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Foreword

YOU WON'T FIND "everything rises and falls on leadership" in the Bible. Yet its truth is affirmed by the scriptures. God, the only perfect leader, reveals His glory by equipping imperfect men and women to lead His people. Jesus was grieved by those who were leaderless – "like sheep without a shepherd." (Matthew 9:36) The New Testament envisions every church blessed with healthy, functional leadership structures. "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care... not lording it over those entrusted to you but being examples to the flock." (1 Peter 5:2-3)

What system of governance is ideal? While we have glimpses of how the early church organized for ministry, God's Word does not spell out a single "sacred" way to structure the Body of Christ to fulfill its mission. Instead, we see a remarkably adaptable and dynamic approach. The church follows the Lord's lead in responding to changing opportunities and obstacles. It resembles an organism more than an

Believing that each local church is uniquely called to develop effective outreach in its setting, we release them to select their system of governance accordingly.

organization. This flexible, contextual strategy is exemplified by the "Jerusalem Council" as it designed a structure to facilitate fellowship among believers. "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements..." (Acts 15:28)

It is our desire to replicate this style of church governance. We've moved from "rule-centered" leadership to a "principle-centered" approach. Believing that each local church is uniquely called to develop effective outreach in its setting, we release them to select their system of governance accordingly.

By anchoring this choice to core qualities of our denominational identity and key scriptural values, we maintain our overall unity, while allowing freedom for healthy and necessary diversity at the congregational level.

"Building A Leadership Team – a Governance Manual for Local Churches" is designed to help your church develop a functional leadership structure. Churches are not required to change their existing governance format, but they should periodically assess the impact of their leadership system. A ministry that has stalled or is struggling to break through a "growth barrier" may benefit from reorganizing. This manual suggests some healthy options to choose from. Our churches are not restricted to choosing one of the suggested forms of government and have the freedom to develop a form of church governance that fits their unique context and ministry focus.

On the other hand, reorganization without a purpose or goal is of little benefit. Change for the sake of change only may not be healthy. Adopting a new structure isn't a "cure all." The leadership model you choose has the potential to help or hinder the ministry but is no substitute for skill, hard work, training, and prayer. Having the right people in place, committed to leading for the right reasons is more important than the system.

Like Solomon, be in prayer throughout the process. "So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people... for how is able to govern this great people of yours?" (1 Kings 3:9)

Introduction

“Building a Leadership Team” is designed to be a practical workbook that our congregations can use as a guide to design and implement a principles-based structure for ministry consistent with parameters laid out in the EC Discipline. It is not a detailed template of a new ready-made organizational system for you to adopt. It is intended to be a “hands on” tool outlining an effective pathway towards a better way to deploying your congregation for ministry

The sections of the manual are laid out in a deliberate sequence that outlines the stages you will want to follow in completing this process. It starts, in **Section 1**, with an explanation of the scriptural basis and leadership philosophy underlying the concept of building a governance structure around a framework of principles.

Section 2 moves to the step of evaluation, addressing the question “why.” Is a change in governance desirable, and if so, why? Where does your church want to be able to go with its ministry that makes a new structure necessary? As in all good planning it’s wise to start with the end in mind at the beginning.

The journey then moves to the “what” question in **Section 3**. What are some basic types of structure our churches may want to consider? By considering the flexible “menu” of governance options, you will be guided in selecting a starting point for your ministry design which you can adapt and customize to your own particular setting.

Section 4 speaks to the matter of “how to”. How does a congregation lay out an itinerary and timetable to move from one governing structure to another? Once again, your unique journey may follow a different route, but a basic road map is provided to help you navigate from start to finish successfully.

Section 5 speaks to one essential element of every congregation: Pastoral Relations Committee. This is provided to help EC churches implement leadership Principle Seven as found in the *EC Discipline*, Section 317, Pastoral Relationship.

Finally, **Section 6** contains additional resources that augment and enrich the steps of the process. It is envisioned that more tools and references will be added to this section in future editions of “Building a Leadership Team – a Governance Manual for Local Churches.”

This is not a journey to be made in haste. You will want to spend sufficient time working through each “way point” in the outline.

Please remember that this printed material isn’t the only guide you have in the process. You are encouraged to enlist the counsel of your District Field Director or to invite input from other churches that have found a better way to “govern.”

This workbook is intended to be a tool outlining an effective pathway towards a better way to deploying your congregation for ministry.

SECTION

1

PRINCIPLE BASED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Principle Based Governance Structure

The EC Discipline “Principle Based Leadership” Section 300 to 320

300 CHAPTER 1 – DENOMINATIONAL IDENTITY

301 EVANGELICAL

Believing the Bible to be the authoritative, inspired, and infallible word of God, we affirm that people are saved by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ. Compelled by this good news, and commissioned to make disciples of Jesus Christ, each local church prayerfully and strategically carries out this commission to its own community and beyond. (Matthew 28:18-19, Acts 1:8, 2 Corinthians 5:9, Ephesians 2:8-9, 2 Timothy 3:16)

302 CONGREGATIONAL

Empowered to be unique and owning the responsibility to be healthy, local churches intentionally, actively, and collectively pursue God’s mission. Each church will operate effectively by developing a principle-centered organizational structure within its local context. Each congregation will employ its gifts and callings to the glory of God. (Romans 12:4-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, Ephesians 4:11-16)

303 CONNECTIONAL

With the understanding that the local church cannot carry out the Great Commission alone, we surrender self-sufficiency and autonomy to join together in love. Embracing our common *Discipline* and our common purpose – to know Christ and make Him known – EC Churches will pray together, fellowship together, develop leaders together, evangelize together, plant churches together, perform acts of mercy together, pursue justice together, and celebrate God together. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Micah 6:8, Acts 2:42-47, James 1:27)

304 LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

Preamble

It is our desire as a denomination to move from rule-centered leadership to principle-centered leadership in order to be more effective in becoming a movement of God. To that end we offer the following nine principles as definitive for the Evangelical Congregational Church. It is our denominational conviction that each of our local churches may operate in harmony with these principles and move forward with God’s grace. Principle-centered leadership sets people free to use their gifts and abilities as the Holy Spirit leads them. With this approach we hope to recapture some of the qualities of a movement of God that enhanced our effectiveness in the past. To that end we present these principles as the foundation upon which to build local church governing structures. While there may be a variety of

local church governing structures, these principles should be found in each type of structure. A “Governance Manual” is available to assist local churches in developing functional structures.

304.2 Principle One: *Purpose, Mission, Core Values and Vision*

Healthy churches identify a purpose, mission, vision, and set of core values (PMVV) that are in harmony with the denomination’s PMVV.

- ◆ Purpose answers the “why” question. Why are we here? Why do we exist? It is the common ground on which the mission, core values and vision stand. Broader and less focused than the mission statement, the purpose statement will be an identifying link between a local church and the denomination, reflecting an unwavering commitment to evangelical theology and practice.
- ◆ Mission answers the “what” question. What are we supposed to be doing? What does God want our church to accomplish? The mission statement is a broad, brief, Biblical statement of what the church is supposed to do in the community and throughout the world. It must be closely tied to the unique cultural setting of the church.
- ◆ A core value answers the question, “Why do we do what we do?” Core values speak to what is most important in the life of the church. Constant, passionate and Biblical, core values represent the “soul” of the church’s ministry.
- ◆ Vision is the clear, challenging picture of what the future will look like as the purpose, mission and core values are lived out by the congregation. In practice, all churches should identify their PMVV before creating operational structures. We find an example of this principle in the Great Commandment of John 13 and the Great Commission of Matthew 28. Jesus gave His disciples a purpose and a mission before they organized as a church. This purpose and mission are clearly reflected in the life of the church as it is described in Acts 2 and 4. Purpose and mission must drive the ministry of the church.

Churches should align their structures to the identified PMVV and regularly assess how they are living up to the PMVV. The PMVV must be dynamic, rather than static. While the PMVV’s foundational Biblical truths will not change, the specific details related to purpose, mission, core values and vision, as well as the words used to convey them, will change.

304.3 Principle Two: *Prayer*

A healthy church is intentionally committed to discovering the heart of God through the discipline of prayer. Effective, fervent prayer of the righteous draws upon the power of God to move in His church. We enter the presence of God on behalf of our families, churches, communities, and world. Prayer allows us to hear the voice of God and to discern His good, pleasing, and perfect will.

A church committed to prayer is a church that:

- ◆ Comes together regularly for corporate times of prayer;
- ◆ Integrates prayer into the life and ministries of the church;
- ◆ Encourages prayer for pastors and leaders;
- ◆ Cultivates the prayer life of individual believers.

304.4 Principle Three: *Disciplemaking*

Healthy churches are disciplemaking churches. Disciplemaking is an intentional, lifelong process:

- ◆ Beginning when we pray for, care for and share Jesus Christ with people who are not yet His followers;
- ◆ Progressing as people choose to submit their lives to Jesus’ authority and receive His gift of salvation by repentance and faith;
- ◆ Continuing as His followers grow in love and devotion to Jesus and their commitment to making disciples.

A church committed to disciple-making will provide opportunities for corporate prayer, evangelistic training, and community outreach. The church will also provide seekers with opportunities to investigate the claims of Christ, make a Biblically informed decision to follow Christ, and receive basic follow-up teaching on how to live the Christian life. The church will continue to provide opportunities for the study and application of God's Word resulting in disciples who are committed to making disciples.

304.5 Principle Four: *Community*

A healthy church creates and cultivates a familial community of disciples marked by loving relationships. In this community, "if one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it." (Corinthians 12:26)

A church committed to cultivating this kind of community will include (but not be limited to) such things as:

- ◆ Assimilating new people into the congregation;
- ◆ Creating opportunities for fellowship and ministry both across and along common lines (such as age and interest);
- ◆ Providing for the spiritual, social, and material needs of all its people;
- ◆ Developing and maintaining healthy relationships by fostering an environment in which sin, conflict, discipline, reconciliation, and repentance are addressed in a Biblical manner.

304.6 Principle Five: *Worship*

A healthy church gathers regularly for worship that exalts God and edifies people; worship that engages both the mind and heart, inspiring people to live more fully for Christ. God-exalting worship may include fervent prayer, joyful singing, affirmations of faith, scripture lessons, Biblical preaching, the celebration of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and opportunities to respond to God's work through His Spirit.

A church committed to God-exalting worship will provide:

- ◆ Well planned, inspiring weekly worship services;
- ◆ The observance of the Lord's Supper at least quarterly;
- ◆ Occasional special worship services such as Christmas Eve, Good Friday, etc.

304.7 Principle Six: *Gift-Oriented Ministry*

Healthy churches empower disciples for ministry and mission. In order "to prepare God's people for works of service" (Ephesians 4:12), the church helps people identify their spiritual gifts and employ them in the life of the congregation, in the community and in the world. The church also takes the initiative in identifying and developing members in the local body for leadership.

A church committed to effective placement of people for ministry will provide clear job descriptions, practical training, and personal coaching to its volunteers. The church will also provide for expressions of appreciation and recognition for its volunteers.

304.8 Principle Seven: *Pastoral Relationship*

A healthy church willingly, trustingly, and respectfully submits to appropriate authority. Pastors, in turn, act as servant-leaders by employing authority for the good of the fellowship.

A church committed to a healthy relationship with its pastor(s) is a church that:

- ◆ Models and demonstrates respect for those in authority, enabling the work of the pastor to be a joy and not a burden;
- ◆ Honors the pastor by offering him compensation that reflects his value to the fellowship and his labor on their behalf;

- ◆ Maintains a Pastoral Relations Committee committed to the best interests of their pastor(s) as well as the health of the congregation.

304.9 Principle Eight: *Stewardship*

A healthy church is a good steward of its financial and material resources. Buildings and budgets are viewed as God-given tools to pursue the Great Commission. The opportunity to give money generously to the local church and to denominational activities is viewed as an act of joyful obedience on the part of a disciple of Jesus Christ.

A church committed to good stewardship is a church that:

- ◆ Teaches Biblical financial principles and calls its people to financial faithfulness and integrity;
- ◆ Provides a system of financial accountability that accurately receipts, records, and reports contributions;
- ◆ Fully discloses its financial state through regular reports and annual audits;
- ◆ Provides for and maintains buildings, grounds, and material resources necessary to accomplish the church's mission.

304.10 Principle Nine: *Global Ministries*

A healthy church places a high priority on proclaiming the Gospel and demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ to a hurting world beyond its immediate neighborhood. This outward focus compels the church to cross cultures and to cross borders in an effort to fulfill the Great Commission to the ends of the earth.

A church committed to global ministry is a church that:

- ◆ Prays for the people of the world and the global church;
- ◆ Cultivates relationships with missionaries and mission fields resulting in spiritual, emotional, physical, and material support;
- ◆ Ministers to the poor, powerless and persecuted;
- ◆ Nurtures a global vision.

305 ESSENTIAL STRUCTURES

Preamble

In order to maintain a healthy and effective connection with our denominational identity (Paragraph 300) several structures will be essential in the life of a local Evangelical Congregational Church. These are membership, affiliation, congregational meetings, Annual Meeting and Pastoral Relations Committee.

Please refer to the **2022 EC Discipline**, which can be viewed at www.eccenter.com, for more information on this item. The following paragraphs are only partial excerpts of more complete statements.

305.2 MEMBERSHIP

305.2.1 Definition

The membership of a local congregation consists of those persons whose names are recorded in the official Church Record Book. (See 321.1 Membership)

305.2.2 Eligibility

Persons may be added to the roll upon profession of faith or by receiving a letter of transfer from another church. Only persons who have expressed a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord will be considered for membership.

306 RESPONSIBILITY OF AFFILIATION

306.1 A congregation that is affiliated with the Evangelical Congregational Church or to which pastors are assigned by the Evangelical Congregational Church shall at all times be subject to the *Discipline*, and the articles of incorporation and/or by-laws of such congregation shall at all times be subordinate to the Constitution and laws of the state of incorporation or organization and to the *Discipline*.

307 CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

307.1.1 Purpose of the Annual Meeting

There shall be held in each church an annual congregational meeting to review the work of the year, consider local opportunities and needs, and elect leaders and officers required by the *Discipline* or by the by-laws of the congregation. It shall hear reports concerning the work, present status, and future program of the Church and of its organizations and societies, shall make recommendations to the Official Board/Ministry Council, and shall transact such business as may come before it.

307.2 Call of the Annual Meeting

The annual congregational meeting shall be provided for and called by the Official Board/Ministry Council. Notice of such meeting shall be given by announcing the time and date thereof on two Sundays in the regular services of the congregation held within thirty (30) days immediately prior to said meeting.

309 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE OFFICIAL BOARD/MINISTRY COUNCIL/LEADERSHIP TEAM

309.1 One of the congregation's Official Board/Ministry Council/leadership team meetings shall be designated its annual meeting.

309.2 Purpose

309.2.1 The Annual Meeting of the Board/Council/leadership team shall be the highest judicial or legislative meeting of the Board/Council/team with respect to the duties set forth in the *Discipline* (404).

309.3 Membership

309.3.1 The membership of the Annual Meeting shall be composed of the membership of the governing Board/Council/team (in the case of a multiple-church charge, the membership of the combined boards/councils) plus all the itinerant and licensed ministers who are assigned as members of the congregation(s) of the charge. All members of the Annual Meeting shall be members in good standing (*Discipline* 305.3.) of a congregation on the charge and entitled to one vote.

311 PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

There shall be a committee on Pastoral Relations constituted annually by the Annual Meeting of the Official Board. This committee shall function according to the rules of the respective National Conferences. The primary function of this committee shall be to aid the pastor, and any pastoral assistants, to effectively serve the needs and programs of the local congregation. It shall be a conferring and counseling committee and shall be available for consultation with the pastor concerning conditions within the local congregation(s) that pertain to various pastoral duties. Any requests concerning stationing must come through the Pastoral Relations Committee to the Bishop on behalf of the charge.

SECTION

2

EVALUATING YOUR CURRENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Overview

THERE'S A SAYING, "If you aim for nothing, that's exactly what you'll hit." Adopting a new form of local church governance will only be of maximum benefit if you establish a compelling case of making a change along with a clear description of where this change will take you. In other words, begin with a destination in mind.

It is strongly encouraged that church leaders first invest the necessary time and prayer to determine what are the purpose, mission, vision, and values (PMVV) of the ministry before contemplating any transition in church governance. The District Field Directors and Church Health Community can provide you with additional resources and tools to make that assessment. Once you have an accurate understanding of what is or isn't working, as well as an awareness of "how to do church" more effectively in your context, you are then ready to start the search for the kind of government structure you need to get from "here" to "there".

Later in this section is a "Church Governance Evaluation Form" to help you launch that discussion with your current leadership team. It is tempting to hurry through or bypass this part of the journey, but time well spent on the front end of the task will yield considerable dividends later. Thoughtful preparation now will make it more likely that the new design will find support and be accepted in a smooth transition. It will also increase the lifespan of the new structure, enabling it to serve you well for an extended period of time.

An Important Reminder...

The only genuine and reliable motivation for making a comprehensive organizational change is the prayerfully tested prompting of the Holy Spirit. Change – no matter how essential and positive – is always a challenging and stressful process. In many cases a whole new way of "doing church" is replacing an old but very familiar system.

It is imperative that you have laid a solid spiritual and relational foundation on which to build before you proceed. Attempts by a few key leaders to impose a new framework on a distrustful congregation are doomed to fail. A culture of higher and healthier trust needs to be cultivated and nurtured throughout the transition.

We strongly suggest that your leadership group include an assessment of trust as part of this evaluation. Six key factors can be used to measure and deepen the trust factor:

- CHARACTER – speaking truthfully and acting with integrity
- COMMUNICATION – sharing information regularly
- CONCERN – showing genuine love for and interest in others
- CONNECTEDNESS – spending time with others
- CONSISTENCY – manifesting predictability and reliability
- COMPETENCE – demonstrating skill in what you do

Church Governance Evaluation Form

1. As a governing board, identify your purpose and mission in the local church.

2. Make a complete list of the responsibilities that your Governing Body cares for in the left column.

RESPONSIBILITY

RATING

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. In the right column (above), on a scale of 1-10 with one being the lowest and ten being the highest, identify your level of satisfaction for the way in which each responsibility is handled.

4. Based on your assessment, what area(s) do you want to address at this time?
5. What makes this area or these areas such a priority concern for you?
6. What sorts of changes would be helpful in this area or these areas?
7. Why have you identified these changes?
8. Brainstorm the potential strategies that may be implemented in bringing about change along with the pros and cons of each.

Understanding Key Issues

STRENGTHS What is working well?	WEAKNESSES What is missing or needs improvement?
OPPORTUNITIES What possibilities do you see?	THREATS What obstacles have you identified?

Describe accurately your current reality:

Reflection Checklist for Church Governing Boards

✓ Consider the big picture:

1. What has God called you to do?
2. What are your hopes and dreams?
3. Which of your responsibilities are you handling well?
4. Which ones need attention?
5. What obstacles are you facing?
6. What opportunities do you see?

✓ Issues sorted by importance/urgency:

1. Brainstorm a list of possible goals.
2. What's really important?
3. What's urgent, but not important?
4. Which issues feel most pressing to you right now? Why is that?
5. If you could improve just one ministry area, what would it be?

✓ Priority issues identified and concurrence established:

1. Where do you want to go?
2. What priorities will you focus on?
3. How strongly do these priorities connect with your values?
4. Who needs to embrace these priorities?
5. What changes are needed to obtain concurrence?
6. How will you cultivate agreement on the priorities?

✓ Commitment to address issues obtained:

1. How committed are you?
2. What are you willing to invest in this?
3. What will you stop doing to free up time and energy?
4. What will you start doing to focus your efforts?
5. What will you continue doing?
6. Who can help encourage and assist you?
7. What accountability structures will help you maintain focus?

SECTION

3

CHOOSING YOUR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Choosing Your Governance Structure

THIS SECTION of “Building A Leadership Team” provides you with several basic templates that are suitable for use as a resource for local church. **Our churches are not restricted to choosing one of the following designs. You have the freedom to “order off of the menu” or develop one that is uniquely your own.** These models do reflect systems that have been used effectively by our churches or in denominations with a kindred spirit in theology and polity. In many cases you will be able to borrow and compare copies of by-laws and transitional governance ideas from other EC Churches that will inform and expedite your own efforts to fashion a governance structure. It may not be necessary to “reinvent the wheel.” You may be able to customize an existing system to fit your present or projected context for ministry.

Each of the following designs has been used to advance the gospel and glorify God. All of them possess both strengths and weaknesses. A chart has been developed to provide you with a generalized overview of

These models do reflect systems that have been used effectively by our churches or in denominations with a kindred spirit in theology and polity.

some of the contrasts and comparisons between them. This analysis attempts to be neutral; but is by necessity simplified and limited in its assessment. It is not intended to favor one structure over the others or to be a critique of any, merely an objective guide as to some of their distinguishing features.

In addition to the chart there is a written summary of each of the structures offering a more complete description of the options. To be faithful to a “principle based” philosophy of governance, these definitions have been kept basic and concise. It is for the church to elaborate on the outline and put “flesh on the skeleton” so as to adapt it to your needs and situation. Like any team, your leadership group will combine different skills, experiences, and opportunities that make it unlike any other. Be sure to maximize the gifts and graces of the “players” God is bringing to you. Make the most of your “home field advantage”.

PREAMBLE to leadership model options

GOVERNANCE in a local Evangelical Congregational Church starts with the congregation. The *Discipline* requires at least one annual meeting of the congregation “to review the work of the year, consider local opportunities and needs, and elect leaders and officers required by the *Discipline* or by the by-laws of the congregation. (The congregation) shall hear reports concerning the work, present status, and future program of the Church and of its organizations and societies, shall make recommendations to the Official Board/Ministry Council, and shall transact such business as may come before it.”

A healthy congregation will invest in their chosen leaders the authority to set the mission and govern the ministries of their church.

A healthy congregation will invest in their chosen leaders the authority to set the mission and govern the ministries of their church. This representative body (the leaders) can be structured in a variety of ways

Leadership Model Options

General Comparisons and Contrasts

**Churches are not restricted to choosing one of the following examples, but may develop a model based on these general models.*

Model	Advantages	Challenges	Pastoral Role	Comments
OFFICIAL BOARD	Traditional Decision Oriented Democratic Brings all key leaders to the table	Property/Finance Focus Administrative/ Maintenance Orientation Emphasizes checks & balances	Pastor serves on governing body	Most adaptable to small & medium size churches
ELDER LED	Shared vision and spiritual oversight Shared pastoral care Shared wisdom and experience	Requires mature candidates Training is essential for elders Possible resistance from congregation	Pastor helps recruit and train elders Pastor serves as lead elder	Adaptable to any size church Great strategy for church with part-time pastor Reflects biblical model

Model	Advantages	Challenges	Pastoral Role	Comments
MINISTRY COUNCIL	Contextual Ministry Oriented Representational Allows for broader balance and emphasis on the mission	Requires better communication and more trust Raises the bar on leadership competency and responsibility	Pastor shepherds the governing body	Most adaptable to medium and larger churches with clear PMVV statement
PASTOR LED	Intentional Vision Oriented Authoritative Provides necessary direction and decision-making while leadership team is being built	Until leadership team is expanded it may limit ministry to pastor's ability Could become authoritarian	Pastor chairs the governing body	Most suitable for church plants and restarts
STAFF LED (Team Approach)	Relational Vision Oriented Cooperative Broadens the leadership base, brings the capacity to address complex and large-scale ministry, allows for specialization	Greater challenges for communication and coordination Large degree of separation from congregation as a whole Requires higher levels of proficiency	Pastor(s) serve as leadership group (coaches)	Adaptable to any size church, allows for expansion over time and formation of separate visioning and administrative boards (councils)

Official Board Model of Governance

FOR EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

THE OFFICIAL BOARD MODEL represents the traditional, historical format for local church governance in the EC Church. In that capacity it has served well for churches of varying sizes and in many different settings. In addition to familiarity, the Official Board has the advantages of simplicity and intimacy, brining most of the key leaders “to the table” for every leadership meeting. It has the potential disadvantage of being weighted towards a focus on matters of property and finance if organized along customary lines with a preponderance of Trustees and Stewards. For the Official Board Model of governance to be most effective is it highly recommended that the various groups represented (i.e. Stewards, Trustees, Missions, etc.) meet separately and do their work prior to all Official Board meetings and report actions and recommendations to the group. When this happens, the Official Board is then free to spend its time considering the greater vision and mission of the church. This requires strong leadership on the part of the pastor and the Official Board president and discipline on the part of the president of the Trustees and Stewards.

Purpose

The Official Board shall serve as the administrative body of a particular congregation, conducting the spiritual and temporal affairs of the congregation subject, however, to the right of the review vested hereby in the Local Conference. Under no circumstances shall the Official Board usurp or infringe upon the duties and powers, as well as the right of administrative review, vested by the *Discipline* in the Local Conference or others.

Membership and Organization

The membership of the Official Board shall consist of the pastor(s), the lay delegate to the National Conference, the class leaders, the trustees, the stewards, the general superintendent of the Sunday school, the president of the senior Christian Endeavor Society, the youth ministries representative, the president of the adult Missionary Fellowship or the chairperson of the local Missionary Committee, the church treasurer, and the chairman of the local board of Christian Education, all of whom shall be members of the congregation in good standing. Should any of the above persons be under legal age (18), they shall be advisory members. The congregation at the annual meeting may authorize the election of additional members to the Official Board. When authorized, such additional members shall be elected annually by the Official Board at the meeting following the annual congregational meeting, unless the congregation at the annual meeting has already elected such members. The number of additional members shall not exceed the number of trustees.

The Official Board will elect its officers (president, vice president, secretary and any others deemed necessary) annually at a meeting convened as soon as possible after the annual congregational meeting. The Board will also elect or appoint a church treasurer from among its members or the congregation. The treasurer will present a financial report to the Board at each of its meetings and complete the monthly and annual fiscal report forms required by the National Conference. The Board Secretary will maintain an accurate record of the minutes of all its proceedings. These minutes shall be open to the members of the congregation for inspection. The overall duties of the Board Officers shall be those customarily expected of their office, unless otherwise specified.

Meetings

The Official Board shall meet regularly, usually on a monthly basis. Due notice of each meeting shall be provided to all Board members. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Board President or Pastor or at the request of four members of the Board. The Official Board shall also provide for and call the regular and special meetings of the Congregation.

Responsibilities

The Official Board is charged with administering the temporal and spiritual affairs of the congregation, receiving members into the congregation, approving and disapproving requests for letters of transfer, concerting the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the congregation, supervising the administration of the various societies or officials of the congregation. The Board shall have authority over the uses made of the church building and other property. It may also appoint standing or special committees as needed. Standing Committees traditionally included an executive, property, and membership committee. When not a regular member of a committee, the pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member.

Historically, the duties of the specific office holders on the Official Board can be summarized as follows:

CLASS LEADER(S) Originally local church members were organized into several classes (small groups) each of which was overseen by a class leader. The class leader was a lay person who assisted the pastor in shepherding a segment of the “flock” and in disciple making. Class leaders also served as prayer meeting and Bible study leaders.

STEWARDS Traditionally Stewards were elected at a session of the Local Conference from a ballot of nominees provided by the pastor. Stewards are tasked with meeting the pastor annually to negotiate his compensation package starting from the guidelines set by National Conference. They also are charged with seeing that adequate housing is provided for the pastor and for the provision of the communion emblems for the Lord’s Supper.

TRUSTEES Traditionally Trustees have been given responsibility for the maintenance and purchase of the church facility and property. Where the congregation is not yet incorporated, the Trustees hold and receive title to the property for the use of the congregation. They may be authorized by the Official Board or at a congregational meeting to represent the church in negotiations to buy, sell, or lease church property.

Every church using the Official Board Model should develop a companion set of By-laws consistent with the principles of this Governance Manual and the requirements of the current “Discipline” of the EC Church. The by-laws should clearly define the offices and duties of all office holder included on the Board. They should also specify how Board members are appointed or elected, their terms of office, and procedure for filling vacancies in office. Finished by-laws will provide a practical definition and explanation of the unique variant of the Official Board Model developed and used by your congregation.

Links

TO THE CONGREGATION – The Official Board should be in constant and regular communication with the congregation at large. It is required to hold at least one annual congregational meeting at which it reports on its actions and conducts the business and elections that may be required by the by-laws or *Discipline*.

TO THE ANNUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING - At least once a year the Official Board will convene a meeting of the Leadership Team. This means that it may be joined by the District Field Director and any holders of EC ministerial credentials assigned (located) at that congregation by National Conference. This reconfiguration provides for a point of connection between the local congregation and National Conference where matters of joint concern defined by the governance manual and *Discipline* are addressed.

TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE – The most significant linkage is through the annual election of a Lay Delegate and Alternate Lay Delegate to represent each church at National Conference. Together with the pastor these delegates provide every congregation with a voice at National Conference and ownership in its decisions. The delegates serve as the liaisons between the denomination and individual congregation.

Elder Led Model of Governance

FOR EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

THE ELDER LED LEADERSHIP paradigm is growing more popular in large, medium and small congregations where the responsibility for the spiritual direction of the ministry and the pastoral care of the congregation is shared among spiritually mature and biblically qualified individuals with the assigned, ordained pastor rather than an expectation that the assigned pastor is solely responsible for the spiritual direction and care for the congregation.

In this setting a structure is needed which can integrate and infuse the overall vision and care of the congregation through the individuals who make up the Elder Team. In some cases, the solution is to create a two-tiered system of church governance where the Elders focus on the spiritual care of the congregation and serve as the highest governing body making the financial and policy decisions while a Ministry Council is formed of individuals (sometimes called deacons) who are given the responsibility to carry out the various ministries of the church such as Christian education, missions, property management, youth ministry, etc.

It should be noted and understood that while we recognize and utilize lay elders in our congregations, the Evangelical Congregational Church refers to our pastors as elders. Pastoral elders are called by God, specifically examined, trained, ordained, and credentialed as the “Ordained Elder” or spiritual authority over a congregation and lay elders.

Purpose

The Elder Led Model intentionally seeks to identify, train and deploy those individuals in a congregation who are spiritually gifted and biblically qualified to lead as “under-shepherds” in harmony with the authority and direction of the assigned, ordained Elder/Pastor. This biblical model allows for a broader group to cast and carry out the spiritual vision and direction of the local congregation within its unique context. The elders can share the decision making and spiritual caregiving of the congregation, or just the spiritual care, allowing the assigned pastor to focus more on his gifted strengths while allowing the elder’s strengths to offset his weaker gifts. It has the advantage of embracing a team approach to ministry that finds unity in sharing a common vision. The number and duties of the Elder Team can increase or decrease depending on the size of the congregation, making it very scalable to any size congregation with a full-time or part-time pastor(s).

The challenges of the elder led model can include recruiting spiritually mature candidates who would be trusted by the congregation to serve their spiritual needs, training both the elders and the congregation to minister and receive ministry that traditionally only came from the pastor. The assigned pastor will need to intentionally train and coach his lay elders so that there is a consistent quality of ministry and care throughout the congregation. Pastors will have to be okay with surrendering and delegating ministry tasks to the elders, celebrating their accomplishments and applauding their successes.

Membership and Organization

Because of the biblical understanding of elders as men and the amount of time the elders will spend together with the pastor, elders should be male candidates nominated or presented to the congregation by a nominating process for approval or ratification. The numbers of elders and their terms of service can fluctuate depending on the size of the congregation. A clear ministry description, qualifications and expectations for elders should be developed prior to selecting

elders. Elders are organized into a team or board and have regular meetings with the pastor to carry out their intended purpose prescribed in the congregation's bylaws.

Meetings

The elders should meet as a group or board on a regular basis, such as monthly or every other month to report, confer, pray together and strategize ways to carry out their responsibilities. In this structure the pastor or pastoral staff play a vital role in cultivating the vision and coordinating the functioning of the elder's ministry among the congregation and community.

Responsibilities

Every church using the Elder Led Model should develop a document that clearly states the purpose, responsibilities, requirements, terms and process of forming and utilizing an Elder Team/Board. This document should be approved and become a part of the congregation's by-laws consistent with the principles of this Governance Manual and the requirements of the current *Discipline* of the EC Church. The by-laws should clearly define the offices and duties of all governance groups and office holders. They should also specify how elders are appointed or elected, their terms of office, and procedure for filling vacancies in office. Some churches may wish to produce a companion manual of policies or procedures to guide the functioning of their Elder Team.

Links

TO THE CONGREGATION – The Elder Led system should be in constant and regular communication with the congregation at large. It is required to hold at least one annual congregational meeting to which the overall governing body and its major sub-groups report on their actions and conduct the business and elections that may be required by the by-laws or *Discipline*.

TO ANNUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING -At least once a year the highest governing body will convene a meeting of the Leadership Team. This means that it may be joined by the District Field Director and any holders of EC ministerial credentials assigned (located) at that congregation by National Conference. This reconfiguration provides for a point of connection between the local congregation and National Conference where matters of joint concern defined by the governance manual and *Discipline* are addressed.

TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE – The most significant linkage is through the annual election of a Lay Delegate and Alternate Lay Delegate to represent each church at National Conference. Together with the pastor these delegates provide every congregation with a voice at National Conference and ownership in its decisions. The delegates serve as the liaisons between the denomination and individual congregation.

Ministry Council Model of Governance

FOR EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

THE MINISTRY COUNCIL Model traces its roots to permission given to churches in the 1990's to explore "alternative organizations". The intent was to provide freedom to design and test governance structures enabling local churches to become more missional in the context of their community.

The Council structure benefits from being built around leaders who represent key ministry areas of the church which reflect the purpose, mission, visions, and value of the congregation as a whole. This more balanced and holistic approach to governance tends to result in a more outreach, growth-oriented congregation. Since in most council designs each major ministry is represented by a single person, there is a greater need to communicate discussions and decisions to other members of the wider ministry team. Council members may be required to wear multiple leadership "hats", serving on the council as well as a ministry commission or committee. This structure works best when it is trust-oriented and permission-giving in nature, empowering individuals and groups to do the ministry, while the Council focuses on the "big picture" of vision, goals, and overall mission of discipling.

Purpose

The Ministry Council shall serve as the administrative body of a particular congregation conducting the temporal and spiritual affairs of the congregation subject, however, to the right of the review vested hereby in the Local Conference. Under no circumstance shall the Official Board usurp or infringe upon the duties and powers, as well as the right of administrative review, vested by the *Discipline* in the Annual Leadership Team Meeting.

Membership and Organization

The membership configuration of each Ministry Council may vary greatly from church to church because its structure should reflect the purpose, mission, vision, and values of the local congregation and facilitate the fulfillment of the Great Commandment and Great Commission. Every Ministry Council must include the pastor(s), the lay delegate to the National Conference and church treasurer. They will be joined by a leader (chairperson) representing each of the major ministry areas (commissions/teams) designated by the congregation as necessary to be directly represented on the council as the governing body of the church. Churches with council governance have usually established "commissions" to oversee the following essential areas of ministry: Evangelism, Discipleship, Property, Worship, Missions, and Finance. These groups may be re-combined and renamed as deemed best in the local context. The aim is the development of a system that promotes church health in terms of missionality, spirituality, and functionality.

Additional ministry representatives or at-large members may be added as the church determines, but their number should not exceed those of the core ministries identified by the congregation. Council members shall be members of the congregation in good standing. Should any of the above persons be under legal age (18), they shall be advisory members. It is up to the local church to determine how Council members are selected and by whom. In some current Ministry Council configurations individuals selected to chair a ministry commission are given a seat on the council by virtue of that position. In others, leaders are selected to the Council and then appointed to serve on or lead a particular commission.

At the next regular Council meeting after the annual congregational meeting, officers should be selected. Typically, they will include a Chairperson (president), Vice Chairperson (vice president), Secretary, Treasurer, and others deemed necessary. The treasurer will present a financial report to the council at each of its meetings and complete the monthly and annual fiscal report forms required by the National Conference. The Secretary will maintain an accurate record of the minutes of all its proceedings. These minutes shall be open to the members of the congregation for inspection. The overall duties of the Council officers shall be those customarily expected of their office, unless otherwise specified.

Meetings

The church may determine the frequency and scheduling of Ministry Council meetings. It is recommended that the governing body convene at least on a bimonthly basis. Due notice of each meeting shall be provided to all Council members. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Chairperson or Pastor or at the request of four members of the Council. The Council shall also provide for and call the regular and special meetings of the congregation.

Responsibilities

The Ministry Council is charged with administering the temporal and spiritual affairs of the congregation, receiving members into the congregation, approving and disapproving requests of letters of transfer, concerting the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the congregation, supervising the administration of the various societies or officials of the congregation. The Council shall have authority over the uses made of the church building and other property. It may also appoint standing or special committees as needed. Standing Committees traditionally include an executive and membership committee. When not a regular member of a committee the pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member with vote.

Every church using the Ministry Council Model should develop a companion set of By-laws consistent with the principles of this Governance Manual and the requirements of the current "Discipline" of the EC Church. The by-laws should clearly define the offices and duties of all office holders included on the Council. They should also specify how Council members are appointed or elected, their terms of office, and procedure for filling vacancies in office. Finished by-laws will provide a practical definition and explanation of the unique variant of the Ministry Council Model developed and used by your congregation.

Links

TO THE CONGREGATION – The Ministry Council should be in constant and regular communication with the congregation at large. It is required to hold at least one annual congregational meeting to which it reports on its actions and conducts the business and elections that may be required by the by-laws or *Discipline*.

TO THE ANNUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING – At least once a year the Ministry Council will convene a meeting of the Leadership Team. This means that it may be joined by the District Field Director and any holders of EC ministerial credentials assigned (located) at that congregation by National Conference. This reconfiguration provides for a point of connection between the local congregation and National Conference where matters of joint concern defined by the governance manual and Discipline are addressed.

TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE – The most significant linkage is through the annual election of a Lay Delegate and Alternate Lay Delegate to represent

each church at National Conference. Together with the pastor these delegates provide every congregation with a voice at National Conference and ownership in its decisions. The delegates serve as the liaisons between the denomination and individual congregation.

Pastor Led Model of Governance

FOR EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

THE PASTOR LED MODEL is most appropriate to a new church plant, or a congregation going through the process of restart or revitalization. It is assumed in all of our leadership models that the pastor functions as the primary leader of the congregation and serves as the point person casting a vision for ministry and gathering together a leadership team to pursue that vision. But where a congregation is still so “young” or small that a core group of leaders has not yet been identified and equipped, a solo lead pastor may by necessity be required to take on a wider array of leadership tasks than would be expected or desired in a more mature ministry. In most cases it is anticipated that Pastor Led governance is a temporary structure that will be outgrown and replaced by another, broader-based model as soon as is practical for the health of the church.

This model has the strengths of being vision-oriented and focused. It enables a new work to be birthed or an older one to be renewed. It facilitates unity and decisiveness. It can have the weakness of being left in place for too long, creating an unhealthy, unscriptural dependency upon the pastor. Even a richly gifted and deeply committed pastor may limit the growth of ministry if he does not multiply and release additional leaders to share the opportunities and responsibilities for outreach and discipling. Every leader, including a church planter pioneering a new work from scratch, needs to be under accountability to someone else and in healthy relationship with others.

Purpose

The Pastor Led Model allows for a solo pastor with or without a small core group of leaders to administer and establish the work of a new or recovering church by conducting the temporal and spiritual affairs of that ministry. During this interim when many of the leadership structures built into other EC Churches cannot be initiated due to a lack of qualified leaders, many of the functions of those groups will be carried by an individual pastor or a ministry launch team of just a few people. Even in this phase, however, the Pastor Led structure shall under no circumstance usurp or infringe upon the duties and powers, as well as the right of administrative review, vested by the *Discipline* in the National Conference or others. In most cases ministries using this model will also function under the guidance and guidelines of the Kingdom Extension Community.

Membership and Organization

The unique circumstances under which the Pastor Led Model is likely to be deployed make it virtually impossible to lay out even a skeletal outline describing what this nascent leadership structure should look like. In many ways it is like a child still growing in the womb from conception to birth. It is recommended that the lead pastor consult and use the start-up training and resources provided through the Kingdom Extension Community as he begins to develop a governance structure. The type of leadership team built should flow out of the purpose, mission, vision, and values God has given for the ministry.

Another important word of counsel is to begin with the end in mind. Examine the other leadership models presented in this manual. Make a tentative decision as to which option you anticipate adopting in the future. Find ways to lay a foundation in your fledgling leadership structure and selection of leaders that will position you to transition to the system you have chosen when the time comes.

Since an official “church membership roll” isn’t created until a church is chartered, membership in a traditional sense cannot be used as a criterion for leadership eligibility. An even greater emphasis than usual needs to be placed on issues of character, spirituality, giftedness, and shared vision when selecting leaders for the team. Initially the lead pastor may need to be more involved in things like minute taking and financial record keeping than is ideal. For the sake of accuracy and accountability these are responsibilities that should be shared or delegated with qualified lay leaders as soon as possible. Individuals with the potential to become leaders or officers in the developing structure should be cultivated.

Meetings

The pastor will determine the frequency and scheduling of leadership meetings. It is important to free people up to do ministry rather than tie them up attending unnecessary meetings. At the same time meeting together helps build relationship and reinforce a common vision.

Responsibilities

Subject to the rights and powers reserved to the National Conference and others, the lead pastor and leadership team are charged with administering the temporal and spiritual affairs of the congregation, in line with the purpose, mission, vision and values developed for the ministry. The pastor and leadership team are responsible for building a strategy for disciple making and outreach. As the ministry grows, the leadership structure will need to grow with it and make decisions regarding the model of governance it will choose to implement. It must be remembered that structure is but a means to an end, not an end unto itself. The system should serve and support ministry, not exist and sustain itself at the cost of ministry. In many cases “less is more” and the simpler the system, the more likely it is to be able to reproduce itself more rapidly.

Every church using the Pastor Led Model should be preparing to select a more developed model as the growth of the church allows and requires. At that time By-laws and other supporting documents and structures can be developed as needed in order to facilitate healthy ministry.

Links

TO THE CONGREGATION – The lead pastor and leadership team should be in constant and regular communication with the congregation at large. For the most part business will be conducted through personal relationships and networking rather than formal meetings. As the group grows it should consider the wisdom of holding at least one annual “congregational meeting” to use in part to plan for “the next steps” in accomplishing the mission and reaching for the vision.

TO THE ANNUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING – Prior to chartering there is no provision or requirement for an Annual Leadership Team Meeting to be held. Issues generally assigned to that session will be cared for by the pastor and leadership team working with the District Field Director or Kingdom Extension Community.

TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE – Prior to chartering, the church is not authorized to select a Lay Delegate but can choose representatives who will attend National Conference in an advisory/non-voting capacity. These representatives serve as the liaisons between the denomination and individual congregation.

For the Pastor Led Model to be used outside of the church plant, restart, or revitalization guidelines of the Kingdom Extension Community, prior permission must be obtained from the Bishop and Church Health Community of the National Conference. At all stages, the Pastor Led Model must operate within and under the requirements of the current *Discipline*, Rules of National Conference, and strategy and policy of the Kingdom Extension Community.

Staff Led Model of Governance

FOR EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

THE STAFF LED LEADERSHIP paradigm may most commonly be considered for use in a larger, multiple staff congregation where the scale and complexity of leadership is perceived to have outgrown the effectiveness of the Official Board or Ministry Council Model. In this setting a structure is needed which can integrate and infuse the vision of the “pastoral team” through several supportive layers of leadership. In some cases, the solution is to create an overall governing board which focuses on the development of vision, direction, and general policy for the ministry. This vision is then entrusted to another level of staff or commission leadership for actual implementation and the creation of procedures, processes, and programs that facilitate daily operations.

It is possible however, that a Staff Led or team leadership style structure could be the next step of development from a Pastor Led Model or even employed in a church plant. In this case a less hierarchical and more relational “co-pastor” approach might be pursued simultaneously with the creation of a vision-focused governing board or council. There are also team-based structures that seek to organize ministry on a more connectional, networking basis.

Purpose

The Staff Led Model intentionally broadens the leadership base so as to maximize the capacity of the structure to expand and specialize as needed. It has the advantage of embracing a team approach to ministry that finds unity in sharing a common vision. Its ability to separate supervisory tasks (visioning) from administration (management) may enable the ministry to remain more effective and efficient while continuing to grow in size and scale. At the same time, a team-based structure can also be used to facilitate the multiplication of groups and leaders on a more localized level. In this form leadership develops organically, in more of a networking style.

The challenges of the staff led approach come in the areas of communicating and coordinating the vision at all levels. In larger churches there may be a greater need to formalize job descriptions and procedures so as to clarify roles and responsibilities. The governing board and staff need to work together in a mutual partnership. The group that does the vision casting must remain connected to the groups that care for the ongoing operations of the ministry. Both leadership bodies must stay linked to the congregation as a whole. Since more leaders are needed to populate this structure, the capacity to equip and release gifted leaders becomes crucial.

Membership and Organization

This format has many different variations and can be modified in numerous ways to reflect the opportunities and history of a given congregation. Typically, an overall board or council is established and charged with the development and evaluation of the purpose, mission, vision, and values of the ministry. This main governing body usually consists of the pastoral staff and key lay leaders selected for their spiritual maturity, character, wisdom, and gifting to oversee the congregation from a “big picture” perspective. “What has God called us to be? Who has He commissioned us to reach?” Together this group clarifies the focus. Other officers or representatives may be added to the leadership core group as needed.

Beneath this vision-oriented group there is usually another level of leadership organized to carry out the mission and fulfill the vision. This “layer” could consist of as many ministry commissions or teams as the church deems necessary to its healthy functioning. These commissions or teams could be led by staff members, pastoral or lay, or by chairpersons elected

or appointed from the membership at large. This group may also be augmented by the addition of other officers or leaders as deemed best. Each of these “units” could have their own sub-set of committees or teams as best suits the situation and system.

Meetings

The two-tiered (or multi-level) nature of this structure means that the schedule of meetings is more elaborate and must be worked out for each local setting. The overall governing board may meet on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis rather than month to month. Meetings of the “middle level” commissions or teams may be monthly or on an “as needed” or “as agreed upon” basis. In this structure the pastoral staff or leadership team play a vital role in cultivating the vision and coordinating the functioning of the various parts of the structure. Informal networking becomes an important piece in releasing and deploying people for ministry, instead of tying them up in meetings. Person-to-person contact is supplemented by the development of a detailed budget and procedures/policy “manual” in order to provide the necessary degree of consistency and control to the system.

Responsibilities

The Staff Led structure is charged with administering the temporal and spiritual affairs of the congregation, receiving members into the congregation, approving or disapproving requests for letters of transfer, concerting the best measure for promoting the spiritual interests of the congregation, supervising the administration of the various commissions, societies or officials of the congregation. The governing body shall have authority over the uses made of the church building and other property. It may also appoint commissions, teams, standing or special committees as needed.

Major leadership groups should provide for the existence of their own executive committee. Adequate provision should also be made for the recording of minutes and keeping of financial records. The structure should establish a means of determining church membership. Members of the pastoral staff should be appointed to councils, commissions, or boards that represent the ministries for which they have major responsibilities. It is assumed that the senior or lead pastor will serve on an overall governing body and be at least an ex-officio member of the remaining primary leadership groups, as well as others that reflect his gifts and graces for ministry.

Every church using the Staff Led Model should develop a companion set of By-laws consistent with the principles of this Governance Manual and the requirements of the current *Discipline* of the EC Church. The by-laws should clearly define the offices and duties of all governance groups and office holders. They should also specify how leaders are appointed or elected, their terms of office, and procedure for filling vacancies in office. Finished by-laws will provide a practical definition and explanation of the unique variant of the Staff Led Model developed and used by your congregation. Larger churches may find it necessary to produce a companion manual of policies or procedures to expedite the functioning of their leadership system.

Links

TO THE CONGREGATION – The Staff Led system should be in constant and regular communication with the congregation at large. It is required to hold at least one annual congregational meeting to which the overall governing body and its major sub-groups report on their actions and conduct the business and elections that may be required by the by-laws or *Discipline*.

TO THE ANNUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING –At least once a year the highest governing body will convene a meeting of the Leadership Team. This means that it may be joined by the District Field Director and any holders of EC ministerial credentials assigned (located) at that congregation by National Conference. This reconfiguration provides for a point of connection between the local congregation and National Conference where matters of joint concern defined by the governance manual and *Discipline* are addressed.

TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE – The most significant linkage is through the annual election of a Lay Delegate and Alternate Lay Delegate to represent each church at National Conference. Together with the pastor these delegates provide every congregation with a voice at National Conference and ownership in its decisions. The delegates serve as the liaisons between the denomination and individual congregation.

“Essentials” Checklist for All EC Governance Structures

SEE ALSO THE 2022 EC DISCIPLINE SECTIONS 305-311

FOR THE SAKE OF UNITY to our core values and fidelity to a principle-based approach to leadership, the following features must be incorporated into the governance structure of all of our churches. [In the case of a church plant, restart, or revitalization work it is understood that some of these features may not be practical at the very beginning. They should be added to the system as soon as possible and prior to chartering.]

1. The lead pastor will be a member with a vote of the highest governing body.
2. Provision will be made for the election of a Lay Delegate and Alternate Lay Delegate to National Conference as defined by the *Discipline*.
3. Provision will be made for the election or appointment of representatives from the church to the District Ministry team the congregation is assigned to.
4. Provision will be made for a functional Pastoral Relations Committee as established in the *Discipline* and the Rules of National Conference.
5. Provision will be made for the highest governing body to meet and fulfill the duties assigned to the Annual Leadership Team Meeting by the *Discipline* and the Rules of National Conference.
6. Provision will be made for the timely and orderly selection of all office holders, along with the means of filling vacancies that arise mid-term.
7. Provision will be made for the selection of the officers of the highest governing body of the church who will also serve as corporate officers for the ministry.
8. Provision will be made for the development of a set of by-laws governing the congregation, and that these by-laws will be stated to be amendable by a favorable vote of the majority of the church membership at a meeting duly called and announced for that purpose.
9. Provision will be made for an Annual Congregational Meeting to be held as defined by the *Discipline*.
10. The structure must be subordinate to and compatible with the requirements of the *Discipline* and Rules of National Conference. Each congregation retains the right to own its own property and disaffiliate from the denomination, but only according to the procedure established by the *Discipline*.

The Annual Meeting of the Leadership Team

THIS ANNUAL MEETING refers to special sessions of the highest governing body of the local congregation, which must be held at least once a year. When convened for this purpose the Official Board, Ministry Council, Leadership Team, or Governing Body is augmented by the addition of all itinerant and licensed EC ministers who are members of the congregation. They are joined also by the District Field Director who chairs the meeting when present.

A complete listing of the duties and details of the Annual Meeting is found in Sections 309 of the *Discipline*. The essential purpose of this session is to provide for an official and guaranteed connection between an individual congregation and the larger denominational family. It is at this meeting that elections are held for the Lay and Alternate Delegate who represent the church to National Conference. It is in this session that a pastoral compensation package based upon National Conference requirements and guidelines receives final approval. It is this Annual Meeting that acts upon candidates for ministerial credentials who will be referred to National Conference and its committees for processing. In cases where charges of misconduct brought against a church leader cannot be resolved at the local level through the *Discipline's* process for restoration, it is the Annual Meeting that acts to refer the dispute to National Conference for resolution. The Annual Meeting also functions as a joint governing body caring for matters of common interest in a multiple church charge.

Congregational Meetings

AN INTEGRAL PART of congregationalism is the annual meeting of the leaders of the local church with their congregations. A sample agenda for this meeting could include:

- ◆ Devotions
- ◆ Review the work of the year (Pastor, Commission/Committee Reports)
- ◆ Consideration of local opportunities and needs
- ◆ Elect leaders and officers required by the *Discipline* or by-laws of the congregation
- ◆ Hear reports on special initiatives of the church regarding present and future programs
- ◆ Make recommendations to the governing body (~~Ministry Council/Official Board~~)
- ◆ Transact such business that may come before it.

Some General Recommendations for the Congregational Meeting include:

- ◆ The pastor should be responsible for the leadership of the Congregational Meeting and should preside over the meeting or appoint a leader from the governing body.
- ◆ As part of the meeting, the pastor should have an important role in reporting to the congregation. He may also want to give a meditation to open the meeting. It is important that the pastor set the tone for the meeting.
- ◆ If the Pastor and/or leaders know of any special issues or concerns from the congregation, these issues sometimes can be handled in smaller group situations or committees prior to the full congregation meeting.
- ◆ Also, if special issues arise at the congregational meeting, it may be helpful to refer them to special council/board committees to address the issues. It is difficult to discuss or resolve issues in a large group meeting.
- ◆ It may be helpful to get written questions and/or agenda items from the congregation prior to the meeting to allow for preparation on how to address these issues.
- ◆ The agenda for the meeting should be assembled by the pastor, with input from the governing body.

SECTION

4

MOVING
TO A
NEW
GOVERNANCE
STRUCTURE

Moving To A New Governance Structure

ONCE YOUR EXISTING LEDERSHIP TEAM (governing board) has worked through Sections 1-3 of this manual and settled upon a recommendation to bring to the congregation for a new governance structure, it is important to formalize the process. Paying careful attention to observe your current by-laws and leadership format is crucial. Not only does this demonstrate the integrity and honesty necessary for healthy church leadership, it also legitimizes and strengthens the new structure by clearly and firmly anchoring it to the foundation of the history and memories of what preceded it. You are free to build high in your future because your design is deeply rooted in the ministry's past.

While the pathway to adopting a new structure will vary from church to church, there are certain crucial milestones to observe along the way in every setting. Communicate frequently and thoroughly. Explain what you are doing and why. Anticipate possible objections or concerns. Develop a set of answers for the “frequently asked questions” you are likely to face. A lack of information and understanding leads to fear, and fear leads to resistance. Many excellent proposals have been rejected because they are not well presented or sufficient opportunity for input invited from those making the final decision. In most cases more than a majority vote at a congregational meeting is needed to change church by-laws. Do not leave the congregation as a whole out of the loop or in the dark until the day of the meeting. Bring them on the journey with you from the beginning.

Organize the transition. It is unlikely that a new system can be put in place in its entirety overnight. You will need to think through and plan out a means of phasing out what was, while bringing what is to be on line. You may need to allow for a brief interim period where elements of both the new and the old systems overlap. In some cases, you will be shutting down organizations or ministries that are no longer required. In others you will be creating groups from scratch or recruiting brand-new leaders to give them life. This is a process calling for patience and perseverance. Expect to spend a year or more simply “learning as you go”. Understand that change, even good and necessary change, is always uncomfortable. It will take time until everyone feels at home in a “new normal” once again. Be positive and adaptable. Remember the vision that you are working for and keep promoting it.

Reflect as you are in transit. Take notes on what you learn along the way. You will need to make mid-course corrections. Give things time to settle down before making major modifications of something brand-new, but realize that there may be some surprises on the journey. The Lord saw them coming, even if you didn't. Be prepared to revisit and reassess them in due time. Remember not to hold too tightly to any structure. Governance is a tool, not an end product. Eventually the brand-new system you have labored to install will run its course, too. Having served God's purpose in “its generation”, it will need to be assessed and upgraded in its turn. You'll be all the better equipped to make that happen, having successfully traveled that road before.

The implementation phase can be complex and requires thoughtful preparation. A strategy for “closing down” the old format while bringing a new one “on line” must be developed.

Once again, the “pathway” that is created to build the bridge from what was to what is will need to be customized to your unique local situation. In some settings it may be possible and preferable to simply terminate the old structure and launch its fully functioning replacement all at once. In others it may be best to design a timetable for more gradually phasing one system out and another in, allowing for a certain period of overlap between the two. Examples of churches that have made a similar change may be borrowed from, but ultimately the template you create must be your own.

The following outline contains a series of suggested steps which are likely to be a part of any effective transition strategy. You may find that not every stage is applicable or in the best order for making your move to a new governance structure. For completeness, this sequence attempts to capture the entire process from start to finish, including the discussion and decisions covered in the previous chapters of this manual.

Transition Sequence

1. **Pray!** Launch and surround the entire process of evaluation, design, selection of leaders, and implementation with prayer.
2. **Establish a governance study team.** This may be the existing leadership group or a special group appointed for the task.
3. **Communicate!** This applies to every stage of the process. Keep the congregation informed about the possibility of change. Seek their input. In some settings you may want to obtain congregational approval to undertake the process.
4. **Complete the governance study.** Work through Chapters 1 & 2 of the manual. Inform the District Field Director of your progress and consider inviting his participation as a facilitator as you review and/or develop the purpose, mission, vision, and values for your church.
5. **Select and design your governance structure.** Use Section 3 of the manual to shape your selection.
6. **Present your recommended new structure to the governing body of the church.** Be prepared to explain and answer questions. Receive their recommendation to move the proposal on to the full congregation.
7. **Present your recommended new structure to the congregation.** Be sure to consult your existing by-laws so that the decision is “beyond reproach”. Be prepared to explain and answer questions. Being well prepared at this stage will avoid unnecessary confusion and opposition later on. Consider requesting the establishment of a “trial period” of 6-18 months in which your current by-laws are suspended, and during which the new structure is set up and “tested” on a provisional basis, subject to final approval at a later date.
8. **Finalize and implement your plan to bring the new structure on line.** This may require identifying, recruiting, and training new leaders for the new structure as

well as reassigning or in some cases retiring former leaders whose roles may be changed or phased out. A means of selecting leaders must be developed. Training in how the new system works is essential.

9. **“Road test” the new structure, evaluate and make preliminary adjustments.** See the “trial period” mentioned in step 7 above.
10. **Prepare a comprehensive new set of by-laws establishing the new governance structure for approval by the congregation.** This formalizes and finalizes the change for now. Expect the need to experience a full annual cycle or two under the new structure until everyone begins to find it familiar and feels comfortable with it. You may feel “in between” for some time.
11. **Periodically evaluate your structure. The governance needs of a healthy growing church may change, and every structure can be improved.** Be prepared to work through this entire process again in the future, if and when your structure is hindering your ministry from being effectively missional.

SECTION

5

PASTORAL
RELATIONS
COMMITTEE

Preface

THE OPENING PARAGRAPH to “Building a Leadership Team – a Governance Manual for Local Churches says it is “designed to be a practical workbook that our congregations can use as a guide to design and implement a principle-based structure for ministry consistent with parameters laid out in the *EC Discipline*. It is not a detailed template of a new ready-made organizational system for you to adopt. It is intended to be a “hands on” tool outlining an effective pathway towards a better way of deploying your congregation for ministry”.

This Section is to help EC churches implement Principle Number Seven in the *EC Discipline* Section 304.8. It is called the principle of “Pastoral Relationship”.

It states:

A healthy church willingly, trustingly, and respectfully submits to appropriate authority. Pastors, in turn, act as servant-leaders by employing authority for the good of the fellowship.

A church committed to a healthy relationship with its pastor(s) is a church that:

- ◆ *Models and demonstrates respect for those in authority, enabling the work of the pastor to be a joy and not a burden;*
- ◆ *Honors the pastor by offering him compensation that reflects his value to the fellowship and his labor on their behalf;*
- ◆ *Maintains a Pastoral Relations Committee committed to the best interests of their pastor(s) as well as the health of the congregation.*

“Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever...”

“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.”

Hebrews 13:7, 8, 17

National Conference Rule on Pastoral Relations Committee

115 PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

115.1 Purpose. According to the *Discipline* (par. 311) the purpose of the Pastoral Relations Committee shall be to aid the pastor, and any additional members of the pastoral staff, to effectively serve the needs and programs of the local congregation. It shall be a conferring and counseling committee and shall be available for consultation with the pastor concerning conditions with the local congregation that pertains to various pastoral duties.

115.2 Function. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall provide a confidential forum within which the pastor, and additional members of the pastoral staff, may seek and receive counsel, input, and insight regarding the work of the local church. In all meetings and activities of the committee, it is expected that biblical principles of conduct in relationships; in particular, those principals drawn from Matthew 18, shall be the norm.

The committee shall assist the pastor in developing a written description of responsibilities for the pastor. (see p. 61-64) The description of pastoral responsibilities shall incorporate the pastor's vision as well as the mission of the church. The senior pastor in consultation with his pastoral team shall develop a written description of the responsibilities for each additional member of the pastoral staff, taking into account the mission and goals of the church as well as the input of the Pastoral Relations Committee. Each description of pastoral responsibilities shall be submitted to the Governing Board for approval.

The committee shall sensitively monitor the relationship between the pastor(s) and the local congregation and cultivate that relationship through consultation with the pastoral staff. The committee shall also communicate to the people the nature and function of the pastoral office.

The committee shall assist the pastor(s) in balancing and prioritizing family and personal needs with church needs. It shall remind him of the wisdom of using all annual vacation days, unless deferral arrangements have been made. In addition, assistance shall be given to appropriately use a week for ministry leave for the purpose of personal spiritual development, study, service, or a global ministry experience. The committee shall also expect the pastor(s) to avail themselves of one day off per week so that, through wise stewardship of time, "burnout" can be avoided, and the biblical requirement of "keeping the Sabbath" can be met. As a result of this wise stewardship of time, the pastor(s) will realize a greater protection of adequate family time, in addition to greater physical, emotional, and spiritual health. The committee shall also work to help the congregation understand these needs.

The committee and the pastor shall annually assess the health and progress of the overall ministry of the church in achieving its mission, vision, and goals. As part of that assessment, the committee and pastor shall together consider the pastor(s) role in light of the mission, vision and goals of the congregation, and his progress in fulfilling the responsibilities agreed upon the statement of pastoral responsibilities. (see p. 65-68). The conclusions of this consultation shall be kept in written form in the records of the committee for future reference. The portion of this consultation concerned with the pastor's role shall have as its objectives both to encourage the pastor and to discern areas for potential means by which that growth may be achieved. In the

case of any additional member of the pastoral staff, the senior pastor shall conduct the annual consultation with each staff member, keeping in mind the objectives set forth above. The senior pastor shall then share the written conclusions of each consultation with the committee. The committee may then consult with each staff member individually, keeping a written record of the conclusions of such consultations.

Pastoral transition requests shall comply with the established procedures of National Conference. (See Section 900)

115.3 Membership. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall be constituted at the Annual Meeting of the Governing Board of each congregation following the annual congregational meeting and the reorganization of the Governing Board. It shall consist of not less than five (5) members, plus the assigned pastor(s). The total number of lay members shall be an odd number. Membership shall include the pastor(s) assigned by the National Conference, the lay delegate and the Official Board/Ministry Council president.

The senior pastor, in consultation with the lay delegate and the Official Board/ Ministry Council president, shall present additional names to the Official Board/Ministry Council for approval.

Additional members may be added where necessary and appropriate, especially when the committee is involved in seeking a new pastor (see section 900). Only one member of an immediate family shall be permitted to serve on the committee. In cases where the inclusion of the lay delegate or president would result in a second person from the same family serving on the committee, the alternate lay delegate or vice president respectively shall replace that person. However, where the pastor, president of the Official Board/ Ministry Council and the lay delegate are in unanimous agreement, the second member of an immediate family may serve.

115.4 Organization. Following the appointment of the Pastoral Relations Committee, the senior pastor shall convene the same within thirty (30) days to elect a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary, and to schedule the committee's meetings for the year. No member of the pastoral staff shall serve as an officer of the Pastoral Relations Committee.

115.5 Meetings. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall hold at least four (4) meetings each year, one within each conference quarter. In case of a multiple-church charge, the committee of each church within the charge shall meet jointly at least once a year on matters relating to the charge. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson, senior pastor, the Stationing Elder, or the District Field Director. **Since the building of trust between the PRC and Pastor is critical to healthy ministry, it is generally understood that the PRC will not meet without the pastor present, unless he gives permission, knowing in advance the items on the agenda and receives the minutes from the meeting afterwards.*

115.6 Reporting. Members of the Pastoral Relations Committee shall keep all deliberations and decisions of the committee strictly confidential, except as it specifically directed by the committee. Report of pertinent matters of the committee meetings shall likewise be made to the Governing Board.

Taken from the Current National Conference Journal

Biblical Resolution Process

For a comprehensive description of the EC Church's statement on Conflict Resolution and Redemptive Church Discipline please see the 2016 *EC Discipline* Part 6.

Covenant –

In obedience to God's Holy Word and commitment to practicing Biblical Resolution, I promise to follow the Principle of Priorities. That is, my priorities are to glorify God, build harmony in the church, and avoid conflict. I will do as Matthew 18 admonishes – go to an offending brother "first alone".

First Step –

I will not first share the offense with another person. I am committed to restoring the relationship, rather than exposing possible sin. I recognize most problems with people are personality clashes, and I will try to understand their actions based upon their perspective.

Second Step –

If going to a person "first alone" does not resolve our differences, I promise to seek an objective and spiritual mature leader of the church who will listen to each of our perspectives on the problem. As a mediator in this dispute, this person will be able to advise one or both disputing parties concerning blind spots or areas of needed growth in order to resolve the issue and bring glory to God.

Warning –

I will not seek to find others who have also been offended, nor share my concerns with others prior to the meeting with my "offending brother". The purpose of involving an objective and mature leader of the church is not to validate my hurt but rather to open my heart and mind to the possible needs I may have regarding my relationship with others and serve as a mediator in the dispute.

I realize my friends may naturally listen to my concerns, but also take up my offense. I will, therefore, not cause them to become a party to a possible division and disharmony because of our friendship. Whenever I feel an urge to share the offense with my friends, I will pray and commune with God about my hurt.

Third Step –

When I am in a dispute with a fellow believer that cannot be resolved voluntarily, even with a mediator present, the one with who I am at odds and I will request that the church appoint an arbitrator(s) to listen to our disagreement. The arbitrator(s) will then render a binding decision to resolve the disagreement.

Fourth Step –

If a person who professes to be a believer refuses to be reconciled to a fellow believer in a conflict situation, refuses the advice of a mediator, or fails to submit to the binding decision of arbitrator(s), and if the party found guilty of an offense refuses to repent, seek forgiveness and be reconciled, then his or her church leaders will formally intervene with the disciplinary measures of trial and removal from the local fellowship as is deemed necessary for the restoration of justice and order in the local church.

(These steps are based on the principles found in Matthew 18:17-20 and Proverbs 6:16-19.)

RULES OF CONFERENCE “INITIATING A PASTORAL CHANGE”

Current National Conference Journal

903 INITIATING A PASTORAL CHANGE

903.1 The Pastor. A pastor may request a new assignment in writing to the Bishop.

903.2 The Pastoral Relations Committee [PRC]. The PRC may make the request for a pastoral change when there are valid reasons for such a request. A careful yet confidential assessment of the attitudes and concerns of the congregation and its other leaders should be considered. The counsel of the District Field Director should be sought. A request for a new pastor must be made in writing to the Bishop.

903.3 The Stationing Committee. The Stationing Committee may ask a pastor to consider a change when his gifts and graces are needed elsewhere. They may also initiate a change when the present assignment is not resulting in healthy ministry.

903.4 Early Withdrawal. Negotiations for an early, regular withdrawal shall be conducted with the stationing committee members from that region through the Bishop.

903.5 Irregular Withdrawal. When a pastor withdraws irregularly (that is, before the end of the assignment year) from our denomination, the Ministerial Development Community shall be authorized but is not required to request the return of his credentials. This request shall be made by the Ministerial Development Community Secretary unless the pastor has negotiated an early release with the Stationing Committee.

903.6 Exit Interview. The Ministerial Development Associate and/or the Bishop shall conduct an exit interview with pastors who withdraw from ministry

Process of Facilitating Pastoral Change

There are times when pastoral change is needed to facilitate health in the congregation. The following process presupposes a healthy congregation, which has a sense of itself, its values and a vision for the future and a clear mission. [Note: There is a document on Goals, Mission and Vision in the Appendix] While it is true that many churches are not at this point of health, the following process can help clarify the mission of a local congregation, while honoring those called by God to lead her as pastor.

Step 1 The Strategic Plan

It is healthy when a Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) can evaluate a request for a change of pastors against clearly stated and understood goals and plans. As PRC's (including the pastor himself) assess the direction of the church they might come to step two.

Step 2 Decision to Consider requesting a change

As part of a reasoned strategic process, a local PRC could conclude that a pastoral change should be considered. This ought not be a regular nor annual consideration. Once the decision to consider is made, the next step can be taken.

Step 3 PRC ask the District Field Director to facilitate the assessment

Since the decision impacts three parties, the congregation, the pastor, and the Conference the District Field Director is invited to facilitate a discussion to discover whether or not "there are valid reasons for such a request". (Journal 903.2)

Step 4 District Field Director facilitates the assessment with the PRC including the pastor in the discussion.

Questions to ask in considering a pastoral change are explored in an attempt to come to agreement on this matter. (See "Questions to Ask..." document)

Step 5 A Request is made by the PRC for a pastoral change OR

The pastor asks to be considered for a new assignment

To help in stationing, requests should be made in writing to the Bishop by January 1 in the year in which a new assignment is to be made.

Step 6 Stationing Committee considers and acts on the request

If the stationing committee concurs with the request, the stationing process is begun and a search for a new pastor is launched.

Resignations: As National Conference assigns the pastor; any pastoral resignation is to be offered to the Bishop for consideration rather than to any entity of the local congregation.

Questions to ask in assessing whether or not to request a pastoral change

1. Has this pastor's mission here been accomplished?
2. Would this pastor be better deployed in another church?
3. Does this pastor have a sense of restlessness with his current assignment?
4. Has a turning point been reached in the family life of the pastor (retirement, death of a spouse, graduation of a child, etc.)?
5. Which are the voices calling for a change?
6. If we requested a change now would we be "negotiating with terrorists"?
7. What time of the stationing year is it? (see deadlines in rule 904.1)
8. How well do the needs and expectations of the congregation at this point in the life of the church meet the gifts and graces of this pastor?

Process in Receiving a New Pastor

1. Announcement a move will be taking place.
2. A Stationing Elder is assigned.
3. Church completes Church Information Profile (the "CHIP").
4. National Conference Stationing Committee chooses a candidate for interview.
5. Local church may expand Pastoral Relations Committee for purpose of the interview process.
6. The Stationing Committee presents the Pastoral Information Profile (PIP) of a potential pastoral candidate to the local Pastoral Relations Committee for review.
7. Candidate interviews with the church Pastoral Relations Committee to confirm a "match".

8. An agreement is confirmed concerning expectations and compensation at a local conference convened by the Stationing Elder.
9. A transition task force prepares for saying good-bye and welcoming the new pastor.
10. National Conference makes the appointment of the new pastor.
11. A new pastor moves to the field. Moving expense reimbursed to local church by National Conference according to schedule.
12. New Pastor is installed.

Pastoral Appreciation Suggestions

October is pastoral appreciation month and an opportunity to encourage your pastor by honoring him by acts of love and appreciation. The Pastoral Relations Committee should take the lead in encouraging the congregation to appropriately celebrate the ministry of the pastor(s), wife, and family. The following suggestions are meant to stimulate your thinking. You may be able to prayerfully think of other creative ways of “appreciating” your pastor(s). Whatever you do, it will lift and refresh your pastor’s spirit!

Suggestions can include:

1. Thoughtful gifts that are bought or made.
2. Monetary gift in a card.
3. Scrapbook of memories.
4. A special day off with pre-paid activities such as:
 - a. Dinner arrangements
 - b. Bed and Breakfast for a night
 - c. Concert or show
 - d. Tickets for an attraction your pastor has expressed interest in
5. A congregational dinner to honor your pastor with testimonies.
6. Card shower

7. A combination of several of the above.

Whatever you may seek to do, it will bless you and your pastor(s).

SECTION

6

RESOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Resources

Pastoral Job Description: Sample

It is important for each Ministry Council/Official Board to work with the pastor to develop a Job Description for the pastor that reflects his duties, responsibilities and expectations of the church and the denomination. The items included in this model have been aligned with denominational expectation and the Code of Ethics adopted by the National Ministry Team. This model provides a guide for each local church to develop its own pastoral job description.

The pastor shall be accountable to:

- The Lord Jesus Christ as the head of the church, for spiritual conduct and the development of personal life and ministry.
- The National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church from which he has received his credentials and assignment.
- The Congregation of the named Evangelical Congregational Church which he serves.
- The Ministry Council/Official Board of the named Evangelical Congregational Church as the administrative body of the congregation, and its Pastoral Relations Committee.

The pastor shall have the following duties:

1. Spiritual Life

- The pastor shall at all times strive to conform his life, personal and professional conduct, and family to the standards set forth in the Word of God.
- The pastor shall actively seek to cultivate his own spiritual growth through his devotional life, prayer, Bible reading, self-examination, and whatever other methods are helpful to him.
- The pastor shall extensively study the Word of God to provide the foundation for his own spiritual growth, preaching, teaching, and all aspects of ministry.
- The pastor shall unceasingly be in prayer with and for the congregation and community.

- The pastor shall do his best to set an example of Christ-like living before the congregation and community.

2. Preaching, Worship and Teaching

- The pastor shall be responsible for preaching in the Sunday morning worship services, and at any other times agreed upon by the pastor and the Ministry Council/Official Board.
- The pastor shall oversee the administration of the sacraments of the church.
- The pastor shall be responsible to see that the new membership classes are organized.

3. Pastoral Care

- The pastor shall make himself available to those in the Community and especially the members of the Congregation who seek counsel in spiritual matters.
- The pastor shall be actively engaged in the visitation of the sick, shut-ins, bereaved, and any in need of pastoral care within the church and community.
- The pastor shall be responsible for performing weddings, funerals, and other pastoral duties of the church.
- The pastor shall show a willingness to extend pastoral care beyond the members of the congregation so that our church is actively ministering to the surrounding community.

4. Leadership

- The pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church and has the responsibility of casting vision for the congregation in partnership with the church's lay leadership and doing all he can to facilitate the church's pursuit of her mission stated both in her mission statement and the Great Commission.
- The pastor shall provide leadership in the areas of Evangelism and Discipleship with the congregation.
- The pastor shall seek to lead the congregation toward unity in the faith and Christ-like conduct in all matters.
- The pastor shall be available to all church leaders to serve as a resource person for advice, help and direction in the execution of all church ministries.
- The pastor shall assist in the planning of the overall church program.

- The pastor shall set an example of Biblical servant leadership for the other church leaders, encouraging others whenever possible.
- The pastor shall exhibit trustworthiness, fairness, faithfulness, and honor confidentiality as he leads and interacts with his congregation.

5. Administration

- The pastor shall prepare and submit reports of his ministry activities to the Ministry Council/Official Board.
- The pastor shall insure compliance with denominational standards and expectations, including the submission of regular reports.
- The pastor shall ensure the accurate keeping of the church records.
- The pastor shall promote financial planning and accountability for the ministry funds of the church.
- The pastor shall work with the local council/board to ensure organizational structures and decision-making procedures are written and followed, with position descriptions for paid employees.
- The pastor shall meet regularly with the Pastoral Relations Committee as required by conference rules.
- The pastor shall ensure that the nomination process and the election/appointment of all officers/positions are done in accordance with the church's bylaws, policies, and procedures.

6. Continuing Education

- Regardless of his previous education, the pastor shall attend formal education opportunities that relate to and will enhance his ministry. These opportunities may include seminars, graduate courses, and in-service training sessions.
- The pastor is expected to read books, articles and other materials that will help to develop his ministry skills.
- The pastor also may work with mentors or other pastors in focus groups to discuss ministry issues.

7. Rest and Family

- The pastor is expected to have and keep a weekly day off for rest, family, and personal development.
- The pastor is expected to use all his allotted vacation time in a given year.

- When the pastor has a family, he is expected to give adequate time away from ministry to his family and their needs.
- Ministry Councils/Official Boards should also work with the pastor if he is eligible, and may need, a short-term sabbatical for study, and recuperation, or to pursue ministry interests.

Pastoral Evaluation Process: Introduction

The Evangelical Congregational denomination encourages churches to be principle-based organizations. The churches need to be guided by principle-centered leadership that allows people in the congregation to utilize their gifts and abilities as led by the Holy Spirit. The goal of each local church should be to assume responsibility and to give attention to the matters of job descriptions and evaluation in order to strengthen lines of communication and accountability, and create internal and operational integrity that will lead to healthy churches. Through a Pastoral Evaluation Process, suggested guidelines and models are provided to assist churches, specifically Pastoral Relations Committees and Pastors, in developing operational guidelines to pursue the mission and ministry of the church.

The pastoral evaluation process is an opportunity for pastors, leaders, and organizations to work together towards the pursuit of the mission for their church. It is a collaborative process to develop and assess standards towards equipping a church for its ministry. The focus of evaluation should be on working towards pursuing the mission in unity, encouraging each other, and providing helpful direction to move the church forward. The actual evaluation must be based on the pastor's written job description agreed upon previously by the pastor and the Pastoral Relations Committee.

Pastoral Evaluation Process: Recommended Guidelines

Below are suggested guidelines to follow when working through the Pastoral Evaluation Process:

1. The Pastoral Relations Committee should meet with the pastor to develop a Job Description or review what is presently in the church policy manual.
2. An evaluation instrument should be developed by the PRC and the pastor that reflects:
 - a. General areas covered in the Job Description
 - b. Annual goals for the pastor
3. A rating scale or method of assessment should then be designed that is a combination of an assessment tool and narrative comments. The assessment tool will provide objective feedback on each item, while the narrative will give an opportunity to give general comments in any of the areas.
4. The evaluation instrument should be completed by the PRC members. *If the pastor and PRC members agree other congregational members can be invited to complete an evaluation of the pastor. Individual assessments should be averaged for the group, while all comments should be included in the final evaluation report.
5. The results of the evaluation should be discussed with the pastor by the Chair of the PRC Committee or a designated person on the committee.
6. The focus of the evaluation discussion should be on giving encouragement and constructive input to the pastor to assist him in the performance of his ministry duties.
7. It is suggested that pastoral evaluations (1) be signed and dated by the pastor and PRC chairperson; (2) be completed on an annual basis; and (3) the Job Description and goal areas be reviewed annually.
8. The PRC should meet at least four times a year with the pastor as specified in Section 115 of the Conference Journal.

Pastoral Evaluation: Sample

Examples of Possible Assessment Scales:

Scale: 1-5; Lowest – 1, Highest – 5

Scale: Exceeds Expectations – Meets Expectations – Needs Improvement – Unsatisfactory

Scale: (1) Strongly Disagree – (2) Disagree – (3) Not Sure – (4) Agree – (5) Strongly Agree

General Evaluation

1. The pastor shall promote the spiritual life of the church through prayer, Bible reading, and example. **Rating:** _____
2. The pastor shall be responsible for preaching, worshiping, and teaching membership classes. **Rating:** _____
3. The pastor shall be responsible for the pastoral care of the congregation; which include counseling, visitations, weddings and funeral, and outreach to the community.
Rating: _____
4. The pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church. This leadership should include working with the Ministry Council/Official Board to develop a vision and mission for the church; giving leadership in the areas of Evangelism and Discipleship; guiding the congregation with integrity and a servant's heart; being a resource person; and assisting in planning programs. **Rating:** _____
5. The pastor shall be involved with the administration processes of the church. These processes shall include the submission of reports, compliance with denominational standards and expectations; assisting in financial planning and in the decision-making of the governance structures; meeting with the Pastoral Relations Committee; and overseeing various election processes. **Rating:** _____
6. The pastor shall continue to develop his ministry skills by attending seminars, classes, and/or workshops, and reading. **Rating:** _____
7. The pastor is expected to provide adequate time for rest, vacation, family, and personal development. **Rating:** _____

General Comments (Job Description):

Goal Evaluation (Some Examples)

- Give leadership to the congregation in pursuit of its long-range planning goals.
Rating: _____
- Continue the work of giving leadership to the realignment of our congregation's workers according to their gifts. **Rating:** _____
- Give support to our denomination through its strategic planning process.
Rating: _____
- Give personal and professional development time to continuing education.
Rating: _____
- Assist our Ministry Council/Official Board in refocusing our leadership development and in-service efforts. **Rating:** _____
- Appoint a homebound care contact person to coordinate the various homebound programs and assist in developing individual shut-in care plans. **Rating:** _____
- Work with the Stewards and Finance Committee to develop a financial plan strategy. **Rating:** _____

General Comments (Goal Evaluation):

LEADERSHIP IN THE E.C. CHURCH

A Position Paper of the Evangelical Congregational Church
Adopted May 28, 2015

Leadership within the Church is a particular role performed on behalf of the Church and is one to which God calls particular individuals just as he calls all followers of Jesus to roles of service (Col. 1.25). While all followers are called to ministry, we are herein concerned primarily with the call to a particular kind of ministry within the local congregation including, but not necessarily limited to, what has traditionally been called the pastoral role. This call to leadership within the local congregation is to be confirmed through a process of discernment that includes the existing leadership and membership of the local congregation, the Pastoral Assessment Center, and the denominationally established examination process. This calling is then finally affirmed by the National Conference.

The ecclesiology statement of the denomination states that the Church is “the people called by God to his mission.” The ecclesiology document goes on to describe the local church as a community in which God’s blessing and power have been received through Christ and which exists to bless the world by being a witness for God and partner in his mission. This understanding of Church and the work of the local church requires the identification of leaders for the carrying out of that mission. A core set of graces and gifts have been identified that leaders in this Church must possess.

The three core graces we seek to identify in leaders are teachability, humility and the ability to build a team. It is often easiest to initially identify graces before other attributes, since most potential leaders have yet to experience the maturity of their particular assortment of spiritual gifts. Accordingly, each of these three graces needs to be evident in every candidate for ministry. Yet, the presence of these graces is not fully sufficient to constitute a call to ministry in the local church. The Scriptures additionally speak of leadership in terms of categorical gifts.

In Ephesians 4 Paul identifies five categories of leadership that the church is given for effective ministry— “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ...” (vss. 11-12). When Paul speaks of these categories, he already comprehends that there are a variety of other spiritual gifts that will find unique expression and direction based upon these categories of leadership. Because each category ultimately gives shape to the expression of these other gifts, Paul also identifies these categories as gifts. As a result, leaders in local churches will need to learn to identify, employ, and work with other leaders within each category in order to most effectively advance the kingdom of God in each local context.

The model of leadership described here stands in contrast to models that highlight only certain of the categories and then elevate those categories over the others. This model is rooted in team and it acknowledges and legitimizes a wider range of leaders than has traditionally been the case. This model also serves to demonstrate a kingdom paradigm where Jesus is the true and only head of the church (Eph. 5) and King of all creation placing all the rest of us under his authority.

Jesus, fully aware of his authority, used his position to model a different picture of what leaders in his kingdom would look like as he washed his disciple's feet and said in John 13:13-17:

“You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”

Therefore, leaders in the E.C. Church are servants of Jesus, advancing his Kingdom by obediently employing the various graces and gifts in service to His body which, in turn, is to be engaged as His incarnate presence in the world.

To Know Him and Make Him Known!

Profile of an EC Pastor

A Position Paper of the Evangelical Congregational Church

Pastors in the EC Church must understand their own identity in Christ, as well as their calling and gifts in relation to the body of believers so that the church is engaged for the work of ministry in the 21st century. **They must know** how to interpret their cultural setting and properly communicate kingdom values and instructions from God's Word in order to form and lead a healthy community of believers.

They must be shaped by a character that reflects God's love in their lives through authenticity, patience, compassion, integrity, and spiritual fervor. They must participate in a disciplined lifelong pursuit that reveals teachability, hospitality, forgiveness, and most of all how to disciple others into these same Christ-like character traits.

They must be able to effectively communicate the faith—what it looks like and how it works—within and beyond their community of believers, while also recognizing and discerning false claims to the Gospel. They must demonstrate a disciple's life through their own ways of living the faith—serving, directing, giving, listening, and laughing with others in order to cultivate and empower flourishing among the community of believers and make an impact on the greater community.

They must see God at work around them, enabling others to grasp hold of God's intentional love for them, and each person's own individual potential for ministry. They must not neglect the opportunities and threats in their midst, but rather reveal how God's kingdom intersects with the life of the church and their surrounding community.

Essential Qualities for a Pastor in the Evangelical Congregational Church

A Position Paper of the Evangelical Congregational Church

INTRODUCTION TO THE “ESSENTIAL QUALITIES FOR A PASTOR IN THE EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH”

The Evangelical Congregational Church is grateful to the Lord for his continued leading in the lives of individuals called to His service as pastors. The Holy Spirit speaks and men respond to that call by placing themselves into His hands, answering the call to pastoral ministry. Through His Holy Spirit He calls and gives gifts so they can serve Him and His church. We recognize that it is our heavenly Father, working through His Holy Spirit, who gives various gifts to those He calls. Those gifts differ from person to person. Through the Evangelical Congregational Church’s Pastoral Assessment Center we have developed a process to confirm the call, the gifts and the graces present in the life of pastoral candidates.

In addition, the Assessment Center, in cooperation with established leaders both inside and outside the denomination, has developed a list of “Essential Qualities” for a pastor in the Evangelical Congregational Church. These are not spiritual gifts or graces, but are essential qualities that must be evidenced in the life of a pastor in order to serve effectively in the context of the Evangelical Congregational Church.

This list of thirteen “Essential Qualities” is a valuable resource for pastors as they examine themselves for healthy ministry and as a resource to share with those who are sensing a call to pastoral ministry within the Evangelical Congregational Church.

ESSENTIAL QUALITIES FOR A PASTOR IN THE EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Approved August 2004

- I. **Empowering Leadership**
 - Helping people to “buy in” and feel responsible for the growth and success of the church
 - Gaining commitment of the people to the vision
 - Establishing a congregational identity
 - Avoiding stereotyping of congregation by imposing unrealistic goals for which it cannot claim ownership
 - Committing to numerical growth within the context of spiritual and relational growth (more and better disciples)
 - Encouraging functional structure for congregational health/ministry

2. **Need-oriented Evangelism**
 - Communicating in style that is understood by the pre-Christian
 - Understanding the mentality and culture of the pre-Christian
 - Moving and functioning in the “personal space” of the pre-Christian without fear
 - Quickly getting to know the pre-Christian on a personal level
 - Breaking through the barriers erected by the pre-Christian
 - Handling crises faced by the unchurched
 - Identifying and assessing community needs and culture
3. **Spousal Cooperation**
 - Having an explicit agreement regarding each partner’s respective role and involvement in ministry
 - Having explicit rules regarding the use of home as an office
 - Evaluating the consequences of ministry demands upon the children
 - Functioning as a team through individual and collective action
 - Having a strategy for dealing with strangers
 - Modeling wholesome family life before the church and community
 - Agreeing upon and sharing the ministry vision
 - Deliberately planning and protecting private family life
4. **Loving Relationships**
 - Displaying God’s love and compassion to people
 - Quickly incorporating newcomers into a network of relationships
 - Engaging others in meaningful church activity
 - Responding with urgency to expressed needs and concerns of people
 - Getting to know people on a personal basis
 - Making others feel secure and comfortable in one’s presence
 - Not responding judgmentally or prejudicially to new people
 - Appreciating and accepting a variety of persons
 - Spending quality time with present parishioners without overstepping them for new people
5. **Gift-Oriented Ministry**
 - Discerning of spiritual gifts in others
 - Matching the gifts of people with ministry needs and opportunities
 - Releasing and equipping people to do the task of ministry
 - Delegating effectively in areas of personal limitations
 - Avoiding personal overload by delegating effectively
 - Not prematurely assigning ministry assignments before people are adequately equipped
 - Not placing unwarranted restrictions on other’s spiritual giftedness
6. **Passionate Spirituality**
 - Regularity of devotional life, including prayer and Bible study
 - Reading of appropriate books/magazines
 - Involvement in an accountability group
 - Possessing a conviction regarding one’s call to ministry
 - Believing in God’s actions

- Having expectation and hope
 - Having a willingness to wait for answers to specific prayer needs
 - Dealing with conflict assertively, constructively, and tactfully
7. **Visionizing Capacity**
- Being a person who projects into the future beyond the present
 - Seeing the congregation within the larger context of God's kingdom
 - Developing a theme which highlights the vision and philosophy of ministry
 - Persuasively selling the vision to people
 - Approaching challenges as opportunities rather than obstacles
 - Coping effectively with non-visionizing elements
 - Not erecting artificial walls or limits whether overtly or subconsciously
 - Establishing a clear church identity related to the theme and vision
 - Believing in God's capacity to do great things
8. **Intrinsically Motivated**
- Having a desire to do well and a commitment to excellence
 - Stick-to-itiveness and persistence
 - Having initiative and aggressiveness without the negative connotations
 - Having a willingness to work long and hard
 - Being a self-starter with a willingness to build from nothing
 - Having a high energy and vitality level, good physical stamina
9. **Flexible and Adaptable**
- Coping effectively with ambiguity
 - Coping effectively with constant and abrupt change
 - Adapting oneself and one's methods to the uniqueness of the particular congregation
 - Shifting priorities and emphasis during various stages of church growth
 - Doing whatever is necessary whenever necessary
10. **Resilience**
- Experiencing setbacks without defeat
 - Riding the ups and downs (attendance)
 - Expecting the unexpected
 - Rebounding from loss, disappointments, and failure
 - Matching the gifts of people with ministry needs and opportunities
11. **Theological Distinctives**
- Agreement with the Articles of Faith
 - Willingness to work with leadership
12. **Financial Stability**
- Agreement with spouse on spending
 - Proper balance between income and expenditures
 - Need for the wife to work outside the home
 - Realistic financial expectations from the church
 - Disclosure of financial statement

13. **Wellness Issues**

- Physical health concerns that would hinder effectiveness in ministry
- Exercise program to keep the body healthy
- Involvement in hobbies as an outlet/escape from ministry pressures

National Association of Evangelicals

Code of Ethics for Pastors

We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. (2 Corinthians 6:3)

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. (Philippians 1:27)

All who are called by God to the ministry of the gospel solemnly commit to a life of joyful obedience and selfless service in order to glorify God and enrich his people. Therefore, a minister will:

Pursue Integrity

I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things I have given willingly and with honest intent. (1 Chronicles 29:17)

- in personal character.

Exalt Christ, not self. Be honest, not exaggerating or overpromising; peace-loving, not contentious; patient, not volatile; diligent, not slothful. Avoid and, when necessary, report conflicts of interest and seek counsel.

- in personal care.

Care for the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical dimensions of your person, for "your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:19).

- in preaching and teaching.

Interpret the Bible accurately and apply it discerningly: "In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned" (Titus 2:7-8). Speak the truth in love. Give due credit when using the words or ideas of others.

Be Trustworthy

It is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. (1 Corinthians 4:2)

- in leadership.

Model the trustworthiness of God in leadership to encourage and develop trustworthiness in others. Use power and influence prudently and humbly. Foster loyalty. Demonstrate a commitment to the well-being of the entire congregation. Keep promises. Respond sensitively and appropriately to ministry requests and needs: "Whoever can be trusted with

very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much" (Luke 16:10).

- with information.

Guard confidences carefully. Inform a person in advance, if possible, when an admission is about to be made that might legally require the disclosure of that information. Communicate truthfully and discreetly when asked about individuals with destructive or sinful behavior patterns. Tell the truth, or remain discreetly silent: "A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret" (Proverbs 11:13).

- with resources.

Be honest and prudent in regard to personal and ministry resources. Refuse gifts that could compromise ministry. Ensure that all designated gifts are used for their intended purpose: "If you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?" (Luke 16:11).

Seek Purity

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. (1 Timothy 4:12)

- in maintaining sexual purity.

Avoid sinful sexual behavior and inappropriate involvement. Resist temptation: "Among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality" (Ephesians 5:3a).

- in spiritual formation.

Earnestly seek the help of the Holy Spirit for guidance and spiritual growth. Be faithful to maintain a heart of devotion to the Lord. Be consistent and intentional in prayer and scriptural study: "Take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

- in theology.

Study the Bible regularly and carefully to understand its message and embrace biblical doctrine. In forming theology, consider biblical teaching authoritative over all other sources.

- in professional practice.

Identify a minister/counselor who can provide personal counseling and advice when needed. Develop an awareness of personal needs and vulnerabilities. Avoid taking advantage of the vulnerabilities of others through exploitation or manipulation. Address the misconduct of another clergy member directly or, if necessary, through appropriate persons to whom that member of the clergy may be accountable.

Embrace Accountability

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:2-3)

- in finances.

Promote accepted accounting practices and regular audits. Ensure that church funds are used for their intended ministry purposes.

- in ministry responsibilities.

Ensure clarity in authority structures, decision-making procedures, position descriptions, and grievance policies. Model accountability at the highest organizational levels.

- in a denomination or a ministry organization.

Ensure compliance with denominational standards and expectations, including regular reports.

Facilitate Fairness

Believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism... Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? (James 2:1-4)

- with staff.

Follow approved church and denomination practices in staff selection processes. Advocate for equitable pay and benefits for staff. Provide regular staff team building, affirmation, training, evaluation, and feedback. Be honest with staff regarding areas to celebrate as well as those needing improvement.

- with parishioners.

Ensure appropriate access to staff by parishioners. Preach and teach to meet the needs of the entire congregation. Assume responsibility for congregational health. When asked for help beyond personal competence, refer others to those with requisite expertise.

- with the community.

Build God's Kingdom in cooperation, not competition, with other local ministries. Provide Christian ministries to the public as possible. Encourage good citizenship.

- with a prior congregation.

Do not recruit parishioners from a previous church without permission from the pastor.
Avoid interfering in the ministry of a previous congregation.

As a minister of the gospel, I commit to abide by the standards set forth in the NAE Code of Ethics for Pastors.

Signature_____Date_____

Printed Name_____

National Association of Evangelicals

Code of Ethics for Congregations and Their Leadership Teams

Jesus and his apostles gave the Church instruction in the responsible use of gifts, in the practice of unity and holiness, and in witness to the world. Jesus also gave gifts to the Church so that it might be built up and reach unity in the faith, knowledge of the Son of God, and maturity.

The Church of Jesus Christ is embodied in local congregations. Among the gifts Jesus provides the Church are pastors to teach congregations, lead them, and care for their spiritual well-being. In return, the lay leaders of our congregations are responsible to provide for the clergy and to facilitate their work. They also have responsibilities to the congregation at large, to the family of churches to which they belong, and to the communities in which they live and worship. Therefore, responsible congregational leadership will:

Honor and Support the Gifts Christ Gives to the Churches

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the Church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.

Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the Church, the Body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-12, NLT)

- Provide for the physical and spiritual needs of pastors and their families; pay an adequate salary and benefits to pastors and other staff; provide annual compensation reviews.
- Ensure that pastors have both weekly and annual times of rest and opportunities for study.
- Seek to enable and cultivate the spiritual gifts of the congregation's members.

Promote the Unity of Christ's Body

Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. (Ephesians 4:3-4, NLT)

- Foster interaction between generations and between social and ethnic groups in the church.
- Affirm the strengths of differing worship styles.
- Honor pastoral vision and teaching, engaging an appropriate outside counselor to facilitate healing when a dispute with a pastor reaches an impasse.
- Present a united front in support of major initiatives.

- Confront those in the congregation that actively oppose the leadership or demonstrate apathy toward the leadership's vision.
- Work to reconcile dissident factions through mutual listening and sharing.
- Work to ensure that all members are engaged in opportunities for growth in discipleship.
- Strive in all things to live out Jesus' command to his followers, "Love one another, as I have loved you."
- Foster constructive connections with and keep commitments to other churches in its community, and to churches that belong to its denomination or the network of churches with which it shares a heritage.

Practice Accountability

The time is coming when everything that is covered up will be revealed, and all that is secret will be made known to all. Whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be shouted from the housetops for all to hear! (Luke 12:2-3, NLT)

- Model openness and clear communication in doing the congregation's business; work with the congregation to develop shared expectations about transparency.
- Open the church's financial records for periodic independent review.
- Create periodic opportunities for both pastors and lay leaders to receive feedback from those they serve and give opportunity for personal and professional growth.
- Hold pastors and lay teachers to the truths found in Scripture, especially as they are embodied in the standards of doctrine and personal holiness established by the congregation or denominational family.
- Train pastors, staff, and volunteers in methods of preventing the abuse of vulnerable persons, particularly children.
- Establish and use a system of church discipline to deal with members who persist in sinful ways after attempts to guide and restore them have failed.
- Deal fairly and openly with causes of scandal when they occur, within the framework of the law.

Practice Good Stewardship

If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? (Luke 16:10-11, NLT)

- Pay bills in a timely fashion and take care not to encumber the church with unmanageable debt.
- Use gifts as they are intended.
- Maintain the property and equipment the church owns in good, safe, and attractive condition.

- Maintain appropriate levels of insurance.
- Practice wise stewardship in use of natural resources.
- Participate financially in the denomination or extended family of churches to which it belongs.
- Honor the financial record-keeping and reporting practices involved in its membership in a denomination or network of churches.

Practice Hospitality

Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. (1 Peter 4:9-10, ESV)

- Maintain a safe and secure environment for public worship, study, and community events.
- Minimize barriers that would discourage persons with disabilities from full participation.
- Affirm the varied cultural heritages represented in the congregation and community.
- Eliminate artificial barriers to welcoming the surrounding community to public events.
- Allow appropriate community use of church facilities, when such use is not inconsistent with the church's witness and its ethical commitments.
- Be sensitive to the impact of traffic, parking, and the sounds of worship on its neighbors.

Seek the Welfare of the Community Where God has Placed It

Work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you ... (Jeremiah 29:7, NLT)

- Demonstrate in the congregation's own life the global and multicultural nature of Christ's Body.
- Speak through designated leaders to issues of injustice in the local community and beyond.
- Work to alleviate suffering and promote health and spiritual well-being of its community and the world.

As the church leadership team, we commit to abide by the standards set forth in the NAE Code of Ethics for Congregations.

Printed Name of Church _____ Date _____

Leadership Representative Name: _____

Leadership Role: _____

Signature: _____

Portrait of a Biblical Leader: A Bible study

What does a Godly leader look like?

GODLY LEADERSHIP is men and women responding to what God has done and what God is doing. Godly leadership is our response to God's call and our stewardship of the gifts that He gives. As believers we are called by God to active service in the various ministries of the church. In order to maximize the effectiveness of those ministries, God calls some into positions of leadership. Scripture clearly identifies the leadership principles by which those so called must be shaped. Leaders recognize that their gifts are given by God, confirmed by the Body, and operate with accountability to the Body. Leaders dedicate themselves to the development of those gifts for the good of the whole.

For the purpose of this study let's liken leadership to a simple ladder, with two rails and a series of rungs. One of the rails is God as the Catalyst who makes things happen. The other rail is the leader who cooperates with God. The rungs upon which the Biblical leader climbs are created in the process as the leader cooperates with God. When (if) the leader ceased to cooperate with God, he has nothing left upon which to stand

As you study, ask probing questions in response to the scriptures and your reflection upon the characteristics of leadership. For example: With regard to each rung where do I see myself on a scale of 0 – 5? What must I do to improve? How do I rate my church leadership with regard to this characteristic? How can we improve? How Do I think others rate me? If the setting slows for a high level of accountability, ask others how they rate you. Ask: "How can I/we be model men and women who lead according to these biblical principles?

SCRIPTURES		TRAITS
Ephesians 4:1-16	Be Grateful	Humility
	GOD Gets the GLORY	God-fearing
John 13 1-17	Be Humble	Under-authority
	GOD Gives the RESULTS	Teachable
Exodus 18:13-23	Be Useful/Willing	Integrity
Numbers 11:25	GOD Gives the GIFTS	Passionate
Philippians 2:1-11	Be Godly	Gifted
Acts 6 1-7	GOD Gives the GRACES	Full of faith
Isaiah 6:8	Be Spirit-filled	Faithful
	GOD Gives the HOLY SPIRIT	Spirit-filled
1 Timothy 5:21-22	Be a Servant	Wisdom
	GOD Gives the EXAMPLE	good reputation
Ephesians 5:22-26	Be Available	Self-controlled
Numbers 13 & 14	GOD Gives the CALL	God -controlled
Galatians 5:16	GOD as Catalyst	
1 Peter 4:10-11	MAN Cooperates	disciplined

Goals, Mission and Vision

This is a document adapted by permission from an outline called “Developing Functional Structures” by Bob Logan and Tom Clegg, 1998.

Values **[Who are you?]**

1. “Values” are deeply held convictions, priorities and underlying assumptions which influence your attitudes and behaviors.
2. “Core Values” describe the unique way people in an organization work and relate to one another.
3. People and their organizations behave in ways which are generally consistent with their core values.
4. Core values are validated only through behavior. A stated value which is not backed by a behavior is an aspiration or preference, not a value.
5. Most conflict is a result of differing values.
6. Most strategic planning fails because values are not articulated early enough...

Vision **[Where are you going?]**

1. Vision is the preferable future God wants to create through you. It is the mental picture you carry in your mind of your future.
2. Intimacy with Christ is the sole source of vision.
3. The character of the leader determines the credibility of the vision.
4. A godly vision:
 - a. Has a sense of being right for the times
 - b. Promotes faith rather than fear
 - c. Motivates people to action
 - d. Requires risk taking
 - e. Glorifies GOD, not people
5. Vision provides the over-all general direction for the ministry.

If God could have his way, you knew you could not possibly fail and you would never lack the resources – what would your church look, feel and be like five years from now? – That is your vision.

Mission

[Answers the what question]

1. Mission is the specific “who and what” of what are we supposed to be doing.
2. What does GOD want us to accomplish while we are here on earth?
3. What is our divine, strategic intent?
4. Your mission identifies:
 - a. The ministry focus group to whom you seek to minister
 - b. Specific needs you are uniquely qualified to meet

Outcomes

[Are we there yet?]

1. Outcomes are the expected results of ministry. They are the specific results from which success for failure may be measured.
2. Outcomes provide the “vital signs” of an organization’s health:
 - a. People
 - b. Resources
 - c. Leadership Development
 - d. Goal Achievement
 - e. Finances
3. Outcomes clarify “customer satisfaction” and the “bottom line”.

KEYS TO WRITING AN EFFECTIVE MISSION STATEMENT

1. Does it identify your ministry focus group?
2. Does it clarify the needs you seek to meet?
3. Is it accurate? Enduring? Concise? Memorable? Energizing?

If “No” to any of the above, rewrite it.

End of Clegg and Logan document

Questions to ask in clarifying mission for a church or a pastor

- What is the name of someone you considered a “good pastor”?
- What three qualities did he have that made him “good” in your eyes?
- What do you know for sure about your church?
- What are some of its strengths?
- What are some of its weaknesses?
- What opportunities are before it?
- What outside forces threaten its ministry?

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Transition Resources

“Leading Congregational Change” Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, James Furr Leadership Network Publications

The authors collaborate to produce one of the most thorough and clear explanations of the process of leading change in a local church. Contains many “step by step” descriptions and examples.

“Managing Transitions: making the most of change” William Bridges Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1991

This is a classic work in distinguishing transition from change. It reminds the reader that people respond to change differently and makes suggestions for how best to help them move through the process.

“Stuck” Terry Walling, Church Smart Resources, 2008

“Transitions: Making Sense of Life’s Changes” William Bridges, DaCapo Press, 2004

“Who Moved My Cheese?” Spencer Johnson, G. Putman & Sons, 1998

An easy and enjoyable “allegory” on the realities of change. A good book for helping people understand what they experience through a making transition.

“Who Stole My Church?” Gordon McDonald, Thomas Nelson, 2008

If you have additional resources for inclusion, please send suggestions to Jodi Earhart, Assistant to the Bishop, at jearhart@eccenter.com

New Member Application

Name _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Home Address _____ Telephone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Work Address _____ Telephone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

E-mail Address _____

Birthplace _____ Date of Birth _____

Have you been baptized? _____
Date Church

If married, give full name of husband or wife _____

Date of marriage _____

How long have you lived in the community where you now make your home? _____

Are you a member of another church? _____

Name of church _____

Location _____

Are you uniting with this church (a) on confession of faith? _____ or (b) by letter of transfer? _____

What church offices have you held? _____

Other members of your family are:

Name _____ Age _____

Name _____ Age _____

Name _____ Age _____

Confession of Faith

Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct?

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord? _____

Do you purpose to remain steadfast in the faith unto the end and, as a true follower of Jesus Christ, to walk in the newness of life? _____

Do you promise in watchfulness and prayer to diligently use the Word of God and the Holy Sacraments?

Do you promise to join in worship and service and to give regularly of your time, talent and treasure for the work of the gospel as carried on by this church and the denomination to which it belongs?

On the following lines, give a brief statement concerning your relationship to Jesus Christ. Tell what He means to you and how He has enriched your life.

Recognizing my need of fellowship with others of like faith and main and desiring to have a part in the ministry of the gospel, I hereby make application for membership in the _____ Church of _____.

I have read the bylaws of the church and I hereby covenant and agree to be bound by the policies and procedures set forth in them and in the *Discipline* of the Evangelical Congregational Church.

Date _____

Signature _____

Certificate of Membership and Transfer

This is to certify that _____ is a member in full communion of _____
Evangelical Congregational Church of _____, and that at _____ own
request _____ is hereby transferred and affectionately commended to the Christian care
and fellowship of _____ Evangelical Congregational Church of _____.

_____ Pastor

Given at ____ this ____ day of _____ A.D. _____.

This certificate of membership and transfer shall be valid for one year from date thereof. It may be
renewed by the pastor of the church from which it was issued.

Certificate of Reception

This is to certify that _____ commended to our care and fellowship by the pastor of _____ Evangelical Congregational Church of _____, was on the _____ day of _____ A.D. _____ duly received into the membership of the _____ Evangelical Congregational Church of _____.

_____ Pastor

Given at _____ this _____ day of _____ A.D. _____.

Certificate of Membership and Dismissal

This is to certify that _____ is a member of _____
Evangelical Congregational Church of _____, and that at
_____ own request _____ is hereby dismissed as a member of the said
Church.

_____ Pastor

Given at ____ this ____ day of _____ A.D. _____.