



Course Syllabus

Good Governance: Preparing Church Governing Body Members for Effective Leadership

Course Duration: 9 weeks (9 one-hour sessions)

Course Description:

This training program is designed to prepare newly elected church governing body members in the United Church of Christ to understand their roles and responsibilities. Participants will learn about the corporate duties of a church governing body, protecting the tax-exempt status of the church, the importance of segregation of duties, managing restricted and designated funds, missionally driven leadership, budgeting with a missional focus, reading financial reports, and safeguarding the church against fraud.

Each session is designed to be dialogical in nature. Some will begin with a PowerPoint presentation followed by group discussion. Others will be group discussions facilitated by the course facilitator.

Facilitator: Keith Clark-Hoyos

Session 1: Duties of Church Officers

- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of church officers
- Collaboration among church officers for effective governance
- Legal and ethical obligations of church leadership

Session 2: How To Lose Your Tax Exemption

- Common pitfalls that can jeopardize a church's tax-exempt status
- Best practices for maintaining tax-exempt status
- Legal and financial consequences of losing the exemption

Session 3: Segregation of Duties & Restricted & Designated Funds and Fundraising

- The importance of segregation of duties in church operations

- Managing restricted and designated funds for specific purposes
- Strategies for successful fundraising and stewardship

Session 4: Mission, Vision, Values, & Structure

- Defining and aligning the church's mission, vision, and core values
- Understanding the church's organizational structure
- Ensuring alignment of governance with the church's mission

Session 5: Mission & the Bottom Line

- The connection between the church's mission and financial decisions
- Aligning financial management with the church's mission and vision
- Ensuring transparency and accountability in financial matters

Session 6: Budgets That Inspire Giving

- Creating budgets that reflect the church's mission and vision
- Strategies for inspiring stewardship and giving
- Allocating resources for mission-driven activities

Session 7: Financial Reports - Part 1

- Introduction to financial statements and reports
- Interpreting the Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Activities
- Identifying key financial metrics for decision-making
- Group Evaluation of financial reports of various anonymous churches.

Session 8: Financial Reports - Part 2

- Introduction to financial statements and reports
- Interpreting the Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Activities
- Identifying key financial metrics for decision-making
- Group Evaluation of financial reports of various anonymous churches.

Session 9: Preventing Church Fraud

- Recognizing common types of fraud in churches
- Implementing internal controls and fraud prevention measures

- Issues specific to smaller congregations

Course Materials:

Each session will be dialogical in nature. Some PowerPoint presentations will be made and the slides will be distributed after the discussion.

Participants are encouraged to bring their church's financial documents for reference.

Assessment and Grading:

This cohort is a voluntary participation training available to those who choose to increase their knowledge and skills in serving the church. No written exam is required.