



**MINISTRY BOARD
HANDBOOK
2021**

The Work of The Porch Community Church Ministry Board

Four main responsibilities of the Ministry Board:

- o Confirm the vision cast by the Lead Pastor and support the goals and staff to accomplish the vision.
- o Ensure all policies and procedures are up-to-date and followed.
- o Affirm TPCC's yearly budget and leadership selection.
- o Evaluate Pastor's effectiveness annually and meet with the District Superintendent for pastoral accountability

RESPONSIBILITY

"Who Is Responsible For What?"

If you have served on a committee, team, board (or similar term used for church leadership) at a UM church, even at TPCC from 7/2019 to 12/2020, your understanding of specific responsibilities may be different from the streamlined leadership structure in place for 2021. The hope is that clarity in decision-making will allow for a more streamlined process and implementation timeline. The 2016 Book of Discipline in paragraph 247.2 allows for a local church to adapt this decision making structure. The 2020 Charge Conference of TPCC approved this leadership structure.

Please read carefully to ensure you are clear on your role and decision-making responsibility

RESPONSIBILITY CHART

PRIME = PRIME RESPONSIBILITY
APP/REQ = APPROVAL REQUIRED

ASST = ASSIST WITH RESPONSIBILITY
INFO = INFORMED

RESPONSIBILITY	BOARD	LEAD PASTOR	STAFF	UMC
FINANCE				
Budget	PRIME APP/REQ	ASST	ASST	INFO
Financial Reports	PRIME	INFO	ASST	
Annual Audit	PRIME	INFO	ASST	INFO
Expenditures over \$500	APP/REQ	INFO	PRIME	
Policy	PRIME APP/REQ	ASST	INFO	INFO

RESPONSIBILITY	BOARD	LEAD PASTOR	STAFF	UMC
FACILITIES				
Interior	ASST	INFO	PRIME	
Grounds	ASST	INFO	PRIME	
Exterior	ASST	INFO	PRIME	
New Construction	PRIME	ASST	ASST	APP/REQ
Insurance	PRIME APP/REQ	INFO	ASST	INFO

RESPONSIBILITY	BOARD	LEAD PASTOR	STAFF	UMC
PERSONNEL				
Employee Handbook	ASST APP/REQ	PRIME	INFO	
HR Matters & Concerns	PRIME	ASST	INFO	
Staff / hire, terminate, reassign	ASST APP/REQ	PRIME	INFO	
Pastor / hire, terminate, reassign	ASST	INFO		PRIME

RESPONSIBILITY	BOARD	LEAD PASTOR	STAFF	UMC
MINISTRY PLAN				
Mission & Vision	INFO	PRIME	ASST	INFO
Staff Goals	INFO	ASST. APP/REQ	PRIME	
Worship Experience	INFO	PRIME	ASST	INFO
Serve Teams	INFO	APP/REQ	PRIME	
Community Groups	INFO	APP/REQ	PRIME	
Impact/Outreach	INFO	APP/REQ	PRIME	
Age Level Ministry	INFO	APP/REQ	PRIME	

Ministry Board Positions & Responsibilities

Lead Pastor

Responsibilities:

- o Cast the vision for TPCC
- o Hold staff accountable for leading ministry areas and fulfilling the mission and vision of the church.
- o Supervise, assess, and hire staff with assistance from HR Representative
- o Teach the congregation in messages, studies, other communication, etc.
- o Equip ministry partners for the work of ministry in our community

Term: Appointed annually by the Bishop

Lay Leader (formerly two positions: Ministry Board Chair & Lay Leader)

Responsibilities:

- o Set the example of lay involvement to the congregation by participating faithfully in all aspects of the life of the church.
- o Follow up with appropriate persons to ensure the agreed action steps of the Ministry Board are carried out between Board meetings.
- o Meet regularly with the Lead Pastor.
- o With the Lead Pastor set a schedule for Ministry Board meetings that involve training, spiritual formation, and growth.

Term: Nominated annually by the Lay Leadership Team and Elected annually by the Charge Conference

Human Resources (HR) Representative (formerly Staff-Parish Relations Chair)

Responsibilities:

- o Set the example of lay involvement to the congregation by participating faithfully in all aspects of the life of the church.
- o To provide evaluation of the pastor and staff in effective ministry.
- o In cooperation with the lead pastor, approve written job descriptions and titles for staff members.
- o Annually review the policy and procedures regarding the process for hiring, contracting, evaluating, promoting, and dismissing staff who are not appointed as clergy.

Term: 3 year term. Nominated by the Lay Leadership Team and Elected by the Charge Conference

Trustees Representative (formerly Trustees Chair)

Responsibilities:

- o Set the example of lay involvement to the congregation by participating faithfully in all aspects of the life of the church.
- o The supervision, oversight, and care of all real property owned by the local church.
- o Annually review to see that all insurance coverage is adequate.
- o Work with Administrator or other staff regarding the ongoing needs for the facility and grounds.

Term: Nominated annually by the Lay Leadership Team and Elected annually by the Charge Conference

Finance Representative (formerly Finance Chair)

Responsibilities:

- o Set the example of lay involvement to the congregation by participating faithfully in all aspects of the life of the church.
- o Each September obtain budget requests from staff and ministries.
- o Work closely with the Administrator and Treasurer compiling a complete budget to submit to the Ministry Board for review and adoption.
- o With the Board, develop and implement plans to raise sufficient income to meet the budget adopted.
- o Administer all funds received according to instructions from the Board.
- o Make provision for an annual audit of the records of the financial officers of the church.

Term: Nominated annually by the Lay Leadership Team and Elected annually by the Charge Conference

Treasurer

Responsibilities:

- o Set the example of lay involvement to the congregation by participating faithfully in all aspects of the life of the church.
- o Disburse contributions to items represented in the budget.
- o Make regular, detailed reports on funds received and disbursed to the Ministry Board.
- o Work closely with the Administrator and Finance Representative.

Term: Nominated annually by the Lay Leadership Team and Elected annually by the Charge Conference

Young Adult Representative

Responsibilities:

- o Set the example of lay involvement to the congregation by participating faithfully in all aspects of the life of the church.
- o Represent the young adult demographic in the community ensuring the church is continually looking to invest in the development of leaders.

Term: Nominated annually by the Lay Leadership Team and Elected annually by the Charge Conference

Administrator (formerly Finance and Membership Secretary)

Responsibilities:

- o Supervise the counting of all offerings.
- o Post all contributions in appropriate accounts.
- o Maintain proper giving records for each person or family in the congregation who gives.
- o Prepare/Distribute giving statements to the congregation.
- o Work closely with the Finance and Treasurer as needed and in development of budget.

Term: *This is a staff position

Recording Secretary

Responsibilities:

- o Set the example of lay involvement to the congregation by participating faithfully in all aspects of the life of the church.
- o Record Ministry Board meeting minutes
- o Submit completed minutes to Lead Pastor and Lay Leader within a week of the meeting.

Term: Nominated annually by the Lay Leadership Team and Elected annually by the Charge Conference

Staff

The personnel who carry out day-to-day responsibilities for TPCC. Job descriptions on file for specific positions.

Term: Evaluated annually by HR and as needed by the Lead Pastor

VOTING PRIVILEGE CHART

BOARD POSITION	FINANCE MATTERS	TRUSTEES MATTERS	HR MATTERS	GENERAL MINISTRY BOARD
Lay Leader	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE
HR Rep	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE
Finance Rep	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE
Trustee Rep	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE
Treasurer	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE
Young Adult Rep	VOICE/NO VOTE	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE
Administrator	VOICE/NO VOTE	VOICE/NO VOTE	EXCUSED	VOICE/NO VOTE
Lead Pastor	VOTE	VOICE/NO VOTE	VOICE/NO VOTE	VOTE
Recording Secretary	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE	VOICE/ NO VOTE
Staff	VOICE/NO VOTE	VOICE/NO VOTE	EXCUSED	VOICE/NO VOTE

When will Ministry Board meetings take place and what will they look like?

- o Meet approximately six times a year with a focus on different areas for each meeting
- o Each meeting is led by the particular representative of that meeting's discussion focus.
- o With exception of Board Orientation and HR meeting, meetings are open to all Ministry Partners.
- o Between meetings the staff carries out the day-to-day functions of the church and communicates with appropriate Representatives when needs arise.
- o Representatives of specific areas do the work necessary between Board meetings through work sessions with the Lead Pastor, Lay Leader, and staff when needed.

Ministry Board Meeting Plan 2021

Date	Focus	Leader	Required Attendees
Jan 26	Orientation/Training	Lead Pastor	Board & Staff
Feb 9	Finance	Finance Rep.	Board & Staff*
Apr 13	Facilities	Trustee Rep. & Pastor	Board & Staff*
Aug 3	Back-to-School	Lay Leader & Pastor	Board, Staff, Ministry Teams*
Sept 14	HR	HR Rep.	Closed Meeting / Board Only
Oct 12	Budget / Prep Charge Conf.	Finance Rep.	Board & Staff*

**Open to all TPCC Ministry Partners*



Ministry Board Meeting Agenda Template

To be used by the Board Representative scheduled to lead

Call to Order by Lay Leader or Scheduled Board Representative

Prayer by Lead Pastor or Staff

Devotional or Team Building Lead Pastor

Important Information about upcoming events, ministries, etc. by Lay Leader, Lead Pastor, or a ministry point person.

Previous Business by Lay Leader or Scheduled Board Representative

*If printed materials are needed for the meeting please email to Kristin by Monday before meeting / kristin@theporchcc.com

*If the previous business or report will require a motion/vote please email the information to be voted upon to the Ministry Board by Monday before meeting.
(This does not include HR matters which are not discussed in electronic form. In-person only.)

New Business/Report from Scheduled Board Representative

*If printed materials are needed for the meeting please email to Kristin by Monday before meeting / kristin@theporchcc.com

*If the new business or report will require a motion/vote please email the information to be voted upon to the Ministry Board by Monday before meeting.
(This does not include HR matters which are not discussed in electronic form. In-person only.)

Close in Prayer by Board Member

Meeting Adjourned by Lay Leader or Scheduled Board Representative

*Board Members present constitute a quorum.

*See Voting Privilege Chart on page 6 of the Ministry Board Handbook.

*Proxy votes for absent members are prohibited.

Conflict Resolution for Ministry Partners, Staff, Pastor, Board

Authentic direct dialogue, humility, and forgiveness go a long way toward building a healthy church culture.

3 Biblical Steps for Resolving Conflict

- **Communicate (Matthew 18:15).** When a person has a concern about an action of a pastor or staff member, they should attempt to work it out directly with the person. Speak face-to-face. Provide an opportunity for reconciliation between them.
- **Companions (Matthew 18:16).** If the concern is not reasonably resolved, speak to the HR Representative and ask for help to resolve your concern. This should include having the HR Rep mediate a conversation between the individuals who are in conflict with one another.
- **Council (Matthew 18:17).** An individual who does not feel their concern has been adequately addressed may ask the HR Rep to call a Ministry Board meeting to seek resolution or a path forward.

Why Anonymous Concerns and Criticisms Are Not Addressed

Most of the time, when one of us disagrees with another, we go to each other openly and graciously and talk about it. In rare cases, however, we go about requesting the change that we want in unbiblical, unhealthy ways. One of the most unhealthy, unbiblical ways to go about requesting change is through anonymous concerns and criticism.

Therefore, the Ministry Board affirms and agrees that anonymous concerns and criticism will not be addressed because it is unbiblical.

Why is anonymous criticism unbiblical?

1. Anonymous criticism is unbiblical because it is UNLOVING. In John 13:34, Jesus said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.” Jesus told us to love each other the way He loved us. He loved us by giving His life for us. We must love sacrificially, at a cost to ourselves. If I share a concern or criticism of a person with a board or staff member but require my anonymity, I am, in effect, saying, “I refuse to extend you grace. I refuse to act sacrificially at a cost to myself. Instead, I choose to offer only condemnation for your words or actions.”

Jesus gave explicit instructions to us, His followers, when He told us how to approach a brother or sister we believe has done wrong. In Matthew, Chapter 18, Verse 15, he said, “If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense.”

The reason Christ tells us to “go privately and point out the offense,” is so that they can see who is delivering the message, someone who loves them, and hear the compassion and grace in our voices. We can’t do that anonymously.

If you or I begin with anonymous criticism, we have said to Jesus, “I refuse to love others the way You demonstrated and You commanded.” To act biblically, we must always act in love, first and foremost.

2. Anonymous criticism is unbiblical because it is PRIDEFUL. In Philippians 2:3, Paul wrote, “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.” Whenever we become angry or offended at the behavior of a fellow believer to the point where we are willing to share an anonymous criticism, we act out of pride not humility. No matter how graciously we may try to phrase our message, we are actually saying, “I am so confident that I am 100% right and you are 100% wrong, that I see no point in making myself available in conversation to talk about the issue.”

The truth is that anger blinds us to circumstances that might otherwise make us rethink at least a part of our criticism. Perhaps the person we’re criticizing is unaware of the issue. Or, perhaps that person is already working on the concern and is receiving godly counsel. Or, perhaps the issue was handled in a deliberate way due to extenuating circumstances or decisions about which we have no knowledge. By attacking the person anonymously, we say, “I believe I have full knowledge of all possible circumstances, motivations, and decisions related to the matter. Nothing you might say can cast any new light.” That’s pride.

Galatians 6:1-3 says, “Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other’s burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.”

Paul warns, “When you start thinking you are something, when you think you have the situation completely figured out, when you think you know all the details, you deceive yourself.” To act biblically, we must first be humble about our own fallibility and open to hearing things we might not know.

3. Anonymous criticism is unbiblical because it is DISCOURAGING. In 1 Thessalonians 5:11, it says, “Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.” Paul is writing about the day when the Lord returns to make things right. He says, “Therefore, because Jesus is coming back, encourage each other. Build each other up.” We are not called to tear each other down, but to lovingly, humbly, and graciously build each other up. Any time we feel God calling us to mention something another person is doing that we believe is wrong or in error, we must first ask ourselves, “How can I bring this up encouragingly, without crushing the spirit of the person I’m confronting?”

One of the unexpected problems with anonymous criticism is that no closure is ever offered. The person who has been criticized is left forever guessing if he or she has met the objection with an appropriate reaction or response. Without closure, the issue is constantly in mind, distracting that person from what God has called him or her to do. Instead of thinking, “How can I serve people today?” that person thinks, “I wonder if the angry person is here today and if they’re still angry?” He or she also wonders, “Why did the anonymous criticizer think I was unapproachable? Has he or she ever taken time to get to know me?” The ongoing uncertainty affects our focus, leaving us drained and discouraged. Given enough anonymous criticism, many ministry leaders give up and leave ministry. Don’t be the cause of that.

Immediately after his charge to us to encourage one another in 1 Thessalonians 5:11 Paul says this, “So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing. Dear brothers and sisters, honor those who are your leaders in the Lord’s work. They work hard among you and give you spiritual guidance. Show them great respect and wholehearted love because of their work. And live peacefully with each other.”

When God calls specific people to take on the responsibility to do ministry in the church, He also calls the church to show them grace. Your Staff are far from perfect. We make mistakes. We need to be challenged to repent when we make mistakes. But if those challenges come anonymously, they cannot be addressed adequately and do not honor God.

If anonymous criticism is unbiblical, what do we do instead?

First, we pray regularly for the person we're planning to approach. If we haven't first prayed for that person consistently, asking God to make him or her the person He's called them to be and asking Him to give us wisdom, love and grace in what we say and how we say it, we shouldn't confront another believer about their perceived error.

Second, we should ask privately, "May I share something I've noticed? You might not be aware of it." We should speak gently not accusingly. We should stick to our own observations, never saying, "Lots of people feel the way I do." We speak only for ourselves and let others speak for themselves. (Further, this would indicate that gossip has occurred under the guise of "concern".)

Third, we should listen with humility to see if there are facts or circumstances that we don't know. We should never attack or demand. We should simply call attention to the issue we've noticed.

Finally, after the other person has had the opportunity to respond, we should always thank him or her for hearing and considering our concerns. We should allow that person time to consider what we've said, not demand an immediate concession. We should wrap up the conversation by saying, "Thank you for listening. I've been praying for you, because I love you as a brother or sister in Christ. Is there anything I can do to encourage you or help you?"

It might be tempting to think, "My criticism isn't personal, so it's OK to send anonymously." But that's not true. All criticism is personal to the person who receives it and is responsible for the issue. When we say to someone, "Don't take this personally," we acknowledge that all criticism feels personal. Because that's true, no form of anonymous criticism, however general it is, meets the biblical criteria. If we feel we must call attention to an issue, as Christians we must do so in person.

That's the approach Jesus taught and the early church followed. That's the model which will bring life and healing and maturity to The Porch Community Church. That's the way of handling conflict that will make us a beacon to the community. And in the end, it's the only strategy which will also bring peace and joy to us, too.

Based on the agreement that anonymous concerns and criticisms will not be received or addressed, what are the steps to take when someone brings a concern to you as a Ministry Board member?

As a member of the Ministry Board, when a ministry partner voices a concern to you about the pastor, staff, or other church leader immediately do the following:

1. Stop them **BEFORE** hearing the complaint or concern, and ask them if they have spoken directly to the person with whom they have a complaint.
2. If they have not, encourage them to speak directly to the person with whom they have a complaint.
 - a. If they indicate they have already done so but are still dissatisfied, encourage them to contact the HR Representative immediately.
 - b. **DO NOT** hear the complaint or concern yourself. This signifies to the ministry partner that biblical conflict resolution is of utmost importance to the process.

3. If the person states they cannot or will not directly speak to the person with whom they have a complaint have the person contact the HR Rep.
 - a. If they decline, tell them that you want their concerns to be heard but you cannot carry anonymous concerns to the Ministry Board.
 - b. You may need to remind them that confidentiality and anonymity are not one in the same.
4. When the HR Rep has a conversation with a concerned ministry partner - the HR Rep must request one of two things if they plan to address the concern with the Ministry Board: 1) Either a written concern signed and dated to be shared with the Ministry Board or, 2) Permission to share their name and full concern verbally with the individual and/or the ministry board if needed.
 - a. If the ministry partner declines to put the complaint in writing or to have their name mentioned, inform them that you cannot carry anonymous concerns to the Ministry Board concerning the pastor, staff member, or other ministry leader.
5. The HR Rep informs the Lead Pastor of the written concern regarding the pastor, staff member, or ministry leader.
6. At the next Ministry Board meeting, it is decided if:
 - a. The concern has merit and deserves further attention, or
 - b. The concern has no merit and deserves no action. If no merit, the HR Rep will contact and thank the person for their input and inform them that the Board has record of the concern.
7. The Board discusses legitimate concerns with the pastor/staff person for a full understanding of the situation. Together, decide on a course of action and follow up.
8. The Board decides if a joint statement is needed with the HR Rep to the individual who initiated the concern. All board members are obliged to share only the approved, joint statement without additions or deletions.

*The HR Rep or Ministry Board may receive individual's letters only, not petitions from groups.

*The Ministry Board is responsible for addressing situations with the pastor. The HR Rep informs the Lead Pastor of any concerns regarding the staff and a course of action is determined.

*The Pastor and Lay Leadership/Nominating Team are responsible for addressing situations concerning elected members of the Ministry Board.

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Conflict Resolution resources are from the following organizations:

https://www.minnesotaumc.org/files/content/chapter_5_-_2014_conflict_resolution_and_pprc.pdf

<https://www.txcumc.org/files/fileslibrary/resolvingconflictincongregations.pdf>

<https://www.bwcumc.org/article/resolving-conflict-at-church/>

<http://stlukeson5th.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/CONFLICT-RESOLUTION-POLICY.pdf>

TPCC Ministry Board Covenant

- o We commit to robust dialogue and to maintain an open, non-defensive attitude.
- o In the spirit of Matthew 18, we will always speak in love and keep short accounts when offense has taken place.
- o We will regularly evaluate progress of the part of the organization we are responsible for. We believe in timely execution and ministry results.
- o We keep our promises. When decisions have been made and assignments given, we are committed to fully executing those assignments on time.
- o We take full responsibility for corporate decisions the board makes and will not engage in leadership default. Outside of our board meetings we speak with one voice.
- o We keep confidential those issues which are shared in our board meetings which should not be shared with others.
- o We are committed to thinking the best of one another, speaking the best of one another, praying for one another, and supporting one another.
- o We agree to hold one another accountable for keeping this board covenant.

Please initial the following and sign below.

I have read and will abide by:

_____ the Responsibility Chart on page 3

_____ the Ministry Board Positions & Responsibilities on pages 4-5

_____ the Voting Privilege Chart on page 6

_____ the Ministry Board Meeting Plan on page 7

_____ the Process for Conflict Resolution on pages 8-11

Ministry Board Member

Date