

St. Andrews Structure I

We begin Lent with a journey into the wilderness. I think we all feel we have been wandering in a wilderness for the past 3 years. It began with a pandemic of a serious deadly virus. It has continued with less dangerous but more transmissible variants. Perhaps we believe that we are beginning to relax but impacts still abound.

We have been on this journey such a long time with ongoing effects that it is not possible to find our way back to how we were before. We, our world, our society, have been forever changed. We are different people and a different Church and adjustments need to be made.

All around us other churches and various volunteer organizations are struggling to get back to normal operations and finding it difficult or impossible. There are many theories and we don't know all the reasons, but the reality is that people just can't give of their time and energy in the ways that they used to. Many folks who we have depended on in the past have simply aged out or their previous levels of activity and participation.

What can we do here at St. Andrew's United in Harvey to address the difficulty of filling all the positions our structure calls for: session members, committee chairs, committee members, trustees, stewards? Each year the Nominating Committee struggles to fill all these positions. Some folks have been doubling up, wearing more than one hat. Quite frankly, some work is not getting done and some of it just not done well. Those who are trying their best are feeling frustrated and overwhelmed.

Your Session and Official Board feel that one helpful step we can take is to change our governance structure to one that requires fewer people. We currently have a Session to deal with the spiritual life of the church, various committees to do actual work and manage property and money, and the Official Board to bring these all together and make major decisions.

The structure we are recommending is called a Unified Board and we will be taking some time in worship for the next several weeks to help us all to understand what that is and how it works. Together we will explore whether this may be the right structure for our congregation to use for our future. Then we can make our decision at our Annual Congregational Meeting. Together.