

FOST Proposed Leadership Team for AWCC

Overview

This document presents ideas generated by the Fruitful Organizational Structures Team (FOST) about the proposed transition from the current Council of Deacons model at AWCC, to a Leadership Team model. The FOST is still working through details and discussing ideas, but we feel it is a good time to communicate with the AWCC congregation to present the ideas we've been discussing, and solicit feedback from the church.

As a summary of how the FOST currently envisions the Leadership Team:

1. The Leadership Team has the responsibility to provide spiritual, strategic, and supportive oversight to the ministries of the congregation.
2. Each member of the Leadership Team will be intentional about communicating regularly with a group of Ministry Team leaders. See Figure 1 for an example of how these communication relationships might look.
3. Members of the Leadership Team are not also Ministry Team leaders.

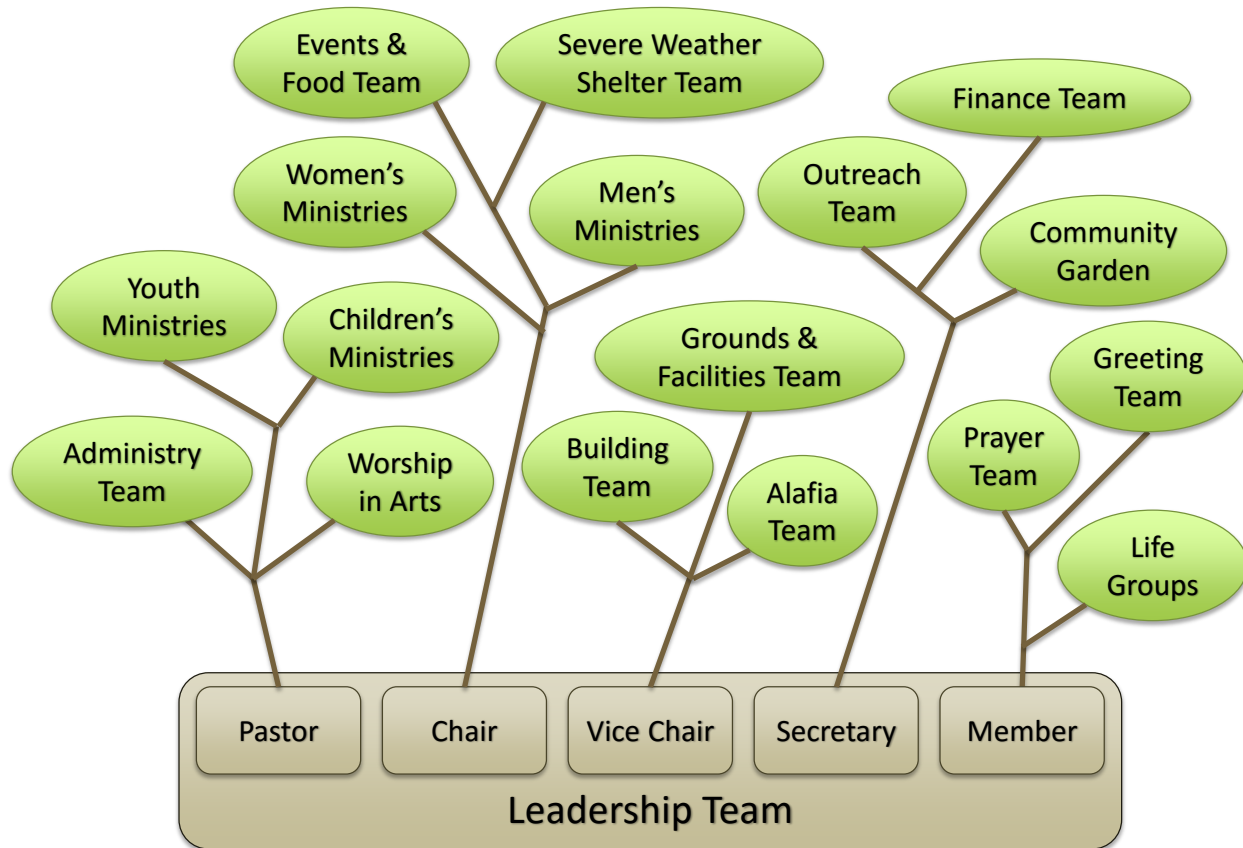


Figure 1: Diagram to illustrate possible relationships between Leadership Team members and Ministry Team leaders. Note that the specific "assignments" are subject to change. The arrangement above is merely for the sake of example.

Purpose of the Leadership Team

The foremost purpose of the Leadership Team is to provide Spirit-led vision and direction for AWCC and its Ministries. Through prayer about the church, and consideration of the gifts and abilities of its members, the Leadership Team will evaluate the health of AWCC's Ministries. Through intentional and frequent communication with Ministry Leaders, the Leadership Team will provide encouragement and support as needed. By having a purposefully high-level view of the Ministries happening at AWCC, the Leadership Team will consider how everything is working together to make AWCC the community it is.

The Leadership Team will also have the organizational purpose of ensuring that tasks which are either legally required, or essential to the operation of the church, are carried out. As discussed below, the Leadership Team will be composed of, at least, specific church officers which are legally required by the State of Colorado.

Leadership Team Members

The Leadership Team will consist of, at a minimum:

1. AWCC's Pastor (ex officio)
2. Chair
3. Vice Chair
4. Secretary
5. One additional member

If necessary, additional members could be on the Leadership Team. The list above seems to the FOST to be the minimum number of members possible for the Leadership Team, with perhaps having up to 7 members as a proposed maximum.

Note that none of the members of the Leadership Team are themselves Ministry Leaders. This is intentional, and the FOST hopes it will be one of the major advantages this new structure will have over the current Council of Deacons structure. One of the primary concerns the FOST has heard from the current Deacons, is that they feel overloaded by having responsibilities for their individual Ministries as well as those associated with being members of the Council. The new Leadership Team is purposely structured so that its members are in communication with Ministry Leaders, and available to support the Ministries as necessary; however, the Leadership Team members are not Ministry Leaders.

Two of the Leadership Team position names (Chair, Secretary) are chosen for the specific purpose of satisfying legal requirements for AWCC to be recognized as a not-for-profit organization in the State of Colorado. The church must have people in these positions, though there is no specific directive that they be members of a "Council" or "Leadership Team". Additionally, it is required that a not-for-profit organization have at least one Financial Officer. AWCC has two Financial Officers, the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary; however, the FOST suggests that the Financial Officers not be members of the Leadership Team. Their duties are quite demanding and time-intensive already, so it seems best to not require them to also be members of the Leadership

Team. The Vice Chair position, which is part of the Leadership Team, is considered best practice, as an additional officer in the organization.

Relationship with Ministry Teams

The Leadership Team will be in communication with the leaders of all Ministry Teams at AWCC. The tree diagram shown in Figure 1 gives an illustrative example of how the communication channels could be arranged. Each Leadership Team member will be assigned a number of Ministries with which he or she will be in regular contact, as represented by the separate trees in the diagram. The position of the Leadership Team underneath the Ministry Teams is intentional; the Leadership Team is not controlling the Ministries, but rather is facilitating their growth and health through prayer, communication, and support.

Note that the specific Ministries associated with each Leadership Team member are not set in stone, especially with regard to the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary; depending on the strengths and interests of the individuals on the Leadership Team, it is expected that the Ministries will be shuffled around and assigned to the most appropriate members. The distribution of ministries to the members of the Leadership Team will differ according to the interests and gifts of each member from year to year or term to term. The Ministries associated with the Pastor are more strongly suggested, since they are (at least, currently) led by church staff members. The Pastor has day-to-day dealings with staff members, and so associating these Ministries with the Pastor for their Leadership Team connection seems logical to the FOST. Similarly, the Finance Officer is shown as being the Leadership Team connection with the Finance Team, which seems like a natural arrangement.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Leadership Team

The Leadership Team has the responsibility to provide spiritual, strategic, and supportive oversight to the congregation of AWCC and its ministries. To meet this responsibility, the Leadership Team will:

1. Pray for discernment and wisdom, to provide AWCC with Spirit-led vision and direction.
2. Pray about the current health of AWCC as a church body, and that of each Ministry. If a Ministry becomes unhealthy or unsustainable, it is the Leadership Team's responsibility to recognize this and act appropriately. Likewise, if it becomes evident that a new Ministry should be started, the Leadership Team should actively encourage it.
3. Communicate with Ministry Leaders regularly to provide encouragement and support. If a Ministry Leader has specific concerns that need the attention of the Leadership Team, his or her Leadership Team connection will be available to communicate those concerns.
4. Communicate, intentionally and bi-directionally, with the congregation.
5. Ensure that the church budget and other financial matters are handled appropriately.
6. Ensure that legally required activities are performed.
7. Ensure that day-to-day church operations, necessary to "keep the doors open", are performed.

To be successful, the FOST believes that the Leadership Team needs to have the following skills distributed among its members:

1. **Organization:** Ability to keep track of everything that needs to get done (i.e. where the leadership team is at with tasks, what the next steps are, and who is responsible for those steps)
2. **Communication:** Ability to communicate effectively and creatively with the congregation (i.e. what AWCC is doing and why, specific ministry needs)
3. **Creativity:** Ability to dream creatively (i.e. suggest different ways AWCC might be able to address an internal or community need)
4. **Focus:** Ability to stay focused on the big picture and gently re-direct conversation that has bogged down in the weeds
5. **Teamwork:** Attention to and maintenance of healthy leadership team dynamics (i.e. organizing annual leadership team retreat, praying for leadership team members regularly)
6. **Finance:** Financial knowledge and integrity

Duties and Responsibilities of Specific Leadership Team Positions

The FOST has not specifically discussed this yet, but these details will need to be considered.

Qualifications of Leadership Team Members

To be on the Leadership Team, one must be a member of AWCC. Beyond this requirement, the general qualifications of a Leadership Team member include:

1. Active prayer practice
2. Seeks God when making major decisions
3. Respected by others for exhibiting characteristics detailed in Titus 1:7-9:

“must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he [or she] will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.”

4. Diligent and able to follow through on commitments
5. Good listener
6. Team player (willing to serve, honors others, not self-promoting, debates and discusses issues in a constructive manner)
7. Gospel-driven heart

Election of Leadership Team Members

A nominating committee will be formed each year to find Leadership Team candidates to be elected at AWCC's annual meeting. The election is not meant to be a competitive one, in the sense of pitting one candidate against another. Instead, consistent with AWCC's current election practices for Council of Deacon members, it is anticipated that the Nominating Committee will find enough members to fill the needed position(s) on the Leadership Team, and these members will be confirmed by congregational vote at the annual meeting.

Instead of electing specific people for specific Leadership Team positions, the FOST suggests electing the Leadership Team members collectively, and allowing these individuals to decide among themselves who should be assigned to each position. This is proposed to allow maximum flexibility in filling the necessary Leadership Team positions.

Term of Service for Leadership Team Members

The FOST has briefly discussed this issue, but no consensus has yet been reached. Some FOST members favored relatively short terms (such as 2 years); this would allow people to volunteer for Leadership Team service without making a very long-term commitment, and provide fresh ideas into the team as members are cycled through. Other FOST members favored longer terms (from 3 to 6 years); this is consistent with the current term limits in place for the Council of Deacons, and would allow more long-term planning and work to be pursued by Leadership Team members.

Rotating terms, such that some (or most) existing Leadership Team members still remain as new members are elected, is supported by the FOST as a good idea. This will give continuity to the Leadership Team, and help new members to learn from the more experienced members. Also, the idea of having the option of repeating a term was favored. If a short term, such as 2 years, is established, then perhaps up to 3 consecutive terms would be appropriate. If a longer term is chosen, then perhaps only 2 consecutive terms would be better.

Limitation of the Leadership Team's Authority

AWCC is a congregation-led church, and as such, no individual or committee has authority over the direction of the church. The current Council of Deacons does not act to override the authority of the congregation, nor will the proposed Leadership Team do so. Instead, the Leadership Team will strive to discern God's desired direction for AWCC through prayer and consideration of their knowledge of the congregation. This direction will then be communicated to the congregation as a whole, which has the authority to act on, or refuse to act on, any suggestions from the Leadership Team.