

`Guiding Principles of Lone Oak United Methodist Church

I. Council General Information:

- A. All references to the Church Council, Board of Trustees, Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee and Finance Committee contained in church policies, procedures, and Guiding Principles and all such references in the Book of Discipline (BOD) of the United Methodist Church, are understood to refer to the Church Council.
- B. The Church Council recognizes and approves the:
 - 1. Church Building Key Policy
 - 2. Church Building and Grounds Usage Policy
 - 3. Wedding Policies and Guidelines
 - 4. Safe Sanctuaries Policy
 - 5. Building Safeguards and Security Policy
 - 6. General Safety Policy
 - 7. Memorial Garden Policy
- C. On behalf of the church, the Church Council has the authority as the Board of Trustees to sign contracts related to maintenance of the facility or equipment of the church. (Chair of the Trustees).
- D. All meetings of the Church Council are open to Church members and attendees, with the exception that any meeting or portion of a meeting in which a personnel matter or a matter of legal negotiations is considered. In those cases, the Church Council will transition into executive session. Minutes of the executive session agenda items concerning personnel matters will be kept separately as part of the Staff/Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) files.
- E. Church Council members are nominated by a separate and independent Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development, chaired by the pastor, and elected at the Charge Conference as described in the BOD. The Nominations Committee is responsible for developing new leaders and equipping them for future Church Council positions.
- F. Guiding Principles may be added, edited, or deleted by the action of the Church Council. For every decision it makes, the Council should ask if a Guiding Principle should be established to help create a permission-giving culture for the staff and ministry team leaders. This allows them to have a healthy environment for people to engage in their ministries while maintaining accountability.

II. Staff:

- A. The Church Council approves the Lone Oak United Methodist Church Personnel Policies (latest revision). (Employee Handbook needed).
- B. The authority to hire and terminate employees of the church is vested in the Church Council. The pastor may interview and recommend candidates to fill open staff positions. It is recommended that the pastor ask a council member to sit in on interviews. The Council has the sole authority to determine the number of staff positions, approve job descriptions for each staff member, and set the salary and benefits for each staff member. The Church Council delegates to the pastor the responsibility to supervise, discipline, and manage paid staff.
- C. The pastor will review all paid staff annually using the approved evaluation process in the employee manual (latest revision). The pastor may ask for a Church Council member to sit in on the evaluation. The Council member may not be an immediate relative of the paid staff member (BOD ¶ 258.2 a). In the case of the paid staff being a member of the Pastor's family, two Church Council members will do the evaluation.
- D. Due to Church Council's serving as the congregation's SPRC, no staff member or immediate family member of a pastor or staff member may serve on the committee. Only one person from an immediate family residing in the same household shall serve on the committee (BOD ¶ 258.2.a). If these conditions cannot be avoided, the family members recuse themselves from consideration of issues with potential conflict of interest.
- E. Due to serving as the congregation's Board of Trustees, only Council members over the age of 18 will have voting privileges in matters of property, incorporation, legal matters, contracts, insurance, investments, or other matters described in the BOD ¶¶ 2525-2552.

III. Finance and Budget:

- A. The Church Council recognizes and approves the:
 - 1. Procedure LOUMC-FIN-001 (latest revision), *Handling of Church Offerings*
 - 2. Procedure LOUMC-FIN-002 (latest revision), *Church Offering Counting Team*
 - 3. Policy LOUMC-FIN-003 (latest revision), *Retention of Financial Records*
 - 4. Church Credit/Debit Card Usage Policy (latest revision)
 - 5. Purchasing Procedure (latest revision)
 - 6. Budget Process Procedure (to be developed)
 - 7. Church Audit Program (to be developed)
- B. The pastor is responsible for reviewing the budget and has responsibility/authority for expenditures with Ministry Action Team leaders, the Building and Maintenance Team leader, and with the appropriate staff for accountability from the staff and to the Church Council.

- C. Those responsible (i.e., staff and Ministry Action Team leaders) for the various ministry areas are authorized to spend their approved budget to align with the objectives for their ministry area. Pastoral concurrence must be obtained for individual expenditures of more than \$150. No further approval is needed to spend budgeted funds in their area of responsibility. Purchase Vouchers and receipts must be provided to the Financial Secretary no more than three days after purchase. The pastor shall inform the Church Council of potential need for additional funding prior to exhausting budgeted funds. Once their budget has been spent, additional funds/expenditures must be approved by the Church Council.
- D. Any member of the Building and Maintenance Team has the authority to purchase supplies for building maintenance and improvements up to \$150.00 without approval. The Building and Maintenance Team leader can authorize purchases for building maintenance and improvements up to \$1,500.00. Purchase Vouchers and receipts must be provided to the Financial Secretary no more than three days after purchase. Any purchases above \$1,500.00 need Church Council approval unless the expenditure is already approved in a capital expenditure line item in the approved budget.
- E. Any expenditure for goods or services over \$1,500.00 will require solicitation of at least three bids. Preference will be given to hiring local companies offering competitive bids within 5% of the lowest acceptable bid. The Ministry Action Team leader, Building and Maintenance Team leader, or staff member responsible for the purchase must provide documentation to the Church Council as evidence of bid solicitation.
- F. The Church Treasurer must be consulted concerning any single purchase or expenditure over \$5,000.00 to ensure adequate cash flow is maintained. The Treasurer does not approve or deny purchases.

Appendix

Responsibilities of the Building and Maintenance Team

- A. The Building and Maintenance Team is accountable to the Church Council and the pastor for the supervision, oversight, care, and maintenance of the property and equipment of the church.
- B. Identify, recruit, equip, and deploy volunteers to assist in the overall care and maintenance of all church buildings and grounds.
- C. Collaborate with the pastor to make decisions related to weather- or emergency-related closings of the church buildings and/or grounds.
- D. Serve as one of the court registered Trustees for the church (Building and Maintenance Team Leader).
- E. Provide a monthly report to the pastor and Church Council sharing updates, progress, and needs of the church building and grounds.
- F. Maintain records of date and work completed on church buildings and property.
- G. Maintain a Priority List of work to be completed for the church.
- H. Ensure a bi-annual review of the church insurance policy and make any necessary recommendations related to it.