


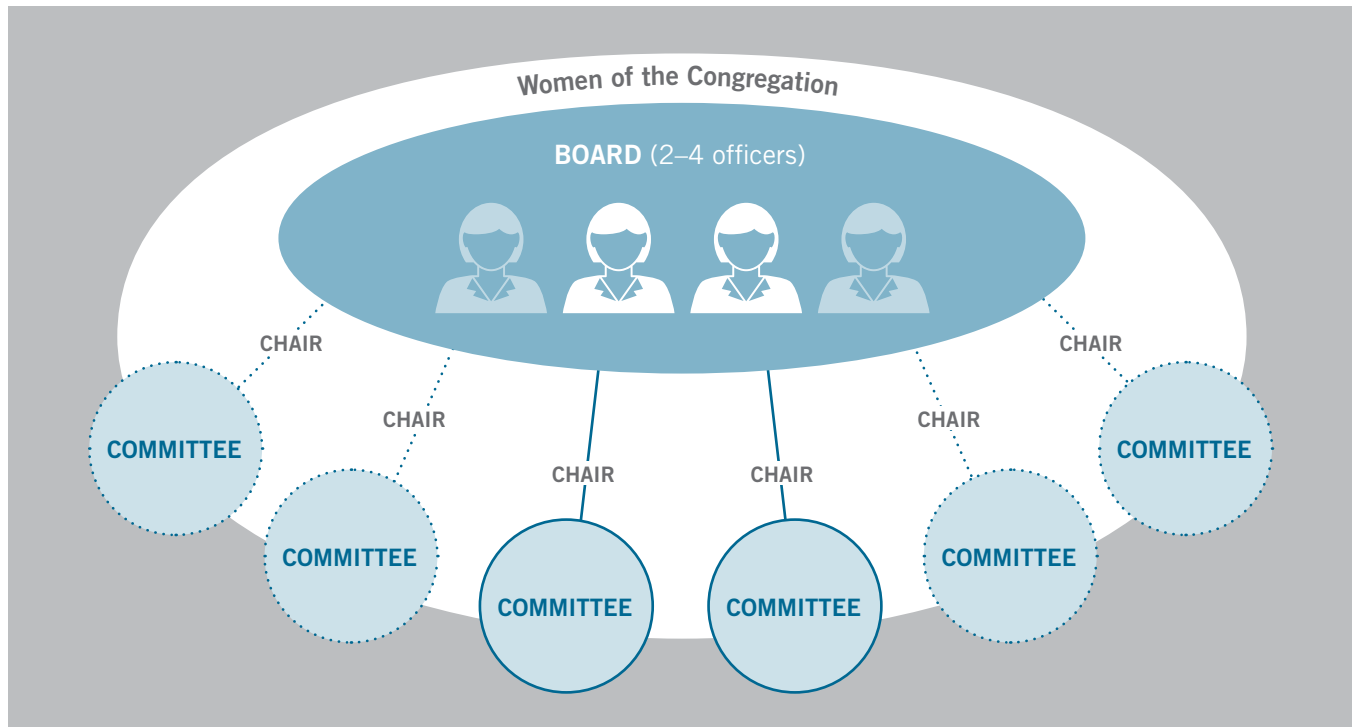
Six Models for Mission



Women of the ELCA offers six different models for organizing your unit for mission. You can adjust them all or even create other models to get just the right fit for your unit. Remember, there is room for flexibility, creativity and a place for everyone to participate.

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, handles communications and selects the materials to be used.



Strengths of this model:

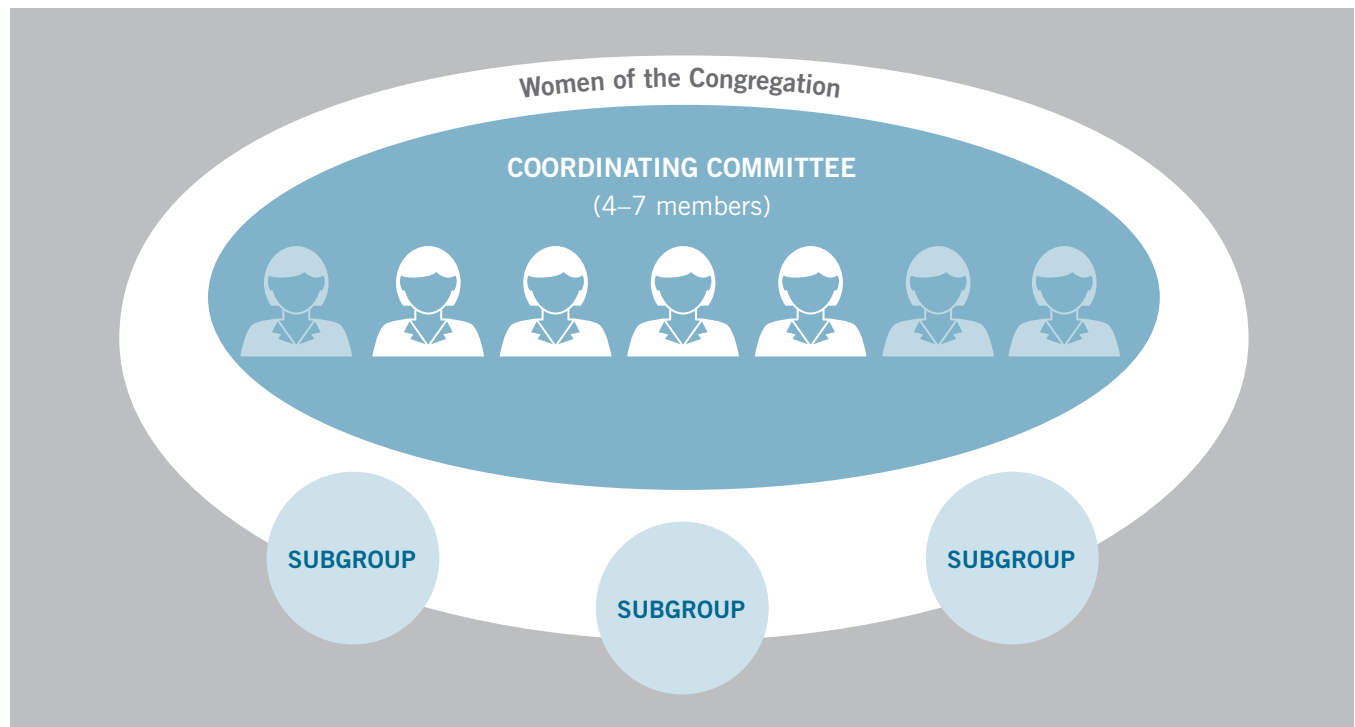
- Effective in disseminating information.
- Works well when there are numerous ongoing subgroups.

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 degree of 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 elected to specific positions and the others at-large. None of the sub-groupings have specific representation on the coordinating committee.



Strengths of this model:

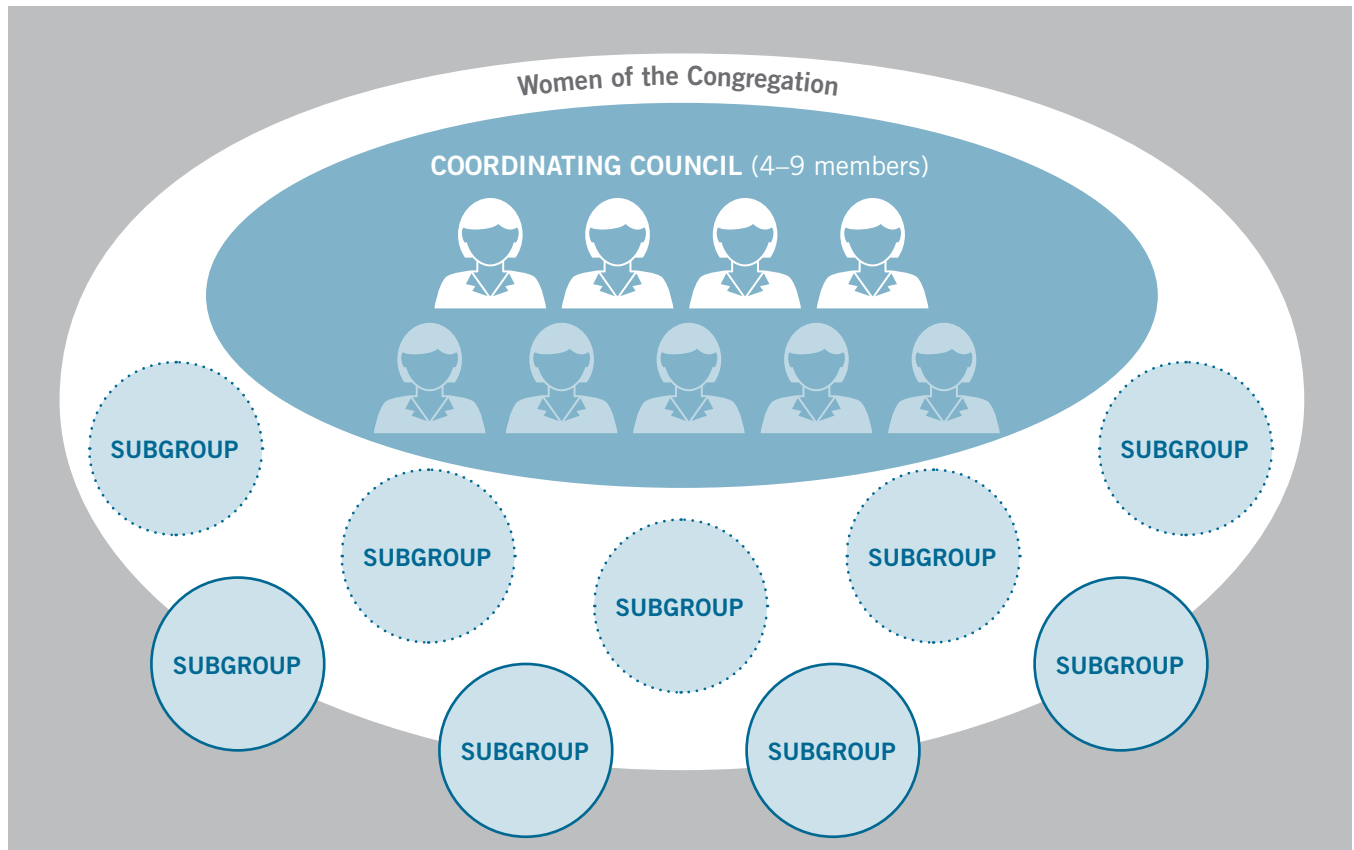
- Tends to be an open and flexible.
- New subgroups can easily form for various lengths of time.

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 and so forth). Two or three leaders may be elected.



Strengths of this model:

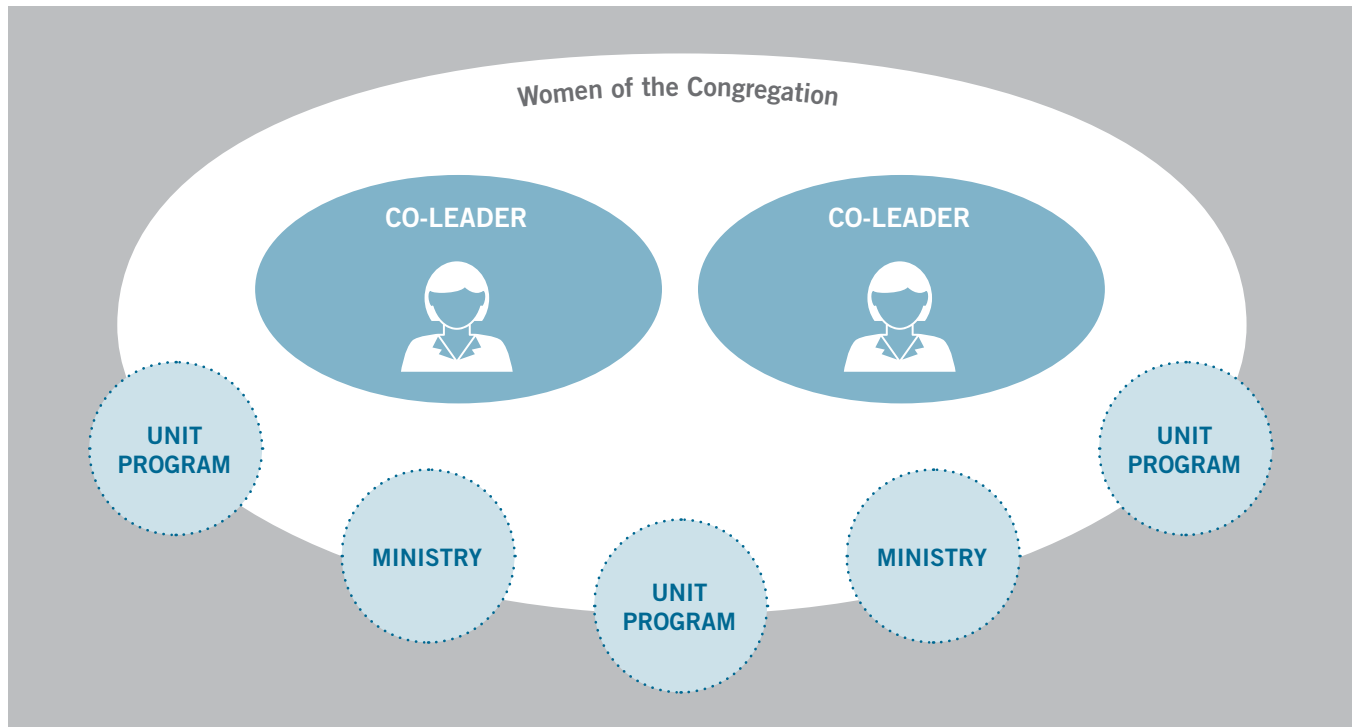
- Flexibility.
- Ability to include new subgroups in the coordinating council.
- Ease of including both short-term and on-going groups.
- Good channels for communication.

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.



Strength of this model:

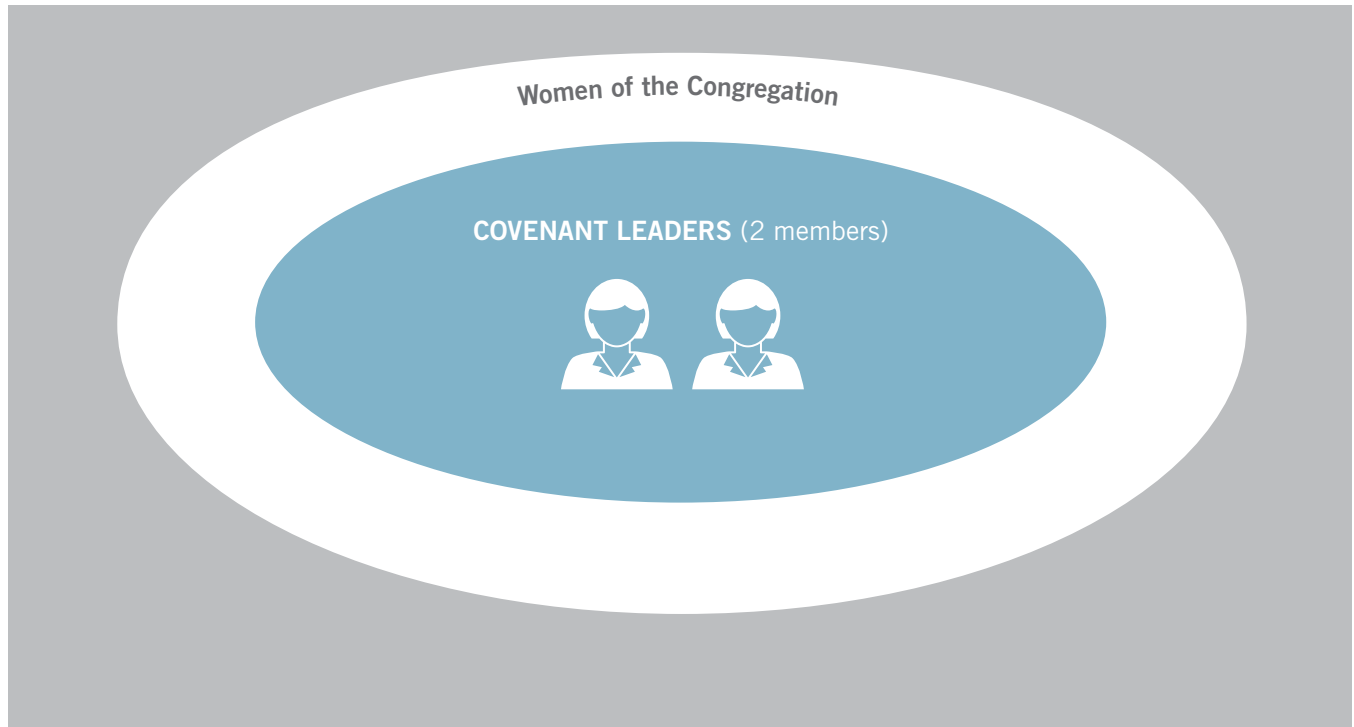
- This is the least formal model and would work well for congregations just beginning a women's organization.

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.



Strength of this model:

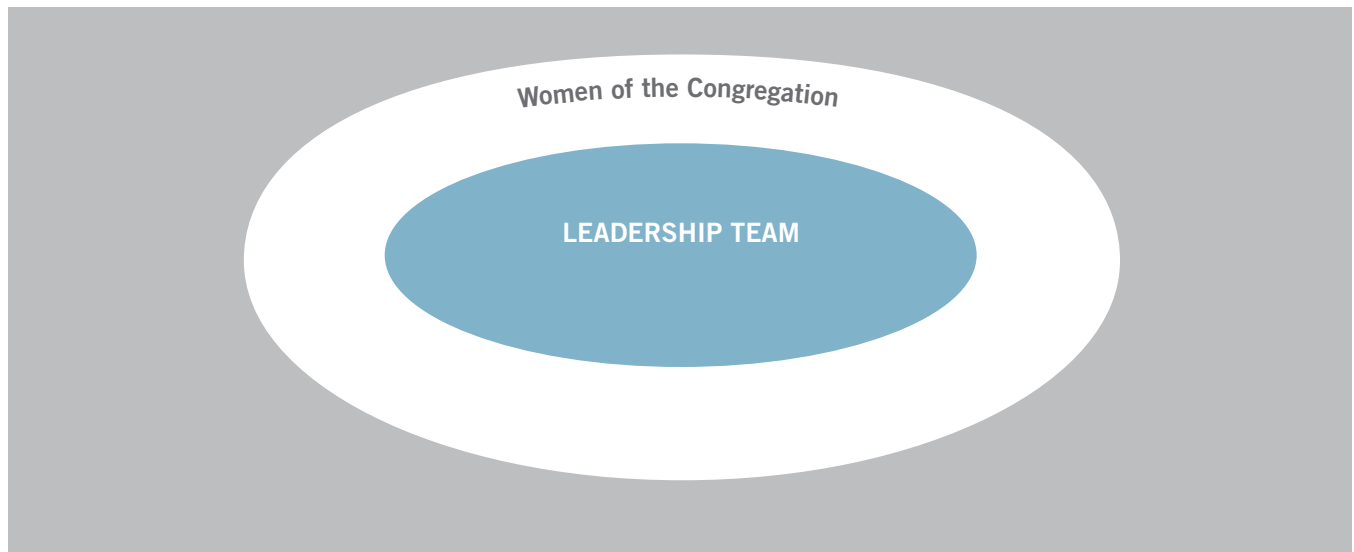
- It can be a way to experiment to determine if you wish to enter into a more permanent arrangement.

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 Model

A team approach to organizational structure is fluid and easily altered as needs, interests and skills change. While it is 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.



Things to consider when organizing as a team:

- What are everyone's gifts and interests?
- What ministries are you interested in doing this year?
- What activities are you interested in doing this year?
- In what ways could a seasoned leader help a newer leader learn to lead?
- Who could form partnerships for leadership?

Match gifts and interests with what you wish to commit to doing. Ask questions like, "Who is good at ..."

- checking for mail and sharing the news with the group?
- collecting the offering, sending it on and keeping records?
- leading meetings?
- planning events?
- publicizing events and programs?
- helping in several little ways?
- seeing the forest (the larger picture)?
- seeing the trees (the smaller picture)?

How does the team model differ from traditional hierarchical models of organization?

- The focus is on accomplishing the ministries that are important to the group and the community.
- All gifts have equal value and are given by the Holy Spirit for the good of the community. (1 Corinthians 12)
- All voices have equal weight and power. Sharing ministry and decision making strengthens community and empowers each person.
- Information is shared with all at the same time.
- Allowing all voices to have equal power will lead to change, which can be both frightening and exciting. Facing change will lead to spiritual growth for the organization.
- Commitments are short-term, perhaps for one year or for a specific task, with clear and explicit expectations.
- More people are involved in leadership because they know their participation is crucial to the organization, and they won't be "stuck" in the position beyond the agreed-upon time.

Embracing your New Model

Now that you have organized or revitalized your model for mission, review the approved Model Constitution and Bylaws for Congregational or Intercongregational Unit, Article VI—Leadership. Model constitutions are located at welca.org/leadertools. Complete it or make the necessary changes. Submit a copy to your synodical president and keep a copy for your unit. Taking time to evaluate and refocus at least yearly will help to revitalize and strengthen your unit.

Now, be prepared for the excitement of what we can do together!

For questions or to find out how to contact your synodical president, send an email to eva.yeo@elca.org or call 773.380.2450. For more information, visit www.womenoftheelca.org/membership.