

# GOVERNING BOARD POLICIES



**First Parish Unitarian Universalist  
Portland Maine**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
1.1 Overview .....	1-1
1.2 Background .....	1-1
1.3 Document Use and Organization .....	1-1
<b>2. MISSION AND VISION .....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
2.1 Mission .....	2-1
2.2 Core Values .....	2-1
2.3 Vision Statement .....	2-1
2.4 Principles .....	2-1
2.5 Statement of Intent .....	2-2
<b>3. BOARD COVENANT .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
3.1 Covenant of the First Parish Governing Board .....	3-1
<b>4. BOARD GOVERNANCE POLICIES .....</b>	<b>4-1</b>
4.1 Philosophy of Governance .....	4-1
4.2 Governance Approach .....	4-1
4.3 Code of Conduct .....	4-2
4.4 Officers' Duties .....	4-3
4.5 Conflicts of Interest .....	4-5
4.6 Discipline and Removal of Board Members .....	4-5
4.7 Governing Board Committees .....	4-6
4.8 Violations of Board Policy .....	4-6
<b>5. DELEGATION TO MINISTRY .....</b>	<b>5-1</b>
5.1 Overall Strategy and Intent .....	5-1
5.2 Guiding Principles .....	5-1
5.3 Board – Ministry Linkage .....	5-1
5.4 Delegation of Operations and Administration .....	5-2
5.5 Delegation to the Minister as Spiritual Leader .....	5-2
5.6 Delegation to the Minister as Head of Staff .....	5-3
5.7 Delegation to the Minister of Program Leadership .....	5-5
5.8 Delegation to the Minister as Board Liaison .....	5-5
5.9 Delegation of Facility Use and Maintenance Authority .....	5-6
5.10 Delegation of Communication .....	5-7
5.11 Delegation of Financial Authority .....	5-7
<b>6. OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING .....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
6.1 Intent .....	6-1
6.2 Monitoring .....	6-1
<b>7. VISIONING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING .....</b>	<b>7-1</b>
7.1 Overview .....	7-1
7.2 Annual Vision Goals .....	7-1
7.3 Strategic Planning .....	7-2

## TABLES

Table No.	Page
Table 1. Ministry Reporting Requirements .....	6-2
Table 2. Content of Monthly Monitoring Report .....	6-4

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 OVERVIEW

This document contains the Governing Board policies of First Parish Unitarian Universalist (First Parish) in Portland, Maine. These policies were developed to support the operation of First Parish under the Policy Governance form of church organization. This document provides the Board policies that govern and direct the work of both the Governing Board and Ministry in the management and planning of First Parish affairs. A brief summary of policy governance and the reasons First Parish adopted it are provided below, followed by a summary of policy sections.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND

Policy governance is a church governance model that relies on uniform Board policies, rather than repeated Board decisions, to guide church activities. Prior to 2012, First Parish used the common “Board-centered” model of governance, in which the Governing Board, comprised of representatives of key committees, served as a final adjudicator of key issues: it resolved disputes, decided procedural questions sent up by committees and otherwise was involved in rendering opinions on matters arising from day-to-day operations. As the church grew, so did the size of the Board, which eventually became too large for efficient decision-making. In addition, little time was available for visioning and strategic planning.

In 2012, the First Parish congregation voted to change the model to the policy-based approach of policy governance. In the policy governance model, authority formerly held by the Board to rule on operational questions is transferred to the operational side of the church, referred to collectively as “Ministry”. Ministry in the organizational context means the committees, teams, and leaders, including the Minister, involved running First Parish, each doing their own form of ministry to make the church whole and productive. Under the policy governance model, Ministry groups and leaders are authorized and empowered to make their own decisions on matters of procedure and priorities, decisions which must however be consistent with overarching policies developed by the Board. The Minister, as the head of Ministry, is responsible for ensuring that all entities (including the Minister) work in accord with these policies, and is held accountable for doing so by the Board.

The role of the Board in this model is to 1) develop these church-wide policies, referred to as Board policies 2) monitor Ministry performance in accord with Board policies 3) conduct visioning and strategic planning and 4) ensure care of resources. The value to First Parish is that Ministry is freed from the need for continual Board approval of procedural matters and the Board is freed from the minutia of operations, so that it can focus on big-picture questions, challenges and strategies.

## 1.3 DOCUMENT USE AND ORGANIZATION

The Board policies contained in this document describe Board responsibilities and outline the specific requirements, limitations and expectations applicable to Ministry performance in several key areas of First Parish administration. However, developing the specific procedures and approaches used by Ministry teams to accomplish their goals is not within the jurisdiction of the Board, but rather falls solely within the authority of Ministry leaders. A Ministry manual of operational policies and procedures for committees and activities is thus an expected corollary document to these Board policies.

The implementation of policy governance as reflected in this document largely follows the approach outlined in Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, by Dan Hotchkiss (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016). Specific sections of this document and their content and intent are as follows:

- Section 2: Values, Mission and Vision: this section presents our core values as a congregation, the First Parish Mission statement that embodies these values and the Vision Statement that describes how we want our church to be when we are living fully to our mission statement.

- Section 3: Board Covenant: this is the Board's agreement on personal conduct for and among Board members.
- Section 4: Board Governance Policies: this section governs how the Board conducts its work.
- Section 5: Delegation to Ministry: this section formally transfers decision-making authority to Ministry (through the office of the Minister) in key areas of church function and outlines specific expectations and limitations that apply to each subject area. This section contains the bulk of the conditions against which Ministry will be evaluated by the Board.
- Section 6: Monitoring and Oversight: the methods used by the Board to monitor and evaluate Ministry are presented in this section.
- Section 7: Visioning and Planning: the requirements and conditions for selecting Annual Vision Goals and conducting strategic planning are presented in this section.

These policies supersede all similar preceding policies or guidelines. They are binding on both the Board and Ministry, but may be modified as necessary by the Board for purposes of clarification, correction, or to accommodate the changing needs of First Parish. All changes to individual sections shall be documented on the "Edits and Additions" page at the end of each section. As necessary, these changes should be incorporated into a revised version of the section, which will be noted by date and revision number ("Rev X") in the section header. These policies will be maintained on the First Parish website.

## Section Formatting

This document was prepared in Microsoft Word (Office 365 package) with automatic numbering achieved by use of headers in the Styles menu, customized to the indentation and fonts shown in the document. For ease of reference, all text in the policies should be identified by a section number.

Formatting details are provided below.

Body Text Font: Arial Narrow, 11 point

Header Styles:

Headers are selected by Level under the **Styles** menu. The custom settings for each header used in the policy documents are preset, but can be set as follows:

Header indents: Select the header level off the list in the Styles menu, then highlight the header number in the document. Right-click on the header number and select **Adjust Line Indents** to set the indents and **Font** to set the font of the header number.

To set the font of the text that follows the header number, right-click on the text and select **Font**.

## 2. MISSION AND VISION

### 2.1 MISSION

2.1.1 The Mission Statement of the First Parish Unitarian Universalist shall be

*To Nurture the Spirit*

*Grow in Community*

*And Help Heal the World*

### 2.2 CORE VALUES

2.2.1 The following core values underlie the congregational life at First Parish:

Love

Justice

Spiritual Growth

Community

Service

### 2.3 VISION STATEMENT

2.3.1 The Vision Statement reflects the condition we hope to achieve by living true to our core values and our Mission Statement.

2.3.2 The Vision Statement for First Parish shall be

First Parish is a congregation in which all people are joyfully engaged and active throughout their entire lives. We achieve this by

*Nurturing the spirit* through transcendent worship and lifelong spiritual growth;

*Growing in community* by offering a welcoming, inclusive and supportive experience with diverse pathways to engagement, personal growth and leadership; and

*Helping to heal the world* by inspiring all our members to engage in vibrant and effective social and environmental activism.

### 2.4 PRINCIPLES

2.4.1 In all we do, the Members of First Parish commit to upholding and fulfilling the seven principles of our faith:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

## **2.5 STATEMENT OF INTENT**

All actions, statements, activities and worship undertaken by the Minister, staff, and members of First Parish shall be conducted for the sole purpose of upholding, fulfilling and furthering our values, Mission, and Vision Statements and the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism.



### 3. BOARD COVENANT

#### 3.1 COVENANT OF THE FIRST PARISH GOVERNING BOARD

We, the Governing Board of the First Parish Portland Unitarian Universalist, will strive to use both mind and heart as we serve and work together to fulfill the highest ideals of our church, congregation and the UU faith. We each pledge to:

- 3.1.1 Be mindful that the owner of First Parish UU is our Mission Statement and that the Board is its fiduciary: we have duties of care, loyalty and service to both the Mission and Vision Statements;
- 3.1.2 Make the work of the Board a priority by preparing for and attending meetings, coming prepared, honoring commitments and staying engaged;
- 3.1.3 Show respect for one another, listening deeply and speaking honestly, presuming each other's good faith;
- 3.1.4 Experience and encourage curiosity and openness to learning;
- 3.1.5 Remember the value of reflection, discernment and patience;
- 3.1.6 Handle differences with courtesy, fairness and generosity of spirit;
- 3.1.7 Recognize when conflicts of interests arise and handle them appropriately;
- 3.1.8 Maintain communication and transparency with the congregation;
- 3.1.9 Speak as individuals at Board meetings, but speak with one voice for the Board outside of meetings;
- 3.1.10 Enforce upon ourselves whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence;
- 3.1.11 Contribute to the conversation if we have been silent (step up) and make space for others to speak (step back);
- 3.1.12 Develop and model spiritual practice, respecting the diversity of its expression;
- 3.1.13 Participate actively as members of the congregation;
- 3.1.14 Model generous giving of time, talent and treasure; and
- 3.1.15 Work together with the strong belief that First Parish can and will continue to thrive.



## **4. BOARD GOVERNANCE POLICIES**

### **4.1 PHILOSOPHY OF GOVERNANCE**

- 4.1.1 The purpose of the Governing Board, on behalf of the Membership of First Parish, is ensure that First Parish (1) achieves the goals of its Mission Statement with appropriate use of its resources, and (2) avoids unacceptable actions and situations as defined in the Bylaws and these Policies.
- 4.1.2 The Congregation elects the Board to function as its governing body and the Minister to serve as its spiritual, programmatic and administrative leader. The intended style of shared leadership shall be consultative, collegiate and inclusive. We shall strive to delegate authority to leaders in proportion to their responsibilities. We expect all leaders to practice open decision making, healthy conflict management and mutual support in their respective roles. Accordingly,
  - 4.1.2.1 The Board will be accountable to the mission of the Congregation.
  - 4.1.2.2 The Board will focus chiefly on developing policies, monitoring church performance, and conducting long-term visioning and planning, rather than on administrative or programmatic aspects of church operations.
  - 4.1.2.3 The Board will initiate policy, either independently or in response to a request from Ministry, rather than only react to staff initiatives.
- 4.1.3 Requests for the Board to act on a management item should be referred to the appropriate Ministry leader for decision.
- 4.1.4 The Board may use the expertise of individual members to enhance the ability of the Board as a body, but will never substitute an individual's, expert judgment for the Board's deliberative process.
- 4.1.5 The Board intends to govern primarily by
  - 4.1.5.1 Discerning and articulating First Parish's mission and vision of Ministry;
  - 4.1.5.2 Setting annual goals and making strategic choices;
  - 4.1.5.3 Creating written policies to guide the First Parish Ministry; and
  - 4.1.5.4 Monitoring and evaluating the performance of Ministry relative to Board policies.
- 4.1.6 The Board will commit to providing competent governance through ongoing Board development, including orientation of new Board members in the Board's governance process and periodic Board discussion of process improvement.
- 4.1.7 The Board will monitor and regularly discuss the Board's own process and performance.
- 4.1.8 The Board will operate with transparency in accordance with the Bylaws.
- 4.1.9 The Board will maintain a central online record of its policies and actions.

### **4.2 GOVERNANCE APPROACH**

- 4.2.1 The Board will govern with an emphasis on vision, encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, strategic leadership more than administrative or programmatic detail, clear distinction of Board and

Ministry roles, collective rather than individual decisions. In addition, the Board will focus on the future while learning from the past and present, and will govern proactively rather than reactively. In this spirit, the Board will

- 4.2.1.1 Focus chiefly on intended long term impacts or ends, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects, since determining means is the responsibility of Ministry;
  - 4.2.1.2 Direct, control and inspire the organization through the careful establishment of the broadest organizational values and governing policies;
  - 4.2.1.3 In accordance with our principles, all policies must implicitly reflect the absence of bias against any race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual or gender identity, physical handicap, or socio-economic class;
  - 4.2.1.4 Enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence; and
  - 4.2.1.5 Be accountable to the congregation and other stakeholders for competent, conscientious and effective accomplishment of its obligations as a body. It will allow no officer, individual or committee of the board to usurp this role or hinder this discipline. Board members' interaction with Ministry or with staff must recognize authority lies with the Board as a whole, and not with any individual member or subgroup of Board members.
- 4.2.2 Discipline will apply to policy-making principles, respect for defined roles and attendance.
  - 4.2.3 After subjects have been discussed and voted upon, both majority and minority will support the action taken and speak with one voice.
  - 4.2.4 Board members' interaction with the public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitations and the similar inability of any member, except the President, to speak for the Board.
  - 4.2.5 The Board may invite individuals and/or establish working groups or Committees to help carry out its work of discernment, strategy, developing policy and oversight. Each working group will receive a clear charge from the Board specifying objectives, desired work products and a time frame for the completion of the task. Board working groups may not speak or act for the Board.

### **4.3 CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 4.3.1 The Board commits itself and its members to ethical and professional conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members. Accordingly,
  - 4.3.1.1 Board members must represent unconflicted loyalty to the Mission and to the interests of the Congregation. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other Boards or staffs. This accountability supersedes the personal interest of any member acting as an individual congregant.
  - 4.3.1.2 Board members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.
  - 4.3.1.3 Board members must not use their positions to obtain employment within the Church for themselves, family members or close associates.

## 4.4 OFFICERS' DUTIES

### 4.4.1 President's Duties

- 4.4.1.1 The President assures the integrity of the Board's process, typically represents the Board to members and outside parties, presides at meetings of the Board and of the church membership and fulfills other such duties or responsibilities as the Board or the church may assign. The President will ensure that the Board behaves consistently with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the church. Accordingly,
  - 4.4.1.1.1 Meeting discussion content will only be those issues that, according to Policy, clearly belong to the Board to decide, not to Ministry.
  - 4.4.1.1.2 Deliberation will be timely, fair, orderly and thorough, but also efficient, limited to time and kept to the point.
  - 4.4.1.1.3 Roberts' Rules will be observed, except where the Board has suspended or superseded them.
- 4.4.1.2 The authority of the President consists of making decisions on behalf of the Board that fall within or are consistent with Policies on Governance Process and on Board-Ministry relationships.
- 4.4.1.3 The President is empowered to chair Board meetings with all the commonly accepted power of that position (e.g., ruling, recognizing).
- 4.4.1.4 The President's authority does not extend to supervising or otherwise directing the Minister.
- 4.4.1.5 Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with mutual interaction about individual understandings of policies.

### 4.4.2 Vice President's Duties

- 4.4.2.1 The Vice President shall act in place of the President during any absence of the President or at the request of the President and shall perform other duties as may be delegated by the President or as identified within the Bylaws or First Parish policies and procedures.
- 4.4.2.2 The Vice President shall serve as the liaison to the Personnel or Finance Committee.

### 4.4.3 Clerk's Duties

- 4.4.3.1 The Clerk is to assure the integrity of the Board's record. The Clerk is responsible for
  - 4.4.3.1.1 Recording and distributing accurate minutes of Board meetings and Membership Meetings of First Parish
  - 4.4.3.1.2 Maintaining current policies and posting them to the website or on other platforms; archiving policies and minutes; and distributing current policies to Board members, Ministry members and the congregation as appropriate; and

4.4.3.2 Making public written announcements of the Annual Meeting and any other special Membership meetings.

#### 4.4.4 Board Job Expectations

4.4.4.1 Attend or otherwise participate in one monthly meeting and additional meetings as necessary

4.4.4.2 Participate in at least one additional Board activity, such as Vision Goaltending or a Board committee

4.4.4.3 Prepare for each meeting by reading the Minister's report and other information received since the last meeting

4.4.4.4 Communicate regularly, and in a timely manner, with other Board members between meetings through electronic and other means

4.4.4.5 Be an active participant in the life of the congregation

4.4.4.6 Participate in and provide support as needed in Stewardship and all other fundraising activities

4.4.4.7 Between meetings, read and research issues related to current deliberations as necessary

4.4.4.8 Serve as an ambassador of First Parish and its mission both within the church and among the wider community

4.4.4.9 If appointed, serve as a member of the Nominating Committee. One member of the Board per year will serve in this capacity.

4.4.4.10 If appointed, serve as a member of the Denominational Affairs Committee.

If appointed, serve as a liaison to the Personnel or Finance Committees. In this capacity, the Board member will communicate regularly with the Committee, assist with interpretation and application of Board policies, attend Committee meetings as necessary to understand practices and issues, and be prepared to support the Minister in communicating Committee reports and needs to the Board. The purpose of this role is to facilitate adequate monitoring of these key Ministry functions. Board members may serve as full committee members only if approved by the Minister and President of the Board.

#### 4.4.5 Board Self-Government

##### 4.4.5.1 Board Agenda

4.4.5.1.1 The Board President shall not allow a Board meeting to occur without distributing a draft agenda to known Board meeting attendees at least three days in advance.

4.4.5.1.2 The Board agenda shall follow this general structure: Chalice lighting, Reflective reading, Check-in, Agenda, Adjourn.

4.4.5.1.3 The opening practices of the meeting (lighting the chalice, reflective reading and check-in) should be a short time for the Board to come together and be mentally and spiritually present to focus on the meeting.

4.4.5.1.4 The agenda is comprised of major items related to the Board's discernment, strategy, linkage and oversight roles.

## **4.5 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

4.5.1 Board members shall carry out their duties with undivided loyalty to the Mission. Board members must avoid conflicts of interest or an appearance of conflicts of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility. A conflict of interest exists whenever a Board member or a close relative of a Board member has an interest or duty that interferes with the Board member's duty of loyalty to the Mission.

4.5.2 Conflicts of interest arise when a Board member:

4.5.2.1 Stands to personally gain or lose because of a Board action;

4.5.2.2 Has a fiduciary duty or close personal or business relationship to any person or corporation that stands to gain or lose because of a Board action;

4.5.2.3 Does not place the interests of the whole congregation and its mission above the member's personal interests; or

4.5.2.4 Faces any other situation that creates or appears to create divided or conflicting loyalties.

4.5.3 If an item of business arises for which any Board member suggests there may be a conflict of interest, the affected member may withdraw or ask the full Board for guidance. The Board (minus the affected member) will decide how to handle the situation. Possible responses include the following:

4.5.3.1 The Board may determine that the affected member may continue to participate and vote as usual.

4.5.3.2 The Board may determine that the affected member should recuse him or herself from voting. If the issue is more sensitive the affected member may also be asked to withdraw from the meeting while the item is under discussion and/or voted on.

4.5.3.3 The Board may determine that the conflict requires the member to resign from the Board.

4.5.4 Anyone who exercises authority delegated by the Board, such as ministers or Board working groups, is subject to the same standards of loyalty that apply to Board members.

## **4.6 DISCIPLINE AND REMOVAL OF BOARD MEMBERS**

4.6.1 The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, professional and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members and officers. The Board has the right to discipline members who fail in their duties or disrupt the body's work, with a maximum sanction of expulsion from the Board.

- 4.6.2 Reasons for discipline include the following:
  - 4.6.2.1 Concealing or ignoring conflicts of interest;
  - 4.6.2.2 Violation of confidentiality regarding matters discussed in executive session;
  - 4.6.2.3 Exerting unapproved individual authority over the organization;
  - 4.6.2.4 Unapproved public statements to outside entities;
  - 4.6.2.5 Repeated absences from Board meetings without reasonable cause;
  - 4.6.2.6 Willful violation of the First Parish Bylaws; and
  - 4.6.2.7 Serious and/or continued violations of the Board Covenant.
- 4.6.3 Before a vote to remove a Board member, the Board shall provide written advance notice to the member of its intent and offer the member the opportunity for a hearing before the Board. Pending a hearing, the Board may suspend a Board member's voting privileges without notice if necessary to protect individuals or the congregation from harm. Removal of a Board member shall require a vote of at least two-thirds of the sitting Board members.

#### **4.7 GOVERNING BOARD COMMITTEES**

- 4.7.1 The Board may establish committees, which may include non-Board members, to help it carry out its responsibilities. Committees will be used to support the Board by completing specific research or other tasks necessary for efficient Board performance.
  - 4.7.1.1 Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Such authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Minister.
  - 4.7.1.2 Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff and in keeping with the Board's focus on the future, Board committees will not ordinarily have direct dealings with current staff operations.
  - 4.7.1.3 All members of Board committees will be governed by Board policies.

#### **4.8 VIOLATIONS OF BOARD POLICY**

- 4.8.1 Complaints of Violation of Board Policy by the Board: If a congregant or staff member believes that the Board or a member of the Board has violated Board policy, or that in resolving a complaint or inquiry the Board has violated Board policies, the congregant or staff member may submit to the Minister a formal complaint, using the First Parish Ministry Complaint Form. The Minister will determine if a policy has been violated and if so, inform the Board President or Vice President in writing and take appropriate corrective action, in consultation with the congregation and other Ministry leaders. Additional help from the UUA may be sought in this effort.



## **5. DELEGATION TO MINISTRY**

### **5.1 OVERALL STRATEGY AND INTENT**

The Board will instruct the Minister and Ministry through written policies that describe the goals, requirements and limitations that pertain to organizational function and operations of First Parish, and will allow the Minister reasonable interpretation of these policies. Within the bounds of these policies, the Minister has authority and accountability for the spiritual, operational and administrative aspects of church function as necessary to support the Mission and Vision Statement of the church, as approved by the Board.

In these policies, the term “Minister” means the settled Minister of First Parish. “Ministry” means the Minister and staff, lay leaders, committees, teams and others under the direction of the Minister. In general, Ministry includes all those involved in the normal operations and functions of the church, except for those functions expressly assigned to the Board or the Trustees.

### **5.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- 5.2.1 The Board will develop policies that define the requirements and limitations that govern the work of the Minister in the operational, administrative and spiritual leadership of the church. The Board explicitly delegates authority to the Minister for key church functions, described in the sections below, but requires that the Minister perform these functions in accord with Board policies.
- 5.2.2 The Board shall allow the Minister to use reasonable interpretation of the Board's policies. Such interpretation will be provided to the Board in writing as part of the Minister's regular compliance reports submitted in accordance with Section 6.
- 5.2.3 The Board may change its delegation policies, thereby shifting the boundary between Board and Minister domains, but as long as a policy is in place, the Board will respect and support the Minister's choices.
- 5.2.4 The Minister's responsibilities are wholly dependent on mutual trust with the Board, the staff, lay leadership and the congregation. The Board shall nurture this trust by strictly respecting confidentiality and communicating in a manner that is prudent and professional.
- 5.2.5 Given the range and volume of responsibilities delegated to the Minister, the Board shall both allow and expect the Minister to further delegate responsibilities and tasks to staff, volunteers or committees. However, the accountability for the completion and consequences of such tasks remains ultimately with the Minister.

### **5.3 BOARD – MINISTRY LINKAGE**

- 5.3.1 Decisions of the Board acting as a body are binding on the Ministry.
- 5.3.2 Because the Minister is the Board's only link to operational activity, Board requests for services from the staff will only be made through the Minister or by other means approved by the Minister.
- 5.3.3 In the case of Board members or Board committees requesting information or assistance without Board authorization or outside of their explicit charter or charge, the Minister may decline such requests that require a material amount of staff time or funds or are disruptive.

## **5.4 DELEGATION OF OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **5.4.1 Overview**

- 5.4.1.1 Ministry is authorized to establish all operational and procedural policies, make all decisions, take all actions and develop all activities that are true to the Board's policies and necessary to implement the mission of First Parish.
- 5.4.1.2 The Board's job in church governance is generally confined to establishing governing policies; implementation and subsidiary procedural policy development is delegated to Ministry. The Vision Statement, in combination with Annual Vision Goals, direct the Minister to achieve certain results. Limitation policies constrain the Minister and supporting staff and lay leaders to act within acceptable boundaries of prudence and ethics. Ministry leaders will report to the Board, at the request of the Board or the Minister, for their areas of responsibility as a means of collaboration towards overall achievement of First Parish's values, mission, vision and other specified ends.
- 5.4.1.3 The Board may, by exercising or extending its policies, rescind or modify areas of the Minister's authority.
- 5.4.1.4 No individual Board member or Board committee has authority over the Minister. Further, the Board does not have authority over the staff except as delegated by the Minister.
- 5.4.1.5 The Minister will not cause or allow within Ministry any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance that is in violation of our Unitarian Universalist principles, our Bylaws, our Vision Statement, commonly accepted business and professional ethics or any laws. In case of conflict among the above limitations, the Minister will abide by them in the order listed and inform the Board.
- 5.4.1.6 Should Ministry deem it necessary to violate Board policy, the Minister shall inform the Board President. Informing is simply to guarantee no violation is intentionally kept from the Board, not to request approval. Board response, either approving or disapproving, does not exempt the Minister from subsequent Board judgment of the action.
- 5.4.1.7 The Minister's authority does not extend to supervising the Board or otherwise directing the Board, individual Board members, or Board subgroups regarding Board policy. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with mutual interaction about individual understanding of policies.

## **5.5 DELEGATION TO THE MINISTER AS SPIRITUAL LEADER**

- 5.5.1 The Minister is called to be the spiritual, pastoral and outreach leader of First Parish.
- 5.5.2 The Minister shall ensure effective leadership of the congregation in worship, ceremonies of passage and all activities related to the spiritual life of First Parish, guided and grounded by the Sources and Principles of Unitarian Universalism.
- 5.5.3 The Minister shall model self care and personal spiritual practice, and facilitate institutionalization of these practices in the congregation and staff.

- 5.5.4 The Minister shall oversee provision of pastoral care, comfort and counsel to the members of the congregation.
- 5.5.5 The Minister is called to provide the prophetic voice for First Parish; to speak and act for the congregation in the greater community by representing the congregation in public outreach and by establishing relationships with groups outside of the congregation.
- 5.5.6 The Minister shall not assert an official position of First Parish or Board until the congregation or the Board has formally and explicitly adopted a position of record, unless the position is clearly in accord with UU principals. Once a position of record has been adopted, the Minister shall support that position in public statements. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe upon the fundamental principle of freedom of the pulpit.
- 5.5.7 To promote a challenging, dynamic and progressive ministry, the Board and the Minister shall encourage and defend the freedom of the pulpit.
- 5.5.8 The Minister shall not allow interpretation of freedom of the pulpit nor any spiritual or pastoral, outreach activities associated with First Parish to breach confidentiality as defined by UUMA Professional Guidelines, legal statute or Congregational policy.

## **5.6 DELEGATION TO THE MINISTER AS HEAD OF STAFF**

- 5.6.1 The Board delegates to the Minister all oversight of the paid and volunteer staff.
- 5.6.2 The Minister, staff and volunteers shall neither cause nor allow activities, programs or practices, decision or organizational circumstance in First Parish to be in conflict with the congregation's values as stated in the Purposes and Principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and in the mission of First Parish.
- 5.6.3 The Minister, staff and volunteers shall treat each other, the members, friends and guests of the congregation in full accordance with First Parish's covenant and the common tenets of right relations, which include respect, deep listening, honesty, gratitude, compassion and acceptance of difference.
- 5.6.4 Ministry is authorized to establish all procedural and operational guidelines and policies. These procedural policies shall not supersede or contradict Board policy.
- 5.6.5 The Minister will ensure reasonable and diligent effort to provide universal access to First Parish's programs, ministries and worship content within limitations of available staff, facilities and financial resources.
- 5.6.6 The Minister is responsible for maintaining necessary levels of confidentiality, respect and professional practice in all administrative functions.
- 5.6.7 The Minister's responsibilities are wholly dependent on mutual trust with the Board, the staff and the Congregation. The Minister shall nurture this trust by strictly respecting confidentiality and communicating in a manner that is prudent, professional and respectful.
- 5.6.8 The Minister, staff and volunteers of First Parish shall not jeopardize the legal not for profit 501(c)(3) status of First Parish through any action, endorsement, decision or outside alliance.
- 5.6.9 The Minister shall not delegate the roles or responsibilities of operational leader, Board liaison, Head of Staff, or Financial Authority to another person without consent of the Board.

#### 5.6.10 Treatment of Staff, Volunteers, and Congregants

- 5.6.10.1 The Minister shall not manifest or allow actions and attitudes that undermine the inherent worth and dignity of the individual or that are not just, equitable, compassionate and respectful.
- 5.6.10.2 The Minister shall ensure compliance with all legal requirements relating to treatment of staff.
- 5.6.10.3 The Minister shall not allow behavior that constitutes sexual harassment or verbal, emotional or physical abuse.
- 5.6.10.4 In accordance with our principles, all personnel decisions, evaluations, hiring and dismissal decisions must be made without influence or bias toward any non job-relevant factor. [e.g. race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual or gender identity, physical handicap, socio-economic class]
- 5.6.10.5 The Minister shall not subject staff or volunteers to unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
- 5.6.10.6 The Minister shall establish commonly accepted safe congregation policies and a disruptive persons policy.
- 5.6.10.7 The Minister shall post in a prominent place current, established, internal complaint procedures, and shall not prevent staff from using them.

5.6.11 The Minister, in consultation with the Personnel Committee, shall oversee the creation, maintenance and implementation of written personnel policies and procedures. The oversight of staff shall be conducted in accord with the protocols and requirements outlined in the First Parish Personnel Manual.

5.6.12 With respect to interactions with and among congregants, the Minister shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy or that fail to apply the standards of the Church's Mission and Vision Statement and Unitarian Universalist principles. The Minister shall ensure that Ministry does not:

- 5.6.12.1 Violate the confidentiality of member pledge amount information, except as required for gathering pledges or
- 5.6.12.2 Fail to establish, publicize and follow written policies for processing member concerns and suggestions.

#### 5.6.13 Compensation and Benefits

5.6.13.1 With respect to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers and volunteers, the Minister may not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or the public's perception of First Parish. Accordingly, Ministry may not:

- 5.6.13.1.1 Change individual staff members' compensation, benefits or allocated professional expenses as established by the Personnel Committee when the annual budget was established without approval by the Board and the Chair of the Finance Committee;
- 5.6.13.1.2 Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment;

- 5.6.13.1.3 Establish current compensation and benefits that
  - 5.6.13.1.3.1 Deviate materially from applicable nonprofit or geographic market for the skills employed, absent legitimate articulated reasons or
  - 5.6.13.1.3.2 Create obligations over a term longer than revenues can be safely projected, in no event longer than one year and in all events subject to losses of revenue;
- 5.6.13.1.4 Establish deferred or long-term compensation and benefits that
  - 5.6.13.1.4.1 Cause unfunded liabilities to occur or in any way commit the organization to benefits that incur unpredictable future costs or
  - 5.6.13.1.4.2 Provide less than some basic level of benefits to all full-time employees, though differential benefits reflecting market conditions or other appropriate factors are not prohibited.

**5.7 DELEGATION TO THE MINISTER OF PROGRAM LEADERSHIP**

- 5.7.1 Since the Board deems all of First Parish's programs, committees and activities as a component of our overall Ministry and mission, the Minister shall be ultimately accountable for all volunteer groups of First Parish. Such groups shall report to the Minister either 1) directly, 2) through the appropriate organizational vehicle (such as the Program Council) or 3) through staff, at the direction of the Minister.
- 5.7.2 The Minister shall not allow committees, groups, task forces or Ministry teams to operate without a written charter that includes a statement of purpose, budget, methods, and intended results and similar defining elements, that is available for review by the Board upon request; or otherwise function contrary to UU principles or the First Parish Mission Statement, Values, Vision Statement, established procedures and Board policies.
- 5.7.3 The Minister shall ensure that church programs and communications, both written and verbal, use non-sexist nomenclature and language.
- 5.7.4 Groups formed by the Board for the purpose of governance shall be exempt from this policy, with the exception of Section 5.7.3.

**5.8 DELEGATION TO THE MINISTER AS BOARD LIAISON**

- 5.8.1 The Minister shall not permit the Board to be uninformed, misinformed or unsupported in its work. The Minister shall be a permanent non-voting member of the Board.
  - 5.8.1.1 The Minister shall ensure that the Board is provided with monitoring information in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion. All other types of information will be presented to the Board in a manner that is timely, accurate, complete, concise, understandable and facilitates decision-making.
  - 5.8.1.2 The Minister shall inform the Board in a timely manner of relevant trends, public policy initiatives, material external and internal changes, staffing decisions and

changes in the assumptions or conditions upon which any Policy has previously been established.

- 5.8.1.3 The Minister shall recommend changes in policies or additional policies, when the need for such becomes apparent.
- 5.8.1.4 The Minister shall not prevent or withhold honest and forthright feedback to the Board about success, failures or problems in implementation of Board policies, and shall not voice such viewpoints to the congregation before doing so to the Board in person.
- 5.8.1.5 The Minister shall not withhold any available relevant information in support of the Board's work in creating policy. This includes, but is not limited to varying viewpoints, internal and external trends, UUA resources and alternative options.
- 5.8.1.6 The Minister shall advise the Board of any changes in conditions that would invalidate the assumptions upon which any Board policy has previously been established.
- 5.8.1.7 The Minister shall inform the Board promptly of any anticipated adverse media coverage.
- 5.8.1.8 The Minister shall inform the Board in a timely manner of any failure of Minister, staff, lay leaders, volunteers or the Board itself to comply with Board policies.
- 5.8.1.9 The Minister shall advise the Board if Ministry perceives the Board to be out of compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board-Ministry Linkage, particularly in the case of Board behavior that is detrimental to the working relationship between the Board and Ministry.
- 5.8.1.10 The Minister, as simultaneous Board Liaison, spiritual leader and prophetic voice shall not allow the Board to work without sufficient attention to the spiritual life of First Parish, and shall ensure adequate spiritual guidance and pastoral care to the Board as necessary.
- 5.8.1.11 The Minister shall deal with the Board as a whole except when fulfilling individual requests for information or responding to members duly charged by the Board.
- 5.8.1.12 For the purposes of Board liaisons, communication to the Board President shall be considered communication to the Board.

## **5.9 DELEGATION OF FACILITY USE AND MAINTENANCE AUTHORITY**

- 5.9.1 The Board delegates authority for oversight of facilities maintenance and operations to Ministry, for all matters except those expressly under the responsibility of the Trustees
- 5.9.2 In guiding the church's facilities planning, the Minister will
  - 5.9.2.1 Be governed by our church's Mission, Values and Vision Statement;
  - 5.9.2.2 Respect the history and heritage of our church and faith;
  - 5.9.2.3 Communicate regularly with all of First Parish stakeholders, as appropriate, about plans regarding facilities; and

- 5.9.2.4 Be mindful of the needs of congregants of all ages and abilities when making facilities changes.
- 5.9.3 The Minister shall take appropriate actions to prevent harm to the members, guests and staff who take part in congregational activities or use the property and shall have the power to deal with situations where such persons are at risk. This includes creating and implementing an emergency response procedure.
- 5.9.4 The Minister shall comply with all legal requirements and recommended practices relating to maintenance of the facilities and equipment.
- 5.9.5 The Minister shall provide an equitable and fair mechanism for rental of the facilities to outside groups, if this does not interfere with congregational activities.
- 5.9.6 Use of the facilities shall be prioritized in favor of congregational activities.
- 5.9.7 Fiscal resources shall be allocated to facilities maintenance in the yearly budget.
- 5.9.8 Contracts
  - 5.9.8.1 No one other than the Minister or the Board President (or Vice President, in the President's absence) will execute any contract for goods or services in an amount over \$2,500 on behalf of the congregation. Contracts for \$2,500 or less may also be signed by the Minister or the Board President or their express designee. The Minister and designees shall not enter into any contractual arrangement that entails unacceptable means or is not in accord with the Mission and Vision Statement. The Minister or designees shall seek legal advice, when necessary, to interpret and assess contractual terms.

## **5.10 DELEGATION OF COMMUNICATION**

- 5.10.1 The Minister shall ensure that there is a system for congregation-wide communication including calendared events, announcements and major polity and policy changes.
- 5.10.2 The Minister shall not be overly restrictive toward the use of various modes of communication as best suits the habits and resources of the congregation.
- 5.10.3 All communications shall reflect UU values and use professional and respectful language and tone.
- 5.10.4 All proposed changes in communication methods shall be discussed with the Board prior to implementation.

## **5.11 DELEGATION OF FINANCIAL AUTHORITY**

- 5.11.1 The Minister shall not place the congregation in financial jeopardy, jeopardize either programmatic or fiscal integrity of the organization, or recommend a budget or budget changes that deviate from Board Policy.
- 5.11.2 Budgeting and Accounting
  - 5.11.2.1 The Board shall delegate to the Minister the task of creating the yearly budget, which must be fully presented to the Board for recommendation to the congregation prior to the annual congregational meeting.

- 5.11.2.2 The Minister shall not allow budgeting or accounting procedures that
  - 5.11.2.2.1 Contains too little information to be credible;
  - 5.11.2.2.2 Omits a projection of revenues and expenses;
  - 5.11.2.2.3 Fails to separate capital and operational items;
  - 5.11.2.2.4 Fails to track cash flow;
  - 5.11.2.2.5 Omits a disclosure of planned assumptions;
  - 5.11.2.2.6 Plans the expenditure in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period, without Board approval;
  - 5.11.2.2.7 Fails to apply prepaid pledges to the anticipated income budget for the year designated by the contributor;
  - 5.11.2.2.8 Carries over annually budgeted funds which were not used during the fiscal year;
  - 5.11.2.2.9 Do not reflect a reasonable effort to contribute our "fair share" to the Unitarian Universalist Association; or
  - 5.11.2.2.10 Use restricted funds for purposes for which they were not designated.
- 5.11.3 Financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the Bylaws of the Church, the Mission and Vision Statement, or risk financial jeopardy.
  - 5.11.3.1 Except for extraordinary circumstances, the Minister shall provide to the Board a balanced budget, in which expenses do not exceed reasonably projected revenues, for each fiscal year. Every fiscal year must end with a balanced budget or a surplus.
- 5.11.4 The budget proposal must be provided to the Board no less than one month before the annual meeting.
- 5.11.5 Fiscal Responsibility
  - 5.11.5.1 To ensure the long term financial health of First Parish, the Minister:
    - 5.11.5.1.1 Shall adjust the discretionary spending lines if it is projected that a year-end deficit is likely to occur and report these adjustments to the Board;
    - 5.11.5.1.2 Shall not incur financial debt for First Parish without prior approval by the Board;
    - 5.11.5.1.3 Shall not buy, sell, lease, encumber, or dispose of real property without prior Board approval;
    - 5.11.5.1.4 Shall settle payroll and debts in a timely manner;

- 5.11.5.1.5 Shall not allow tax payments or other government ordered payments or filings to be overdue or inaccurately filed;
- 5.11.5.1.6 Shall not allow any conflict of interest to be present in the awarding of contracts or other purchasing decisions;
- 5.11.5.1.7 Shall maintain appropriate financial controls;
- 5.11.5.1.8 Shall maintain written financial procedures;
- 5.11.5.1.9 Shall follow generally accepted accounting practices to the extent that those practices are followed by congregations of our size;
- 5.11.5.1.10 Shall establish and fund a reserve account for the purpose of meeting unanticipated financial needs for which there are no budgeted funds available, as possible;
- 5.11.5.1.11 Shall not allow actual allocations to deviate materially and detrimentally from intended allocations;
- 5.11.5.1.12 Shall establish and fund a sabbatical leave account, which may also be used to fund the search for a new minister;
- 5.11.5.1.13 Shall not violate contracts entered into by the Church without prior approval of the Board;
- 5.11.5.1.14 Shall not receive, process, or disburse funds intended for church use (e.g. collections, event revenues, etc) or allow others to receive, process, or disburse such funds in a way that might reasonably allow the funds to be misappropriated; and
- 5.11.5.1.15 Shall ensure that 50% of any surplus funds at year's end be placed in a Contingency Fund to provide a financial buffer against future unexpected expenses. The use of the Contingency Fund must be approved by the Board.

#### 5.11.6 Minister's Discretionary Fund

- 5.11.6.1 A Minister's discretionary fund was established and is funded by the Trustees. Use of the funds is at the discretion of the Minister.

#### 5.11.7 Gifts to First Parish

- 5.11.7.1 No gifts, either of money or in-kind services, shall be accepted from individuals or organizations that do not support or manifest UU values and principles.

##### 5.11.7.2 Restricted Gifts

- 5.11.7.2.1 Restricted Gifts require Board approval and must be used for the purposes for which they were designated.
- 5.11.7.2.2 Restricted gifts must support activities consistent with UU and First Parish values and vision, and may be declined by the Board for any reason.

## 5.11.8 Fundraising

- 5.11.8.1 All income and revenue from First Parish fundraisers, whether run by a ministry, committee, or congregation at large shall be deposited into First Parish bank accounts for transparent record keeping, and will be used to support the general needs of the church.
- 5.11.8.2 First Parish committees and groups are not permitted to retain their net revenues in non-First Parish bank accounts (e.g., personal accounts).
- 5.11.8.3 Fundraising encompasses all First Parish sponsored events, regardless of location.
- 5.11.8.4 Programs will be encouraged to submit planned expenses and proposed fundraising efforts to support those activities as part of the annual budget cycle.

## 5.11.9 Outreach Effort Funding

- 5.11.9.1 This policy establishes guidelines to ensure the good trust of our membership and the quality and effectiveness of our giving to outreach efforts. An "outreach effort" is defined as one that is intended to benefit people or groups outside First Parish community.
- 5.11.9.2 First Parish may not solicit, accept, or collect donations for any outreach effort that:
  - 5.11.9.2.1 Is not sponsored by a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization in the U.S., separate from First Parish 's non-profit 501(c)(3) status, or is a foreign charity that would be treated as a tax-exempt charity if it were in the U.S.;
  - 5.11.9.2.2 Has a mission, purpose or practices contrary to the stated mission, principles or clearly-stated values of First Parish; and
  - 5.11.9.2.3 Has not been approved by the Minister.
- 5.11.9.3 The collection and distribution of all funds earmarked for distribution to organizations other than First Parish must be documented in First Parish 's financial records with all customary receipts and accounting.

5.11.10 Intellectual property: Procedures governing intellectual property created by the Minister are described in the Minister's Letter of Agreement.

## 5.11.11 Asset Utilization

- 5.11.11.1 The Minister will ensure that Church assets are devoted to endeavors that support the Mission and Vision Statement and are congruent with Unitarian Universalist principles. The Minister or their express designees shall
  - 5.11.11.1.1 Use their best efforts to mobilize the Congregation and staff to fulfill the Church's Mission and Vision Statement and Unitarian Universalist principles;
  - 5.11.11.1.2 Welcome the Portland community into the Meeting House's sanctuary and center; and

- 5.11.11.1.3 Use their best efforts to increase and diversify the membership of the Church.

#### 5.11.12 Asset Protection

- 5.11.12.1 With respect to proper stewardship of the Church's assets, the Minister may not risk losses beyond those necessary in the normal course of business. Accordingly, the Minister shall not

- 5.11.12.1.1 Fail to insure against theft and casualty losses at replacement value less reasonable deductible and/or co-insurance limits;

- 5.11.12.1.2 Fail to insure against corporate liability and personal liability of Board members and staff, taking into account pertinent statutory provisions for indemnification and exemptions applicable to Maine's nonprofit organizations;

- 5.11.12.1.3 Allow unbonded personnel access to material amounts of funds;

- 5.11.12.1.4 Subject plant and equipment to improper wear or insufficient maintenance;

- 5.11.12.1.5 Unnecessarily expose the organization, its Board, or staff to claims of liability or risk the nonprofit status;

- 5.11.12.1.6 Make any purchases not provided for in either the capital expenditure or operational projections;

- 5.11.12.1.7 Make any purchase of over \$2,500.00 without at least two competitive bids;

- 5.11.12.1.8 Receive, process or disburse funds under controls insufficient to meet the Board appointed auditor's standards or other government standards;

- 5.11.12.1.9 Invest operating capital in insecure instruments, including uninsured checking accounts and bonds or CDs of less than A rating;

- 5.11.12.1.10 Allow intellectual property ownership to be unclear or undocumented;

- 5.11.12.1.11 Allow the intellectual property assets of the church to be unprotected. These assets include liturgical materials, curricula, music and any other intellectual property developed during the tenure of staff and ministers unless otherwise specified in letters of agreement or employment contracts; or

- 5.11.12.1.12 Allow damage to physical and electronic assets.

- 5.11.13 The Minister shall not add or dispose of any asset valued at \$500 or greater without Board approval or in accordance with the Trustee Charter.

- 5.11.14 The Minister shall not fail to preserve the historic building and other property by the following, subject to agreement with the Trustee Charter:

- 5.11.14.1 Subjecting plant and equipment to improper wear or insufficient maintenance;
- 5.11.14.2 Allowing alterations to the property that would violate its status as a national and state Historic Landmark; or
- 5.11.14.3 Unnecessarily exposing the Church, the Board, or staff to claims to liability or risk the Church's non-profit status.



## 6. OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING

### 6.1 INTENT

Regular monitoring and evaluation by the Board and the Minister encourages open communication and regular feedback among all whose work contributes to achieving the First Parish mission. The purpose of the Oversight policy is to ensure the health of the congregation and its success in living its mission.

### 6.2 MONITORING

- 6.2.1 Monitoring refers to the review of standard indicators of the health of our Ministry, e.g., financial status compared to budget projections, attendance trends, etc. as well as compliance with Board policies. The purpose of monitoring is to determine the degree to which Board policies are being fulfilled. Such reviews should occur monthly and will be as automatic as possible, requiring a minimum of Board and Minister time. The Board and Minister should respond appropriately to such reviews. Alternative schedules for monitoring Ministry compliance with Board policies may be chosen by the Board, as long as they ensure sufficient oversight. All policies that instruct the Ministry will be monitored by a method chosen by the Board.
- 6.2.2 A given policy may be monitored in one or more of the following ways:
  - 6.2.2.1 Internal Report: Disclosure of compliance information to the Board from the Minister.
  - 6.2.2.2 External Report: Discovery of compliance information by an external party (for example, auditor, inspector, consultant or counsel) who is selected by and reports directly to the Board. Such reports must assess executive performance only against policies of the Board, not the external party unless the Board has previously indicated that party's opinion to be the standard.
  - 6.2.2.3 Direct Board Inspection: Discovery of compliance information by a trustee, a Board committee, or the Board as a whole. This is a Board inspection of documents, activities, or circumstances directed by the Board and that allows a "prudent person" test of policy compliance.
- 6.2.3 Reporting Schedule: **Table 1** indicates who is responsible for providing information (reports) and to whom, as well as the timing and formats for reports.

**Table 1. Ministry Reporting Requirements**

<b>Report</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Content</b>
Monthly Ministry Report	Minister	Monthly; submitted at least three days before Board meeting	Board	See Table 2 for Table of Contents for monthly report.
Annual State of First Parish Report	Ministry	May Board meeting	Board and Congregation	Operational summary and progress assessment relative to church goals
Draft Annual Budget	Ministry	One week before April Board Meeting	Board	Detailed assumed income and expenses for upcoming church year; budget assumptions and projections included
Final Annual Budget	Ministry	Three days before May Board Meeting	Board	Final budget for Board approval; to be presented to congregation at annual meeting

6.2.4 Content of Monthly Report

6.2.4.1 At a minimum, the monthly report must address each area identified in **Table 2**.

6.2.4.2 Beyond these requirements, the Minister must convey information about past or proposed activities necessary for the Board to be informed as necessary to complete its mission of evaluation and monitoring of church activities.

6.2.4.3 Concise language and bullet lists are recommended where appropriate; lengthy narratives should be reserved for complex or significant issues.

6.2.4.4 The Board believes that the primary benefit of the Monthly Report accrues to the Minister directly by requiring a monthly review of policy expectations and limitations, as well as a big-picture assessment of the functioning of the church. The content of the Monthly Report may thus be modified from time to time to ensure that this goal is met.

6.2.5 Compliance with Ministry policies may be documented by completion of a Monthly Reporting Checklist, included as Attachment 1 to these policies.

6.2.6 Removal of Minister for Non-Disciplinary Reasons

6.2.6.1 If the Board determines that a Minister is unable to effectively perform ministerial duties because of physical, mental, emotional or other non-disciplinary reasons, the Board has the right to request the resignation of the Minister within a time period determined by the Board. If the Minister refuses to voluntarily resign, the Board may exercise its right, pursuant to the Minister's Letter of Agreement, to initiate dismissal procedures against the Minister.

## 6.2.7 Disciplinary Policy for the Called Minister

6.2.7.1 The Board will pursue the following process in the event that it determines a policy violation has occurred. If the Board determines that the violation is egregious, (e.g., in violation of UU principals, or having a significant actual or potential adverse effect on current membership or morale) an alternative process will be designed, commensurate with the severity of the violation. At any point in either process, outside counsel may be engaged.

6.2.7.2 The disciplinary process will consist of the following steps:

Step 1. The Minister will be informed verbally of the policy violation and requested to correct the violation within a specified time period. This may be documented in writing if necessary. If necessary, the Board may request that the Minister submit to the Board a written plan to remediate the violated policy at a time specified by the Board. Prior to implementation, the written plan must be approved by the Board. The Board is not obliged to approve the plan.

Step 2. If, after the period of time specified by the Board, the policy violation has not been corrected, written documentation of non-compliance will be prepared by the Board and given to the Minister and the Program Council Leader. The Minister will be informed at that time of the potential consequences of continued non-compliance.

Step 3. If the policy violation continues, the Board may consider and impose suspension without pay of the Minister, after consultation with the Program Council Leader, the Worship Committee, and the Committee on Ministry. The congregation and church leadership must be informed by the Board no later than the Sunday following the suspension.

Step 4. If the situation remains unresolved, the Board may initiate a termination process. If termination of a Called Minister is initiated, the Board must

- i. Recommend to the congregation that the Minister be terminated for continued policy violation.
- ii. Call a meeting of the congregation in compliance with First Parish Bylaws regarding removal of the Minister
- iii. Abide by the congregational vote regarding dismissal of the Minister, in accord with First Parish Bylaws.

**Table 2. Content of Monthly Monitoring Report**

<b>Policy Section</b>	<b>Report Section No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Content</b>
5.7	1.	<b>Program Leadership</b>	Major activities and changes in Ministry committees and efforts, as necessary to keep the Board apprised of Ministry activities
	1.1.	Committee Additions or Retirement	
	1.2	Major Activities and Trends	
5.5.6	1.3	Public Representations of First Parish	Any representations of First Parish in conventional, online, or social media. This includes intentional position statements as well as commentaries by others.
5.6	2.0	<b>Staff Management</b>	Any staff issue that does or may constitute or lead to a violation of a policy or a need for a new policy, or for which Board guidance or interpretation is requested; also descriptions of staff efforts and morale as necessary to keep the Board apprised of Ministry activities
	2.1	Treatment of Staff, Volunteers and Congregants	
	2.2	Compensation and Benefits	
5.9	3.0	<b>Facility Use and Maintenance</b>	
	3.1	Building Event Summary	Identity of important or potentially controversial events planned for First Parish facilities
	3.2	Major Maintenance Activities and Contracts	Major maintenance activities and needs, other information as necessary to keep the Board assured that physical assets are being cared for appropriately
5.10	4.0	<b>Communications</b>	
	4.1	Changes in Internal Communication Methods	Significant changes in communication methods or content
5.11	5.0	<b>Financial Authority</b>	Issues related to the financial health of First Parish
	5.1	Financial Highlights Report (Attached to Monthly report)	
	5.2	Status of Financial Condition	Position relative to expectations and balanced budget requirement
	5.3	Significant Changes: gifts, expenses, liabilities	
5.11.10	6.0	<b>Asset Utilization</b>	Any new, repeating or single building rentals, with particular note of those that may increase membership or enhance membership diversity
	6.1	Use of assets for membership and diversity enhancement	
5.11.11.	6.2	Asset Protection	Security-related issues, activities or needs
All	7.0	<b>Exceptions and Needs</b>	
	7.1	Explanation of Adverse Notations in Checklist	
	7.2	Potential Policy Needs	Any issue arising from a Ministry activity that would benefit from a church-wide policy developed by the Board
	7.3	Potential Policy Violations	Actual or anticipated violations of policy; interpretations of policy etc.

<b>Policy Section</b>	<b>Report Section No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Content</b>
All	7.4	Formal Complaints	Discussion of any complaints made through the formal complaint process
	7.5	Other Issues	As needed

## 6.2.8 Evaluation

6.2.8.1 Evaluation refers to the qualitative assessment of aspects of our Ministry, including the performance of the Minister and policies, and progress in realizing our mission, vision, and strategic goals. Such assessments should occur at regular intervals and as needed.

6.2.8.2 At least annually, upon receipt of the Minister's Report or equivalent, and in time for the budgetary planning, the Board shall evaluate the Minister's performance to determine the extent to which

- i. the Vision Goals, Strategic Plan goals, or other written objectives were or are being accomplished;
- ii. the Minister operates within the boundaries set by Board Policies;
- iii. the Minister operates within the boundaries of the Letter of Agreement and First Parish By-laws; and
- iv. the Minister exhibits any other defined critical performance factors.

## 6.2.9 Compensation

6.2.9.1 First Parish UU is committed to offering fair and competitive compensation to its Minister, based on applicable regional and national salary and benefit information.

6.2.9.2 The Board shall review the Minister's total compensation package annually prior to the period of budgetary planning and shall recommend adjustments to the Minister's compensation.

6.2.9.3 The Minister's total compensation consists of salary, benefits, and for ordained ministers, housing allowance, as outlined in the Letter of Agreement.

6.2.9.4 The Board will annually review the Minister's total compensation and consider cost of living adjustments and merit increases relative to current financial conditions.

6.2.9.5 The Board will maintain records of the Minister's compensation adjustments.



## 7. VISIONING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

### 7.1 OVERVIEW

- 7.1.1 As a primary part of its mission under policy governance, the Board will undertake goal-setting and long-range planning to help focus and direct the short and long term efforts, respectively, of First Parish.
- 7.1.2 These efforts will result in the development of written Annual Vision Goals and, as necessary and appropriate, a long-range Strategic Plan.

### 7.2 ANNUAL VISION GOALS

- 7.2.1 During the course of its monitoring and other activities during the year, the Board will identify key areas where additional, focused effort is necessary in the near term to maintain the long term health and performance of the church in accord with our Mission and Vision Statements.
- 7.2.2 To identify church needs, the Board will draw from a knowledge of both operations and sentiments within the church as well as relevant social and political trends in religious life and the wider culture. The means used to identify specific church needs will consist of two or more of the following, at a minimum:
  - 7.2.2.1 Surveys or workshops with congregants and/or Leadership
  - 7.2.2.2 Results from monthly monitoring of Ministry activities
  - 7.2.2.3 Consultation with the Minister and/or the Program Council Leader
  - 7.2.2.4 Routine communications with congregants and leadership over the course of the year.
  - 7.2.2.5 Communications with the Board of Trustees
  - 7.2.2.6 Knowledge from UUA or other information sources outside the church
  - 7.2.2.7 Knowledge of church operations relative to the expectations of the Mission and Vision Statements
- 7.2.3 At least annually, and prior to the start of the church budgeting cycle, the Board will develop Vision Goals to direct near term efforts of Ministry and the church in general.
  - 7.2.3.1 Annual Vision Goals will be established before the beginning of the budgeting cycle, so that funding to achieve the goals can be incorporated into the upcoming year's budget.
  - 7.2.3.2 Goals will be presented for discussion at the annual Leadership Retreat, or at another time and venue that allows for widespread and simultaneous dissemination to Leadership.
  - 7.2.3.3 Goals will also be presented to the congregation in a setting that allows for widespread participation and discussion. After-church workshops are one method for this.

- 7.2.3.4 The sole purpose of Annual Vision Goals is to address issues of pressing need at the church, and for this reason the Board must consider the time and resources necessary to achieve the goals before finalizing them in content and number. Goals that are too big or too numerous will either not get done or not get done well, and the purpose in setting the goal will not be achieved. For this reason, no more than three Annual Vision Goals are recommended per year.
- 7.2.3.5 Goals will be achievable in a one to two-year timeframe.
- 7.2.3.6 Goals should be as specific as possible and describe actions to be undertaken or conditions to be achieved at the end of the goal period.
- 7.2.3.7 Each goal shall be supported by a written Statement of Basis that includes the following sections or equivalent, at a minimum:
  - 7.2.3.7.1 Basis of Need that describes the current conditions that make the goal necessary, or otherwise provides the rationale behind selecting the goal;
  - 7.2.3.7.2 Objectives, detailing the condition that the Goal is intended to attain, the activity the Goal is intended to initiate or a corresponding depiction of the intent of the Goal;
  - 7.2.3.7.3 Measure of Completion, detailing how the attainment of the Goal will be determined. This should be as specific as possible, detailing specific characteristics, features, or conditions that reflect successful implementation. The content of this section will provide the basis for evaluation at the end of the vision goal term. Interim Measures may be established as necessary.
  - 7.2.3.7.4 Timeframe: A timeframe for completion, if other than annual. A Schedule for Completion may be developed for Goals that are implemented in increments.
- 7.2.3.8 Vision Goals may be modified by the Board during the course of the implementation period in response to changing needs or priorities at the church.

### **7.3 STRATEGIC PLANNING**

- 7.3.1 From time to time, the Board may develop a long range Strategic Plan to guide the efforts of the church over a multiple-year period.
- 7.3.2 Strategic planning is intended to move the church in a new direction or address issues that require changes at multiple levels and substantial time to achieve, and goals may thus be less specific and activity- oriented than Annual Vision Goals.
- 7.3.3 Strategic Plans are intended to achieve change over a three to five year timeframe. Vision Goals may be used as interim milestones in the implementation of a Strategic Plan.
- 7.3.4 A written Strategic Plan will be prepared by the Board prior to the initiation of the Plan.
  - 7.3.4.1 Like Vision Goals, the Strategic Plan must work towards a defined and discernable result that can be assessed to determine progress and ultimate achievement of the plan goals.

- 7.3.4.2 The means used to identify the goals of the Strategic Plan will be, at a minimum, those used to identify Vision Goals. However, the input of both a broad array of congregants and leadership should be obtained to ensure that the final strategic goals have widespread support within the church.
- 7.3.4.3 The Plan should cover the same general topics as the Statement of Basis for the Vision Goals, at a minimum. Provisions for Board involvement and ongoing monitoring of both progress towards the goals and the evaluation of the continued relevance of the goals should be included.
- 7.3.4.4 Because of the timeframe involved, the Plan may need to change with evolving church conditions and priorities. Implementation of the Plan will follow the precepts of Adaptive Management, using robust monitoring to discern the need for mid-course changes or corrections during the implementation period.
- 7.3.4.5 The Plan should avoid being overly detailed or prescriptive in its approach and recommended means, focusing rather on ends and milestones. This provides to Ministry and other church leaders the freedom to create the most effective means of achieving the strategic goals and allows room for adaptation and change during the implementation period.
- 7.3.4.6 As part of the Plan, the Board will consider the resources necessary to achieve the goals, in terms of both money and labor, to ensure that the goals are realistic and achievable in the intended time period.
- 7.3.4.7 Following completion, the Strategic Plan will be made available to the congregation and presented in a setting that allows for widespread participation and discussion.
- 7.3.4.8 During implementation of the Plan, the Board will work closely with Ministry to understand the means used to achieve the goals and progress achieved. The Board will provide clarification or strategic assistance as necessary.

