



Mentoring

The concept of mentoring in our service structure is primarily focused on assisting new members on committees and boards to learn the ropes of the work done to educate the new member on the process of serving on a board/committee. In this time of potential transition of our overall service structure, we expect the guidelines below will suffice until further need arises.

Initially, a mentor will be identified collectively by the chairperson and existing members to connect with the new member and set up a meeting designed to inform the new member of the expectations for involvement. Ongoing mentoring could occur during regular meetings of the board/committee, however separate meetings to check-in or address needs and concerns would likely be more productive in a neutral setting. The nature of the mentor-mentee relationship will logically depend on the nature of each person and possibly the particular service entity. Ideally a mentoring relationship will naturally build from initial entry into membership on a board/committee. The following information is provided as a summary of commonly understood qualities of a mentoring structure; it is provided simply as background and is not intended to be adhered to.

A note on Youth representation in our service structure:

After confirmation, we believe that teens should become involved with helping “run” the church by sitting on various boards/committees. Also teenagers need to form real relationships with adults in the church that go beyond greetings in fellowship hall. The only way to do this is to get to know each other well over time. To this end, the nominating committee makes efforts to recruit teens to accept formal service positions. We hope this will provide them with an opportunity to learn new skills and deepen relationships with other church members while making a real and significant contribution to some of the basic work of the church; additionally this may be an opportunity to fulfill requirements of involvement in their community and broaden the experience for applications to colleges, jobs and other endeavors. To help ensure that this experience is meaningful, it is encouraged that an adult on each board/committee volunteer to “show the ropes” and work with a teen to organize a particular board project, such as Alternative Christmas, Greening of the Church, preparing board budget, etc.

What is mentoring?

A relationship built in a series of one-to-one meetings to develop in the mentee:

- Technical and professional skills, knowledge and understanding;
- Improved competence in leadership or management or self-management;
- Helpful attitudes and habits (e.g. confidence, self-reliance, questioning assumptions, punctuality);
- More awareness of potential and any self-limiting beliefs that undermine the use of potential;
- Clarity about personal values and goals in life;
- A sense of belonging / induction to an organization or community; and/or
- Mentoring also provides learning opportunities for the mentor.

Guidelines

1. Entering mentoring relationships is voluntary.
2. Either party has the right to withdraw from a mentoring relationship.
3. While a mentor may have more experience, the relationship is one of partners who jointly make decisions.
4. Mentoring meetings will preferably be held in a comfortable environment.
5. Mentoring meetings should be structured to allow for getting to know and feel comfortable with each other.
6. If either party is unclear about the current status of the mentoring, that party should clarification.
7. Mentors should recognize their limitations and avoid working in ways that exceed those limitations.
8. Mentoring is for a limited period; any other form of the relationship is to the parties to explore separately.