

Frequently Asked Questions Proposed Structure Changes

What are the main differences between the proposed Gift Discernment Team and the present Nominating Committee?

The proposal places greater emphasis on the calling of able and committed leadership for important work in service of God and the church—calling out persons for specific roles rather than agreement to be on a ballot to serve a board with a particular role to become clear at a later time.

What sort of systems would we expect a Gift Discernment Team to develop to insure that the new structure will call out strong leadership from across the District and not rely too heavily on persons who are well known or nearby?

The present Nominating Committee has been doing some work to suggest systems that a Gift Discernment Team might develop. These include surveys to enable District Conference delegates, congregational leaders, and others to help identify potential leaders for particular responsibilities. There would be provision for persons to self identify their interest in a particular area of District ministry. The Gift Discernment Team would be charged to insure some balance of geography, theology, age and gender as persons are called.

Why does the proposal include a slate of proposed leaders rather than a ballot from which delegates can choose?

The District Board believes that calling persons to a particular assignment in a person's area of passion and expertise makes it more likely that strong leaders will accept the call. The experience of agreeing to be on a ballot is often a negative experience for persons not chosen.

Would the Gift Discernment Team be too powerful?

Certainly this group would be a key one in shaping the District's core of leaders and workers. Note that the Moderator Elect, the District Executive and the TVT chair ("board chair") work with this group. Greater trust is necessary than in the present system.

The proposals suggest increased use of phone/video conferencing and other emerging technologies in carrying forward the work of the District. Why do we not just introduce wider use of this technology with our present structure?

A significant obstacle in our present system is that it is often not possible for about 40 persons to clear their schedules to meet face to face as District Board,, resulting in nonattendance of 20-30%. Youth, young adults, and employed persons sometimes find specific dates difficult to clear. While we use new technology to assist meetings of our present Executive Committee and some Commissions, we find it cumbersome with the larger group. We believe that the much smaller Transformation Vision Team proposed

as well as the Vision Fulfillment Teams will be able to take advantage of the gains possible from new technology. The use of careful scheduling that clears a smaller group of participant's availability in advance along with adding the provision for some members to be present via technology should result in much stronger participation in needed meetings.

Why does the Board propose that persons be called to the Transformation Vision Team for specific multi-year assignments and to specific Vision Fulfillment Teams?

Several reasons: We anticipate we will be able to call gifted and passionate leaders; it enables persons to contribute in the areas of their passion strengths and experience; and it gives the District greater continuity of leadership.

With a smaller Transformation Vision Team and Vision Fulfillment Teams where most members do not attend the TVT meetings, how do we continue the sense of a larger working whole that builds unity across the District?

The proposals include joint participation of Transformation Vision Team and Mission Fulfillment Teams in an annual retreat specifically to work at this value. Other significant events in our district life that support the sense of unity are District Conference, the Gathering, and the Pastor/Leader Training Events.

Would we expect some changes in the programs that the District offers? Who decides?

We assume the District should not to be limited by what we traditionally have done each year but would continually exert new discernment about program activities. It is our hope that program shifts would be guided by our central mission. Program change decisions would be decided by the Transformation Vision Team, often on recommendation of the appropriate Vision Fulfillment Team.

Several of the ministry areas seem to be daunting assignments (e.g. Outdoor Ministries, Transformation Training, Congregational Resourcing). How can this be overcome?

The plan for dealing with large assignments is to call Vision Fulfillment Teams with an eye to some of the specific major tasks of the area. The way of doing this may vary from area to area, but the Chair of the Vision Fulfillment Team is not alone in doing the work.

What difference do we hope to see if the new structure is adopted?

Some of our dreams:

- *More persons engaged in the work of Western Plains District than at present;*
- *More attention to God's call of individuals;*
- *A transformation culture permeating our District;*
- *More attention to the vision of the District and to doing the work;*
- *Less attention to operating the machinery of the organization;*
- *A more satisfying experience for those who accept key District assignments.*