

Committees

Board Policy on Committees

UUCWI Board Policy

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Applicable until revoked or amended

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Background:

Committees are the principal operating arms of the congregation, complementing the Board of Trustees (Board), which is the principal policy body. The Bylaws of the congregation, in Article VIII, amplified by Article X, direct the Board of Directors (the Board) to establish standing and ad-hoc committees and approve their responsibilities. Committees are directed to work with the Board and be subject to its approval and control. Articles V and VII give special independence to the Nominating and Ministerial Search Committees; they report to the congregation directly and are not subject to restriction by this policy.

This policy establishes standing committees and provides additional guidance on the relationships between committees and the Board, It defines principles for selection and confirmation of committee chairs and lists their responsibilities.

Policy:

Roles and responsibilities of committees are required to be approved by the Board.

Liaisons to all committees shall be designated by the Board to provide visibility for the board into committee activities.

Standing Committees In addition to the Nominating Committee established through the Bylaws, the Board has approved the following standing committees:

- Adult Programs Committee
- Auction Committee
- Building and Grounds Committee
- Caring Connections Committee
- Children's Religious Exploration Committee
- Communications Committee
- Finance Committee
- Membership Committee
- Committee on Ministry
- Music Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Social Responsibility Committee
- Stewardship (formerly Canvass) Committee
- Visual Arts Committee
- Worship Committee

Ad-hoc Committees The bylaws provide for an ad-hoc Ministerial Search Committee when needed to recruit a minister. The Board may establish other ad-hoc committees, task forces, review boards, and other such temporary bodies as it sees fit. These will be reflected in the minutes of its meetings.

Principles

As the bodies charged with carrying out the programs of the congregation, committees do the majority of the work of the church and are indispensable contributors to its effectiveness and its reputation. It is important to have committees stable, membership rewarding, and leadership appreciated. As well, it is a goal that the committees will work harmoniously and cooperatively together and with the Board, which has policy, finance, oversight, and integration roles. A Leadership Council, comprised of all committee chairs and staff, provides a forum for communication and cooperation among the operating branches of the congregation.

The leader, or chair, or convener of each committee, bears formal responsibility for the effectiveness of the committee and for conforming its functioning to policies of the board. Unless specified otherwise in the Bylaws, committees are encouraged to select their own leaders and members and to set the number of their members. If appropriate and agreed by the Board, a committee may consist of a single member, the chair. The Bylaws require that any chair, and members of Nominating and Ministerial Search committees, be a member of the congregation.

The Board cannot escape ultimate responsibility for the success or failure of each committee; hence, it may recruit individuals to fill vacant chair positions, dissolve and/or re-form committees that do not meet or are otherwise ineffectual, or take other prudent measures to assure the success of the congregation in fulfilling its purposes. The norm and goal shall be self-energized committees that operate in concert with the board and other committees.

Application of Policy:

Committee Chair Responsibilities

This is a checklist of duties that the chair must assure are discharged. They are not tasks that he or she must perform personally. It is expected that the chair will delegate many of the responsibilities to members of the committee.

- Assure that the goals and responsibilities of the committee, as stated in the Board-approved roles and responsibilities, are achieved.
- Preside over the meetings and activities of the committee, encouraging a diversity of viewpoints, free exchange of ideas, and where possible, development of consensus.
- Involve the Minister in the committee's goal-setting.
- Ensure that the committee's activities, including meetings, are productive and timely.
- Encourage that a written record of the committee's decisions be maintained.
- Train at least one substitute and potential successor.
- Assure responsible administration of any funds allocated to the committee, operating within the budget approved by the congregation.
- Annually submit any funding requests to the Board Treasurer and President for consideration in the following year's congregational budget.
- Know and follow Board policies and procedures.

- Report to the Board and congregation regularly through appearances at Board meetings, cooperation with the Board liaison, written reports to the Board, newsletter articles, website postings, announcements at services, etc., as appropriate.
- Coordinate any publicity or activities that may affect the reputation of the congregation with the Board or its designated contact sufficiently in advance to allow constructive feedback.
- Annually review the roles and responsibilities of the committee and if changed, submit it to the board for approval.
- Encourage healthy diversity and evolution in the membership of the committee, to maintain its vibrancy.
- Actively participate in the Leadership Council to ensure cross-committee collaboration.
- Submit an annual report to the board and congregation about committee goals and achievements.

Board Responsibilities

- Annually review the list of committees.
- Review and approve roles and responsibilities for each committee, when changed.
- Assure that chairs are named for each committee. Recruit and select a candidate for any vacant chair that the committee is unable to fill.
- Dissolve and/or re-form committees that do not meet or are otherwise ineffectual.
- Maintain cognizance of committee activities through reports from chairs and liaisons.
- Maintain cognizance of the budget approved by the congregation, including stepping in, as appropriate, if committees fail to operate within allocated budgets.
- Act on committee requests in a timely manner.
- Create opportunities, such as “Leadership Council” meetings, for the Board and chairs to discuss issues of common interest and develop approaches to challenges that transcend the responsibility of any one committee.