

## Geographical Parish Writing Team

The work of the writing team is to receive information gathered from congregation surveys and conversations and construct a first proposal following outline of “What Needs to Be an Agreement”.

It may take several rewrites which includes congregational review of the agreement.

The writing team is usually composed of one member from each of the interested congregations. Since this is a team it is important that the following skills be present in the team as a whole:

- **Patience** - the proposal will go through several re-writes, so the team members need the time and patience to follow through with the project. Prayer is a good thing.
- **Communication** - team members will need to communicate well with one another and with the members of the congregations they represent in order to produce the best proposal.
- **Organization** - since the writing team will be working with material from a variety of sources, the ability to organize the data is important
- **Vision** - since the geo-parish is a statement that brings people together around a vision for the future there should be someone on the team with a vision for mission
- **Common sense** - someone on the team should have a clear sense of what is possible and what is beyond the limits of possibility
- **Administration** - someone should be in charge of a master copy of the agreement that records changes and decisions as
- they remake the document and keeps tracks of deadlines in the steps of the agreement process

## **Glossary:**

### **Geographical Parish:**

A system by which a defined group of Christians create a ministry to share the faith within a defined territory. This is done in a variety of ways:

**Yoked Call** – two or more congregations unite as “points” to share the calling and supporting of a pastoral ministry staff. Each congregation keeps and uses its own name.

**Parish Contract** – two or more congregations agree to a system of shared programs and pastoral ministries. This agreement is written as a job description to guide the pastoral staff who serve the parish. Individual congregations issue the calls under the agreed contracts. Each congregation and church uses its own name for all practical purposes. If the word “parish” is used, the names are combined for clarity. (St John church has a chili supper. The Grace/St. John parish confirmation classes are held on Wednesdays)

**Parish Council** – two or more congregations agree to a second level of church governance to enable the ministry of the parish. Each congregation has its own government and church council for local and property needs. Each congregation contributes representatives and finances to parish council that governs the parish. The details of these contributions and responsibility are written and approved of by each of the congregations. The parish council finances and oversees all pastoral and cooperative ministry. Each congregation has its own name (St. John) but the parish also has its own name (Sioux Valley Parish)

## **What Should be in an Agreement**

- Purpose & Vision Statement
- Renewal of Agreement
- Pastoral Staff Needs and Responsibilities
- Time Management for Pastoral Staff
- Office Expenses & Supplies
- Worship Schedules including Holidays
- Regular Scheduled Evaluation of Ministry – Deadlines & Methods
- Joint Budgeting – Timelines & Boundaries
- Sharing of Call Procedures