

Committees

Board Policy on Committees

UUCWI Board Policy

Approved TBD

Drafted 1/5/04 DPC

Applicable until revoked or amended

Background:

Committees are the principal operating arms of the congregation. The Bylaws of the congregation, in Article VIII, amplified by Article X, direct the Board of Directors (the Board) to establish standing and ad-hoc committees and approve their responsibilities. Committees are directed to work with the Board and be subject to its approval and control. Articles V and VII give special independence to the Nominating and Ministerial Search Committees. Provision is made for Board liaisons to committees.

This policy establishes standing committees and provides additional guidance on the relationships between committees and the Board. It defines principles for selection and confirmation of committee chairs and lists their responsibilities. Job descriptions of the standing committees are to be appended to this Policy upon approval by the Board.

Policy:

Standing Committees

In addition to the Nominating Committee established through the Bylaws, the Board has approved the following standing committees:

- Adult Programs Committee
- Building Committee
- Capital Campaign Committee
- Canvass Committee
- Caring Connections Committee
- Children's Religious Education Committee
- Membership Committee
- Committee on Ministry
- Music Committee
- Social Action Committee
- Worship Committee

Ad-hoc Committees

The Board may establish ad-hoc committees, task forces, review boards, and other such temporary bodies as it sees fit. These will be reflected in the minutes of its meetings.

Principles

As the bodies charged with carrying out the programs of the congregation, committees do the majority of the work of the church and are indispensable contributors to its effectiveness and its reputation. It is important to have committees stable, membership rewarding, and leadership appreciated. As well, it is a goal that the committees will work harmoniously and cooperatively together and with the Board, which has policy, finance, oversight, and integration roles.

The leader, or Chair, of each committee, bears formal responsibility for the effectiveness of the committee and for conforming its functioning to policies of the board. Unless specified otherwise in the Bylaws, committees are encouraged to select their own leaders and members and to set the number of their members. If appropriate and agreed by the Board, a committee may consist of a single member, the Chair. The Bylaws require that any Chair, and members of Nominating and Ministerial Search committees, be a member of the congregation.

The Board cannot escape ultimate responsibility for the success or failure of each committee; hence, it may recruit individuals to fill vacant Chair positions, dissolve and/or re-form committees that do not meet or are otherwise ineffectual, or take other prudent measures to assure the success of the congregation in fulfilling its purposes. Such board-initiated actions shall be taken only in serious circumstances and shall be preceded by appropriate and caring consultation and mediation; the norm and goal shall be self-energized committees that operate in concert with the board and other committees.

Committee Chair Responsibilities

This is a checklist of duties that the Chair must assure are discharged. They are not tasks that he or she must perform personally. It is expected that the Chair will delegate many of the responsibilities to members of the committee.

- Assure that the goals and responsibilities of the committee, as stated in the Board-approved job description, are achieved.
- Preside over the meetings and activities of the committee, encouraging a diversity of viewpoints, free exchange of ideas, and where possible, development of consensus.
- Involve the Minister in the committee's goal-setting.
- Ensure that the committee's activities, including meetings, are productive and timely.
- Encourage that a written record of the committee's decisions be maintained.
- Train at least one substitute and potential successor.
- Assure responsible administration of any funds allocated to the committee, operating within the budget approved by the congregation.
- Annually submit any funding requests to the Board Treasurer and President for consideration in the following year's congregational budget.
- Know and follow Board policies and practices.
- Report to the Board and congregation regularly through appearances at Board meetings, cooperation with the Board liaison, written reports to the Board, newsletter articles, website postings, announcements at services, etc., as appropriate.
- Coordinate any publicity or activities that may affect the reputation of the congregation with the Board or its designated contact sufficiently in advance to allow constructive feedback.
- Annually review the job description of the committee and if changed, submit it to the board for approval.
- Encourage healthy diversity and evolution in the membership of the committee, to maintain its vibrancy.

Board Responsibilities

- Annually review the list of committees.
- Review and approve job descriptions for each committee, when changed.
- Assure that Chairs are named for each committee.
- Recruit and select a candidate for any vacant Chair that the committee is unable to fill.
- Dissolve and/or re-form committees that do not meet or are otherwise ineffectual.
- Maintain cognizance of committee activities through reports from Chairs and liaisons.
- Maintain cognizance of the budget approved by the congregation, including stepping in, as appropriate, if committees fail to operate within allocated budgets.
- Act on committee requests in a timely manner.
- Create opportunities, such as “Leadership Council” meetings, for the Board and Chairs to discuss issues of common interest and develop approaches to challenges that transcend the responsibility of any one committee.

List of Committee Job Descriptions

A (√) is shown if a job description has been approved by the board in the 2003-2004 year.

Adult Programs Committee
Building Committee
Capital Campaign Committee
Canvass Committee
Caring Connections Committee
Children’s Religious Education Committee
Committee on Ministry
Membership Committee
Music Committee
Nominating Committee
Social Action Committee
Worship Committee