

Board Policy

FOOTHILLS UNITARIAN CHURCH BOARD POLICY - Adopted Sept 16, 2025

Under the authority the Congregation has given us through the bylaws, the Board has adopted the following policies to provide a framework for the conduct of the Board and guidance for the Senior Minister. These are statements of direction, intention, and limitations, as the Board engages in governance and conducts the work of the Church. The Board commits to working in covenant and mutually supportive partnership with each other and with the Senior Minister in their role as ex-officio board member and chief executive of the church.

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1. Ends

The following subsections identify the principles and moral sources that inform and guide the work of the Board of Trustees, the Senior Minister and Staff, and the Congregation as a whole.

1. Ends

1.1 Our Mission

Approved by the Congregation 10-16-2016

Foothills Unitarian Church unleashes courageous love in Northern Colorado and beyond by embracing our diversity, growing our faith, and awakening our spirits to the unfolding meaning of this life.

1. Ends

1.2 Our Guiding Values

Approved by the Congregation 12-20-2018

- Joyful Resilience
- Collective Courage
- Deepening Belonging
- Transcendent Wonder

1.3 Our Bold Vision

Approved by the Congregation 12-20-2018

We, the members of Foothills Unitarian Church, commit to create and sustain a healthy, vibrant religious community where:

1. Foothills is a vital part of the lives of its people, providing abundant opportunities for relationships across differences that provide joy, care, and belonging for all.
2. We are committed to a path of lifelong spiritual deepening that allows us to live lives of meaning and purpose in a world that needs our Unitarian Universalism.
3. We understand that being a part of Foothills requires us to give abundantly of our time, and this deepening involvement helps us to identify and grow our individual gifts.
4. We each engage in joyful and generous financial giving that fosters a deep ownership of the impactful work we support.
5. We are committed to recognizing and dismantling prejudice and oppression in all their forms, including within ourselves, allowing us to be more effective and trusted partners to marginalized communities in Northern Colorado and beyond.
6. Foothills is a leader in Northern Colorado in developing sustainable, innovative, intersectional approaches to caring for our earth and its people to ensure a greater flourishing of all life.
7. We do the work to make Unitarian Universalism accessible to all in Northern Colorado.

1. Ends

1.4 Our Sources of Accountability and Authority

We understand our sources of accountability and authority to include the following categories:

1. Our Congregation
2. Future congregants
3. The Unitarian Universalist faith, including other UU Congregations and the Association
4. People we serve (beyond our Congregation)
5. People we serve with (our community partners)
6. Local community
7. Planet

1. Ends

1.5 Fundamental Expression of the UU Values of Foothills Unitarian Church

On behalf of the Foothills Unitarian Church congregation, we proclaim that our principles and values unequivocally commit our faith to comprehensive ministry encompassing human dignity, liberation, and flourishing as divine mandates flowing from our core theological convictions. These practices are not separate from our faith—they ARE our faith in action.

Core Theological Foundation

Our religious practice flows directly from fundamental convictions established through 130 years of faithful witness:

- *Sacred Axiom*: Every person possesses inviolable worth regardless of any human-constructed category, making radical inclusion, protection of the vulnerable, and resistance to oppression religious imperatives binding on our covenantal community.
- *Religious Authority*: Our faith draws from sacred sources commanding love of stranger, celebration of diversity, and resistance to unjust authority—including Jewish/Christian teachings, humanist ethics, earth-centered traditions, and progressive revelation through lived experience.
- *Covenantal Practice*: Through democratic processes spanning decades—Welcoming Congregation (1998), Sanctuary vote (2017), Eighth Principle (2021)—this congregation has formally covenanted to an ongoing practice of our faith within and beyond our walls as a binding religious commitment.
- A more specific and detailed theological articulation of Foothills essential religious practices is found in Appendix A of this document.

2. Executive Direction and Limitations

2. Executive Direction and Limitations

2.1 Role of the Senior Minister

The Senior Minister is the chief executive and spiritual leader of Foothills Unitarian Church, responsible for leading the ministry and managing church operations in alignment with Board-defined Ends and Policies.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall:

1. Serve as the head of staff, accountable for staff performance, work environment, and alignment with church values.
2. Lead the ministry team in worship, pastoral care, faith formation, public witness, and programs that embody the Mission and Vision.
3. Act as the public representative of the Congregation to the wider community and denomination.
4. Establish and oversee procedures, operations, and systems to implement Board policy and report regularly to the Board.
5. Ensure ministers and staff act with undivided loyalty to the congregations's mission.

Confidential pastoral conversations and communications with a minister, held in their professional role, are confidential as a matter of religious discipline. Such communications shall not be disclosed without the informed consent of both minister and the individual who shared the information, in accordance with clergy-penitent privilege.

Ministers are mandatory reporters under Colorado law and will fulfill legal obligations while maintaining pastoral care and discretion to the fullest extent possible.

The Board shall review this definition periodically, upon request, or in conjunction with Bylaws or policy review cycles.

2.2 Global Delegation to Senior Minister

The Board delegates its authority to manage the work and resources of the Church, except as expressly defined by these policies, to the Senior Minister as the Board's official connection to church operations.

2. Executive Direction and Limitations

2.2.1 Legal and Ethical Integrity

The Senior Minister shall not cause or allow actions or practices that violate any applicable laws, regulations, or professional codes of conduct, or that compromise the ethical integrity of the church.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not:

1. Fail to ensure compliance with all relevant local, state and federal laws.
2. Fail to adhere to generally accepted accounting and human resources practices.
3. Fail to inform the Board of any civil disobedience undertaken by or on behalf of the Church.
4. Allow professional misconduct by staff, including but not limited to harassment, exploitation, or abuse of power.

2. Executive Direction and Limitations

2.2.2 Interpretation of Membership Identity

To uphold clarity and consistency in applying the Church ByLaws regarding membership status, the Board delegates authority to the Senior Minister to define the meaning of a “prolonged period of inactivity” as referenced in the ByLaws.

Accordingly:

1. The definition must align with the Church’s mission, reflect reasonable and holistic patterns of congregational life, and avoid surprising reasonable people.
2. The definition must be documented in organizational guidance.
3. The Board shall affirm the definition annually.

2.2.3 Information Retention and Distribution

The Senior Minister shall not allow inadequate protection, retention, or access to church records.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not:

1. Fail to preserve essential historical records, nor historical documents related to shared experiences important for congregational health.
2. Restrict member access to relevant documents, except where legally or ethically confidential.
3. Risk loss or misuse of intellectual property, data, or physical records.
4. Lack written procedures for the retention, backup, destruction, and distribution of key records.
5. Interfere with the Board's authority over its own records or fail to support their stewardship.

2.3 Care for People

2.3.1 Staff and Volunteer Treatment

With respect to staff and volunteers, the Senior Minister shall not allow conditions that are inhumane, unfair, unsafe, or unprofessional, or that fail to uphold principles of anti-racism, anti-oppression, inclusion, or equity.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not:

1. Operate without a clear and accessible grievance process for staff.
2. Allow employment practices that compromise minister-congregant boundaries.
3. Offer employment contracts that circumvent Colorado's at-will standard without Board approval.
4. Set or manage compensation in ways that are misaligned with UUA guidelines.
5. Allow conflicts of interest to go unreported or unresolved.
6. Operate without written and communicated personnel policies that clarify staff expectations and grievance procedures.
7. Operate without documented role descriptions or guidance for volunteers in leadership roles.
8. Fail to provide leadership development opportunities to interested members in a variety of roles appropriate to living out our mission, values and vision.

2.3.2 Congregational Care

With respect to members and guests, the Senior Minister shall not allow environments -- on site or online -- that are unsafe, exclusionary, inaccessible, or lacking in accountability and care, nor fail to consider long-term spiritual development and engagement, prevention of misconduct, and pathways for healing when harm occurs.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not:

1. Neglect emergency preparedness and response procedures, safety protocols, accessibility, or substance use policies.
2. Allow work with children or vulnerable adults without proper screening and training.
3. Withhold clear processes for voicing concerns, including whistleblower protections and appropriate escalation to the Board.
4. Compromise privacy or personal data without consent.
5. Fail to report major safety, misconduct, or care-related concerns to the Board.
6. Fail to maintain accurate membership rolls in alignment with Bylaws and report annual membership to the UUA.

2.3.3 Grievance and Complaint Resolution

The Senior Minister shall not fail to provide systems for resolving grievances and complaints by staff or members, in a fair, timely, and transparent manner, nor fail to uphold accountability through proper escalation.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not:

1. Obstruct members or staff from escalating complaints to the Board when:
 - a. grievances involve Board policy violations or inadequacy, or
 - b. misconduct involves the Senior Minister or a Board member.
2. Fail to inform the Board of significant grievances or misconduct concerns.
3. Fail to support the Board in fulfilling its responsibility to:
 - a. review submitted grievances,
 - b. investigate misconduct escalations, and
 - c. respond appropriately and transparently to those who raise concerns.

2.3.4 Congregational Healing

In the wake of any ministerial, staff, or lay leader misconduct, the Senior Minister tends to the health of the Congregation as a whole through pastoral work informed by principles of restorative justice, honesty, transparency, compassion, respect, and personal responsibility. If the misconduct involves the Senior Minister, the Board can enlist outside support.

2.4 Care for Material Resources

Foothills Unitarian commits to the faithful stewardship of its financial and material resources, ensuring they are used to further its mission, values, and long-term viability. The Board establishes the following policies to define accountability, boundaries, and necessary monitoring related to the financial health of the church.

2.4.1 Financial Accountability of the Senior Minister

The Senior Minister is accountable for the organization's financial performance and condition. This includes the planning, budgeting, and prudent management of the Church's financial and material assets. The Senior Minister shall:

- Ensure that financial practices are fiscally, socially, and environmentally responsible,
- Comply with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP)
- Prevent material deviation* from the Board-approved budget or unauthorized use of designated funds
- Maintain sufficient internal controls to safeguard assets and limit financial risk
- Review monthly financial statements
- At least once every five years, the Senior Minister engages qualified professionals to review the Church's financial records and processes.

*Material deviation includes any change big enough to affect the church's financial health or strategic direction.

2.4.2 Budget Creation and Oversight

2.4.2.1 Operating Budget

Each fiscal year, the Senior Minister shall propose an operating budget to the Board that is aligned with the church's Vision Interpretation. The Board affirms the proposed budget before it is presented for a congregational vote.

The budget must:

- Reflect anticipated income and expenses
- Demonstrate sustainable use of resources
- Align with policy and strategic direction

2.4.2.2 Staff Compensation

The Senior Minister holds authority for staff compensation within the total amount allocated in the congregationally approved budget. Any proposed increase to the total staff compensation budget outside of budgeted limits must be approved by the Board.

2.4.3 Spending and Reserve Limits

2.4.3.1 Spending Authority

The Senior Minister is responsible for all spending and account management. They may delegate authority to staff while retaining overall accountability.

- Deviations from the budget exceeding \$50,000 must be reported to the Board.
- Any deviation from the budget exceeding \$100,000 requires prior Board approval.

2.4.3.2 Operating Reserves & Endowment Fund

The Senior Minister shall maintain unrestricted cash reserves equivalent to a minimum of two months of operating expenses. If reserves fall below this threshold, the Senior Minister will notify the Board and propose a corrective plan.

The Senior Minister is responsible for soliciting, accepting, managing, and disbursing contributions of cash, securities, and other tangible resources to build an Endowment Fund in support of the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Congregation.

The Endowment Fund is only invested in the UU Common Endowment Fund, with its professional asset management guided by UU socially responsible investment goals.

The Senior Minister cannot spend the principal (contributions) to the Endowment Fund without Board approval.

2.4.4 Contracts, Debt and Investments

2.4.4.1 Contracts

- The Senior Minister may delegate authority to staff to sign contracts up to \$25,000.
- The Senior Minister may enter into contracts up to \$100,000 or up to two years in length.
- Contracts exceeding \$100,000 or longer than two years require Board approval.

2.4.4.2 Debt

- Board approval is required for the refinancing of existing debt.
- The congregation must approve any new debt that will be retained beyond a single fiscal year.

2.4.5 Fundraising

The Senior Minister must ensure fundraising activities occur to secure sufficient financial support from Foothills' participants and members to fund the budget of the Church.

The Senior Minister may also seek other financial resources such as grants or donations from individuals or organizations outside of the Church that further the Mission, Values and Vision and align with the Church's non-profit status.

The Board must initiate capital campaigns to finance major needs such as a building project, a major repair project, or to grow the Endowment Fund. The Senior Minister is responsible for executing and managing such campaigns in alignment with strategic goals.

2.4.6 Asset Protection and Insurance

The Senior Minister shall take all reasonable care to protect the church's assets from loss, damage, or misuse. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Adequate insurance to protect against property losses, liability for injuries to others, corporate liability, personal liability of Board members and staff.

2.4.7 Fiscal Agency and Outside Fundraising

The Board must approve any arrangement in which Foothills serves as a fiscal agent or sponsor for another organization or fund.

The Senior Minister shall provide:

- A statement of alignment with mission
- Projected resource impact
- Ongoing oversight and reporting of fund use

2.4.8 Financial Transparency and Reporting

The Senior Minister will ensure that financial records are accurate, timely, and accessible to the Board and congregation, excluding personal details or legally protected data.

The senior minister will:

- Provide comprehensive, quarterly financial reports as defined by the monitoring schedule.
- Ensure that financial records are accurate, timely, and accessible to the Board and congregation (excluding personnel details or legally protected data).
- Maintain a record retention and destruction guidance
- Ensure secure systems for all financial data

3.1 Board-Executive Leadership Linkage

3.1.1 Board–Senior Minister Relationship

The Board and Senior Minister shall maintain a collaborative, covenantal partnership grounded in trust, mutual accountability, and shared commitment to the Mission, Values, and Vision of Foothills Unitarian Church.

Accordingly:

1. Only decisions of the Board as a whole are binding on the Senior Minister.
2. The Board and Senior Minister jointly engage the congregation to define Mission, Values, and Vision.
3. The Senior Minister annually presents a Vision Interpretation aligned with the Ends, to be approved by the Board prior to budget adoption.
4. The Senior Minister informs the Board of major shifts in operations, staffing, finances, safety, or public visibility.
5. The Board and Senior Minister partner on content and communications related to Congregational meetings.
6. The senior minister may recommend honorary or special covenantal status (such as Community Minister or Minister Emeritus/Emerita) to the Board for approval. These designations affirm a clear covenantal relationship and support ongoing alignment in any continued involvement with the Church and its mission.
7. The Senior Minister provides timely counsel on relevant developments within the denomination, region, and community.

3.1 Board-Executive Leadership Linkage

3.1.2 Senior Minister Compensation

The Board shall ensure that the Senior Minister's compensation is fair, competitive, and aligned with UUA salary guidelines.

Accordingly:

1. The Board reviews and determines the Senior Minister's compensation annually in conjunction with the budget process.
2. Compensation decisions shall account for experience, tenure, cost of living, and internal parity.

3.2 Board Governance Process

3.2.1 Oversight and Accountability

The Board holds a fiduciary role and is legally responsible for the well-being and long-term future of Foothills Unitarian Church. It ensures that the Church's people and property serve its Mission, Values, and Vision.

Accordingly, the Board:

1. Articulates and affirms the Church's Mission, Values, and Vision as the foundation for all ministry.
2. Governs through policy by articulating high-level direction and guardrails to the Senior Minister.
3. Monitors policy compliance and evaluates the Senior Minister's execution of Board-defined Ends.
4. Links to the future by maintaining relationships with the Church's sources of authority and accountability.
5. Makes decisions in exceptional circumstances, including:
 - a. Complaints related to Board policy
 - b. Grievances or misconduct involving the Senior Minister
 - c. Variances from or exceptions to Board policy
 - d. Senior Minister compensation decisions
 - e. Capital campaign approval
 - f. Large purchases or significant budget deviations
6. Convenes Congregational Meetings as required by the Bylaws for elections, business, and special topics.

3.2.2 Monitoring

1. The Board monitors policy compliance through a variety of methods, including regular internal reports from the Senior Minister, per the Board's monitoring calendar.
2. The Board may appoint Ad hoc Committees or external consultants to investigate specific areas of policy compliance or concern.
3. The Senior Minister provides:
 - a. Quarterly financial reports
 - b. Annual programmatic updates on the Vision Interpretation
 - c. Annual internal financial reviews in years without an external audit
 - d. External financial and HR reviews at least every five years

3.2.3 Evaluation

1. The Board and Senior Minister conduct an annual mutual review of their partnership and respective roles.
2. The Board evaluates the Senior Minister's annual performance against the Vision Interpretation.
3. Every three years, the Board initiates a comprehensive Senior Minister review through a mutually agreed Ad hoc Review Committee.
4. The Board conducts an annual self-evaluation of its performance and compliance with its own policies.
5. Committees conduct annual self-evaluations, with Ad hoc Committees completing evaluations at conclusion.

3.2.4 Policy and Bylaws Review and Retention

1. The Board reviews its policies and Church Bylaws at least every five years to ensure alignment with the Church's Mission and ministry.
2. Policy changes typically originate within the Board but may be suggested by members, staff, or committees.
3. The Board partners with the Policy Committee to research, draft, and revise proposed updates.
4. Revised policies are published annually, and the Board communicates changes to affected stakeholders.
5. The Board manages the creation, editing, retention, and distribution of Board documents.
6. The Board maintains and keeps current a Board of Trustees Handbook of procedures and practices to support effective operation as a Board.

3.2.5 Board Officers

The Board Officers are responsible for facilitating effective governance.

These positions are as follows:

1. The Board President:
 - Speaks on behalf of the Board.
 - Prepares agendas and facilitates or delegates facilitation of Board meetings.
 - Ensures Board focus on strategic and fiduciary responsibilities.
 - Collaborates closely with the Senior Minister to support shared leadership.
 - Calls and manages Congregational Meetings.
2. The President-Elect:
 - Serves in years when succession planning is in place.
 - Prepares to assume the President role.
 - Substitutes for the President as needed.
3. The Vice President:
 - Serves when there is no President-Elect.
 - Is selected by the Board for a one-year term.
 - Substitutes for the President as needed.
4. The Treasurer:
 - Supports Board financial oversight in collaboration with the Senior Minister.
 - Ensures timely availability and review of financial reports.
 - Plays no direct role in operational financial management.
5. The Secretary:
 - Ensures accuracy and accessibility of Board records, minutes, and governing documents.
 - Works with staff to maintain transparency and public availability of Board materials.

3.2.6 Board Committees

The Board may form committees to support its governance responsibilities. Committees exist to strengthen the Board's work, not to direct operations.

Accordingly:

1. Committees operate under Board-approved charters and may include:
 - Nominating Committee (required by Bylaws)
 - Policy Committee
 - Linkage Committee
 - Ad hoc Committees for specific, time-limited purposes
2. Committee membership:
 - Policy and Linkage members are appointed by the Board.
 - Nominating members include three elected by the Congregation and one Board-appointed member.
3. Committees may not:
 - Act on behalf of the Board unless explicitly authorized.
 - Intervene in Senior Minister or staff operations.
 - Exercise management authority.
4. Each committee:
 - Conducts an annual self-evaluation (Ad hoc Committees evaluate at conclusion).
 - Operates within clearly defined objectives, timeframes, and limitations.

3.2.7 Board Ethics and Conflict of Interest

Board members are expected to act ethically, professionally, and in the best interest of the Congregation.

Accordingly, Board members shall:

1. Disclose any real or perceived personal, financial, or relational conflicts of interest.
2. Refrain from participating in decisions where a conflict exists.
3. Avoid internal conflicts—e.g., familial partners may not serve simultaneously.
4. Address violations of conduct or conflict policies promptly, prioritizing Congregational well-being and individual dignity.

APPENDIX A Foothills Unitarian Church Fundamental Expression of UU Religious Values

Core Theological Foundation

Our religious practice flows directly from fundamental convictions established through 130 years of faithful witness:

Sacred Axiom: Every person possesses inviolable worth regardless of any human-constructed category, making radical inclusion, protection of the vulnerable, and resistance to oppression religious imperatives binding on our covenantal community.

Religious Authority: Our faith draws from sacred sources commanding love of stranger, celebration of diversity, and resistance to unjust authority—including Jewish/Christian teachings, humanist ethics, earth-centered traditions, and progressive revelation through lived experience.

Covenantal Practice: Through democratic processes spanning decades—Welcoming Congregation (1998), Sanctuary vote (2017), Eighth Principle (2021)—this congregation has formally covenanted to an ongoing practice of our faith within and beyond our walls as a binding religious commitment.

Theological Articulation of Essential Religious Practices

Bodily Autonomy as Sacred Trust

Our theological understanding holds that each person's body is sacred territory. This sacred trust cannot be violated by governmental interference without violating fundamental religious principles:

- **Reproductive Justice:** We hold as religious doctrine that reproductive decisions—including abortion healthcare—are sacred acts of moral agency exercised in covenant with the divine. Government restriction of reproductive choice violates our religious belief that individuals possess sacred authority over their own spiritual and physical being.
- **Gender-Affirming Care:** Our theology affirms that authentic gender identity reflects divine creativity and that gender-affirming healthcare constitutes essential care supporting spiritual wholeness. Denying such care violates our religious conviction that suppressing authentic identity damages the sacred self.
- **Healthcare Privacy:** We believe healthcare decisions constitute sacred dialogue between individual conscience, divine calling, and trusted healers. Government intrusion into this holy space violates the sanctity of personal spiritual discernment.
- **Comprehensive Sexuality Education:** Our faith requires providing comprehensive, inclusive sexuality education as essential religious practice that honors the sacred nature of human sexuality and relationships. We hold as religious doctrine that young people deserve honest, medically accurate information about their bodies, relationships, and sexuality as part of their spiritual formation and development into whole, healthy individuals. Restricting such education violates our theological commitment to truth-telling and our religious obligation to support youth in understanding their sacred embodiment.
- **Parental Religious Authority:** Our faith affirms parents' sacred responsibility and religious authority to access healthcare for their children based on theological conviction and spiritual discernment, free from governmental interference in family covenant relationships.

Radical Hospitality as Imperative

Our theology commands unconditional welcome of the stranger as fundamental religious practice rooted in sacred text and progressive revelation:

- **Sanctuary Ministry:** We hold as religious doctrine that providing sanctuary to those fleeing persecution fulfills our covenant obligation to "love the stranger as yourself." Our sanctuary practice constitutes essential not optional charity.

- Immigration Accompaniment: Our faith requires active resistance to systems that dehumanize immigrants, understanding such accompaniment as fulfillment of our religious calling to protect divine image in every person.
- Civil Disobedience: When immigration enforcement conflicts with our religious obligation to provide sanctuary, our theology invites faithful disobedience as expression of our sacred values.

Sacred Relationships as Divine Celebration

Our theological understanding affirms that love in all its authentic expressions reflects inherent dignity, divine creativity and demands religious celebration:

- Marriage Equality: We hold as religious doctrine that sacred relationships honor inherent worth and dignity regardless of gender identity, or relationship structures. Our faith compels us to consecrate and recognize all relationship structures that embody mutual love, commitment, and spiritual growth.
- LGBTQ+ Affirmation: Our theology celebrates diverse sexual orientations and gender identities as beautiful manifestations of divine creativity. Suppressing such authenticity violates our religious belief in the sacred nature of authentic self-expression.
- Ceremonial Authority: Our ministerial practice includes religious freedom to perform blessing ceremonies for all couples whose relationships embody love, commitment, and spiritual partnership, exercising our congregational authority to define sacred relationships within our faith community.

Religious Authority and Constitutional Protection

Mission Clarity: Through active community discernment, we articulate our evolving understanding of mission through theologically grounded statements that reflect our ongoing revelation of divine will and calling. Our congregation exists to serve our religious mission of creating beloved community through radical inclusion, protection of the vulnerable, and liberation of the oppressed—a mission that deepens and expands as our theological understanding grows through lived experience, spiritual practice, and prophetic witness. Every space, every activity, every interaction serves this sacred purpose as theological reality revealed through our covenant community's discernment process, not political statement or secular social work.

These theological convictions constitute a partial accounting of the ongoing revelation of our religious practice. They are central to our congregational identity, ministerial authority, and theological integrity. Through our religious authority as a covenant congregation, we declare these practices essential expressions of our faith and protected under constitutional rights to free exercise of our religious values.

APPENDIX B COMMITTEE CHARTERS

APPENDIX C BOARD LINKS

APPENDIX D GLOSSARY OF TERMS

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE - Adopted on April 15th 2025

Under the authority the Congregation has given us through the bylaws, the Board has adopted the following policies to provide a framework for the conduct of the Board and guidance for the Senior Minister. These are statements of direction, intention, and limitations, as the Board engages in governance and conducts the work of the Church. The Board commits to working in covenant and mutually supportive partnership with each other and with the Senior Minister in their role as ex-officio board member and chief executive of the church.

1 Governance

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

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1 Governance

1.1 Guiding Principles

The following subsections identify the principles and moral sources that inform and guide the work of the Board of Trustees, the Senior Minister and Staff, and the Congregation as a whole.

1.1.1 Our Mission

Approved by the Congregation 10-16-2016

Foothills Unitarian Church unleashes courageous love in Northern Colorado and beyond by embracing our diversity, growing our faith, and awakening our spirits to the unfolding meaning of this life.

1.1.2 Our Guiding Values

Approved by the Congregation 12-20-2018

Joyful Resilience

Collective Courage

Deepening Belonging

Transcendent Wonder

1.1.3 Our Bold Vision

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We, the members of Foothills Unitarian Church, commit to create and sustain a healthy, vibrant religious community where:

1. Foothills is a vital part of the lives of its people, providing abundant opportunities for relationships across differences that provide joy, care, and belonging for all.
2. We are committed to a path of lifelong spiritual deepening that allows us to live lives of meaning and purpose in a world that needs our Unitarian Universalism.
3. We understand that being a part of Foothills requires us to give abundantly of our time, and this deepening involvement helps us to identify and grow our individual gifts.
4. We each engage in joyful and generous financial giving that fosters a deep ownership of the impactful work we support.
5. We are committed to recognizing and dismantling prejudice and oppression in all their forms, including within ourselves, allowing us to be more effective and trusted partners to marginalized communities in Northern Colorado and beyond.
6. Foothills is a leader in Northern Colorado in developing sustainable, innovative, intersectional approaches to caring for our earth and its people to ensure a greater flourishing of all life.
7. We do the work to make Unitarian Universalism accessible to all in Northern Colorado.

1.1.4 Our Sources of Accountability and Authority

We understand our sources of accountability and authority to include the following categories:

1. Our Congregation
2. Future congregants
3. The Unitarian Universalist faith, including other UU Congregations and the Association
4. People we serve (beyond our Congregation)
5. People we serve with (our community partners)
6. Local community
7. Planet

1.1.5 Our Covenant of Right Relations

The well-being, strength, and reputation of the Church depend on a sense of fellowship among the members, guests, and staff, which thrives in an atmosphere of trust, respect, and cooperation, guided by our shared covenant:

We covenant to build a religious community guided by love and sustained by respectful relationships which work towards the greater and common good. Believing that building healthy relationships is a spiritual practice, we aim to listen appreciatively, speak with care, express gratitude, honor and value our differences, and assume good intentions. We will communicate directly, honestly and compassionately, particularly when we are in conflict, and we will not expect to always get our own way. When we feel hurt or when we hurt others, we will try to forgive, make amends and connect in a spirit of love. In celebration of the common purpose that unites us, we will do our best to abide by this covenant.

1.1.6 Our Commitment to Inclusivity

We make every effort to be fair and avoid discrimination because of race, color, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, national origin or ancestry, economic status, union membership, or political affiliation. This applies to all our policies and operations including all employment matters.

Leadership actions, decisions, and communications in the Congregation, from staff and from lay leaders, reflect our commitment to actively and accountably being an institution that is anti-racist, anti-oppression, culturally inclusive, and class inclusive; sexual orientation and gender identity affirming; and is safe, supportive, and accessible to people of all abilities.

1.1.7 Our Commitment to Laws and Ethical Practices

The Board of Trustees and Senior Minister comply with all relevant local and federal laws, and adhere to generally accepted accounting and Human Resources practices.

The Senior Minister informs the Board of civil disobedience by the Church as a strategy for change.

All ministers, ministerial interns, and professional staff members abide by the current codes of conduct for their professional positions. Some examples of prohibited conduct include, and are not limited to sexual, sexualized, or romantic relationships between the minister or intern and persons they serve in ministry, and sexual harassment of any kind. Ministers are also prohibited from using their position of authority for their personal gain.

1.1.8 Our Commitment to a Healthy Culture

The Board is committed to having a healthy culture at Foothills where each person's integrity is respected and expectations for healthy boundaries are clear; people understand why these boundaries exist; and there is a clear path toward accountability and healing if violations do occur.

The Board and Senior Minister recognize that professional misconduct within a Church has broad consequences that go beyond those directly impacted, and therefore embrace the principles of transparency and restorative justice in efforts to reestablish a healthy culture.

1.2 Governing Role of the Board

The Board is fiducially and legally responsible to oversee the Church including care for people and property, and is charged with stewarding the long term future of Foothills. To uphold these responsibilities, the Board:

Articulates Mission, Values, and Vision. The Board articulates the “ends” we are aiming for as a Church through the Mission, Values, and Vision that guide all of the work at Foothills.

Governs through policy. The Board creates and updates policies that provide high-level direction and guardrails to the Senior Minister, who is responsible for the “means” of accomplishing the “ends”.

Monitors policy compliance. The Board provides oversight by monitoring the Senior Minister’s compliance with Board policies.

Links to the future. The Board holds the responsibility for future focus on behalf of the Church, and connects regularly with our sources of authority and accountability.

Makes decisions in exceptional cases. The Board represents the Congregation in topics such as:

- Complaints from members and staff related to Board policy
- Grievances and professional misconduct involving the Senior Minister
- Approval of variances or exceptions to Board Policies
- Decisions as noted in the policies such as compensation for Senior Minister, approval for capital campaigns, approval of large purchases, and approval for significant variation of the congregationally-approved budget.

Convenes Congregational Meetings. As stipulated in the By-laws, the Board is responsible for convening the Congregation for annual business meetings, elections and special topics.

1.3 Board Operations and Covenant

The Board maintains a Handbook of procedures and practices to support effective operation as a Board. The Handbook is updated annually with agreements for how the Board works together, for example the regular meeting time, communication methods, and a shared Board covenant.

1.4 Board Officers

The Bylaws establish the terms of office and manner of selection for the following officers of the Church: President, President-Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary. In addition to the duties defined in the Bylaws, the officers have the following responsibilities:

Board President: The Board President speaks on behalf of the board, is responsible for calling and managing congregational meetings, and facilitates the healthy functioning of the board as a whole. The President prepares the Board's meeting agendas and facilitates or arranges for the facilitation of Board meetings. The President is responsible for ensuring that Board meetings are focused on the primary purpose of the Board. The Board President works in close collaboration with the Senior Minister to promote a productive partnership between the Board and the ministry.

President-Elect: In alternating years, the President-Elect trains for the role of the President, and substitutes for the President as requested.

Vice President: When there is no current President-Elect, the Board selects from among the Board members a person to serve as the Vice President for a one-year term. The Vice President substitutes for the President as requested.

Treasurer: The Treasurer is selected from among the Board members, and supports fulfillment of the Board's financial oversight responsibilities by working with the Senior Minister to ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to Board members on a timely basis and that the financial operations of the Church are in line with best practices and with the Church's Mission. The Treasurer plays no direct role in operational financial management.

Secretary: The Secretary is selected from the Board members, and ensures the accuracy and security of Board records, including the minutes, Board policies, and Church Bylaws. In cooperation with the staff, the Secretary regularly reports Board proceedings to the Congregation, and ensures that meeting minutes, Board policies, and Bylaws revisions are promptly posted on the Church website and maintained in e-archives.

1.5 Board Committees

Board Committees exist to help the Board to carry out its governance responsibilities. Committee charters are included in the Appendix, and are reviewed by the Board annually. For time-limited tasks, the Board may create Ad hoc Committees.

The one standing committee of the Board as articulated in the Bylaws is the Nominating Committee, which is responsible for the annual development of a slate of nominees for all elected positions.

The Board may have additional committees, such as:

- **Policy Committee:** The Policy Committee assists the Board in reviewing and revising its policies to ensure the policies are effectively serving the needs of the Congregation.
- **Linkage Committee** The Linkage Committee assists the Board in maintaining its focus on the future. This committee helps to identify and, where appropriate, facilitate conversations between the Board and its sources of accountability and authority. It brings materials to the Board to help develop capacity for future focus, and takes the lead in planning for upcoming visioning efforts.

Members of the Policy and Linkage Committees are appointed by the Board. Three members of the Nominating Committee are elected by the Congregation as specified in the Bylaws; one member is a Board member appointed by the Board for a one-year renewable term.

Ad hoc Committees may be formed by the Board at any time. The Board clearly directs each Committee by outlining specific objectives and/or changes that need to be implemented, any limitations, and a time frame for completing its work.

Committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. They are not involved in Senior Minister or Staff operations and do not exercise authority over them. Committees have no management authority and are accountable to the Board of Trustees.

1.6 Board of Trustees' Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

Members of the Board:

- Act in an ethical and professional manner, and always in the best interests of the Congregation, its Mission, and its Vision
- Disclose any personal, financial, or other conflict of interest that might influence their actions or decision-making regarding the Church

To prevent internal conflicts of interest within the Board, familial partners may not serve on the Board at the same time. Other relationships that could create conflicts of interest within the Board are carefully considered by the Nominating Committee prior to nomination.

When a conflict of interest arises or the Board's code of conduct is violated by a Trustee, the Board of Trustees addresses the matter in a timely manner, prioritizing the health of the Congregation and remaining in alignment with its Mission, Vision, and Values, while respecting the worth and dignity of the individual(s) involved.

2 Senior Minister Role

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

2.1 Senior Minister as Spiritual Leader

The Senior Minister acts as spiritual leader and shares responsibility for ministry with the Congregation. This ministry helps us explore life's questions, challenges us to live our Values and comforts us in times of suffering. The Senior Minister and the ministry team lead regularly scheduled worship services and give sermons, challenge and guide the Congregational spiritual focus, enable groups and activities, develop the leadership capacity of the congregation, provide pastoral care and counseling, and conduct special services. The Senior Minister serves as the representative of the Congregation and the voice of its values to the denomination and to the community, the region, and beyond.

2.2 Global Delegation to Senior Minister as Head of Staff

The Board delegates its authority to manage the work and resources of the Church, except as expressly defined by these policies, to the Senior Minister as Head of Staff and the Board's official connection to Church operations.

The Senior Minister leads the Ministry team of ministers, staff, and volunteers to accomplish the ends defined by the Board through this Policy book.

The Senior Minister is responsible to:

- Maintain a productive and effective staff team, a healthy and compassionate work environment, and a focus on fulfilling the Congregation's Mission, Values, and Vision.
- Ensure ministers and staff carry out their duties in compliance with the Bylaws and Board Policies and with undivided loyalty to the Congregation and its Mission and Vision.
- Ensure members and guests are safe and cared for, and the material resources of the Church are protected and used wisely.

- Establish operating procedures, make decisions, take actions, develop activities, and monitor and report on operations and finances in accordance with these Policies.

2.3 Board - Senior Minister Relationship

The Board works in deeply collaborative partnership with the Senior Minister to help the Congregation live into its Mission, Values, and Vision. We have a shared commitment to fiscal responsibility, forward-thinking growth, and the values that guide our work as a community.

Only decisions of the Board as a whole, and not instructions or decisions of individual board members or board committees, are binding on the Senior Minister.

The primary tool used by the Board and Ministry to ensure that the work of the Church is focused on the shared Vision is the Vision Interpretation. The Senior Minister updates the Vision Interpretation that guides the work of ministry each year, and presents the Vision Interpretation to the Board for approval in advance of the annual budget.

The relationship between the Board and the Senior Minister is profoundly covenantal, based on mutual trust, support, and respect. Examples of this deep collaboration include:

- The Board includes the Senior Minister in partnership as they engage the Congregation to articulate shared Mission, Values and Vision
- The Board ensures shared meaning and understanding of Board Policies, especially when updates are made
- The Senior Minister keeps the Board updated on significant changes to operations to confirm alignment with the Board Policies
- The Senior Minister annually updates the Vision Interpretation that guides the work of ministry, and the Board approves the interpretation
- The Board and Senior Minister partner on communications and content of the Congregational meetings

In a spirit of partnership and with the goal of shared understanding of situations facing the Congregation, the Senior Minister informs the Board of any significant shifts in the Church financial situation, Ministry operational approaches, staffing, situations that impact health and safety of members and guests, or Church actions or activities that may lead to media coverage (positive or negative).

The Senior Minister shares additional counsel with the Board, such as developments in the UUA, news from neighboring congregations, insights from newcomers to the Congregation, and other helpful information for the Board to know.

2.4 Senior Minister Compensation

The Board is responsible for ensuring the Senior Minister's salary remains competitive, per the UUA salary guidance. As part of its review of the annual budget, the Board reviews and makes decisions about the Senior Minister's compensation package based on principles of parity and tenure, accounting for cost of living changes, and budget projections.

3 Operational Guidance and Requirements

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

3.1 Care and Administration of Personnel

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

As Head of Staff, the Senior Minister creates a culture of care for paid staff, supported by processes, procedures, and active involvement, including hiring, supervision, discharge, and termination of all paid staff.

3.1.1 Professional Conduct

The Senior Minister is responsible for the professional conduct of themselves and staff. If any individual violates the ethical or professional standards of practice applicable to their position, the Senior Minister investigates, takes action, and informs the Board.

The staff, including the Senior Minister, acts in the best interest of the Congregation and its Mission. They promptly report the existence of actual or potential conflicts of interest that arise to the Senior Minister (if staff) or to the Board (if the Senior Minister).

3.1.2 Compensation and Benefits

The Senior Minister ensures that compensation for all paid staff (excluding those under specific contracts) is reviewed annually as part of the budget process. The review process includes recommended adjustments as needed to ensure that staff compensation, benefits, and professional development funding are aligned with UUA policies and guidelines.

3.1.3 Hiring Limitations

Employment with the Church is not open to members of the Congregation except in exceptional circumstances as determined by the Senior Minister. This policy is intended to preserve the singular relationship between a minister and a congregant.

With the exception of called ministers, all employees are employed “at will” within the meaning of Colorado employment regulations. Board approval is required for any employment contract that states otherwise.

3.1.4 Paying Congregants for Services

In general, the Congregation does not pay congregants for services provided to the Church on an ad-hoc basis in order to maintain the opportunity for people to share their gifts in service and avoid conflicts of interest.

The Senior Minister has the discretion to pay a congregant for services based on the congregant's financial need, urgency of the work, and specialization of congregant skills to meet a particular Church need.

When the Senior Minister decides to pay a congregant for services, the Senior Minister reports the decision to the Board.

3.1.5 Honoring and Recognizing Religious Professionals

The Senior Minister may recommend honorary or special covenantal status - such as Community Minister or Minister Emerita/Emeritus - for Board approval, to recognize individuals whose service and values strengthen the Church's mission.

These designations affirm a clear covenantal relationship and support ongoing clarity, respect, and alignment in any continued involvement with the Church.

3.2 Care for Members and Guests

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

The Senior Minister creates a culture of care for members and guests, supported by processes, procedures, and active involvement.

The Senior Minister informs the Board of significant health and safety issues related to care for members and guests in a timely manner, especially those that impact vulnerable populations.

3.2.1 Membership and Service

The Senior Minister ensures there is a clear path to membership and engagement so all are encouraged, welcomed, and supported in becoming more deeply involved, and so engaged volunteers and lay leaders can serve the Congregation.

3.2.1.1 Membership Rolls and Eligibility

The Senior Minister keeps the membership rolls current to identify who is engaged and is eligible to make decisions on budgeting and the governance of the Church, and reports membership numbers annually to the UUA.

Per the Bylaws, a member shall be removed from the membership rolls in case of death, written request by the member, removal by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of the Board for actions that threaten the well-being of the congregation, or a period of inactivity as defined by Board Policy.

Members are considered inactive after more than one year of not attending services or activities in person or virtually, and/or not pledging or contributing to the Church (without requesting a financial hardship waiver).

The Senior Minister can designate long-term members who are unable to participate due to life circumstances as Lifetime Members to be retained as members despite inactivity.

3.2.2 Health and Safety

The Senior Minister takes all reasonable care to prevent harm to the members and guests who take part in Church activities or use Church property.

The Senior Minister ensures:

- The Church is physically accessible, meeting or exceeding all legal requirements, with facilities in a safe, sanitary, and secure condition.
- Firearms and other weapons are prohibited on Church grounds except when carried by on-duty public law enforcement officials.
- The Church has safety procedures and training to de-escalate situations including non-violent and trauma-informed methods in addition to the option of contacting law enforcement for support.
- The Church has an effective plan for responding to reasonably foreseeable emergencies such as medical incidents, behavioral or mental health crises, fire, toxic conditions, weather problems, power outages, and natural disasters, threatening communications, digital threats, data breaches, or online harassment.
- Procedures and practices are in place limiting tobacco, vaping, and controlled substance use, and for managing alcohol use within Church functions and by renters and other non-Church groups.

3.2.3 Preventing and Resolving Behavioral Issues

The Senior Minister promotes and lives out the Foothills' Covenant of Right Relations (1.1.5) with ministers, staff, members, volunteers and guests, and ensures ministers and staff do the same.

3.2.3.1 Harassment and Destructive Behavior

The Senior Minister promotes a culture free of harassment for staff, volunteers, members and guests, and is responsible to address instances of destructive behavior from individuals to protect the wellbeing and interests of the Congregation as a whole.

Destructive behavior is defined as any behavior that is dangerous, could be perceived as a threat, is disruptive to the functioning of Congregational activities, or offensive and likely to diminish the Congregation's appeal to members and guests.

3.2.3.2 Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

To protect children and vulnerable adults, the Senior Minister establishes and implements written procedures for the selection, training, and supervision of all Ministry team members who work with persons aged eighteen and younger or any vulnerable adults.

3.2.3.3 Process for Voicing Concerns

Whistleblower Protection - Staff or members need to report their concerns to the Senior Minister if they believe they have been subject to retaliation for a good faith report of: (a) a suspected violation of any law or local, state or federal rule or regulation; (b) mismanagement; (c) gross waste or misappropriation of Church funds or assets; (d) a suspected danger to public health and safety; or (e) other alleged wrongful conduct.

Minister and Staff Conduct - Staff or members need to contact the Senior Minister if they believe a minister or other professional working at the Church has violated their profession's code of conduct, or if the member or staff has a grievance about wrong or unfair treatment.

Escalation to the Board - Staff or members need to contact the Board President if they believe there is a violation of Board policy, if there is a question as to the sufficiency of existing policy, or if there is misconduct or a grievance that directly involves one of the Board members or the Senior Minister.

3.2.3.4 Congregational Healing

In the wake of any ministerial, staff, or lay leader misconduct, the Senior Minister tends to the health of the Congregation as a whole through pastoral work informed by principles of restorative justice, honesty, transparency, compassion, respect, and personal responsibility. If the misconduct involves the Senior Minister, the Board can enlist outside support.

3.2.4 Privacy Policy

The Senior Minister ensures the agency of members, guests, volunteers and staff to determine what personal information they wish to share or to keep private. Personal data, including but not limited to photos, videos, and stories, is respected and safeguarded in all aspects of Congregational life.

3.3 Care for Material Resources

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

The Senior Minister is accountable for the organization's financial performance and condition, and for the planning, budgeting, and prudent management of the Church's financial and physical assets.

3.3.1 Financial Management

The Senior Minister is responsible for the handling of the Church's financial affairs, ensuring fiscally, environmentally, and socially responsible purchasing, limiting the Church's financial risk, and meeting generally accepted accounting principles.

The Senior Minister ensures operating reserves at least equivalent to two months of annualized monthly expenses.

3.3.1.1 Operating Budget

Each year prior to the Congregational budget approval meeting, the Senior Minister gets Board affirmation of an operating budget that fulfills the current Vision Interpretation.

3.3.1.2 Financial Oversight

The Senior Minister partners with a Finance Team composed of congregants with financial expertise to share responsibility and enhance transparency in financial oversight, reducing the risk of fraud, theft, or mismanagement.

3.3.1.3 Spending Authority

The Senior Minister is responsible for all Church spending and accounts, and ensures expenditures are made in service of the Mission, Vision, and Values and in alignment with the Congregation-approved budget.

The Senior Minister reports any deviations from the budget in excess of \$50,000 or single transfer of funds in excess of \$100,000 to the Board.

The Senior Minister must get approval from the Board for any use of funds that deviates from the budget in excess of \$100,000.

3.3.1.4 Contract Authority

The Senior Minister can delegate authority to staff to enter into contracts up to \$25,000.

The Senior Minister alone may enter into contracts that exceed \$25,000 in total value.

Board approval is required for any contract exceeding \$100,000 in total value or requiring a commitment of more than two years.

3.3.1.5 Credit Cards and Debt

The Senior Minister can authorize credit cards for staff to use for purchasing convenience and as a short-term cash-flow management tool.

Board approval is required for refinancing of debt.

Congregation approval is required for any new long-term debt.

3.3.2 Fundraising and Generosity Building

The Senior Minister ensures fundraising activities occur to secure sufficient financial support from Foothills' participants and members to fund the budget of the Church.

The Senior Minister may also seek other financial resources such as grants or donations from individuals or organizations outside of the Church that further the Mission, Values and Vision and align with the Church's non-profit status.

3.3.2.1 Capital Campaign

The Board initiates capital campaigns to finance major needs such as a building project, a major repair project, or to grow an endowment fund, and the Senior Minister operationalizes those campaigns.

3.3.2.2 Endowment Fund

The Senior Minister is responsible for soliciting, accepting, managing, and disbursing contributions of cash, securities, and other tangible resources to build an Endowment Fund in support of the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Congregation.

The Endowment Fund is only invested in the UU Common Endowment Fund, with its professional asset management guided by UU socially responsible investment goals.

The Senior Minister cannot spend the principal (contributions) to the Endowment Fund without Board approval.

3.3.3 Asset Management and Stewardship

3.3.3.1 Asset Protection

The Senior Minister takes all reasonable care to ensure that Church assets are protected from loss or theft including:

- Adequate insurance to protect against property losses, liability for injuries to others, corporate liability, personal liability of Board members and staff, honesty bond for all personnel with access to material amounts of funds.
- Maintenance of Church property and equipment to keep it in good working order, subject to reasonable wear and tear.
- Securing the building to limit access to those with legitimate needs.

3.3.3.2 Construction and Maintenance

For construction and maintenance projects under \$100,000, per policy 2.3 the Senior Minister may inform or consult with the Board where there is lasting change and/or potential Congregational impact.

For construction and maintenance projects over \$100,000, per policy 3.3.1.4 Board approval is required.

The Senior Minister is responsible for operationalizing construction and maintenance.

The Senior Minister provides an extra level of management and reporting to the Board for projects: with a budget of over \$100,000; requiring building permits; taking more than 3 months to complete; having an impact on the facilities functionality and/or ability to support the Church Mission; and/or having a significant risk of scope change.

- The Senior Minister may create a ministry team or hire external consultants to provide appropriate expertise and management, or get agreement with the Board if additional expertise is not necessary for the project.
- The Senior Minister returns to the Board for approval of scope changes exceeding 20% of total project cost or schedule.

At the start of the project, the Senior Minister and the Board agree on and document the frequency and types of project updates the Senior Minister will provide.

3.3.4 Information Retention and Distribution

In support of information retention and distribution, the Senior Minister:

- Ensures historical documents related to shared experiences important for congregational health are held with care, shared in a sacred and covenantal manner, and with respect for

the worth and dignity of all involved.

- Ensures Church governing documents are accessible to the members of the Congregation upon request, including by-laws, Board policies, organizational guidance documents, Board meeting minutes, Congregational meeting minutes, audits and financial reports.
- Ensures sensitive documents are protected from unauthorized access, including pastoral care notes, financial pledges, personnel matters and legally restricted information.
- Retains and distributes the Church's intangible property, including intellectual property, electronic data, and paper files and protects it from significant damage or loss.
- Establishes and implements procedures to govern the backup, retention, destruction, and distribution of the Church's documents, giving definite retention periods for financial, business, pastoral, personnel, governance, corporate, and historical records in both paper and electronic form.

The Board manages the creation, editing, retention and distribution of Board documents and partners with the Senior Minister for the retention and distribution of those documents.

3.3.5 Acting as a Fiscal Agent or Sponsor

Board approval is required for Foothills to serve as fiscal agent for another organization or a community fund.

The Senior Minister brings the goals for how the sponsorship will further the Mission, and the projected impact on Church resources, to the Board for consideration and approval.

Once a fiscal agency is approved, the Senior Minister ensures the other organization's funds are administered appropriately.

4 Oversight by the Board

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

4.1 Mission Focus

The Board ensures the Church's human and material resources are used for the benefit of its Mission. The Board addresses this in partnership with the Senior Minister in two ways: by monitoring regular reports on how the policies are being met, and by regular evaluation of the Church's progress toward accomplishing our Mission, Values, and Vision.

4.2 Monitoring

4.2.1 Monitoring Methods

The Board monitors policy compliance by reviewing internal reports from the Senior Minister, following the planned schedule for monitoring linked in the appendix of this document.

The Board can inquire into specific questions of policy compliance or organizational concerns by appointing an Ad hoc Committee or by engaging an outside consultant to assess some aspect of Church program or organizational functioning.

4.2.2 Programmatic Monitoring

The Senior Minister reports progress to the Board at least annually around impact, engagement, and direct Congregational feedback related to the Vision Interpretation.

4.2.3 Financial Monitoring

The Senior Minister reports to the Board regarding the Church's finances at least quarterly.

4.2.4 Internal and External Reviews

At least once every three years, the Senior Minister engages external qualified professionals to comprehensively review the Church's financial records and processes, and HR policies, practices,

and procedures to ensure practices are protecting the health of the organization.

The Senior Minister ensures internal finance and HR reviews are performed in the years when no external review is performed.

The Senior Minister provides the completed review reports to the Board each year.

4.3 Evaluation

4.3.1 Board and Senior Minister Partnership Evaluation

The Senior Minister and the Board together review their partnership and their effectiveness in their respective roles each year.

4.3.2 Ministry Evaluation

The Board evaluates the Senior Minister's success and difficulties towards accomplishing the Vision Interpretation in dialogue with the Senior Minister each year.

4.3.3 Senior Minister's Triennial Review

Every three years, the Board appoints an Ad hoc Review Committee mutually acceptable to the Board and the Senior Minister. The Committee gathers feedback on the Senior Minister, and produces a comprehensive review report for the Board.

In the years in which a triennial review is not being conducted, the Senior Minister's performance evaluation consists of the annual review of progress made on that year's Vision Implementation.

4.3.4 Board and Committee Evaluation

Annually the Board reviews its effectiveness and compliance with Board policies.

Committees perform an annual self-evaluation in conjunction with the Board President to ensure their ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

Ad hoc Committees perform a self-evaluation with the Board President at their conclusion.

4.3.5 Policy and Bylaws Review and Revision

The Board reviews the Board Policies and Church Bylaws at least once every five years. The Board evaluates each policy to assess whether and the extent to which that policy furthers the Mission and Vision of the Church, and the Bylaws as a whole to ensure the Bylaws facilitate the Church's Mission and ongoing ministry.

Proposals for Board Policy revisions generally arise from the Board itself. Other Church groups, members, or staff may suggest revisions by contacting the Board President.

The Board partners with the Policy Committee to draft updates to Board Policy for review and approval by the Board.

The Board publishes a list of revised policies annually, and communicates directly with stakeholders who request or are impacted by revisions to Board Policy.

4.4 Board Response to Complaints and Grievances

As noted in Process for Voicing Concerns (3.2.3.3), members or staff with complaints or grievances not directly related to the Board's policy making and monitoring functions need to address those complaints or grievances first to the Minister or staff member directly responsible for the concern.

4.4.1 Escalation of Misconduct or Grievances to the Board

Members and staff may escalate misconduct or grievances to the Board by submitting information to the Board President in writing, including the names of individuals involved and any witnesses. The Board President acknowledges the allegation in writing, initiates an investigation, and recommends a response to the Board, who then makes a final decision on the response.

4.4.2 Complaints to the Board about Policy

Members, staff, or the Senior Minister contact the Board President in writing with any concerns related to violations of Board policy, or inadequacy of Policy, including the specific Policy of concern.

The Board then reviews the concern, potentially creating an Ad hoc Committee to investigate and make a recommendation. The Board may create or adjust policy as needed to resolve issues.

The Board President provides regular updates and resolution to the person who raised the concern.

Board Policy Appendices

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

Board Links

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

- Foothills Bylaws ([link](#))
- Monitoring Schedule ([link](#))
- Sample Board Calendar ([link](#))
- Letter of Call: Rev. Gretchen Haley ([link](#))
- Letter of Call: Rev. Sean Neil-Barron ([link](#))
- Staff Handbook: Employee Handbook ([link](#))
- Staff Handbook: Operational Handbook ([link](#))
- Staff Handbook: Financial Handbook ([link](#))
- Board Handbook ([link](#))
- Policy Book Revision History (summary of changes prior to The Guide system)

Policy Glossary

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

Ad hoc Committees - For work that falls outside the scope of its standing committees, the Board can form Ad hoc Committees. These groups are typically time-limited, and can include both board members and lay leaders.

By-laws - This is a legal document that is registered with the state. It specifies the rules on how the organization is going to operate. All Board policies must align with the By-Laws.

Committee - The term Committee is reserved for the established groups reporting to and authorized by the Board, while Teams report to the staff or other members of the ministry.

Executive Team - This Team includes the Ministers and any Senior Staff that the Senior Minister designates as part of the Executive Team. The Executive Team helps to develop and execute the Strategic Plan along with guiding the day to day operation of the Church.

Minister, Assistant - Any minister that acts as an assistant to the Senior Minister.

Minister, Associate - A minister that is in a hired position, typically with a contract length.

Minister, Called - A minister that has been selected by the Congregation as a permanent moral guide. This is in contrast to a hired minister.

Minister, Interim - A temporary hired minister to facilitate a transition.

Minister, Senior - The minister designated as the lead minister. They operate much like a CEO (Corporate Executive Officer) of a company.

Ministry - Generally refers to the leaders and staff that work with the Senior Minister to accomplish the Mission of the Church.

Mission Statement - This is developed every 3 to 7 years by a special Committee created by the Board. They develop it by interactions with the Congregation, and Executive Team. It is then ratified by the Board and Congregation.

Officers - According to the Bylaws, the officers of the Church are: President, Treasurer, and Secretary but others may be added as needed.

Senior Staff - Is designated by the Senior Minister and is part of the Executive Team.

Team - The term Team is reserved for groups formed, reporting to, and authorized by the Ministry, while Committees report to the Board.

Board Committee Charters

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

Nominating Committee Charter

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

Updated: May 2023

Purpose:

The Bylaws state that the duties of the Nominating Committee are to nominate candidates for all of the elective offices of the Church and to present these nominations to the Congregation.

Composition and Term of Service:

The Bylaws state that the Nominating Committee has three members who are elected by the Congregation for three-year terms, plus one Board Member liaison Trustee in a one-year renewable term.

Outcomes:

- Present a slate of candidates meeting the Board criteria for leadership needs in the upcoming year, at least 1 month prior to the Congregational elections
- Present a slate of candidates for all of the elective offices of the Church at the Congregational Meeting where elections are held.

Responsibilities:

1. Nominate a slate of candidates for all elective offices.
 1. Per the By-laws, nominees for any elective office must be members of the Church.
 2. Consults with the Board to ascertain future leadership needs and criteria for open positions.
 3. Consults with the Senior Minister and the Leadership Development team, and requests nominations from the Congregation, to identify potential leaders with the required skills.
 4. Continues our commitment to a transparent process allowing for Congregational input and receiving suggestions for nominations from any source.
 5. Ensures that nominations are based on qualifications and competencies rather than on personal relationships.
 6. Creates a slate of nominees to present to the Board, and certifies to the Board that the criteria have been addressed and that the nomination process was compliant with Board policies.
 7. Presents the slate of qualified nominees to the Congregation.

2. Support leadership development within the Congregation.
 1. Stay up to date with the Board's needs for changing roles and emerging leadership needs
 2. Work with the Senior Minister and Leadership Development Team to identify congregants who have demonstrated their commitment to personal growth, to leadership activities, and to the Foothills' Mission and Values; and who have the particular skills that are needed in a given year.
 3. Use proactive communication practices throughout the year to share about leadership development opportunities created by the Leadership Development Team and open positions.

Policy Committee Charter

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

Date Revised: May 4, 2023

Purpose:

The Policy Committee is a working committee of Foothills Board of Trustees. It assists in focusing the Board on its governance role and in its efforts to ensure that the organization and governance of the Church serves its Mission and members.

Composition and Terms of Service:

- The Policy Committee has two members and a Board of Trustees liaison.
- Members of the committee selects the chair.
- The Committee meets as needed.
- Each member serves a two year term that can be renewed.

Outcomes:

- Annual review and recommendations for Policies and Bylaws updates

Responsibilities:

1. As requested by the Board, reviews and makes recommendations on matters of procedure to determine if they are within the Ministry or Board of Trustees purview.
2. Reviews Bylaws for consistency with Church Mission and vision and identifies potential changes for the Board to take to the Congregation for a vote.
3. Maintains and updates the Board Policy Book.
 1. Reviews the Policies to ensure they are consistent with Bylaws, they are clear and working effectively; and identifies needs for updates.
 2. Recommends Policies to address new Policy needs identified by the Committee or the Board.
 3. Maintains a revision history of Policy changes
4. Reviews proposed changes to manuals and policies to ensure Operational Manuals are aligned with Board Policy.
5. Educates the Congregation about policy-based governance as needed.

Linkage Committee Charter (Needs Updating)

PRIOR VERSION OF BOARD POLICIES FOR REFERENCE

Date Adopted: May 4, 2023

Purpose:

The Linkage Committee assists the Board in maintaining its focus on the future. Needs Updating

Composition and Term of Service:

- The Linkage Committee has three to five members that may be members of the Board. At least one member must be a Board Member.
- Members of the committee select the chair.
- The Committee meets as needed.
- Each member serves a two year term that can be renewed once.

Outcomes:

- Materials for the Board to develop capacity for future focus
- Planned Visioning Efforts

Responsibilities:

Needs Updating

This committee helps to identify and, where appropriate, facilitate conversations between the Board and its sources of accountability and authority. It brings materials to the Board to help develop capacity for future focus, and takes the lead in planning for upcoming visioning efforts.

Archive Policy