

GOMSF Church Music Federation Transition Update Q& A May 2018

Below are responses to 6 questions, which were distilled from the dozens of questions and comments we received before, during, and after our April 21, 2018 business meeting in Castro Valley. We continue to look forward to your questions, observations, and encouragements as we move toward presenting our proposals at the August business meeting in San Diego.

1. What issues have caused the board to seek changes in the organizational structure of the Federation?

- The primary cause has been the need to develop a more robust and sustainable leadership targeted toward our organization's central purpose, which is music ministry in the areas of choir, chant, youth music, and music education. We found ourselves at a sticking point last August without people qualified by our by-laws who were willing to run for the main offices of the Federation or to take roles in the larger executive board. His Eminence asked the current board to remain another term to find solutions to this challenge and to transform the organization into a more fully functioning ministry of the Metropolis. His Eminence had been in dialogue with the board since March of 2017 encouraging us to work more collaboratively among all aspects of church music ministry (choir, chant, music education, and youth music) and find ways to engage and include more people of all ages in the actual work of the ministry. Our current organizational structure has not allowed the ministry to grow organically. (Please see question #2 for more explanation of this.)

2. What "new" will happen with the new structure?

- *This is the best question of all!* In the new structure the practical work of the organization would be divided into areas of music ministry and practical administration rather than being the work of four officers and the narrowly defined roles of the other 6 members of the board. In the new structure there would be Team Leaders for the four areas of music ministry (music education, choir, chant, and youth music) and Team Leaders of the four areas of internal support (events, ways and means, communication/outreach, and organizational record keeping). These teams would have anywhere from 3 to 15 members, depending upon the nature of the team. For example, there would be a Communication and Outreach Team rather than simply a newsletter editor, so that all forms of communication could be developed by people with the experience and expertise to work with e-mail programs, manage the website, etc. The number Regional Administrators would be increased and become known Regional *Ambassadors* to do the essential face-to-face personal communication so often missing in a digitally oriented world. The Events Committee would collaborate with the four music committees to produce the Church Music Institutes, which are the heart of our ministry, allowing

the offering of more CMIs, including some for youth, as well as webinars, concerts, and conferences. The roles of the previous structure would be organically assimilated into the new teams. For example, some of the current work of the Database and Membership Chairman would go to Communication and Outreach and some to Ways and Means. ***Best of all, Team Leaders would be able to build their own teams of talent and not have to wait for the president to issue an appointment or invitation to participation in the day to day work of the ministry. In this structure there will be collaboration between the various areas of music so that no area is over or under represented.*** Of course there are more examples, but these are a few of the most exciting ones.

3. What happens to the autonomy of our organization?

- Just like all the other ministries of the Metropolis, we are given latitude to independently run our organization, and we would remain under the general oversight and guidance of His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos as we have in the past. As with other ministries, we will work with the Metropolis staff to enjoy the resources of the Metropolis.
- From the conversations we have had with Federation members, it is clear that there is no desire to explore any benefits of having our funds held in a restricted fund by the Metropolis, ***and we will continue to be a self-funding organization, rather than being part of the larger Metropolis budget.***
- Any changes to the organization will be made according to our current by-laws.
- We will remain in affiliation with the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians.
- We will have no organizational positions paid from our budgets.

4. Has the board looked at other ministries in the Metropolis and other Federations for guidance on re-organization?

- Absolutely. There are many models of ministry across the Metropolis and very similar models among the Federations the National Forum. We researched models that work best with ministries similar to ours such as Missions and Evangelism and Youth and Young Adult Ministries. We consulted with the leaders of these ministries who recently underwent structural transition and are beginning to flourish. Primarily, we wanted to find a model that would fit the kind of unique ministry we are. We discovered that other Federations and the National Forum do not function in any essentially different ways than we do and yet struggle with the same challenges we face. We want to find things that work, and do them!

5. When you speak of being inclusive and breaking down barriers, what do you mean? Are we not already inclusive? What barriers are there now?

- We are inclusive in some ways, of course, but there remains a false sense of separation and competition between the areas of music ministry, particularly between choir and chant. We cannot move forward if we are not inclusive in the practical operation of the ministry. We are also less inclusive in the way that that nearly all the power to invite church musicians to become engaged in the actual work or the organization has rested in the president. In the new ministry team structure, Team Leaders themselves would be free to invite the right people for the right places in the ministry, and when church musicians are aware of the specific areas in which they might serve, they can more easily volunteer. For example, would you be more likely to volunteer to run for the office of Vice President or to be a member of the Events Team? (Please note the examples in Questions 1 and 2.)
- When we think of barriers, we have asked ourselves what keeps parishes and church musicians from feeling as if they are both participants in and beneficiaries of the ministry. One answer has been the requirement of parish dues. A ministry such as ours is different from one such as Philoptochos, whose work is philanthropy. Because of the nature of their work, dues are appropriate as is a more standard board of officers. Again, we are much more of a ministry like Missions and Evangelism and Youth and Young Adult Ministries, both of which have team structures and do not require dues of the parishes they serve. For this year we have suspended the parish dues requirement as we work through the issues of our transition, and will propose making this suspension permanent. We want everyone's voice at the table, whether parishes have paid their dues or not. Of course stewardship and donations are completely in keeping with a ministry such as ours and we will continue to solicit them.

6. What happened to the plan to have a committee of youth music ministers?

This question is such an important question and has been a great impetus for us to change to a collaborative ministry structure. The Federation approved funds to support volunteer youth music ministers to create and carry out enrichment programs for youth music. However, within our current model, the responsibility and authority for this committee has rested with the President, and the volunteers looked to her for the creation of the programs rather than feeling empowered to create them on their own. This investment and empowerment is at the very heart of the collaborative ministry model, where ideas and innovations are worked out and implemented by not just one or two people, but by a team of people with the authority and permission to carry out the guiding principles of the organization in their work. In the new collaborative model, there will be a Youth Ministry Team, and any new ideas or suggestions for youth music would immediately be sent to that team for planning and action rather than waiting for the President or board to come up with a way to bring the

suggestion to life. The same would be true for suggestions pertinent to any of the ministry teams, removing the time and steps between a good idea and its execution.

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