

Presbytery Leadership Model Task Force Report and Recommendations

MOTION

The Leadership Model Task Force moves that the Presbytery of San Francisco adopt its recommendations below, including:

1. The formation of a Presbyter Nominating Committee to recruit and recommend a Transitional Executive Presbyter. The Transitional Executive Presbyter will be involved in recruiting and hiring the Associate Executive Presbyter.
 - a. The PNC will be comprised of one representative from each of the following groups: Mission Vision and Leadership (MVL), Personnel Working Group (PWG), Committee on Ministry (COM), Finance Property and Oversight (FPOC), Nominating Committee (NOM/COR), Committee on the Preparation for Ministry (CPM), Partnership Model Evaluation Team (PMET), as well as two at-large members, preferably clergy or elders from churches of color or from New Worshiping Communities who are predominantly People of Color (POC) in the Presbytery.
 - b. The composition of the Task Force will represent a broad cross-section of the presbytery, including a balance between clergy and ruling elders, and a balance between regions (West, East, Central). The committee will not include any of the current Transitional Partners, and will be facilitated by one or both of the co-moderators.
 - c. Each committee and working group represented in the task force will name its own representative to the task force. The two at-large members will be named by the co-moderators of the presbytery, in consultation with the Nominating Committee/Committee on Representation. The co-moderators will monitor the balance of the composition of the task force, and make adjustments as necessary.
2. The formation of a working group to propose revisions to the Standing Rules to reflect the recommendations of the Task Force. The Standing Rules Working Group shall consist of seven members reflecting a diversity of experience and churches.

Report Introduction

Tasked with evaluating and determining the most effective long-term leadership model for the Presbytery, the Leadership Model Task Force was formed in June 2023 with representatives from key committees in the Presbytery plus at-large members from churches of color in the Presbytery. Upon reflecting on the last 30+ years of the Presbytery and key events, as well as the last three years of the Transitional Partnership Model, the Task Force recognized that as a result of the ruptures over LGBTQ ordination and racist actions toward certain churches/clergy of color, a significant number of the members of the Presbytery, clergy and congregations alike, are traumatized and disaffected. This has fed a culture of apathy and dissatisfaction, where laity and clergy alike lack trust in the Presbytery and its leadership. This lack of energy and satisfaction has been confirmed with the Holy Cow! landscape surveys of 2015 and 2023.

Further, the transitional partnership model with three co-equal Transitional Executive Partners which has been in existence for the past three and a half years has deepened the dysfunction, as the model was destabilized with the death of one Partner and the resignation of another, and the three incumbents lack cohesion and trust to work as an effective leadership team. Because of the co-equal nature of the Partnership Model, the Partners are not accountable to each other, and therefore management of individual Partners' performance and the Partners as a team has fallen to the volunteers on the Personnel Working Group, who have no authority over the team, which is an ineffective and unsustainable situation.

In order for the Presbytery to live into its mission and vision, the Task Force believes that both the trauma of the Presbytery and the resulting dysfunction, and the flawed Partnership Model need to be addressed. A new permanent leadership model in and of itself will not resolve the problems that plague the Presbytery. It will require a new governing structure and commitment to covenants of mutual love and respect, along with a staffing model that is led by a single Head of Staff, who is accountable to a reconstituted Presbytery Council, to whom a streamlined set of Presbytery committees report.

Setting up and implementing the new governing structure, promoting and enforcing covenants of healthy and respectful communication/behavior, and a new staffing model will take time. But, instead of continuing the current Transitional Partnership Model until these structures and covenants are in place, the Task Force recommends that a Transitional Executive Presbyter and Transitional Associate Presbyter be recruited and in place before the end of the Transitional Partners' contracts in May 2024.

As such, we also recommend the formation of a Presbyter Nominating Committee (PNC) to hire a Transitional Executive Presbyter. This committee would use the report and recommendations provided by the 2023 Leadership Model Task Force as its guiding principles for filling these positions.

COMPOSITION of PNC:

- The PNC will be comprised of one representative from each of the following groups:
Mission Vision and Leadership (MVL), Personnel Working Group (PWG), Committee on

Ministry (COM), Finance Property and Oversight (FPOC), Nominating Committee (NOM/COR), Committee on the Preparation for Ministry (CPM), Partnership Model Evaluation Team (PMET), as well as two at-large members, preferably clergy or elders from churches of color or from New Worshiping Communities who are predominantly People of Color (POC) in the Presbytery.

- The composition of the Task Force will represent a broad cross-section of the presbytery, including a balance between clergy and ruling elders, and a balance between regions (West, East, Central). The committee will not include any of the current Transitional Partners, and will be facilitated by one or both of the co-moderators.
- Each committee and working group represented in the task force will name its own representative to the task force. The two at-large members will be named by the co-moderators of the presbytery, in consultation with the Nominating Committee/Committee on Representation. The co-moderators will monitor the balance of the composition of the task force, and make adjustments as necessary.

Recommendations of the Task Force

- Establishing a Presbyter Nominating Committee to fill the Transitional Executive Presbyter position, using the guidelines and language below to complete a job description and hiring process
- Staffing the model outlined below
 - URGENT: Transitional Executive Presbyter hiring a Transitional Associate Executive Presbyter
 - Transitional EP and AEP would be tasked with evaluating and implementing a long-term staffing and committee model
- Updating Standing Rules and Standing Committees' roles and responsibilities (suggestions found below)
 - HIGHLIGHT: Merging MVL + FPOC into one Council for the Presbytery, who act as the trustees. The Council should not be led by the Presbytery Pastor/TEP. All other committees would be accountable to this Council.
- Developing job descriptions for volunteer positions, including chairpersons and members of working groups and committees

Proposed Staffing Model Outline

Transitional Executive Presbyter

- Visionary
- Helping us reimagine how we do our work together (re-imagining committee structure)
- Pastor to help with healing of trauma deeply ingrained in our presbytery
- Staffing COM + CPM -- Train + Equip Committees
- Preparation of the Presbytery for permanent EP/Associate EP leadership with appropriate staffing and reorganized committees that are equipped and fully functional

Transitional Associate Executive Presbyter

- Communications
- Staffing FPOC – visioning financial oversight
- Staffing Nominating Committee
- Volunteer recruitment and training
- Preparation of the Presbytery for permanent EP/Associate EP leadership with appropriate staffing and reorganized committees that are equipped and fully functional

Stated Clerk (part-time)

- Preparing documents
- Overseeing working group to update Standing Rules

Other Positions

(to be evaluated as a part of the work of the Transitional Executive and Associate Executive Presbyter)

- Administrative Coordinator
- Office Coordinator
- Treasurer (volunteer position)
- Property Caretaker for El Cerrito Center
- CRE/CLP Program Coordinator
- Contractors
 - o Accountant/Enrolled Agent
 - o Legal Counsel
 - o Recording Clerk
 - o Technical Support
 - o Judicial Consultant

Job Description

Specific Title: Transitional Executive Presbyter/Head of Staff

With the current situation in the Leadership of the Presbytery of San Francisco, the Task Force proposes Trauma healing at this point in time. With this in mind, we propose a Transitional Executive Presbyter/Head of Staff, who should be an Ordained Minister of the Word and Sacrament.

Presbytery of San Francisco Mission Statement

Celebrate, Nurture and Serve our Communities by our Lives Together in Christ.

Presbytery Vision for Ministry

The Task Force proposes the following Goals for Ministry:

1. Leadership that is an incubator for innovation which involves,
 - creating space for, and supporting people/communities in innovative thinking and creating.
 - Making space for voices of agitation and resistance.
2. Leadership that holds on to the uniqueness of Presbyterianism while leading us into wider experiences of ecumenism and interfaith relationships and work. Educating and building the capacities of volunteer leaders in these areas.
3. Trauma-informed leadership:
 - Understanding our history through this lens.
 - Recognizing that a significant number of the members of the presbytery are traumatized.
 - Telling God's story of saving Grace throughout history.
 - Equipping presbytery members to respond to crises.

With the above goals in mind, we hope that the Presbytery will be:

- One of transparency, accountability and trust;
- More relational, connectional, encouraging, spiritual and joyful;
- More agile, adaptive, innovative and risk-taking;
- More diverse, inclusive and justice oriented; and
- More focused on providing resources and support to elders, pastors and churches.

Addressing the emerging needs of our community or constituency

As a Matthew 25 Presbytery, we join with other Presbyterian Church(U.S.A) congregations, presbyteries, and synods in our commitment to:

- Build congregational vitality,
- Dismantle structural racism, and
- Eradicate systemic poverty.

These principles influence decisions around our priorities, our budget and our relationship with God, creation, and each other, for we strive to be a Presbytery that when people talk about us they say, "for I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed

me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me” (Matthew 25:35-36).

This will entail developing a new less cumbersome structure, the building of relationships and community, healing our divisions, a multifaceted communication program and continual training/capacity building for elders, pastors and other church leaders.

How will this position help to reach our vision and mission goals?

We believe the Transitional Executive Presbyter can achieve the stated goals by:

1. Listening more than speaking.
2. Learning about the San Francisco Presbytery history and the impact racism has had on its people and churches.
3. Helping to rebuild trust in the Presbytery (both in the institution and among congregations).
4. Leading in changing both the structure and the atmosphere of the Presbytery.
5. Helping to heal the divisions and relationships within the Presbytery.

We do not expect the Transitional Executive Presbyter to do these things by themselves, but working with the talented and dedicated Presbytery staff, pastors, and elders of the Presbytery, we believe they can do this together.

Characteristics needed by the Transitional Executive Presbyter

1. One who demonstrates Love to others.
2. One who recognizes our individual congregational and Presbytery responsibilities for past and current racism.
3. One who can create a culture of abundance (enough for everyone).
4. One who is an authentic Servant Leader.
5. One who can celebrate the life of a church at its death (build expectancy about the future)
6. One who understands the dynamics of change and has led change in the past.
7. One who can encourage, oversee and support the Presbytery staff.
8. One who understands systems theory and has used that knowledge in the past.
9. One who can deal with conflict and encourage healing.
10. One who is open, inclusive, respectful, collegial, honest, humble, energetic, pastoral and spiritual.

The main tasks of the Transitional Executive Presbyter will be:

- to be a Pastor to the Pastors
 - meeting with as many Pastors and congregations as possible
 - to help with healing of trauma deeply ingrained in our presbytery
- to understand the dynamics of the Presbytery and its congregations
- to serve as Head of Staff
- to be a visionary
- helping the Presbytery reimagine how we do our work together (re-imagining committee structure)
- staffing COM + CPM – training and equipping these committees
- hire an Associate Executive Presbyter within the first couple of months in the position
- Preparation of the Presbytery for permanent EP/Associate EP leadership with reorganized committees that are equipped and fully functional

Job Description

Specific Title: Transitional Associate Executive Presbyter

This person will be hired by and will work alongside the Transitional Executive Presbyter to oversee the operations and administration of the Presbytery, ensuring the smooth functioning of our work together.

Characteristics needed by the Transitional Associate Executive Presbyter

1. One who demonstrates Love to others.
2. One who recognizes our individual congregational and Presbytery responsibilities for past and current racism.
3. One who can create a culture of abundance (enough for everyone).
4. One who is an authentic Servant Leader.
5. One who can celebrate the life of a church at its death (build expectancy about building future)
6. One who can deal with conflict and encourage healing.
7. One who is open, inclusive, respectful, collegial, honest, humble, energetic, pastoral and spiritual.

The main tasks of the Transitional Associate Executive Presbyter will be:

- To oversee communications for the Presbytery
- To oversee the administrative operations of the Presbytery of San Francisco
 - Manage day-to-day operations, office facilities, services, and equipment to ensure effective collaboration onsite or through remote work as needed.
 - Ensure Presbytery's operational policies and practices are administered fairly and consistently, as guided by the employee handbook, labor laws, and other personnel, payroll, and safety standards.
- Provide visionary leadership for financial oversight
 - Staffing FPOC (or the committee(s) formed that includes FPOC's work)
- Overseeing training, work, and morale of volunteers
 - volunteer recruitment, staffing the Nominating Committee (or the body that provides this function in the redesigned Presbytery structure)
 - volunteer training
- Preparation of the Presbytery for permanent EP/Associate EP leadership with reorganized committees that are equipped and fully functional

Observations on and Recommendations for the Standing Rules of the Presbytery of SF

Standing Rules include both Standing Rules and Manual of Administrative Operations and Appendices – BOTH need to be reviewed and updated.

Based on a concept of dual leadership positions (Transitional Executive Presbyter/Head of Staff and an Associate Executive Presbyter), the Standing Rules should be evaluated and revised to reflect these positions.

In particular, Chapter 5/Section 5.2 Personnel Working Group, Chapter 9 Presbytery Personnel, and Appendix H, Personnel Policies should be reviewed and revised.

- Personnel Working Group's scope and responsibilities are too broad now, thereby leading to overwork and burnout.
 - **Question:** Should Personnel Working Group be a standing committee of the Presbytery, or a committee of the Presbytery Council?
- Chapter 9 Presbytery Personnel should describe:
 - What constitutes a staff person?
 - How are they chosen?
 - What are their roles and responsibilities, and to what are they held accountable? By whom?
- Appendix H, Personnel Policies, should describe:
 - How staff raise/resolve concerns about each other
 - Staff community covenants for respectful communication and conduct

STAFF ROLES: definitions and questions.

- The (Transitional) Executive Presbyter/Head of Staff would be responsible for communicating the vision of the Presbytery and working with committees, clergy/pastors, and congregations to implement the vision.
- The (Transitional) Associate Executive Presbyter would be responsible for running the Presbytery operations with subordinate staff (part-time) who would be assigned to specific committees.
- How does the Stated Clerk relate to the Presbytery Pastor/Executive Director? Per current org chart, does the Stated Clerk report to the Executive Director as Head of Staff?

All Standing Committees and working groups and their definitions/scopes need to be revisited.

- In particular, Chapter 4 Standing Committees should be reviewed and revised.
- Consider developing charters for each standing committee/working group, which include required community covenants or statements of conduct, which include Respectful Communication Guidelines.
- Provide template to each committee/working group, which can be adapted to reflect each committee's role/responsibilities.
- All committee members should agree to follow the agreed-upon covenants.

- Community covenants would include:
 - How to engage in respectful discussions and decision-making, allowing for dissenting voices and disagreement – to apply to both volunteers and staff
 - How to provide constructive, encouraging and supportive feedback to staff
 - How to hold each other accountable in following the covenants
 - Limit decision-making to meetings, while allowing for discussion during and outside of meetings
- Such covenants would be reviewed annually by committees and updated/revise as needed.
- The charter would also describe committee's roles/responsibilities, authority, accountability/reporting relationships, staffing, member job profiles (including required/desirable skills, knowledge and experience), and moderator/chair job descriptions (including traits/training they need to be effective). If committee members and moderator/chairs do not possess the skills, knowledge, training they need, the staff should work with committee members and moderators to find them training and resources, as part of onboarding.
- An organizational chart that includes both committees and staff should be included. The functions to be performed by staff and the functions to be performed by the committees should be clearly articulated.

Reorganize committee structure as follows:

- Reconstitute the Presbytery Council (meeting quarterly), which would be the Trustees of the Presbytery under the Corporation
 - The Council would oversee the following committees:
 - Finance Committee (see italicized comments below – consider making Finance Committee the Operations Committee?)
 - Property Oversight Committee (see italicized comments below – consider making Property Oversight for congregations functions part of the Congregational Support Committee and Property Oversight functions for Presbytery property part of an Operations Committee?)
 - Mission Vision and Leadership Committee
 - Personnel Committee – converting the current working group to a committee
 - Committee on Ministry
 - **Question:** Should COM be combined with CPM? (see italicized comments below – consider combining pastoral support functions of COM and CPM into a Pastoral Support Committee and splitting off congregational support functions into a Congregational Support Committee?)
 - Committee on Preparation for Ministry – Question: Should COM be combined with CPM? (see above)
 - Return to having separate Standing Committees for the Committee on Representation (COR) and the Nominating Committee (NOM).
 - By combining these committees, the Presbytery has limited the ability of COR to address the critical responsibilities of a COR (which are

The next most important missing description is the Finance and Property Oversight Committee description (in the form of a charter?).

Per italicized comments above, if Finance functions are assumed by a new Operations Committee, and the Property Oversight functions are assumed by a Congregational Support Committee (for congregational property oversight) or a new Operations Committee (for Presbytery property oversight), then the descriptions of how those functions are performed by those committee and the policies used by such committees would be described in appendices to the Standing Rules.

If the Presbytery Council is reinstated and the MVL committee reports to the Council, then the MVL Committee can focus its efforts on helping/advising the Council and other committees on how the Presbytery and its members can execute on its Matthew 25 mission. Then, the Council will take the MVL recommendations and direct the staff and other committees to execute those recommendations.

Additional thoughts: Strive for a diversity of representation on the Council, including teaching elders and ruling elders, as well as a diversity of men/women/nonbinary, LGBTQIA/cisgender or straight, large church/small church, racial/ethnic groups, geographic regions.

Final Thoughts

At the May meeting of the Presbytery of San Francisco, a highly ambitious goal was set for this task force. We have endeavored to live into the hopes and desires behind this goal while listening to the movement of God's Spirit that was evident among us as we worked together.

With the strong leadership of Julie Boleyn and James Fielder of the Kaleidoscope Institute, we were able to get to the point of presenting the above recommendations for staffing and the changes to the structure of the Presbytery that are needed in order for this new staffing model to succeed. But, as you may have noticed, not all of the details are worked out as of yet.

One final recommendation that we have is for a working group, constituted of some of the members of the Task Force along with others, to convene in the next month to iron out the final details paving the way for the hiring of a Transitional Executive Presbyter early in the new year.

We believe that the TEP/HOS should be hired for a period of 2-3 years to give sufficient time for listening, healing, visioning, and implementing the above recommendations, setting the Presbytery up for a successful call for a new EP/HOS in the future.

While it may seem to some that we have overstepped our bounds in recommending such sweeping changes to the Standing Rules and committee structure, it is our strong conviction that no staffing model will be successful if such changes are not undertaken to support the work done by the Presbytery staff and volunteers.

Respectfully submitted by the Presbytery Leadership Model Task Force:

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