

## THE UNIT LEADERSHIP

### WHAT IS THIS?

Women of the ELCA suggests six different models for organizing your unit. And you can adjust them all or even create other models to get just the right fit. They range from very structured to very loosely structured. Remember our mission statement as you consider a new model: How can you best mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ?

### HOW DOES THIS WORK?

#### Model A: Board

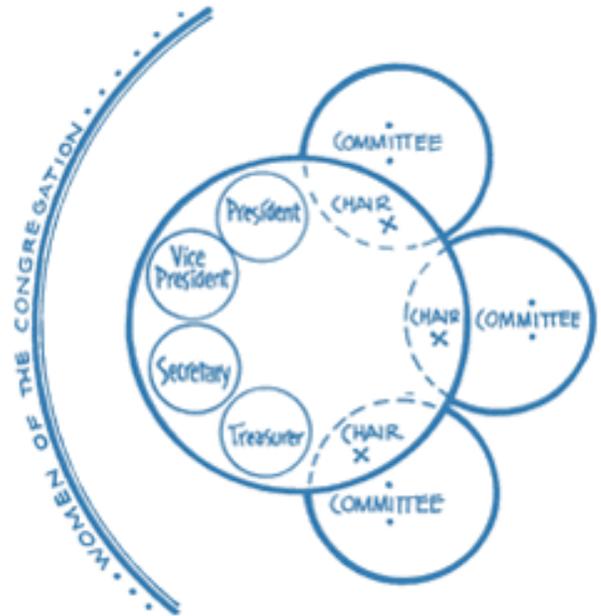
The board model has two to four officers and two to six committee chairs who are board members. The board plans the programs for the women, handles the communication and selects the materials to be used.

Strengths of this model:

- Effective in disseminating information.
- Works well when there are numerous ongoing subgroups.

Weaknesses of this model:

- Lack of flexibility. It can be difficult to change this structure quickly to respond to the changing needs of your organization.
- May create a feeling among the women in your congregation that they are "in" or "out" depending on their involvement with the organization.
- Channels of communication generally work well from the top down, but they may be less effective from the bottom up.



#### Model B: Coordinating Committee

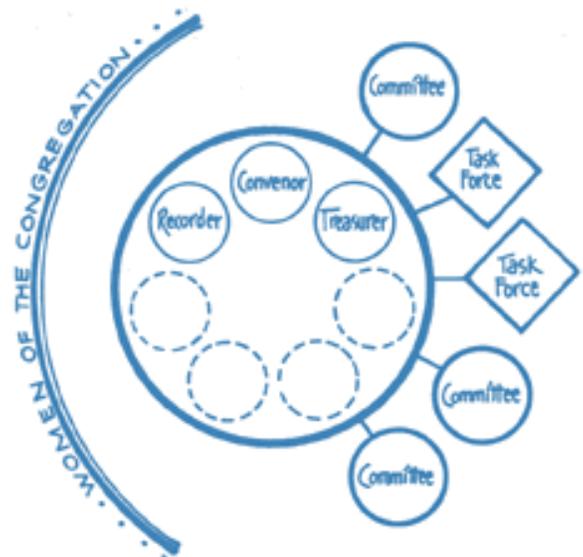
The Coordinating Committee model has four to seven committee members: two or three who are elected to specific positions and others who are at-large. None of the sub-groupings have specific representation on the coordinating committee.

Strengths of this model:

- Tends to be an open and flexible.
- New subgroups can easily form for various lengths of time.

Weaknesses of this model:

- Permanent subgroups may not have as much input into the overall organization as they do in other models
- Communication among the various groups may be more difficult.



## Model C: Coordinating Council

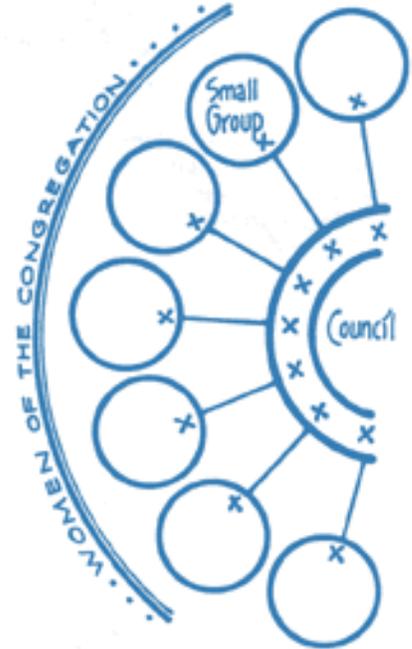
The coordinating council model has four to nine council members, each representing a subgroup of women (for example, a Bible study group, quilters, a service group, a book study group, and so forth). Two or three leaders may be elected.

Strengths of this model:

- Flexibility.
- Ability to include new subgroups in the coordinating council.
- Ease of including both short-term and on-going groups.
- Good channels for communication.

Weaknesses of this model:

- Possible size.



## Model D: Co-Leaders

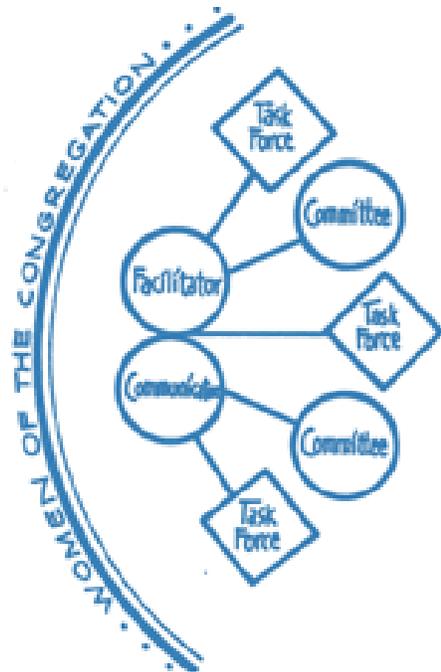
The co-leaders model has two elected or appointed leaders to coordinate ministries and unit programs.

Strengths of this model:

- This is the least formal model and would work well for congregations just beginning or reforming a women's organization.

Weaknesses of this model:

- Women's organizations that already have extensive sub-groupings in place might find this a difficult model to use.
- Could result in a significant amount of work for the co-leaders.



## **Model E: Covenant**

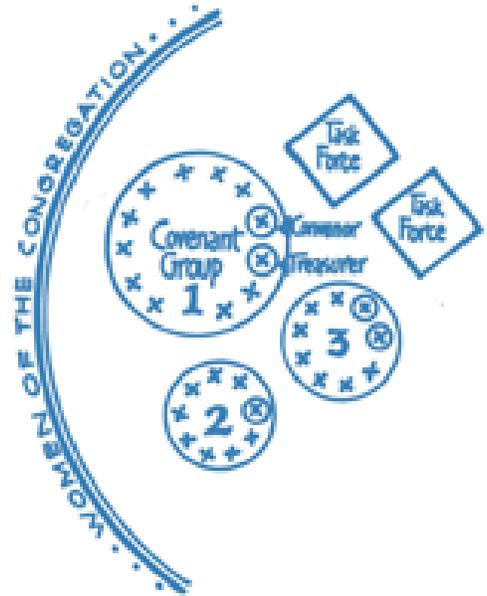
The covenant model has two elected or appointed leaders with limited responsibility. The participants agree to meet together for a specific purpose and for a specific length of time, disbanding or evaluating their commitment at the end of the time frame. This is the least structured model.

Strengths of this model:

- It can be a way to experiment to determine if you wish to enter into a more permanent commitment.

Weaknesses of this model:

- Lack of community with other women in and beyond the congregation.
- Lack of permanence and investment in the mission of the group.



## **Model F: Team**

A team approach to organizational structure is fluid and easily altered as needs, interests, and skills change. While it is still necessary to have leaders designated to do things like convene the group, gather and disseminate information, and act as treasurer, authority is shared and decisions are generally made by consensus.

Leadership is developed based on the skills and gifts of individual women (and through mentoring). Ministry choices are based on the current interests of the group and the needs of the community.



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## **WHO DO I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?**

SWO (Synodical Women's Organization)  
Unit Organizer