

ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Leading a Ministry or Committee

Training Materials

Prepared by the Leadership Support & Development Committee



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A Prayer for Leaders

May you have the grace and wisdom
To act kindly, learning
To distinguish between what is
Personal and what is not.

May you be hospitable to criticism.

May you never put yourself at the center of things.

May you act not from arrogance but out of service.

May you work on yourself
Building up and refining the ways of your mind.

May you learn to cultivate the art of presence
In order to engage with those who meet you.

When someone fails or disappoints you
May the graciousness with which you engage
Be their stairway to renewal and refinement.

May you treasure the gifts of the mind
Through reading and creative thinking
So that you continue to be a servant of the frontier
Where the new will draw its enrichment from the old,
And you never become a functionary.

May you know the wisdom of deep listening,
The healing of wholesome words,
The encouragement of the appreciative gaze,
The decorum of held dignity,
The springtime of the bleak question.

May you have a mind that loves frontiers
So that you can evoke the bright fields
That lie beyond the view of the regular eye.

May you have good friends
To mirror your blind spots.

May leadership be for you
A true adventure of growth.
Between Us

— John O'Donohue from *To Bless the Space*

Core Values and Mission Statement of All Saints Church

All Saints Church is committed to excellence in its many ministries, building on these foundational values:

Radical Inclusion

We believe that all beings on earth are equally loved and valued by God, and are all irrevocably interdependent with each other. Enriching ourselves by embracing the diverse identities of others, we actively invite all to share God's love within the All Saints community, whoever you are and wherever you find yourself on the journey of faith.

Courageous Justice

We believe no person or group has an inherent right to hold power over another or to distort the fundamental balance of nature. We are committed to audacious examination and challenging of power and privilege in the world and in our church; to pursue truth relentlessly, not for retribution but toward trust and reconciliation. We choose love over fear to overcome prejudice and promote healing, to redress oppression and to restore environmental equilibrium.

Joyful Spirituality

We believe God is love. Our trust in God's love makes us whole, worthy just as we are, and able to experience the deepest joy in life from loving each other as God loves us. We continually strive to develop a personal understanding of the nature of God within us and our unique path of fellowship and faith. Through God's grace we discover the silent essence of communion and the exuberant joy of being.

Ethical Stewardship

We believe that with God's gift of freedom to make choices comes the responsibility to make them wisely. We are committed to thoughtfully and rigorously nurturing the healthy, sustainable development of our financial resources, our people, and our planet.

Mission Statement

We are an Episcopal Church, walking with a revolutionary Jesus,
Loving without judgement
Doing justice courageously
Embracing life joyfully
Reverently inviting all faiths and peoples into relationship
For the healing and transformation of ourselves, our community, and the world.

Leading at All Saints Church

Thank you for offering to be a leader of a ministry, committee or group at All Saints Church.

Leadership is crucial for a healthy, well-functioning body organization. We are called at All Saints Church to love the people we lead, to speak truth to them in love and to listen for their truths.

Leadership in the Bible emphasizes humility, service to others and integrity. It highlights the importance of serving others and leading with a humble heart. Leaders endeavor to lead by example for their ministry or committee.

Qualifications and characteristics for leadership at All Saints Church:

- Compassionate and service-oriented demeanor
- Strong communication and organizational skills
- Good listening skills
- Ability to maintain discretion and sensitivity in emotionally difficult situations
- Willingness to work collaboratively with church staff and volunteers
- Commitment to growth of people, create a positive and supportive environment that builds community for your group, enabling them to accomplish the goal/tasks of your ministry or committee.

Leadership Support & Development Committee

The Leadership Support & Development Committee of All Saints Church is a sub-committee of the Congregational Life Vestry Committee and provides training and resources to support committee and ministry leaders. In conjunction with All Saints staff and vestry, the Leadership Support & Development Committee works to identify new ministry and committee leaders.

The committee offers specialized training in Facilitating Small Groups and *The Art of Listening*. These courses are useful for leaders of book study or sharing groups and for others who frequently facilitate discussions. Offerings are published in *This Week at All Saints* (TWAAS) and can be scheduled for specific groups when there is sufficient demand. This committee also contributes to the newsletter for All Saints ministry leaders and hosts a recognition event for ministry leaders.

The Basics of Planning and Conducting a Meeting

Planning is essential and *always* a good use of your time. The time you spend planning for your meetings will pay benefits in time saved for you and in successful, productive meetings for your committee or ministry. Your staff liaison is available to assist you with planning your meetings. The actual level of involvement and input from your staff liaison will vary, depending upon unique factors related to your group's mission, but make the effort to reach out and get together in advance of your meeting.

In Advance

- Schedule a meeting time that considers the needs of all participants and accommodates as many as possible.
- Confirm a meeting location. If using facilities and equipment at All Saints Church, book your request through the "Create Events" section on My All Saints. Ask your staff liaison to help with requesting needed equipment.
- Create an agenda.
 - Consult the meeting notes or minutes of the last several meetings to capture all items ripe for discussion.
 - Allow time for all working groups or sub-committees that have on-going responsibilities to report on their progress.
 - Consider estimating the duration of each agenda item to enable the attendees to manage the time.
 - Consider the order of the items on the agenda. If a special guest will attend to provide a report or participate in a discussion, consider putting that individual at the top of the agenda so they won't have to sit through conversations that concern only the committee.
 - Put important items at the top of the agenda because there is usually more energy and engagement at the beginning of a meeting.
 - A sample agenda is included in the appendix of resources.
- Remind members of the upcoming meeting or event by email, phone call or text. Enclose or attach a copy of the proposed agenda. Also include the minutes of the prior meeting if they haven't already been circulated to the group.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Confirm what the All Saints staff liaison will do and what is to be done by the members of the committee or the ministry. Communicate at least monthly with your staff liaison about your progress.
- **Chair:** The chair's role is to keep the meeting moving forward and the group focused. If a discussion takes longer than estimated, "renegotiate" the time. Either defer the discussion—or parts of it—until a later meeting, or defer other items on the agenda to permit the longer discussion to continue and conclude.

The chair will seek input from everyone present and engage others to make reports and presentations. The chair will be careful not to “shut down” discussion by expressing opinion as if it is the conclusion of the group. By listening carefully, the chair can better facilitate genuine consensus.

- **Note Taker:** For each meeting, appoint a note taker to prepare a written summary following the meeting. While the notes may not amount to a formal set of minutes, they should capture all **decisions, action items, and the names of people responsible for the actions and the deadlines or timelines for activities**. Generally, it is a good idea for the meeting notes to follow the outline provided by the agenda.
- **Timekeeper:** may be appointed to watch the clock and keep the meeting on schedule.
- **Working Groups or Sub-committees:** Much of the work of some committees and ministries is conducted by a sub-group such as a working group appointed for a discrete purpose or a sub-committee that has on-going responsibility for a sub-part of the work.
 - If the efforts of a sub-group are about a particular issue, consider a working group of a size appropriate to the task.
 - If the efforts of the sub-group are on-going, consider a sub-committee that may function in the same way as the committee or ministry with periodic meetings at predetermined times, notes of meetings, etc.
 - Avoid sub-groups so small that diverse views and skills aren’t adequately represented.
 - Try to have adequate participation in order to spread the work and increase efficiency of the ministry or committee.

Conducting the Meeting

As the leader of the committee or ministry, you will chair the meetings. Being the chair carries responsibility – the chair is the person *most* responsible for ensuring that the committee or ministry achieves its mission.

- Out of respect for those attending, begin and end on time.
- Confirm that a note taker is in attendance and ready.
- If there are absences due to significant events that can be shared publically, note them. If there are unexpected absences, note them for possible follow up after the meeting.
- Begin with a prayer or meditation.
- Next, Check In – this is a brief statement of one’s emotional state – joyful, peaceful, sad, angry, sacred or powerful. Encourage everyone to participate. It should not be an extended sharing of life stories or personal histories. If

someone needs to engage in a lengthy story, take note and suggest discussing it at the end of the business meeting.

- Remember to use the Guidelines for Recognizing and Valuing Differences (in Appendix), encourage all to participate, manage those who may tend to monopolize the discussion and make a safe space for the work of the ministry or committee. Allow room for disagreement – the members of the group can agree to disagree – while working toward consensus.
- End with a discussion of “+/-deltas” – what aspects of the meeting went well, what could be improved. Ensure that Loose Ends have follow-up and let everyone express their Appreciations and Regrets (pertaining to the meeting).
- Close with a prayer and/or reflection.

Creating a Sense of Mission and Shared Purpose

- Have a mission statement or description of what the committee or ministry does. At some point during the year, structure a discussion about it to invite newcomers into the conversation and to see if the mission has changed. Provide an updated mission statement to your staff liaison or a member of the Leadership Support & Development Committee.
- Establish group behavioral norms in addition to the Guidelines for Recognizing and Valuing Differences (see Appendix), e.g. confidentiality, etc.
- Keep up to date your group member roster in My All Saints (see Appendix). Create a committee or ministry notebook/folder (or in your group's file section in My All Sains) with information relevant to the work of the group. Include a membership roster with appropriate contact information, minutes, training materials, and any other resources in the resource section of your group.
- Provide a copy of the relevant materials to new members, and hand these resources over to the next chairperson.
- Develop a job description for members of your ministry of committee. See sample in the Appendix.

Leadership for the “Long Run”

Leading a committee or ministry is more than keeping order and facilitating meetings. Leaders will want to consider some “big picture” matters – and be open to feedback about their own performance as a leader.

Setting the BIG Agenda

- Consider the role of your committee or ministry.
- Consult with your All Saints Church staff liaison or the Leadership Support & Development Team about how your group can better serve its mission. The

All Saints Church staff liaison is a great source for history and guidance. If you're not sure who your staff liaison is, check with us.

- Ask other leaders of other committees or ministries about their perceptions of your group and its successes, strengths or weaknesses. Take advantage of structured opportunities to meet other leaders.
- Identify your long-term goal and get your group's buy-in.
- Working with your membership, set S.M.A.R.T. goals – which should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely. (See Appendix).

Developing the Next Leader

- Have a clear schedule for leadership succession; most committees and ministries rotate leaders in May or June.
- Typically, two to three years as the leader of a committee or ministry is sufficient. The appropriate length of service will vary from one committee to another, with some requiring longer service. As a rule, however, a committee's leadership should change at least every four years.
- Start developing replacement candidates IMMEDIATELY!
- Developing your leadership replacement is one of the most important contributions that you will make as a leader!
- Consider having a co-chair of your committee.
 - This can be especially helpful in light of the fact that everyone is busy with other commitments.
 - The co-chair successor can learn by doing as you share some of the workload; and the co-chair can fill in as needed, in the chair's absence.
 - The "leader-in-waiting" can develop confidence and familiarity with relevant personnel, issues and challenges.
 - The new leader will be ready to hit the ground running, which will ensure smooth transitions from year to year.
- Working groups or subcommittee leaders may be good candidates for your successor as chair.
- Consult with your All Saints Church staff liaison or the Leadership Support & Development Committee regarding good candidates.
- Ask your group: "Who is interested in leadership of this committee next year?"
- Take an active role in developing new leaders (and your successor) by:
 - Rotating members as note takers and to lead at meetings.
 - Assigning potential leaders to lead projects, working groups, subcommittees or events.
 - Delegating responsibility to other committee members.

Leadership Performance Input – How am I Doing?

- Use this leadership position to learn about *yourself* and as an opportunity for *growth*. This is one of the many benefits of being a leader.
- Be open and honest with your group – ask for feedback periodically.
 - It is a sign of maturity to ask for input on how you could improve.
 - Consider providing a confidential method for your group to comment.
- Ask a confidant in your group or ask your staff liaison for feedback.
- Talk to other group leaders about their experience.
 - What is working well for them?
 - What “lessons learned the hard way” can they share with you?

Dealing with Challenges

When the Group Can't Agree

Committee chairs are group *facilitators*. The skills used and goals of a facilitator are different from those employed to keep a meeting running smoothly, and this requires balancing skills on the part of the leader.

- As facilitator, work hard to be sure all sides feel heard and understood as you lead to a consensus. Being heard is the universal salve for hurt feelings. Remember the Guidelines for Recognizing and Valuing Differences (see Appendix) and underlying assumption that we are not in a zero-sum game; there is enough for everyone's needs to be met in our community, even if the resulting decision doesn't satisfy everyone 100%. We should want to be influenced and changed by others.
- When the committee is stuck, try one or more of these:
 - Ask the group to identify the points of agreement. Then have them identify the areas where they appear to be in disagreement. Chart these differences.
 - Is there a way to make space for other ideas?
 - Ask two people who are not invested in the different positions of discussion to frame the different proposals for the group.
 - Ask each "side" to clearly identify what they need from the solution to this issue.
 - Ask what it would take for them to be able to support the other proposal.
 - Ask what they get out of resolving it their way as opposed to another way.
- When one person cannot support or live with the proposal:

- Ask again what would have to be different for him/her to be able to support the proposal the others are supporting. If useful, work with that answer.
- Ask again if the individual could "live with" the agreement.
- You may have to create a "separate peace." The group will be able to move forward, "agreeing to disagree" and there will be opportunities to revisit the issue later. When the idea is presented to others, it is noted that the group did not have full agreement.
- The point is to be sure the person who cannot agree with the group has been heard.
- Be careful not to move to the "separate peace" approach too quickly. Sometimes the holdouts have important ideas that need to be considered and will lead to a richer agreement.

Handling Challenging Situations

- Challenges comes in many flavors. Here are some specific situations and issues that may be detrimental if they arise:
 - The naysayer – who shoots down every proposal or suggestion.
 - The "know it all" type.
 - The one who talks too much.
 - The one who fails to honor confidentiality.
 - The "loud voice" or "interrupter" – who shuts down other inputs.
 - The sideline/secret conversationalist, who talks behind others' backs – or conducts "parking lot conversations."
 - The chronically late arriver, or one who lacks follow-through on assignments.
 - Sometimes pastoral care is the answer; talk to your staff liaison if the issues seem serious.
- Remember the Guidelines for Recognizing and Valuing Differences (see Appendix).
- In a private setting, approach the issue of concern with honesty – sometimes it is helpful to begin and end with a positive stroke and place the issue of concern in the middle.
- During a meeting, remind the group and the individual of the ground rules:
 - Give everyone a chance to talk.
 - Thank the person for their input, and suggest that "we hear from others who have not had the opportunity to speak yet."
 - Look to your co-chair – check in after meeting to make sure your perception is validated.

Leader Overload and Burnout

- Share your frustrations with your staff liaison, co-chair, or a member of the Leadership Support & Development Team.
- Delegate and share responsibility with your committee members.
- If others will not help to do the work, then it may be that “it” will not happen.

Membership

Getting the “Right Size” for Your Committee

- Finding the correct size for the committee or ministry requires an examination of the mission, events and activities; evaluate your workload.
- The ideal size will be enough members to share the burden of the work, and small enough to provide all members with meaningful opportunities for participation.

Recruitment and Diversity

- Pay attention to all elements of diversity:
 - Race and ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Sexual identity
 - Generation
 - New members and long-term members
- Use the staff liaison or Leadership Support & Development team to identify candidate members.
- The Getting Connected Class (formerly known as the New Members Class) is a good source for new recruits.
- Avoid stagnating membership by going back to the same individuals repeatedly.

Thanking and Acknowledging Volunteers

- Members whose efforts are appreciated are more engaged and help recruit new members. Thank your volunteers often!
- Consider why an individual volunteered in the first place. Consider that they have many other options for using their time if this experience is not engaging.
- Periodically ask each volunteer how the experience is going and solicit any suggestions for improving the experience.

Members Who Drift Away

- Consider pursuing an exit interview with a member who has left your group to discuss why.
 - Why are you leaving?
 - Did you feel equipped and supported to do your job effectively?
 - Do you have any feedback to improve our committee?
- Reach out personally by email or phone.
- Engage another member to reach out.
- Consider offering a formal hiatus if there is a discrete time commitment issue.
- Consider a modified role for someone inclined to drift away if that person isn't comfortable with all group activities.

Resources and Appendixes



All Saints Church Communication Basics

[revised 8/2025]

Website: As our online “welcome mat” to All Saints, we strive to keep the website as current as possible. Please monitor the pages related to your programs or ministries and send any updates or changes to communication@allsaints-pas.org with “website page update” in the subject line.

This Week at All Saints (TWAAS)

- Weekly calendar and news bulletin publication currently generated by Director of Liturgy, Melissa Hayes
- Distributed on the Sunday liturgy, at the Welcome Table, posted to the website
- **Deadline for content: The Friday 10 days prior to a given Sunday**
- Submission process: content submitted **communication@allsaints-pas.org**; with Subject Line that includes *TWAAS: Content subject/date requested*

Flyers: Approval from our Communication Department is required for the distribution/display of flyers at ASC.

- Flyers must include
 - [a] our [All Saints Church logo](#) and address
 - [b] “for more information contact” info (phone and/or email)
 - and should be **submitted to Keith by the staff liaison supporting the ministry/program for approval.**

ASC subscribes to an online desktop publishing platform available to all staff members specifically to equip generation of publicity flyers. Access and a tutorial is available by contacting one of the communication team via communication@allsaints-pas.org.

Social Media: Content regarding upcoming events is repurposed on our online platforms, including our Face Book page and group and Instagram.

Sunday Greetings/Announcements: Our current policy on announcements includes: striving to keep them as brief as possible so as not to grind the liturgy to a complete halt limiting event “call outs” to three or four that are open to the whole parish -- prioritizing “next week” and including (when applicable) the weekly Featured Ministry and a brief summary of the weekly Faith in Action.

Please help us manage expectations with ministry leaders and event planners by communicating this information to them to avoid the side-door and last-minute requests. It truly takes a village.



Job Description - Sample

Church Hospitality Team Memorial Reception Liaison All Saints Church

Position Summary:

The Hospitality Team serves as a compassionate and organized liaison between grieving families and church staff during memorial receptions. This team ensures that each reception is handled with care, respect, and attention to detail, providing support to both the family and the church throughout the planning and hosting process.

Key Responsibilities:

- Serve as the primary point of contact for families during memorial reception planning.
- Coordinate with church staff to reserve spaces, arrange setup, and manage logistics.
- Assist families in understanding available hospitality services and options.
- Help organize food and beverage service, volunteers, and cleanup as needed.
- Provide a warm, empathetic presence during the event to support the family and guests.

Qualifications:

- Compassionate and service-oriented demeanor.
- Strong communication and organizational skills.
- Ability to maintain discretion and sensitivity in emotionally difficult situations.
- Willingness to work collaboratively with church staff and volunteers.

This team plays a vital role in offering comfort and hospitality to families during a deeply personal time, reflecting the church's mission of love and care.

Updated 7/1/25

Agenda - Sample

Leadership Support and Development Committee

Tuesday, May 7, 2024

Agenda

Opening Prayer	2 min
Check in and Welcome: appoint a note taker	5 min
Review of Minutes	2 min
Training on Facilitating a Small Group	10 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training cancelled April 28• New training sessions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ October 20, 2024, 2:30 – 4:00 with snacks;○ February 9, 2024, 2:30 – 4:00 with snacks	
Training on Leading a Ministry or Committee	15 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New dates:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ August 25, 2014, 2:30 – 4:00 to prepare for program year;○ April 20, 2020, 2:30 – 4:00 with snacks	
Listening	20 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Could be a multi-part presentation; integrate positive with negative• Conversation with staff liaison; dates set for summer for between services:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ July 14○ July 21○ July 28	
Calendar	5 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our next Leadership Support meeting is June 4	
Newsletter for Ministries	5 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will send in dates after confirmation from committee	
Closing Prayer or Reflection	2 min
Loose ends, appreciations, and regrets	5 min

Resources for Leaders

Using Survey Monkey and Doodle

Both of these web applications can be used to take a quick survey of your group and are especially handy for picking a meeting date or helping members to sign up to work at an event, for example. Both are easy to use and the main page has straight-forward instructions that walk users through signup and implementation. These are examples and are endorsed due to familiarity and the availability of free versions.

[SurveyMonkey](#)

[Doodle](#)

Creating S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Realistic

Timely (or time-bound)

There are a multitude of resources on the web for setting goals. You may want to start at [Wikipedia](#) or this brief summary at the [MIT Human Resources page](#).

[Volunteer Manual](#)

[ASC Logo](#)

My All Saints

My All Saints provides all members of the community with both information and communication tools - including the ability to update profile information, interact with groups, and sign up for classes and volunteering opportunities. As leaders, you can use these tools to communicate easily with your ministry or committee teams. Furthermore, the portal includes the ability to store document files for access by team members.

You can access [My All Saints](#) using the username and password that you set up. If you do not remember your password, follow the online instructions to reset your password.

[Click here](#) to access the ***Ministry Leader How-to Guide to My All Saints***. This is step-by-step walk through on editing your group roster, emailing your committee members, taking attendance, uploading documents for your committee and booking events.

Contacting the Leadership Support & Development Team

The Leadership Committee doesn't intend for this training session to be the end of its support for your success as a leader of a committee or ministry. The Leadership Support & Development Team have experience acting as chairpersons or leaders of committees and other groups, and they are available to talk with you about specific issues you may face, to offer suggestions and to consult or to commiserate. We are available to "mentor" you and your group whenever needed.

If you have a question or would like to talk with one of our committee members, send an email to LeaderSupport@allsaints-pas.org and someone from the Leadership Support & Development Team will contact you.