

Center for Spiritual Living Congruence Model

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INTRODUCTION

The United Church of Religious Science (UCRS) adopted a new organizational design model in January, 2000. This model was designed to “create an organizational design for the Church that would be renewing and innovative, vision and values oriented, and effective for a 21st century spiritual movement...Spiritual Mind Treatment and responsiveness to an all-guiding Source are central to the new design. Vision, values, guiding principles, spiritual community, shared prosperity, mentoring, and unified support replace an emphasis upon governance, hierarchy, politics, scarcity, and a ‘we-they’ separation.”

The Center for Spiritual Living (CSL) voted to move into a similar organizational model in January, 2005. Being inspired by the spirit of the UCRS model and its openness, circularity, and vision-driven nature, the Board of Trustees and its appointed Transition Team has developed a model for our CSL community. The CSL Congruence Model is offered in the spirit of innovation, creativity, and forward thinking. It is a living, breathing design, open to further interpretation and refinement based upon both the unfolding vision of CSL, and consensus-building discussions within the leadership and community as a whole.

UCRS GLOBAL HEART VISION AND MISSION

As a member church of the UCRS and therefore a ‘point of inspiration and influence’, the Center for Spiritual Living deeply embraces the Global Heart Vision and Mission. The Global Heart

Vision inspires and infuses CSL's Congruence Model, Purpose, and Mission, and the UCRS Mission articulates our role in service to the manifestation and demonstration of this high vision.

GLOBAL HEART VISION

- We envision the emergence of the Global Heart to balance and guide the further evolution of humanity.
- We see a world free of homelessness, violence, war, hunger, separation and disenfranchisement.
- We see a world in which there is generous and continuous sharing of heart and resources. We envision a world in which forgiveness, whither for errors, injustices, or debts, is the norm.
- We see a world in which borders are irrelevant.
- We see a world which has renewed its emphasis on beauty, nature and love through a resurgence of creativity, art, and aesthetics.
- We see a world in which fellowship prospers and connects through the guidance of spiritual wisdom and experience.
- We envision a world in which we live and grow and One Human Family. We envision UCRS as a bridge across the illness and illusion of separation thereby dynamically empowering the vision of Global Heart.
- We envision United Church of Religious Science as united and actuated by this compelling vision of a healthy world (a world experiencing Global Heart) and are ardently committed to bringing this vision forth through its ministries and its transformative teaching.
- We see the UCRS as a global community of people pervasively caring for and about each other and the entire human family, thereby bringing the gift of active compassion to the world. Our local churches and communities become "points of inspiration and influence" effectively advancing the vision of Global Heart.

MISSION: AWAKENING THROUGH SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

United Church of Religious Science experiences and manifests the truth of Oneness through the demonstration and development of Spiritual Community. We experience being one community with many locations.

The "glue" for our Spiritual Community is our shared commitment to spirituality, love, vision, community service, education, integrity, financial health, caring, and compassion. We make our decisions and guide our growth by continuous sensitivity to the unfolding vision of God for our community and by devotion to our shared values and guiding principles.

We convey a way of life based on spiritual practices that builds spiritual community globally. Every center, church or aspect of our Spiritual Community serves as a point of inspiration and dynamic influence for the vision of Global Heart, and we further express our vision through compassionate service to our members and to the world.

Our vital and growing Spiritual Community fuels an expanded awareness of our transformative teaching throughout the world. As we communicate "New Thought — Ancient Wisdom" through the teachings of Science of Mind and Spirit, we further the experience of a "universal spirituality" bridging all peoples, cultures, nations and faiths.

The richness of our expression of Spiritual Community cultivates leaders, not just followers. We bring forth an enlightened citizenry and generate an abundant flow of spiritual leaders in service to the transformation of our world.

CSL PURPOSE AND MISSION

The Center for Spiritual Living seeks to exemplify its Purpose and Mission. Our Purpose is a clear statement of that which we accomplish, while our Mission articulates the means by which we accomplish it.

OUR PURPOSE

Awakening Courage
Transforming Lives
Together
Through Love

OUR MISSION

To commune, celebrate and lift spirits through sacred celebration;
To teach and practice the Science of Mind;
To build a diverse spiritual community;
To spread Science of Mind through positive outreach; and
To minister through healing and revealing wholeness, and developing spiritual leadership.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Congruence Model relies on Guiding Principles, as articulated by the UCRS, to describe the ideal way in which all parts of the organization work together to fulfill CSL's Purpose and Mission, as well as actuate the Global Heart Vision in our community and our world. Because the Congruence Model places no reliance on hierarchy and rules to prescribe the interaction of the organization and all its parts, the Guiding Principles serve as clear behavioral aspirations and precepts against which all decisions, structures, actions, and results can be measured.

Spiritual Mind Treatment and Visioning: To anchor our expression of spirituality, we value an emphasis upon spiritual mind treatment and meditation for spiritual connection, along with the practices of visioning and co-creation for spiritual insight to reveal our pathway.

Leaders as Vision Facilitators: Leadership at all levels must be centered on the facilitation of the Vision and the ever-unfolding pathway revealed through continued visioning practices.

Rather than advancing their personal opinions and preferences, our leaders participate in discerning the pathway for the unfoldment of our vision and facilitate progress along that pathway. Furthermore, our leadership involves as many as possible in service to the vision and continually cultivates more leaders.

Congruence: Congruence suggests an all-pervading dedication to living out our values and principles and to advancing our Purpose, Mission, and Vision in every way possible and at all levels of our community. Simply put, our community and its members "walk our talk," in dedication to expressing a living embodiment of our Vision/Mission and of our teaching. We are demonstrating and actualizing our Vision and our possibilities.

Accountability: By means of rigorous dedication to our values and Guiding Principles, we manifest a natural accountability for our commitments, actions, and community participation. We are thoroughly principled and constructive.

Teamwork: At all levels, we work together to achieve our goals and to develop an ever richer, more involved, and effective community.

Open Communication: Information and insights flow openly and dynamically in this new design, enhancing creativity, engendering a sense of inclusion, and nurturing the efficient resolution of misunderstandings or conflict.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR THE CONGRUENCE MODEL

Inspiration: This model is inspired and based upon the UCRS New Organizational Design model. In addition, it is inspired by the leading edge thinking in organizational design, renewal and leadership. It seeks to demonstrate an organization that is based in Spiritual Principles and guided by values-based leadership, while empowering all people involved to mature spiritually and personally through working within the framework of the model.

The Spirit and the Letter of the Model: In all cases, CSL leadership seeks to understand and be informed in its work by the Spirit of the Congruence Model. Rather than seeking to impose the letter of the law, we seek to reveal its spirit, and find new ways to be and do in our work together.

Web or Circular Model: Taken from nature and Indra's net, the CSL organization is designed to develop as a web-like structure of overlapping and intersecting circles. Rather than a top-down pyramid, the organization is a series of circles moving from the center out. Although direct lines of report are essential for personnel reasons and general communication, interactions and coordination of effort follow natural patterns of influence rather than rigid organizational structure. In this model, everyone talks to each other – while the leadership in the center seeks to provide organizational coherence, communication, priorities, and vision-driven direction.

Learning Organization: A learning organization means that we are flexible in approach, never seeking to find blame or fault; instead we use mistakes as opportunities to learn more about what

works and what doesn't work. We seek to implement the learning in a supportive and empowering manner. In addition, it means that the leadership of CSL is constantly seeking to inform, enlighten and inspire itself in new ways, methods and ideas about organizational design, leadership styles, and general best business and church practices.

Trained Leadership: Essential to the health of CSL is leaders who are willing to learn and be trained in new organizational design, new leadership styles, and who are constantly seeking deeper spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity is an essential quality when dealing with the inherent stresses and tensions in a circular model. Conscious, consistent, open communication is key to the health and vitality of CSL leadership and staff as they seek to operate from this model. A dual peer/supervisory role can only be negotiated through the utmost desire to operate from the Guiding Principles, in service to the Vision, Purpose, and Mission. In addition, discernment regarding the timely practice of autonomy and individual authority versus greater collaboration and inclusion is called for. In both cases, authentic speaking and listening are paramount, while being willing to openly receive feedback from individuals within the organization that in a more traditional model would have no right or reason to provide input into a project or decision. Moreover, actively seeking the inclusion of other leaders and teams who might be impacted by or have useful input into the decision or project is optimal.

New Decision-Making Models: Decision-making at all levels of the organization is informed by vision and uses appropriate types of decision-making models. While there continues to be a place for many types of decision-making processes, the main process used for important decisions that have a larger impact is consensus. Consensus is based on the notion that all sides of a decision are aired; all input gathered; then reasoned conversation follows which seeks to reveal the wisdom of the group. When the wisdom of the group seems to be revealed a decision has been made. Members have the option to disagree but go along, disagree and choose to abstain, or disagree so vehemently that the wisdom of the group clearly has not been reached, and the process needs to continue. Once a decision has been made, all members agree to support the decision regardless of their personal opinions along the way toward building consensus.

Professionalism Embedded in Spirituality: We seek the highest level of professionalism in all our business decisions and actions while solidly being grounded in Spiritual Principles and vision. This professionalism translates into an ongoing practice of the Guiding Principles of the Congruence Model, while seeking to develop greater personal spiritual maturity.

Gifted and Talented: Inherent to a circular design is the participation of a greater number of people. Through the use of elected and appointed Cores and self-created teams, members and friends of CSL are invited and encouraged to participate in all levels of leadership and the work of the community. This is based on the assumption that everyone carries a piece of the CSL vision, whether they are taking on someone else's project or bringing their own forward. Congruent with the overall theme and unfolding vision of CSL, the leadership of CSL seeks to incorporate as many visions and possibilities as it can.

Communication and Visibility: Essential to the health of an emerging 21st century spiritual organization is a willingness to communicate our vision and message in new and innovative ways. We seek to reach across the insular world of New Thought and Metaphysics, and the

possible barriers of other faith traditions, to the community of “un-churched.” We seek to communicate and provide visibility to our faith tradition in the Interfaith Community in a forthright manner. This also includes being appropriately visible and outspoken on socially relevant issues such as peace and human rights, and any other issues that are informed by our Global Heart Vision.

Communication and visibility are possible through appropriate media and web outreach; advertising and PR; participating in appropriate community, interfaith, peace and other such events; and appropriate speaking and teaching in the greater community.

Partnerships and Strategic Alliances: Creating strong relationships with groups and organizations which are engaged in work in alignment with CSL allows CSL to expand its potential for fulfilling its Purpose and Mission without duplicating effort or re-inventing the wheel. In addition, CSL seeks to assist and support groups and organizations which are growing and are engaged in work that is in alignment with CSL’s Purpose and Mission, and the Global Heart Vision.

CONGRUENCE MODEL OVERVIEW

The large circular diagram accompanying this description (Diagram A) is a visual representation for the Congruence Model. The following comprise its basic elements:

The innermost circle bears the words “God...Spirit...One Mind” and represents our conviction that God is the central force animating CSL’s existence.

The first ring outward from the center contains the phrase “Visioning Practices”. It is through Visioning that we become receptive to and guided by the Divine. Visioning is the central practice through which CSL’s unfolding direction is guided.

The second ring, “Purpose, Mission, and Guiding Principles,” represents the importance of these ideals in informing our choices, efforts, decisions, and actions.

The ring labeled “Implementation Structure” denotes the most common aspects of an organization – the means provided for moving toward the Vision, Purpose, and Mission of CSL. Diagram B, an enhancement of this ring, presents the core structures necessary for the operation of CSL’s Congruence Model.

The spokes that extend out from the Implementation Structure represent a combination of current and proposed ministries, departments, functions, and activities. These may be coordinated by elected or appointed members, or by paid personnel. We envision these ‘spokes’ infused with the energy and creativity of committed members of CSL who are motivated and gifted to serve in each area.

Beyond the spokes is a ring entitled “CSL Community.” This represents our greatest area of support and involvement, and there is a flow of people and resources from the CSL community into the ministries, projects, etc., as well to the implementation structure.

Finally, the outermost ring is the "Greater Dallas Community and World," the entire human family which, as our vision implies, is itself becoming a spiritual community. This represents the larger world we are involved in and serve.

IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE (Diagrams B & C)

The Congruence Model calls for a uniquely organic and fluid implementation structure. Rather than a rigid hierarchical organizational structure, this model is based on spheres of influence and communication, and the use of Cores of the gifted and talented.

The implementation structure includes:

LEADERSHIP OF THE COMMUNITY

Leadership for the Center for Spiritual Living is provided through the Senior Minister, the CORE Council, Vision Core and Nominating Core.

Senior Minister: The Senior Minister is the primary vision caster and keeper for the Center for Spiritual Living by articulating and furthering CSL’s Purpose and Mission. Working in conjunction with the leadership and implementation structure, the Senior Minister brings spiritual wisdom, charisma, purpose and light to the CSL community. While having a general area of implementation within CSL (see Diagram C, Web of Influence), the Senior Minister functions as a spokesperson in the greater Dallas community and the world, and provides visibility and presence at major community events. The Senior Minister promotes the formation of strategic alliances and community projects with organizations aligned with CSL’s Purpose, Mission and the Global Heart Vision.

C.O.R.E. Council

Purpose: The CORE Council serves a function similar, but not identical, to a corporate Board of Trustees. Its responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Receive input from all Cores and areas of CSL and synthesize it into a clear direction and operational plan
- Prioritization, coordination, and application of resources
- Overall health and unfoldment of CSL
- Communication Hub
- Final decision-making body for CSL Dallas

Composition: Eleven (11) members – 5 elected, 3 ex officio, and 1 by appointment

- 1 Senior Minister (ex officio)
- 1 Business Administration Director (ex officio)
- 1 Director of Stewardship (ex officio)
- 1 Minister (jointly appointed each year by Nominating Core Chair, Senior Minister, and CORE Council Chair)
- 1 Vision Core Liaison (elected to Vision Core; appointed each year by Senior Minister to CORE Council)
- 2 Practitioners (elected)
- 4 Lay Persons (elected)

Election: By community members at the Annual Meeting from a slate prepared by the Nominating Core.

Terms of Service: Elected lay and Practitioner positions will have a three year term of service. For elected positions, two consecutive re-elections are possible.

Chair and Vice Chair: The Chair and Vice Chair are elected by the CORE Council from within its elected membership for a term of one year. To serve as Chair, you must not have a close relative concurrently serving as either Vision or Nominating Core Chair.

Qualifications

- CSL Dallas membership for a minimum of one year at the time of election
- Successful completion of the Foundations accredited class at the time of election
- Tither or significant financial contributor, by identifiable means, for a minimum of one year (does not apply to ex officio positions of Directors/Managers of Stewardship & Business Administration)
- Informed of and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership on the CORE Council
- Not seek to profit in your personal business through service on the CORE Council
- No spouse or significant other currently serving on the CORE Council

Additional Qualities and Skill Sets

- Spiritual maturity
- Passion and dedication to CSL Dallas
- Strong communication skills
- Gifts and talents essential to the guidance of CSL Dallas
- Business and organizational acumen, as evidenced by successful business, personal and financial management
- The following leadership skills:
 - 1. Visionary with strong ideas
 - 2. Follow-through
 - 3. Willingness to learn and experience non-traditional leadership styles and organizational models. In short, a willingness to do business differently.

Vision Core

Purpose: The Vision Core convenes regularly to conduct visioning sessions, and thus establish a field of consciousness which is sensitive to the impress and guidance of Spirit. The results of these visioning sessions are ‘harvested’, and as they are communicated to the CORE Council, become the basis for the unified direction and evolving pathway of CSL Dallas.

Composition: 8 members

- 1 Minister – (jointly appointed by Nominating Core Chair, Senior Minister, and CORE Council Chair)
- 2 Practitioners – elected
- 3 Lay members – elected
- 1 Communications Director – ex officio
- 1 Youth (age 13- 18) – Elected by the youth members of the Teen Group from within their membership, and approved by the Teen Advisors, for a period of one year, with successive designations possible. The youth member need not meet all qualifications that apply to adult members. This position is designated by the CSL youth members for a one year term with support and guidance by the Teen Advisors.

Election: By community members at the Annual Meeting from a slate prepared by the Nominating Core.

Terms of Service: Elected and appointed positions will have a three year term of service, with two consecutive re-elections possible.

Vision Core Chair (CORE Council Liaison): The Vision Core Chair shall be appointed by the Senior Minister for a term of one year, and shall serve as the liaison to the CORE Council. If the Vision Core Chair cannot or chooses not to serve on the CORE Council, the Senior Minister will appoint another qualified member of the Vision Core to serve as Liaison. To serve as Chair, you must not have a spouse or significant other concurrently serving as either CORE Council Chair or Nominating Core Chair. To serve as Liaison, you must not have a spouse or significant other serving on the CORE Council.

Qualifications

- CSL Dallas membership for a minimum of one year at the time of election
- Successful completion of the Foundations accredited class at the time of election
- Financial contributor, by identifiable means, for a minimum of one year (does not apply to ex officio staff position)
- Informed of and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership on the Vision Core
- Not seek to profit in your personal business through service on the Vision Core
- No spouse or significant other currently serving on the Vision Core

Additional Qualities and Skill Sets

- Spiritual maturity
- Passion and dedication to CSL Dallas
- Strong communication skills

- Sensitive to the impress of Spirit
- Recognition of visioning and the Vision Core as a central influence in the life and direction of CSL Dallas
- Some skill at visioning, or willingness to learn
- Ability to harvest ideas from the visioning process and organize them
- The following leadership skills:
 1. Visionary with strong ideas
 2. Follow-through
 3. Willingness to learn and experience non-traditional leadership styles and organizational models. In short, a willingness to do business differently.

Nominating Core

Purpose: To seek out and cultivate the most highly qualified nominees to fill each elected position within the organizational model of CSL Dallas; to interview and assess the qualifications of nominees; and to determine and present an annual slate for each elected Core.

Composition:

- 1 Minister (jointly appointed by Nominating Core Chair, Senior Minister, and CORE Council Chair)
- 2 Lay Members (elected)
- 2 Practitioners (elected)
- 1 Former CORE Council Member (jointly appointed by Nominating Core Chair, Senior Minister, and CORE Council Chair)
- 1 Sacred Service Ministry Representative (appointed by Sacred Service Ministry Team)

Election: By community members at the Annual Meeting from a slate prepared by the Nominating Core.

Terms of Service: Elected and appointed positions will have a two year term of service, with two successive re-elections possible.

Nominating Core Chair: The Nominating Core will elect its own chair from within its membership for a term of one year. To serve as Chair, you must not have a close relative concurrently serving as either CORE Council Chair or Vision Core Chair.

Qualifications

- CSL Dallas membership for a minimum of one year at the time of election
- Successful completion of the Foundations accredited class at the time of election
- Financial contributor, by identifiable means, for a minimum of one year
- Informed of and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership on the Nominating Core
- Not seek to profit in your personal business through service on the Nominating Core
- No spouse or significant other currently serving on Nominating Core

Additional Qualities and Skill Sets

- Spiritual maturity
- Passion and dedication to CSL Dallas
- Strong communication skills
- Business and organizational acumen, as evidenced by successful business, personal and financial management
- Networker, socializer, and/or people person who enjoys reaching out to others
- Ability to practice discernment and confidentiality
- Interviewing/HR skills
- Ability to work by consensus
- The following leadership skills:
 1. Visionary with strong ideas
 2. Follow-through
 3. Willingness to learn and experience non-traditional leadership styles and organizational models. In short, a willingness to do business differently.

Stewardship Core

Function: The Stewardship Core provides the resource information which becomes the basis of the CORE Council's prioritization and allocation functions. The Stewardship Core is charged with fiscal oversight and financial cultivation. It is responsible for the development of budgets (both current and future). We envision a community that is abundant and dedicated to financial integrity. This Core would also be charged with raising additional funds to support the evolving pathway of the community. The Corporate Treasurer is appointed from the membership of the Stewardship Core by the Nominating Core Chair, Senior Minister, and the Director/Manager of the Stewardship area, and serves a one year term.

Composition: The Stewardship Core is a volunteer team created by the Director/Manager of the Stewardship Department, who functions as its Chair Person.

Implementation Web

Two Ministers (the Senior Minister and a second appointed Minister) are fully functioning ex-officio members of the CORE Council. Through these positions all ecclesiastic, education, and program areas of CSL are coherently tied into the decision, policy and priority making of the CORE Council. These areas are charged with developing staff, volunteers and Cores of the gifted and talented to further the ecclesiastical, educational and program health, integrity and fulfillment of the vision discerned by the Community, Vision Core and CORE Council.

Two staff members are fully functioning ex-officio members of the CORE Council. This includes the Director/Manager of the Business Administration area (ex officio Corporate Secretary) and the Director/Manager of the Stewardship area of CSL. Each of these areas is then coherently tied into the decision, policy and priority-making of the CORE Council. These areas are able to intelligently and appropriately inform CORE Council matters and are expected to implement the CORE Council policies, priorities and decisions. These areas are charged with developing staff, volunteers and Cores to further the operation and implementation, integrity and fulfillment of the vision discerned by the Community, Vision Core and CORE Council.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership (adult): The CSL Community is diverse and welcoming, fostering an environment of inclusion and connectedness. With membership comes the honor of shaping the direction and future of CSL, both through voting privileges and eligibility to serve on one of the leadership Cores. Community Membership at CSL shall be considered active following application submission, and successful completion of the Membership 101 class, including either 'QuickStart' or the Foundations Class.

Youth Membership: Teens between the ages of thirteen and eighteen may be youth members. A teen is eligible for youth membership when s/he has been active in the Teen Group for six months, with an attendance rate of approximately 80 percent. Eligibility is verified by the Teen Advisors. Although a youth member does not possess voting rights, participation in the greater community is anticipated, and the youth members may elect one of their own to serve on the Vision Core (see Vision Core section). In addition, a Youth Delegate to the Annual Gathering of the UCRS may be elected by the teens.

Junior Member: Any child under the age of thirteen whose parent/s are CSL members may be a junior member. This designation is automatically granted at the parent's request. When a junior member reaches the age of thirteen, s/he may choose to become a Youth Member.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Center for Spiritual Living holds annual meetings at which the business of the community is conducted, including the election of leadership; voting on bylaw and non bylaw resolutions; and other such legal/corporate business by registered members. However, the emphasis for these gatherings is on the work of the community, not just its business. This includes inspiration around service; education in leadership and organizational development; recruitment of the gifted and talented; deepening collectively in our Guiding Principles; and growing our skills and commitment to the Purpose and Mission of CSL. This work is embedded in sharing, testimony, music, ritual, enthusiasm, love and trust.

These meetings are all day Saturday gatherings held early in the year, and include rejoicing and feasting together, leadership reports, elections, inspiration and education. This is a primary opportunity for the leadership of CSL to share the vision and priorities, financial health, budget, and program plans to the community in order to elicit commitment, support and involvement.

The structure and program of these meetings will be jointly created and presented by the Senior Minister, CORE Council Chair and an Annual Meeting Committee.

2008 CHANGES

As a result of ongoing operational assessment, the CORE Council, with the blessing of the congregation as represented by a quorum at the 2008 Annual Meeting, made the following changes to the composition, eligibility, and terms of service for the CORE Council, Vision Core, and Nominating Core:

1. Practitioner seats for the above-mentioned Cores are eligible to be filled by Practitioners-in-training (PIT). In order to be eligible, the PIT must successfully complete Practitioner studies, and pass oral and written Practitioner examinations within eight months of election. In the event that an elected PIT does not complete these requirements, s/he will resign his/her seat, and that vacancy may be filled by a qualified individual jointly appointed by the Senior Minister, CORE Council Chair and Nominating Core Chair.
2. The term of service for lay and Practitioner seats for the CORE Council and Vision Core is changed to three years in order to enhance organizational and functional continuity, and to allow for greater depth of experience on those Cores.
3. The changing focus of the CORE Council calls for the greater participation of non-staff laity on the CORE Council. Two lay positions are added, and this is done in such a way as to provide two elected seats are open for election each year.

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