

SCR-7

Sample Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles are offered to you as guidelines or thought-starters. These are not intended to be a complete set of building principles. In fact, you will find that a few guiding principles contradict one another. This is intentional and is offered to remind churches of the importance of clarity around specific guiding principles. Guiding principles are intended to be a permission-giving tool. They eliminate a drawn-out approval process and any bottleneck that slows down ministry. Guiding principles provide healthy boundaries and macro, rather than micro, decision-making. Please do not cut and paste these (or other churches') guiding principles. Every church has its own unique setting, so special care and attention in this work will pay dividends for years to come.

- All references to the Church Council, Board of Trustees, Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, Endowment Committee, and Finance Committee, in all congregational policies as of _____, and in all references in the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, shall be understood to refer to the Leadership Board beginning _____.
- Once the budget is approved, those responsible (i.e., staff and team leaders) for the various ministry areas have the authority to spend their budget to align with the objectives for their ministry area approved by the pastor. No further approval is needed to access the budget in their area of responsibility.*
- The pastor is responsible for reviewing line items within ministry areas with the appropriate staff or team leaders for accountability from the staff and to the board.
- Any member of the Building Maintenance Team has the authority to purchase supplies for building maintenance and improvement up to \$ ____ without approval. The Building Maintenance Team leader can authorize purchases for building maintenance and improvement up to \$ _____. Purchases up to \$ _____ can be approved by the pastor (executive pastor or business manager). Any purchases over \$ _____ need Leadership Board approval unless the expenditure is already approved in a capital expenditure line item in the approved budget.*
- Any expenditure over \$ ____ will require three bids. Preference will be given to hiring local companies offering competitive bids

within ___% of other bids. If the expenditure is already approved in the budget and meets the previous criteria, no further approval is needed. The ministry team leader or staff member responsible for the purchase will provide documentation of the bids to the Leadership Board for purposes of a paper trail only.

*The treasurer must be consulted concerning any single purchase or expenditure over \$_____ for purposes of cash flow. The treasurer does not approve or deny purchases but confirms large purchases will not create cash flow issues.

- The pastor has the authority to hire and release employees using the church's employee policies and procedures in the _____ *UMC Employee Handbook*. When terminating an employee, the pastor will invite a board member to sit in on the exit conversation for purposes of liability protection. The pastor is responsible for supervising, disciplining, and evaluating staff performance as outlined in the _____ *UMC Employee Handbook*.
- The authority to hire and terminate employees of the church shall be vested in the Leadership Board. The pastor shall have the authority to interview and recommend candidates to fill open staff positions. The board shall have the sole authority to determine the number of staff positions, approve job descriptions for each staff member, and set the salary paid to each staff member. The Leadership Board delegates the authority to supervise, discipline, and manage paid staff to the pastor.
- The pastor will review all paid staff annually using the approval evaluation process in the employee manual dated _____.
- The board recognizes and approves the Building Usage Policies dated _____.
- The board recognizes and approves the Building Security and Key Policies dated _____.
- The board recognizes and approves the Financial Controls Policies dated _____.
- The board recognizes and approves the _____ United Methodist Church Personnel Policies date _____.
- All meetings of the Leadership Board shall be open to the public, except for any meeting or portion of a meeting in which a personnel matter or a matter of legal negotiations is considered. In those cases, the board will transition into executive session. Minutes of executive session agenda items concerning personnel matters will be kept separately as part of the "S/PPRC" files.

- Leadership Board members are nominated by a separate and independent Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development, chaired by the pastor, and elected by the charge conference as described in the *Book of Discipline*. The Nominations Committee will be responsible for developing new leaders and equipping them for future Leadership Board positions.
- Due to the Leadership Board's serving as the congregation's Staff-Parish Relations Committee, no immediate family member of the pastor or other paid staff person may serve as a board member. Due to serving as the congregation's Board of Trustees, only Leadership Board members over the age of eighteen will have voting privileges in matters of property, incorporation, legal matters, contracts, insurance, investments, or other matters described in the *BOD* ¶s 2525-2551.
- The lead pastor is the Leadership Board's only link to church ministry and programming. The lead pastor has complete authority and accountability for all staffing, including hiring, evaluating, firing, and consideration of raises. The Council will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the lead pastor. The Council will view the lead pastor's performance as identical to church performance so that organizational goals will be viewed as the lead pastor's performance.
- Compensation for the lead pastor and all appointed clergy will be determined by a charge/church conference. Recommendations for the lead pastor's compensation will be made by the Leadership Board (as part of their SPRC duties) to the entire Church Council for consideration before the charge/church conference. Recommendations for other appointed clergy compensation will be made by the lead pastor in consultation with the Leadership Board to the entire Church Council for consideration before the charge/church conference. Decisions about increases in the lead pastor's compensation will be based primarily on the following three criteria:
 1. Council's review of the lead pastor's effectiveness in reaching established goals.
 2. Needs of the church for a lead pastor with the skill sets necessary for reaching established goals. This will be determined in relation to the compensation packages of churches of similar or larger size in the annual conference.
 3. Possible cost of living increases. However, it is understood that the primary criteria for compensation will always be (a) the Leadership Board's review of the lead pastor's performance.

- The lead pastor shall not cause or allow any activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unlawful or in violation of commonly accepted business practices and professional ethics. Furthermore, the lead pastor shall not cause or allow any activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is a violation of the current *Book of Discipline*, the standing rules of the annual conference, or the express direction of the resident bishop and/or district superintendent of the annual conference.