

Worship Associates Charter

Mission Statement: The Worship Associates are a shared ministry of the congregation. The Worship Associates work collaboratively with the minister(s) and other program staff to create a cohesive worship calendar for the year, serve as liturgists when the minister is in the pulpit, assist guest speakers and others in the congregation to lead services, lead their own services when they feel ready, and generally “mother hen” the Sunday morning worship time. They also think strategically about the worship program over the course of the church year. Worship Associates supports the Vespers Team.

Goals: Each year the Worship Associates establish goals in consultation with the minister(s). For example, last year the goal was to create an alternative worship experience at a time other than Sunday morning. This led to the establishment of the monthly Vespers service.

Roles: The minister facilitates the Worship Associate program. Worship Associates collaborate with the minister to recruit and train new Associates, and mentor new Associates in their roles. The minister leads a yearly training session for new Associates with assistance from experienced Worship Associates. Roles for Worship Associates include: preaching/leading worship, serving as guide, support and liturgist for guest preachers, and serving as liturgists when the minister is in the pulpit. The summer worship calendar is planned and managed by the Worship Associates. The Worship Associates are also part of the safety and security plans for Sunday mornings; training includes this information.

Responsibilities: Worship Associates serve for two years, with the option to serve a second term. Decisions about a second term are partly based on the number of interested new potential Associates. They are expected to share responsibility for the weekly worship services, participate in planning the liturgical calendar, and assessing the worship life of the congregation. One Worship Associate will be designated as liaison to the Vespers Planning Team.

Recruitment: Program staff, minister(s) and current Worship Associates collaborate to create a list of people to be invited to apply for Worship Associate training each summer. Members of the congregation may also self-nominate to apply. The minister(s) make final decisions as to who is accepted into the program.

Guidelines: Worship Associates meet monthly with the minister. The agenda is planned in advance by the minister, with input from group members. Worship Associates rotate responsibility for taking minutes and providing opening and closing readings. The Worship Associates submit a written report for the Annual Report to the congregation.

Accountability: The Worship Associates are a shared ministry of the congregation; they are accountable to the minister(s) and Executive Team. Each month the agenda includes a conversation about the state of the worship life of the congregation. Progress toward goals is also discussed. At the end of each church year, the Worship Associates are intentional about assessing their impact on the congregation and begin to look forward to possible goals for the coming year.