

## **Chelsea First United Methodist Church**

... is a vibrant, intentionally inclusive, justice-seeking faith congregation. We gather in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ to worship God, to care for one another and to serve the world in the name of Jesus.

We are ordinary people learning to love like Jesus.

### **Purpose and Core Values**

**We invite and nurture persons who are becoming disciples of Jesus to transform the world.**

Core Values: Connect, Equip, Commit

### **Definitions**

**Our Guiding Principles** are the permission-giving policies, procedures and practices that protect and allow the ministry of the church to function on a day-to-day basis within healthy boundaries. This is a living, breathing document that guides our ministry under the Simplified, Accountable Structure (SAS) while still adhering to our denomination's *Book of Discipline* (BOD). Only the Leadership Board has the authority to establish, remove, or modify a Guiding Principle.

**Our Simplified, Accountable Structure utilizes accountable leadership** principles that combine accountability, responsibility and authority. It enables a streamlining of decision making and ensures that all resources and ministries are aligned with the mission, vision, values, and goals of the church. SAS ensures that the mission is driving the church, rather than its structure. With one board fulfilling all administrative committee responsibilities, congregation members are free to be fully engaged in hands-on ministry to fulfill the mission and vision of the church.

### **Strategic Plan**

*Section content to be determined at first annual retreat and will then be updated determined at each annual retreat.*

## **Roles Within Accountable Leadership**

### **Leadership Board's role**

*The Leadership Board is accountable to Christ for the church living out its mission of nurturing disciples of Jesus Christ.*

- The Leadership Board is responsible for leadership and governance, not management or ministry development.
- All administrative committee responsibilities and functions are vested in the Leadership Board. All references to the Church Council, Board of Trustees, Staff/Parish Relations Committee, Endowment Committee, and Finance Committee, in all congregational policies and in all references in the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, shall be understood to refer to the Leadership Board.
- The three main types of work of the Leadership Board are:
  - Fiduciary: tending to the stewardship of tangible assets.
  - Strategic: working to set the congregation's priorities and seeing that resources are aligned with those priorities.
  - Generative: Framing problems with the goal of finding solutions and bringing clarity to the shifting environment of the congregation and mission field.
- **The Leadership Board will:**
  - Collaborate with the pastor to:
    - Discern, name, and cast the mission, vision, purpose, boundaries and yearly goals for the church.
    - Evaluate the progress of the church in accomplishing the agreed-upon goals.
    - Engage the congregation as a whole so that the Leadership Board is sharing with and listening to the church.
  - Plan and allocate resources (financial, staff, building, etc.)
  - Empower and support the pastor to lead the church in its mission, vision, values and goals.
  - Interpret the role of pastor to the congregation and hold lead pastor accountable in partnership with the district superintendent.
  - Create and update policies, procedures, Guiding Principles, budget and covenants.
  - Ensure all resources align to the mission, vision, goals and strategies.

### **Pastor's role**

*The pastor is accountable to the Leadership Board for keeping the mission, being the spiritual leader of the church and managing day-to-day operation and ministry.*

#### **The pastor will:**

- Supervise and evaluate the staff, holding them accountable to their ministry and goals.
- Collaborate with the Leadership Board to discern, name, and cast the mission, vision, purpose, boundaries, and yearly goals for the church.
- Ensure the ministries of the church, including their measurable goals and strategies align with the mission and vision of the church.
- Monitor accomplishment of goals and make necessary strategy and staff adjustments.
- Collaborate with the Nominations and Leadership Development Team to equip present leaders and develop new leaders.

### **Staff/Ministry Team Leaders' role**

*The staff and ministry team leaders are accountable to the pastor for day-to-day ministry, programming and management.*

- Ministry teams are created with pastor approval and must align with the church's mission, vision, values and strategic goals.
- Ministry team leaders are accountable to the pastor and as such are considered appointed officials in doing the work of the church and should be considered insureds in the context of any insurance policy.
- **Staff / Ministry Team Leaders will:**
  - Identify, recruit, equip and deploy ministry team members, while holding them accountable.
  - Coordinate ministry within the bounds of the Guiding Principles and ensure Ministry Team Responsibilities (See Appendix A) are met.

## **Guiding Principles of the Church**

### **Leadership Board membership**

- The Leadership Board consists of nine elected members, the lay leader and the pastor. The lay leader and pastor have a voice, but not a vote, on the Leadership Board.
- Only Leadership Board members over the age of 18 will have voting privileges in matters of property, incorporation, legal matters, contracts, insurance, investments, or other matters described in Book of Discipline (“BOD”) paragraphs 2525 – 2551.
- Leadership Board members are nominated by the separate and independent Nominations and Leadership Development Team, chaired by the pastor, and elected by a charge conference as described in the BOD.
- Member are elected to 3-year terms. Members rotate off the Leadership Board for a minimum of one year to promote the development of new leaders.
- Leadership Board members must be active in the life of the church for at least one year and a full member of the church.
- Immediate family members of paid staff or the pastor may not serve on the Leadership Board.
- Members of the same family may not serve on the Leadership Board at the same time.
- Staff (paid or unpaid) and ministry leads may not serve on the Leadership Board.
- Leadership Board members may not simultaneously serve on the Nominations and Leadership Development Team.
- The Leadership Board chair signs all conference and district related papers as chair of Trustees, Staff/Parish Relations Committee, Finance Committee and Church Council.
- The Leadership Board will approach matters of disagreement or conflict with transparency and maintain our missional focus as a board. The Leadership Board will not accept anonymous concerns. When approached by a person or group concerning a matter of disagreement or conflict, the Leadership Board will follow the path laid out by Jesus on Matthew 18 by encouraging the concerned party to first go directly to the individual, to volunteer to go with the concerned party as a witness, or as a last option, to invite the concerned party to address the full leadership or an assigned work team to address the issue. At no time will the Board support secret meetings or anonymous concerns that undermine the integrity or authority of the pastor or Board.
- Leadership Board members hold one another accountable in their life of discipleship through use of a covenant and prayer.

### **Leadership Board meetings**

- The chair for the coming year should be elected in a preparatory meeting taking place between the Charge Conference in October/November and the end of the calendar year.

- The Leadership Board chair will coordinate and conduct meetings, working with board members and pastor to set and post meeting agendas. The meeting agenda and board packet will be available prior to the board meeting.
- The Leadership Board packet may be prepared by a staff person and reviewed by the chair and pastor before distribution. Likely the administrative person will need to send out reminders to people contributing to the packet. The pastor will hold the administrative person accountable for its timeliness, accuracy and thoroughness. Members of the Leadership Board should have read the packet and come prepared to either vote for approval of the items or to move the items toward the discussion phase of the agenda.
- All Leadership Board meetings are open to the congregation except for closed executive sessions.
- Minutes will be taken by a recording secretary or member of the Leadership Board, reviewed by the Board chair and circulated via email/shared drive to the Leadership Board for edits, comments within two weeks.
- Closed executive sessions deal with matters related to staff, clergy, or legal negotiations. Executive session notes are confidential.
- The Leadership Board conducts an annual retreat between early August and mid-October to perform an in-depth review of the church's vision and goals. This retreat occurs prior to budget requests going out so that ministry chairs can be aware of any change in the vision or goals for the upcoming year.
- Whenever possible the Leadership Board will use a model of consensus to make decisions. Voting will occur only when necessary or where a documented vote is required.
- The Leadership Board appoints sub-teams as needed to fulfill its work which may include persons not serving on the Leadership Board. These teams will be provided guidance and boundaries in which to work. They exist until their task is complete and results/recommendations have been presented to the Leadership Board for consideration and approval.

### **Communication**

- An agenda for each meeting is made available to the congregation prior to the meeting.
- Summaries from each Leadership Board meeting are distributed to the congregation within two weeks following the meeting. What to include in the summary is typically the final agenda item in the board meeting.
- Approved minutes from each Leadership Board meeting (except executive session minutes) are made available to the congregation after the approval is received.
- When making significant decisions, the Leadership Board may solicit input from the congregation.
- The Leadership Board will annually review and approve a Communication Plan (See *Appendix B*) outlining how it will effectively communicate with the congregation throughout the year.

## Finances and Budget

- The Leadership Board recognizes and approves the Investment Fund Policy dated August 2019.
- The Leadership Board recognizes and approves the Endowment Fund Policy dated October 2021.
- The Leadership Board recognizes and approves the Gadbury Memorial Youth Fund dated September 1985.
- The Leadership Board recognizes and approves the Internal Controls dated June 2020.
- Yearly Budget
  - The Finance Manager is responsible for constructing the yearly budget. In this role, he or she collaborates with various staff members and ministry team leads for recommendations and expected variances from historical.
  - The Finance Team is responsible for reviewing and revising the budget. Once the Finance Team is comfortable with the budget, they are responsible for making a formal recommendation to the Leadership Board.
  - The Leadership Board establishes the yearly budget. Any changes to the budget or allocation of funds for new ministries not already covered in the budget must be approved by the Leadership Board.
- The pastor is responsible for reviewing line items within ministry areas with staff and leaders for accountability.
- All checks over \$1000 require two signatures with the pastor, Mark Wellman, or the treasurer as the second signature.
- Once the budget is formally approved by the Leadership Board and that approval communicated to the Finance Manager, those responsible (staff, team leaders, etc.) for the various ministry areas have the authority to spend their budget to align with the goals for their ministry area approved by the pastor. No further approval is needed to access the budget in their area of responsibility.
- Any member of the Property Team has the authority to purchase supplies for building maintenance and improvement up to \$600 without prior approval as long as this is consistent with the approved budget.
- Any non-emergency expenditures over \$5,000 will require three bids. Preference will be given to hire local companies offering competitive bids within 5% of other bids. If the expenditure is already approved in the budget and meets the previous criteria, no further approval is needed.
- Additionally, if the expenditure is emergent, the Property Chair has the right to call whomever they deem necessary to provide immediate help.
- The Treasurer's role is to oversee the account reconciliations of the Finance Manager, serve as a signer on accounts and serve as a resource for the pastor and Finance Manager.

### **Staff**

- The Leadership 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. Recommendations may, and most likely will, be made by the Personnel Team.
- The pastor has the authority and responsibility to hire, supervise and manage, discipline, and terminate paid staff.
- The pastor will review all paid staff annually.
- The Leadership Board recognizes and approves the Employee Manual dated 2025.

### **Building and Property**

- The Property Lead/Team provides the oversight and care of the property and grounds of the church and the parsonage (*See Appendix C*).
- All building use requests should be made to the church office and in keeping with the Building Use Information/Policy.
- Weather related closings for the office and church activities will follow the closure schedule for city of Chelsea government offices. However, discretion is available to the pastor, ministry leaders and Property Lead to cancel activities even if government offices are not closed.
- Either the pastor or the Property Lead (collaborating whenever possible) is able to make decisions related to weather closings for Sunday worship or non-weather emergencies.
- The Leadership Board recognizes and approves the Building Use Information/Policy dated October 2024.

### **Other policies, procedures, practices**

- The Leadership Board recognizes and approves the Policy for the Protection of Minors dated September 2024 with Appendices A-M.
- If any position of leadership requiring election (per BOD) becomes vacant during the year, the Leadership Board is responsible to elect a new leader as authorized by Charge Conference. When applicable, the Leadership Board will seek recommendations from the Nominations and Leadership Development Team.

### **Review of guiding principles**

- These guiding principles will be reviewed in January of each year with the commencement of a new leadership board and edited or updated as needed under the direction of the Leadership Board Chair.
- Any necessary updates, edits or changes throughout the year may be brought by staff, ministry team leaders, other Leadership Board members to the attention of the Board

Chair who will incorporate that as soon as practicable in the next meeting's consent agenda.



**Appendix A – Ministry Team Responsibilities**

Ministry teams of the church may be formed for short-term or long-term work. Ministry team members are accountable to the ministry team lead who is accountable to the pastor. Ministry teams may form at any time with the approval of the pastor.

**Responsibilities of Ministry Teams**

- Have a clear understanding of how each ministry aligns with the church's mission, vision, strategic goals, and values.
- Coordinate the ministry of the church and connect the congregation to the church's discipleship pathway to help them take their next steps.
- Create measurable goals and strategies to fulfill the Leadership Board's strategic goals, in coordination with the pastor.
- Follow the Guiding Principles of the church, including all church policies related to finances, building use, etc.
- Annually evaluate the ministry.
- Effectively communicate with the congregation.
- Gather periodically, as requested, with other Ministry Team Leaders for planning. This will provide opportunities for more strategic planning, communication, goal assessment, and collaboration in ministry.

## **Appendix B – Leadership Board Communication Plan**

A regular cadence of communication with the congregation is essential to successful church leadership. At Chelsea First United Methodist Church all meetings of the church's Leadership Board are open to church members and to the public, with the exception of executive sessions.

The Leadership Board is committed to openness and transparency in all its actions.

As the Leadership Board works with the congregation to increase two-way communication, we offer the following means to further these efforts:

- Church members are invited to each Leadership Board meeting through sharing the agenda in advance. Meetings are typically scheduled on the second Tuesday of each month, 6:30-8 p.m., in Room 207.
- Following each Leadership Board meeting a news summary will be shared through the Pathfinder to capture the key decisions and other elements of the meeting. News also may be shared through social media as appropriate.
- A video may be released occasionally to add additional details or context to Leadership Board actions.
- At least three town hall meetings will be scheduled annually to summarize the strategic and generative goals, progress and action items as well as financial stewardship and hear feedback from the congregation.
- Questions may be directed to any member of the Leadership Board individually. Their contact information has been shared through the Pathfinder newsletter.
- A question submission form will be developed and housed on the church website. Every submitted question will get a response. Submitted questions are shared with all Leadership Board members and typically will be discussed at the next Leadership Board meeting before sending a response. More information may be shared broadly when appropriate.
- There may be times when an email message to all church members may be needed to communicate important information directly or between editions of the Pathfinder.

## Appendix C - The Property Lead/Team

The Property Lead is accountable to the pastor and Leadership Board for the supervision, oversight, care, and maintenance of the property and equipment of the church.

Responsibilities of the Property Lead/Team:

- Provide supervision, oversight, care, and maintenance of the property and equipment of the church and parsonage.
- Coordinate and communicate with the Fix-It Group in the Fix-It Group's role as primary for the care and maintenance of church and parsonage.
- The Fix-It Group will take direction, both financial and otherwise, from the Property Team.
- Identify, recruit, equip and deploy volunteers to assist in the overall care and maintenance of all church buildings and grounds, holding them accountable.
- Follow all church Guiding Principles, especially related to financial matters
  - Any member of the Property Team has the authority to purchase supplies for building maintenance and improvement up to \$600 without prior approval as long as this is consistent with the approved budget.
  - Any non-emergency expenditures over \$5,000 will require three bids. Preference will be given to hire local companies offering competitive bids within 5% of other bids. If the expenditure is already approved in the budget and meets the previous criteria, no further approval is needed.
  - Additionally, if the expenditure is emergent, the Property Chair has the right to call whomever they deem necessary to provide immediate help.
- Either the pastor or the Property Lead (collaborating whenever possible) is able to make decisions related to weather closings or non-weather emergencies for Sunday worship.
- Provide a quarterly report to the pastor and Leadership Board sharing updates, progress, and needs of the church building and grounds.
- Conduct a walkthrough of the parsonage annually with the pastor in order to complete the required annual Parsonage Review. Make needs known to the Leadership Board through regular reporting.
- Provide work completed to Facilities Managers so that he or she will maintain records of date and work completed on church buildings and property.
- Maintain a priority list of work to be completed for the church and the parsonage.
- Property Lead is hereby designated authority to sign contracts on behalf of the Leadership Board related to maintenance of the facility or equipment of the church.
- Ensure a bi-annual review of the church insurance policy and make any necessary recommendations related to it. Check policies against Michigan Conference UMC policy standards.

## Appendix D - The Personnel Lead/Team

- The Personnel Lead is accountable to the pastor and Leadership Board for creating and updating staff job descriptions and personnel handbooks, assisting with hiring and disciplinary processes, and managing staff relations and well-being.
- Responsibilities of the Personnel Lead/Team:
  - Create and update staff job descriptions in consultation with the Pastor to ensure that all staff roles have clearly defined responsibilities and expectations.
  - Develop and maintain a comprehensive personnel handbook that outlines policies and procedures for staff.
  - Assist with hiring and disciplinary processes by supporting the pastor or relevant staff member with the hiring process, including posting job openings and assisting with interviews.
  - Facilitate open communication and address any concerns or issues that arise regarding staff, ensuring effective performance and a positive and supportive work environment.
  - Oversee compliance with relevant labor laws and regulations.
  - Have access to and knowledge of accurate and organized records of staff information, including employment contracts, performance evaluations, and disciplinary actions.
  - Keep the Leadership Board informed about staff matters and any relevant issues or concerns.
  - Represent the needs and concerns of staff to the Leadership Board, ensuring that their voices are heard in decision-making processes.
  - Participate in strategic planning discussions, providing insights and recommendations related to staff roles, resources, and development.
  - Collaborate with other ministry teams to ensure that staff are well-supported and that their needs are being met.
  - Maintain open and transparent communication with staff, ensuring that they are informed about important decisions and developments.

**Appendix E - The Finance Lead/Team**

- The Finance Lead is accountable to the pastor and Leadership Board for sharing financial reports, monitoring church finances, reporting to the leadership board, and running the annual financial campaign.
- Responsibilities of the Finance Lead/Team:
  - Reporting and commenting on the church's financial performance to the leadership board, allowing for informed decision-making. The finance manager prepares the financial reports.
  - Monitoring the church's financial health, ensuring responsible management of funds and adherence to financial regulations.
  - Planning, executing, and managing the church's annual financial campaign.
  - Reviewing and critiquing the church's annual budget, ensuring alignment with the church's mission and goals.
  - Consider long-term financial planning, ensuring the church's financial stability and sustainability.
- Responsibilities of the Treasurer:
  - Oversee and check the account reconciliations of the Finance Manager
  - Function as a signer on accounts
  - Serve as a resource for the pastor and Finance Manager