

WEST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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Leadership Council

# Policy Statements

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## ENDS

West Congregational Church will love and serve God by:

- Delighting in God and His Word and experiencing His transforming power.
- Participating in caring Christian community committed to sound doctrine.
- Bringing people closer to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. **Adopted 6/15/99**

## Leadership Council – Staff Relationship

- The Leadership Council will delegate all management decisions and deployment to the Senior Pastor that are not expressly prohibited by West Church policies.
- The Leadership Council will communicate officially to Staff and Management Team through the Senior Pastor. **Adopted 7/20/99**

### **Policy on Definitions:**

Staff: Pastoral and Non-Pastoral:

The Pastoral Staff shall be determined by the Senior Pastor with approval from the Leadership Council; all other staff will be designated as Non-Pastoral. **Adopted 10/19/99**

### **Policy on Bottom-Line Financial Figures Required by Leadership Council:**

- The Senior Pastor shall provide to the Leadership Council, at least quarterly, a summary of income and expenses.
- This summary shall include month-to-date, year-to-date, and prior-year comparison figures. **Adopted 10/19/99**

### **Policy on Information Required of the Senior Pastor:**

The Senior Pastor will provide a monthly summary to the Leadership Council including the following:

- Ministry issues.
- Spiritual issues.
- Property issues.
- Financial issues.
- Any other issues that affect the well being of the church. **Adopted 10/19/99**

## Board Process

The Leadership Council, on behalf of the West Congregational Church membership and the total church community, will provide vision and governance with *one voice* through written church policies. The Leadership Council will operate within the constraints of the congregational will, the admonitions of the entire infallible body of God's Word, and the accepted rules of order.  
Adopted 7/20/99

### **Policy on Quorum:**

A quorum of the Leadership Council is defined as being two-thirds (2/3) of the voting membership of the Council. Adopted 7/20/99

### **Policy on Absenteeism:**

- The Leadership Council is to be the highest ministry priority of its elected members.
- When a council member has missed their second meeting in 4 months, the Council will initiate a dialogue with that member concerning absenteeism.
- When the Council member has missed 3 monthly meetings in a 6-month period, withdrawal will be requested, contingent on Council action. Adopted 9/28/99

### **Policy on Conflict of Interest:**

Elected Leadership Council membership shall not include:

- More than one member of the immediate family.
- Paid staff.
- A spouse of a paid non-pastoral staff member who works over 25 hours per week.
- A spouse of a pastoral staff member.
- Management team members. Adopted 9/28/99

### **Policy on Fee-for-Service Ministries:**

The Leadership Council shall establish policy for fee-for-service ministries operating under the corporate auspices of West Congregational Church of Haverhill, Massachusetts.  
Adopted 10/19/99

### **Policy on Hilltop School Board Relationship:**

The Hilltop School will allow no practices or circumstances that violate:

The whole infallible counsel of Scripture.

The officially expressed will of West Congregational Church's membership.

Written policies of the Leadership Council

Commonly accepted business and professional codes of ethics

Business prudence

- The Hilltop School will:
  - Submit an annual financial report.
  - Contribute financially to the church on a regular basis. Adopted 12/28/99

### **Policy on Business Meetings:**

- Agenda will be posted with meeting date - see Bylaws, Article 6, Section 3
- Each agenda item must be submitted on the West Church Business Proposal Worksheet (obtain at the church office)
- All meetings will have a 3-hour time limit with no new agenda items introduced within the last half-hour. The Moderator will have a future date cleared on the church calendar for any unfinished business.
- There will be no absentee balloting. **Adopted 9/25/01**

#### **FORMAT**

- A. Presentation of proposal by sponsor with advantages/disadvantages clearly stated – use of overhead or handouts are strongly recommended.
- B. General discussion of proposal
  1. Business meetings will be conducted formally and politely, however without the use of Robert's Rules of Order, for the purpose of fairness, courtesy and flexibility.
    - a. Robert's Rules of Order can be reinstated for a particular proposal by request and vote of the church.
  2. Only one person will be permitted to speak at one time. Members will be given permission to disagree graciously in the context of Christian love.
- C. New Business – (Proposals not on posted agenda)
  1. A new proposal may be introduced prior to any business meeting. This proposal (written on the West Church Business Proposal Worksheet) must be submitted to the Clerk or Moderator BEFORE the meeting begins. (This allows for prayer and forethought on the part of the presenter.)
  2. If five (5) members do not wish to vote on this proposal at this meeting, it can be deferred to a future meeting time. The date will be set at this meeting and the understanding is that the purpose of the postponement is for further thought and prayer.
  3. In the event the members vote to defer, a meeting date will be set to vote on this newly introduced business proposal. **Adopted 1/23/2000 & revised 3/14/2000**

### **Policy on Absentee Ballots:**

The Leadership Council will see to the continued voting practice, whereby a person must be present to cast a vote at church business meetings. Absentee ballots are not acceptable as being present in prayer and discussion is part of our congregational voting system. (According to Roberts Rules of Order, no member can vote except in person unless it is stated in the Bylaws). **Adopted 5/9/06**

### **Policy on Orientation of New Leadership Council Members:**

The Council will appoint a knowledgeable, experienced member to arrange a meeting with each new LC member to convey the general operations of the group. The meeting dates will be mutually agreed upon and before the next regular Leadership Council meeting time. The Council will give the new member copies of all policies, procedures and pertinent leadership resources in current use. **Adopted 3/14/2000**

**Policy on Nominating Committee:**

The Leadership Council will assemble a Nominating Committee in October of each year to carry out Bylaw Article 9, Section 4. It will consist of:

- Minimum of 3 church members
- No member of Leadership Council or an Officer

The Nominating Committee will seek out and interview prospective candidates for election to Leadership Council and offices. Prospective candidates will be selected according to the following qualifications:

- Church member
- Participant in at least one small group for discipleship
- Regular church attendance

The Nominating Committee will:

- Consult with Senior Pastor on all recommendations
  - Present nominees to the church membership at the Annual Meeting for election.
- Adopted 4/18/2000

**Policy on Senior Pastor's Extended Absence or Departure:**

In the event of the Senior Pastor's extended absence or departure:

- Leadership Council will delegate coordination of preaching responsibilities to a member of the Pastoral Staff Team until such time as an interim pastor is appointed by Leadership Council. The primary role of this Pastoral Staff Team Member is to be responsible for preaching and scheduling speakers.
- Leadership Council will delegate coordination of other responsibilities to another member of the Pastoral Staff Team. Coordination may include individuals other than Members of the Pastoral Staff who are gifted and experienced in any of the specific tasks.
- A member of the Pastoral Staff Team who is selected by the Pastoral Staff Team will fill the Senior Pastor's seat on Leadership Council.
- Hiring and dismissing of paid non-pastoral staff by the Pastoral Staff Team may be carried out with Leadership Council approval.
- When it is necessary to appoint an interim pastor, he shall be expected to cooperate with the existing Pastoral Staff Team and Leadership Council. Responsibilities other than preaching will be determined by the interim's written agreement with Leadership Council and by the interim's spiritual gifts, skills, and experience.
- During this interim period, Leadership Council shall address any concerns regarding the quality of preaching and any fluctuation of attendance compared with the previous year.
- When Leadership Council determines that the Senior Pastor position is open, Leadership Council shall appoint a Pastoral Search Committee (Article 9 Section 4). **Adopted 4/18/2000**

**Policy on Peer Review:**

Periodically the Leadership Council will conduct a peer review process.

The objectives of this process are:

1. To help ensure a committed and spiritually healthy Leadership Council team through a periodic self-examination process.
2. To formally understand the intent of current Leadership Council members regarding service on the team for the upcoming year.

Format:

1. Leadership Council members-at-large and chairperson are subjects of this process. Although all Leadership Council members, lay and pastoral, will participate in providing feedback, the Senior Pastor and his appointee will not be subjects.
2. The formal evaluation process will be completed before and reviewed at the November monthly meeting. Both the self and peer review surveys should be completed privately by each peer. The process is comprised of:

Self-evaluation survey: this will provide a mechanism for each individual to describe their perceived strengths and areas of improvement, spiritual health, ongoing walk with God and their anticipated Leadership Council role for the upcoming year.

Peer feedback: each Leadership Council member will review each other. Perceived strengths and areas of improvement and other words of encouragement will be documented. Participation, attendance, gifting match, and positive contribution are some examples of specific areas of review. Each peer will formally recommend or not recommend the continuation of each subject for another year of service. Situations in which there is not unanimity across the peers regarding a subject will be resolved via further discussion, prayer, and then vote.

All of the self and peer evaluations, except for those pertaining to chairperson, will be compiled by the chairperson. The chairperson and one other Leadership Council member will meet with each person to review his or her results. The Senior Pastor and one other Leadership Council member will compile the evaluations for the Leadership Council chairperson and will meet to review the results with the Leadership Council chairperson.

3. The Senior Pastor will keep documentation from this process in a confidential file.
4. All Leadership Council member vacancies need to be relayed to the Nominating Committee by December 1<sup>st</sup>. **Adopted 6/13/2000**

**Policy on Non-Leadership Council Presence at Leadership Council Meetings:**

A Responsible West Congregational Church Member (as defined in West Congregational Church Bylaw Article 5, Section 1) may observe at a Leadership Council meeting.

- Printed information will not be handed to observers. Finalized Policy shall be in the Leadership Council Binder in the Church Office.
- When a Responsible Member wishes to address a Leadership Council Policy/decision, he/she may arrange for a hearing at the next meeting by making an appointment with the Leadership Council Chair, as stated in Bylaw Article 9, Section 3.
- At any time, at the discretion of the Leadership Council Chair or by Leadership Council “one voice” decision, the meeting may be closed on items warranting confidentiality, such as, “spiritual discipline” or “risk management”. **Adopted 11/21/2000**

### **Policy on Pastoral Staff Compensation:**

The Leadership Council shall annually engage a compensation team, consisting of three (3) West Church Members-in-good-standing that will propose annual Pastoral Staff compensation packages to the Finance Team.

- The team will be assembled and have its first meeting no later than July 31<sup>st</sup> and complete their report by October 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The team will be available for ongoing consultation with the Pastoral Staff on compensation for new hires.
  
- Criteria for the Pastoral Staff Compensation Team  
The team cannot be comprised of:
  - A Finance Team member
  - A spouse or immediate family member of the Pastoral Staff
  - Multiple members of the same immediate family. That is to say, no more than one member of the same family can be on this team.

### **Pastoral Staff Compensation**

- Compensation should reflect fair market value. The Compensation Team should engage in a market analysis, at least once per year, to acquire a level set for all the compensation packages.
- Compensation should reflect years of service/experience in the particular field of expertise.
- Compensation should not reflect performance levels.
- Compensation should reflect regional cost of living indices.
- Compensation recommendations should be formally presented in written form to the Finance Team and then to the congregation for final approval. The latter will typically be done at the Annual Meeting of West Congregational Church. **Adopted 10/23/01**

### **Policy on Safe Church Policies:**

Leadership Council shall safeguard its own Leadership Council Members from legal risk:

- Church Officers and Leadership Council Members shall be uncompensated for carrying out their specific duties.
  
- When signing legal documents, Church Officers and Leadership Council Members shall indicate the church's name on the document and clearly indicate their own representational capacity: Officer, Leadership Council Member, etc.
  
- Leadership Council shall not allow any loans out of corporate funds to either Officers or Leadership Council Members.
  
- Leadership Council Members shall be made aware of the legal risk associated with unauthorized dissemination of confidential information.

Leadership Council Members shall hold confidential any "charged" information; and shall hold each other accountable to this trust. **Adopted 4/23/02 & Revised 12/21/04**

### **Policy on Short-Term Committees/Teams:**

The Leadership Council may assemble short-term committees/teams for bylaw compliance and for research and development of LC projects within the LC responsibilities as outlined in the WC Bylaws. LC Committees/teams and their participants shall have no authority to act without first submitting their recommendations to LC for one-voice decisions.

A team/committee may be formed for a short-term project and shall be dismissed when the project is completed. When a project extends longer than a year, the team/committee members who receive an acceptable review by LC may continue to serve for another year.

- Nominating Committee (Bylaw Article 9, Section 4)
- Senior Pastor Search Committee (Bylaw Article 9, Section 4)
- Pastoral Staff Compensation Team (LC Policy adopted 10/23/01)
- Research & Development Team: The LC shall assemble a Research & Development Team comprised of the senior pastor or designee, a LC member, and five people that have professional/business expertise. They shall develop short and long-term planning for space requirements and necessary funding to carry out vision as reflected in the LC Ends policies. This team shall oversee any project they generate. They shall be responsible to the LC and they shall be subject to the WC Membership's expressed will by vote regarding any financial activities. **Adopted 1/6/04**

### **Policy on Signing Documents:**

Leadership Council shall oversee the official signing of:

- Financial documents approved by the expressed will, by vote, of the West Congregational Church membership.
- Property purchase & sales agreements approved by the expressed will, by vote, of the West Congregational Church membership.
- Construction contracts not funded by the annual budget and within the expressed will, by vote, of the West Congregational Church membership. **Adopted 4/20/04**

### **Policy on Conflict Resolution:**

- Leadership Council shall attend to any conflict unresolved through the efforts of the Pastoral Staff using scriptural principles with the goal of reconciliation. The resulting decision shall be binding on all parties.
- In the case of a non-dismissal grievance that cannot be resolved by the Senior Pastor, Leadership Council shall review using scriptural principles. **Adopted 4/26/05**

### **Policy on Annual Audit:**

Leadership Council shall see to the implementation of an annual audit for all financial records of West Congregational Church. **Adopted 4/26/05**

### **Policy on Continuing Education for Pastoral Staff:**

Leadership Council supports Pastoral Staff members in pursuing continuing education relative to their pastoral work and will recommend to the annual budget a reimbursement up to a \$2500 cap

per year for no more than four years per person. This recommendation is dependent on receiving the annual request before November 15<sup>th</sup> for the next calendar year and receiving proof of passing grades for the previous year. This recommendation is subject to annual budget approval by vote of the Membership. **Adopted 11/15/05**

### **Policy on Church Discipline:**

- In all matters of church discipline, Leadership Council shall refer first to the Bible and then to the Original West Congregational Church Covenant for rationale, and to Bylaw Article 5 Sections 3 and 4 for process.
- Leadership Council shall empower the Senior Pastor to manage church discipline issues listed in Bylaw Article 5 Section 3 until a Member refuses further counsel and/or the Member refuses to take necessary steps toward restoration. **Adopted 4/30/07**

### **Policy on Financial Oversight**

Leadership Council recognizes the need for transparency among and oversight of the Finance Team. To this end, Leadership Council requires the Finance Team, through the Senior Pastor, to maintain reasonable checks and balances. The Finance Team, through the Senior Pastor, will present to Leadership Council their current practices to insure transparency and provide financial oversight for review and acceptance. A copy of the Finance policy of current practices is recorded in Appendix A of the Leadership Council's Policy Statements. **Adopted 7/15/08**

### **Policy on Executive Administrator Attendance at Leadership Council Meetings**

As the role of the Executive Administrator (EA) is to facilitate the organizational processes within the church, including the staff and other leadership, the EA is welcome to attend Leadership Council meetings at the discretion of the Leadership Council. The EA may attend in a non-voting capacity unless designated as the voting Pastoral Team Member by the Senior Pastor (see Bylaws Article 9, Section 1). **Adopted 5/18/09**

### **Policy on Women in Ministry**

The issue of women's roles in the home and church has been enormously controversial in evangelical life. We recognize a diversity of opinions even within our own fellowship. The desire of the Leadership Council is not to hand down a final and definitive statement closed to further research and interpretation. In formulating a policy on women in ministry it is our purpose rather, to put a 'framework' around the actual practice of women's roles within the church. We do believe that our practice conforms to biblical injunctions and principles as the Bible is our First, Foremost and Final Authority.

Before we state the policy we make the following affirmations:

We affirm:

- That men and women both are created equally in the image of God (Genesis 1.27).  
Therefore,...
- Men and women *"should be seen by us as having absolutely equal value as persons and equal value to the church."*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology : An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 937.

- The enormous contribution of women to the work of God’s Kingdom throughout history and in current ecclesial life, including the immeasurable contribution of the women of West Congregational Church in many roles, including deacon, pastoral staff members.
- That equally biblical and spiritually committed evangelical scholars disagree on this issue. The enormous volume of literature representing multiple views from orthodox and reputable scholars attests to this fact.
- Much seems to be at stake. For the complementarian, it may appear that a more egalitarian interpretation comes at the sacrifice of biblical integrity.<sup>2</sup> For egalitarians, it may appear that the church is denying the Holy Spirit gifting of over half of its population.
- We have much in common in faith and practice.

We also affirm for the future:

- A continued recognition that further research and dialogue are needed and welcomed.
- A strong desire not to sacrifice the overall unity of West Congregational Church for the sake of a particular view on this subject. We consider the issue of women in ministry a non-essential issue as opposed to an essential issue. We affirm that *“there is no excuse for Christians to disfellowship one another, to become embittered against each other, or to separate over the issue of gender roles. Here we need to recapture the wholesome insight of historic Evangelicalism that concedes that there are many issues such as baptism, church polity, the gift of tongues, the future of Israel, the millennium, etc., which are important and worthy of our prayerful and earnest examination, but not of divisive obsession. May the Lord help us always to major on majors.”*<sup>3</sup> We affirm that we hold much more in common regarding our high regard for Scripture and our fervent desire to participate with God in the coming of his Kingdom here and around the world.
- The conviction that egalitarians and complementarians can co-exist in the same church for the wider sake of the furtherance of God’s Kingdom.

Therefore, we recognize that we do not have definitive answers. Given this reality, at this time we seek to adhere to the following policy:

*Leadership Council accepts the recommendation of the 2001 preliminary study of Women in Ministry by the committee of members-at-large formed with LC consent and led by Dr. James Gustafson. After considering pertinent scripture and the historical and present practice at West Church, they recommended that women may serve according to their spiritual gifts and experience in all aspects of ministry with three restrictions: (1) A woman may not fill the senior pastor position; (2) A woman may not serve as LC chairperson or moderator; (3) Women shall not be recommended for ministerial ordination. This 2001 recommendation shall be applied until Leadership Council completes a follow-up study to confirm or revise this recommendation. The Senior Pastor shall be advised. Adopted 3/23/09*

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<sup>2</sup> “Complementarian” refers to the view that men and women have equal value before God but differing roles in the church. “Egalitarian” refers to the view that there is no difference between value or roles in the church.

<sup>3</sup> Gordon Hugenberger, *“Some Notes on the Gender Question.”* Undated article from Park Street Congregational Church, Boston, Massachusetts found at the internet address: [http://www.parkstreet.org/qa\\_women](http://www.parkstreet.org/qa_women).

### **Policy on Leadership Council Vice Chairperson Role**

The Leadership Council (LC) will, by one-voice consensus, at the beginning of each year (at the time new members are brought onboard), assign the role of Vice Chairperson to an LC member for a renewable one year term. The role of Vice Chairperson will include (but will not be limited to) the following duties:

- Collecting LC member and staff input in creating an agenda for the next upcoming meeting
- Maintaining a list of “next actions” based on action items decided on during LC meetings
- Leading/starting the LC meeting if the LC Chair is absent/late due to extenuating circumstances. **Adopted 4/25/11**

## **Executive Limitations**

The Senior Pastor will allow no practices or circumstances that violate:

- The whole infallible counsel of Scripture.
- The officially expressed will of West Congregational Church’s membership.
- Written policies of the Leadership Council
- Commonly accepted business and professional codes of ethics
- Business prudence **Adopted 8/24/99**

### **Policy on Ministry Team Guidelines:**

All Ministry Team guidelines will be collated and available for review in the church office.  
**Adopted 10/19/99**

### **Policy on Ministry Areas:**

New Ministry areas will be established by the Senior Pastor, with the approval of the Leadership Council, and in accordance with the following criteria:

- Is it scriptural?
- Does it support the mission of the Church?
- Is it beneficial to the Church body? **Adopted 12/28/99**

### **Policy on C.O.R.I. (Criminal Offender Record Inquiry) Evaluation:**

West Congregational Church will do everything possible to assure the physical, emotional, and spiritual security of our children.

- A confidential questionnaire and information release will be required of all those involved in ministry to minor children: Teachers, care givers, youth workers, chaperones/drivers, and others.
- A request for CORI information will be made for all those in ministry to children under the age of 18.
- Risk management guidelines will be developed under the direction of the senior pastor, to including the following:
  - Confidential questionnaire.
  - Information release.
  - CORI evaluation procedures.

- The evaluation results are the express responsibility of the Senior Pastor and will be kept in a confidential, locked file. **Adopted 12/28/99**

**Policy on Leadership Council Clarification of Bylaw, Article 10 – Senior Pastor:**

The Senior Pastor may dismiss Non-Management Team paid staff, only with the approval of Leadership Council. **Adopted 6/7/01 & revised 12/21/04**

**Policy on Pastoral Staff Performance Evaluations:**

The Senior Pastor may engage a Performance Evaluation Team to assist in putting into place a formalized evaluation program for sub-ordinate Pastoral Staff.

This evaluation team should work closely with the Senior Pastor to establish a set of parameters by which a performance evaluation of each Pastoral Staff member can be carried out.

- **Criteria for the Pastoral Staff Performance Evaluation Team:**

The team cannot be comprised of:

- A Pastoral Staff Compensation Team member
- A spouse or immediate family member of the Pastoral Staff
- Multiple members of the same immediate family. That is to say, no more than one member of the same family can be on this team.

- **Job Descriptions:**

The evaluation team will work closely with the Senior Pastor and other Pastoral Staff to document and update all of the job descriptions for all of the paid Pastoral Staff positions at West Congregational Church. Each Pastoral Staff member will be linked to one or more job descriptions. These job descriptions are faceless and something that should be used as a reference during a time of hiring as well. These will be kept up to date and will be kept on file by the Senior Pastor.

- **Performance Management Plan:**

A performance management plan is a formal, comprehensive plan that specifies all of the short and long-term goals for the Pastoral Staff member. It is the written statement of expectations by his or her superior, combined with those of the Pastoral Staff member. The team should work to create a template that can be applied to the entire Pastoral Staff. This is not a job description. These are kept on file by the Senior Pastor. **Adopted 10/23/01**

**Policy on Safe Church Policies:**

The Senior Pastor shall safeguard the church through supervision of volunteers:

- The Senior Pastor shall see to the provision of a system of supervision for all volunteers to reduce the risk of negligence and misconduct.
- The Senior Pastor shall see to the implementation of the “Two Adult Rule” \* for all ministry areas that serve children under age 18.

*\* “Two Adult Rule” = at least two adults, 18 years or older, who have had a CORI background check and have completed a West Congregational Church Volunteer “Application/Self-Disclosure Form”. **Adopted 4/23/02.***

- The Senior Pastor shall see to the practice that no volunteer shall be allowed to work with children or vulnerable adults within the first six months association with the church.
- The Senior Pastor shall see to the inclusion of molestation prevention in ongoing Safe Church training for employees, youth group leaders and chaperones.  
Adopted 9/20/05

**Policy on Church-Sponsored Fund Raising:**

Fundraisers are events that are held in an effort to raise money for specific groups or events above and beyond that which are received in regular church offerings.

- Purpose:** Does it relate to and support the WC mission statement?
- Timing:** Does it detract from the overall-giving ministry of the church?  
Is there another significant fundraiser going on at this time?  
Have there been a number of fundraisers in a short amount of time?
- Method:** Is it cost effective?  
Is it thought out and properly planned?  
Is it appropriate?  
Is it safe?

- The Pastoral Staff must approve church-sponsored fundraisers. The Pastoral Staff shall review written fund raising requests to assess the purpose, timing, and method of the fund raiser.
- All funds must go through the church bank account in the form of deposits in and checks out. One adult person should be assigned as the “treasurer” of the fundraiser to keep track of the income and expenses.
- **Fund raising events on church property on Sundays is discouraged.** Adopted 5/9/06
- **Community-related groups are not church-sponsored and do not, therefore, fall under the policies of Church Fund Raising, and shall not solicit the church body for such purposes.**
- Hilltop School operates under the financial guidelines of their own Board. Should Hilltop wish to make a direct fundraising appeal to the church they would be expected to comply with this policy. Adopted 9/24/02

**Policy on Conflict of Interest:**

The Senior Pastor shall see to the implementation of the following Conflict of Interest policies:

- Concerning the Missions and Finance Ministries and every team whose financial disbursement exceeds the annual sum of \$5000, the Team’s volunteer and/or paid members shall not include more than one voting member of the same immediate family.
- Concerning the Finance Ministry Support area, the Team shall not include any spouse of a paid pastoral or non-pastoral staff member. (This does not apply to a team whose function is limited to stewardship education). Adopted 10/28/03

**Policy on Signing Documents:**

The Senior Pastor shall allow Ministry Leaders to sign service/maintenance contracts and contracts for projects that are reflected in the current annual budget. Officers shall sign contracts for projects not reflected in the current annual budget with Leadership Council approval within the expressed will, by vote, of the West Congregational Church membership. When there is a breach of contract that may require legal action, the Senior Pastor or designee shall report to Leadership Council for its recommendations. **Adopted 4/20/04**

**Policy on Consolidation of Sunday Worship Services on Snow Days:**

If a significant snowstorm is expected on Saturday night and/or Sunday morning, the three Sunday morning services will be consolidated to one service, to be held at 11:00 a.m.

The Senior Pastor will make a decision by 7:00 p.m. on Saturday evening. The decision will be posted on the church's website and the church's telephone answering system. **Adopted 12/21/04**

**Policy on Conflict Resolution:**

The Senior Pastor shall see to the implementation of scriptural principles for conflict resolution leading to reconciliation wherever possible.

When the Senior Pastor himself is implicated in unresolved conflict within the church, he shall invite Leadership Council's participation for resolution leading to reconciliation wherever possible.

The Senior Pastor shall refer to Leadership Council for reconsideration any dismissed employee or dismissed volunteer who claims unfair practices. **Adopted 4/26/05**

**Policy on Church Discipline:**

The Senior Pastor and his designee shall manage spiritual discipline issues outlined in Bylaw Article 5 Section 3.

1. The Senior Pastor and his designee may request the Member to withdraw from a leadership position and when necessary they may take away the privilege of serving in any volunteer capacity until the matter is satisfactorily resolved or until the Member refuses further counsel and/or refuses to take necessary steps toward restoration.
2. When a Member refuses further counsel in matters requiring spiritual discipline or refuses taking steps toward restoration, the matter may be brought to Leadership Council to implement Bylaw Article 5 Section 3: "No member who is under discipline by vote of Leadership Council may vote in any business meeting of the church or continue in any leadership position."
3. As a last measure toward restoration, according to Bylaw Article 5 Section 4: "A member who, in judgment of the Senior Pastor and Leadership Council, has not resolved a matter of church discipline may be terminated from Membership by vote of the church as recommended by Leadership Council."

The Senior Pastor and his designee may administer spiritual discipline to a non-member by taking away the privilege of serving in any volunteer capacity.

The Senior Pastor shall report to Leadership Council those matters of discipline that have resulted in curtailing the privilege of serving in a volunteer capacity. **Adopted 4/30/07**

**Policy on Approved Vendor's List and Quotes:** For any work on the church the Property Team will follow the rules in the Approved Vendor's List regarding cost of work and required number of quotes. Staff will review the Approved Vendor's List to revise and approve it yearly, subject to ratification by Leadership Council. Any project costing more than \$2,500 will require 3 bids from vendors. **Adopted 8/21/07**

**Policy on Reinstatement of Membership:**

The Senior Pastor and his designee shall manage issues relating to the possible reinstatement of former members outlined in Bylaw Article 5, Section 4.

If a member is terminated or resigns from membership, there will be a minimum of a two year waiting period before reinstatement of membership can be considered.

If a former member desires reinstatement, the Senior Pastor and his designee will identify necessary steps for restoration and will later meet with the former member to determine if the requirements for restoration have been satisfied. The former member may then re-enter the membership process (outlined in Bylaw Article 5, Section 1) upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and his designee. **Adopted 11/9/09**

**Policy on Divorce**

The Senior Pastor shall refer to the "Guidelines for Those Considering Divorce" (see Appendix B) when managing spiritual discipline issues relating to divorce. **Adopted 1/18/10**

**Policy on Premarital Counseling**

The Senior Pastor shall see to the implementation of the following premarital counseling policy regarding the conduct of weddings at West Congregational Church and/or performed by pastoral staff or anyone perceived by the Senior Pastor as representing West Congregational Church.

The Senior Pastor shall see to the implementation of the following premarital counseling policy regarding the conduct of weddings at West Congregational Church and/or performed by pastoral staff or anyone perceived by the Senior Pastor as representing West Congregational Church.

- All weddings will be in accordance with the Statement of Marriage outlined in Bylaw Article 4, Section 2.
- No wedding will be performed inside of three (3) months from the time of notification by the couple of the desire to conduct the wedding at West Congregational Church and/or by the pastoral staff.
- Each couple will be sent the West Congregational Church Wedding Procedures and Forms document and will agree to the guidelines stated therein.
- Each couple will take the Prepare/Enrich Inventory ([www.prepare-enrich.com](http://www.prepare-enrich.com)) or a comparable relationship inventory administered by qualified personnel.
- The couple will meet at least twice with a pastor for premarital counseling. The pastor may require more sessions or refer the couple to professional counseling before agreeing to conduct the wedding.
- The pastor may reserve the right not to perform the ceremony after the process of premarital counseling begins. **Adopted 8/16/10**

**APPENDIX A**  
**Financial Control Procedures**  
**Leadership Council Policy Statements**

West Church Finance Support Team  
**Financial Control Procedures**

Revised to July 15, 2008

**Purpose:** To provide for accountability and oversight of finances. A key to control is the separation of responsibilities. Good financial control procedures will help to minimize the possibility of illegal or unethical activities. Controls also serve to protect volunteers from charges of misconduct.

**COLLECTION TEAM**

Responsible for receiving, recording and depositing all income.

- Separate from disbursement personnel
- Separate from reconciliation and reporting personnel
- At least two unrelated people present when receiving and counting cash and checks and preparing deposit
- All funds deposited on Sunday – deposit goes directly from Church to the bank night deposit
- Deposits leave the Church in a locked night deposit bag

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE TEAM**

Responsible for preparing checks for all authorized disbursements.

- Separate from collection personnel
- Separate from reconciliation and reporting personnel
- A/P Team members are not authorized to sign checks
- Checks are issued based on vouchers signed by authorized Leaders

**AUTHORIZED CHECK SIGNERS**

Signs and distributes checks. Currently done by Clerk / Administrative Staff Assistant.

**TREASURER & ASSISTANT**

Reconciles bank statement with information provided by Collection and A/P Teams. Prepares income and expense reports and balance sheet on monthly and annual basis. Not directly involved with income or disbursement activities. These officers work closely with the Finance Team, but are responsible to Leadership Council (per Bylaws).

## **APPENDIX B**

### *Guidelines for Those Considering Divorce* Leadership Council Policy Statements

#### GUIDELINES FOR THOSE CONSIDERING DIVORCE

its core, West Congregational Church desires to be a place where the mercy and grace of God are lived and demonstrated to one another. We desire to do so because we believe it is what God has demonstrated to us in sending Jesus his Son. Our desire is to be a redemptive community--slow to judge, quick to forgive and welcoming to all who are searching for a deeper relationship with Christ. It is with this understanding we try to understand and apply principles of Biblical teachings to our everyday life.

God addresses human relationships in the Bible.<sup>1</sup> The highest of all these relationships is marriage. Given human sinfulness, this high and holy union is distorted, twisted and, unfortunately, sometimes destroyed. Our goal is to honor marriage by seeking reconciliation of partners. We recognize, however, that reconciliation is sometimes not possible or even desirable. No matter where people are in their relationship with their spouse, we seek to walk with each person through the trauma, ever humbly extending grace and truth, spoken in love.

West Church is committed to God's institution of marriage and demonstrates this commitment by providing:

- Premarital counseling through pastoral staff;
- Ongoing mid-size and small groups focusing on marriage;
- Recommended resource lists such as books, videos and websites;
- Information regarding outside sources for marriage enrichment;
- Marriage mentoring through trained couples;
- Marital counseling through pastoral counseling, and,
- Carefully considered recommendations for professional counseling.

West Church also demonstrates its commitment to those suffering divorce by

- Welcoming into fellowship and leadership divorced people;
- Celebrating remarriages within a Christian framework;
- Ongoing pastoral and lay care for those going through or having transitioned to divorce;
- Divorce support groups, and,
- Recommendations, when appropriate, for professional counseling.

Given the

- Vast resources available,
- Commitment of West Church people, leadership and staff to reconciliation where possible,
- The serious consequences of divorce and the powerful hope that God is for marriage and can redeem the unlikeliest of relationships,... it is expected that those in the West Church community experiencing difficult marriages will take advantage of these resources to their fullest extent to experience Jesus' redemptive power within their relationship.

For those who are separated and may be contemplating divorce:

- If you are facing divorce, please ask for help early. Don't wait until it is too late.
- If you are in the process of separation or divorce we ask you, in consultation with the pastoral staff, to voluntarily step down from leadership and ministry positions in the church until such time as your situation has been resolved. Reinstatement to any leadership or ministry position will be at the discernment of the pastoral staff and Leadership Council. Take this time in prayer, and reflection to listen to what God is saying to you regarding your relationship with him and your spouse and family.
- IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF WEST CHURCH AND YOU DO NOT WISH TO FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES REGARDING YOUR DIVORCE, WE ASK THAT YOU VOLUNTARILY WITHDRAW YOUR MEMBERSHIP. If you are committed to these guidelines, we urge you to uphold your membership and benefit from every possible resource here at West Church - Sunday Celebrations, small groups, classes, etc. You need the support and encouragement and accountability of your Christian community now more than ever. And as you learn and grow through this experience, you will have much comfort and help to offer others who face similar struggles (2 Corinthians 1:3-11).
- DO NOT "RECRUIT" PEOPLE TO YOUR SIDE. DO NOT BUILD A COALITION OF FRIENDS AT WEST CHURCH, SEEKING THEIR SUPPORT OF YOUR OWN VIEW OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP. Find a two or three people who will pray with you, and to whom you can be accountable, but do not publicly rehearse the sins of your spouse. When you speak with others about your divorce, please join us in urging people to work to build and preserve healthy marriages. As a member of the body of Christ, please do not make it easier for others to give up on a marriage because of your influence. Saving a troubled marriage is hard, but few if any divorced people will say that surviving a divorce is, in the long run, an easy thing either. Just as a person who has survived a serious car accident will urge others to wear their seatbelts, drive carefully, etc., you should become a force to strengthen marriages, not weaken them, in the Christian community and beyond.
- Do not gloss over the seriousness of breaking solemn vows made to another human being in the presence of God (Matthew 19:1-15). Do not try to minimize or defend this tragedy, or to blame everything on the other party. It is far better to acknowledge your

own fault as fully as possible, and to prayerfully repent of your part in the failure of your marriage. "God is close to a contrite heart," (Psalm 32, Psalm 34, and Psalm 52, for example). You should make every effort to save your marriage, including professional counseling, patience, and prayer. If you are not able to save your marriage, you should acknowledge your inability with real sadness. If you walk away from a marriage that you could save, you are sinning. You are breaking the solemn vows that you made when you got married ... "for better or for worse." If you leave a marriage that you can not save, sincerely having done everything in your power to save it, this should be seen and acknowledged as a real tragedy.

- As far as it depends on you, you should achieve the greatest degree possible of relational reconciliation with your estranged partner (Romans 12:14-18). You should acknowledge and ask for forgiveness for all of your failures - naming them as specifically as possible. You should extend complete forgiveness to your partner, too. Walking through a divorce with deep grief, humility, and forgiveness is a very different thing from walking through it with bitterness, self-justification, and anger. The former wounds can heal; the latter will scar you for life - and others will likely be wounded too.
- Under no circumstances will divorce with the intention of replacing one spouse to marry another be tolerated. If, before or since your separation, you have become sexually, emotionally, or physically involved with another person, you should acknowledge that you have committed the sin of adultery. No amount of focusing on the failures of your partner will justify this behavior of yours (Matthew 5:27-32). Even if you have not physically committed adultery, but if you have allowed yourself to cultivate an emotional relationship which encouraged you to leave your spouse, without giving your sincere best effort to patiently work to save your marriage - that shows a deep failure which calls for deep repentance. The best way ahead for you is to face your sin, repent of it, and prepare to move on with an appropriate humility and spiritual contrition (Proverbs 28:13). Please be clear on this: sex outside of marriage is sin, and can not be condoned among professing Christians (1 Corinthians 9:5-11). If a Christian commits sexual sin, he or she needs to repent and get back on the path of wholehearted discipleship. We do not expect non-Christians to act like Christians, but we do expect Christians to act like Christians. That includes taking seriously the Christian's call to a holy life (1 Thessalonians 4:3-4).
- We strongly urge you not to date anyone until you are legally divorced. To do so can be a danger signal for a number of reasons. First, you may not have taken adequate time to process the failure of your marriage; moving into another relationship is not fair to yourself or your partner under these circumstances. Second, your marriage still may be salvageable; to jump into another relationship could ruin those chances. Third, your behavior could reflect a lack of seriousness about the failure of your marriage. Fourth, you could be setting a bad example for other Christians. We urge and request you to abstain from dating until you are legally divorced for these reasons.
- If there are contributing factors which led to your divorce - addictions, violence, uncontrolled anger, mental or emotional illnesses, lasting effects of past traumas - it is expected you commit yourself to uncover and deal thoroughly with every deeper issue. It will be hard - but if you do not deal with the underlying issues, in the long run you will

suffer far more. We strongly encourage you to get professional help in this regard. If you had cancer or heart disease, you would not expect to treat your illness yourself. Similarly, it is foolhardy to try to heal yourself from a problem of this magnitude. We can make referrals to qualified and caring Christian counselors to help you through this important healing process.

## RECONCILIATION PROCESS

Marital conflict and divorce tear at the heart of all that God desires for his creation. The fractures caused during this painful time can have long lasting consequences for all involved. Our desire is that all people involved, husband, wife and children (if any) be reconciled as far as is possible to God, self, family members and others.

The ideal is the reestablishment of the marriage. If this is not possible, it is important to seek to make peace over and through the situation as far as is possible. The following suggestions are given as an offering from West Church as we all continue to seek to be 'ministers of reconciliation' (2 Corinthians 5.16-21).

1. Meet regularly for six months to a year with an appropriate mature Christian mentor for the purposes of prayer, support, and discipleship through the reconciliation process.
2. The former spouse should be contacted by letter for purposes of confession of sin and seeking forgiveness. This letter should be submitted to the Senior Pastor or designee as evidence that such a process has indeed taken place.
3. Any accountability group or ministry team that may have felt betrayed by any wrongful behavior on your part should be contacted by letter for purposes of confession of sin and seeking forgiveness. This letter should be submitted to the Senior Pastor or designee as evidence that such a process has indeed taken place.
4. The Leadership Council should be contacted by letter explaining that true confession and repentance before God has taken place and that contrition is evidenced. This letter should also detail how your view of marriage has changed so that the sin will not be repeated. The letter should convey an understanding and acceptance of the biblical view of marriage and a commitment to that view.
5. Special care should be taken regarding children. Children are often quiet in the midst of the heart-rending circumstances. This quietness is often misunderstood to mean that the child is processing the events well. In reality, the child is often unable to express deep and potentially destructive feelings. For this reason, it is highly recommended that
  - a. Professional counseling be sought for children through and after the crisis.
  - b. The adults involved seek the wisdom of counselors and trusted Christian friends on guiding their children through the process.
  - c. The adults involved do not expect adult behavior from children.
  - d. The adults involved do not seek to gain the favor of the children in the marriage.
  - e. The adults involved spend extra effort on and time with their children.

Conclusion: The subject of divorce is a prevalent and difficult one in the life of the church today. While divorce is not an "unforgivable" sin, it is one that needs to be examined in the full counsel

or scripture, and with discernment of the Holy Spirit. It is the desire that everyone who come to West Church finds it to be a place of healing and hope that only the grace of God can provide.

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<sup>r</sup>The Bible speaks eloquently and voluminously on the topic of marriage. Nave's Topical Bible includes the following:

**MARRIAGE.** In family blood lines, Abraham and Sarah, Gen. 11:29; 12:13; 20:3, 9–16. Isaac and Rebekah, Gen. 24:3, 4, 67; 28:2. Jacob and his wives, Gen. 29:15–30; see below, in the elaborated text. Levirate (the brother required to marry a brother's widow), Gen. 38:8, 11; Deut. 25:5–10; Ruth 4:5; Matt. 22:24; Mark 12:19–23; Luke 20:28. Parents contract for their children: Hagar selects a wife for Ishmael, Gen. 21:21; Abraham for Isaac, Gen. 24; Laban arranges for his daughters' marriage, Gen. 29; Samson asks his parents to procure him a wife, Judg. 14:2. Parents' consent required in the Mosaic law, Ex. 22:17. Presents given to parents to secure their favor, Gen. 24:53; 34:12; Deut. 22:29; 1 Sam. 18:25; Hos. 3:2. Marriage feasts, Gen. 29:22; Judg. 14:12; Esth. 2:18; Matt. 22:11, 12. Jesus present at, John 2:1–5. Ceremony attested by witnesses, Ruth 4:1–11; Isa. 8:1–3. Bridegroom exempt one year from military duty, Deut. 24:5. Bridal ornaments, Isa. 49:18; Jer. 2:32. Bridal presents, Gen. 24:53; Psa. 45:12. Herald preceded the bridegroom, Matt. 25:6. Wedding robes adorned with jewels, Isa. 61:10. Wives obtained by purchase, Gen. 29:20; Ruth 4:10; Hos. 3:2; 12:12; by kidnapping, Judg. 21:21–23. Given by Kings, 1 Sam. 17:25; 18:17, 21. Daughters given in, as rewards of valor, Judg. 1:12; 1 Sam. 17:25; 18:27. Wives taken by edict, Esth. 2:2–4, 8–14. David gave one hundred Philistine foreskins for a wife, 2 Sam. 3:14. Wives among the Israelites must be Israelites, Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3, 4; 1 Chr. 23:22; Ezra 9:1, 2, 12; Neh. 10:30; 13:26, 27; Mal. 2:11; 1 Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14. Betrothal a quasi-marriage, Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:27. Betrothal made with the spirit, Ezek. 16:8. Celibacy deplored, Judg. 11:38; Isa. 4:1; Jer. 16:9; advised, 1 Cor. 7:7, 8, 24–40. Obligations under, inferior to duty to God, Deut. 13:6–10; Matt. 19:29; Luke 14:26. Not binding after death, Matt. 22:29, 30; Mark 12:24, 25. See **Bride**; **Bridegroom**.

**Unclassified Scriptures Relating to:** Gen. 2:23, 24 1 Cor. 6:16. Ex. 22:16, 17; Lev. 18:6–8 [Deut. 22:30.] Lev. 18:9–18; Lev. 20:14, 17, 19–21; Lev. 21:1, 7, 13–15; Num. 36:8; Deut. 21:10–14; Deut. 24:1–5; Prov. 18:22; Prov. 21:9, 19; Jer. 29:6; Hos. 2:19, 20; Mal. 2:13–16; Matt. 5:31, 32; Mark 6:17, 18; Mark 10:2–12 Matt. 19:2–9. Luke 16:18; Rom. 7:1–3; 1 Cor. 7:1–40; 1 Cor. 9:5; 1 Cor. 11:11, 12; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; 1 Tim. 4:1, 3; 1 Tim. 5:14; Heb. 13:4

**Figurative:** Isa. 54:5; 62:4, 5; Jer. 3:14; 31:32; Hos. 1:2; 2:19, 20; Eph. 5:30–32; Rev. 19:7–9. Parables from, Matt. 22:2; 25:1–10.