

The following Questions and Comments were written by Church members at the “Church Chat” Meeting held in the CAC on April 6, 2025. All members of our congregation were invited to attend this meeting which followed our Worship Service on 4/6/25. Answers and Responses for the Questions asked, and Comments written are provided below.

Additionally, it is very important to understand that a transition to SAS is aimed at moving Church Leadership from a focus on “Management” to “Governance”. Moving from doing things the way we’ve always done them to strategic “adaptive leadership” in our rapidly changing world.

Question 1 - I generally agree with the SAS Structure, but have the following questions:

- a. How are mission (ministry) teams setup and renewed?
- b. How do we plan to communicate what mission (ministry) teams exist and what they are doing?

Answer 1 – Transitioning to an SAS Governance structure opens a path for any individual called to serve God to pull together a group of people in the church and form a “Ministry Team”. That Ministry Team can pursue and carry out the work that they are passionate about so long as it advances the mission of the church of making disciples. The initial step is a conversation with the Senior Minister to explain the idea, the people involved, any costs associated, and how the idea helps advance the mission of the church. The team could focus on a single event (short-term Ministry Team), or some type of ongoing outreach that meets the needs of our community over the longer term. The ability to quickly form “Ministry Teams” to advance initiatives aimed at the mission of the church is a significant advantage for implementing SAS. The Ministry Team determines the work they want to do and how long they want it to continue and they review it with the Senior Minister. There is no requirement for approval from a committee or the SAS Board. The Minister and Board will periodically look at the various Ministry Teams for alignment with the goals and mission of the church.

Our church and the various leaders of the different Ministry Teams will need to determine how they want to announce a Ministry opportunity to gather people and how they want to update the congregation on their work. We could consider some type of regularly scheduled “Church Chat” for this purpose. We could also use the G.I.F.T., the Congregational email list, the Sunday Worship Bulletin, or develop a new area on our Church Website.

Question 2 - The churches that have tried this, has it worked? If so, how? What tangible ways has it worked? What results? In general, I’m all for condensing-simplifying things.

Answer 2 – The churches that have implemented SAS, using guidance from the “Mission Possible” SAS workbook and an SAS Coach through the implementation, have experienced successes balanced with adjustments and learning how to function with a different form of governance. A few examples of churches in our area that have implemented SAS over the past couple years are Brecksville UMC and Chardon UMC. Some of the early successes they’ve experienced come from moving to one consolidated monthly meeting of Church Leaders instead of having 4 separate Committee meetings. The one SAS Board meeting brings a focus on what’s best for the overall church. The Church Leaders have greater visibility to the broader issues of the church and can approach decisions more strategically. Another early benefit is that some people previously on committees are freed up to form new Ministry Teams. The effectiveness of transitioning to an SAS structure happens over a few years and requires church leadership and members to learn and adapt. There are typically some growing pains and adjustments as the church implements this new form of Governance. Despite the challenges that come with this type of transition, churches that have implemented SAS and stuck with it for a few years have been highly effective at engaging church membership, revitalizing a focus on church goals, developing new Ministry Teams, and advancing the mission of the church. Over time it provides a path for church revitalization.

Question 3 - What are potential negative issues with SAS? How will 9 people do the work of the current 25+ people? Will their workload increase substantially?

Answer 3 – A transition to SAS does not provide an instant solution to the various challenges that we face as a church. It does provide our church with a more effective structure for “adaptive leadership” which is the ability to quickly review situations and make decisions or adjustments to decisions. It also creates a greater focus on church goals and everyone’s role in accomplishing those goals.

Some of the key challenges of transitioning to SAS include:

- a. Discerning and identifying the initial group of 9 SAS Board Members (Nominations Committee).
- b. Communicating and updating the Congregation (ongoing – establish structure & calendar).
- c. Establishing “Work Teams” such as “Grounds & Building” to support the daily operations of the church. The church will need some of the current Trustees-Finance-SPRC Committee members that are not becoming SAS Board Members to continue to serve as part of a work team in their area of expertise. These work teams are important to support the SAS structure.
- d. The SAS Board will also need to recruit church members to be part of a work team for things like the Annual Stewardship Campaign and the Annual Church Budget to name a few.
- e. Other issues and challenges will pop up which will require our church to be flexible and adapt to each situation. Real and lasting change includes the challenges that help us learn.

Question 4 - This will put a lot of work on the SAS group. Many of the old committees were responsible for making recommendations and decisions. Seems like this is all on SAS now. Seems like it is not all flushed out and very vague. I suspect that in addition to presenting SAS to the congregation, you should also have a structure of what “Mission” teams will be. It shouldn’t be vague concepts.

Answer 4 – An important piece of a successful transition to SAS is the development of both “Work Teams” and “Ministry Teams”. Some of the Ministry Teams will focus on a mission that they are passionate about, and others might like to organize a community event. The “Work Teams” will be more specific for handling specific ongoing work tasks or ongoing operations of the church. Part of the transition to SAS will be to define the necessary work teams. The development of ministry teams will not be structured. These groups will develop based upon God’s calling and will be discussed with the Minister. Our existing missional outreaches to Feed My Sheep, Open M, ASP, Hudson Food Pantry, and others will continue as they have. Most of our existing Committees and groups such as the Mission Committee, United Women in Faith, Memorials-Endowments & Gifts, are not changing with SAS. Transitioning to SAS consolidates the 4 current committees of Trustees, Finance, SPRC, and Church Council. These are the 4 existing Committees that are affected by this transition.

Question 5 - Will Council do all hire & review performance of all employees? Or will there be a committee like the current SPRC?

Answer 5 – If the church has the need to hire someone for a paid church position, the SAS Board and Minister would discuss the situation and recruit a specific “Work Team” with appropriate expertise to pursue candidates and fill the position. This team, which could be called a “Ministry Team” for the open position, would work closely with the Minister to discern and select the most qualified candidate that best fits the position. Annual Performance Reviews have been conducted by the Senior Minister at HUMC and that will continue to be the practice at HUMC. The SAS Board will periodically review and discuss both paid staff, ministry team leaders, and work teams for alignment to accomplishing the mission of the church.

Question 6 - Trustees currently oversee conditions of building and grounds. Will a committee do that? As well as actually do projects like spring/fall cleanups, etc.?

Answer 6 – Some current members of the Trustees will likely continue as an ongoing work team for “Building and Grounds”. One member of the SAS Board will be designated as Trustee Coordinator and act as Liaison with the Building and Grounds work team. This team would also perform projects like spring and fall cleaning. HUMC is fortunate to have Gary Beckley as our “Church Caretaker” who handles much of the daily building and grounds support.

Question 7 - I wonder if some group independent from SAS should involve finance. The group would obviously report to SAS.

Answer 7 – HUMC currently performs an Annual Financial Audit to ensure proper record keeping and financial practices are in place. An Audit Report is provided to the Conference by HUMC annually. This practice will continue. The SAS Board will identify a “Ministry Team” of members that are not on the SAS Board and this ministry team will report their findings to the SAS Board for review.

Nominations Comments & Response

Comment-Nominations 1 – I would like to see leaders from all generations. This way, we will have the benefit of past experience as well as fresh and new ideas to move forward into the future and attract younger couples and families. Diversity is needed, as well as expertise in the fields of the committees that are being consolidated.

Comment-Nominations 2 – Do you think you have diversity of thought from Nominations Committee to create a diverse 9?

Comment-Nominations 3 – I would like to be considered for a position on the SAS Board. (An Application has been provided to this person)

Response – Comments Nominations 1-3 – Rev. Bruce is assembling a larger Nominations Committee of diverse church members that reflect the make-up of our church. This group will utilize guidance from the SAS Workbook, “Mission Possible”, along with our SAS Coach, Rev. Jeff Croft, to pursue a group of Leaders for the future of HUMC. The Nominations Committee will likely change to become an ongoing “Leadership Ministry” group as the SAS Board will need 3 new members every year as 3 other members complete their term. The work for this ministry group will be an ongoing effort.

Diversity will certainly be an ongoing consideration of the nomination committee. The membership of the SAS Board will also be dependent on those who express interest in joining the SAS Board."

General Comments & Response

Comment 1 - Great work Church Council!!! I'm excited for the future changes and growth at HUMC.

Comment 2 - I'm leaning towards yes. I need to think and pray on this.

Comment 3 - Pros and cons, worth a trial.

Comment 4 - Good idea! Watch for things that may unintentionally get dropped or lost. Also, it sounds like consolidation of effort may be more effort on the 9.

Response 4 – The transition to SAS includes the development of both “Work Teams” and “Ministry Teams” in an effort to keep things from being dropped. The SAS Board will pay attention so that everything continues to be covered through the transition.

Comment 5 - The monthly meeting structure is much like Leadership Plant Manufacturing meetings. All Department Managers are present. Decisions must have a consensus. Information is openly discussed therefore eliminating surprises and aligning all departments with organizational goals.

Response 5 – Yes. The main focus of the SAS Board is to align the work of the Staff, Ministry Team Leaders, and Work Teams with the Organizational Goals. In the case of HUMC, the organizational goal is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Fellowship Comments & Response

Comment 6 - Good idea. The only concern is coverage for weekly fellowship after Service.

Comment 7 - Make sure fellowship is handled smoothly. Important to hospitality.

Response - Fellowship 6 & 7 – Fellowship is an important part of “Hospitality” at HUMC and something that will continue on a weekly basis. Part of transitioning to SAS will need to include a plan for the ongoing coverage of our Sunday morning Fellowship. We may want to look to our developing “Hospitality Ministry Team” for their ideas in this area.

Concern 1 - Sounds like the 9 members on the board will be discussing only “theoretical” matters – not practical “hands on” issues.

Response 1 – The SAS Board Meetings will follow a structured Agenda with responsibility for Church Stewardship, Direction, Generative, and Goal Accomplishment. While the “Generative” portion of the meeting could focus on theory and visioning for our future, the other 3 areas will focus on our specific plans as a church and what it takes to both lead and execute on those plans. The SAS Board is designed to focus on strategy and leadership of the church rather than daily operational issues. The Board will have responsibility to ensure that the daily operations of the church are being handled along with ensuring that the activities and ministries of the church are aligned with and accomplishing the mission of the church.

Recap of selections made on the “We want your opinion!” survey completed by those attending Church Chat on 4/6/25 (3 Options provided):

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| 1. It seems like the right structure for HUMC going forward and I would vote yes for SAS. | 35 |
| 2. I feel that HUMC should not implement the SAS Structure. | 0 |
| 3. I do not have enough information to make an informed decision. | 2 |

(2 surveys were submitted with comments but did not check any of the above 3 options.)