



Canton First UMC

Sharing Life • Sharing Christ • For Others

GOVERNING BOARD

Guiding Principles

January 2022

Mission & Vision | Organization | Accountability, Authority, and Transparency

Canton First UMC
Canton.first@cantonumc.org

Canton First United Methodist Church

Governing Board Guiding Principles

I. Mission & Vision

Canton First UMC has both a corporate and unique identity. We are a part of The United Methodist Church and adhere to its theology and doctrine.

We also embrace our unique mission and calling for our community: Canton First United Methodist Church exists to glorify God and make disciples by sharing our lives with others so that everyone will find hope-filled life in Christ.

We are Christ-followers, called to live missionally by intentionally aligning our lives to participate in God's redemption of all creation. In other words, we look for what God is doing and join Him in it.

Our decisions and actions are shaped by three **Core Values**:

1. Every Person Matters to Us Because Every Life Matters to God

- We are all created in the image of God and have sacred worth.
- God's grace is available to everyone and is continually at work in our lives.
- We commit ourselves to be in ministry with and for all persons.

2. God Shapes Us through Scripture

- The scriptures are God's inspired Word and are the primary source and criterion for our faith.
- As we open our minds and hearts to the Word of God, faith is born, our understanding of God and self is deepened, and we discover God's call to join Him in redeeming the world.
- The scriptures are God's living Word as the Holy Spirit reveals to us all things necessary for salvation and growing in our faith in Christ.

3. God Gives Us a Resilient Faith

- Like the early Christians show us, it is possible to remain strong in our faith without being isolated from or giving into the prevailing culture.
- We seek to make disciples who stand firm in their faith through the various phases of life and the storms of life.
- Faith is strongest when it is built in Christ-centered community and shared in life.

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II. Organization

- 1. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, and the Church is the Body of Christ. The Lead Pastor is the primary spiritual leader of Canton First United Methodist Church.**
- 2. The Governing Board will carry out the administrative functions of the Trustees, Staff Parish Relations Committee, Finance Committee, and the Administrative Board, and functions in the role of the Board of Directors of The First Methodist Church of Canton, Inc. Except as specifically delegated, all legal authority is vested in the Governing Board, and no person may legally bind the church to any obligation without prior approval of the Governing Board.**
- 3. The Governing Board acts on behalf of the church in accordance with the Book of Discipline and in compliance with these Guiding Principles. Revisions and/or additions to the Guiding Principles may be recommended by the Governing Board and ratified at the next Charge Conference.**
- 4. The service of existing administrative committees and their members (Church Administrative Board, Staff Parish Relations, Board of Trustees, and Finance) will be completed as of December 31, 2021, and the Governing Board will thereafter assume any and all responsibilities previously assigned to the administrative committees as detailed in this Guiding Principles document.**
- 5. All references to the Administrative Board, Board of Trustees, Staff Parish Relations Committee, and Finance Committee, in all church policies, and in all references in the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, will be understood to refer to the Governing Board beginning January 1, 2022.**
- 6. All other existing committees, excluding the Nominations and Leadership Development Committee (Nominations Committee) and the Preschool Committee, will become Ministry or Task Force Teams and remain in place for 2022. The Nominations and Leadership Development Committee will remain in place. The Preschool Committee will become the Preschool Ministry Council.**
- 7. The Nominations Committee will continue to operate separately from the Governing Board for the purpose of recruitment, selection, and development of Church lay leaders through a process of discernment and ensuring alignment with the Canton First UMC Mission and Vision.**

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8. The Preschool Ministry, as an integral part of the ministry of Canton First UMC, is fully amenable and accountable to the Governing Board. The Director of Preschool Ministries reports to the Lead Pastor or his/her designee. The Preschool Ministry Council will provide support, advice, and assistance to the Director of Preschool Ministries related to daily operations, programs, procedures, employee relations, and in the development of budget recommendations for presentation to the Governing Board. Additionally, the Preschool Ministry Council will assist the Director of Preschool Ministries with review and updates of Preschool Ministry policies for submission to the Governing Board for approval. The Director of Preschool Ministries in consultation with the pastor will designate representatives from church members to serve on the Council.
9. The Nominations Committee will be charged with recommending to the annual Charge Conference those who will serve as members of the Governing Board and which of those members will serve as Board Chairperson and Lay Leader. Lay Delegates will be appointed annually from the members serving on the Board by the Nominations Committee. To carry out corporate functions the Council will elect from its membership a vice-chairperson and secretary. This is necessary and will be utilized only as it relates to carrying out responsibilities of a corporate nature assigned to trustees. Additionally, the Nominations Committee will assist the Governing Board as requested with recommendations of individuals to serve on lay ministry teams and task force teams.
10. Any vacancy on the Governing Board occurring between Charge Conferences will be filled by the Nominations Committee, and the person selected will serve for the remainder of the vacant term.
11. The Governing Board members will be divided into three classes. Approximately one-third of members will rotate off the Board each year and new members will be seated. This allows for both continuity, historical preservation and inclusion of new leaders each year. To serve this purpose for the inaugural year, the Nominations Committee will divide Governing Board members to serve in 1-, 2-, & 3-year classes: 2022, 2023, 2024. Following the inaugural year, members will be nominated to serve for three-year terms. Members may serve two consecutive terms if elected by Charge Conference.
12. Each member of the Governing Board must be a member of the church or appointed clergy, and shall not be a church employee, or an immediate family member of appointed clergy, or any church employee, or other Governing Board member.

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- 13. The Governing Board will consist of 12 members elected by the Charge Conference plus four ex-officio members with vote – Lead Pastor, Associate Pastor(s) (if appointed by the Conference), Chairperson of the Preschool Ministry Council, and the church Treasurer. The elected members will include the Board Chairperson, Lay Leader and Lay Delegates to the Annual Conference.**
- 14. The Governing Board will assign three Board members to a personnel committee. The Personnel Committee will advise the Governing Board on matters relating to personnel policies and practices, compensation and benefits, employee performance review, employee relations, staffing and organizational structure. When referring to the personnel committee, the terms “Staff Parish Relations Committee” and “Personnel Committee” may be used interchangeably having the same meaning and purpose.**
- 15. Authorized by the Board either annually or as needed – Ministry Teams and Team Leaders are identified, recruited, and equipped to serve. Task Force Teams may also be designated by the Board for specific research, review, and/or design, and project-based work.**
- 16. The Governing Board Chairperson will also serve as the Trustees Chair and Personnel Committee Chair.**
- 17. The Director of Administration, as an ex-officio non-voting member of the Governing Board, will attend all meetings, other than meetings which are closed as permitted under the Discipline or these Guiding Principles, and will ensure required communications and accurate records.**
- 18. The Lead Pastor and the Associate Pastor (if appointed by the Conference) may attend all meetings except those closed meetings of the Personnel Committee as permitted by the Book of Discipline.**

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III. Accountability, Authority, and Transparency

- 1. Guided by the Mission & Vision for Canton First United Methodist Church, the Governing Board will continually discern, plan, implement, evaluate, and reflect to effectively accomplish the fiduciary, generative, and strategic work of the church.**
- 2. The Governing Board will seek to focus on empowering members in using their spiritual gifts and passions for ministry to contribute to the work of the church in reaching new disciples for Jesus Christ.**
- 3. The Governing Board shall act on behalf of the church in accordance with the Book of Discipline and in compliance with these Guiding Principles. Revisions and/or additions to the Guiding Principles can be recommended by the Governing Board and ratified at the next Charge Conference.**
- 4. For the Governing Board to conduct church business, a quorum is required. A quorum will exist when two-thirds of Governing Board members are present. The Lead Pastor, Associate Pastor(s), Treasurer, and Church Administrator do not count toward a quorum.**
- 5. The Governing Board will use a process of spiritual discernment to reach consensus in making decisions. Through a consensus-forming process, decision-makers will have an opportunity to hear and understand every interest and work together to achieve the best possible decision for the church.**
- 6. The Governing Board will be empowered, at the discretion of the Chairperson, to waive the requirement for an in-person meeting to hold a meeting virtually, or to handle urgent matters outside of a scheduled meeting by email. To facilitate the consensus-forming process by email, members will be asked to submit a response to the entire Governing Board with agreement, to request additional clarification, or to voice comments for consideration. Once a consensus is reached, the Chairperson will reply with an email to the Governing Board with the decision. Decisions will be made public as part of a special addendum to the Governing Board's meeting minutes.**
- 7. The Governing Board will adopt an annual church budget, and review and approve a mid-year budget adjustment when needed. Once the budget is approved, those responsible for the various ministry areas have the authority to spend the budget amount allocated to align with the objectives for the ministry as approved by the Lead Pastor. No further action/approval is needed to access the budget with these exceptions:**

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- a. A building maintenance or capital improvement expenditure over \$2,500 will require three bids. Preference will be given to hire local companies offering competitive bids within 5 percent of other bids. References, company history, and professional experience will be strong considerations in accepting a proposal for services.
 - b. Purchases over \$2,500 require Governing Board approval unless the expenditure is already included as a building maintenance or capital expenditure line item in the approved budget.
 - c. The Director of Administration will consult with the Treasurer concerning any single purchase or expenditure over \$5,000 for purposes of cash flow.
8. The Lead Pastor is accountable to the Governing Board. The Board and Pastor will set performance goals each year by which the Pastor's work will be assessed and for which the Pastor will be accountable.
9. The Governing Board will conduct an annual performance review of the pastoral staff, participate through consultation in the appointment process, and determine pastors' compensation recommendations for Charge Conference approval.
10. The Board, in consultation with the Lead Pastor, has the authority to determine the number of staff positions, hire new employees, and set the salary paid to each staff member including the amount of any merit, cost-of-living raises, or bonuses. The Lead Pastor has the authority to interview and recommend candidates to fill open staff positions. The Director of Preschool Ministry in consultation with the Preschool Ministry Council has the authority to determine the number of preschool staff positions and hire new employees based on student enrollment and within the approved budget.
11. The Governing Board delegates to the Lead Pastor the authority to supervise, evaluate, discipline, establish job descriptions, and otherwise manage paid staff. The Lead Pastor will establish a staff organizational chart, supervisory roles, and reporting structure with lines of authority. The pastor has the authority to terminate employees in accordance with the church's employment policies. When terminating an employee, the pastor will invite a Board Member to participate.
12. The Board will conduct an annual review of policies for required updates. Policy revisions may be submitted at any time to the Board for review and approval in accordance with Governing Board Meeting Agenda preparation procedures. Any policy revision including a substantive change requires a First Reading and Second (Final) Reading before adoption.

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13. All meetings of the Governing Board will be open to church members, except for any meeting or portion of a meeting in which a personnel matter or a matter of legal negotiations is considered. In those cases, the Board will go into executive session. The Chairperson or his/her designee will record minutes of executive session meetings and will forward to the Director of Administration to maintain in official church records. Executive session item minutes will be kept separately and confidentially.