

Summary of Recommendations
to
Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
by
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I. Clergy

Senior Minister: Reorient the position externally as the “face” of Plymouth in Ft. Collins and beyond. Do so by dramatically reducing the expectations of the Senior Minister’s attendance at Board and team meetings (the same would be true for the associate pastor). Increase the amount of time the Senior Minister has to interact with members directly and spends on social justice work in the community.

Associate Minister: Have only one Associate Minister whose work is oriented toward young adults (including college students) and young families. Hire a young person for this position, preferably female.

II. Communications

This needs to be less of a nuts-and-bolts position and more focused on strategic marketing and communications (internal and external). It is challenging, at best, for a congregation to grow in the 21st Century without an aggressive marketing and communication strategy aimed at the community in which it is located.

III. Administration

Make a major upgrade in this area:

1. Hire a Church Administrator. This is a lower paying position than a Business Manager. The skill set required will be high quality managerial and people skills. This person will be the “go-to” person for the staff and congregation alike. The person will manage the office staff and everything about the office, serve as a de facto Facilities Manager working with the Trustees, manage the cleaning staff, oversee the data base, work with the outsourced IT 24/7 support group, make sure mailing lists are up-to date, etc. the administrator will make sure that setups and cleanups are done and work with staff and committees as they have administrative needs. The administrator will work with a part-time Administrative Assistant, delegating tasks as needed.
2. Hire a part-time (20-24 hours per week) bookkeeper/accountant to handle the financial bookkeeping and reporting. This person will handle all the financially related responsibilities in the current Business Manager’s job description. Continue to Outsource payroll. If possessing the skill set, this person can also offer financial management advice to a newly reformulated Budget and Finance Committee.
3. A Budget and Finance Committee needs specific expertise regarding the running of a business such as creating budgets and managing finances. Members should be recruited

who possess the appropriate skills. Most congregations with investments have a separate committee/team working with a financial advisor to ensure safe and productive management of investments.

IV. Role of the Trustees

While the Trustees are not staff of Plymouth, in the consultant's opinion, they function like staff. They, in effect, fill a position found in many congregations known as Facilities Manager. The question the consultant raises is: How long can the Trustees continue to do, collectively, what amounts to an individual staff job? As members age, their ability and willingness to perform this function may well decline. Thinking ahead is wise.

V. Staff-Congregation Relationships

These relationships are not broken but they are frayed for some, especially after the long period of physical separation during the pandemic. Issues such as defensiveness to criticism, being present to each other and diffusing authority for doing ministry can be improved over time with clear, well-communicated strategies. Both staff and congregation can acknowledge their role in creating the sometimes-frayed relationships and build stronger bonds for the future.

Possible Staff Reporting Relationships

