

Accountable Leadership Structure for the Local Church

(revised 1/18)

Setting for Ministry

Assumptions:

1. No church has enough money, staff, volunteers or facilities to do all that the leadership/staff would like to do.
2. Therefore, valuable resources cannot be wasted on activities, programs or ministries that do not focus on the Mission, Discipleship System and Strategic Goals.
3. The younger generation prefers doing ministry rather than serving on committees.
4. Changing the structure will not move the church forward unless the pastor and lay leadership deliberately focus their valuable resources on strategic, results-based goals.

Mission: Making new disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the world.

Discipleship System to fulfill the mission; examples:

Come: Invite, welcome, assimilate

Grow: Worship, prayer, study, community, small/growth groups

Go: Stewardship, serve within and beyond the church, Invite, welcome

Q. What in your current system is blocking progress in fulfilling the mission of your church?

Come: Every church will lose 5-6% of their members every year.
Every church will bring into membership 10-30% of first time visitors.
How important is it to serve the members of the church?
How important is it to reach a new generation for Jesus Christ?

Grow: Members will seldom do more than expected; usually less than expected:
Membership Covenant: Which of the following spiritual disciplines is God calling you to focus on this year:
Worship regularly
Pray daily
Join a small group
Serve monthly, within or beyond the local church
Give generously, working towards a tithe (10%)
Invite someone to church 3 times this year

Go: Hands-on-missions
Invitational hospitality
Volunteer service

Mission/Strategic Goals:

(2 to 3 strategic, urgent focuses of ministry to take the church to the next level in fulfilling the mission through the discipleship system. These are the specific areas to focus the resources of staff, leadership, volunteers, facilities and financial resources. Strategic goals are focused on results, not just on activities.)

For example, (A church usually has 2-3 strategic goals):

- *Increase worship attendance by 3% per year.

- *Increase the number of first time visitors and the number of new members by 10%.

- *Increase by 10% the number of young families involved in Sunday school and family ministries.
- *Add two new growth groups this year.

- *Increase by 10% the number of volunteers in ministry.

- *Increase by 10% the number of persons involved in relational, outreach ministries.

- *Balance the operating budget

Organizing to focus on Mission and Vision.

Administrative Committee General Responsibilities:

To deploy resources implementing the mission, discipleship system and strategic goals.
(Church Council, Staff Parish Relations Committee, Trustees, Nominating and Finance Committee):

- *Church Council: Governing and setting policy

- *SPRC: Supporting the pastor/staff and calling to accountability

- *Trustees: Managing facility resources

- *Finance Committee: Managing financial resources

- *Lay Ministry/Nominating Committee: Deploying volunteer resources

Authority and Responsibility:

Pastor: Leads by:

- *Communicating the mission, vision, discipleship system and strategic goals.
- *Leading the staff and lay leaders to fulfill the mission and strategic goals
- *Teaching and inspiring the congregation

(General responsibilities: Pastoral care, preaching, worship, Sacraments, administration)

Staff (Paid and Volunteer) Manages ministry, makes operational decisions, delegates tactical decisions to ministry teams: supports lay ministry!

Administrative Committees : Sets policy and governs: Makes decisions to deploy resources to support the mission and strategic goals. **Does not** micromanage ministries. Develops a partnership with the pastor in working to achieve strategic goals.

Ministry Teams: Organizes and deploys resources into specific ministries to support the mission. Ministry teams, with the exception of the chairperson may be self-perpetuating, recruiting new members of the team. (Missions, Education, Youth, UMW, Evangelism, etc.)

Members: Minister, Using their Spiritual Gifts in support of the mission, strategic goals and discipleship system.

New Accountable Leadership Organization

Church Council, Staff Parish Relations Committee, Trustees, Lay Leadership Committee, Visioning or Long Range Planning committee and Finance Committee are combined into one 9-12 member Accountable Leadership Board (ALB). Some churches use the name, Servant Leadership Board.

9 -12 Member Leadership Board

- 1 - Chairperson (may also be Lay Leader)
- 2 – SPRC, Support and call Lead Pastor to accountability
- 2 – Trustee, (with facilities team), manage facilities
- 2 - Finance, (with finance team) manage finances
- 1 - Lay Member to Annual Conference or person at large.
- 1-4, At large: One or two persons may represent key strategic areas of ministry: Children, youth, young family ministry, evangelism, missions, etc.
(In small churches, one person may fill more than one role.)

In addition: Lead pastor.

Associate pastors attend when their areas of responsibility are being discussed.

Financial secretary and Treasurer attend meetings as needed. No vote.

Secretary: may also hold another position on the ALB.

*When discussing or voting, the entire board will act as the Administrative Board, Trustees, Nominating, SPRC or Finance Committee.

*Other ministry team leaders may be occasionally invited to attend the board meetings when their area is being discussed or to report on their ministry progress.

*Existing ministry teams (missions, education, youth, United Methodist Women, etc.) will continue to operate without significant change.

*ALB and pastor are mutually responsible for making progress towards strategic goals.

Is the Accountability Model Appropriate for Your Church?

Strengths of Accountability Model

1. Buck stops with the Lead Pastor and the ALB: bringing together responsibility, authority and accountability.
2. Promotes administrative and ministry unity, functioning at a high level of efficient, cooperative decision making.
3. Mission/Discipleship System/Strategic Goals become the driving forces for ministry decisions, not management of existing ministries.
4. Leadership Board brings together some of the most committed Christians to assume a special leadership role in the congregation.
5. The 9-12 member ALB replaces 20 to 60 volunteers needed for the 5+ committees to be replaced, freeing members to be in the ministry of their choosing.

Weaknesses of the Accountability Model

1. Transition from many people making decisions to a few: There may be the perception of power or control in the hands of a few. However, in the current structure, a few vocal voices often make most of the decisions.
2. Gives the Lead Pastor additional leadership, administrative and personnel responsibilities. Appropriate staff or volunteer administrative assistance may need to be provided. However, there is a decrease in number of meetings.
3. Effectiveness of model depends on the selection of the right people to serve on the ALB. Negative people with personal agendas will limit the ALB effectiveness.

Accountability Principles for the Lead Pastor

The Lead Pastor has the responsibility, authority and accountability to serve as the primary leader of the congregation at every level by communication the vision, teaching, inspiring and leading. The pastor is the “servant leader” not the dictator.

Primary Role of the Board: Provide support and accountability for the Lead Pastor by writing concise Guiding Principles in three areas:

1. Boundary Principles

Ethical Standards : The Lead Pastor shall:

- *Uphold the highest standards of Biblical teaching and morality.
- *Maintain appropriate confidentiality and privacy.
- * Adhere to the churches personnel policies.
- *Abide by the Lead pastor job description.
- *Keep the Leadership Board informed and maintain a good working mutual support system.

Financial Standards: The Lead Pastor shall

- *In conjunction with the stewardship representatives, develop a yearly budget reflecting the mission/strategic goals of the church.
- *Oversee all expenditures in accordance with good accounting practices.
- *Assure that monthly financial reports will be made to the Leadership Board.
- *Assure that all expenditures are within the approved budget.
- *The Lead Pastor may authorized any expenditures of up to \$500 that are within the approved budget, informing the Finance representatives and Board of the approval. (Actual amount to be determined by the board.)

Supervisory Standards: The Lead Pastor shall:

- *Treat all staff with dignity and fairness at all times.
- *Build a staff team, focusing on the mission and strategic goals.
- *Assure staff adhere to the personnel policies.
- *Hold regular staff meetings.
- *Develop and maintain job descriptions for all staff.
- *Hire or terminate staff only with Leadership Board approval.
- *Assist staff in setting yearly goals. Support, mentor and coach staff in meeting those goals.
- *Take appropriate measures to settle disputes or conflicts between staff and himself/herself or members of the congregation.

2. Accountability Principles

The Leadership Board is responsible to monitor the performance of the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor is to set goals based on the Mission/Strategic Goals and focused on results, not just activities or areas of concern. The Lead Pastor is to report on the progress of meeting these goals on a regular basis.

Examples of results focused goals:

- *Number of New Christ Followers/church members to be received this year.
- *Number of new volunteers/leaders to be developed.
- *Worship attendance and Sunday school attendance goals.
- *Number of new small groups/classes to be formed.
- *Number of persons involved in community service/outreach.

The Leadership Board evaluation of Lead Pastor:

- *The purpose of evaluation is not to place blame, but to continue to make progress in achieving the mission and strategic goals.
- *The pastor writes personal ministry goals including
 - General description of planned work and areas of responsibility.
 - 1-3 strategic, results-based goals.
- *Board and pastor work together in achieving progress towards achieving these goals.
- *Establish procedures for growth/training for the Senior Pastor, staff and ALB when goals are not met.
- *Establish procedures to reward the Senior Pastor (and staff) when progress is made.
- *Establish procedures for seeking transitions in pastor/staff when progress is not achieved.

The Board Does Not

1. Hire staff without approval of the Lead Pastor.
2. Manage, direct, discipline, or coach individual staff members.

Selecting the Leadership Board

Basic qualifications and qualities of persons to serve on the Leadership Board

1. Disciples of Jesus Christ. Mature in their faith, willing to witness to their faith with humility and conviction.
2. Generous givers, supporting the work of Christ and His church, growing towards a tithe.
3. Use their Spiritual Gifts in service both within and beyond the walls of the church.
4. Desire to “make new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”
5. Minimum of three year commitment to serve by attending all meetings, participating in continuing education events, and sharing their spiritual gifts in ministry.
6. Do not have an ax to grind: They support the mission and strategic goals of the church.
7. Board Membership is a balance of care givers, organizers and visionary persons. (See Primary Leadership Components Assessment)
8. Have credibility with the various groups within the congregation. Have participated in the leadership of the church for a significant time and understand the United Methodist Church.
9. Able to focus on the future rather than trying to manage or control existing ministries.
10. Collectively, demonstrate competency in human resource management, administration, financial management, property management and discipleship ministries.
11. Support the Lead Pastor and willing to call the Lead Pastor to accountability in meeting the mission and strategic goals.

Nomination and Election of Board

1. The Nominating committee, after training in the Accountable Leadership Structure, receives applications for serving on the Leadership Board either as volunteers or as persons invited to serve. Applications may include the filling out the *Primary Leadership Components Assessment*. Persons may volunteer or be invited by the Nominating Committee to apply.
2. Receiving 15 or more applications, twelve persons are nominated to serve including the needed qualities, area representatives, chairperson and at-large representatives. Area representatives may include one or more strategically important ministry areas such as education, mission, evangelism, family ministries, etc.

3. Nominated list of 12 is presented to the Charge/Church Conference for election.
4. Persons are nominated to serve for a three year term with the option of serving a second term.
5. As Board members need to be replaced, the Leadership Board acts as the Nominating Committee, presenting the names for approval to the Charge/Church Conference.
6. As replacements are elected, the board will evolve into yearly rotating classes, each serving 3 years.

Functioning of Leadership Board, Area Representatives

Staff-Parish Relations Representatives (2)

***Mentor, support coach Lead Pastor**

***Assist in hiring, interviewing and job description writing (HR person)**

1. Lead Pastor is responsible for the effective functioning of all staff. All staff reports to the Lead Pastor, who encourages, mentors, supports and coaches staff in fulfillment of their responsibilities and strategic goals.
2. Hiring New Staff: The two Staff-Parish representatives and appropriate other persons interview potential new staff persons and may select the two finalists. Lead Pastor approves the final selection, affirmed by the Leadership Board. Key positions will be interviewed by the entire ALB, acting as the SPRC.
3. Terminating Staff: Lead Pastor, with appropriate process, terminates ineffective staff with the affirmation of the Leadership Council.
4. Staffing Needs: Lead Pastor, in consultation with the two Staff-Parish representatives, recommends future staffing needs.
5. Appointment of new pastors: The entire ALB acts as the Staff-Parish Relations Committee in all relationships and in the appointment process with the District Superintendent, Cabinet and Bishop.
6. Role of Staff: Staff (volunteer and paid) manage ministry. Staff is evaluated by the Lead Pastor:
 - * by their effectiveness in fulfilling the mission, vision and strategic goals in their areas of responsibility.
 - *by the number of lay volunteers who are invited, supported, trained and involved in ministry

Trustee Representatives (2)

- *Supervise team of lay maintenance volunteers**
- *Supervise contracts and legal obligations**
- *Work with a Facilities Team**

In most churches, there will be a **Facilities Team**, appointed by the ALB, consisting of the two ALB Trustee representatives, a coordinator of outdoor needs, of indoor needs parsonage needs and other building needs. They meet regularly (monthly, quarterly or as needed) to manage the facilities.

- *The Facilities Team does not make decisions or policy.**
- *As long as the team operates within approved budget and polices, then Facilities Team may approve projects and contracts and report them to the ALB.**
- *The ALB sets boundaries. For example, the two ALB Trustee representatives may approve expenditures within the budget up to \$1000.**
- *Significant changes in policy or facilities budget requires ALB approval.**
- *For general policy decisions, the pastor acts as “gate keeper” to keep decisions consistent with the mission and strategic goals. Significant policy decisions are referred to the ALB.**
- *Major projects: The Facilities Team will do the research and make a recommendation for approval by the ALB.**
- *The outdoor, indoor and parsonage coordinators maintain lists of and deploy volunteers to perform many of the maintenance tasks.**

Implementation of Trustee transition: The two trustee representatives, working with existing Trustees:

1. Arrange for an assessment of immediate maintenance needs, long term maintenance needs and building expansion/remodeling needs.
2. Create a list of volunteers and their maintenance skills (plumbing, carpentry, painting, electrical, lighting, sound, roofing, etc.)
3. Appoint a small Facilities Team:
 - *Replaces existing Trustees, several members of the Trustees may be invited to serve on the Facilities Team**
 - *May include several persons in addition to the 2 ALB Trustee representatives with specific responsibilities: Indoor, outdoor, parsonage, computers, etc.**

Finance Representatives (2)

- *Financial reports**
- *Stewardship development in the congregation**

1. In conjunction with the Lead Pastor, develop a yearly budget reflecting the mission, discipleship system and strategic goals of the church. The Lead Pastor/Finance Representatives present the proposed budget to the ALB.
2. Oversee the monthly budget reports, making a brief written report to the Leadership Board of any significant findings.
3. In consultation with the Lead Pastor, develop an all-year Developing Generous Givers Team. For example, arrange for the “Financial Peace University”.

4. In consultation with the Lead Pastor, assure adequate funds are raised to support the ministry needs including arranging for Teams to lead the annual operating budget pledge drive and special capital fund or other church wide appeals.
5. Lead Pastor may authorize fund expenditures within the approved budget up to \$500.
6. Arrange for annual audit.

Communication and Transparency

It is crucial that the congregation is informed of the actions and topics to be discussed and to listen to the ideas and opinions of the congregation. Possible suggestions:

- *Meetings may be open to visitors, unless SPRC personnel issues are being considered.
- *Schedule quarterly or bi-yearly forums
- *Surveys; to listen to the congregation. Fill out simple survey in worship service.
- *Monthly Newsletter reports of topics being discussed and decisions made.
- *Schedule congregational conversations after worship when major changes are being considered.
- *Select members for the ALB who have credibility with the congregation.

Typical Flow of Leadership Board Meeting (90 minutes long)

First 45 minutes:

1. Prayer time: praying for the ministries of the church and for persons who have no church home. May do prayer walk through church and community. May pray for specific persons by name who have no church home.
2. Teaching moment by Lead Pastor. Usually about 15-30 minutes, training board in needed areas of leadership and ministry related to the mission, vision and strategic goals. May be book study, articles, report on workshop attended, etc.
3. Review Mission and strategic goals. Lead pastor may report on progress or lack of progress made. Appropriate discussion follows, projecting possible needed actions. Actions may be postponed to future meetings after appropriate research has been completed.

Second 45 minutes:

1. All reports including financial reports are E-mailed to Leadership Board members or packets may be picked up on weekend before the meeting.
2. Most decisions would have needed materials in packets received before meeting. Additional information may be presented in brief, 1-2 minute reports. Decisions may be made, or, postponed until more information is presented.
3. At each meeting, one or two ministry area representatives may be invited to make a brief report of strategic importance
4. Make any appropriate decisions. (Approve the % needed to pass all motions: Suggested: 60% or more. Goal is consensus.)
4. Pray for each other.
5. Plan to see each other at the ministry events coming up in the church and community.

Leadership Board Covenant

Having been called by God to serve and having been equipped by the Holy Spirit to minister, I make the following covenant to the Leadership Board and the membership of the church:

1. I will protect the unity of my church by acting in love toward other members, refusing to gossip and adhering to the process and final decisions of the Leadership Board.
2. I will share the responsibility of my church by praying for its growth, inviting other unchurched to attend and by welcoming those who visit.
3. I will serve the ministry of my church by using my Spiritual Gifts.
4. I will support the church by faithful attendance, living a Godly life and with my proportionate giving with the goal of tithing.
5. I will support the pastor and staff, the mission, the strategic goals and the ministries of the church.
6. If concerns arise about the church, its mission, ministries, traditions or the staff, I will share my concerns with the Lead Pastor in a private setting.
7. I will maintain the contents of the Board discussions in total confidence.
8. I will take the initiative to resolve any conflict that might arise between me and other members of the body of Christ, particularly in regard to the ministry of the church.
9. I will not interfere in the work of the staff or the leadership of the pastor.
10. I will protect the congregation by holding the pastor accountable to the mission and strategic goals of the congregation.
11. I will faithfully attend all Board meetings, do assigned reading or study and attend agreed upon continuing educational experiences.
12. I will hold the pastor, the Leadership Board and the churches ministry in continued prayer.

Process for Implementing the Accountable Leadership Structure

(The following order is flexible, depending on local church needs)

2. Pastor and lay leadership express the need for a new structure to better focus resources of staff, finances, building and volunteers to make progress on mission, vision, discipleship system and strategic, result-focused goals.
3. Leadership attends *Introductory Workshop* on the Accountable Leadership Structure
For local church workshop, contact: Dick Jones, djonesgrifton@gmail.com
4. New structure is explained in dialogue with current administrative committees: Church Council, SPRC, Finance Committee, Trustees, Lay Leadership (Nominating) Committee.
5. Church Council approves moving forward. District Superintendent is notified.
6. Congregational communication through News Letter, Q. and A. bulletin inserts and congregational informational gatherings.
7. Planning Team finalizes Organizational Plan including: Mission, Vision, Discipleship System, Strategic result-focused goals, Boundary Principles, Accountability Principles, Process for selecting Board Members, Qualifications to serve on Board and Leadership Board Covenant.
8. Church Council approves organizational plan.
9. Lay Leadership (Nominating) Committee selects the 9-12 board members.
10. District Superintendent and Church Conference approves structure and board membership.
11. Board Members are commissioned during Sunday worship services.
12. Board begins to meet at least 3 months before taking over church leadership responsibilities.
 - *Board members accept Leadership Board Covenant.
 - *Study the book, *Winning on Purpose* or *Fish or Cut Bait* by John Kaiser, *Flood Gates* by Sue Nelson Kibby or *Gear Up; Nine Essential Processes for the Optimized Church* by Kay Kotan
 - *Board begins to build trust with and accountability to each other. Take *Primary Leadership Components Assessment*; compare approaches to ministry.
 - *Begin prayer walk and prayers for the current and future church ministries.
 - *Perfect flow of meetings accounting for the various responsibilities.
 - *Affirm mission and discipleship system. Begin to formulate strategic, result-focused goals.
 - *Arrange for current Board of Trustees to do a building/properties audit. Appoint a Facilities Team.
 - *Set up systems needed for future monthly meetings including the assembling of an advanced packet of agenda and materials for each monthly meeting.
13. Board Chairperson and pastor attend Accountable Leadership Gatherings in Sun Prairie twice per year with other churches for support, sharing of ideas and training.

Sample Motion for making transition to Accountable Leadership Structure

(Structure approval may be given by the Administrative Council/Board or the Church Conference. Written permission is needed from the District Superintendent. Nominating Committee report approval is by the Church Conference.)

With the oversight of the Lead Pastor and the approval of the District Superintendent, a streamlined Accountable Leadership Board (ALB) of 9-12 persons will be selected by (date) and will be given the full authority to begin and lead the _____ United Methodist Church.

Persons selected to serve on the ALB should demonstrate spiritual maturity, desire to make new disciples of Jesus Christ, have a track record of regular ministry service and a history of generous giving.

The Nominations Committee, with the approval of the District Superintendent, will present the list of ALB candidates as per UMC polity, to the Church Conference. A selection and board-rotation process of 3 year classes will commence after the first three years including a maximum of two 3 year consecutive terms to be served by one person.

The duly elected Leadership Board will begin by reading/studying the accountable leadership model principles in the books, *Winning on Purpose* or *Fish or Cut Bait* by John Kaiser.

The new ALB will assume full responsibility on (date) and will be commissioned on that weekend in all worship services.

The ALB will have governance oversight of the administration and of the resources of the church to align with and keep in support of the mission, "to make new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." All other existing committees will be redeployed as ministry teams.

The annual Lay Ministry report to the Church Conference will list all members of the ALB as members of the Church Council, SPRC, Finance Committee, and Trustees with the area representatives listed as chairpersons. All ministry teams will also be listed on the report.

The ALB will provide support for and accountability to the Lead Pastor in approving and monitoring progress on strategic, results-based church goals.

Application to Serve on the Accountable Leadership Board

Name _____ Date _____

E-Mail _____ Phone _____

Please answer the following questions, using additional paper as needed:

1. How would you describe the mission and vision of your church?
2. What spiritual disciplines do you now engage in? (worship, Bible study, prayer, devotions, fasting, religious reading, etc.)
3. Provide a brief description of your spiritual or religious journey.
4. Describe your current involvement in the ministries and leadership of your church.
5. Describe your non-church volunteer and leadership responsibilities.
6. What are your strengths?
7. What are your weaknesses?
8. Describe why you believe God may be calling you to serve on the Leadership Board.
9. Are you willing to keep the confidentiality of the Board when they are called to discuss sensitive issues?
10. Are you able to commit to monthly meetings and to preparations before and followup after meetings as may be needed?