

Guiding Principles of the Leadership Board for Milford First United Methodist Church Revised March 2024

Our Mission:

We are a congregation committed to living out the Great Commandment by Doing No Harm, Doing Good, and Staying in Love with God and God's Creation. We are a people living into the future of God's Intention, serving the Human Family whoever they are, wherever we find them, and however we can serve them, and all for the sake of Christ and the Kingdom.

Our five tenets are Faith and Discipleship, Service and Outreach, Love and Justice, Acceptance and Inclusion, and Community and Connection.

Leadership Board:

1. The Leadership Board is the governing, policy-making body of Milford First United Methodist Church. It exists to create and supervise the strategic plan for the effective ministry of Milford First United Methodist Church. The objective of the Leadership Board is to envision, plan, and continually evaluate the effectiveness of the congregation's ministry and mission.
2. The Leadership Board will serve as a multi-faceted Board acting as Church Council with the Board of Trustees, Finance Committee, and Staff-Parish Relations Committee and will follow responsibilities and guidelines in accordance with the United Methodist Book of Discipline.
3. Leadership Board members are nominated by a nominations subcommittee of the Leadership Board (chaired by the pastor) and approved by the Leadership Board. Members of the Leadership Board shall be persons of genuine Christian character who love the Church and are committed to the mandate of inclusiveness in the life of the Church, are loyal to the ethical standards of The United Methodist Church and are competent to administer its affairs. An open invitation will be offered to the congregation.
4. The Leadership Board will consist of a minimum of nine voting members presented by the Sub-Committee on Nominations and approved by the Church Conference. They will serve three-year terms with $\frac{1}{3}$ rotation off each year. When members' terms have expired, they must remain off the Board for at least one year before being considered for re-election.
5. The Leadership Board chairperson will serve a three-year term as elected chairperson with a maximum of six years on the Board and will have the following responsibilities: a) leading the Board in fulfilling its responsibilities; b) preparing and communicating the agenda of the Board meetings at least five days prior to meetings; c) reviewing and assigning responsibility for the implementation of actions taken by the Board; d) communicating with members of the Board and others as appropriate to permit informed action at Board meetings; e) coordinating the activities of the Board; f) providing the

initiative and leadership for the Board as it does the planning, establishing of objectives and goals, and evaluating; g) participating in leadership training programs as offered by the annual conference and/or district.

6. The Leadership Board will have voting members that include representatives of the Staff/ Parish Relations Committee, the Financial Operations Team, the Board of Trustees, the Million Dreams Learning Center and the Missions Committee. Ideally, the Leadership Board should have broad generational, vocational/background and gender representation.
7. The Pastor serves on the Leadership Board in a non-voting capacity. The Pastor is in addition to the elected members.
8. No staff person or their immediate family, and no immediate family member of the Pastor, may serve as a member of the Board. Only 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 the 2016 Book of Discipline, paragraphs 2525-2551. No two members of the same immediate family may serve on the Board concurrently.
9. Only active professing members of Milford First United Methodist Church may serve on the Leadership Board; we will endeavor for the makeup to be at least 1/3 lay women and 1/3 being lay men, as recommended in the Book of Discipline.
10. The Lay Member to Annual Conference should be a member of the Leadership Board. In the case that the Lay Member to Annual Conference is not a member of the Leadership Board, that lay member will be invited to attend Leadership Board meetings with voice but without vote.
11. A Board member can be replaced by a vote of three quarters of the members of the Leadership Board for reasons of mental, physical, or emotional incapacity or illness and/or conduct unbecoming a member of Milford First United Methodist Church and the values we aspire to hold.
12. If a replacement is needed to fill a Board vacancy (other than the normal expiration of a term) it will be addressed in the following manner:
 - The Sub-Committee on Nominations will accept applications for the vacant term and submit a recommendation to the Leadership Board.
 - Anyone selected to fill a Board vacancy of 12 months or less may re-apply for a position on the Board immediately after fulfilling the vacancy.
13. An Annual Charge Conference will be convened.
14. The Leadership Board will meet monthly.. A quorum is required to hold a meeting in which any motions are to be voted upon. Attendance by at least two thirds of the Board constitutes a quorum. All meetings will be open to the congregation; however, no one except members of the Board will have a vote. In a meeting or portion of a meeting in which personnel matters or a matter of legal negotiations is considered, the Board will go into Executive Session, and attendees who are not Board members will be excused. Clergy may be present for Executive Sessions. Minutes of executive session agenda items will be kept separately.

15. The first item of agenda of the Leadership Board each year will be the selection of a Board Secretary. Accurate and complete minutes will be recorded at each meeting and distributed to Board members, and made available to the church body via digital and print media to anyone who wishes to read them. Minutes of Executive Sessions will be kept separately and not made public.
16. The Leadership Board is to provide transparent and routine communication to keep the congregation informed of missional effectiveness and resource alignment. This includes making available all meeting notices and agendas at least one week before the meeting, and summarized meeting minutes one week after the meeting.
17. Any church member who wishes to bring an agenda item to the Board must submit a written request to the Board Chairperson at least 10 days in advance. The Chairperson will determine if it is an appropriate agenda for the Leadership Board and if so, will notify the rest of the Board members and Pastor of the request. Guests attending Leadership Board meetings will be given an opportunity to address the Board; guests' comments or questions will be limited to five minutes.
18. Agenda items and documentation will be distributed to Leadership Board members a week prior to the scheduled meeting. Board members are expected to have thoroughly reviewed the packet prior to the meeting and be prepared to discuss and or take action to expedite the meeting agenda.
19. The Leadership Board is responsible for overseeing the following committees. Note that the Staff-Parish Relations Committee has delegated staff-related duties to the Pastor, and that Trustees has delegated its non-administrative duties to a Building Maintenance Team. These duties, as specified in the Book of Discipline and in Milford First United Methodist Church's long standing practice, include but are not limited to the following:

Staff-Parish Relations:

- 1) support the Pastor(s) and their family,
- 2) confer with the Pastor(s) on their priorities and the effectiveness of their ministry as well as both their physical and spiritual health,
- 3) encourage the formation of candidates for ordained ministry and for missionary service,
- 4) complete an annual Pastoral review for the District Superintendent, and
- 5) meet in closed session when discussing personal matters such as hiring, firing, salaries, and conflict resolution.

Finance:

- 1) compile and secure approval of a complete annual budget for the local church,
- 2) plan, strategize, and implement ways to generate the resources required by the budget,
- 3) provide guidance to the church treasurer and the financial secretary,
- 4) arrange for an annual independent audit of the church's finances, and
- 5) provide feedback to the congregation about monies received and spent, including benevolences and debts.

Trustees:

- 1) elect a chairperson of Trustees in the first meeting of the year,

- 2) have the supervision of all real property owned by the local church and of all property and equipment acquired directly by the local church,
 - 3) annually report on the adequacy of the current church insurance policies, and
 - 4) annually review the church grounds and buildings for any barriers to people with disabilities.
20. The Leadership Board will ensure that the church budget is finalized and approved by the end of each year.
 21. The Leadership Board will ensure there is always a current organizational chart reflective of the decision-making process and accountability structure. See Appendix 1
 22. The Leadership Board Guiding Principles must be reviewed in the first meeting of the year and amended if necessary.
 23. The Leadership Board Covenant must be reviewed, amended if necessary, and signed in the first meeting of the year and any time the membership of the Board changes.
 24. The Leadership Board acknowledges, approves, and is responsible for ensuring that these policies exist and are reviewed and updated annually.
 - Milford First United Methodist Church Employee Handbook
 - Safe Sanctuary Policy
 - Building Usage Policy
 - Building Security and Key Policy
 - Financial Controls Policy
 - Emergency Preparedness Policy

Finances:

1. Once the budget is approved, those responsible (i.e., staff and team leaders) for the various ministry areas have the authority to spend their budget to align with the objectives for their ministry area approved by the Pastor. No further approval is needed to access the budget in their area of responsibility.
2. Unbudgeted expenditures up to \$2,500.00 can be approved by the Pastor. Any unbudgeted item over that amount must be approved by the Leadership Board.
3. The Treasurer must be consulted concerning any single purchase or expenditure, **even if budgeted**, over \$5,000.00 for purposes of cash flow. The Treasurer does not approve or deny purchases but rather confirms large purchases will not create cash flow issues. If the funds are not available, the Leadership Board and the Pastor must be consulted.
4. Any expenditure over \$ 7,500.00 will require at least two bids. Preference will be given to hire local companies offering competitive bids. The ministry team leader or staff member responsible for the purchase will provide documentation of the bids to the Leadership Board for purposes of a paper trail.
5. Compensation for the Pastor and all appointed clergy will be determined by a Church Conference. Recommendations for the Pastor's compensation will be made by the Leadership Board (as part of their Staff-Parish Relations Committee duties) for consideration before the Church Conference. However, it is understood that the primary

criteria for compensation will always be the Leadership Board's review of the Pastor's performance.

Amendments to these Guiding Principles:

Changes to these guidelines must be recommended by the Leadership Board and approved by a majority vote of the Milford First United Methodist Church Leadership Board as needed.

Pastor's Guiding Principles

1. The Pastor is the Leadership Board's only link to church ministry and programming. See organizational map (Appendix 1) for the flow of lines of communication.
2. The Pastor is responsible for reviewing budgetary line items within ministry areas with the appropriate staff or team leaders for accountability from the staff and to the Leadership Board.
3. The Pastor has the authority to hire and release employees, in consultation with the SPRC and Leadership Board, using the current Milford First United Methodist Church Employee Handbook. When terminating an employee, the Pastor will invite an SPRC and/or Board member to sit in on the exit conversation for purposes of liability protection. The Pastor has the responsibility to supervise, discipline, and evaluate staff performance as outlined in the Milford First United Methodist Church Employee Handbook.
4. The Leadership Board will view Pastor performance as identical to church performance so that organizational goals will be viewed as the Pastor's performance.
5. The Pastor shall not cause or allow any activity, decision or organizational circumstance that is unlawful or in violation of commonly accepted business practices and professional ethics and will follow all guidelines under the current Book of Discipline.
6. The Pastor shall create a discipling atmosphere at the Leadership Board, encouraging everyone to grow in their devotion to Jesus Christ.
7. The Pastor is the primary spiritual shepherd and leader for the congregation. The Pastor, along with all paid staff shall guide all Ministry Team Leaders by articulating the vision of the church and focusing the work of the whole congregation toward the accomplishment of that vision.
8. The Pastor shall ensure that Board members are fully aware of their responsibilities and roles and receive the appropriate training needed.
9. The Pastor should maintain strict confidentiality in all matters of a personal nature, seeking permission when advisable to involve professionals in the care of members and friends in need.
10. The Pastor shall oversee church discipline and manage conflict in the church, seeking to reconcile relationships and promote unity within the church.

Leadership Board Covenant

On an annual basis the members of the Leadership Board shall sign the Leadership Board Covenant as a way of governing their own spiritual and leadership development, as well as to ensure that members of the Board are maintaining a life of servant leadership.

Leadership Board Members will:

1. participate fully in Board decision making and will accept and publicly support the Board's final decisions.
2. attend all Board meetings unless ill—or attend virtually, if at all possible. If members miss 25% of the meetings per year, the Leadership Board Chair will determine whether their seat needs to be vacated and filled by someone who can be more active.
3. review the meeting agenda and documentation prior to meetings and come prepared to participate.
4. model mature discipleship by attending worship regularly, tithing or moving toward tithing, having an active prayer life, participating in opportunities to grow in Christian faith and service, and sharing their faith with others.
5. be on time for meetings, silence cell phones, and be fully present without distractions.
6. encourage and support our Pastor and fellow Board members.
7. hold one another accountable and will allow church members to hold Board members accountable as well.
8. approach matters of disagreement with transparency and maintain our missional focus as a Leadership Board.
9. be supportive and encouraging publicly. Negative comments or conversations about personnel are inappropriate outside of the Leadership Board and are to be avoided.
10. be expected to maintain confidentiality with regard to personnel matters.
11. carry, support, and promote the mission and vision of the church at all times.
12. hold one another and Milford First United Methodist Church in prayer.

Signed and dated _____