

**Ad Hoc Governance Team  
Proposal to the Board  
May 2017**

**Background**

The HRCC Ad Hoc Governance Team has been meeting since January 2017. Members of the team are Shirley Stone, Erin Tyler, Betsy Noland, Jeremy Turner, David Weeks, Melissa St. Clair and Joann Johnson.

Our team has spent time analyzing HRCC's current Cabinet and Heart Ministry structure. We attempted to better understand what group or team was responsible for what tasks. We tried to be aware of what was currently working well and what needed to be changed. Our overall goals included trying to change our current system in such a way that would increase member participation but decrease commitment time overall for those involved.

We then contacted several pastors from churches from around the country (listed below) who had recently undergone organizational/structural changes and tried to gather information from these churches about their new plans:

- a. Jenn Simmons, Co-Lead Pastor, National Avenue Christian Church, Springfield, MO
- b. Teri Peterson, Former Pastor, The Presbyterian Church of Palatine, Palatine, IL
- c. Thandiwe Dale-Ferguson, Associate Pastor, Cairn Christian Church, Lafayette, CO

Based on a thorough review and many discussions, our team proposes to the board that we implement a "seasonal approach" and introduce this to our congregation as a one-year trial.

The key qualities we affirmed in this approach:

- Short term commitment for team members, which means more people can become involved without making year-long commitments
- Ability to include more people from congregation to participate
- Scripture study as part of each season's planning and theme; scripture drives the work of each season
- A sense of ownership felt by a larger percentage of the congregation
- The "binder" that each seasonal team uses to guide them in planning

We believe this approach will create an environment for ministry in which:

- The entire congregation has a hands-on opportunity to plan and implement the ministries for the church with less risk of burnout
- Our ministry is energized and there is increased potential for spiritual growth
- People are encouraged to serve where their passions lie

**Proposal to the HRCC Board**

The Ad Hoc Governance Team proposes that the Heart of the Rockies Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Board consider this trial as a plan to change our Ministry model here at HRCC.

We are proposing a "Seasonal Structure" based on the liturgical calendar. We have not agreed on a name for our plan yet, but some ideas include: "Seasons of the Heart" or "Seasons of the Rockies" or "Heart Seasons."

In our proposal, the year is divided up into 8 seasons:

- Epiphany
- Lent

Easter  
Summer I and Summer II  
Harvest I and Harvest II  
Advent/Christmas

Each season will be planned, organized and implemented by a Seasonal Team. A Seasonal Team will consist of 6-8 people. A team may also have a couple of consultants – those that can't commit to being on the team but may be able to help out during this season.

The Seasonal Team will meet approximately 6 weeks before the start of their "season" to begin planning. The first Season Team meeting will be a 4-hour meeting, most likely on a Saturday or Sunday, when most of the season's planning will take place. The team will study the upcoming lectionary scriptures together and discern a theme, then use scripture and their theme for the season to plan all the ministry and activities of the church for that season (worship, fellowship, mission, education, stewardship, etc). Our pastor(s) will attend this initial meeting. The team may choose to meet again at a later time to continue their work. A pastor(s) would join them for subsequent meetings only at the team's request. A team chairperson will be decided on by each Seasonal Team. Anyone can join a Seasonal Team – all that is required is the ability to attend the initial planning meeting.

The total time commitment for each member is approximately 3-4 months. No one is to serve on consecutive Seasonal Teams, so each season has its own flavor and no one gets burned out. Members and friends will be limited to serving on only 2 Seasonal Teams per year.

We believe that some of our current *HeartMinistries* are working well and should continue to function as they presently are, but in collaboration with each Seasonal Team. These ministries include Outreach, Children's Ministry, and Youth Ministry. Ideally, each of these ministries could send a representative to each Season planning meeting. We'd imagine that our Music Director would play a role in this seasonal planning, as well, through partial attendance at the initial Seasonal Team planning meeting. We expect that our Nominating Team would continue to nominate Elders, Stewards, Board officers and members at large and appoint a Property Team leader.

We also propose that the Board consider planting a couple of "key members" during the year-long trial period on each Seasonal Team. This key member does not necessarily need to take on the team chairperson role.

We propose that this trial period begin with the 2017 Advent/Christmas. This means that a Seasonal Team would need to be formed and hold its initial meeting approximately October 22, 2017 (6 weeks prior to Advent).

The trial period should last 1 full year – all 8 seasons. Evaluations will be conducted following each season during the trial period and at the end of one year.

A very comprehensive and detailed "roll out" should begin sometime this summer. This would include:

- Communicating this plan/trial to our members and friends
- Start pulling together people interested in serving on our first Season Team for Advent/Christmas

We request that the Board appoint a task force to meet to work out the details and the guidelines for each Seasonal Team prior to October. This task force will be charged with developing a "binder" that will serve as the road map for each Season Team to follow. The Binder will contain a season summary, general guidelines, advice from previous teams, scripture readings for the upcoming season, and the work that the team needs to think about – worship and music ideas, education ideas, mission ideas, fellowship ideas, stewardship ideas, publicity plans, budgetary limitations, evaluations, etc.