



The Congregational Leadership Team

Before inviting someone to serve on the Congregational Leadership Team, remember that you are seeking people who will be reflecting on who you are as a congregation and how you are part of a larger community, listening for God's call toward your congregation's next faithful steps, and assisting in helping those steps happen. Please keep the following in mind as you invite people to serve:

- The congregation will be best served by a leadership team representative of the whole congregation and community.
- Team members bring with them diverse stories, networks, perspectives and experiences. When inviting members to serve on the leadership team, consider gifts, passions, gender, ethnicity, experiences in the congregation, occupation, networks, economic perspective, family demographics, generational representation (i.e., Silent Generation, Baby Boomer, Gen X, Millennials, Gen Z) and years in the community.
- The leadership team of five to ten members should include the pastoral leader and at least one member of the council.

There's more to this invitation than simply sending an email or talking with someone as you stand in line at the grocery store. Here are the suggested steps:

1. Make listening a part of this process. Start by listening to God. Who is God calling into this ministry? Begin by praying, asking God's Spirit to guide your search for leadership team members.
2. Identify two people who will facilitate the process of inviting the leadership team. While the pastoral leader and council president are good leaders in a congregation, they don't need to be the ones doing the inviting. Who likes to connect with a variety of people before and after worship in your congregation? Who keeps in touch with both those who are active and those who are not that active in your congregation? These people might be good to ask to serve as facilitators.
3. Once the two facilitators are asked to serve, here are their next steps:
 - a. Meet together and start with prayer, inviting God to help them listen, watch for God's work in their midst and gather a team that will serve in this new initiative.
 - b. Talk with as many people as they can about the Vitality Initiative for Congregations and ask, "Who do you know who might be a good fit for the Congregational Leadership Team?. It's important to keep in mind that they are listening for suggestions of people of diverse ages, backgrounds, ethnicity, economic backgrounds, experiences in the community, occupations, family demographics, etc. All the names that are shared should be noted, even if a person named isn't a regular worship attendee.

- c. Pray about the names that they have heard and listen for God's nudge about which 5-10 people to invite. If more than one person suggested inviting a particular individual, that might be a nudge, or the nudge might be a "gut feeling" about inviting someone.
 - d. Set up a time to meet on the phone, online or in person with potential leadership team members. Ideally, both facilitators would be part of the conversation.
 - e. Begin each visit with a potential leadership team member in prayer and explain to that person that they have been named as being a good candidate for the new Congregational Leadership Team that will be part of the Vitality Initiative for Congregations. Ask what this person may have heard about the Initiative (if anything) and share highlights of what the Initiative will be. To learn more about the Vitality Initiative go to the Nebraska Synod web site - [\(insert the link here for the web page\)](#)
 - f. Let the person know that they aren't under pressure to say "yes" to the invitation (and then follow up by not pressuring them). Give them 3-7 days to prayerfully consider if they could serve in this way. Pray for them while waiting for their answer.
 - g. Some people may respond that they can't make it to every gathering of the Congregational Leadership Team, and that is OK. There will be a process for helping people who have to miss one or more gatherings to catch up with a partner.
 - h. Once a person accepts the invitation to serve, thank them and ask them what they are most looking forward to in the Initiative and what gifts or connections they hope to use during the process. Ask them what questions or concerns they have as well. Make note of these and share them with the pastoral leader and council member who will be part of the Congregational Leadership Team as well.
4. Celebrate the newly formed Congregational Leadership Team. Share the news with your congregation and community through the newsletter, local paper, on your website, on a special bulletin board, etc. During a worship service before the Initiative begins, include a time for commissioning this team. A suggested Commissioning service is provided on the Nebraska Synod web site.

Adapted from *Contemplative Youth Ministry: Practicing the Presence of Jesus* by Mark Yaconelli.