

1. Introduction to Policy Governance

The structure and responsibilities of our Policy Governance model are stated in Board Policy 1.2 *Governing Role of the Board*.

- [Introduction to Policy Governance \(details\)](#)
- [Board Member Resources](#)

Introduction to Policy Governance (details)

Note of History: In May, 2017, the Congregation voted to adopt a new, policy-based governance system for a trial year. In June, 2018, the Congregation affirmed the new system. In June 2023 the Congregation approved updated bylaws which are consistent with policy-based governance.

Policy Governance defines and guides the appropriate relationship between a church, its [Board of Trustees](#), and its Senior Minister. It provides a systematic way to ground the work of the congregation in its core values and to organize power and authority for visioning and decision-making in alignment with those values.

This relationship between the Board and the Senior Minister (and Ministry staff) includes the Board communicating via written policies and vision-based work products that guide the staff in prioritizing and carrying out the work of the congregation. The Board holds the Senior Minister accountable by use of ongoing monitoring practices throughout the church year.

The Board is responsible for church "Ends" - the present and future impact the Church is called to make. Board members should continuously be asking "why" our church is doing what it's doing. Board responsibilities are enumerated in more detail in Section 3.

Ministry, which includes the ministers, church staff, lay leaders and member volunteers, is the "what" that supports our church "why." Ministry is responsible for the daily, practical work to operationalize what takes place each week - build congregational community, manage resources and guide experiences that support transforming the lives of our members. Ministry is responsible for the "Means" - all the ways put in place to encourage that our "Ends" are supported and accomplished.

Board Member Resources

- Video, [Foundational Assumptions](#) (4:44)
- Video, [Governance & Ministry](#) (1:54)
- Book, *Nested Bowls* by Laura Park
- Book, *Focusing Your Church Board* by Ted Hull
- [Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership](#) by Dan Hotchkiss (Alban Institute, 2009)
- **[Boards That Make a Difference: A New Design for Leadership in Nonprofit and Public Organizations](#) by John Carver (Jossey-Bass, 1990, 2nd edition, 1997)**