

Board Job Description, Policies, Covenant

(Taken from [Governing Policies for First Unitarian Church Of Portland, Oregon](#). A complete copy of the Policies is on [the Board page of the church's web site](#).)

PART 4 of the Policies: BOARD STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

The bylaws should be consulted for requirements about Board processes in governance. Provisions in the bylaws supersede any contrary provisions in these Governing Policies. The policies below supplement the provisions in the bylaws.

4.1 Governing Style. The Board will govern in the spirit set forth in our congregational covenant with an emphasis on vision, strategic leadership, oversight of the organization's affairs, clear distinction between Board and administrative roles, open communication and information sharing, encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, and collaborative decision making.

4.2 Board Job Description. The job of the Board is to work in collaboration with the Executive Team and congregation in leading the church to realize its mission. To perform its job, the Board shall:

- Honor the board Covenant of Leadership and Congregational Covenant in creating linkage between the congregation, ministers, and board.
- Discern the major church goals every five years, in collaboration with the Executive Team and congregation, and hold the Executive Team responsible for developing a strategic plan based on these goals.
- Determine the management limitations within which the Executive Team is expected to achieve the goals, and monitor the church's progress in achieving them.
- Evaluate the ministry of the church annually as required by the bylaws.
- Set and realize annual Board goals related to fulfilling the Board's role in advancing the church's mission.
- Ensure financial solvency and compliance with the law and good practices.
- Provide for a variety of means for exchanging information with the congregation.
- Support Board decisions after subjects have been fully explored, discussed and decided. Trustees' interactions with the public, press or other entities must recognize the inability of any Board member to speak for the Board as a whole, other than to convey decisions which have been made.
- The Moderator has the authority to speak to the press in the event that the Board needs to communicate more than its Board decisions.
- Act as required in compliance with the Governing Policies.
- Fulfill special responsibilities to encourage generosity by the congregation.
- Arrange for periodic reviews of the church's Articles, bylaws, policies, minutes and governance practices to ensure that the Board is properly governing the church.

- Provide trustees with trainings and resources adequate to perform their duties.

4.3 Standards of Performance for Duties of Trustees. The Board expects that its trustees will act responsibly and ethically in managing the church. To do this, trustees must act with due care and with loyalty to the church.

4.3.1 Duty of Due Care. Trustees should act with due care in carrying out their responsibilities and in making Board decisions. Trustees shall be attentive to the church by attending meetings and preparing themselves as necessary to make informed decisions. Trustees will maintain confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.

4.3.2 Duty of Loyalty. Trustees have a duty to be loyal to the church—that is, to place the church's interests above their own or those of their family or business in any transaction in which the two may come into conflict. A Trustee must disclose the existence of any conflict of interest to the Board. The Board must then follow the Conflicts of Interest and Executive Compensation Policy (see Appendix). Each year each Trustee shall sign a Disclosure and Acknowledgment form similar to the one in the Conflicts of Interest Policy (see Appendix) and file it with the Secretary of the church.

Time Commitment and Committees:

(The following paragraph has been added by the Nominating Committee to describe the time commitment and committee work expected of Board members.)

Board members are expected to attend a monthly board meeting and prepare for that meeting by reading the Board packet sent about one week before each meeting. They are also expected to participate in at least one committee of the Board. These are Board Officers, Finance, Communications and Governance.

Board officers are Moderator, Vice Moderators, Secretary and Treasurer. These are elected by the Board each year. They, of course, have additional responsibilities.

In addition, the Board members are called upon to do special assignments with congregants, for example, take turns being part of Sunday greeting circles after each service, and participating in Board Forums at least twice each year. Special meetings of the Board may also be called.

Board members report that they usually spend 20 - 25 hours per month on meetings, assignments and communication.

BOARD COVENANT OF LEADERSHIP

Our promises of spirit

We promise to

- pray and be mindful of Spirit, alone and together
- be thankful for and continue to strive to deepen our spiritual lives
- look within our hearts for help and listen to the answers that come to us.

Our promises to our church community

We promise to

- demonstrate our leadership and commitment to our church by our example
- support our church ministers and the staff so that their efforts can be most productive
- try to discover what is best for our church as a whole, not what may be best for us or for some small group of the church
- listen with an open mind and heart to the words and ideas of the members of our church community
- communicate openly, acknowledge and appreciate others, act with heart and integrity, and cultivate relationships within our church community

Our promises to the ministers and to each other on the board of trustees

We promise to

- respect and care for each other
- honor the fact that our ministers are called, not hired
- treat our time on the board as an opportunity to make an important gift to our church
- listen with an open, nonjudgmental mind to the words and ideas of the ministers and each other on the board
- discuss, debate, and disagree openly in board meetings, expressing ourselves as clearly, honestly, and courteously as possible so that we are certain that the board understands our point of view
- support the final decision of the board, whether it reflects our view or not.

We pledge to observe these promises, to do our best to trust that others are also observing them, and to be forgiving when we inevitably make mistakes. We accept the accountability implied in these promises.”