



Northwest Conference Revitalization Gatherings for Pastors

February 13, 2013- noon

Purpose of Re-Connect:

1. Mutual Learning Opportunities
2. Sharing of Best Practices
3. Extend Connection and Support
4. Prayer Support
5. "Real Time" Peer Consultation and Support

Agenda

- **Welcome/Prayer for Lunch/Introductions-**
- **Reflection-** Romans 15: 14-19- Leadership Longevity- Cionca/Prinzing
 - Small Groups- Answer- Of the 4 leadership longevity resources (purpose, power, prayer, & people), which resource do you need to cultivate most right now? Why?
 - Share further updates/Pray for one another

Reflections on Marker- **Fruitful Organizational Structures**

Key Values:

Our organizational structures are designed to be efficient at making decisions while at the same time building congregational ownership for those decisions.

We can articulate a compelling, Christ-honoring vision for our church.

We embrace evaluation as normal and natural and work through conflict constructively.

Key Questions:

How is your church doing in carrying out its mission and ministries effectively and efficiently?

Are there ways/places where your organization &/or structures might adjust to make things more productive? How would this happen?

How is your church doing in communicating and solving its current challenges?

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Resources: Church Board Member Resource Packet

- **Prayer/Dismiss**
- **Confirm Next Meeting- Wed, March 13, 2013- noon- Mark Stromberg joining us- looking at Centrality of the Word marker**

Bring Your Own Lunch...Beverages Provided

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another"... Proverbs 27:17

Leadership Longevity
John Cionca/Fred Prinzing

Romans 15:14-19- New International Version (NIV)

Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

14 I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another. 15 Yet I have written you quite boldly on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

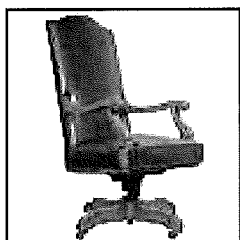
17 Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. 18 I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done— 19 by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

In Romans 15 Paul reveals several essentials for Leadership Longevity:

1. Paul served with **purpose**. He wanted to proclaim the gospel of God to the Gentiles (v 16) particularly in places where Jesus was not known so for Paul it did not matter where he was as long as he was accomplishing his purpose. No adverse circumstance was large enough to override his personal mission.
2. Paul ministered by the **power** of the Holy Spirit. What kept him energized was the Holy Spirit who enabled him to faithfully proclaim Christ. He was quick to admit that his accomplishments were due to the spirit's power and presence (vs 19).
3. Paul's ministry was bathed in **prayer**. Throughout his letters he reminded his recipients that he prayed for them (Rm 1: 8-10; Eph. 1:15- 22, Ph. 1: 3-5) He also invited fellow believers to pray for him (see Rm 15: 30-33).
4. Paul kept his focus on people. To these Roman believers he expressed his longing to see them (Rm. 15: 23). And in his concluding remarks (Rm Ch 16), he sent his personal greetings to many individuals by name. Paul was always concerned for the spiritual nurture of people.

What kept Paul going? It wasn't sheer personal determination. It was his laser focus on his purpose, his sensitivity to and empowerment by the Holy Spirit, his regular communication with the Father through prayer, and his deep connection with his teammates (friends, supporters).

Orientation Guide: Church Board Member



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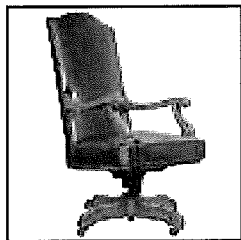
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Leader's Guide

How to use "Orientation Guides" by BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS.

Welcome to BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS: Your Complete Guide to Leadership Training. You've purchased an innovative resource that will help you develop leaders who can think strategically and biblically about the church. The material selected by the editors of Leadership Resources and Christianity Today International comes from respected thinkers and church leaders

"Orientation Guides" are easy-to-use tools to help prepare people to take on new roles in church leadership. Each guide focuses on a practical area of church ministry and comprises brief handouts on specific aspects of that ministry. The handouts first present an overview of the ministry and of the leadership role, including an interview with a successful practitioner. The second section provides focused, practical information to help you perform your duties.

This specific guide is designed to help you provide orientation and basic training to new church board members. You may use it either for a group training session or to give individually to new board members as they are appointed. Simply print the handouts you need and use them as necessary.

For example, examine a sample board member job description (pp. 9–10) and use it as a basis to draw up your own documents. For suggestions about how to train new board members, see "Orienting New Board Members" (pp. 3–4). Learn some different ways boards settle issues by studying "Making Great Decisions" (pp. 13–14).

We hope you benefit from this guide as you begin service to your church as a board member.

Need more material, or something on a specific topic? See our website at www.BuildingChurchLeaders.com.

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Orienting New Board Members

Focusing on these ten procedures will get newcomers off to a promising start.

1 Corinthians 3:10

BY RICHARD R. HAMMAR

New church board members often receive no orientation or training. They show up at board meetings without the slightest idea as to the nature of their responsibilities or possible liabilities. They deserve better. This article presents ten steps that your board can take to orient members. These recommendations will make the new members feel welcome, significantly increase efficiency and value, and provide them with a positive “first impression” regarding the competency of church leadership.

1. 4-hour training programs. An audio course called “The 4 Hour Legal Training Program for Church Boards” addresses vital legal and tax information with which every church board member should be familiar. We recommend that churches provide these CDs to every new board member as a component of an orientation program. Some of the topics that are addressed include fiduciary duties, risk management, documents and records, financial issues, and personnel issues. In addition, the topic of personal liability for church board members is explained. It is important for church board members to understand that they, and their church, are as likely to be sued as any other leader or organization. For more information, go to <http://store.churchlawtodaystore.com/test.html>

2. Minutes of annual business meetings. Provide new board members with the minutes of the last few annual business meetings, along with the minutes of any recent special business meetings.

3. Minutes of prior board meetings. Provide new board members with the minutes of all board meetings for the past year.

4. Financial statements. Provide new board members with the church’s financial statements for the most recent two or three years.

5. Budget. Church budgets are a mystery to many new board members. Many sit silently during board meetings when budgetary matters are being addressed, ashamed to “show their ignorance” by asking questions about what is happening. Senior pastors, and veteran board members, should anticipate this and provide new board members with an overview of the church’s budgetary system at their first meeting.

6. Explain all “special rules.” These include the number and identity of persons who are authorized to sign checks and contracts on behalf of the church; the dates, times, and locations of board meetings; any special events (such as retreats) that are being planned; and whether or not the church carries “directors and officers” insurance for the members of the board.

7. Bylaws. Provide each new board member with a current version of the church’s governing documents. These ordinarily will include the corporate charter if the church is incorporated, and a constitution or bylaws. We recommend that a veteran board member or the senior pastor take a few minutes to review the main provisions in these documents.

8. Explain fiduciary duties. Most church officers and directors are unaware of the fact that they owe various “fiduciary duties” to the corporation. These fiduciary duties are imposed on officers and directors because of the position of special trust that they occupy. One of these duties is the duty of care. Board members are under an obligation to perform their duties “in good faith, in a manner they reasonably believe to be in the best interests of the corporation, and with such care as an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances.”

Church board members can satisfy this fiduciary duty by:

- Attending all of the meetings of the board and any committees on which they serve.
- Thoroughly reviewing all interim and annual financial statements and reports, and seeking clarification of any irregularities or inconsistencies.

CHURCH BOARD MEMBER

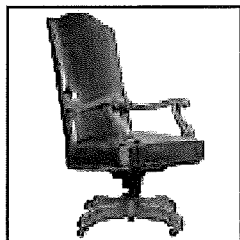
- Affirmatively investigating and correcting any other problems or improprieties.
- Thoroughly reviewing the corporate charter, constitution, and bylaws.
- Dissenting from any board action with which they have any misgivings, and insisting that their objection be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- Resigning from the board if and when they are unable to fulfill these duties.

Directors of nonprofit corporations (i.e., churches) also have a fiduciary duty of loyalty to the corporation. This duty generally requires that any transaction between the board and one of its directors be (a) fully disclosed, (b) approved by the board without the vote of the interested director, and (c) fair and reasonable to the corporation. In most cases, a director breaches the duty of loyalty only through some secret or undisclosed interest in a transaction with the corporation.

9. Confidentiality. New board members should be instructed that some matters considered by the board are confidential, and should not be disclosed to others. Some church boards adopt “covenants of confidentiality” requiring board members to maintain the confidentiality of a specified matter.

10. Ongoing lessons. The website www.churchlawtoday.com/ contains weekly lessons, which provide another way to orient new board members. We recommend that each new board member immediately be apprised of this service, and how to access it. These lessons are designed to assist church board members understand and fulfill their legal and administrative responsibilities, and reduce legal risks to themselves and the church.

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Getting Up to Speed

You are in a position to become a change agent while learning the ropes.

John 13:17

BY R. STEVEN WARNER

As a new board member, you will immediately be in a position to exert a positive influence on your church. Key decisions won't wait just because you are new. Here are suggestions about how to hit the ground running.

Learn What Is Expected

Speak with the pastor, staff, and other board members before your term begins, or even if you are only thinking about seeking a spot on the board.

When you learn the duties expected of you, make sure you share this information with your spouse. Honestly evaluate the current state of your marriage and family. If you are going through a difficult time with your marriage or having more than the usual challenges raising kids, this may not be the right time to take on the responsibilities of a board member.

Understand the commitment level required of a board member. This includes attending worship regularly, participating in prayer meetings, and other special meetings. Find out how much time a week it will take to become a good board member.

Agree to key principles. Church leaders need to agree on how they will work together. At the first meeting of the new board, discuss the church's mission statement or the board's leadership covenant. Examine it point-by-point, pausing after each to see if everyone can agree to it. At this point, just as in a marriage, you should speak now or forever hold your peace.

Perform To Expectations

It's not enough to agree to meet expectations. Board members should understand that their conduct will be monitored by fellow board members, staff, and the congregation.

Beware of breaking promises. This is especially true concerning meeting attendance. You may not play hooky from a meeting because your supper was burned, or you are taking a motorcycle trip, or you are meeting your daughter's boyfriend's parents.

Pace your performance. Board membership often means extra responsibility on Sunday and during the week. Boards should consider assigning a "board member of the week." This will be the point person for Sunday mornings and for other tasks during the week, giving other board members a chance to share responsibility and avoid burnout.

Be a Team Player

The greatest danger facing new leaders is to fall into disunity. In general, new leaders will learn to seek unity when the decision-making system rewards unity. Some churches aim for full agreement in all decisions. If even one leader feels strongly against something, the board waits for a month. If the leader still has objections, they wait another month, or however long it takes until unanimity is achieved.

Does that give you too much power as a new leader? Do you run the risk of becoming an obstructionist? Yes. If you feel strongly about an issue, God may be speaking through you; but if God is not speaking through you, you could be holding up what God wants to do today. Pray hard about the issue and learn to find the balance.

Every church has dissenters. Confrontation with certain chronically grouchy members of the congregation is standard.

Other behind-the-scenes happenings can disconcert a new leader. Understand that people will disappoint you. You will not be able to come to church with the bliss of not knowing so-and-so has a marital problem or another person is vigorously critical of some church policy.

CHURCH BOARD MEMBER

Understand and be able to practice the principles of Matthew 18. If you have a problem with someone, go directly to that person first. If someone comes to you with a complaint about another leader, interrupt and say, "Excuse me, but you're talking to the wrong person. You need to go talk to that other leader. I guarantee you he will give you a good hearing. If he doesn't, I'll go with you next time."

Be Patient With the Learning Curve

Growth will be difficult if you are not given the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them. Ask pastors, staff, and more experienced board leaders to be patient as you try new responsibilities.

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Advice From an Experienced Leader

Build confidence as you learn the roles and responsibilities of serving on the board.

Ephesians 4:11–13

AN INTERVIEW WITH JIM BUICK

Jim Buick of Grand Rapids, Michigan has a record of service on church boards dating to the 1960s. He has served Dearborn (MI) Free Methodist Church, Winnetka (IL) Bible Church and two terms at Calvary Church in Grand Rapids, where he is still active in leadership as a former board member.

What are the three most important things a new board member should keep in mind?

1. The most important thing is that you're there to serve. It's a responsibility more than an honor. You are serving the mission of the church, and in a direction that has frequently been set before a new person comes on the board.
2. You are one of a number of people. It's not a solo trip. It's a combined wisdom of the board members that brings out the best results.
3. Learn from the other board members. Usually the ones who have been on the board longer have found out all the things that can go wrong. Try to structure your behavior in a way to take advantage of that.

What are the most important character traits of a church board member?

Integrity, above all. It's important to have pure integrity as evidenced by your behavior. You also need the ability to listen to others—what they're saying and what they're meaning.

How much should I talk and how much should I listen?

It is appropriate to ask questions. Those questions can be about procedure, substance issues, and direction [of the church]. Ask them as long as they're couched in a vein that you're not telling people what to do but finding out where they're coming from and where they're going. You're on the board because you have attributes the congregation thinks are of value. You've earned the right to speak, but it's not automatically granted. Raise questions not to draw attention to yourself, but for understanding.

Are there specific spiritual disciplines that can help my performance on the board?

You need a good prayer life. Make certain that your relationship with God is such that when you're serving, it's for his kingdom and not for your own agenda. Reading Scripture on a regular basis is important, because there are great insights that can be developed from the Bible.

How do I measure success as a board member?

Ask yourself, "Am I contributing to the purpose to which the board is meeting? Are the responses to my questions, comments, and participation helping move the agenda of the church and the board forward? Am I helping resolve issues and developing priorities? Have I helped the board accomplish its particular objectives for this period?"

What has been your biggest surprise as a board member?

[Learning that] all members of the board are not dealt the same ability to function as board members. There are always some people who want to be heard, and some who never have anything to say.

What has been your biggest continuing challenge?

To stay fresh and not get bored with the kind of minutiae that inevitably creeps into a board's deliberation. In one church, we had agreed that as long as someone reviewed contributions to our library that we would just accept them. We had one member that wanted us to examine each of the books. But the board should be setting policy and direction and not try to engage in the management of the church.

CHURCH BOARD MEMBER

How can I build and maintain confidence in my ability to serve?

By keeping your perspective. Understand that it is a board process. Your confidence is built as you find yourself raising critical questions and appropriate suggestions. Relationships with colleagues are really a key to your ability to serve. I don't believe in Lone Rangers on a board.

What is different about service on a church board as distinguished from service on other types of boards?

The ability to openly address the issue of spiritual needs and God's direction in a board's process. Although I pray about things I do on other boards, I'm not always at liberty to discuss it. The purpose of the church is different than for-profit organizations. In a sense the church board is there to represent the congregation, but it also has to adhere to the constitution of the church, which was set and deliberated on very carefully.

How much time can I expect to spend in board service? How much extra time will my office demand of me outside of attending board meetings?

If you're a deacon or elder, there are other meetings besides board meetings. For instance, at least two elders at Calvary interview all prospective members (average weekend attendance is 4,000). Typically we had elder and deacons meet one week and the next week the combined board met. It's not unreasonable to think that at least four times a month, you'll be doing something in terms of service as a board member.

How can I best prepare for meetings?

Review the prior month's minutes. Then look at the agenda for the upcoming meeting. If you find issues that are not adequately explained, try and get that information before the meeting. And bathe all of this in prayer.

How do I respond when an idea I propose gets rejected?

Gracefully! Once we had something come before our board which was proposed by two of us. It was clear from the discussion that we had the votes. But a couple of older members felt strongly that it wasn't something we should do. I and the seconder both withdrew the motion so we could get time to work it out. To force something through when there's strong opposition is not the way forward. If there are strong feelings that are contrary, and the issue needs more time and more deliberation, table it and come back. Even then if it gets rejected, you'll have to say, "God's in charge."

How can I stay accountable and accessible to members of the congregation?

You have to listen. To be in favor of certain members of the congregation is not appropriate board behavior.

What are the keys to maintaining good relationships with pastors and staff?

A member of the board or the entire board should not be providing direction to individual staff members other than through the senior pastor. If they do that, the senior pastor has to take the heat because he's the leader. If you have a structure, don't violate that structure. Everyone should know what's expected and know what the process is.

What is the hardest decision you've ever had to take as a board member?

When I was chairman, we had an issue where two elders had revoked someone's membership. After we had taken the action, I found out that we had really blown it. Having to take membership away from someone is bad enough and then to do it when it's not appropriate is worse. Then I had to spend time with the two board members to try and repair that situation. It didn't heal as well as I would like to have seen it.

What are the most common criticisms or complaints that come to you?

Music is the overwhelming one, and it always has been, even though we've come a long way.

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Sample Job Description

Board of Directors Role

A member of the board of directors participates in the governance and direction of First Church and its overall ministry. Board members meet on a monthly basis to uphold the mission of First Church, oversee the ministry direction of the church and its members, and ensure the provision of resources to carry out the church's work.

The board of directors has five key areas of responsibility:

- Compliance with doctrinal and denominational standards, and legal and tax compliance with federal, state and local requirements as a corporation in the state of _____.
- Development of long-term ministry strategies and relevant outcomes as the strategies are implemented.
- Provision of financial oversight on church income and expense, development of an annual fiscal year budget, reduction of the church's risk and liability, support of financial giving programs, and oversight of an annual certified independent audit for the church.
- Oversight of the work of the senior pastor, conduct of an annual pastoral performance evaluation, and annual review of the senior pastor's financial package. The board of directors also provides direction for the church in an interim period should the senior pastor position be open.
- General development of the church's marketing program, community outreach priorities, and missions efforts.

The board of directors of First Church provides an ongoing presence of leadership in ministry to fulfill God's call in the community.

Board Member Qualifications

A member of the board of directors of First Church ideally follows the guidelines the apostle Paul laid down in 1 Timothy 3:1-7:

- Be above reproach; respectable; hospitable; of good reputation.
- In a solid marriage or, if single, sexually pure; a good family manager.
- Temperate, self-controlled; not a lover of money.
- A well-grounded Christian believer immersed in prayer.

More specifically, a board member will meet certain practical requirements. The individual will be:

- A member in good standing.
- A regular participant in worship and the programs of the church.
- A contributor of record to the church's giving program.
- At least 18 years of age.

In addition, the member will not be employed by or married to an employee of First Church.

Continued ➤

CHURCH BOARD MEMBER

Key Skills

While there are different specialties, disciplines and interests among First Church board members, certain skills are most helpful though not all are needed in any one person:

- A well-grounded student of the Bible and theology
- A good strategic thinker and ministry planner
- A strong educator
- Experience in employment, human resources issues, and counseling
- A good financial manager
- Skills in marketing and public relations
- Excellence in operations management and hospitality

Appointment Process

There are 12 members of the board of directors of First Church. Four members are elected by the membership each year at the congregation's annual meeting in January, to serve a three-year term, with an opportunity to be elected to a second term. A board nominating committee develops a slate of candidates for election or re-election, with input from church ministers, ministry leaders, and members of the church.

If a vacancy arises on the board of directors due to resignation or removal, the board members may appoint an individual to serve the unexpired term. It is possible, but not automatic, that this individual will stand for election for a regular term.

All board members will review the First Church board member ethics statement and will affirm and sign the conflict of interest statement.

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CHURCH BOARD MEMBER**A Code of Conduct for Board Members**

Share your opinions, listen with care, and get down into the trenches of church life.

2 Corinthians 4:2

BY STEPHEN A. BLY

Divisive board disputes can be greatly minimized by a few simple ground rules. Here is an example of a code of conduct for both new and experienced board members.

Make Decisions In Scriptural Proportions

The relative attention given to any issue will be in direct proportion to its prominence in Scripture. We ask ourselves: How often does the Bible deal with this? Could we postpone this issue a month without harm to our total ministry? Minor problems need solutions, too, but not at the cost of major confrontations.

Promote Prayer

We will encourage church members to spend an hour's time each month in prayer for the pastor and board members. A person who seeks the Lord on my behalf will find my listening ear when he or she wants to change my mind. An hour per month can be rearranged into two-minute segments each day. Another good suggestion is to ask people to spend at least as much time praying for the board as talking about them.

Listen to All Opinions

Each board member understands that having their say is more important than having their way. Every opinion matters. That doesn't mean we jump every time someone hollers. But we do listen. Then we watch for God's wisdom and God's timing.

Don't Become Lofty

We will stay in the nitty-gritty of church life while serving on leadership boards. Once we've been elected, we try not to remove ourselves from the creative tension of ministry with people. This helps our decisions lean toward the practical rather than the speculative. For example, the one who dashes into the church office a half hour before Sunday school to run the old copier votes with more understanding the next time office equipment is discussed.

Majority Rule, Minority Respect

A majority vote is a strong indication of God's will for us at this time. If the board has been called by the Lord to serve, then logic presumes he will express his voice through each of the members. The minority may still be right, but the timing may be wrong.

Hold very high respect for opponents who freely express their view, then fully give themselves to carrying out the measure that eventually is approved. They earn attention to their opinions next time. Always ask yourself: Do they have more facts than I do? Do they have more experience? Could it be that I'm right, but the timing's wrong? Is there a scriptural reason why I can't fully support this suggestion?

Express Yourself

Never keep silent in a meeting on an issue that won't be kept silent at home. Some of the best logic is saved for the spouse and the walls. While it's unrealistic to expect anyone to struggle through an important, fervent argument behind closed doors and never mention a word at home, the problem develops when opinions expressed clearly outside the meeting never get voiced within.

Don't Be Hasty

Attempt never to make notable judgments on an idea the first time it's introduced. That way, the members can jot down feedback as it comes over the next month. They can present their information to the major parties involved before the next meeting, too.

CHURCH BOARD MEMBER

The Value of Dissent

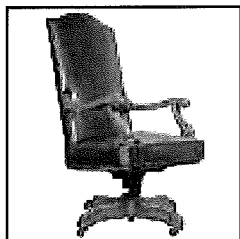
Every dissenting vote symbolizes a possible word of caution from the Lord. The objective should be well-reasoned, enthusiastic unanimity. But the road toward that goal produces more than a few gray hairs.

Help Shy People Speak

Solicit comments from those who haven't vocalized any. Look for nonverbal signs, too. In order to encourage feedback from the hesitant, initiate drawbacks to your own ideas. This presents an easy opportunity for expressing doubts. When a whole board welcomes alternate views as a strength rather than an irritating intrusion, hostilities are minimized.

Many a church disaster has sprung from seemingly minor issues. How do you avoid hard feelings? By following guidelines for good church board conduct.

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Making Great Decisions

You will be faced with hundreds of choices. Here's how to make the best ones.

Philippians 1:9–10

BY LYLE E. SCHALLER

It is important for you to understand what criteria you and your fellow board members will use to make decisions.

Power of the Past

The most obvious and frequently the most influential reference point in decision-making is precedent. What did we do last year? Did anyone complain about that? If not, the past can legitimize the future.

For example, the pastor may tell the board he plans to take two weeks of vacation in August. When a new board member questions that, the pastor replies, "That's the schedule I've followed every year since I came here." Everyone appears satisfied.

In many communities, someone should ask, "My impression is that July, August, and early September are the peak church-shopping months for newcomers to this community. Do you think it's wise for our minister to be out of the pulpit for two Sundays when our number-one goal is to grow? Would it be possible to move those two weeks in the summer to June?"

The usual answer is, "No, the number-one criterion in scheduling vacations is the convenience of the staff; number two is local tradition."

Two Sets of Questions

The way in which board members ask questions can influence the decision-making process. Compare these two sets of questions that may be criteria for board members.

Set A

- What did we do last year?
- What will our older members think?
- Is it consistent with our local traditions?
- Is it compatible with the design of our building?
- What does our pastor prefer?
- Can we get a majority of our members to support this?
- Will it be asking too much of our people?
- How much will it cost?
- We tried it in the church I was in before, and it didn't work. What makes you think it will work here?
- Will it place too much of a burden on our pastor?
- Can we secure the necessary approval from our denominational headquarters?
- Will it require adding another staff person to the payroll?

Set B

- How will it improve the quality of our ministry?
- How will it expand our capability to reach the younger generations?
- How would a first-time visitor respond to this?
- How will it enrich the spiritual journeys of our members?
- How will it strengthen our ministry with single-parent families?

CHURCH BOARD MEMBER

- How will it enhance our teaching ministries?
- Will it really challenge the commitment level of our people?
- Are you suggesting we try to do yesterday again, only better?
- Which change should we introduce first and which one should come later?
- How will the leaders in the year 2030 evaluate our response to this issue?
- How will it enrich our ministries to families with young children?
- How will this glorify God?

Who Chooses the Criteria?

Who decides on the criteria that will guide the decision-making process?

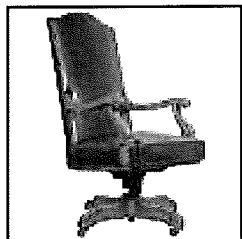
In smaller congregations the answer often is a mix of (a) local traditions and precedents, (b) respected and influential veteran leaders, (c) building and property constraints, and (d) comparative dollar costs.

In larger congregations the criteria frequently originate in (a) the senior minister and/or program staff, or (b) books, workshops, and visiting experts.

In middle-sized congregations the criteria are more likely to be articulated by the pastor and/or board members.

Regardless of how your criteria are chosen, it is important to answer these questions: Which criteria does our board use? Which criteria would improve the governance system in our congregation?

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Church Governance by the Books

Board members need to be aware of which church records are needed and why.

2 Chronicles 34:16–17

BY RICHARD R. HAMMAR

As a church board member, you should be familiar with and be able to identify a number of records. Here are eleven that you should be familiar with:

1. Articles of incorporation. If your church is incorporated, the document that you submitted to a court or to the secretary of state to become incorporated is generally referred to as the articles of incorporation. It is a short document that contains the church's name, address, period of duration, initial board of directors, and statement of purposes. When this document is recognized by the state, and the church's corporate status begins, the articles of incorporation is called the church's charter. There are a few things that church board members should know about their church charter:

- In the event of a conflict between the charter and another legal document, the charter will control.
- Since the charter defines the purposes for which your church was established, it is important for you to be familiar with this document.
- The charter may contain restrictions or limitations that the board needs to be aware of. For example, some charters impose restrictions on the sale or purchase of church property, the size of the board, and debt limits.
- The IRS requires that certain provisions be included in a church's charter. These include prohibitions of political activities, and the payment of unreasonable compensation.
- Check the period of duration specified in your charter. This provision will determine the length of your church's corporate life. Many churches were incorporated years ago for a specific number of years. If so, you may want to consider amending your charter to become perpetual.

2. Constitution or bylaws. This is the document that contains most of a church's rules of internal administration. At a minimum, church bylaws should cover the following matters: the qualifications, selection, and expulsion of members; the time and place of annual business meetings; the calling of special business meetings; notice for annual and special meetings; quorums; voting rights; selection, tenure, and removal of officers and directors; filling of vacancies; responsibilities of directors and officers; the method of amending the bylaws; and, the purchase and conveyance of property. It is essential for church board members to be familiar with this document, since it covers so many issues of church organization and administration.

3. Financial records. Board members owe various fiduciary duties to their church, and these include familiarity with the church's financial records. It is your responsibility to insure that appropriate safeguards are implemented with regard to the handling of contributions, that cash and expenses are properly recorded and presented in the church's financial statements, and that the church is properly receiving donors for their contributions. You should be reviewing the finances of the church at each board meeting, and asking questions about anything that you don't understand or that seems irregular.

4. List of members. It is often critical for a church to be able to identify those persons who are active voting members, since in most churches the members ultimately decide important questions of church administration. Many churches have bylaw provisions that call for the periodic review of the membership list, to be sure that it is up to date. Find out how recently the list was reviewed and updated. Become familiar with the procedure and grounds for removing members from this list.

5. Minutes of membership meetings. Most churches conduct an annual business meeting, and occasionally hold special meetings. Your church should keep records of all of these meetings.

CHURCH BOARD MEMBER

6. Minutes of board and committee meetings. Churches should maintain a complete set of minutes of board and committee meetings.

7. Insurance policies. Find out where your church's insurance policies are maintained. Become familiar with the terms of your policies. Learn how much coverage your liability policy provides for personal injuries, or incidents of sexual misconduct. Unfortunately, coverage for such incidents is reduced under many insurance policies, and it is essential for board members to know how much coverage their church has.

8. Tax records. These will include payroll tax forms, housing allowance designations for your pastors, contribution records, and any other forms you have filed with the federal government or with your state or local government.

9. Annual reports filed with the secretary of state. Churches should maintain a full set of all corporate annual reports filed with the secretary of state's office. In many states, incorporated churches are required to file this report. This form only takes minutes to complete. But failure to comply with the requirement can jeopardize a church's corporate status; and this can expose church members and board members to personal liability.

10. Employment records. These include applications for employment, reference checks, information concerning disciplinary actions, the I-9 immigration form that all employers, including churches, must maintain for each new employee, and any other document relating to your employees.

11. Deeds. You should be able to locate and review the deed to your church property. It may contain information of vital importance to your church.

Most of a church's records are not required by law. But as previously noted, it is very important for board members to be able to identify and understand the relevant provisions in all church records.

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Practice Strategic Planning

Participate in creating a board vision that will help take your church forward.

Isaiah 32:8

BY MICHAEL R. BAER

Churches reap great benefits when their pastors and boards work together in a process of strategic planning. Here are strategies to help you when questions of planning to implement the church's vision come to the forefront. This process works well in a retreat or workshop session for the entire board.

Setting the Stage

Set general ground rules when engaging in strategic planning. These include:

- Be entirely open with one another. This seems self-evident, but in my experience, church boards are not always characterized by hearty and honest sharing.
- Creativity and dreaming are encouraged. Commit yourself to think big thoughts.
- Operate on consensus. The goal is the development of a team vision, so there has to be agreement.

Assessing Reality

You must first discover the present status of your church. One way to do this is to list on 3 x 5 cards five strengths of our church, five weaknesses, and five opportunities for growth or ministry. Each person shares their list with the group, and a facilitator writes them on a board.

Then set priorities in each list—which strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities are most important right now. Examine the new master list, and on a separate card, list what to you are the five top strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. Have each person then read their revised lists. Each time a topic is mentioned, it receives one “vote.” Keep a tally. By this simple math you can determine the consensus strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. From there, you have three working lists that represent agreement as to where you are as a church.

Finding Vision

Now help determine where the church wants to be. Dream about what you want to see happen in the next year. One strategy is to take a couple of strengths and build on them, a couple of weaknesses and improve them, and a couple of opportunities and seize them. Go through the same list of establishing priorities as above. The result will be a “provisional vision” for the church year.

Setting Objectives

More church boards bog down at this point than any other. It is fun and exciting to dream and come up with a shared vision; it is another thing to think specifically and practically about how to achieve it.

Tackle this step in two phases. Based on your newly stated vision, create four major categories, such as finance, outreach, fellowship, and youth. Then, under each category brainstorm specific things you could do to reach the goals in that area. (Basic rule: There are no “bad ideas” in such a brainstorming session.)

Taking Responsibility

If you really have arrived at a consensus of vision and objectives for the year, members of the board should be ready to take oversight of the areas. In a short time, each area needs to be covered by a leader ready to see that his area goal was reached.

Other Steps

Consolidate your vision (determined in the first two steps) into a mission statement, a brief sentence that accurately captures your goal. Such a statement can be immensely helpful in communicating the vision to the church, as well as keeping it before the board.

CHURCH BOARD MEMBER

Work for longer-range planning. One year is a good place to start, but the world is moving too fast for that to be effective for very long. Think about planning in terms of three or five years.

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Starting At the Top

What to remember if you find yourself appointed chairman of the board.

Joshua 3:28

BY DAVID HUBBARD

In some instances, board members begin their tenures in the same way Chief Justice John Roberts began his on the Supreme Court: by being appointed to the chair. Here are some things to remember if you are quickly thrust into this important role.

The Role of the Chair

The chair keeps the meeting focused. Time is wasted when the focus gets blurry. If that happens, you need to say, "Let's focus on this issue. Here's what's before us as I see it."

Another responsibility of the chair is to test the support of an idea. If people can register their support, then you can promptly end the discussion and move on to the next component.

But you have to read the climate and be sure all sides are heard from. Watch body language. You may say, "It looks to me like most of you are with this proposal, but I'm not sure what I am reading from you (to particular member). Do you want to share with the group what you are feeling?"

Good chairing makes time productive and still gives people a chance to express their convictions.

Keep Meetings on Track

Use a timed agenda. The standard criticism of church meetings is that they're too long. They are too long because nobody weighs the relative value of the various issues and suggests the amount of time each item is worth. Otherwise Parkinson's Law takes over: the amount of discussion becomes inversely proportionate to the importance of the issue. A timed agenda can also prevent a few individuals from dominating the discussions.

Make Meetings Stimulating

First, there should be accomplishment. We need to serve the ministry by making effective decisions and getting business done in a timely fashion.

Second, we affirm and recognize each person. Make sure every person at every board meeting has the chance to share his or her views.

Third, emphasize joyful fellowship, and consistently point to Christ.

The Missing Ingredient in Most Board Meetings

Planning is often lacking. A board meeting has to be structured to enable people to contribute. Getting the board members' contribution is the most important single goal.

Find issues to which each member can contribute, wrestling with problems, possibilities, and ideas. Do some "blue sky" thinking so board members feel they have done more than come, listen, and vote. When the meeting ends, people need to know the ministry is different because they made the effort to attend.

Planning starts with the pastor and the chair of the board sitting down together and figuring out the three or four most important things to accomplish at that meeting. If they plan accordingly, the board meetings are not laundry lists of activities, nor are they times for reading report after report. Anything that can be mailed out and read in advance ought to be handled that way. Board members should not have to sit through a meeting having reports read to them.

CHURCH BOARD MEMBER

Manage Conflict

Allow enough time for everyone to be heard. When people feel rushed, they get anxious and don't think or communicate as clearly.

Sometimes you need to take a break. Try to talk to people during the break to help them clarify the issues. Sometimes you may want to ask a person to write out their concerns so the board can address them specifically.

But if it gets too tense, break off and give a little space. Often people will get together and work differences out by themselves. Or the person will cool down and apologize after the break. Just allowing a little space with good people usually bleeds the bad feelings off.

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Prayer List

Prayer is an important part of the motivation and practice of a church board member. Use this list to help you focus your individual and board prayer time. Make copies and keep on using it throughout your service on the board.

For The Board

Joys: _____

Concerns: _____

For the Congregation

Joys: _____

Concerns: _____

For Myself

Joys: _____

Concerns: _____

Scripture: Joshua 3:28; 1 Kings 3:7-10; 2 Chronicles 34:16-17; Psalm 15:1-5; Proverbs 20:24; Isaiah 32:8; Jeremiah 3:14-15; Matthew 20:25-28; John 13:17; 1 Corinthians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 1:24; 2 Corinthians 4:2; Ephesians 4:1-3; Philippians 1:9-10; Hebrews 13:7; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 Peter 5:2-3



Further Exploration

Helpful resources for new church board members.

Building Church Leaders: Leadership training resources from Christianity Today International.

 www.BuildingChurchLeaders.com

“Decision Making” Training Theme and PowerPoint

“Finances” Training Theme and PowerPoint

“Strategic Planning” Training Theme and PowerPoint

“Organizing a Church Board” Best Church Practices

“Becoming a Great Church Board” Practical Ministry Skills

LeadershipJournal.net. This website offers practical advice and articles for church leaders.

Christian Management Association. Provides a variety of information and resources to leaders of Christian organizations. www.cmaonline.org/

The Effective Church Board by *Michael J. Anthony*. A handbook for training and mentoring servant leaders. (Zondervan/Resource Publications, 2001; ISBN 978-1579105051)

Leading Leaders: Empowering Church Boards for Ministry Excellence by *Aubrey Malphurs*. Written to provide comprehensive training to board members. (Baker Books, 2005; ISBN 978-0801091780)

Meetings That Work: A Guide to Effective Elders’ Meetings by *Alexander Strauch*. A short and practical examination of how to improve board meetings. (Lewis & Roth, 2001; ISBN 978-0936083179)

Nailing Down a Board by *Charles C. Ryrie*. Designed to be an introduction or refresher course on effective board membership. (Kregel, 1999; ISBN 978-0825436499)

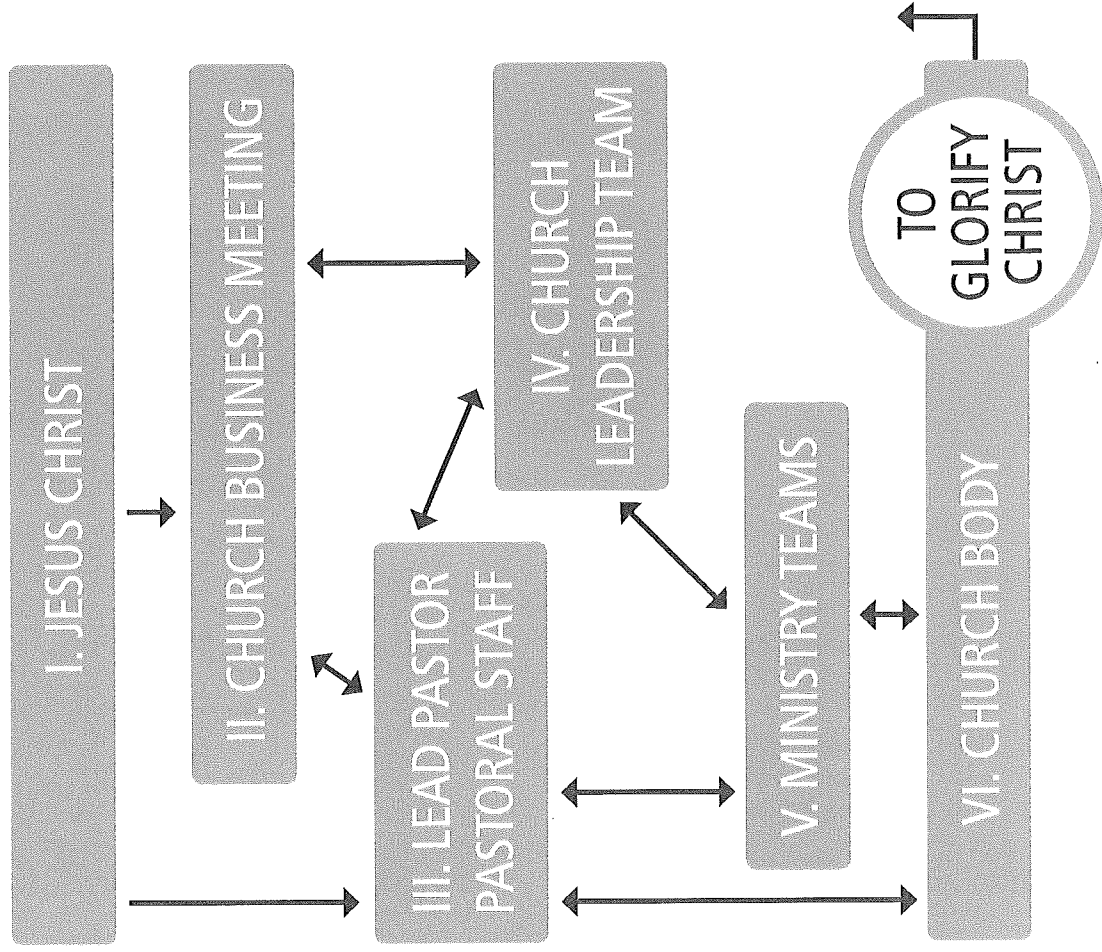
They Smell Like Sheep: Spiritual Leadership for the 21st Century by *Lynn Anderson*. Provides an in-depth look at the qualifications and responsibilities of elders. (Howard, 2002; ISBN 978-1582292977)

Transforming Church Boards into Communities of Spiritual Leaders, by *Charles M. Olsen*. Offers a four-point program of spiritual formation for board members. (Alban Institute, 1995; ISBN 978-1566991483)

Your Calling As a Deacon by *Gary Straub and James Trader II*. Helps people discover the depth of their call to diaconal ministry. (Chalice Press, 2005; ISBN 978-0827244115)

MINISTRY FLOW CHART

Interpreting Leadership Team Form of Government for ECC churches



RESPONSIBILITIES

I. Jesus Christ

- Head of the Body

II. Church Business Meeting

- Adopt Constitution and Bylaws
- Approve the Annual Budget
- Call or Dismiss the Lead Pastor
- Elect Church Leadership
- Approve Capital Indebtedness (land and buildings)

V. Ministry Teams

- Deploy Ministry Teams
- Empower Administrative Teams
- Train and Equip Individuals
- Interface with Leadership Team
- Implement Plans
- Obtain & Manage Resources

VI. Church Body

- Implement Evangelism & Compassion, Mercy & Justice
- Provide Financial Support
- Support & Encourage Staff and Ministry Teams

III. Lead Pastor/Pastoral Staff

- Provide Leadership
- Envision Ministry
- Provide Spiritual Direction
- Equip Others
- Supervise Staff
- Preach/Teach
- Provide Direction to Ministry & Staff Teams
- Coordinate Ministry with Conference and Denomination

IV. Church Leadership Team

- Establish Budgets & Policies
- Coordinate Ministries
- Ensure Cooperation
- Long Range Planning
- Model Servanthood, Stewardship, & Sacrifice
- Oversee Operations



One of the most important aspects of the "Ministry Flow Chart" is defining the roles each part of the church should fill. The Ministry Flow Chart was designed to help everyone see the various roles and responsibilities, and the proper configuration that is necessary if we are to have a healthy church. The secret to being a healthy missional church is for each person to live into his or her role in a responsible way and in cooperation with others.

Comments About The Roles For Various Parts of the Church

Jesus

Jesus is the head of the church so He is listed first. (Colossians 1:18, 24) As a church, we submit to His authority, follow His commands, and we seek His will through prayer and the Word.

Church Business Meeting

The Covenant has a modified form of congregational polity; therefore, it is important to list the congregational business meeting next. However, the congregation does not have the authority to decide everything. Typically the congregation votes on the call or dismissal of a senior pastor, acquisition of land or buildings, approval of the annual budget, constitutional changes, and the election of the team leaders. Only the members, present and voting at the congregational business meetings, have authority. Members can call other meetings, if needed, as outlined in the bylaws.

Lead Pastor/Pastoral Staff

In Acts 6, the deacons/pastors were called to seek the Lord in prayer, to teach, and to lead the church. Later, in Acts 15, the apostles determined that God's design included incorporating Gentiles into the church. Biblical vision for the church usually does not come from a committee, or from the whole church, it must come through the pastors/leaders God has called. The pastors/leaders must make sure that the design for the ministry comes from God, and must make sure the people know that they are making decisions with the best interests of the whole church in mind.

The design for the church includes the vision, but it also calls for spiritual direction, pastoral care, and equipping the people for ministry. Members of the church can contribute to the vision or design for the church; however, as a general rule the vision and the design will originate with the pastoral staff. When vision or new ministries originate elsewhere in the church, these should be compatible with the vision of the pastoral staff.

Church Leadership Team

In cooperation with the Pastoral Staff, the leaders develop budgets and plans to move the vision forward and communicate it to the whole church family. The church leadership team will initiate planning, set goals, authorize action on those goals, set policy, be agents of congregational discipline when necessary, evaluate the core ministries of the church regularly for alignment with the vision, and do a regular check-up on the health of the church. They may serve as the Pastoral Relations Committee to facilitate good communication between the pastor and the church.

Ministry Teams

Rather than committees, we prefer to call these "Ministry Teams." Committees tend to ask, "Who else can we find to do the work?" Ministry Teams ask, "How can we do the work of ministry?" These Ministry teams are the implementation agents for the core ministries of the church. The suggestions they have for their areas of ministry are practical because they are working in those areas, are gifted in those areas, and are passionate about the ministry area they are serving in. This model allows those gifted to serve rather than sit in meetings.

The Church Body

The body is intended to be the "hands and feet" of the church working through the ministry teams to accomplish the dreams and goals of the church. Additionally, every person who is a part of a church family is to support and encourage those God has placed in leadership. The church body needs to stay connected, give generously, serve when and where they are needed, pray consistently, worship regularly, and strive for the unity and harmony of the whole body. The church body needs to be committed to growing in Christian maturity.

Every part of the Body of Christ has a specific role to play in the church. So what are the RESPONSIBILITIES that go with each role in a healthy church?

I. Jesus

- To be the head of the church

II. The Church Business Meeting

- Adopt Constitution and Bylaws
- To approve the budget
- To call or dismiss the senior pastor
- To elect leaders
- To vote on the purchase or sale of land or buildings
- To approve any changes to the constitution or bylaws of the church
- To celebrate how God has shown up in the last year.
- To honor those who have faithfully served.

III. Lead Pastor/Pastoral Staff

- To regularly communicate and safeguard the vision
- To Lead on key initiatives
- To be persons of character and competency
- To equip, develop and empower others to lead
- To envision ministry
- To provide spiritual direction for the church
- To supervise and provide direction to the staff and ministry teams
- Depending on the role, to preach and teach
- Coordinate with the Conference and the Denomination
- To safeguard the unity of the church
- To be a servant
- To model evangelism, service, and generosity
- To Pray

IV. Church Leadership Team

- To set yearly goals and objectives in consultation with the ministry staff
- To oversee the missional priorities of the church
- To submit a comprehensive budget to the church business meeting annually.
- To present, with the work of a nominating committee, a ballot to the annual church business meeting.
- To provide operational oversight for the church
- To interface with the ministry teams, provide support and encouragement, and receive regular reports on core ministry initiatives.
- To pray for, encourage, and support the staff, the ministry teams and the leaders of the church.
- To look for new opportunities to engage the community in mission
- To be the agent of unity, reconciliation, and church discipline.
- To call and run the business meetings of the church.
- To be faithful in their attendance, model sacrificial giving, serve humbly, and lead by example

V. Ministry Teams

- To implement the key ministry initiatives of the church
- To recognize gifting in people, to recruit, and to develop teams to accomplish the priorities of the church
- To regularly pray for their ministry area and those who serve with them
- To train, equip and celebrate those who serve on each team.
- To operate within the budget guidelines as approved by the church business meeting.
- To strive for excellence in all they do
- To regularly communicate with their pastoral supervisor or leadership team member with oversight for their ministry area.
- To give "feet, heart, and hands" to the vision of the church

VI. Church Body

- To Worship regularly
- To give sacrificially
- To serve both inside and outside the church
- To share Christ
- To provide care for those in need
- To preserve unity
- To be a growing disciple of Jesus
- To pray regularly for the Pastoral staff, leaders and ministry teams
- To always err on the side of love
- To exercise humility by putting others first
- To respect the call and the office of pastor
- To be joyful



COMPARISON OF MODELS

CONCEPT	BOARD	COUNCIL	LEADERSHIP TEAM
Elected Leadership	Executive Board (chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, vice-secretary), Board of Deacons, Board of Christian Education and Discipleship, and Board of Trustees – number of members on each determined in bylaws	Council including officers of church (chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, and vice-secretary) and other members as specified in bylaws	Leadership Team - # of members can vary, but is not less than, nor more than determined by the church in its bylaws
Appointed Leadership	Standing committees appointed by the Executive Board	Council appoints administrative committee members, special committees, and task force	Financial secretary, treasurer, and ministry team chairs – number/type determined by Leadership Team to carry out church's mission; ministry teams members may be selected by chair of team
Application for Membership	To Board of Deacons or pastor	To Enlistment Chair or pastor	To Leadership Team
Dismissal of Members	Board of Deacons presents recommendation to congregation	Council presents recommendation to congregation	2/3 vote of Leadership Team members; may be appealed by person to next congregational meeting
Calling of Lead Pastor	Congregational meeting	Congregational meeting	Congregational meeting
Calling of Other Pastors	Congregational meeting	Congregational meeting	Congregational meeting or congregation may delegate authority to Leadership Team acting unanimously and giving 10 day notice before
Personnel Committee	Pastoral Relations Committee (chair of the church and chair of each church board)	Pastoral Relations Committee (same as Executive Committee which is listing of officers)	Leadership Team

MARKS OF COVENANT IDENTITY AND POSITION THAT ARE REQUIRED IN CONSTITUTIONS AND BYLAWS SEEKING APPROVAL

- Use of the Covenant Preamble as the preamble for the church document.
- Use of the Confession of Faith as the sole doctrinal description in the main body.
- Congregational action to nominate, call or dismiss pastor.
- Congregational action to approve budget.
- Congregational or Leadership Team action to affirm and dismiss people into or out of membership.
- Congregational action to nominate and select lay leaders to officer/board/council/leadership team positions for defined terms.
 - Congregational action on incurring capital indebtedness (land or buildings).
 - Ministerial credentialing, care, and discipline areas conform to the Covenant Rules for the Ordered Ministry.
 - Congregational action to amend Constitution and Bylaws.
 - Schism dispute resolution occurs through Conference Executive Board.
 - Asset distribution reversionary clause assigned to Conference and Covenant.



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PROS + CONS OF MODELS

	BOARD	COUNCIL	LEADERSHIP TEAM
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive with lots of involvement High accountability Stability even when paid staff changes Quorum of members involved in the operational decisions of the church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smaller Decision Making Group More efficient Flexible with fewer layers More representative style of government Decisions made by those passionate and gifted in specific areas Greater awareness Good Coordination and Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient Flexible Can move quickly Vision focused More staff input to vision Necessity to get "the right people" on the team Need to choose people you trust Allows ministry without unnecessary involvement in the day to day decisions Requires Big Picture Leaders
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very slow moving The Pastor's voice in the process is often lost. Pastor becomes an employee Exhausts and overwhelms staff Layers of approval and discussion Fails to empower people gifted for ministry Too open to conflict Too much time in meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobbyist behavior/Possibility of ministries becoming silos Rivalry between committees for scarce \$ and volunteers Still too many layers Pastors often treated more as employees rather than spiritual leaders Feels more top down Less flexibility than LT Still many meetings. Still an operational model, not a visioning model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer people making decisions for the church. Possible overload for leadership team if they don't understand their role Team Leads but is not directly responsible for the ministry teams. Nominating Committee critical Requires a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of this group and the ministry teams. Communication can break down if not intentional about it
Questions			
Issues/Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited volunteer hours spent in endless meetings rather than invested in ministry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of control by body Still too top heavy for quick decisions to be made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Function of Nominating Committee Requires good decision makers Loss of control
General Comments	Members need to be empowered and equipped to serve with their limited volunteer hours, not spend them sitting in endless meetings.		

Adapted with permission from Dr. Larry Sherman