

# Celebrating God's Gift of Servanthood



**Officer Orientation Retreat  
Part Two—Session Edition**

**Wasatch Presbyterian Church  
Salt Lake City, Utah**

**Saturday, April 13, 2024**

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# Morning Worship

## Session Orientation Retreat

### *Opening Sentences*

In the beginning, when it was very dark God said, "Let there be light."

**And there was light.**

In the beginning, when it was very quiet, The Word was with God.

**And the Word was God.**

When the time was right God sent the Son.

**Christ came among us, Christ was one of us.**

In the beginning, we were created in the image of God. But the image of God is a deep and broad thing, the totality of which constantly eludes us. And so as we draw near to God, we offer the pieces of the image which we each hold, praying that together we may more fully reflect and proclaim the height, depth, and breadth of the One who calls us from death to life. Let us join together in the prayer of Catherine of Sienna,

**"You, O Eternal Trinity, are a deep sea into which, the more I enter, the more I find, and the more I find, the more I seek. O abyss, O eternal Godhead, O sea profound, what more could you give me than yourself? Amen."**

### *Scripture Reading: Romans 12*

*I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

*For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.*

*Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.*

*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

### *Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession*

We rejoice in your generous goodness, O God. As you have made this day, O God, you also made us. Give light for our comfort. Come upon us with quietness and still our souls, that we may listen for the whisper of your Spirit and be attentive to your nearness in our deliberations.

Empower us to rise above our differences in new life to proclaim your praise, and plan new ways to show Christ to the world, for he reigns forever and ever.

Let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us.

**Our Father who art in Heaven....**

### *Benediction*

Let us begin our retreat in the presence and guidance of the God revealed in Jesus the Christ and in each of us. **Amen!**

# How Our Session Works: An Introduction

## Session Orientation Retreat

### *The Session: Presbyterian Polity in Action*

1. Representative Democracy—similar to civil structure; separation of powers; one of three
2. “Theology of the Group”—group of people more likely to make good decision than individual person

### *Purpose of the Session*

1. “Lead the Church”—responsible for every area of church life
2. Organization varies by size of congregation—division of responsibility and labor
3. Set the vision (the “big picture”) of where we’re going and why
4. Work with ministries to fulfill our shared mission

### *Purpose of the Committees*

1. “Do the Work of the Session”—enact the Session’s plan in their area of service
2. Primary place of deliberation and action
3. All responsible to the Session—Session retains final authority

### *Role of Moderator*

1. “Moderate”—keep us on topic and on track
2. Call meetings to order; identify speakers; calls for motions/discussions/votes
3. Moderator can be overruled by the session—session is still ultimate authority
4. Does not make motions—may suggest a direction or approach for consensus
5. Call special meetings as needed—usually at request of a committee or two session members
6. “Police Process”—enforce our agreements; keep order in meetings; shared responsibility among session members

### *Role of Clerk of Session*

1. “Clerk”—similar to secretary—records actions of session and preserves information
2. Notifies session members of meetings and compiles information for meetings
3. Does not make motions—records them

### *Working Together as a Covenant People*

1. Authorize Committees to fulfill their jobs and spend their money
  - a. No authorization needed for “regular” responsibilities or expenditures
  - b. Something “new” that impacts multiple ministries needs to come to session
2. Honor our Covenant
  - a. Read and review Session Covenant—see draft within this orientation packet
  - b. Hold us all accountable to the same level
3. Honor our Process—Present a united front to Congregation
  - a. We discuss, discern, decide and declare
  - b. We vote our convictions, and accept the majority decision
  - c. We do not share our process outside of Session—triangulation doesn’t help
    - i. *“Those concerns were addressed fairly, and the session decided to ....”*
4. Consider the question, “What is best for the whole church?”
  - a. Not just your committee, but the overall vision/direction
  - b. Doing what is best for the whole body at the “expense” of your area may be necessary—and noble

### ***Ways to Enhance our Productivity***

1. Committee Moderators do not have to be Session Members, but serve at discretion of session and staff members
2. One of the Session Members prepares one-page Session Report in three agreed Areas: Action, Discussion and Information (do not send minutes from committee meetings)
  - a. Action—requires action from the Session
  - b. Discussion—would appreciate the insight of Session to explore implications (no vote)
  - c. Information—keeps Session members informed of committee activities; no vote; no discussion unless there is a desire to highlight or ask questions
3. Session Reports are due to the Clerk of Session before noon on the Friday before Session Meeting
4. All Session Members agree to read all information prior to meeting, an absolutely necessary step to make informed decisions
5. All items come from committees (not individual Session members)
  - a. If a session member brings a motion, moderator usually will refer to a committee
  - b. Exceptions can—and probably will—be made depending on circumstances
6. In most cases, significant items will be presented for discussion at least one month prior to action
7. Electronic votes
  - a. Used only when a response is necessary in short period of time
  - b. Nothing controversial
  - c. Any opposition indicates a special meeting will be called
8. Email is to be used for sharing information—not emotion. If confronted with a complicated or difficult issue, it's better to connect personally

### ***Enjoy Serving on Our Session***

1. Taking some time to agree on these items now should enhance our time together—and make our meetings more enjoyable
2. Thank you for your service to our church and to our God.

### ***Questions, Clarifications and/or Comments?***

### ***Remember Basic Principles of Session Ministry Work***

- #1—Divide the Work!
- #2—Multiply the Ministry!
- #3—Grow the People, Grow the Church

1. The goal of good ministry teams is to involve as many people as possible doing the ministry, to encourage them in the life and ministry of our church...
  - a. by matching people's gifts to needs and opportunities around us
  - b. by trusting people to do their best without micro-management
  - c. by dividing the ministry into smaller pieces so more can become a part
2. As servant leaders, we are called to **Invite, Engage, Integrate, and Disciple** our church family for ministry.
3. We must trust our members—and help them to trust themselves.

***“Every difference of opinion is not necessarily a difference of principle.”***

--Thomas Jefferson

# Responsibilities of Committee Leaders/Members

## Session Orientation Retreat

### ***A. Purpose of Committees***

1. Provides opportunities for members to live out their faith through service
2. Includes members in church leadership and ministry
3. Enables Session and staff to implement the vision/priorities/direction of Session, while equipping/empowering more ministry with same amount of time
4. Witnesses to the Biblical model of servant-leadership for ministry

### ***B. Committee Membership***

1. Committee Chair (typically a Session member)
2. Session members (3)
3. Staff member(s)
4. Various church members and volunteers as appropriate

### ***C. Committee will work together to determine:***

1. Scope and breadth of ministry within their area
2. Best size for committee to keep it small and directional
3. Job description and checklist for committee itself
4. Possibility and purpose of “Ministry Teams”, as well as priority for order of implementing
5. Ministry Team Job Descriptions for top-priority ministry teams and their ministry team members
6. Ministry Team Checklists to assist ministry teams in planning and implementing ministries
7. Best type of coordination and communication within the team and within the church

### ***D. Committee’s Standard Procedure for Creating/Implementing a Ministry Team***

1. Determine the need for a ministry
2. Outline Ministry Team job description—in writing—to address the need
3. Coordinate Ministry Team job description with Session and Staff
4. Identify and enlist Ministry Team Moderator and Ministry Team Vice-Moderator
5. Work with leaders to outline process and procedure checklist—including timeline—in writing—using “9-6-3-plus-1 approach”
  - a. Nine months ahead of event: begin planning; create written materials
  - b. Six months ahead of event: begin doing
  - c. Three months ahead of event: confirm and complete details
  - d. One month after event: debrief and update checklist for next time
6. Identify and Enlist Ministry Team Members
  - a. Provide job description and checklist—including timeline
  - b. Orient Ministry Team on purpose and responsibilities
  - c. Assign responsibilities to team members
  - d. Involve/include additional team members as needed
  - e. Create additional ministry teams if needed
7. Coordinate and Resource Ministry Team as Ministry Team fulfills job description and checklist
  - a. Coordinate process and procedure—including timeline
  - b. Engage additional resources as needed
  - c. Fine-tune process as needed
8. Assist Ministry Team to accomplish ministry—and celebrate!
9. Evaluate ministry and update/revise current checklist

### ***E. Specific Responsibilities of Committee Members***

1. Committee Moderator
  - a. Responsible for providing leadership to the committee (agendas, minutes, coordinating with session members and staff, etc.)
  - b. Coordinates communication for congregation (articles, announcements, promotions, etc.)
  - c. Provides care and oversight for Ministry Teams
  - d. Updates Ministry Team Calendar Checklists as appropriate
  
2. Session Members
  - a. Communicate with Session (session reports, relay progress/questions, etc.)
  - b. Responsible for keeping committee and its ministry teams consistent with Session vision
  - c. Provides care and oversight for Ministry Teams
  - d. Updates Ministry Team Calendar Checklists as appropriate
  
3. Staff Member(s)
  - a. Communicate the ministry of the committee to the staff as a whole (staff meeting reports, conversations, etc.)
  - b. In concert with other staff, coordinates the church calendar and issues surrounding calendar
  - c. With the staff, examines “bandwidth” of projects concerning resources required and available (financial, volunteers, etc.)
  - d. Responsible for providing completion of calendar checklists
  - e. Provides care and oversight for Ministry Teams
  - f. Updates Ministry Team Calendar Checklists as appropriate

### ***F. A Good Time to Meet***

1. Concentrating our meetings early in the month saves time and energy—allows more time without meetings!
2. Committees meet Sunday-Wednesday during the first two weeks of each month
3. Session meets on the third Tuesday of each month
4. No night meetings on the fourth week of each month

# “Plan...Prepare...Produce”

Annual Planning Calendar

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee

Updated March 22, 2023

	<b>Produce</b> (0-3 months before)	<b>Prepare</b> (6-3 months before)	<b>Plan</b> (9-6 months before)	<b>Possibilities</b> (9-12 months before)
June				
July				
August				
September				
October				
November				
December				
January				
February				
March				
April				
May				



# COMMITTEE AGENDA (Draft)

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee  
Date Time

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| 7:00pm | Opening Prayer   |
| 7:05   | Time for Study and Growth  |
| 7:15   | Review Last Month's Report<br>(list feedback from Session)   |
| 7:20   | Items to Produce (now-3 months!)<br>(list items)   |
| 7:30   | Items to Prepare (3-6 months)<br>(list items)  |
| 7:40   | Items to Plan (6-9 months)<br>(list items)   |
| 7:35   | Items for Possibilities (9-12 months)<br>(list items)  |
| 7:50   | Review Report for Session <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Items for Decision</li><li>2. Items for Discussion</li><li>3. Items for Information</li></ol> |
| 7:55   | Other Items  |
| 8:00   | Closing Prayer   |

# Present Session Committee Organization

## Session Orientation Retreat

Moderator: Bob Sheldon  
 Clerk of Session: Shantel Mullin

Treasurer: Jennifer Dawson Purdom  
 Assistant Treasurer: Wendy Holloway

Committee	Staff	Session
Adult Education	Andrew Fleishman	Marty Shannon
Budget & Finance	Bob Sheldon	Michael Holloway
Buildings & Grounds	Allan McInnis	Clare Coonan
Children's Ministry	Matt Bethune	
Congregational Life	Bob Sheldon	Sam Whitaker
Deacons	Andrew Fleishman	
Membership	Andrew Fleishman	Stacey Riekhof Jeremy Cunningham
Mission Ministry	Andrew Fleishman	Shelley Horel
Nominating Committee	Bob Sheldon	Liz Harald
Personnel	Bob Sheldon	Russ Fericks Stephen Jacob
Preschool	Misa Anderson	Liz Harald
Worship & Music	Bob Sheldon Ken Udy	
Youth	Jerri Crawford	

### *Session Appointments*

1. Presbyterian polity authorizes Session to appoint their members to tasks and responsibilities
2. While elected by congregation (through Nominating Committee), Session makes appointments to committees/responsibilities
3. Principle is that everybody gets to try everything—at least once!
4. Eliminates “begging” and “pulling teeth” when asked later to sign up for activities
5. If assigned to what you know won't work, swap with a colleague or contact the pastors
6. **At June meeting, Session will vote to appoint its members**
7. The Session appointments are to these areas:
  - a. Committees
  - b. Serving Communion
  - c. Representing Session during Baptisms
  - d. Representing Session by examining New Members
  - e. Representing Session at Presbytery Meetings

# Financial Policies, Procedures and Practices

## Session Orientation Retreat

### ***How Do We Make a Budget?***

1. Each fall, the Budget/Finance Committee (BFC) invites each committee to estimate how much it will cost to fund their ministry for the coming year
2. Each ministry team examines their present expenses and projects their future needs
3. BFC examines each ministry team's projected needs, estimates next year's income and establishes a draft budget
4. Draft budget provides an estimate of funding needed to fund next year's ministry
5. BFC leads us all in an Annual Fund Campaign in October, to encourage members to make pledges toward the budget
6. Once pledges are tabulated, BFC makes a more accurate estimate of projected income and suggests revisions to the draft budget as appropriate
7. BFC invites moderators of each committee to meet and discuss proposed budget
8. BFC presents proposed budget to the Session for discussion in November and approval in December
9. Session approves the budget for next year—no congregational approval necessary
10. Everybody has money to do ministry!

### ***How Do We Get Approval to Raise Funds?***

1. All requests to raise funds must be coordinated with Budget/Finance Committee (BFC) prior to fundraising—they will coordinate requests and mediate overlapping requests
2. "Regular" events can be submitted to BFC by September of each year and approved by Session at January meeting
3. Unforeseen requests can be submitted to BFC for coordination with other requests already scheduled

### ***How Do We Spend the Money?***

1. Each committee is authorized by Session to manage their allotted amounts, both budgeted, donor-restricted, and session-designated
2. Classify expenses to the appropriate budget line item, even if this action overspends the particular line item; this accurate picture of expenditures will help in creating next year's budget
3. Committees are responsible for the "bottom line" of their ministry area—funds are fungible within line items
4. Do your best to stay within budget—but Session can approve more funds if needed
5. If a ministry team's needs to exceed its total budget by \$1,000 or more, it must seek Session approval
6. Contact BFC as soon as possible to explain the need for additional funds and decide next steps

### ***How Do We Get Reimbursed?***

1. Complete Check Request Form – found online or church office
2. Attach/scan original receipts
3. Attain authorization signature from Staff Resource or Committee Chair
4. Submit Check Request form to the Business Administrator by placing it in her box
5. Receive a check in the mail

## SESSION COVENANT

Wasatch Presbyterian Church  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
Approved by Session June 20, 2023

*“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.”* (Ephesians 4:1-6)

***As members of this Session, we have been called by God through the voice of this congregation to serve the people of God with energy, intelligence, imagination and love. Therefore, we bind ourselves together with bonds of honesty, support and encouragement.***

***As leaders called to model the Body of Christ, we will:***

1. Maintain a community and climate of worship so that the central question is not “What is the group consensus?” but “What is the leading of Christ in our midst?”
2. Be intentional in developing relationships with one another, and engaging in conversation and ongoing study together, in order to build and maintain Christian community and foster trust.
3. Gather good data and basic factual information, identifying alternatives and possibilities. Keep all possible options open in order that creativity may contribute to the process.
4. Lay aside all biases and blocks to the Holy Spirit, leaving the outcome to God’s direction, being willing to consider new ideas, and being obedient to the results.
5. Spend time in reflection and prayer, listening for God’s intimations of the future and hints of God’s direction, relying on scripture, listening, and deep engagement with Christ and each other.
6. Share with the community what one has seen, heard, or felt in the reflection time and speak from our personal experiences related to the subject.
7. Act in a spirit of love and humility, honoring the truth that God works through each member of the body. Be aware God may be speaking through another person and remember that no one possesses all of God’s truth.
8. Listen attentively and with respect and openness to our sisters and brothers, believing that all desire to be faithful to Jesus Christ. Focus on ideas instead of questioning motives, intelligence, or integrity.
9. Wait for God’s timing. Continue to ask God for direction during the waiting. Speaking with a united voice depends on waiting long enough to receive a common sense of leading.
10. Lead by example, by sharing our faith and resources to further the church’s ministry through:
  - a. Regular attendance and participation in Worship
  - b. Intentional involvement in a Christian Education program
  - c. Consistent Stewardship through pledges and contributions
  - d. Joyful engagement in the Fellowship Activities with our members
  - e. Ongoing participation in the Mission Outreach of our church
11. Use our leadership roles to empower and encourage others, so that our members may experience the joy of serving and that God’s ministry will be done. We recognize that it is our responsibility to work with our committees and groups to provide clarity of roles, resources for their work, and directions in selecting priorities.
12. Maintain confidentiality within the group, sharing only “public” information in ways that build up the Body of Christ.

***Furthermore we agree:***

1. Committees and boards are authorized and responsible for their particular areas of ministry as described in their job descriptions in Administrative Manual. They do not need additional permission to fulfill their duties.
2. Committees and boards are authorized to spend budgeted and committee-controlled line items, not needing additional permission from the session. Other funds should receive prior approval. If a committee/board requires funding beyond its budget, it may submit a request to the session, detailing its rationale and design. Because budget allotments are made based on each committee/board's plan, a request will be examined for its consistency with the church's long-range plans.
3. Session meetings generally will last no more than 90 minutes.
4. We will allot time in each meeting for ongoing training/reflection/dreaming—this provides the opportunity for the Session to set both the vision and the direction of the church, while committees may labor together to “make it happen.”
5. Written reports from each committee will be submitted to the clerk by noon on the Wednesday before Session meeting, so that an agenda can be made and all materials distributed electronically the Thursday prior to session meeting, and will be read by all session members prior to meeting.
6. Written reports are not ministry minutes or summaries, but will follow the template divided into:
  - a. Decision Items—issues requiring session approval by formal vote
  - b. Discussion Items—occasions that a committee requests feedback from the session, which the session will provide without a formal decision or vote. In most cases, “major items” will be presented for discussion at least one month prior to action.
  - c. Information Items—actions the ministry team has taken as authorized by session; these items will be noted, but not mentioned unless (1) a session member has a question or (2) the reporting elder would like to highlight something.
7. Teaching Elders are authorized to approve and perform baptisms, weddings, funerals, communions and other duties included in their ministries, under the guidance of session policies, reporting as “information” such activities at each session meeting.
8. We will speak as a governing body. While we may disagree during our discussion, our voted decision will be considered the official position/decision of the session, and we will not undermine this decision by conversations within the congregation. We work and stand together.
9. We will speak the truth in love to each other, knowing that sometimes this may hurt another's feeling; we agree that it is better to be honest than agreeable.
10. We will support one another in our shared ministry, encouraging and assisting whenever possible. Because the church has called us to lead them, we consider our responsibilities to be a sacred trust, and will thank God regularly for the opportunity to serve our community and our God.
11. At this time in our lives, we each agree to fulfill these responsibilities. If a member of our session should have a change in personal circumstance which no longer allows him/her to fulfill these responsibilities in a timely manner, the member may resign from the session with absolute appreciation for ministry provided.
12. We are a team that trusts each other, holds each other accountable, and works together for the shared ministry of our church. Thanks be to God for this opportunity to serve!

Here we hold ourselves and each other accountable to this covenant, and the policies and/or agreements we make together. We commit ourselves to one another, this congregation and the God we serve together.

# SESSION AGENDA (SAMPLE)

Tuesday, June 18, 2024 7:00pm

- 7:00pm Opening Devotion/Prayer
- 7:05 Time of Visioning and Discerning
- 7:35 Consent Agenda  
Approve Agenda  
Minutes of Previous Meetings  
Treasurer's Report  
New Members:  
Transfers:  
Weddings:  
Baptisms:  
Deaths:  
Excused:  
Approve All Reports as Presented/Amended
- 7:40 Moderator's Report
- 7:45 **ITEMS FOR DECISION**
- 7:55 **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**
- 8:20 **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION—Committee Reports**  
Administrative  
Adult Education  
Budget & Finance  
Buildings & Grounds  
Children's Ministry  
Congregational Life  
Deacons  
Membership  
Mission Ministries  
Nominating  
Personnel  
Preschool Board  
Special Gifts  
Stewardship  
Worship & Music  
Investment  
Youth Ministry
- 8:25 Other Matters for Discussion
- 8:30 Adjourning Prayer

## WORSHIP REPORT TO SESSION (SAMPLE)

Name, Reporting Elder  
Wasatch Presbyterian Church  
Date

### FOR DECISION

1. **We move that the Session approve the moving of communion celebration to the first Sunday of each month, with additional communion celebrations to be added on special liturgical days as selected.**

**Background:** Having the regular celebration of communion helps our members know when it will be coming, so that they can make their plans accordingly.

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. **Special Events for Lenten Emphasis. What portrayal of the cross is consistent with our worship style and tradition?**

**Background:** The Worship Committee is considering a different approach to celebrating Lent next year and would like the session's feedback. Our idea is to connect a different aspect of the cross each Sunday and to ask the pastors to preach on that aspect. Maundy Thursday would have a soup supper with communion around the tables in the CLC. Good Friday would feature the cross filled with the images and end with the cross covered in black. Easter would feature a shiny brass cross—empty and bright—in the place of the wooden Lenten cross.

### FOR INFORMATION

1. **Advent went great!** We had a great advent season and everyone seemed pleased with our new additions in worship
2. **Music Committee is having a party.** The choir is having their year-end party on January 23 to celebrate their good work and great blessing
3. **Exploring handbells for children.** We are exploring the possibility of adding a handbell choir for elementary-age children

# “What We’ve Accomplished”

## Session Orientation Retreat

### ***What’s the Purpose of an Interim Period?***

The purpose of an interim period is not just to find a new pastor. Its primary purpose is to give us the opportunity to examine and evaluate ourselves, so we can prepare ourselves for a new pastor. An interim period gives us a chance to grieve both the pastor and the past which cannot be repeated, and also the opportunity to claim our identity so that we can then find a new pastor who fits with our vision of where God is leading us. It gives us time to figure out “who is God calling us to serve?”

### ***What are We Doing During This Time?***

Early in the process, three areas arose in which we could improve: (1) communication; (2) congregational care; and (3) church infrastructure (staffing, properties, and finances) to support our ministry and mission. To better focus our attention and energies, we can develop “interim objectives:” concrete, measurable things that we could do as a congregation to improve ourselves and prepare us for our next pastor.

### ***How Are We Progressing on Our Interim Objectives?***

Last summer, we agreed and approved these eight interim objectives, and have been working together to fulfill them. Here’s a brief summary of our progress and accomplishments.

#### **1. Develop and implement an engaging ministry and outreach model that intentionally attracts, enlists, equips and encourages all people to fulfill their God-given ministry.**

- God has entrusted us with grace and love, so that we can share it with others--both inside and outside the church.
- We hope to be a complete congregation, caring for both our own members and our community. To accomplish both, we need to develop an engaging model of what our ministry looks like.
- In order to grow our church, we need to be more visible in our community. An engaging ministry will entice current and potential members with relevant activities, helping us attract new members in order to continue our ministry.

#### **Progress:**

- Membership Committee is developing new strategies for greeting, welcoming, and integrating new people into our church family.
- Worship Committee has been working hard to refine a meaningful blended worship service that reaches and inspires.

#### **2. Develop and implement an updated congregational care model (deacons, volunteer visitation teams, pastoral ministries, etc.) that will provide care for all those in our congregation.**

- We have many caring people in our congregation. By providing a coordinated, intentional plan, we can help each of our members to experience God’s touch through God’s church. We must help members engage in expressing God’s love and care for one another and for those who will become a part of our church
- We want to create a sustainable model that is not dependent on one person and that does not limit the Deacons’ ability to perform their work.

#### **Progress:**

- Deacons have incorporated new ways to connect with our church family, including new visitation strategies to visit people in hospitals/rehab centers, as well as our homebound or those who would like some company.



**3. Develop and implement an enhanced organizational model (committees, ministry teams, special project teams, etc.) to expand and enhance our organization and encourage increased congregational involvement.**

- The goal of every church is to enlist, equip and empower people to grow in their faith and service to God. Our plan is to enhance our present structure in ways that invite even more people to engage in God's work. We need to create opportunities for the entire congregation to leverage their skills and gifts to contribute to the church's mission.
- As we redefine our goals, we need to update our structure to support those goals. To be successful in our efforts, we also need to engage more people in contributing to and engaging in the work of the church. As the saying goes, "Many hands make light work."

**Progress:**

- All committees have adopted a new, improved structure for meeting and serving our congregation. Each aspect of a committee's work includes the question: who else can we include in this ministry?

**4. Organize and equip our church ministry staff to resource the above models, allowing time for the adjustments to be made in ways that are both financially sustainable and ministry-based.**

- We appreciate all that our staff has done and is doing to assist our church in fulfilling our ministry. At the same time, we want to ensure that each staff member has understanding and confidence to serve both individually and as a team.
- In order to meet the changing needs of our congregation and the world around us, we need to review what roles are really needed and then ensure that our staff is trained and ready to meet those needs.
- As our planned goals shift, we want to update our staff responsibilities to better manage those goals and achieve the expected outcomes.

**Progress:**

- Personnel Committee has worked with our staff to reorganize and redefine the responsibilities of our staff. This has resulted in reducing our staff size while increasing our productivity.

**5. Develop plans and timelines for updating our buildings and grounds to provide warm, inviting, flexible, multi-use spaces for present and future ministry.**

- In order for our church to continue its ministry in the decades to come, we must plan now to ensure that our facilities will be in good shape when the future arrives. This entails anticipating, projecting, and preparing a proactive plan.
- As our buildings age, we need to continue to identify the needs in other areas of our property and create a plan to address those needs as well as look at some of the cosmetic changes and additions that we might want to make so that our building feels warm and inviting.
- Creating and maintaining our facilities allows us to attract events from the community, increasing awareness of the church and creating the potential for growth.

**Progress:**

- Buildings and Grounds is developing a master strategy to enhance our community presence, while streamlining our staff needs.

- 6. Develop a comprehensive approach to funding our shared ministry, including a balanced budget and initiating new teams to assist in annual, special and planned giving. This will provide financial support for the above models and show financial stability and sustainability.**
- One of the greatest challenges of modern ministry is providing its funding. Available funding is the number one determining factor in prioritizing our ministry. Taking steps now to provide adequate funding will make our life together more enjoyable and fruitful.
  - Developing a comprehensive plan for funding requests helps us avoid a “mishmash” of fragmented requests throughout the year and ensures that resources are available for key goals.
  - People appreciate information in making stewardship decisions. By providing clear information on how the church uses our tithes and offerings--and what ministry could be accomplished with a little more--we can assist our members and grow our ministry.

**Progress:**

- Budget and Finance has reorganized our financial system, streamlined our processes, and created more transparency within our finances. While we continue to run a deficit budget, our session has accepted the responsibility to develop a balanced strategy for 2025 and beyond, which includes the congregation’s input and assisting in “making up the difference.”

- 7. Provide for a reasonable and sustainable plan to provide housing for our pastor and staff.**

- The exploding costs of real estate in Salt Lake City (it has doubled in recent years) has made affordable housing an illusion.
- Our present compensation would not allow our next pastor to buy or rent a home in our community.
- We will explore alternative approaches to housing, in order to make it appealing for our pastor and affordable for our church.

**Progress:**

- Our Pastoral Housing Task Force has identified a generous couple who will sell their home at a “bargain price.” Session is in the process of approving the proposal, and forwarding it to the congregation and presbytery for their approval. This is a “game changer” for our church!

- 8. Develop and begin implementing an updated communications/marketing/growth/ outreach plan—including revised materials and new website (also instrumental in pastoral search).**

- Communication is the most crucial—and hardest—part of being a modern church. It helps build awareness in the community and the congregation of our shared goals and purpose.
- Many of our other benchmarks require consistent communications to ensure they succeed in helping grow our congregation, engage the community and our church family and deliver care to those who need it.
- We need to be proactive in creating a communication plan that incorporates all constituencies, and a wide variety of media.

**Progress:**

- The Transition Team has completed our mission study, and turned over their information to the PNC, who created the Ministry Information Form, and Pastor Search Information for our website. Pastor Nominating Committee is well on their way to enlisting a nominee for our next pastor.

# Preparing for a New Pastor

## Session Orientation Retreat

### ***We are not finished!***

- During this transition, WPC has done a lot and grown a lot
- Can be proud of accomplishments—more than most churches dream of doing
- Tempting to think: “I’m glad that’s over!”
- Don’t!

### ***You are just beginning!***

- All churches spend their entire lives “in transition”
- The best transition is yet to come!

### ***A New Identity***

- Time and covid have changed us greatly and deeply
- Forging a way to serve in a new day

### ***A New Vision***

- Outward focus
- Serving our community
- Meeting people where they live and hurt
- Welcoming them into our church home
- Making strangers into family

### ***A New Era***

- Everything we have done is prelude to what will come in your future
- Pastor Nominating Committee knows our work—and seeks a pastor going in the same direction
- Our “real” pastor will lead us in similar directions—with a new pace

### ***It’s Almost Football Season!***

- We all know the image of working as a team
- Our “game plan” is to work so that there are no major/controversial decisions during pastor’s first year
- WPC is about to get a new “Quarterback”
- Officers serve as the “Offensive Line,” with two primary tasks:

### ***Play 1. “Protect Your Quarterback”***

- Your next pastor will need help learning the plays and ways of Wasatch—may not realize it
- Working as a team will give them the time/buffer to learn names—and personalities
- You have set the direction—take any heat that might come for the first year

### ***Play 2. “Move the Ball Up the Field”***

- God has given us all a calling, a mission—and a direction to fulfill both
- You can do it—together
- Get ready for a new season of transition!

### ***Two Questions to Discuss***

1. As officers, what can we do in the coming months to prepare our congregation for our next pastor?
2. As officers, what is our role in supporting our new pastor?

## Closing Worship

*"Seeking After God"*

**An Offering of Ourselves** (based on "Body Prayer" by Richard Foster)

I pray today with my head, Lord, lifting it heavenward in adoration.

**I pray today with my eyes, Lord, looking for the things that are not seen.**

I pray today with my hands, Lord, raising them in jubilant praise.

**I pray today with my knees, Lord, bowing in submission and contrition.**

I pray today with my feet, Lord, working with all my might.

**May you be pleased with my prayer. Amen.**

**Scripture Lesson**

**Psalm 46**

**God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.**

**Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;**

**though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.**

**There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.**

**God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.**

**The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.**

**The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.**

**Come, behold the works of the Lord; see what desolations he has brought on the earth.**

**He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire.**

**"Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth."**

**The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.**

**Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

**God, in you I trust.**

Eternal God, we thank you for being with us today, and for every sign of your truth and love in Jesus Christ. Especially we thank you for the gift of peace in Christ...

for reconciliation in our relationships...

for each new insight into your love...

for energy and courage to share your love...

Gracious God, we remember in our own hearts the needs of others, that we may reach up to claim your love for them, and reach out to give your love in the name of Christ. Especially we pray for our families...

for harmony and justice...

for friends who are hurting or bereaved...

for the Spirit's power in this church...

**O Lord my God, thank you for bringing this day to a close; Thank you for giving me rest in body and soul. Your hand has been over me and has guarded and preserved me.**

**Forgive my lack of faith and any wrong that I have done today, and help me to forgive all who have wronged me. Let me rest in peace under your protection, and keep me from the temptations of darkness. Into your hands I commend my loved ones and all who dwell in this place; I commend to you my body and soul. O God, your holy name be**

**praised. Amen.**

(The unison prayer is by Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

**Departure Blessing**

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with us all. **Amen!**

Bless the Lord! **The Lord's name be praised!**