

Transitional Board Governance Model **With Thanks to Rev. Murray Speer**

Preamble:

The Manual of the United Church of Canada 2013 states: “A governance structure is a framework for the life and work of the local ministry unit. It must free people to live out their commitment to God and to each other.”

“Then he said to them, The sabbath was made for humankind, not humankind for the sabbath...” – Mark 2:27

A. In recent years, the established governance models for the United Church of Canada have been challenged by a diminished volunteer base as well as a resistance against business meetings and longterm commitments. Nevertheless, United Church people remain faithful and committed to exercising their gifts for the sake of the gospel and Christ’s ministry in the world.

B. Any governance model that takes the changing context seriously will emphasize the following:

accomplishing tasks rather than filling seats on committees; flexibility to accommodate different schedules; openness to innovation; and an understanding of church as a spiritual community rather than a club or business.

C. As we move forward we must keep in mind our Mission Statement and Values

Mission Statement: “We are a faith community building relationships with God, all people and our world.”

Our Values:

1. Foster understanding of the divine through the ministry of Jesus Christ
2. Work for justice, peace, love, and wholeness of all.
3. Encourage ecologically sustainable lives.

The following is a basic Transitional Board Governance model that we propose using while transitioning to a more permanent system.

1. Board

The Board of the congregation will be elected from among the full members of the Congregation at the Annual Meeting. The total number of elected members should be no less than eight and no more than twelve. Any minister(s) settled or appointed to the pastoral charge will also be members of the Board with full voting privileges.

2. Officers and Representation

The congregation will elect a Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer who will sit on the Board as officers. These three will be included among the 8-12 elected members. These officers will be full voting members though the Chair will normally withhold any votes unless a tie must be broken. The congregation will also choose one or more representatives to Presbytery (according to Manual guidelines) who will also sit on the Board as one of the 8-12 members.

Optimally, when the Volunteer base is available, the Church Board may include representatives from the United Church Women and Youth.

3. Qualifications and Expectations

Each Board member will be recognized as a spiritual elder of the Congregation. Membership will reflect, as much as possible, the variety of members of the Congregation in respect of age, gender, vocation, and gifts. Members of the Board will be expected to maintain contact with one another, to develop themselves as spiritual elders, to commit to weekly or monthly offerings in support of the congregation, and to attend all regularly scheduled meetings.

4. Meetings and Quorum

The Board will meet six times a year: September, November, January, March, May and an offsite summer board retreat. In addition, the Executive (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Clergy) is to meet October, February, April and June. The Board may also gather for non-business meetings such as leadership study or visioning. An earnest attempt will be made to notify all members of scheduled meetings. Decisions of the Board require a quorum of members to

join in discussion at the same time. This includes the possibility of teleconference, videoconference, or real-time group text chat, email if at least one third of members reply to all, but does not include individual telephone calls. A quorum of the Board will be defined as one-third of members plus a minister or designate of the Presbytery as per the Revised Constitution.

5. Mission Areas

The Board will be responsible for organizing and overseeing the regular life activities of the congregation as it sees fit. Members of the Board may be assigned to work in conjunction with the minister(s) on one or more of these areas, or groups outside the Board may be formed and asked to report to the Board on a regular basis. In organizing these activities, the Board should remember the emphases stated in preamble section (B). One person for each mission area will serve as a liaison with FAM – eg: making a phone call quarterly to the respective committee at FAM to see how things are going, is there anything we might want to partner on, etc. We will request the Church Secretary to send a copy of our Newsletter to other Congregations.

****Note**** The duty descriptions for each committee as set out in the Constitution will still apply, even though some committees are combined.

Following are proposed transitional changes to current committees:

- ***Worship and Sacraments*** (organizing ushers, greeters (greeter/usher combination of 2 people only), scripture readers, communion, changing colours, decorating etc.). Take into consideration the placing of offering plates in the narthex so that the congregation may place their offerings in the plates as they enter the church for worship. The offering will be brought forward during the worship service as it is currently done. (This will reduce the need for four volunteers each Sunday).
- ***Faith Formation and Discipleship***; (Sunday School, Bible Study etc.)
- ***Pastoral Care and Welcoming*** (coordinate coffee hour – 2 people and lug a mug);
- ***Stewardship and Fundraising***; - includes Finance and Property

- **Mission and Outreach** (arrange Minute for Mission readers).
Promote the work this committee does in our community.

- **Nominations Committee** (Volunteer Recruitment covered by each committee).

- **Spiritual Entrepreneurship** – Members of the Congregation will be encouraged to bring forward ideas to enhance the Mission and Worship experience and work within self contained small groups to achieve their goal. Board approval would be required.

The criteria for bringing concerns and items to the Board are :

1. Where there is a potential liability issue.
2. It deals with any money matters not already approved by the congregation at the Annual General Meeting.
3. Communication with other committees if the project/work impacts or crosses over with anything they are doing

Personnel issues will go to Ministry and Personnel, not to the Board.

6. Ministry and Personnel

The Congregation will have a Ministry and Personnel Committee as described in the Manual. One or more members of this committee may also sit on the Board, but as it is a committee of the Congregation and not of the Board, it may choose to report to the Board without full representation.

7. Trustees

The Congregation will have a Board of Trustees as described in the Manual and the Model Trust Deed. One or more of the Trustees may also sit on the Transitional Board, but it may also report to the Transitional Board without full representation.

8. Evaluation

The Transitional Board will continuously evaluate the needs and resources of the Congregation in the area of Governance models and report to the Congregation in December 2017 regarding future recommendations and refinements of the Transitional Model.

**** A major part of this transitional model requires intentional and consistent communication between the Board and all Committees and or working groups. ****