

Organization of a Single Governing Board

Board of Stewards

First United Methodist Church

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

To more effectively fulfill our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ and better manage the temporal affairs of the church, First United Methodist Church shall be organized into a single governing board in accordance with ¶243 and ¶247.2 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (referred to with the ¶ notation).

This single governing board shall fulfill all the functions, duties and responsibilities of these former administrative committees: Church Council, Board of Trustees, Finance Committee and Staff/Parish Relations Committee.

The Committee on Nominations shall remain and function as outlined in ¶258.1.

The name of this board shall be called the Board of Stewards, (also referred to in this document as the Board). The Board shall be amendable to the Church Conference in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*. These are the rules under which the Board, Senior Pastor, appointed clergy, staff and congregation will function effective January 1, 2021.

SECTION II: PURPOSE

The primary responsibility of the Board of Stewards is to protect and champion the Church's mission, vision, core values, and statement of faith, as well as, make significant ministry decisions and oversee the administrative needs of the church.

As leaders of the church, members of the Board should be men and women of deep Christian faith, spiritual maturity and have demonstrated a commitment to the life and ministry of First United Methodist Church.

SECTION III: ORGANIZATION

The Board of Stewards shall be composed of thirteen members, twelve lay persons (who are professing members of First United Methodist Church) and the Senior Pastor. Each Board member shall have one vote.

The Chairperson of the Board shall be one of the lay members and shall be elected by the Church Conference upon the recommendation of the Committee on Nominations. The Lay Leader shall be one of the lay members and shall be elected by the Church Conference upon the recommendation of the Committee on Nominations.

The Committee of Nominations shall designate members of the Board, who are not the Senior Pastor, Lay Leader, or Chairperson of the Board, one to serve as Steward of Staff/Parish Relations, one to serve as Steward of Finance and one to serve as Steward of Trustees. These individuals are responsible to ensure that the functions of those former committees are successfully accomplished by the Board as a whole.

The Committee of Nominations shall designate Lay Delegates to Annual Conference equal to the number of clergy appointed to the church and will be a part of the board. For instance, if there are two clergy appointed to the church, then two Lay Delegates would be designated and they would be two of the twelve who are serving on the board.

Only one person from an immediate family shall serve on the Board (spouse, parent, child, sibling or in-law). No relative or in-law of an appointed clergy or staff member may serve on the Board.

Except for at the initial creation of the Board, each lay member shall serve a term of three years and shall not immediately repeat a three-year term until they have rotated off the Board for at least one year. The Board shall be organized into three classes and staggered in such a way that one third of the Board rotates off every year.

In the identification and selection process, care shall be given that the leadership of ministries reflects inclusivity and diversity in accordance with ¶ 258.1e.

SECTION IV: MEETINGS

The Board shall meet at least quarterly. It shall meet additionally at the request of the Bishop, the District Superintendent, the Senior Pastor, or the Chairperson of the Board. The Church Administrator or another person designated by the Chair of the Board of Stewards shall serve as secretary, recording the minutes of the meetings. A quorum shall be considered 7 or more of the voting members. No business shall be conducted if a quorum is not present. There are no proxy votes. Meetings may be conducted in person, via teleconference, or both. In the case of email voting, all voting members must be included in the email, and a majority of responses for or against will be all that is needed to consider a vote binding. For members of the board who do not have access to email, accommodations will be made in order that they are able to participate. In the event of a meeting called by the Bishop or District Superintendent, a quorum shall be considered those members present.

The Board shall adopt an annual covenant of expectations for participation on the Board.

Notice shall be given to all Board members and the church of a meeting at least fourteen days prior to the meeting unless necessary to call a special meeting. If it is

necessary to call a special meeting, notice shall be given to all Board members by email, phone call, text message, or other personal notification.

The Board shall not meet without the knowledge of the Senior Pastor or District Superintendent. The Senior Pastor shall be present at all meetings unless he or she voluntarily excuses him or herself. The Board may meet with the District Superintendent without the Senior Pastor present as long as the Senior Pastor is informed in advance of such a meeting and shall be brought into consultation immediately thereafter in accordance with ¶258.2e.

All meetings of the Board shall be open to any member of the church in accordance with ¶722. The Board will enter into executive or closed session to consider personnel matters, staff salary discussions, potential litigation, contract negotiations, annual budget and other items allowed in The Book of Discipline.

In the event that the Chair of the Board of Stewards is unable to be present at a meeting of the Board of Stewards, the Lay Leader shall serve as chair of the board for that meeting.

SECTION V: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board shall encompass the duties and responsibilities of the former administrative committees listed above, including but not limited to setting the annual church budget, staff salaries, recommending appointed clergy salaries to the Church Conference for approval, annual evaluation of the Senior Pastor, setting staff and other church policies, ensuring an annual review of the church's finances, attending to the maintenance and repairs of church property, entering into contracts on behalf of the church, and other duties included in the former administrative committees of Staff/Parish Committee, Finance Committee and Board of Trustees.

The Board may organize itself with additional policies and procedures as needed, as long as these policies and procedures do not conflict with this document or the *Book of Discipline*. The Board may create other committees, sub-committees and task forces from time to time as needed.

The Board shall communicate regularly its activities and decisions with the church.

The Senior Pastor shall manage the appointed clergy and staff and shall be accountable to recommend to the Board for the hiring, termination and evaluation of the staff. The Board may set specific policies and procedures for the Senior Pastor to follow as needed.

SECTION VI: NOMINATIONS TO THE BOARD

The Committee on Nominations, as described in ¶258.1, shall nominate all members of the Board of Stewards, including the Chairperson of the Board. The Senior Pastor

shall be the chair of the Committee on Nominations ¶258.1c. The Lay Leader shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee on Nominations and co-chair. No other current member of the Board shall serve on the Committee on Nominations. Nominations from the floor of the Church Conference may also be made to the Board.

To ensure proper accountability to the church, the Board shall request that the District Superintendent call an annual Church Conference to consider Board nominations in place of the annual Charge Conference as outlined in the *Book of Discipline*. If the District Superintendent chooses not to call a Church Conference in place of the annual Charge Conference, the Senior Pastor should call a church-wide meeting to discuss the proposed nominations to the Board prior to the Charge Conference meeting.

In the event that a Board member resigns or is unable to fulfill his or her term, the Senior Pastor shall nominate, in consultation with the Committee on Nominations, and by a majority vote of the Board, an eligible church member to fill the current term. If the vacated term extends beyond the calendar year of the vacancy, the choice of this person shall be placed before the annual Church Conference along with the new Board members for approval of a full term.

In the event the Senior Pastor becomes incapacitated or unable to serve, the District Superintendent may designate one of the appointed clergy to serve on the Board in his or her place.

SECTION VII: CHURCH CONFERENCE APPROVAL

Changes in this organizing document must be approved by the District Superintendent and a duly called Church Conference of First United Methodist Church as outlined in the *Book of Discipline*.

Approved on November 19, 2020 at the Church Conference of First United Methodist Church with Rev. Richard White, Superintendent of the East District of the Texas Annual Conference, as the Presiding Elder.

Richard White

Rev. Richard White
Superintendent of the East District
Presiding Elder at Charge Conference

Sharon Bright

Sharon Bright
Elected Secretary at the Charge Conference

Dr. Nathan Hodge

Dr. Nathan Hodge
Senior Pastor appointed by the Bishop to First United Methodist Church

Appendix

The 2016 *Book of Discipline* includes the following provision on creating an alternate organizational plan for the local church:

¶247.2: the charge conference, the district superintendent, and the pastor shall organize and administer the pastoral charge and churches according to the policies and plans herein set forth. When the membership size, program scope, mission resources, or other circumstances so require, the charge conference may, in consultation with and upon the approval of the district superintendent, modify the organizational plans, provided that the provisions of ¶ 243 are observed.

The primary tasks of the local church as outline in the 2016 *Book of Discipline*:

¶ 243. Primary Tasks—the local church shall be organized so that it can pursue its primary task and mission in the context of its own community—reaching out and receiving with joy all who will respond; encouraging people in their relationship with God and inviting them to commitment to God’s love in Jesus Christ; providing opportunities for them to seek strengthening and growth in spiritual formation; and supporting them to live lovingly and justly in the power of the Holy Spirit as faithful disciples.

In carrying out its primary task, it shall be organized so that adequate provision is made for these basic responsibilities: (1) planning and implementing a program of nurture, outreach, and witness for persons and families within and without the congregation; (2) providing for effective pastoral and lay leadership; (3) providing for financial support, physical facilities, and the legal obligations of the church; (4) utilizing the appropriate relationships and resources of the district and annual conference; (5) providing for the proper creation, maintenance, and disposition of documentary record material of the local church; and (6) seeking inclusiveness in all aspects of its life.