

## **A GOVERNANCE CHANGE?**

By Rev. Benjamin Broadbent, Senior Minister  
& Patty Raney, Moderator

The Community Church's Council has been looking at an alternative governance model to the one that has been in place since 1985, the year our current Bylaws were adopted by a vote of the congregation. Our current Bylaws have served us well by creating consistency for over three decades and by providing way to grant formal authority to lay leaders by outlining the purpose and structure of various standing Boards and Committees. However, there are a variety of ways in which our Bylaws do not reflect current practice and do not support us moving forward. There are committees required by the Bylaws that haven't existed for several years, and there are procedures that we no longer follow. Furthermore, our current governance model requires that the congregation elect members into 98 different positions on as many as 16 standing committees. Our Council is made up of at least 20 people, making it difficult to make nimble and strategic decisions.

### ***Some aspects of the new model (see next page):***

- Our congregation's mission is at the center.
- 4 "Ministry Areas" include every program, committee, and volunteer position in the church.
- 3 "Support Areas" work collectively to carry out the ministry of our congregation.
- 3 "Resource Areas" support all business functions of our organization.

### ***Benefits of this model:***

- Carries forward our church's values while reflecting the current contexts of our members' lives and the surrounding culture.
- Honors congregational participation while encouraging a culture of "yes" so that ministry leaders can pursue their interests and passions.

- Enables a nimble governing board (Council) to represent the membership by articulating mission and vision, evaluating programs, and ensuring responsible stewardship of resources.
- Empowers program leaders to work harmoniously to create effective programs with the support of a structure that delegates authority and requires accountability.

### ***Frequently Asked Questions:***

- *How are Council members chosen?* They are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the congregation.
- *Will we still have committees?* Yes, many of them. But they won't be required by the Bylaws. We will keep and add and adjust the committees and ministry teams we need.
- *Will we still have a Board of Trustees?* No, but the functions of the Trustees will carry forward into the Finance and Facility Resource Areas and the Vice-Moderator & Treasurer positions.
- *Will this require a change to the Bylaws?* Yes, by vote of the membership at a congregational meeting.

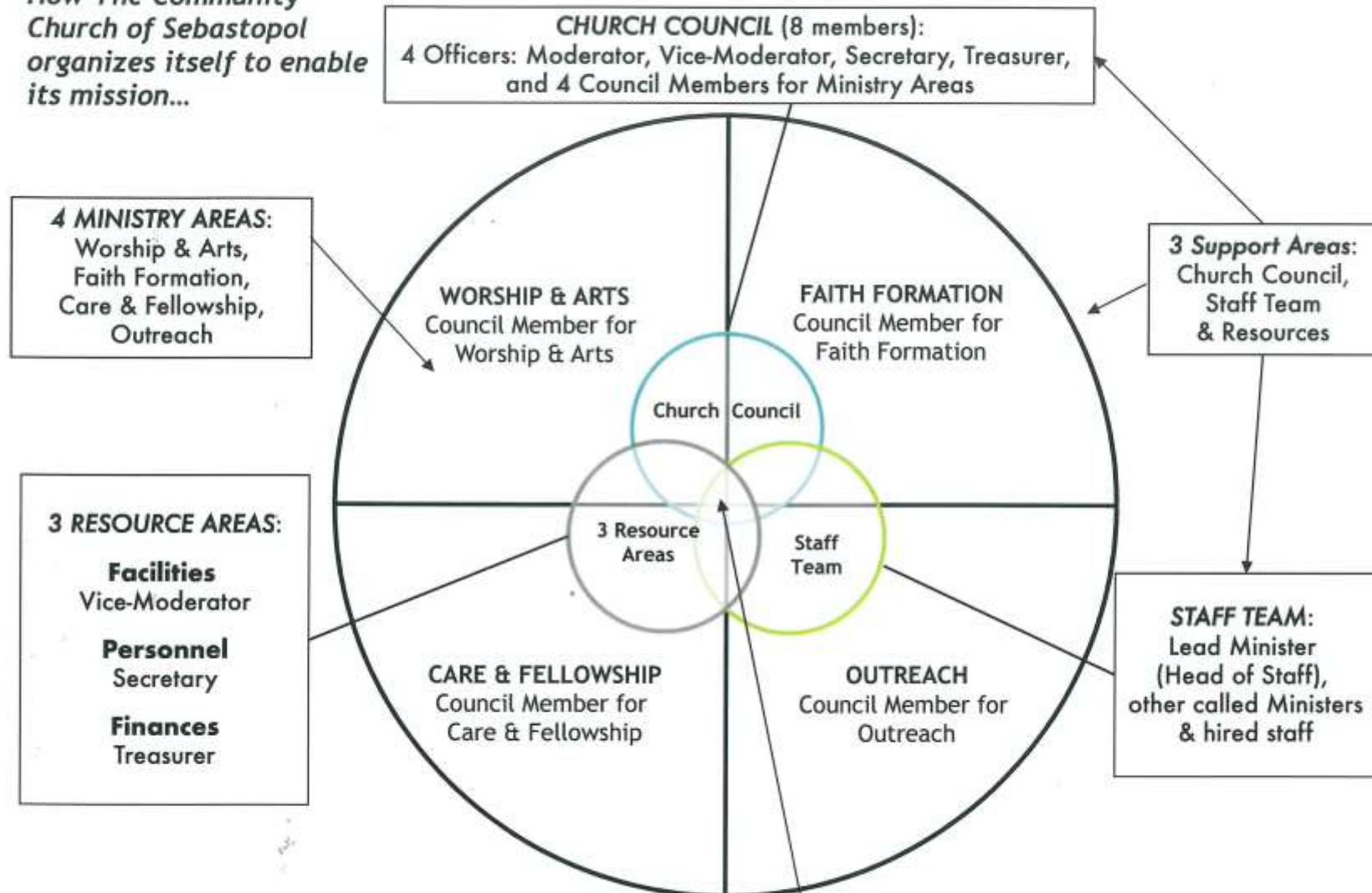
### ***Next Steps:***

- *Learn more.* We will continue to make presentations at committee meetings and after worship on Sundays.
- *Ask questions.* Contact either of us or any Council person.
- *Vote.* It is our hope to bring this change to the Annual Meeting of the Congregation in January.
- *Give feedback.* We want this process to be as transparent as possible. Let us know if we're doing a good job and how we can improve.

(See Governance model on reverse side)

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*How The Community Church of Sebastopol organizes itself to enable its mission...*



**OUR MISSION:** To be a community in which we worship God and share the love of Jesus Christ, teaching the message of Jesus to all ages and putting our faith into action.