

**ST. LUCAS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**CHURCH COUNCIL POLICIES**

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**Overview**

Using the authority St Lucas United Church of Christ has given it through its Constitution and Bylaws, the St. Lucas UCC Church Council has adopted the following policies. This policy book is intended to guide the actions of the Church Council and those it authorizes to act on its behalf. The Church Council records all its actions in its minutes; for ease of reference, it also records in this policy book any action intended to authorize others to make decisions or to control multiple decisions over time. The Church Council minutes, and this policy book are both posted on the church website.

## **Council Governance**

### **1.1. Role of the Council**

The Council will govern primarily by discerning mission; planning for the future; partnering with the Senior Minister and his/her clergy and lay staff to establish both long and short-term objectives; and holding leaders of the Church, including its own members, accountable for their performance. The Council is accountable to the congregation.

#### **1.1.1. Annual Council Work Products**

In concert with the Senior Minister, staff, and congregation, the Council will produce and adopt two work products, an Annual Budget and a Vision of Ministry. At the Council's annual planning meeting in January, the Council President will present the top three priorities from the prior year's Planning Process that were voted on by the congregation at the preceding Annual Meeting in November. Goals will be developed at this retreat and will be sent to council members following the retreat. Dialog will continue at subsequent Council meetings to further the discussion of "where we are headed and what does it look like".

#### **Annual Budget**

- Using the above goals, formal budget planning sessions will occur in May through June with members of the Council, the Church Cabinet, ministers and staff.
- Budget drafts resulting from these sessions will be administered by church staff and presented to the Finance Committee for review in August.
- The Finance Committee will make a recommendation to the Council no later than October 1 in order to finalize the budget for a vote at the Annual meeting in November.

### Vision of Ministry

- At the Semi-Annual Meeting, a Council Report consisting of a **Ministry Evaluation** of the Church's progress in achieving the prior year's Vision of Ministry will be presented along with a mutual **Performance Evaluation** of the Senior Minister's and Council's effectiveness in their respective roles.
- Using the above reports, formal planning sessions will occur after the Semi-Annual Meeting to develop a current **Vision of Ministry**, consisting of a short list of top- priority areas where the Church will advance its work in the coming year. This Vision of Ministry will be presented by the Senior Minister at the Annual Meeting in November for discussion and approval. The church budget will also be presented at this meeting for discussion and approval.
- Ongoing meetings will occur throughout the year and will be used as a vehicle for Council to continue the dialog with the congregation on how best to fulfill the church's mission. The agendas for these meetings will be to articulate our mission by agreeing upon whose lives we intend to change and in what ways. The method for these meetings will be to hear from the congregation on a

short list of specific questions for which the Council is seeking to know the will of the congregation.

### **1.1.2 Less Frequent Council Work Products**

In concert with the Senior Minister, staff, and congregation, the Council will produce and adopt:

- A **Strategic Plan**, to be updated at least once every five years, consisting of a short list of the most important results the Council intends to achieve through the Church's ministry and the strategic choices regarding program, membership, capital and operating budgets, and staffing the Council has made about how to achieve those results.
- A **Mission Statement**, to be updated as needed, that articulates the Church's purpose, vision, values, and related statements in order to communicate the reasons for Church's work.

## **1.2 Council Officers**

In addition to the duties defined in Part VII of the St. Lucas By-Laws, the officers have the following responsibilities:

### **1.2.1. President**

The President prepares the Council's agenda, facilitates or arranges for facilitation of Council meetings, and works in partnership with the Senior Minister to ensure productive partnership between the Council and staff, both clergy and lay.

### **1.2.2. Vice-President**

The Vice President assists and substitutes for the President upon request. The Vice President is responsible for leading the Council's planning work, including planning conversations with members and supporters of the Church.

### **1.2.3. Recording Secretary**

The Recording Secretary ensures the safety and accuracy of Council records including the minutes and these policies. In cooperation with the staff, the Secretary sees that minutes and Council policies are promptly posted on the Church website.

### **1.2.4. Financial Secretary**

See Part VII of the St. Lucas Bi-Laws for duties and responsibilities.

### **1.2.5. Treasurer**

The Treasurer serves on the Finance Committee. See Part VII of the St. Lucas Bi-Laws for duties and responsibilities.

## **1.3. Council Committees**

Committees exist to help the Council to govern. The standing committees of the Council are:

### **1.3.1. Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee assists the Council in its oversight of the congregation's finances, ensures that routine financial reports are clear and helpful, and coordinates the financial audits. From time to time, holds educational sessions to ensure that Council members have adequate understanding of the Congregation's financial status and goals.

## Responsibilities:

- Prepare the annual budget and estimate.
- Prepare an estimate of income for the current year and budgetary forecast of income for the upcoming budget year.
- Prepare an estimate of expenditures for the current year and budgetary forecast of expenditures for the upcoming (budget) year, based on, among other things, input from various Council and Standing Committees.
- Match estimated income and expenditures for the upcoming (budget) year, making whatever adjustments are necessary to ensure, at a minimum, that a balanced budget is presented to the Congregation for approval.
- Monitor the financial condition of the church.

The Financial Secretary is Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

### **1.3.1.1. Stewardship Committee**

The Stewardship Committee reports through the Finance Committee and is in charge of fundraising. They will develop educational programs to stimulate the congregation to a level of giving in keeping with good Christian stewardship in order to meet the financial needs of the church.

### **1.3.2. Personnel Committee**

Assists the Council in developing personnel policies, ensuring compliance with applicable laws, and carrying out the staff grievance process as defined by these policies. The Committee has no management authority and does not participate in supervision or personnel decision-making. When it is necessary to hold a meeting on a staff grievance, the Council will appoint an ad hoc committee in each case.

### **1.3.3. Governance Committee**

Helps the Council to focus on its chosen role, to train Council members, and to lead the annual Council self-evaluation process.

### **1.3.4. Nominating Committee**

In addition to the duties prescribed by the bylaws, consults annually with the Council and Governance Committee to ascertain future leadership needs in the light of members who are rotating off the Council. The Chairperson shall be a council member appointed by the President with Council approval.

### **1.3.5. Building and Grounds Committee**

The Building and Grounds Committee is responsible for the overall maintenance, repair, and improvement of the church building, the area used for the ball fields and the balance of the property, excluding the cemetery. The committee's goal should be; to provide an attractive, safe, clean, and operational facility that encourages the mission of the Church while ensuring the spiritual needs, health, and safety of all concerned.

## **1.4. Expectations of Council Members**

### **1.4.1. Church Member Service**

Only one Church member per household is permitted to serve concurrently on the Council. Church members considered for filling Council vacancies until the next

Congregational meeting must be approved by Council prior to appointment by the Council President.

#### **1.4.2. Council Covenant**

We, the members of the Council, enter this covenant of mutual expectations for Council service. New members of the Council will be asked to join us in these commitments, and the Council will review and update this covenant at least annually. As Council members, we will:

- **Prepare** for Council meetings. We will read the Council packet sent prior to each meeting and accept responsibility to seek and provide information necessary for the Council to make well- informed decisions.
- **Attend** Council meetings. When possible, we will attend all duly called Council meetings. If it is necessary to miss a Council meeting, we will inform the Council President as early as possible. If we do not expect to be able to attend meetings consistently, then we will resign for the good of the Council.
- **Participate** in Council meetings. We will listen carefully to others, giving special attention to ideas and perspectives different from our own. We will feel free to state the obvious and ask questions when we do not understand. We will speak forthrightly in Council meetings and vote according to our understanding of the Church's mission.
- **Share** the work of the Council. We will respond to e-mails and other communications in a timely manner. We will accept assignments and other tasks and complete them as agreed. Each Council member is equally responsible for speaking up to ensure compliance with the bylaws, ethical values, and this covenant.



- **Treat one another with respect and courtesy.** When we have disagreements or conflicts, we will address those directly with the persons concerned, seeking assistance from others as necessary to sustain a positive working atmosphere at the Council table.
- **Use discretion** in communicating about Council discussions. We will treat the views expressed in Council discussion as tentative and refrain from reporting the opinions of others. We will speak respectfully of the Council's authority to make decisions, even when we do not agree. When the Council agrees that certain matters will be kept confidential, we will honor those agreements.
- The President can determine when to go into closed session at any time. The Council can go into closed session any time a Council member motions, gets a second, discussion and approval.

### **1.4.3. Conflicts of Interest**

The Council expects all its members to carry out their duties with undivided loyalty to the Church and its mission. A conflict of interest exists whenever a Council member has interests or duties that may hinder or appear to hinder the Council member from fulfilling this duty.

#### **1.4.3.1. Definition**

Conflicts of interest arise when the Council member:

- Stands to gain or lose financially because of an action of the Church in which he or she has a decision-making role.
- Cannot set aside his or her personal preferences as an individual consumer of the Church's services to act in behalf of the whole Church and its mission.

- Faces any other situation that impairs or reasonably appears to impair his or her independence of judgment.
- Has a close relationship with someone who has a conflict of interest, as defined here. A close relation includes any person, corporation, or other business entity with which the Council member has a close personal, family, or business relationship.
- Serves on any board, council or committee of another element of the United Church of Christ which may impact any St. Lucas UCC minister and/or staff member.

#### **1.4.3.2. Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure**

The Council will require (at least annually), its members to disclose in writing all existing or foreseeable conflicts of interest. Disclosure forms must be kept by the Secretary and made available to any member of the Council who asks to see them.

#### **1.4.3.3. Conflict-of-Interest Process**

When a Council member reports a potential conflict of interest related to a matter before the Council, the Council, minus the affected member, will determine how to handle the situation. Possible responses include:

- Disclosure in Council minutes of the nature of the conflict.
- Leaving the room during all Council discussions and votes related to the conflict of interest.
- Resignation from the Council.

#### **1.4.4. Discipline and Removal of Council Members**

The Council will follow the following procedures:

#### **1.4.4.1. Removal for Misconduct**

The Church Council shall review, validate, and assess the seriousness of the allegations of misconduct by a Council Member. The Secretary will notify the member in writing and offer a hearing before the Council. Pending such a hearing, the Council may suspend the member's voting privileges.

##### **1.4.4.1.1. Vote Required**

Council members may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all members of the council. A motion must be made and seconded to remove a council member at a regularly scheduled council meeting. All members must vote on the motion. Council members who are not present when the initial vote is taken must be given the opportunity to vote before the vote is considered final. The vote will be by secret ballot. The Recording Secretary will tally the votes and report the results to the entire Church Council as soon as practical after all council members have voted.

#### **1.4.4.2. Removal for Absence From Council Meetings**

If an officer or Council member misses more than four meetings in a twelve-month period, then the Secretary will notify the member in writing that the member may appear at the next meeting to ask the Council to excuse the absences, or the Council will request the member's resignation.

### **1.5. Church Boards**

Church Boards are chartered by the Council to further the mission and goals of the Church. Their bylaws, including any amendments, must be approved by the

Council and their officers must promptly file all of their official minutes and financial reports with the Church office and make other disclosures or reports as the Council or staff may require in order to ensure compliance with the Church's nonprofit and tax-exempt status.

#### **1.5.1. Cemetery Board**

The Cemetery Board shall manage and conduct the business of St. Lucas Cemetery within the limits established in the St. Lucas United Church of Christ Constitution and By-Laws, and applicable statutes. See Part IX of St. Lucas By-Laws for details of Organization, Responsibilities, and Officers of the Cemetery Board.

#### **1.5.2. Preschool Board**

The Preschool Board shall be responsible for the administration of the St. Lucas Preschool. See Part X of the St. Lucas By-Laws for details of Organization, Responsibilities, and Officers of the St. Lucas Preschool.

#### **1.5.3. Board of Christian Education**

The Board of Christian Education shall be responsible for operation of the Sunday School, confirmation program, youth programs, and other related functions primarily designed to educate children, youth, and adults in the Christian religion. See Part VIII of the St. Lucas By-Laws for details of the Organization, Responsibilities, and Officers of the Board of Christian Education.

### **1.6. Endowment Funds**

The Endowment Funds include all Church funds intended to be held in perpetuity to provide a long-term stream of income to the Church. The Council places funds in the Endowments either by accepting gifts restricted by the donor to Endowment use or by voluntarily placing funds into the Endowments. See Parts XIV and XV of the St. Lucas By-Laws for more details on the General Endowment and the Perpetual Endowment Trust respectively.

### **1.6.1. Delegation and Guidance**

Council is authorized to use investment professionals to develop suitable investment policy statements and to provide on-going investment advice for the Endowment funds. Any investment professional(s) so employed must be a State or SEC regulated Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) or be a Registered Representative of an RIA firm, to assure that said professional(s) has a fiduciary responsibility to the Church.

### **1.6.2. Investment Objectives**

Capital funds must be invested to produce a maximum rate of total return consistent with the following: prudent management of investments, preservation of principle, and potential for long-term asset growth.

### **1.6.3. Permissible Investments**

Endowment fund assets may be invested in publicly traded common and preferred stocks, convertible bonds and preferred stocks, bank common funds, mutual funds, ETF's, Separately Managed Accounts (SMA's), and fixed income securities,

including corporate bonds and money market instruments. No other investments are permissible.

#### **1.6.4. Current St. Lucas endowment funds**

##### **1.6.4.1. Perpetual Endowment Trust**

The Perpetual Endowment Trust is an irrevocable trust managed according to the St. Lucas United Church of Christ Perpetual Endowment Trust dated January 30, 1984. It has a separate and distinct tax i.d. different from that of the Church. See Part XV of the St. Lucas By-Laws for more details.

##### **1.6.4.2. General Endowment Fund**

The General Endowment is a fund set aside and managed by Council according to guidelines that are adopted, and may be modified from time to time, by Council. The income from this fund is intended to be used in the Church's general fund for various programs as determined in the annual Church budget. This fund uses the same tax i.d. number as the Church. See Part XIV of the St. Lucas By-Laws for more details.

##### **1.6.4.3 Beyersdorfer Endowment Fund**

The Beyersdorfer Endowment is a fund set aside and managed by Council according to guidelines that are adopted, and may be modified from time to time, by Council. The income from this fund is intended to be used to subsidize programs for children and youth as determined in the annual Church budget. This fund uses the same tax i.d. number as the Church. Council may delegate the management responsibility of this fund as it sees fit.

