

**January 30, 2022** - The following was tabled to be considered at the next semi-annual meeting.

In the regular meeting of the Prince of Peace Congregation Council on December 14, 2021, the following amendment to the bylaws was approved by the Council and will be submitted to the congregation for consideration at our regular semiannual meeting on January 30, 2022.

1) Delete

Section V.1 ~~Congregation Life Area Coordinators. Serve on the Congregation Council and attend meetings as required. Participate in all activities of their area as required by the Continuing Resolutions.~~

Replace with:

Section V.1 **At Large Council Members.** Council members serve on the Congregation Council at large and attend meetings as required. The Nominating Committee will seek Council members that provide a diversity of age, gender, years of membership, and areas of participation in the congregation.

2) Delete as follows from Section II.4.

4. The order of business at the semi- annual meeting in January shall be:

a. The minutes

b. The reports of the

i Pastor(s)

ii Congregation President

iii ~~Congregation Life Area~~ and Committee Chairs

iv Treasurer and Auditing Committee

v and other reports

## **Background**

Last spring, Prince of Peace accepted an offer to join “Liberating Structures for Mission,” an eighteen-month process of rethinking our governing and operating structures. Our goal is to find ways to free ourselves from ways of doing things that don’t work anymore and that takes time and energy away from doing our most important work.

As we began looking at our governing documents, particularly the bylaws and continuing resolutions, we found that much of what they say doesn’t describe how we actually function and is not helping us achieve our goals. The most obvious issue is the “Congregation Life Area Coordinator” designation. Current members (and probably past members) are confused about how they are supposed to relate to the committees/teams and functions listed in their congregational life area.

The language that a Council member “Participate in all activities of their area as required by the Continuing Resolutions” implies that somehow that member will be a liaison between all of the committees and functions assigned to their area. In practice, that doesn’t happen. Generally, the groups listed in the congregation life areas function autonomously and don’t need a liaison to the Council to function. Also, the “Liberating Structures” project has reminded us that the role of the Council should be to take a broad “30,000-foot” view of the work of the church, focusing on policy and planning. Operational coordination of committee functions would not be a good use of Council resources.

## Q & A

- **Why is this amendment being proposed?**

As described above, it would better describe how we really function. A lot has changed in the decade that has passed since Prince of Peace last changed our bylaws. The current bylaw makes a lot of sense in concept, but in practice it hasn’t worked.

This change will also make it easier to recruit new council members, since connection to a particular area of church life would not be a main criterion.

- **Why now?**

Elections are coming up at our meeting in January and it makes sense to make this update at the beginning of any new terms. Also, we are at a point in the Liberating Structures process where we are beginning to look at the shape of future structures and this amendment will give us more clarity and transparency as we go forward.

- **How would this amendment affect our current committees/teams?**

This amendment doesn’t change how our committees are structured or operate. Except for those committees required by our constitution (Executive, Personnel, Nominating, Enduring Gifts, Audit and Call) all of our committees are designated by a continuing resolution. Except for an expectation that each Congregation Life Area Coordinator will report annually to the congregation there is no defined role or relationship in the bylaws.

- **Does that mean that our committee structure will remain the same?**

Our committee structure won’t change as a direct result of this amendment. However, we do need to look at how our committee/team structure is working and how it could be improved to help us achieve our vision. That review process needs to involve everyone in our congregation who is willing to pitch in. We hope to begin these conversations in January.

- **Would this amendment have any financial impact?**

No.