Finance Committee

The mandate of the Finance committee is to:

1. Oversee the financial health of the church
  - supervise the work of the treasurer
  - maintain a structure of mortgage, banking and related accounts that will serve the church well
  - track spending and congregational giving
  - provide Ad Comm and Council with updates and recommendations on financial matters
  - ensure that the church has appropriate insurance coverage
2. Guide the preparation of the annual budget
  - collect budget requests from the relevant parties
  - present AdComm with the budget requests, along with recommendations
  - assist Council in presenting the budget to the congregation
  - promote and collect pledges, jointly with the deacons, from the congregation

IV. Conclusion

At least once each year the committee chairpersons and staff meet as part of the planning and budget process to coordinate the ministries of the committees.