

# **Stalking the Spirit: Servant Leadership within Seekers**

*Class summary:*

## **Week 1: History of Leadership within Seekers**

### *Evolution of Servant Leadership at Seekers*

1976- The Impact of Robert Greenleaf's "Servant As Leader" Pamphlet.

1988- A Founding Leader Leaves Seekers.

1993- Losing Our Home.

2000- Finding a New Home, Losing Another Founding Leader.

2011- A Tragic Death.

2016 & 2020- Retirement from SLT and New Opportunities for Servant Leadership

### *Servant Leadership Class 1-Discussion 2*

1. Where do you see structures that encourage Servant Leadership to emerge in Seekers?
2. Where do you see barriers that prevent or slow down the emergence of Servant Leadership in Seekers

## **Week 2: What is Servant Leadership?**

What is Servant Leadership? How is SL different from ordinary forms of leadership development? What is its Biblical grounding and where does it show up in Seekers?

## **Week 3: When Tensions Arise**

Working out our differences and finding ways to meet the pastoral needs within the community after Sonya left and we moved to our new location (on the street with an "open door" for all).

## **Week 4: Leadership in Seekers**

Power Point on various places to develop shared leadership within Seekers.

Discussion on where we find leadership and how SLT fits into the scheme of developing servant leaders within Seekers.

Handout: Team Needs Discernment Report

## **Week 5: What is working? What is not? An Interview with current SLT members**

**Questions for SLT members.**

### **1. Role of the SLT?**

Response summary:

- I'd love to hear from SLT what they see as primary concerns/challenges/opportunities? Are there things that *need* to change from their perspective?
- Sonya's gift was calling forth strength and health in people w/o serious needs; now it seems that SLT is focused more on pastoral needs (result of this location?)
- What determines if a need is met by SLT vs Stewards vs a Mission group vs some other committee/individual?
  - How is this system of delegation currently meeting our needs well?
  - How is this system currently not meeting our needs well?

**2. Is Seeker's current model of SLT/Stewards/mission groups still working? Does it work for everyone in the community? Has it ever worked for everyone? Are there alternatives?**

Response summary:

- Understanding that mission groups and stewards are fundamental to Seekers, how can we encourage people on this path while making sure that they don't become "shoulds" for everyone or that people are not made to feel like "less thans" if they are not called to these paths? ++
  - Can we find words to let people know that it is possible to engage in a meaningful way in Seekers as a member
- In our current model, those with more time to give may have more input into Seekers simply because they have the time to give to mission groups, meetings, and tasks - which means our leadership may skew older and/or wealthier simply because they have an additional 40-50 hours a week.
  - What are the potential opportunities in this, and are we making the most of them?
  - What are the pitfalls/challenges, and what are we doing to address that?
- What more do we need to do to help us address our unconscious biases and to understand how our structures, created by middle-aged, white, middle-class people 45 years ago may not serve our more diverse congregation in 2021?

**3. For Groups: What lessons have we learned from our time spent in virtual community? Have we learned anything more about what it means to be in community with others? Has the way we have related to each other in this different way revealed anything that we didn't know about our community? What improvements have we made in how we relate to each other as we have become more comfortable with technology and also have accepted that this is a long-term way of being?**

Response summary:

- When we move back to in-person meetings, how do we hold onto the aspects of Zoom meetings that have been actually better for some than in person meetings?
- What support does Seekers offer our aging community with different physical energy constraints? Ditto for Sunday school and retreats.
- With our virtual gathering, how do we maintain connection with our more distant physically distant members? What will that look like when we can safely gather in person again?
- Do we need to think beyond the ways we've done it, and/or do we need to beef up those practices?

**Week 6: Where do we go from here? Next steps to get to where we want to be.**

Short discussion on finances and the "culture of generosity" as an aspect of servant leadership at Seekers, and then discussion of these questions:

1. Many years ago when we began the process of buying a new building for Seekers, our children conducted a service one Sunday. The topic they chose for that morning was "How Do You Know You Are A Seeker?" One of the things they listed was; " You know you are a Seeker if it takes longer to decide on a process to make a decision that it takes to make the decision." In that spirit, what kind of process do you think we need in order to decide on the changes that we believe need to be made?

Response summary:

- Survey the congregation (who will design the survey?)
- Do all Stewards see their role as discerning call and gifts in the congregation?

- Are there ways to share the pastoring role beyond SLT for people not in mission groups?
- Who will be making recommendations about the SLT?
- Have we considered hiring someone for children and youth?

2. Given where we have been and where we are now and the circumstances we are facing, what changes in the structure or model of SLT do you think need to be implemented in order for us to thrive in the future? Or to rephrase in another way: Imagine you enter Seekers Church in the year 2030, ten years from now. What is different? What is the same?