

Basic Set of Guiding Principles

The following document is designed to immediately implement a staff-led, policy-governed model modified for a Church of God congregation. The Guiding Principles fall into five categories:

1. through Mission Principles the board prescribes for the Lead Pastor the ends to be achieved by the church.
2. through Boundary Principles the board sets constraints on the means that may be used in pursuit of those ends. (The Governing Board must be careful not to prescribe any particular means for accomplishing the ends. Means are the domain of the Lead Pastor and staff.)
3. through Accountability Principles the board instructs its chairperson how to maintain the linkage of the board with its constituents, the monitoring of Lead Pastor's performance, and the integrity of the board's own process. Through Goals and Behaviors the board gains a clear understanding of the ministry objectives for which the Lead Pastor is to be held accountable. The Lead Pastor is expected to submit a set of annual goals at the outset of each year.

These Guiding Principles are not intended to communicate all that the church believes and practices. These Guiding Principles are intended to focus the priority outcomes, the ethical boundaries, and the organizational accountability of the Lead Pastor.

MP1.0 Comprehensive Mission Statement

In order to glorify God by bearing much fruit, _____ exists to lead people into a life changing relationship with Jesus Christ. We exist so that people in our ministry area will become committed followers of Jesus Christ.

MP1.1 Component: Evangelism

The highest priority of _____ Church is to be an outward focused church that puts the priority on reaching people who are "not here yet". We are committed to being a church that encourages members to invite their unsaved and unchurched friends. We will find ways to be intentionally involved in our community as a positive Christian presence that draws people to us and then Christ.

MP1.2 Component: Maturity

A significant and supporting priority of _____ Church shall be helping believers to become grounded in the Christian faith and to grow in their participation with the body of Christ.

MP1.3 Component: Ministry

A significant and supporting priority of _____ Church shall be equipping and deploying each believer for a significant ministry by developing their God-given gifts, talents, and experiences.

MP1.4 Component: Mission

The second highest priority of _____ Church shall be empowering each church member for a personal life mission in the world, sending out missionaries, and planting new churches.

MP1.5 Component: Worship

A significant and supporting priority of _____ Church shall be gathering and leading people into the presence of God through worship so that they are transformed and mobilized.

BOUNDARY PRINCIPLES

*[Defining **the limits of acceptable means** that the Lead Pastor is hereby authorized to use in achieving the Mission Principles]*

BP1.0 Comprehensive Boundary Statement

The Lead pastor shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unlawful, imprudent, unethical, or unbiblical.

BP1.1 Component: Biblical and Moral Integrity

With regard to the teaching, leadership, and membership of the church, the Lead Pastor shall not fail to uphold high standards of biblical teaching and morality.

BP1.2 Component: Financial Planning and Budgeting

Financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the board's Mission Principles, or risk financial jeopardy.

BP1.3 Component: Financial Condition and Activities

With respect to the actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities, the Lead Pastor shall not allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in Mission Principles.

BP1.4 Component: Asset Protection

The Lead pastor shall not allow the assets of the church to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked.

BP1.5 Component: Treatment of Constituents

With respect to interactions with constituents or potential constituents, the Lead pastor shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decision that are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy.

BP1.6 Component: Compensation and Benefits

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract worker, and volunteers, the Lead Pastor shall not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image.

BP1.7 Component: Treatment of Staff

With respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the Lead Pastor may not cause or allow conditions that are unfair, illegal or undignified.

BP1.8 Component: Communication and Support to the Board

The Lead pastor shall not permit the board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

ACCOUNTABILITY PRINCIPLES

*[Defining for the chairperson the standards to uphold for enforcing **the integrity and fulfillment of the board's process**]*

AP1.0 Comprehensive Accountability Statement

The responsibility of the board before God, on behalf of people and the surrounding region who need to be led to Christ and nurtured in Him, is to see that _____ Church, through the leadership of its Lead Pastor, (1) achieves the fulfillment of its Mission Principles, and (2) avoids violation of its Boundary Principles.

AP1.1 Component: Stewardship to Christ for Those He Calls Us to Serve

The board shall maintain an active connection to the "moral ownership" of the church: Christ and the people he has called his church to serve.

AP1.2 Component: Disciplining the Process of the Board

The board shall conduct itself with discipline and integrity with regard to its own process of governance.

AP1.2.1 Detail: Board Style

The board will govern with an emphasis on (1) outward vision rather than internal preoccupation, (2) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, (3) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (4) clear distinction of board and staff roles, (5) collective rather than individual decisions, (6) future rather than past or present, and (7) proactivity rather than reactivity.

AP1.2.2 Detail: Board Job Description

The essential job outputs of the board are linkage to the people served, definition of Guiding Principles, and monitoring of Lead Pastor performance.

AP1.2.3 Detail: Board Member Code of Conduct

The board commits itself and its members to the following code of conduct:

- a. Members of the board must exhibit loyalty to the interests of Christ regarding those whom he has called his church to serve (Matt. 28:18-20). This loyalty supersedes any personal or group interest among or outside consumers of the church's services.
- b. Members of the board must honor the principles and decisions of the board acting as a whole.
- c. Members of the board must respect the confidentiality of sensitive board issues and must avoid facilitating gossip or other "triangulation" against the practice of direct, biblical resolution.
- d. If there is a decision or discussion by the board and a member has a special or close financial, relational or any other interest that could be seen as a conflict of interest, the board member would first state that and then excuse him or herself from all votes pertaining to it.

AP1.2.4 Detail: Responsibility of the Chairperson for Integrity of Process

The chairperson enforces the integrity and fulfillment of the board's process including the monitoring of Lead Pastor performance. The Lead Pastor has the responsibility, authority, and accountability to serve as the primary leader of the church at every level: congregation, board, and staff.

AP1.3 Component: Monitoring the Performance of the Lead Pastor

The board's sole official connection to the operating organization of the church, its achievement, and conduct shall be through the Lead Pastor.

AP1.3.1 Detail: Unity of Control

Only decisions of the board acting as a whole and documented in the Guiding Principles or the minutes of board meetings are binding on the Lead Pastor.

AP1.3.4 Detail: Performance of the Lead Pastor

The board will conduct systematic and objective monitoring of the Lead Pastor's performance solely against accomplishment of the Mission Principles and compliance with the Boundary Principles. The Lead Pastor will be required to write measurable goals each year that correspond to each of the board's Mission Principles.