

AN EXPLORATION OF CHURCH GOVERNANCE ISSUES

**Sponsored by Michigan Conference of Congregational Christian
The Center for Congregational Leadership**

**February 20, 2010
9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Olivet College, Olivet, Michigan**

9:00 am – Welcome and Introductions, Why are you here?– Betsey

9:30 am – What is Governance and Why is it Important? – Betsey and Marty (Betsey lead....why imp; structure serves ministry;)

10:00 – Break

10:15 – Discussion: What is your governance model? What works well about it and what doesn't? (do it in small groups and have the groups report back; make sure clergy and laity are disbursed and people from same churches split up)

What are the signs/symptoms you might see in a church that reflect the need to examine the model/structure you use for ministry? Report resources mentioned in your group.

11:15: Report back to the group

12:00 – Lunch

- What models are out there for structuring church governance? Where did they come from? Where are they being used? What is working? What is not?
- What resources are out there that could help inspire/guide the questions that need to be addressed?
- What churches have gone through restructuring in ministry models in our area? What have they learned? What advice can they share?
- How important is the use of outside consulting for a process such as this?

1:00 - Using Outside Consultants: Mimi Biedron (tell your governance story and if you have any insights on the questions above, please share them – what, where and why you did it; challenges you had to overcome.)

1:30 – Moving toward Ministry Teams: Matt Olsen (tell your governance story and if you have any insights on the questions above, please share them – what, where and why you did it; challenges you had to overcome.)

2:00 – Small group discussion (using the questions you generated, Marty?)

- How do you get the conversation started? Where does it all begin?
- What hurdles might you expect along the way? What pitfalls are common in the process?

- If it is determined that a new model is needed, is it necessary to go through the process of restructuring the bylaws at the outset? Could the congregation adopt a 'provisional' structure for a given period that would supersede the bylaws, allowing the legalistic work to take place if/when it is determined that the changes should be instituted permanently? Would such a provisional approach assist with the buy in? Would the provisional approach hinder 'buy-in'?
- What things might help to get the congregation to undertake the change in ministry models?

3:00 – Break

3:15 – Large group discussion

4:00 – Wrap up and Goodbye