

First Unitarian Universalist Church

Governance Policies



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Ends, Vision and Values: How First Church is Making a Difference in the World

1. Global End Statement (Mission)

Firmly grounded in our Unitarian Universalist principles, we join together on the path of spiritual and intellectual growth to promote and celebrate community, diversity, and social justice for a healthier and more equitable world.

First Church is a community of love beyond belief: transforming ourselves, Houston and the world.

- 1.1 First Church is a powerful voice for progressive ideals and action; feeding souls and changing lives.
- 1.2 Our Worship fosters spirituality, compassion and community, inspiring us to go into the world and reach for our best selves.
- 1.3 Our lifespan religious education programs provide tools to help us grow spiritually, build stronger families, improve relationships and make the world a better place.
- 1.4 We are equipped, empowered and compelled to do justice and to serve. "Doing justice" includes signature service projects, signature community partnerships and giving generously of our time and treasure.
- 1.5 First Church is a magnet for innovative ventures that spark our creative energies and meet the needs of underserved populations.
- 1.6 Our strong and diverse music ministry unites us, feeds our spirits and brings joy to the world.

First Church values and affirms the inherent worth of each person. We value personal spiritual growth through lifelong education in this free religious tradition. We value active participation in the local, national and world communities. We value our connection to the interdependent web of life.

2. Executive Limitations Policy

2.1 Global EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS Policy. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not cause or allow any organizational practice, activity, decision, or circumstance that is either unlawful, imprudent, or in violation of commonly accepted professional ethics and practices.

2.2 Treatment of Congregants. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, untimely, undignified, or that lack clarity. The behavior of the SENIOR MINISTER will not fail to be and to appear to be above reproach.

2.3 Treatment of Staff. With respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the SENIOR MINISTER may not cause or allow conditions that are unfair, undignified, unproductive, oppressive, or unclear. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not:

2.3.1 Operate without written personnel procedures that (a) clarify rules and duties for staff, (b) provide for effective handling of grievances and terminations, and (c) protect against wrongful conditions which may include, but not be limited to, nepotism and preferential treatment for personal reasons.

2.3.2 Fail to insure that staff receives training on written personnel procedures.

2.3.3 Discriminate, harass, or retaliate against any staff member.

2.3.4 Fail to acquaint staff with the SENIOR MINISTER's interpretation of their protections under this policy.

2.3.5 Allow staff to be unprepared to deal with emergency situations.

2.4 Financial Planning/Budgeting. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not cause or allow financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year to deviate materially from the board's ENDS priorities, risk financial jeopardy, or fail to be derived from a financial plan that deals with at least one fiscal year beyond the current year. There will be no financial plans that:

2.4.1 Risk incurring those situations or conditions described as unacceptable in the board policy "*Financial Condition and Activities.*" (Note: This will be a part of the board's "*Governance Process Policy.*")

2.4.2 Omit credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow, and disclosure of planning assumptions.

2.4.3 Provide less for board prerogatives during the year than is set forth in the *Governance Process Policy*, Section 4.8.

2.5 Financial Condition and Activities. With respect to the actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities, the SENIOR MINISTER shall not cause or allow the development of financial jeopardy or material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in ENDS policies. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not:

2.5.1 Expend more funds than have been received in the fiscal year to date while allowing for customary cash flow variances.

2.5.2 Incur debt in an amount greater than can be repaid by certain and otherwise unencumbered revenues within sixty days.

2.5.3 Use any long-term reserves including endowment.

2.5.4 Conduct interfund shifting in amounts greater than can be restored to a condition of discrete fund balances by certain and otherwise unencumbered revenues within sixty days.

2.5.5 Fail to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.

2.5.6 Allow tax payments or other government-ordered payments or filings to be overdue or inaccurately filed.

2.5.7 Make a single unbudgeted purchase or commitment of greater than \$5,000. Splitting orders to achieve this is not acceptable.

2.5.8 Acquire, encumber, or dispose of real estate.

2.5.9 Fail to pursue pledge payments or bank drafts after a reasonable grace period.

2.6 Emergency SENIOR MINISTER Succession. To protect the board from sudden loss of SENIOR MINISTER services, the SENIOR MINISTER shall not permit there to be fewer than one other executive sufficiently familiar with board and SENIOR MINISTER issues and processes to take over with reasonable proficiency as an interim successor.

2.7 Asset Protection. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not cause or allow church assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not:

2.7.1 Fail to insure adequately against theft and casualty and against liability losses to board members, staff, and the church itself.

2.7.2 Allow inadequately unbonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.

2.7.3 Subject facilities and equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.

2.7.4 Unnecessarily expose FIRST CHURCH, its assets, its board, or its staff to claim of liability.

2.7.5 Make any purchase (a) wherein normally prudent protection against conflict of interest has not been given; (b) of more than \$1,000 without documenting comparative prices and quality; (c) of more than \$10,000 without board approval and a stringent method of assuring a balance of long-term quality and cost. Orders shall not be split to avoid these criteria.

2.7.6 Fail to protect confidential information and files from unauthorized disclosure, loss or significant damage.

2.7.7 Receive, process, or disburse funds without sufficient controls established in accordance with generally-accepted accounting principles.

2.7.8 Compromise the independence of the board's audit or other external monitoring or advice, such as by engaging parties already chosen by the board as consultants or advisers.

2.7.9 Invest or hold operating capital in insecure instruments, including uninsured checking accounts and bonds of less than AA rating at any time, or in any non-interest bearing accounts except when necessary to facilitate ease in operational transactions.

2.7.10 Endanger FIRST CHURCH's public image, its credibility, or its ability to accomplish ENDS.

2.7.11 Change FIRST CHURCH's name or substantially alter its identity in the community.

2.8 Compensation and Benefits. With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers, the SENIOR MINISTER shall not cause or allow jeopardy to financial integrity or public image. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not:

2.8.1 Change the SENIOR MINISTER's own compensation and benefits, except as those benefits are consistent with a package for all other employees.

2.8.2 Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

2.8.3 Establish current compensation and benefits that deviate materially from the geographic or professional market for the skills employed.

2.8.4 Create obligations over a longer term than revenues can be safely projected, in no event longer than one year and in all events subject to losses in revenue.

2.8.5 Establish or change pension benefits so as to cause unpredictable or inequitable situations, including those that (a) incur unfunded liabilities; (b) provide less than some basic level of benefits to all full-time employees; (c) allow any employee to lose benefits already accrued from any previous plan.

2.9 Communication and Support to the Board. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not cause or allow the board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not:

2.9.1 Neglect to submit monitoring data required by the board in Board-Management Delegation policy "*3.5 Monitoring SENIOR MINISTER Performance*" in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, which directly addresses provisions of board policies being monitored, and which includes SENIOR MINISTER interpretations consistent with Board-Management Delegation policy "*3.4 Delegation to the SENIOR MINISTER*" as well as relevant data.

2.9.2 Allow the board to be unaware of any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any ENDS or EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS policy of the board regardless of the board's monitoring schedule.

2.9.3 Allow the board to be without information required periodically by the board or let the board be unaware of relevant trends.

2.9.4 Let the board be unaware of any significant incidental information it requires including anticipated media coverage, threatened or impending legal issues, claims or lawsuits, and material internal and external changes.

2.9.5 Allow the board to be unaware that, in the SENIOR MINISTER's opinion, the board is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation, particularly in the case of board behavior that is detrimental to the work relationship between the board and the SENIOR MINISTER.

2.9.6 Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form or in a form that fails to differentiate among information of three types: monitoring, decision preparation, and other.

2.9.7 Allow the board to be without a workable mechanism for board, officer, or board committee communications.

2.9.8 Deal with the board in a way that favors or privileges certain board members over others except when (a) fulfilling individual requests for information or (b) responding to officers or committees duly charged by the board.

2.9.9 Fail to submit to the board consent agenda items delegated to the SENIOR MINISTER yet required by law, regulation, constitution or bylaws, contract or other binding obligation to be board-approved, along with applicable monitoring information.

2.10 ENDS Focus of Grants or Contracts. The SENIOR MINISTER may not enter into any grant or contract arrangements that fail to emphasize primarily the production of ENDS and, secondarily, the avoidance of unacceptable means. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not:

2.10.1 Fail to establish methods and activities which preclude grant funds from being used in imprudent, unlawful, or unethical ways.

2.10.2 Fail to assess and consider an applicant's capability to produce appropriately targeted, efficient results.

2.11 ENDS Focus regarding Safety. The SENIOR MINISTER shall not fail to assure that all appropriate activities and actions are performed to assure that staff, visitors, and congregants are provided with a safe environment.

2.11.1 Fail to establish a safety program with bench marks which is presented to the Board and posted on the web site.

2.11.2 Fail to assess and report to the Board as appropriate regarding compliance related to safety activities in the plan in order to give the Board information on issues that should be addressed in the budget for the next year.

3. Board-Management Delegation Policy

3.1 Global Board-Management Delegation Policy. The board's sole official connection to the operational organization, its achievements, and conduct will be through a chief executive officer, titled SENIOR MINISTER.

3.2 Unity of Control. Only officially passed motions of the board are binding on the SENIOR MINISTER.

3.2.1 Decisions or instructions of individual board members, officers, or Task Groups are not binding on the SENIOR MINISTER except in instances when the board has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.

3.2.2 In the case of board members or Task Groups requesting information or assistance without board authorization, the SENIOR MINISTER may refuse such requests that require, in the SENIOR MINISTER's opinion, a material amount of staff time or funds, or are non-productive.

3.3 Accountability of the SENIOR MINISTER. The SENIOR MINISTER is the board's link to operational achievement and conduct, so that all authority and accountability of staff, as far as the board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the SENIOR MINISTER.

3.3.1 The board will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the SENIOR MINISTER.

3.3.2 The board will not evaluate, either formally or informally, any staff other than the SENIOR MINISTER.

3.3.3 The board will view SENIOR MINISTER performance as identical to organizational performance so that organizational accomplishment of board-stated ENDS and adherence to EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS will be viewed as successful SENIOR MINISTER performance.

3.4 Delegation to the SENIOR MINISTER. The board will instruct the SENIOR MINISTER through written policies that prescribe the organizational ENDS to be achieved and proscribe organizational situations and actions to be avoided, allowing the SENIOR MINISTER to use any reasonable interpretation of these policies.

3.4.1 The board will develop policies instructing the SENIOR MINISTER to achieve designated results, for designated recipients, at a designated cost. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels and will be called ENDS policies. All issues that are not ENDS issues as defined here are means issues.

3.4.2 The board will develop policies that limit the latitude the SENIOR MINISTER may exercise in choosing the organizational means. These limiting policies will describe those practices, activities, decisions, and circumstances that would be unacceptable to the board even if they were to be effective. Policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels, and they will be called EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS policies. The board will never prescribe organizational means delegated to the SENIOR MINISTER.

3.4.3 As long as the SENIOR MINISTER uses any reasonable interpretation of the board's ENDS and EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS policies, the SENIOR MINISTER is authorized to establish further procedures, make decisions, take actions, establish practices, and pursue activities.

3.4.4 The board may change its ENDS and EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS policies, thereby shifting the boundary between board and SENIOR MINISTER domains. By doing so, the board changes the latitude of choice given to the SENIOR MINISTER. But as long as any particular delegation is in place, the board will respect and support the SENIOR MINISTER's choices.

3.5 Monitoring SENIOR MINISTER Performance. Systematic and rigorous monitoring of SENIOR MINISTER job performance will be based solely on the expected SENIOR MINISTER job outputs: organizational accomplishment of board policies on ENDS and organizational operation within the boundaries established in board policies on EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS.

3.5.1 Monitoring is simply to determine the degree to which board policies are being met. Information that does not do this will not be considered to be monitoring information.

3.5.2 The board will acquire monitoring information by one or more of three methods:

3.5.2.1 By internal report, in which the SENIOR MINISTER discloses interpretations and compliance information to the board.

3.5.2.2 By external report, in which an external, disinterested third party selected by the board assesses compliance with board policies.

3.5.2.3 By direct board inspection, based on its own initiative and/or on input from congregants, in which a member or members of the board assess compliance with the appropriate policy criteria.

3.5.3 In every case, the board will judge (a) the reasonableness of the SENIOR MINISTER's interpretation and (b) whether data demonstrate accomplishment of the interpretation.

3.5.4 The standard of compliance shall be any reasonable SENIOR MINISTER interpretation of the board policy being monitored. The board is the sole judge of reasonableness.

3.5.5 All policies that instruct the SENIOR MINISTER will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the board. The board can monitor any policy at any time by any method, but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule:

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
3.5.5.1 Ends (1.1 - 1.6)	Internal	As needed
3.5.5.2 Treatment of Congregants (2.2)	Internal	Semiannually
3.5.5.3 Treatment of Staff (2.3)	Internal	Annually
3.5.5.4 Financial Planning and Budgeting (2.4)	Internal	Quarterly
3.5.5.5 Financial Condition and Activities (2.5) (including Grants & Contracts, if any) (2.10)	Internal External	Quarterly Biennially
3.5.5.6 Emergency SENIOR MINISTER Succession (2.6)	Internal	Annually
3.5.5.7 Asset Protection (2.7)	Internal External	Annually Biennially
3.5.5.8 Compensation and Benefits (2.8)	Internal External	Annually Biennially
3.5.5.9 Communication and Support (2.9)	Direct Inspection	Annually
3.5.5.10 Safety (2.11)	Internal	Semiannually

4. Governance Process Policy

4.1 Global Governance Process Policy. The Board of Trustees of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston ("FIRST CHURCH") will govern through set policies and will act on behalf of the congregation to further the congregation's mission and chosen ENDS.

4.2 Governing Style. The board will govern lawfully, observing the principles of good governance, with an emphasis on (a) outward vision rather than internal preoccupation, (b) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, (c) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (d) clear distinction of board and executive roles, (e) collective rather than individual decisions, (f) future rather than past or present, (g) proactivity rather than reactivity, and (h) the Seven Unitarian Universalist Principles.

4.2.1 The board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The board will be the initiator of policy and not be merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The board will not use expertise of individual members to substitute for the judgment of the board, although the expertise of each individual member will be used to enhance the understanding of the board as a body.

4.2.2 The board will direct, control, and inspire the organization through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the congregation's values and perspectives. The board's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term impacts outside the staff organization, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.

4.2.3 The board will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to such matters as attendance, preparation for meetings, policymaking principles, and respect of roles. Although the board can change its Governance Process policies at any time, it will scrupulously observe those currently in force.

4.2.4 Continual board development will include orientation of new board members in the board's governance process and periodic board discussion of process improvement.

4.2.4.1 The board will implement Board Orientation as documented in the Governance Policies Appendix and will continue to revise the document as needed.

4.2.5 The board will allow no officer, individual, or Task Group of the board to hinder or serve as an excuse for not fulfilling group obligations.

4.2.6 The board will monitor and discuss the board's process and performance at each meeting. Self-monitoring will include comparison of board activity and discipline to policies in the Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation categories.

4.3 Board Job Description. The Board is elected to represent the congregation in determining and demanding appropriate organizational performance. Specific responsibilities of the board include:

4.3.1 Authoritative linkage between FIRST CHURCH and the SENIOR MINISTER.

4.3.2 Written governing policies that realistically address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations.

4.3.2.1 ENDS: What difference will FIRST CHURCH make, for whom, and at what cost.

4.3.2.2 EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS: Constraints on executive authority that establish the boundaries of prudence and ethics within which all executive activities and decisions must take place.

4.3.2.3 GOVERNANCE PROCESS: Specification of how the board conceives, carries out, and monitors its own task.

4.3.2.4 BOARD-MANAGEMENT DELEGATION: How authority is delegated and its proper use monitored; the SENIOR MINISTER's role, authority, and accountability.

4.3.3 Assurance of successful organizational performance on ENDS and EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS.

4.3.3.1 To accomplish its work, the board will follow an annual agenda that (a) completes a re-exploration of ENDS policies annually and (b) continually improves board performance through board education and informed deliberation.

4.3.3.1.1 The planning cycle will conclude each year on the last day of April so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing a one-year segment of the board's most recent statement of long-term ENDS.

4.3.3.1.2 The planning cycle will start with the board's establishment of its annual plan. Planning to include:

4.3.3.1.2.1 Consultations with selected groups in FIRST CHURCH.

4.3.3.1.2.2 Governance education and education relating to ENDS determination.

4.4 President's Role. The PRESIDENT is a specifically empowered member of the board, who ensures the integrity of the board's process and, secondarily, represents the board to outside parties.

4.4.1 The PRESIDENT ensures that the board acts consistently with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.

4.4.1.1 Meeting discussion content will consist solely of issues that clearly belong to the board to decide or to monitor according to board policy.

4.4.1.2 Information that is neither for monitoring performance nor for board decisions will be avoided or minimized and always noted as such.

4.4.1.3 Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough but also timely, orderly, and kept to the point.

4.4.2 The authority of the PRESIDENT consists in making decisions that fall within topics covered by board policies on Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation, with the exception of (a) employment or termination of the SENIOR MINISTER and (b) areas where the board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others. The PRESIDENT is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in these policies.

4.4.2.1 The PRESIDENT is empowered to chair board meetings with all the commonly accepted powers of that position, such as ruling and recognizing.

4.4.2.2 The PRESIDENT has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the board within ENDS and EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS policy areas. Therefore, the PRESIDENT, as an individual, has no authority to supervise or direct the SENIOR MINISTER.

4.4.2.3 The PRESIDENT may represent the board to outside parties in announcing board-stated positions and in stating the PRESIDENT's own decisions and interpretations within the area delegated to that role.

4.4.2.4 The PRESIDENT may delegate this authority to another board member but remains accountable for its use.

4.5 Board Secretary's Role. The board secretary, also referenced as the Parish Clerk in Article 6 section G3 of the constitution and Clerk in Article I section E of the Bylaws, is an officer of the board whose purpose is to ensure the integrity of the board's documents.

4.5.1 The assigned result of the secretary's job is to see to it that all board documents and filings are accurate and timely.

4.5.1.1 Policies will be current in their reflection of board decisions. Decisions upon which no subsequent decisions are to be based, such as consent agenda decisions, motions to adjourn, and staff or board member recognitions, need not be placed in policy.

4.5.1.2 Policies will rigorously follow Policy Governance principles.

4.5.1.3 Bylaw elements necessary for legal compliance and for consistency with the principles of Policy Governance will be known to the board.

4.5.1.4 Requirements for format, brevity, and accuracy of board minutes will be known to the SENIOR MINISTER.

4.5.2 The authority of the secretary is access to and control over board documents, and the use of staff time not to exceed 50 hours per year.

4.6 Board Member's Code of Conduct. The board commits itself and its members to ethical, efficient, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as board members.

4.6.1 Members must demonstrate loyalty to FIRST CHURCH, unconflicted by loyalties to staff, other organizations, or any personal interest as congregants.

4.6.2 Members must avoid conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.

4.6.2.1 There will be no self-dealing or business by a member with the organization. Members will annually disclose their involvement with other organizations or with vendors and any associations that might be reasonably seen as representing a conflict of interest.

4.6.2.2 When the board is to decide upon an issue about which a member has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that member shall withdraw without comment not only from the vote but also from the deliberation.

4.6.2.3 Board members will not use their board position to obtain employment in the organization for themselves, family members, or close associates. A board member who applies for employment must first resign from the board.

4.6.3 Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.

4.6.3.1 Board members' interaction with the SENIOR MINISTER or with staff must recognize the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly authorized by the board.

4.6.3.2 Board members' interaction with the public, the press, or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any board member to speak for the board except to repeat explicitly stated board decisions.

4.6.3.3 Except for participation in board deliberation about whether the SENIOR MINISTER has achieved any reasonable interpretation of board policy, board members will not express individual judgments of overall performance of employees or the SENIOR MINISTER.

4.6.4 Board members will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.

4.6.5 Board members will be properly prepared for board deliberation.

4.6.6 Board members will support the legitimacy and authority of the final determination of the board on any matter, without regard to the member's personal position on the issue.

4.6.7 Board members will demonstrate a spirit of generosity and leadership through their meaningful annual contribution to FIRST CHURCH.

4.7 Board Task Group Principles. Board Task Groups, when used, will not detract or deter from the board's overall responsibilities and not interfere with delegation from board to SENIOR MINISTER.

4.7.1 Board Task Groups help the board do its job.

4.7.2 Board Task Groups may not speak or act for the board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority will be carefully written in order to prevent conflict with authority delegated to the SENIOR MINISTER.

4.7.3 Board Task Groups cannot exercise authority over staff. The SENIOR MINISTER works for the full board, and will therefore not be required to obtain the approval of a board Task Group before an executive action.

4.7.4 Task Groups will be used sparingly, and ordinarily in an ad hoc capacity.

4.7.5 This policy applies to any group that is formed by board action, whether or not it is called a Task Group and regardless of whether the group includes board members.

4.8 Cost of Governance. Because poor governance costs more than learning to govern well, the board will invest in its governance capacity.

4.8.1 Board skills, methods, and supports will be sufficient to ensure governing with excellence.

4.8.1.1 Training and retraining will be used liberally to orient new members and candidates for membership, as well as to maintain and increase existing members' skills and understandings.

4.8.1.2 Outside monitoring assistance may be arranged so that the board can exercise confident control over organizational performance. This includes but is not limited to financial audit.

4.8.1.3 Outreach mechanisms will be used as needed to ensure the board's ability to listen to congregant viewpoints and values.

4.8.2 Costs will be prudently incurred without endangering the development and maintenance of superior capability.

4.8.3 The board will establish its Cost of Governance budget for the next fiscal year during the month of April.

Appendix: Board Orientation

Purpose: To create a system that will enable new board members to seamlessly enter the work of the board given selection of new board members in December or January.

During orientation, participants will:

1. Review and discuss church governing documents including but not limited to the constitution, by-laws, and policies as well as their relationship to each other with emphasis on what they say about the role of the board.
2. Read and discuss texts about Policy Governance basics, specifically ends, policies, limitations, linkage, and monitoring.
3. Gain awareness of the talent, skills, and characteristics that new and old board members possess.

Process and Timeline

Timeline	Action	Persons Responsible
October	The board reviews the board member job description, makes any revisions and sends it to the Nominating Committee	Board
November/ December	Interviews of church members for the board	Nominating Committee
January	Nominating Committee recommends candidates for the board	Nominating Committee
January	Recommended candidates are assigned a mentor	Current board members
January - May	Learning meetings with recommended candidates to review documents and discuss policy governance	Mentors, recommended candidates, any interested board members
February - June	Recommended Candidates observe at least two regular Board meetings – mentors and executive committee stay after to debrief, answer questions	Board, recommended candidates
Mid-July	First meeting with new Board members as voting members - mentors stay after to debrief, answer questions	Board
Late August/ Early September	Retreat to refine practice, study, and plan work for the coming year	Board and facilitator

Note: "Board" refers to voting members and non-voting members (senior minister, treasurer and secretary)

Possible Documents to Review

- Constitution
- Bylaws
- Governance Policies
- Interpretation of Ends
- Frequently Asked Questions about Good Governance
- Annual Report
- Board Evaluation by Board Members
- Board Member Self-Evaluation

Possible Discussion Topics

- Policy Governance (article or books)
- Case studies
- Other