

REGION STRUCTURE GUIDELINES

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE

Approved by
Conference Constituency Session
May 19, 1996

Revised by
Conference Administrative Committee
September 18, 2003

Approved by
Conference Executive Committee
September 30, 2003

Purpose

The Region will be the primary church organizational unit for interacting directly with congregations and pastors. It will hold much of the authority and responsibility previously assigned to the Conference. The Region will be smaller than the Conference and will enhance grassroots connectedness between churches.

The Region Director will be nominated by the Region Committee and ratified by the Conference Executive Committee. The Region Director will be chosen for pastoral experience, congregational focus, and administrative judgment. The Region Director will be an employed officer of the Conference and a voting member of the Executive Committee and the Administrative Committee.

The Region concept reflects a thoughtful and intentional change of vision regarding the purpose of church organization. The emphasis is on congregational life and pastoral functioning. It acknowledges the great diversity that exists at the local church level -- a diversity that makes office-based resource ministries and conference-wide programming and planning strategies ineffective, inefficient, and almost unavoidably unresponsive.

The Region staff will consist of a Director and a part-time secretary provided by the Conference. This will allow for greater connectedness and accountability between pastors and congregations. It will give greater flexibility, both in finances and programs, for congregations to fulfill their mission.

Structure

A. Region size and shape

1. Each Region will be primarily formed around ethnicity and/or geography.
2. Except in the case of ethnically defined regions, there will be no other layering or overlapping of Regions.
3. Important to the Region concept is the flexibility and opportunity to reshape or create Regions as opportunities arise and to view them as fluid entities.
4. New or realigned Regions can be established by authority of the Conference Executive Committee with input from local congregations.

B. Staffing and office location

1. Regions cannot increase in staff size beyond a single Region Director and a part-time secretary. Circumstances may require that a Region Director also serve as a pastor of a congregation.
2. Because of the close geographical proximity of the Conference, Region offices will be maintained at the Conference office. This will also allow for secretarial help being shared.
3. All other needs of the Region can be negotiated and/or purchased on a free-lance basis from other entities.
4. Some services such as auditing, payroll, accounting, personnel, etc., will continue to be provided by the Conference/Association.

C. Region Committee

1. Membership
 - One member from each organized church in the Region.
 - One additional member for churches with more than 1,000 members, meaning a pastor and a layperson.
 - Nonpastoral members shall be at least a majority. Nonpastoral membership shall reflect ethnic and gender balance.
 - Members shall serve staggered four-year terms with one-fourth of the members elected each year, alternating pastor/layperson representatives every four years.
 - Members shall be limited to serving a maximum of two terms consecutively. This applies to churches that have more than one member on the Region Committee.
 - Region Director, who shall serve as chair.
 - Conference senior officers will be permanent invitees.
 - Executive Committee members from the region will be permanent invitees.
2. Meetings
 - Meetings shall be held a minimum of six times a year.
3. Functions
 - Nominates selection of Region Director to Conference Executive Committee.
 - Prepares and approves the Region's strategic mission plan.
 - Coordinates the over-all ministry program of the Region.
 - Is responsible for nominating, selecting and assigning pastors, which are then ratified by the Conference Personnel Committee, based on the number of pastoral budgets allocated by the Conference Executive Committee.
 - Oversees the ministry of the Region's evangelist, if one is desired and funded from the evangelism funds allocated to the region.
 - Allocates funds to local churches from funds that are assigned to the Region by the Conference Executive Committee.
 - Purchases region-wide services and/or sponsors special projects, such as youth rallies, evangelistic crusades, training events, as it sees fit.
 - Keeps conference senior officers informed of Region Committee actions and plans.

4. Officers:

- The officers of this Committee shall be a chair, a vice-chair, and a secretary.
- The chair shall be the Region Director.
- The vice-chair and secretary shall be selected by the Region Committee.
- The vice chair shall serve as chair at times when the chair is unable to do so.
- The secretary shall maintain accurate record of the actions of the Committee.

D. Region Director

1. Selection Process

- The Conference President or designee shall lead the selection process including:
 - A call for special meeting of the region pastors to get their input on selection of the Region Director.
 - Chair the Region Committee when it functions as the nominating committee.
- Notice will be given to all churches giving time and place of Region Committee meeting for nomination of the Region Director.
 - When serving as nominating committee the Region Committee will go into executive session.
 - The first hour will be set aside for any Region's church board member wishing to speak to the Region Committee regarding the Region Director nomination.
 - Speeches will be limited to two (2) minutes per person.
- The Region Committee will vote by secret ballot.
- This nomination shall be ratified by the Conference Executive Committee.

2. Region Director Qualifications

- Ordained or commissioned minister.
- Pastoral experience.
- Congregationally oriented.
- Administrative judgment.

3. Term:

- Four years from the date of election by Conference Executive Committee.

4. Functions and Duties of the Region Director:

- To chair the Region Committee.
- To work with the Region Committee and pastors in establishing an overall strategic plan for the Region.
- To coordinate the selection/retention/rotation of pastors.
- To supervise pastoral development and performance.
- To coach/counsel regarding pastoral ministry.
- To facilitate cooperative relationships between pastors.
- To be proactive in the evaluation of programs and ministries.
- To help mediate church disagreements and disputes. When necessary, cooperation will be sought from the Conference Conciliation and Dispute Resolution Procedures.

(The next pages are not part of the guidelines, but serve only to assist in understanding the Region system)

A Comparison

Current Conference Structure

- Directs K-12 educational system.
- Operate Camp Cedar Falls Conference Center.
- Responsible for financial and technical services.
- Process tithe and non-local church offerings.
- Association holds title to all property.
- President, or designee, sits on various Conference committees and institutional boards, also attends Union, NAD and GC meetings.
- President gives only partial focus to congregational and pastoral life because of many other administrative responsibilities.
- Has 31 people serving on Executive Committee making administrative decisions for the conference.
- Determines the total number of pastoral budgets available in current conference budget.
- Appoints and assigns pastors.
- Barely nurtures and supervises pastors.
- Disburses funds directly to local churches.
- Primary organizational unit for area wide mission planning and for assistance in handling personnel issues and various local church disputes.
- Conference officers elected at constituency session.

New Region Structure

- No change
- No change. Region Director does not sit on or attend these functions, except those related to the Region.
- Region director almost exclusively focuses on working with pastors and facilitating church and region planning.
- No change in Executive Committee, but as many as 150 additional people making decisions for the Regions.
- Conference divides pastoral budgets among Regions according to formula.
- Region selects pastors which are then ratified by the Conference Personnel Committee.
- Responsibility of the Region.
- Regions disburses assigned funds per conference budget and distributes per denominational policy.
- Region is seen as primarily responsible for these areas. Conference serves as advisor for the Region.
- No change for senior officers. Region Directors selected with region input.

Quick Summary

The Conference....

- Directs the K- 12 educational system.
- Operates the Camp Cedar Falls Conference Center.
- Provides financial and technical services.
- Processes tithe and non-local church offerings.
- Holds title to all property.
- Determines distribution of pastoral budgets to regions.
- President sits on conference/institutional boards, including Union, NAD and GC Committees.
- Forms Regions and draws their boundaries.
- President works closely with Region Directors and is responsible for their orientation and holding them to personal accountability.
- Maintains an institutional and administrative focus.

The Region

- Supervises and nurtures pastors.
- Disburses evangelism funds.
- Recommends pastors employment based on quota allotted by conference budget.
- Region director focuses almost exclusively on pastoral nurturing, and congregational and district planning.
- Arbitrates church disputes.
- Facilitates church and district wide mission planning.
- Maintains a congregational and pastoral focus.