

## A New Leadership Structure

The United Methodist Book of Discipline includes the following statement:

¶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.

Paragraph 243, it should be noted, says nothing about *how* those tasks are to be carried out structurally. **The matter of governing structure is a matter between the local church, the pastor, and the district superintendent, in accordance with relevant provisions in the Book of Discipline.** There is wide latitude to convene a structure that:

- **has clear lines of authority**, so that everyone knows who is in charge of what
- **privileges decision-making** above simple reporting, so that God's people can move forward in ministry
- **empowers laity** to do the work of making disciples rather than sitting in incessant meetings, and
- **empowers the pastor** to attend to the work of Word, Order, Sacrament, and Service.

Lay employees are accountable to the pastor (clear line of responsibility), and the pastor is accountable to the Administrative Board (another clear line). Hiring and firing decisions are made by the pastor, in consultation with the SPRC chair; while the pastor consults with the whole council about staffing matters, the pastor is ultimately responsible for staffing, so that the staff understands lines of authority and so that the pastor may be properly evaluated on his or her entire portfolio, including management of the staff. This line of authority with lay staff, it should be noted, is in line with the Discipline's mandate that the pastor order the life of the church.

While certain members of the Board have coordination responsibilities, this model completely replaces the old SPRC / Trustees / Finance committee model. Rather than meeting in individual committees, Trustees matters are brought by the chair and dealt with by the entire Board. SPRC matters are typically handled by the pastor (as head of staff) or in the Board as a whole. Major financial decisions are made not by a Finance committee, but by the Board as a whole. The purpose of the structure, after all, is to be clear about who has the authority to make decisions: it is the Board. When the budget is put together, the Finance chair works with the ministry chairs, the staff, and other council members as needed to craft the proposed budget, which is then approved by the entire Board. Similarly, when a special Trustees project needs to be addressed, the Trustees chair is free to put together an ad hoc advisory or implementation group; even then, the entire Board retains decision-making power.

**Overview:** For several years now, as United Methodist congregations shrink in size, there has been a recognition that the leadership structures mandated in the Book of Discipline do not always serve the needs and abilities of smaller congregations. In 2016, the United Methodist General Conference added a provision in the Book of Discipline that allows congregations to devise new structures of leadership that better meet their needs as long as certain basic provisions are followed. This led Annual Conferences across the denomination to promote simpler and more streamlined ministry structures that removes the burden of staffing committees and helps to create an environment where ministry can thrive. Many congregations throughout the U.S. and in our annual conference have moved to a “one-board” model and many leaders have suggested that this structure enhances their ministry.

*Guiding Principles: The following guidelines provide the framework for our church’s leadership structure.*

### **ARTICLE 1: OUR MISSION**

Located in the heart of the Amqui community of Madison, Tennessee, we at Matthews Memorial are a community of believers grounded in God’s Word and empowered by His Spirit. **Our mission is to impact our community through the power of the Holy Spirit by loving others, developing disciples, and exemplifying Christ.** We believe that God has placed each of us here to fulfill the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you,” (NRSV). We do this by loving God and others, learning a new Way of living, and working out our faith for the benefit of our neighbors; **loving, learning, and serving.**

### **ARTICLE 2: ORGANIZATION**

1. Jesus Christ shall always be the Head of the Church, and the Church shall always be the Body of Christ.
2. The Lead Pastor shall be the primary spiritual leader of Matthews Memorial and also serve as the church’s Chief Executive Officer.
3. The Administrative Board shall serve as the Board of Trustees of the church and shall function in the role of the “Board of Directors” of Matthews Memorial United Methodist Church. Except as specifically delegated, all legal authority shall vest in the Administrative Board and no person may legally bind the church to any obligation without prior approval of the Administrative Board.
4. The Administrative 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 Administrative Board and ratified by the Charge Conference.

5. The church shall be organized in such a manner as to promote efficient and effective decision-making with appropriate checks and balances and levels of accountability and transparency.

### **ARTICLE 3: ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD ORGANIZATION**

1. The Administrative Board shall consist of at minimum twelve (12) members including the following positions:

- Chairperson (Recommended by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Charge Conference)
- Vice Chairperson/Secretary (Recommended by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Charge Conference)
- Clergy (Elders and Deacons) appointed to Matthews Memorial
- Lay Leader (Recommended by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Charge Conference)
- Lay Member to Annual Conference (Recommended by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Charge Conference)
- Finance Chairperson (Recommended by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Charge Conference)
- Financial Secretary (Recommended by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Charge Conference)
- Trustee Chairperson (Recommended by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Charge Conference)
- Staff Parish Relations Chairperson (Recommended by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Charge Conference)
- President of the United Women in Faith (approved by members of UWF)
- Additional At-Large Members (Recommended by the Committee on Nominations for ministries of Nurture, Outreach, and Witness and approved by the Charge Conference)

2. Members of the Administrative Board shall each serve three-year terms with the exception of the Lay Leader, Lay Member to Annual Conference and the Clergy

(pastors). To assure continuity and experience, the Administrative Board will be comprised of three rotating classes. One class will roll off each year while a new class is added by the Committee on Nominations.

3. The Committee on Nominations shall annually recommend four new members to the Administrative Board, and any other replacements for resignations or removals for Charge Conference approval.

4. A member may be removed for cause, including excessive absenteeism or behavior detrimental to the work of the Board, by a 2/3 vote of members of the Administrative Board.

5. Any vacancy on the Administrative Board shall be filled by the Committee on Nominations, and the person selected shall serve for the remainder of the vacant term.

6. No member of the Administrative Board should serve more than three consecutive years, unless the Committee on Nominations determines that there exists an exceptional and unique reason to do so. A former Board member may again serve after an absence of at least one year upon the nomination of the Committee on Nominations and approval of the Charge Conference.

7. Each member of the Administrative Board must be an active participant in the ministry life of the church. This shall include regular worship attendance and participation in the discipleship and service ministries of the church. Members shall not be immediate family members of the pastors.

8. The Administrative Board shall serve as:

- the Administrative Committee and/or Church Council
- the Staff Parish Relations Committee
- the Board of Trustees, and
- the Finance Committee of the church and shall assure that all the duties of each of the above committees are performed.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The Administrative Board shall function in the role of the governing body of the church. Essential responsibilities of the Board are to serve both the congregation and the community, to implement the Guiding Principles with emphasis on strategic leadership rather than administrative detail, and to evaluate the performance of the Lead Pastor.

2. The Administrative Board shall maintain an outward vision, seek out diversity in viewpoints and experiences, strive for collective decision-making, and place emphasis

on the future rather than the past or present. They shall determine how the mission will be achieved and the boundaries within which to operate.

3. The Administrative Board, in conjunction with the Lead Pastor, shall establish annual, measurable goals for the church to be implemented under the direction of the Lead Pastor, and shall provide regular reviews and evaluations of the Lead Pastor's progress in implementing such goals.

4. Each member of the Administrative Board shall be expected to attend monthly meetings. Should a member be unable to be present, the Chairperson must be notified. The Chairperson shall determine if attendance by teleconference or other electronic method shall be made available.

5. The Administrative Board Chairperson shall prepare and coordinate the meeting agenda in consultation with the Lead Pastor. The Chairperson shall communicate meeting times and locations in advance to the Administrative Board. The Chairperson is authorized to use a reasonable interpretation of the Guiding Principles as she or he acts to ensure the integrity of the Board's process.

6. One member of the Board (preferably the Vice Chair) shall serve as the recording secretary for the Administrative Board and will take, distribute, and file minutes of all proceedings.

7. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary, as ex-officio members of the Administrative Board, can attend all meetings other than meetings which are closed as permitted under the Discipline or these Guiding Principles.

#### **COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENCY**

1. All Administrative Board meetings shall be open to the congregation.

2. Notices of upcoming meetings shall be communicated to the congregation.

3. The Chairperson shall close the portion of the meeting related to Staff Parish Relations matters. The Chairperson has the discretion to close a portion of any meeting for other subjects deemed sensitive/confidential. In doing so, the Chairperson must always be steadfast in his/her commitment to transparency.

4. The church website will contain agendas and summaries from previous meetings.

#### **CONTRACTUAL AUTHORITY**

The Administrative Board Chairperson or Secretary and any one other member of the Board shall have authority to legally bind the church on contracts and obligations

pertaining to the real property of the church provided such action has been approved by the Administrative Board and all requirements of the Discipline have been satisfied.

### **PASTORAL CONNECTION**

1. The Administrative Board's official connection to the operation of the church shall be through the Lead Pastor.
2. The Lead Pastor has authority over and accountability for the staff.
3. The Lead Pastor is bound first by direction and decisions made by the Administrative Board before any other group, team, committee or staff member.
4. The Administrative Board shall conduct an annual performance review of the pastoral staff and determine pastors' compensation recommendations for Charge Conference approval.

### **MINISTRY TEAMS**

1. The Administrative Board will annually provide a list of "Ministry Teams" (possible examples: Worship, Discipleship, Outreach, Facilities etc.). The Committee on Nominations will then name Chairpersons for these teams for annual Charge Conference approval.
2. At any point during the year, the Administrative Board can form a new "Ministry Team" or "Task Force" as needed and also name the Chairperson of that team.
3. Ministry Teams will be under the strategic direction of and be held accountable to mission fidelity, goal setting, and achievement by the Administrative Board.
4. The Lead Pastor and staff will coordinate with the Ministry Teams to accomplish the strategic plan and goals set forth by the Administrative Board.

### **VOTING**

1. A quorum will exist when a majority of Administrative Board members are physically or electronically present.
2. The Administrative Board shall be empowered, at the discretion of the Chairperson, to waive the requirement for an in-person meeting and hold votes by email on urgent matters outside of a scheduled meeting. All electronic votes should be submitted in an email to the entire Administrative Board so votes can be properly recorded. For those members without email, the Chair is allowed to accept their votes via telephone or in writing. Once a vote reaches a majority, the Chairperson will reply with an email marking the official tally and determination of the vote results. These votes will be made public as part of a special addendum to the Administrative Board's meeting minutes.

**DATE OF EFFECT AS** approved by the 2022 Charge Conference, this new model of leadership shall take effect on January 1, 2023.