

Saint John UMC Augusta Guiding Principles

Guiding principles will be approved by the Leadership Board on an annual basis, normally in May. Documents contained in the guiding principles, such as specific dated policies, may be approved individually as needed by filing the updated policy with the church office and updating the document date in the guiding principles.

1. All references to the Church Council, Board of Trustees, Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, and Finance Committee, in all congregational policies as of May 22, 2023, and in all references in the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church, shall be understood to refer to the Leadership Board beginning January 2023.
2. Once the budget is approved, those responsible (i.e., staff and team leaders) for the various ministry areas have the authority to spend their budget to align with the objectives for their ministry area approved by the pastor. No further approval is needed to access the budget in their area of responsibility.
3. The pastor is responsible for reviewing line items within ministry areas with the appropriate staff or team leaders for accountability from the staff and to the board.
4. Any member of the Trustees Team and groups approved to do specific projects by the Trustees Team has the authority to purchase supplies for building maintenance up to \$500 without approval. The Trustees Team leader Chair can authorize purchases for building maintenance and improvement up to \$5,000 per event. Purchases or projects between \$5,000 and \$10,000 may be approved by the Trustee Team. Purchases up to \$1,000 per month can be approved by the Senior Pastor. Any purchases over \$10,000 need Leadership Board approval unless the expenditure is already approved in a capital expenditure line item in the approved budget

or as a special project to be funded with “temporary restricted” funds (05-xxxx accounts). Purchases over \$5,000 require multiple bids with preference to local bidders within 10%.

5. Any expenditure over \$5,000 will require multiple bids. Preference will be given to hire local companies offering competitive bids within 10% of other bids. Should multiple bids not be received, the Trustee Chair and Board Chair may jointly authorize proceeding if the bid received does not exceed the approved amount. Should the bid exceed the approved amount, Leadership Board approval is required. If the expenditure is already approved in the budget and meets the previous criteria, there is no further approval needed. The ministry team leader or staff member responsible for the purchase will provide documentation of the bids to the Leadership Board for purposes of a paper trail only.
6. The Finance Team Chair must be consulted concerning any single purchase or expenditure over \$500 for purposes of cash flow. The Finance Team Chair does not approve or deny purchases but rather confirms large purchases will not create cash flow issues.
7. The Leadership Board, church officers, staff, and members shall adhere to the Financial Controls as approved by the Leadership Board and contained in Attachments A and C to these Guiding Principles.
8. The Permanent Endowment and Planned Giving Ministry Committee (Endowment Committee) shall adhere to the General Policies as approved by the Charge Conference and contained in Attachment B to these Guiding Principles.
9. An internal or external audit shall be conducted at least every three years (or following a change in the staff position Finance Manager/Finance Secretary) using the Local Church Audit Guide (LCAG) revised February 2021 with recommended procedures as adapted for St. John UMC and approved on May 20, 2025. See Guiding Principles Attachment A #11 and Attachment C.

10. The pastor has the authority to hire and release employees using the church's employee policies and procedures in the St. John UMC Employee Handbook. When terminating an employee, the pastor will invite a board member to sit in on the exiting conversation for purposes of liability protection. The pastor has the responsibility to supervise, discipline, and evaluate staff performance as outlined in the St. John UMC Employee Handbook.
11. The pastor shall have the authority to interview and recommend candidates to fill open staff positions. The Board shall have the sole authority to determine the number of staff positions, approve job descriptions for each staff member and set the salary paid to each staff member. The Leadership Board delegates to the pastor the authority to supervise, discipline, and manage paid staff.
12. The pastor will review all paid staff annually using the approved evaluation process in the employee manual dated May 22, 2023. Paid staff will review unpaid staff/team and leaders annually using the same evaluation process.
13. The board recognizes and approves the Building Usage Policies dated May 22, 2023.
14. The board recognizes and approves the Building Security and Key Policies dated May 22, 2023.
15. The board recognizes and approves the St. John UMC Personnel Policies dated May 22, 2023.
16. All meetings of the Leadership Board shall be open to the public, with the exception of any meeting or portion of a meeting in which a personnel matter or a matter of legal negotiations is considered. In those cases, the Board will transition into executive session. Minutes of executive session agenda items concerning personnel matters will be kept separately as part of the "SPR" files.

17. Leadership Board members are nominated by a separate and independent Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development, chaired by the pastor, and elected by the Charge Conference as described in the BOD. The Nominations Committee will be responsible for developing new leaders and equipping them for future Leadership Board positions.
18. Due to Leadership Board's serving as the congregation's Staff-Parish Relations Committee, no immediate family member of the pastor may serve on the Board. Due to serving as the congregation's Board of Trustees, only Leadership Board 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 ¶s 2525-2551.
19. The Lead Pastor is the Leadership Board's only link to church ministry and programming. The Council will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the Lead Pastor. The Council will view Lead Pastor performance as identical to church performance so that organizational goals will be viewed as the Lead Pastor's performance.
20. Compensation for the Lead Pastor and all appointed clergy will be determined by a Charge/Church conference. Recommendations for the Lead Pastor's compensation will be made by the SPR Team (as part of their SPRC duties) to the entire Leadership Board for consideration before the Charge/Church conference. Recommendations for other appointed clergy compensation will be made by the Lead Pastor in consultation with the SPR Team to the entire Leadership Board for consideration before the Charge/Church Conference. Decisions about increases in the Lead Pastor's compensation will be based primarily on the following three criteria: 1. Council's review of Lead Pastor's effectiveness in reaching established goals. 2. Needs of the church for a Lead Pastor with the skill sets necessary for reaching established goals. This will be determined in relationship to the compensation packages of churches of similar or larger size in the Annual Conference. 3. Possible cost of living increases. However, it is

understood that the primary criteria for compensation will always be the Leadership Board's review of the Lead Pastor's performance.

21. The Lead Pastor shall not cause or allow any activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unlawful or in violation of commonly accepted business practices and professional ethics. Furthermore, the Lead Pastor shall not cause or allow any activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is a violation of the current *Book of Discipline*, Standing Rules of the Annual Conference, or the express direction of the resident bishop and/or district superintendent of the annual conference.
22. The Leadership Board will meet once each month with the exception of July and December. The meetings will normally be scheduled for the 3rd week of the month but may be adjusted based on other events. The next meeting date and time will be confirmed at the end of each meeting.
23. The Leadership Team will meet in person, by video teleconference and, for approval of projects, over email. Email approval will be reported in the next meeting minutes.

Approved: May 22, 2023
Revised: February 20, 2024
May 20, 2025