

March 9, 2022

To: Rev. Wendy Woodworth
Cascadia District Superintendent

After an initial period of exploration and discernment, the Church Council of Newberg First United Methodist Church has voted to continue exploring an alternative structure for church administration, according to *Book of Discipline* paragraph 247.2. We ask your permission to continue our discernment process. We are using the resource *Mission Possible: A Simple Structure for Missional Effectiveness* by Kay Kotan and Blake Bradford, expanded third edition, to guide our discernment process and, if approved, implementation process.

Our discernment activities thus far have included:

2020

- Rev. Casey Banks attended a 4-hr “Mission Possible” webinar by Kotan, hosted by the Western North Carolina Annual Conference.

2021

- Chris Lee (Council chair), Patty White (Treasurer), Greg Pitman (Trustee chair), Meg Lewis-Price (Lay Leader) and Rev. Casey Banks read and discussed John Kaiser’s book *Winning on Purpose: How to Organize Congregations to Succeed in Their Mission*, which was recommended by Kotan as a starting point. This group presented a summary of the book’s ideas to the Church Council and recommended the Council move forward with studying simplified, accountable structure using the *Mission Possible 3* resource for United Methodist churches.
- Newberg FUMC held an all-church, 2-day virtual training “Mission Possible” workshop led by author and consultant Kay Kotan, with 28 church attendees. During the workshop, participants learned about the church life cycle, cultural and generational shifts in church membership and service, what a simplified, accountable structure looks like and spent time in small breakout groups talking about strengths and weaknesses of our current decision-making processes.

2022

- Nominations & Leadership Development Committee gathered as the basis of an SAS Discernment Team to study the *Mission Possible 3* resource book.
- Pastor Casey asked the congregation to pray about the SAS discernment every day during Lent. It will also be included in each week’s prayer list email and Sunday pastoral prayer.
- Congregation was invited to fill out an SAS survey based on discernment questions from Kotan’s book (p.22-31), including the strengths and weaknesses of the current 4-committee structure and our motivating factors for potentially adopting SAS. 17 church members completed surveys. The Discernment Team reviewed them and presented important insights to the Church Council.

Newberg FUMC is exploring a modified organizational plan that would combine our current Church Council, Finance Committee, Staff-Parish Relations Committee, Board of Trustees, and Endowment Committee into one governing board (name to be determined) of nine members in three rotating classes. An independent Committee on Nominations & Leadership Development would continue to recommend leaders for the governing board, and annual charge conferences would be all-church conferences to allow all church members the opportunity to elect the governing board members. Ministry teams, led by paid or unpaid staff, would facilitate church ministries in accordance with the mission, vision, goals, and policies set by the governing board.

The results of our congregational SAS survey reveal that our biggest motivation for potentially switching to a combined governing board is efficiency. Currently, the majority of decisions made in our church go through 3 committees for approval and there is a sense that laity do not know where to start when they have ideas for new ministries. A second major motivating factor is missional focus. The survey found there is no consensus on who in the church is responsible for setting vision and goals or monitoring the changing needs of our mission context of Newberg. A governing board would be responsible for those and would align church resources with them.

We propose the following timeline for the remainder of our SAS process:

March: DS approval for NFUMC to continue exploring SAS.

Rev. Casey Banks will receive training and certification as an SAS coach.

March - June: Educational material about SAS distributed to the congregation and small group opportunities for members to learn and ask questions. Intentional prayer.

June/July: Church Council reviews the discernment process learnings and takes a vote to recommend adoption of SAS.

Council sends formal request to DS to use a \$247.2 modified organizational plan.

Mid to Late Summer: Special all-church conference with DS presiding to hold a vote on adoption of simplified, accountable structure.

If approved,

Aug - Oct: Trustees will be directed to make organizational changes as needed.

Nominations will distribute governing board applications, conduct interviews, and create its slate of governing board members.

Oct - Nov: Annual all-church conference will approve elected leaders for governing board.

Nov - Dec: Training period for new board members.

Jan 1, 2023: New board begins its term.

Thank you for considering our request for permission to continue exploring a modified organizational plan.

In ministry together,



Chris Lee, Council Chair



Meg Lewis-Price, Lay Leader



Rev. Casey Banks, Pastor