

RE Governance March 2012

The **Parents Association** is the organization of the parents of children and youth who participate in the religious education program. It provides fellowship for parents, and organizes events and activities that support the program, including breakfasts, service projects and holiday parties.

- The focus of the Parents Association is on the noncurricular aspects of the RE program.
- The Parents Association is led by an executive committee consisting of four people, appointed by the RE Committee. Terms are two years. Terms are staggered, so that two members are appointed each year.
- The responsibilities of the leadership of the Parents Association is to lead PA meetings, coordinate volunteers in order to run PA activities, and to regularly report to the RE committee the PA activities.
- The PA will meet 3-4 times per year. PA meetings provide an opportunity for parents, members of the RE committee, and the Director of Religious Education to discuss the progress of the program in an open forum.

The **Religious Education Committee** represents the congregation in assisting the DRE in overseeing the church's program of religious education for children and youth. It monitors the RE program, ensuring that its curriculum and overall operation remain consistent with its mission.

- The membership of the RE committee consists of 6 people, self-appointed to staggered three-year terms. Membership should include, but not be limited to, an RE teacher, and parents of both children and youth who participate in the program. [The members of the PA executive committee can be members, but are not expected to be. The PA Association and the RE Committee are separate bodies.] The members of the RE Committee will select a chairperson to serve a one-year term.
- The responsibilities of the RE committee include:
 - Collaborating with the DRE to develop the goals and mission of the RE program
 - Reviewing the RE budget, calendar, and curriculum as they conform to the goals and mission of the program
 - Preparing an annual report on the RE program and the RE committee's work for the Board of Trustees.
 - Providing support, advice and assistance to the DRE.
 - Engaging in long-term planning to ensure the continued vitality of the RE program.

- Meeting as-needed with the senior minister to report on the program and to discuss the program's philosophy and future plans.
- Serving as the principal liaison between the congregation as a whole and the RE program.

Some notes:

- The RE calendar is the central planning-device in the program. By giving the RE Committee approval rights over the curriculum, calendar and the budget, we create a potentially strong body. The fourth critical piece is the report to the Board of Trustees, which establishes an accountability mechanism. It is the job of the staff to prepare the budget and calendar.
- A rule of thumb about sorting out the RE committee and the PA. If it involves knowledge of the curriculum, long-range planning, interfacing with the ministers or other congregational committees, or allocating church resources (including space), it is an RE Committee responsibility. If it requires mostly good will and a willingness to pitch in on relatively short notice, it is a PA activity. Thus, deciding to have coffee hours in the Ware Room is an RE committee decision. Running the coffee hours is the responsibility of the PA.
- Assigning the RE committee the congregational liaison role means that if an *ad hoc* committee or task force is organized by the congregation and the RE community's participation is desired, the RE committee is the body that should provide representation.