



Simplified Accountability Structure (SAS)

Hudson United Methodist Church



SUMMARY

SAS (Simplified Accountability Structure)

•WHY?

- SAS is just a different but more efficient framework to help our church address our challenges
- The SAS consolidates committees
 - SAS board of 9 plus the Minister meet monthly instead of 4 Committees involving persons meeting monthly.
 - The SAS Board focuses on governance, accountability, and aligning church activities with its mission.
- Aligns resources with goals
- Frees members for ministry

•HOW?

- Transitioning to SAS involves approval from the District Superintendent and ongoing communication.
 - Step 1 – Contact District Superintendent (DS)
 - Step 2 – Leadership Review and communicate with Congregation
 - Step 3 – Letter to DS for Approval
 - Step 4 – Continued Communication
 - Step 5 – Special Charge Conference Vote
 - Step 6 - Implementation



AGENDA

- **Current Church Structure**
- **Alternative Structure (SAS)**
- **Transitioning to SAS**



CURRENT CHURCH STRUCTURE

4 Administrative Committees
make church decisions in their
area of expertise:

- Board of Trustees (6 persons)
- Finance Committee (7 persons)
- Staff-Parish Relations Committee (7 persons)
- Church Council (9 persons)





Challenges with Current Structure (4 Admin. Groups – 4 Separate Meetings)

- Decisions are often made in silo's
- Can lead to disunity and enables dysfunction
- Tends to focus on what was done in the past rather than our future vision and goals
- Has clear lines of authority, but no clear lines of accountability
- Nearly impossible to make difficult and timely decisions
- Admin. Group Members required to attend several meetings each month





CURRENT
CHURCH
STRUCTURE

Structure is driving the mission versus the mission driving the structure.





CURRENT CHURCH STRUCTURE

**The current “functional”
Committee structure tends to
lead to disconnected decisions
for the church and our
resources instead of a
leadership structure that’s
aligned and accountable to the
larger church vision & mission.**



Are we allowed
to change our
current
structure?

Yes! The 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline provides a process for local churches to restructure into an Administrative “single board”. (i.e.-consolidate the 4 Administrative Committees into one church Leadership Board now called the “Simplified Accountability Structure”)



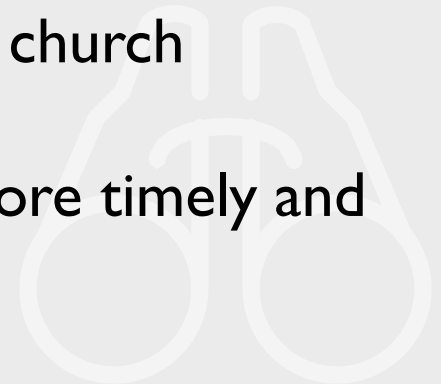


ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE

SIMPLIFIED ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE (SAS)

What are the potential benefits of changing to this structure?

- One leadership board that meets together to focus on vision, mission, and goals for HUMC now and in the future with accountability for outcomes.
- SAS board of 9 plus the Minister meet monthly instead of 4 Committees involving 21 persons meeting monthly.
- Leadership training is part of every monthly meeting.
- Frees up church members to pursue the ministries they are passionate about instead of sitting in meetings.
- SAS board maintains a focus on alignment of church resources with church-wide goals.
- Creates a leadership structure to support more timely and unified decisions.





ALTERNATIVE
STRUCTURE

SIMPLIFIED
ACCOUNTABILITY
STRUCTURE (SAS)

What are the challenges of transitioning to SAS?

- Change is disruptive and messy with lots of opportunities to learn and adapt.
- The routine “work & details” that Trustees, Finance, and SPRC currently handle will still need to get done. Many of the people currently in these groups will need to continue doing this good work.
- Ongoing communication to keep the full congregation informed throughout the process is daunting.
- Changing to an SAS Board requires approval from the District Superintendent and a “Yes” vote of the local church.
- SAS is not a “magic pill” and it does not eliminate the challenges we face as humans and as a church.



ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE

SIMPLIFIED ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE (SAS)

What are our challenges?

- Not enough people
- Meeting ineffectiveness
- Aging building
- Different opinions - conflict
- Leadership development
- Unclear goals
- Lack of engagement
- Lack of clear purpose

SAS is just a different but more efficient framework to help our church address our challenges.





ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE

SIMPLIFIED ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE (SAS)

What is the SAS Board structure

9 Members elected at a Special Charge Conference

- One Board Chair
- 8 Board Members
- Senior Minister

The initial SAS Board of 9 will have 3 members with a 1-year term, 3 with a 2-year term, and 3 with a 3-year term. As these initial members rotate off, new replacement members will serve a 3-year term. Each year 3 board members rotate off and 3 new board members are added.

The local church has some flexibility to review needs and add essential members to the SAS board if necessary.





ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE

SIMPLIFIED ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE (SAS)

SAS Board Purpose

- Utilize a leadership style that combines accountability, responsibility and authority
- Reduce micro-management
- Synchronize and align all the church's ministries with the mission, vision, and goals
- Reduce the number of people engaged in administration and free up resources (time, gifts, talents, etc.) for hands-on ministry and engagement in the mission field
- Empower the pastor to lead





ALTERNATIVE
STRUCTURE

SIMPLIFIED
ACCOUNTABILITY
STRUCTURE (SAS)

The Work of the SAS (3 Areas)

1. Fiduciary = tending to the stewardship of tangible assets
2. Strategic = working to set the congregation's priorities and seeing that resources are aligned with those priorities
3. Generative = problem framing and sense making about the shifting environment of the congregation and Community

Overall focus to set boundaries: budget, policy, goals, and oversight.

The SAS Board should NOT work on the day-to-day operations of the church.





ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE

SIMPLIFIED ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE (SAS)

Challenges of the SAS Board

1. Management of communication
2. Decision making aligned to effectiveness
3. Shift to a focus on accountability
4. Shift to strategic and generative focus

Overall, the board focuses on “Governance” instead of “Management”.

Governance question for SAS: Are we accomplishing the mission and goals of the church?





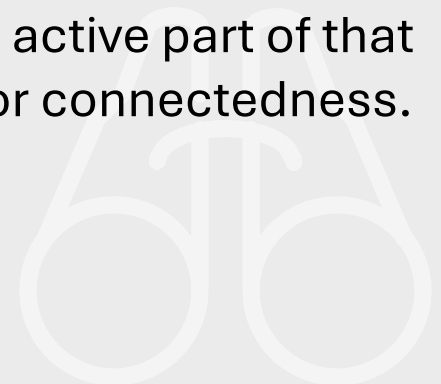
ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE

SIMPLIFIED ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE (SAS)

Specific SAS Board Responsibilities

- Establish the church's yearly budget
- Review the primary task and mission of HUMC in the context of the local community and establish yearly goals aligned to achieve this
- Work in partnership with programs and ministries to ensure they fulfill the mission and vision of the church
- Work with the District Superintendent to hold the pastor accountable
- May choose to designate members of the SAS Board to serve as liaisons between the SAS board and each various ministry team or group within the church. (for example: Mission Team, UWF, etc.). This promotes communication and allows for avenues of evaluation and decision making.

Note: The Liaison is not expected to become an active part of that arm of the church but simply provide a bridge for connectedness.



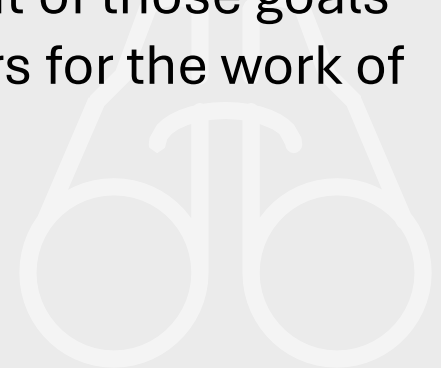


ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE

SIMPLIFIED ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE (SAS)

Role of the Pastor

- Engage and provide guidance with the SAS Board for the review of the primary task and mission of HUMC in the context of the local community and the establishment of yearly goals aligned to achieve this
- Hire, supervise, assess (and if needed, terminate) both paid and unpaid staff
- Hold staff (paid and unpaid) accountable for leading their ministry areas and fulfilling the mission and vision of the church
- Monitor the accomplishment of church goals and make adjustments as required to ensure achievement of those goals
- Equip present leaders and raise up new leaders for the work of ministry



SAS MEETING AGENDA

1/3

Start

Spiritual
Formations

Leadership
Development

Review Of
New People/
Families

1/3

Middle

Review Goals
With
Accountability

Review
Finances

Reallocation
Of Assets
And
Resources

1/3

End

Pressing
Decisions &
Issues

Help
Ministries As
Needed

Problem
Solving

Meeting Outline

Spiritual Formation - Prayer

Leadership Development

Review of New People

Review of Goals

Review Finances

Reallocation of Assets & Resources

Pressing Issues

Problem Solving

Approval & Questions of Agenda Packet

Communication

Prayer

SAS ANNUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- ❖ Evaluate current year ministry
- ❖ Review vision & church life cycle
- ❖ Deliver on current year goals
- ❖ Set new annual goals
- ❖ Set budget after strategies designed
- ❖ Church/Charge Conference Forms
- ❖ Conference/Denominational Forms

THE BENEFITS OF THE SIMPLIFIED ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE

- Has clear lines of authority, so that everyone knows who oversees what
- Prioritizes decision-making above simple reporting, so that God's people can move forward in ministry
- Empowers laity to do the work of making disciples rather than sitting in incessant meetings
- Empowers the pastors to attend to the work of Word, Order, Sacrament, and Service.
- Focus to have people participate in the ministries of the church.
- Streamlined leadership structure consistent with best practices in both business and congregational development.



HOW TO TRANSITION TO SAS



ROADMAP FOR THE JOURNEY TO SAS

Step One
Contact DS
& Engage
Coach

Step Three
Letter to DS
for Approval

Step Five
Annual Charge
Conference
Vote

Step Two
Leadership
Review &
Communication
to Congregation

Step Four
Communicate,
Communicate,
Communicate

Step Six
Move To
New
Structure



Where is HUMC on this Roadmap?

1. The District Superintendent (DS) has been informed that HUMC is exploring the potential value of SAS.
2. Church Council (CC) has engaged Rev. Jeff Croft as our SAS Coach to assist HUMC in this journey. Jeff is a resource provided by the Conference to local churches at no charge. He's been coaching local churches for the past 10 years.
3. Leadership Review by HUMC Church Council:
 - Prior to 3/19/24 Council Meeting – CC members listened to 7/31/23 SAS Podcast
 - 3/19/24 Council Meeting – Discussed SAS Concept, Reservations, and Reasons to Pursue
 - Council voted a majority “Yes” to “pursue more information about SAS”.
 - 5/21/24 Council Meeting – SAS Coach Jeff Croft presented Council an overview of SAS and a time for questions and answers. Council voted to develop and mail an SAS introduction letter to HUMC members homes. Letter mailed out 7/10/24.
 - 9/17/24 Council Meeting - It was agreed that the letter to the DS asking for permission to explore and implement SAS at HUMC. Letter sent to DS on 9/19/24.
 - 12/10/24 Rev. Bruce received email approval from DS for Council to pursue a process of transitioning to SAS.

HUMC Roadmap - Continued

4. Small group presentations in the church September 2024 – February 2025.
5. “Church Chat” scheduled for April 6, 2025 to share SAS concept with congregation and provide other resources. Solicit opinions of SAS as of 4/6/25 and provide a process for asking questions. Begin process of identifying prospective SAS Board Members.
6. Church Council evaluation of Church Chat learnings to determine next steps for SAS.

**Thank you for being a part of
the HUMC Church Family!**

**Please contact any member of Church Council to request
additional information.**