

## **GRaT Things in the Works**

So perhaps you've been in on a committee meeting and met the team, or maybe you've just heard some rumblings about something GRaT happening at the church. Either way, I wanted to take a few moments to explain some of what's going on.

But first, what is GRaT? GRaT stands for Governance Restructuring Team. This is a group composed of Tonja Kelly (chair), Jim Ross, Cheryl Randino, Rebecca Vicki, and Stephanie Lewis, who have been meeting since July. Expanding on the work done by a previous governance restructuring subgroup, and picking up on the desires and wishes of our church's visioning campaign, they were charged by the Church Council to "develop an updated governance structure."

In my Monday email on October 30<sup>th</sup>, and in the Faith in Action on November 5<sup>th</sup>, you will hear more directly from the team about their efforts. I don't want to steal their thunder on the what and the how of the work they've been doing; rather, I'd like to take a moment to comment on the why.

Although you may not see it when you attend worship on Sundays, or even if you serve on a committee or volunteer on a team or at an activity, there are a lot of decisions that we, as a church, are called to make. Oftentimes who can make those decisions is clear; many times, it is not. And sometimes we get something that we just don't know what to do with at all!

The new governance structure is one that will clarify who can make decisions, how they are made, and it will also allow us to be more adept and responsive in making those decisions.

In addition, this effort will also enable committees and groups to exercise more flexibility in membership and how they do the work they are called to do. This we have found, according to our vision process, is much more appealing to our membership.

We live in a very fast-paced world and sometimes it's necessary for us to move a little more quickly, and differently, than when the current structure was set up some decades ago.

I know this may sound like the restructuring work is done; it is not. The team is still meeting with groups and committees and will be reaching out to the congregation at large for their input. And then, as is the congregational way when making such a big decision, we'll come together, as a church, to discern how God is calling us to respond to their proposal.

This team has worked very hard over the last few months and I hope that you will be both supportive of, and receptive to, their efforts. Restructuring will require change, no doubt. But the world is changing and ministry is changing, and so we believe that the church needs to change, as well, if we want to stay active and vibrant as we seek to be *locally engaged, broadly inclusive, and deeply relevant*.

There's much more to come. For now I pray that you will keep this GRaT team in your prayers as they do this hard work on behalf of the church. I believe they are listening to the Spirit—and that will lead us all into a very exciting new chapter!