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# Christian Reformed Church of St. Albert

## Transition Team Report to Council

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Submitted by

- Cathy Vandermeer
- Dana Dyck
- Henry Vogelaar
- Joanne Munro
- John Luth
- Marcia Stikma
- Russ Bell

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## Introduction

The Transition Team respectfully presents to church council this report and its recommendation for a new team ministry structure. The report and recommendations flow from many weeks of discussions arising from congregational input at the three “Meetings with Melle” last fall.

We have provided a brief overview of the process undertaken and then present our recommendation to address the concerns arising from those meetings. There is one appendix: a brief discussion of the implications of the proposed changes on the size and role of church council.

## Process

After the three Meetings with Melle late last fall, the transition team met to review the documented comments. Results of discussions were reviewed and grouped into themes. Six broad categories were identified:

- Children/Youth
- Fellowship
- Service
- Education
- Worship
- Communication

Each team member was assigned one of the categories. All congregational feedback pertinent to that category was taken into account by the team member, and then each category was given a goal statement, set of objectives, and finally a series of recommendations for the team to consider. It was through that process we came to realize that many of the challenges identified by the congregation were related to a church governance structure that hindered our ability to move forward and provide the ministry and fellowship opportunities desired by the congregation. Therefore, we focused our efforts on designing a new team ministry structure that will provide exciting ministry opportunities, direction and accountability, and enhanced communication. It is intended to meet the needs of a growing and vibrant church family.

From the congregational reflections during the Meetings with Melle, the committee came to three key conclusions:

- 1) It is not that we lack good ideas or a desire to serve and follow Jesus Christ. We lack the structure and direction to prioritize the good ideas and ensure that they are carried through to completion.

*... a growing  
and vibrant  
church family.*

- 2) Our present structure makes it difficult for people to know who to contact with suggestions, comments or how to get involved in a specific area of ministry. When initiatives are approved, there is no accountability matrix to ensure they are acted upon. As a result, many good ideas fall through the cracks.
- 3) Communication between council, committees, ministries and the congregation needs to be enhanced.

## Recommendation

This team proposes a change in the way our congregation oversees ministry. We recommend a series of team coordinators be appointed to oversee the development and implementation of some new ministries and enhancement of ministries that are already in place. The intent is to have one point of contact for each area so communication will be enhanced and objectives achieved. One ministry team coordinator would be responsible for each of:

- Small Group/Discussion Group
- Discipleship
- Fellowship
- Service
- Youth
- Worship
- Administration

*The intent is to have one point of contact for each area so communication will be enhanced and objectives achieved.*

This group of team coordinators would be called the Ministry Team.

As mentioned above, the importance of good communication was a recurring theme. Rather than recommending a communication team coordinator, we have made communication the first goal for each team coordinator. While the detailed discussion notes and draft summaries prepared for each area are not a part of this document, they will be provided to each team coordinator in order to provide a head start in their respective roles.

The Ministry Team will meet quarterly led by the chair of council, to discuss initiatives and enhance cooperative efforts. The pastor will also attend meetings. The team coordinators will be accountable to council and serve a four-year term. Terms may be renewed if both council and the team coordinator agree. Each team coordinator will develop a regular report to council.

The team coordinator for each area will recruit people to fulfill the ministry responsibilities, identify areas of need, develop plans for meeting needs, and bring the ideas to the Ministry Team for discussion and prioritization. Committees supporting

the work of each ministry may be developed, if necessary. The Ministry Team will develop an annual plan and goals to take to council for review and approval.

The team coordinators will be responsible for the development, communication, and coordination of various areas of ministry under the direction of council. The intent is not to create a bureaucracy, but to ensure there is someone looking after each area of ministry. Leaders of existing programs will coordinate activities and communicate plans with their respective team coordinator. We want to put a structure in place to allow current gaps to be filled and allow new initiatives to be started where needed.

The team coordinators will not necessarily do the various tasks, but recruit volunteers and ensure objectives are met. In some areas there are existing groups. We do not want to see the new positions usurp existing leaders, but to provide support and encouragement to the existing program leaders, and provide a vehicle for moving issues forward. The only way this will work is if all members become involved in serving one another.

### Small Group/Discussion Group Team Coordinator

*... development of formal bible study and discussion groups.*

#### Overview

This position will oversee the development of formal bible study and discussion groups. Special interest and social groups will be under the Fellowship, Discipleship or Service Team Coordinators as appropriate.

#### Responsibility and Accountability

Accountable to council via the Ministry Team, this position will be responsible to recruit group leaders, provide training for new and existing leaders, provide ongoing support for group leaders, be the single point of contact for people interested in small groups, ensure people interested in joining small groups are connected to appropriate group leaders, follow up to ensure that contacts have been made, and to promote small group ministries.

#### Objectives

- Actively communicate activities and plans with the congregation (monthly).
- Determine the status of various existing groups (September 2008).
- Gather names of interested parties to start new groups (September 2008).
- Develop training plan for leaders (September 2008).
- Start regular (quarterly) group leader meetings (September 2008).
- Hold a formal Small Group kick off (September 2008).
- Building upon the work of the existing small group development team, develop an ongoing plan and strategy for the building of small group ministries (September 2008).

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## Discipleship Team Coordinator

### Overview

This position will oversee the development of programs and ministries to enhance the discipleship of all involved in our church community.

### Responsibility and Accountability

Accountable to council via the Ministry Team, this position will be responsible for the spiritual growth of members in our church. This will include formal learning events for adults, oversight of the Sunday School ministry from three years old to Grade 12, and retreats focused on spiritual growth.

### Objectives

- Actively communicate activities and plans with the congregation (monthly).
- Ensure Sunday School program is adequately resourced, starting with the Sunday School superintendent (September 2008).
- Encourage participation of all children of Sunday School age, including the determination of issues with participation and strategies to facilitate more regular participation (September 2008).
- Develop training plan for teachers (September 2008).
- Ensure existing retreats occur on a regular basis (annual or every two years) (September 2008).
- In conjunction with the pastor, develop a New Members' Class (CRCSA 101) to provide new members and potential new members the opportunity to learn about our church, our church's vision, mission, values, the basic foundational doctrines we follow, and how to connect with small groups, service work and so on.
- Develop a plan to identify and implement ongoing educational and growth opportunities for members of the congregation (September 2008).

*... development of programs and ministries to enhance the **discipleship** of all involved in our church community.*

## Fellowship Team Coordinator

### Overview

This position will oversee the development of programs and ministries to enhance the fellowship of all involved in our church community.

### Responsibility and Accountability

Accountable to council via the Ministry Team, this position will be responsible for coordinating social and fellowship events for the congregation. The intent is to enhance members' sense of being connected to the congregation and help those who are new or on the edges to make those key connections. The desire is to provide authentic fellowship that will allow us to experience life together and fulfill our responsibilities as Christians.

### Objectives

- Actively communicate activities and plans with the congregation (monthly).
- There are several "church wide" events including the Rodeo Breakfast in May, and the Church Campout in the summer. The team coordinator will work to develop one more meaningful church wide event in November or January (September 2008).
- Develop a structure to facilitate the identification and creation of other interest groups (September 2008).
- Coordinate a monthly "post communion" pot luck lunch (September 2008).
- Develop relationships and support the leadership of existing fellowship events including: rodeo breakfast, church campout, U.F.O. (Unfinished Objects), bikers, golf, etc. (September 2008).
- Coordinate church family events such as weddings, baby showers, and emergency meals (September 2008).
- Investigate the need for and develop new events as required to enhance fellowship. Items to investigate include a yearly Newcomer's Social, Guess Who's Coming for Lunch, and a September Kickoff BBQ.
- Meet with greeters and ushers to establish strategies for welcoming new people.
- Formulate a list of individuals and groups willing to help host any of the above activities and events.

*... development of programs and ministries to enhance the **fellowship** of all involved in our church community.*

*... development of programs and ministries to coordinate the service opportunities for all members in the congregation.*

## Service Team Coordinator

### Overview

This position will oversee the development of programs and ministries to coordinate the service opportunities for all members in the congregation. The role is to promote service opportunities for our congregation.

### Responsibility and Accountability

Accountable to council via the Ministry Team, this position will be responsible for identifying, coordinating, and promoting the various service opportunities available to the congregation. This includes support of local (St. Albert) charities, mission trips (local, national, and international), creation of a pastoral visitation team, and coordinating the existing driving ministry. This team coordinator will also work closely with the deacons to ensure there is no duplication between deaconate initiatives and service initiatives.

### Objectives

- Actively communicate activities and plans to the congregation and encourage two-way communication with the congregation.
- Work with the deacons to develop a needs and talents database to link needs with skills within the congregation (December 2008).
- Work with elders to create a pastoral visitation team to ensure regular visits are made. The team will report to the elders and will not replace regular family visits.
- Identify service opportunities in Greater Edmonton. Develop and publish a contact list for these opportunities. This includes facilitating collaborative efforts with other Christian Reformed Churches in the Greater Edmonton area (September 2008).
- Identify service opportunities in St. Albert. Develop and publish a contact list for these opportunities (September 2008).
- Develop a guideline for SERVE and other mission opportunities within our congregation identifying timing and frequency of projects (September 2008).
- Develop and maintain a list of service opportunities in Alberta, Canada, and outside Canada (September 2008).

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## Youth Team Coordinator

### Overview

This position will oversee the development of programs and ministries to enhance the experience of the youth within the congregation.

### Responsibility and Accountability

Accountable to council via the Ministry Team, this position will be responsible for coordinating meaningful youth activities with youth leaders and the youth elder(s). Responsibilities will include youth from Grade 2 to ReConnect, including Gems and Cadets. The mandate will include development of fellowship events and Bible Study events for our youth. The children and youth ministry program should be a ministry that contributes to attracting new families to join our fellowship.

### Objectives

- Actively communicate activities and plans with the congregation (monthly).
- Intergenerational opportunities will be sought out and encouraged. We must actively look for opportunities that would associate youth with 'older' members of our congregation. These activities may include sitting on committees (e.g. worship or property and grounds committee), or working together (e.g. Rodeo Breakfast). The key is to actively seek out these types of opportunities.
- Work actively with the team coordinators of other areas to ensure youth interests are a part of decisions, and to ensure youth are included in discipleship, service fellowship, etc. wherever possible.
- Where youth specific ministries are required, work actively with the existing youth elder and youth workers to develop a strategy to ensure ongoing needs of the youth are identified and met with no gaps and preferably with overlaps.
- Coordinate the children and youth ministry programs.
- Develop training plan for leaders (September 2008).

*... development of programs and ministries to enhance the experience of the youth within the congregation.*

*... development of meaningful worship experience and to coordinate the worship needs arising from the other coordinators with the worship committee.*

### Worship Team Coordinator

#### Overview

This position will be filled by the chair of the worship committee. The role is to oversee the development of meaningful worship experience and to coordinate the worship needs arising from the other team coordinators with the worship committee. This position will work closely with the music director and pastor in developing the worship ministry.

#### Responsibility and Accountability

Accountable to council via the Ministry Team, this position will be responsible for coordinating the worship needs of the congregation with the various ministries in the congregation. This position should be filled by the chair of the worship committee to ensure the worship committee remains involved in the task of developing and delivering meaningful worship services in conjunction with the pastor.

#### Objectives

- Actively communicate activities and plans with the congregation (monthly).
- Identify the worship needs of the congregation and develop plans to incorporate those into services.
- Develop and implement a process to enhance the quality of participants in the services.
- Develop and implement a process for the selection of new participants that utilizes talents and gifts of people.
- Develop and implement a process for developing, mentoring, and training our youth so they can grow in active participation in services.

### Administration Team Coordinator

#### Overview

This position is to coordinate the various administrative functions on behalf of council.

*... coordinate the various administrative functions*

#### Responsibility and Accountability

Accountable to council via the Ministry Team, this position will be responsible for coordinating various administrative functions on behalf of council. Responsibilities include liaison with the treasurer, the

property and grounds committee, the building enhancement committee, auditors, a budget committee, etc. This position will work closely with the clerk of council and the church secretary.

### Objectives

- Actively communicate activities and plans with the congregation (monthly).
- Develop a regular reporting regime to keep council abreast of issues and able to make decisions as needed.
- Promote the ministries of our congregation through the use of a ministry booth. Recruit members to staff the booth on a rotational basis. Information and answers to questions will be available to anyone requiring such, each Sunday before and after the service to ensure that newcomers (especially) will know where to find information regarding small group ministry, nursery, girls/boys/youth ministry opportunities, how and whom to contact. Pamphlets, brochures, schedules will be made available for easy accessibility (September 2008).
- Develop and implement an asset management registry and process to allow sharing of church assets among ministries.
- Develop recommended strategies and policies for the redevelopment of the church website.
- Develop and implement a process to ensure the church website contains current information.
- Develop a communication policy for approval that provides guidance as to contents of church bulletin boards and the weekly church bulletin.

## Appendix

### Implication of Changes

The role of council under the new structure was not seen as a part of the transition team's mandate. The committee did see the role of council changing and wanted to highlight the issue in the report.

If the suggestions in this report are implemented, the role of council will change. It will no longer be directly involved in the day-to-day operation of ministry, but will have much improved reporting and visibility into the various ministries. We anticipate council being free to focus on the spiritual health of the congregation and her overall direction. As such, council may spend more time on policy-making and direction setting than it is currently free to do. If council takes this new role, defines it well and provides leadership, a smaller council would suffice (perhaps four elders, four deacons and pastor). If council does not let go of some of the day-to-day responsibilities that will be assumed by the team coordinators, there will be overlap and, very likely, some frustration.

*We anticipate council being free to focus on the spiritual health of the congregation and her overall direction.*