



UNIFIED BOARD GOVERNANCE MODEL

Guiding Principles

Following are recommended guiding principles in determination of an updated governance model for Grace United Church:

- Principles of Grace-FULL conversations and Holy Manners will be adhered to at all times.
- “Levels” of governance should be minimal – a “relatively-flat” organizational model should work the best in terms of overall effectiveness.
- Every aspect of governance & leadership should be as open & transparent to the Congregational membership as possible – except, of course, for certain personnel matters which are mandated as confidential.
- Emphasis should focus on a structure that encourages and enables all members to participate in one or more meaningful ways in areas where they feel comfortable contributing.
- To the extent feasible, all members should participate in one or more of the Board Committees, working Teams or Task Groups -- whichever best suits their talents & interests.
- In all cases, committee and group ‘chairs’ and leaders can be either singular (eg: “Chair”) or plural (eg: “Co-Chairs”).
- In every aspect of governance and leadership, we must always remain flexible.

Congregational Meetings

Congregational Meetings are scheduled as needed when a major consideration or decision is required. It is chaired by the Congregational Board Chair(s) and proceedings are recorded by the Congregational Secretary. All Grace United Church members are encouraged to attend and participate.

Congregational Board

Congregational Board meetings are scheduled monthly – or more frequently, if needed to deal with major issues, recommendations, or cross-committee decisions. To be effective, the Congregational Board should not deal with routine issues and decisions that properly belong with the committees, teams and task groups. All members of committees and the congregation are invited to attend Board meetings. Everyone present at Board meetings is encouraged to share their views and opinions but when a vote is required, only the Official Board has voting privileges.

The Official Congregational Board consists of the chairs or co-chairs of the following committees. (When voting there can be 2 votes from each committee (chair/co-chairs or representative)):

Committees

- Care Network @ Grace
- Communications Committee
- Endowment Committees
- Emergency Response Committee
- Faith Formation Committee
- Finance Committee
- M & P Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Outreach Committee
- Property Committee
- Stewardship Committee
- Welcoming & Membership Committee
- Worship Committee
- Trustees

- Other positions as required by the United Church of Canada
- The Co-Chair, in attendance, who is not chairing the meeting may vote.

It also includes the

- Congregational Board Chair(s)
- Congregational Secretary
- Congregational Treasurer
- Regional Council Representatives
- Members-at-Large to a maximum of 3
- Minister(s) (must be present but does not have voting privileges)

Congregational Directors

Some congregational reports, transactions, and practices require the listing of the directors of the organization. At Grace United Church, Directors will generally be named by virtue of their roles and elected positions. The following are deemed to be the Directors of Grace United Church:

Congregational Board Chair(s)
Congregational Secretary(s)
Finance Committee Chair(s)
Property Committee Chair(s)
Trustees Chair
Congregational Treasurer

Committees & Teams

Working within Congregationally approved budgets & guidelines, Committees, and their Teams plan and carry-out the duties & responsibilities associated with their area of contribution and responsibility at Grace United Church. They make all routine decisions and plans for their areas within the guidelines set. They form task-groups and sub-groups as needed to carry-out their responsibilities effectively. They meet as often as needed to accomplish their goals. They keep records of their actions and activities and provide regular reports about their plans & accomplishments to the Congregational Board. Committees, Teams, & Task Groups are the “go-to” and “get-it-done” members and leaders of the Congregation. They are the “basic ingredient” or “backbone” of our organizational model. It is sincerely hoped that virtually all active members of Grace United Church (depending,

of course, on their ability) will be on one or more Committee(s), Team(s) or Task Group(s).

Ministry & Personnel Committee

Much of the work done by the M & P Committee falls into sensitive categories, including but not limited to, financial compensation, hiring, firing, leaves of absence and discipline. All these confidential HR decisions will be approved (or rejected) by a simple majority vote of the Congregational Board Directors (as outlined above - Congregational Board Chair(s), Congregational Secretary(s), Finance Committee Chair(s), Property Committee Chair(s), Trustees Chair, Congregational Treasurer). Note: M & P does not have the ability to make a recommendation regarding the hiring of a minister.

Interest Groups

There are a variety of interest groups that are not committees of the Official Board, but they enhance the work of the church and provide much needed fun, fellowship and caring within and outside of the church community. As such, their concerns and ideas are always welcomed by the Board but all new ideas and motions must go through an Official Board member. Interest groups can channel these through any Member-at-Large but as previously stated, all members are welcome to attend meetings to discuss.

Pop Up Teams

Pop Up Teams are groups of individuals who have a common interest in an area of the ministry and come together to test new ideas by asking questions within their small group. When they have a proposed direction, they widen the circle to include stakeholders within the congregation to test their idea and make improvements before taking the final decision the Board or initiating the event or activity. They liaise with the Board

- At the beginning to initiate the conversation
- Updating the Board and seeking feed back
- Presenting a final proposal, if necessary
- Reporting back the result of an event activity

Quorum

Official Board Meetings:

A quorum is required for a motion to be voted on. To reach a quorum over 50% of the currently active committees must be represented. It is the responsibility of the committee representatives to pass along any pertinent information to their committee.

Congregational Meetings:

A meeting of the congregation or pastoral charge may take place only if a minimum number of full members is present, as follows:

- a) for congregations or pastoral charges with 100 or more full members, at least 20 full members must be present; Bylaws B. Community of Faith; Bylaws B. Community of Faith
- b) for congregations or pastoral charges with between 30 and 99 full members, at least 10 full members must be present: and
- c) for congregations or pastoral charges with fewer than 30 full members, at least 1/3 of the full membership must be present.

The Manual, 2019 The United Church of Canada.

In order to maintain transparency, the minutes of all board meetings should be available to the congregation at any time.

Voting Principles

In an ideal world, most decisions would be made by consensus but in the real world, that is not always possible. In the event of a split vote, a majority vote of 60% is required.

Review

This document is to be reviewed bi-annually or whenever a new chair is installed to ensure that the governance model is being followed and/or any appropriate changes are made. All changes must be approved by the Board and the congregation.

Definitions – As per the United Church Manual

Please refer to the United Church Manual at this link:

<https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/2021-12/the-manual-2022.pdf>

Appendix A

The Board will communicate with the congregation by the following means:

- Advise and invite the congregation to attend Board meetings in the bulletin, rolling announcements and a verbal invitation be extended during morning announcements on the Sunday prior to each Board meeting.
- Advising the congregation once draft minutes are available. A hard copy will be available in the office.
- Invite any member of the congregation who is interested in receiving an electronic copy of the Board minutes to notify the office and/or Board Secretary to have their name added to the distribution list.
- Whenever a significant item is to be discussed at a board meeting, that item is to be brought to the attention of the congregation prior to the board meeting.
- Advise the congregation of any significant decisions that are made by the Board.