

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

St. Thomas Lutheran Church (STL)

Rocky River, OH

June 1, 2015

MISSION PRINCIPLES

Our mission and vision, in unity with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament, is to “Build the Community Spiritually” by “Living and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our fellowship and community.

MP 1 - OUTREACH: The highest priority of STL shall be outreach. This includes equipping each STL disciple as a missionary to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with households in the community who need to be welcomed into the body of Christ.

MP 2 - Other significant priorities in the mission of STL shall be

MP 2.1 WORSHIP: to glorify God through our individual, household, and corporate worship celebrations.

MP 2.2 DISCIPLESHIP: strengthening believers to be firmly grounded in the Christian faith and to grow in their participation in the mission of the Church.

MP 2.3 MINISTRY: the equipping and sending of each believer into a ministry by developing their unique God-given gifts and talents.

MP 2.4 FELLOWSHIP: helping others to develop meaningful relationships with other believers.

MP 3 - INREACH: While secondary to the outreach mission of STL, caring for the needs of one another within STL will continue.

BOUNDARY PRINCIPLES

The Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unbiblical, unlawful, unethical, immoral, or imprudent within the ministry of STL.

Specifically, the Senior Pastor shall NOT:

BP 1 - **BIBLICAL AND DOCTRINAL:** with regard to all aspects of the ministry of the congregation, allow, foster or condone any teaching or practice that is unbiblical or in conflict with the Lutheran Confessions and membership in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

BP 2 - **LAWFUL:** allow any decision, practice, or activity within the ministry of the congregation that is illegal or unethical.

BP 2.1 cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy.

BP 3 - **FINANCIAL:** allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures established in alignment with the Mission Principles.

BP 3.1 allow budgeting that contains too little information to enable credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, relation of expenditures to Mission Principles and disclosure of multiyear planning assumptions.

BP 3.2 allow budgeting that plans expenditures in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period, unless there is approval by the Board of Directors.

BP 3.3 allow reserve accounts to drop below a level that would jeopardize the cash flow needs of the congregation to be met in a timely and prudent manner.

BP 3.4 sign any check written to himself or endorse any check over to himself in any amount.

BP 3.5 authorize any non-budgeted expense in excess of \$500 or a

budgeted expense in excess of \$2,000, with the exception of salaries, benefits and utilities, without the consent of the Board of Directors.

BP 3.6 enter into a contract legally binding STL to a future commitment of physical or financial assets (with value in excess of amounts defined in BP 3.5 above) without consent of the Board of Directors.

BP 3.7 allow the Board of Directors to be uninformed as to the financial status of STL. The Senior Pastor shall cause regular financial statements to be made to the Board of Directors and to be made available to interested congregation members.

BP 3.8 allow the congregation to become uniformed whenever cash reserves drop below the average monthly expenses for more than four consecutive weeks.

BP 3.9 allow non-essential expenditures, budgeted or unbudgeted, whenever cash reserves drop below the average monthly expenses for more than four consecutive weeks.

BP 4 - Compensation and Benefits: With respect to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers and volunteers cause or allow jeopardy to financial integrity or public reputation.

BP 4.1 change his own compensation or benefits.

BP 4.2 create compensation obligations beyond the terms of the current effective Period as defined in BP 3.5 above and in all events subject to loss of revenue.

BP 5 - Relating to Individuals : With respect to interactions with individuals whether members, attendees, or others cause or allow conditions, procedures or decisions that are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy.

BP 5.1 fail to take appropriate measures to guide participants to resolve underlying conflicts and to counsel or disciple participants in the events of inappropriate behavior.

BP 5.2 allow or permit any person to serve as a staff member, ministry leader or volunteer without the assessment of that person's suitability for the position. Those serving children under 18 years of age must also have satisfactorily completed training and background checks. Volunteers must be members for a minimum of six months.

BP 5.3 with respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, cause or allow conditions that are unfair, undefined, or contrary to law.

BP 6 - Communication and Support to the Board of Directors: The Senior Pastor shall not permit the Board of Directors to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

ACCOUNTABILITY PRINCIPLES

The responsibility of the Board of Directors before God, on behalf of the people of STL, Rocky River, Ohio, and the surrounding community to whom we carry Christ and nurture them in Him, is to see that STL, through the leadership of its Senior Pastor, (1) achieves the fulfillment of its Mission Principles, and (2) avoids violation of its Boundary Principles.

AP 1 - DISCIPLINING THE PROCESS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS: The Board of Directors shall conduct itself with discipline and integrity with regard to its own process of governance.

AP 1.1 Board of Directors Members will:

- a. be regular in worship and group Bible study with the people of STL.
- b. be a faithful giver of time, talent, and treasures to support the mission of STL.
- c. understand and be in agreement with the Mission and Vision of STL
- d. commit to holding the Senior Pastor accountable for the Mission Principles.

AP 1.2 The Board of Directors is responsible to:

- a. Define the Guiding Principles.
- b. Monitor the performance of the Senior Pastor
- c. Monitor its own performance and complete the necessary training to continually improve members' skills and understanding.

AP 1.3 The Board of Directors will develop Guiding Principles with an emphasis on:

- a. Outward vision rather than internal preoccupation.
- b. Concern for the people served.
- c. Consideration of diversity in viewpoints.
- d. Strategic leadership more than administrative detail.
- e. Clear distinction of Board of Directors, Senior Pastor and Staff roles.
- f. Collective rather than individual decisions.
- g. Future action rather than past or present considerations.
- h. Being proactive rather than reactive.

AP 1.4 The Board of Directors members must:

- a. Represent un-conflicted loyalty to the interests of Christ regarding those whom He has called His Church to serve (Matthew 28:19-20). This loyalty supersedes any personal or group interest among or outside the recipients of the Church's services.
- b. Disclose any fiduciary conflict of interest and withdraw from any decision-making affected by it.
- c. Honor the principles and decisions of the Board of Directors acting as a whole.
- d. Respect the confidentiality of sensitive Board of Directors issues and avoid facilitating gossip or other "third hand communication" contrary to the practice of direct Biblical conflict resolution (Matthew 18:15-20).

AP 1.5 The Board of Directors Chairperson:

- a. Enforces the integrity and fulfillment of the Board of Directors process including the monitoring of the Senior Pastor's performance.
- b. Is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the Accountability Principles to ensure the integrity of the Board of Directors process.
- c. May represent the Board to outside parties in announcing board-stated positions and also in stating chair decisions and interpretations within the area delegated to the Chairperson.
- d. May delegate the authority described above but remains accountable for its use.

AP 1.6 The Senior Pastor:

- a. Has the responsibility, authority, and accountability to serve as the primary leader of STL at every level: Congregation (by teaching), Board of Directors (by inspiring), and Staff (by directing).
- b. Will defer to the judgment of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors if a question of process arises with regard to STL's governing documents or Guiding Principles.

AP 2 - WITH RESPECT TO THE MISSION PRINCIPLES The Board of Directors shall maintain the position that Christ is the owner of the Church and the people that He has called His Church to serve.

AP 2.1 The Board of Directors will assure that resources are invested regularly to enhance its understanding of the needs of people in the Community and to enhance the Church's reputation of service to the Community.

AP 2.2 The Board of Directors will collect and/or review input and feedback from people in the congregation and in the community to better understand their needs and, if deemed appropriate, changes in the Guiding Principles or recommendations to the Senior Pastor shall be made.

AP 2.3 Under the teaching and guidance of the Senior Pastor, the Board of Directors will continually seek the wisdom and teachings of Christ as the Lord of the Church. To this end, significant attention will be given to prayer and study of Scripture as a group.

AP 3 - MONITORING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SENIOR PASTOR: The Board of Directors' sole official connection to the operating organization of the congregation, its achievement, and conduct shall be through the Senior Pastor.

AP 3.1 Only decisions passed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors are binding on the Senior Pastor.

AP 3.2 The Senior Pastor is the Board of Directors' only link to operational achievement and conduct, so that all authority and accountability of Staff, as far as the Board of Directors is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Senior Pastor.

AP 3.3 The Board of Directors will not evaluate, either formally or informally, any Staff member other than the Senior Pastor.

AP 3.4 The Board of Directors will instruct the Senior Pastor through the Guiding Principles that define the Mission Principles to be achieved and

establish the Boundary Principles to be abided by, allowing the Senior Pastor to use any reasonable interpretation of these principles (see AP 1.5).

AP 3.5 After seeking Board of Directors and staff input, the Senior Pastor will be required to write a minimum of 3 SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time specific) goals and objectives each year that correspond to each of the Board of Directors' Mission Principles. These "Annual Senior Pastor Ministry Approved Goals and Objectives" will be presented to the Board for initial review in October and for final mutual acceptance in November.

AP 3.6 Monitoring of the Senior Pastor's ministry performance will be based only on the "Annual Senior Pastor Ministry Approved Goals and Objectives", congregational accomplishment of the Board of Directors' Mission Principles, and congregational operation within the Board of Directors' Boundary Principles.

AP 3.7 Each year in the month of September the Board of Directors shall review the results achieved by the Senior Pastor with respect to each of the areas referenced in AP 3.6. A merit raise, cost of living raise, corrective action, or request for resignation shall be based on these results.

AP 3.8 At the meetings of the Board of Directors, the Senior Pastor's goals will be discussed and reviewed for performance, modification, and accountability