

# Leadership Handbook

Falcon Heights Church  
United Church of Christ

Version 2021

*As seekers and servants growing in God's love, we will  
SPEAK the truth in love,  
CELEBRATE each other's gifts and perspectives, and  
CHOOSE the good of the whole church over our individual preferences and comforts.*

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## PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide all Falcon Heights Church leaders with information that is important to running the ministry of the church. Ideally, this Handbook will be reviewed and updated yearly, and time taken to familiarize new and old leaders alike to how the church operates.

## VISION, MISSION, VALUES

Falcon Heights Church, United Church of Christ, seeks to become a demonstration plot for the reign of God on earth, sowing seeds of love, peace and justice, cultivating the transformative possibilities revealed in Jesus Christ, the Master Gardener. We will:

1. Offer unconditional welcome, sanctuary and spiritual nourishment to everyone hungry for God's love.
2. Tend to our inner transformation through prayer, the exploration of scripture, kindness, forgiveness and openness to God's still speaking voice.
3. Share God's restorative power to repair injustice within our wider community through witness and service.
4. Teach about our faith and inspire deeper connections with God through vibrant worship and a wide spectrum of music and creative arts.

## COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP

In the Congregational tradition of the UCC, "covenant" has strong historical meaning. The framers of the American Constitution were steeped in this tradition and shaped our government by their understanding of covenant. They understood that a covenant:

- Defines a people
- Creates a body politic (the "incarnational statement")
- Describes common goals and values
- Outlines the institutions through which the people will act collectively

The difference between a covenant and a contract can be thought of as follows:

- A contract is based on law, and built on fear; a covenant is based on grace, and built on love.
- A covenant "has a gratuitous, growing edge which nourishes rather than limits."
- Each addresses accountability differently. In a covenant, accountability must remain mutual.
- Covenants require public affirmation and re-affirmation.

Source: Northern California Nevada Conf. UCC Committee on Ministry <http://www.ncncucc.org>

## HISTORY OF FALCON HEIGHTS CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Falcon Heights Neighborhood Congregational Church began as a mission church in 1939. At that time, housing development in the unincorporated township outside the St. Paul city limits began to grow, and family farms became streets full of single family homes. It was thought that a church was needed to serve the area's protestant families. For years, the church met in the basements of members' homes. Founding members fondly remembered the time when people in their Sunday best crowded into folding chairs around the homeowner's furnace while coffee percolated in the kitchen upstairs.

When the congregation reached a critical mass of members, an old church building from the Mayflower Congregational Church in south Minneapolis was purchased and moved on the back of a truck to two acres of empty land in Falcon Heights, and a parsonage for the minister's family was built. The *Little White Church* was located where the present church entryway is today.

As post-war families added to the baby-boomer generation, the church rapidly outgrew the Little White Church. In 1951, a new sanctuary was planned to meet the needs of the neighborhood. The architectural firm of Thorshov and Cerny was hired to design a modern building that reflected the church's congregational and Pilgrim heritage: the V-shaped chancel and tongue-and-groove ceiling suggest the hull of a ship. The lower level included makeshift classrooms divided by portable walls, and a full commercial kitchen to meet the food service needs of church suppers, weddings, and memorial services.

The congregation grew rapidly, and by 1957 the Sunday School had outgrown the church's ability to house all the children: an education wing was needed. To help pay for the addition, many members took on second jobs, the parsonage was sold and moved to 1835 Holton Street, and men and women baked pies in the church kitchen that were sold in a booth at the Minnesota State Fair. Kenneth Whitehead of the Thorshov and Cerny firm designed the addition, which included six classrooms, offices for a secretary and pastor, restrooms, a memorial lounge, and a connecting hallway/coat rack.

In 1959 the Congregational and Evangelical and Reformed denominations merged, and the Falcon Heights Congregational Church became the Falcon Heights United Church of Christ.

Church membership continued to grow through the 1970s. To accommodate all the church attendees, the church held two services each Sunday and offered faith education programming for all ages in the 50 minutes between the services. The Sunday morning experience included hundreds of people cramming into the six-foot wide hallway that connected the church to the education wing. The parking lot was expanded to accommodate the increased parking needs.

By the 1980s, church participation began to change as the baby-boomers began to move out from their parent's homes and the Falcon Heights community aged. As older people moved out of their homes, younger families moved in, but few of them identified as UCC, or religious at all; like many mainline churches, the membership and church attendance started to diminish.

By the early 2000's, the congregation realized that the church facility needed updating to be more available and receptive to new community uses. In response, an addition was added that included a generous entryway and coat storage area, improved circulation, updated offices, accessible restrooms, an elevator, a main floor social hall, a cheerful childcare room, and life safety improvements. Architect Clark Engler was chosen to design the addition: Clark had worked with Whitehead on the 1957 addition as a young draftsman. Today, the Falcon Heights Church is used by many community organizations including a theatre, an orchestra, and social service providers as well as a polling place for state and national elections.

## SUMMARY OF CHURCH GOVERNANCE

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in Falcon Heights Church is a covenantal relationship, where individuals agree to accept the cost and joy of discipleship. A person must be a member of the church to vote on matters brought to the congregation in a meeting. A person can become a member by (a) baptism and either confirmation or profession of faith; (b) reaffirmation or re-profession of faith; or (c) letter of transfer or certification from other Christian churches.

### **LEADERSHIP**

#### *The Congregation*

The governance of the church is vested wholly in the members assembled in congregational meetings. The church believes in the freedom and responsibility of the individual, and holds to the autonomy of the Local Church. The church is a member of the United Church of Christ (UCC). It is in the Minnesota Conference (acting as an Association), with delegate representation in the Minnesota Conference.

The church shall call ordained settled ministers for an indefinite term by a two-thirds vote of the members attending a congregational meeting called for that purpose. The hiring of non-ordained or other staff, including interim ministers, to the Executive Board.

The church provides that staff shall have voice without vote at meetings of all boards, committees, teams, and task forces of the church.

#### *The Executive Board*

The Executive Board is the policy-making body and transacts the business of the church between Congregational meetings. They make governance rules and regulations; call, supervise, annually review, and terminate the ordained ministers; prepare and recommend annual church budget; monitor and maintain financial controls; assist with programs in consultation with ministry teams; set policy and arrange calendar of church events; authorize the use of church facilities; plan programs and agenda for all congregational meetings; listen and take in advisement concerns for congregational meetings.

#### *The Officers*

The *Moderator* presides over the Executive Board; runs all congregational meetings, helps the minister(s) in administrative duties; preserves church records; executes legal documents on behalf of the church; serves as an ex-officio member of all committees and teams.

The *Moderator-Elect* assists the Moderator and presides in the absence of the Moderator at all meetings. The Moderator-Elect serves one year in this position and the following year as Moderator.

The *Treasurer* accounts for income and funds, pays church obligations, maintains records of all income and disbursements, forwards mission money and special offerings, maintains the financial records of the church and preserves all documents relating to church property. The Treasurer is bonded.

The *Assistant Treasurer* assists the Treasurer in the performance of the duties of that office, performs the duties of the Treasurer in their absence, and assists the Financial Secretary in overseeing the counting and depositing of receipts. The Assistant Treasurer is bonded.

The *Financial Secretary* is responsible for and/or oversees the counting and depositing of receipts, maintains the records of pledge contributions, reports weekly the bank deposit to the Treasurer and other officers, and forwards statements of giving to members. The Financial Secretary is bonded.

The *Clerk* maintains and preserves all records of membership, acts as secretary at all congregational meetings and meetings of the Executive Board, and preserves the minutes of such meetings.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

The *Nominating Committee* seeks individuals to fill vacancies as officers, Board members, committees and lay-ministry positions.

The Audit Committee biennially audits the church's financial records and the records of any other church-related group or program that manages their own funds and reports those findings to the Executive Board.

The *Ad Hoc Search Committee* seeks qualified ordained clergy to fill ministerial positions, as outlined in the Bylaws.

## **OTHER COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY TEAMS**

The *Personnel Committee* recommends personnel policies and performance review processes for the church, provides oversight in their implementation, ensures that each staff person has a current job description, and recommends compensation changes to the Executive Board.

The *Pastoral Relations Committee* cultivates healthy relationships between pastors, congregation and church members, promotes effective pastoral leadership, and encourages professional growth and supports the pastor's well-being. The Committee is independent of the Executive Board.

*Children's Ministry Team* plans and develops education, service and social opportunities for the children, and nurtures them and their families in the identity and practice of the Christian faith.

*Youth Ministry Team* plans and develops education, service and social opportunities for youth, and supports youth and their families in developing in the Christian faith.

*Adult & Intergenerational Ministry Teams* plan and implement adult educational opportunities and provide and promote other meaningful activities for building relationships among members of all ages, friends, and visitors of the church.

*Communications Team* focuses on the communicating and marketing of the Church for current and new members.

*Inreach & Caregiving Ministry Team* coordinates the physical and emotional caregiving and wellness activities for the Church's members and friends through programs and activities.

*Membership Team* regularly audits the church's membership rolls, welcomes new members, and plans activities for all members.

*Outreach Ministry Team* is responsible for sharing information about, promoting concern for, and supporting community, state, national, and world missions.

*Prayer Ministry Team* meets regularly to hold the joys and concerns of the church close in prayer.

*Stewardship Ministry Team* is responsible for the education, promotion, implementation, and evaluation of the Church's financial stewardship program and opportunities.

*Worship Ministry Team* provides assistance and guidance for worship experiences, including sanctuary preparation, music, communion, and recruiting of lay participants (readers, ushers, greeters, etc.).

*Friday Fellowship* invites participants to monthly social activities, serves luncheons for memorial services and funerals, helps with special church projects, and contributes resources to the Department of Indian Works, Salvation Army, and Union Gospel Mission.

*Falcon Heights Church Foundation* is an independent charitable organization that receives, oversees, and manages gifts in a principal account in perpetuity. The income generated from that principal is paid out annually to the Falcon Heights Church congregation.

## PROFESSIONAL STAFF ROLES

### OFFICE MANAGER

#### Essential Functions:

- **Communications**
  - Represent the church on the phone, in writing, and in person in a way that reflects well on FHCUCC and the UCC in general.
  - Produce the monthly newsletter.
  - Produce other mailings and emails as needed.
  - Produce Sunday and special service worship bulletins and announcements.
- **Records**
  - Create and maintain computer database of member names, addresses, phone numbers, significant dates, and other data as necessary for the administration of the church.
  - Determine, in conjunction with pastors, status of people in database.
  - Prepare statistical data for UCC yearbook (membership info) each year.
  - Maintain permanent hand-written record books with membership, confirmation, baptism, marriage, death, and other information.
- **General Office Management**
  - Answer the phone and greet visitors.
  - Maintain church calendar.
  - Ensure adequate office supplies available.
  - Ensure office equipment is maintained.
  - Coordinate worship flower orders and billing.
  - Maintain files of past bulletins, newsletters, annual reports, attendance records, and Executive Board and Congregational Meeting minutes.
  - Maintain worship supplies in pew racks.
- **Building Use Coordination**
  - Maintain building usage calendar for groups using the church space.
  - Maintain files and documentation for outside groups using the church space. Work with new groups to ensure proper documentation, including filling out a Facilities Use Application and Indemnification Agreement.
  - Coordinate with the church's janitorial service to arrange for rooms to be set up according to the user's wishes.

### MUSIC DIRECTOR

#### Essential Functions:

- General supervision of total church music program.
- Working in consultation with the Lead Pastor, the Music Director chooses music and directs the adult Chancel Choir and accompanists from September through May.
- In partnership with organist, ensures there is worship music for June, July and August.
- Able to utilize a variety of worship music styles. Preparing and conducting combined choral and orchestral works, as well as more contemporary worship music.
- Provides music leadership for special services (Christmas Eve, Holy Week).



- Prepares annual music budget; maintains music library and instruments.
- Supervises organist's work, providing assistance in annual performance reviews, which are primarily the responsibility of the Lead Pastor.

## **ORGANIST**

### **Essential Functions**

- Working in consultation with the Music Director and Lead Pastor, the Organist chooses and performs organ and keyboard music during Sunday morning services, from September through May.
- In partnership with Music Director, ensures worship music for June, July, and August.
- Provides accompaniment for special services (Christmas Eve, Holy Week).

## **NURSERY COORDINATOR**

### **Essential Functions**

- Effectively manages a group of infants and young children, fostering a positive group dynamic and redirecting children as needed.
- Using curriculum chosen by the Children's Ministry Team, develops and leads vital, fun and creative faith-based learning and spiritual growth experiences for children up to 5 years old.
- Working within a limited budget, gathers and prepares materials for weekly lessons.
- Oversees middle school volunteers working with the children.
- Tracks supplies and materials needed in the nursery.
- Interacts with adults in welcoming manner, establishing special needs of each child.
- Keeps records of attendance.

## HOW WE LEAD REFLECTS WHO AND WHOSE WE ARE

*Church meetings are different from other kinds of meetings. They should reflect our faith focus and the reasons why people join teams in a church. Spiritual formation rises and falls on connecting people with God, each other, and the entire congregation.*

### **Before a Church Meeting:**

- Include Spiritual Formation components written throughout the agenda (joys/concerns, closing prayer).
- Collaborate with Rev. Rick about ideas during your monthly Ministry Team planning meeting.
- As a Leader, take a moment in the car or before entering meeting to refocus yourself. Take deep breaths, listen to a favorite song, say The Lord's Prayer, stop to "smell the flowers."

### **During the Meeting:**

- **Checking In:** Even before a formal prayer to begin the meeting, lead team members in sharing joys and concerns. This is a way to move from "getting here" to "being fully here," and lets participants know this is a place where people care about them. Much of this can happen as they arrive at the meeting, but it should also continue into the opening of the meeting.
- Other ideas to help move to "being fully present:" Candle, breathing ball, meditation bell, moments of silence, elements of nature (flower, rock, leaf), scents. Maybe we could start a basket of these items and store in the church office for all Leaders to use when they have a meeting?
- **Prayer in Meetings:** Ideally, the prayer experience at the beginning of a church meeting will help participants connect with God in light of your team's Ministry. And remember, "bookend prayers" (to open and close the meeting) are but one way to incorporate prayer in church meetings. Other ideas:
  - Ask a team member to write down things that come up during the meeting and then incorporate them into a closing prayer to close the meeting.
  - Light a votive candle followed by a moment of silent reflection after each agenda item; by meeting's end, the lights symbolize the Light of Christ reflected in your team's agenda!
  - After check-in time, invite people to be silent for 2-3 minutes, then read a brief printed prayer you choose ahead of time (we never have enough silence in our lives).
  - Prepare people to write down their own "prayer points" during the meeting, then as the closing prayer, go around the group and have people read them: prayers of thanks, prayers of asking, prayers on behalf of others in need, etc. (This is basically #1 above, but involving more than one person.)
  - Lay hands on the agenda or related papers at the beginning or end of the meeting. Pray for guidance and discernment from God.

## **After the Meeting:**

- Include spiritual formation components in written communication (emails, personal note, TAB):
  - Reflection about event, meeting, worship relating it to God, Jesus, Holy Spirit.
  - Include a Bible verse that applies to a decision being made, event being held, etc.
  - Following up individually with Team members if there was a particular joy and concern.
  - Signing off in an email to convey appreciation, connection, Faith. The language of the Mission and Vision statements could be incorporated. i.e.: “Seeking and Serving in God’s Transforming Love.”

*With teams in our church, it’s not just about getting the work done, but also growing spiritually from the experience of being on the team, and involving more people in the work. As the Team Lead, you can have an impact on team members by giving them the opportunity to give and receive at every meeting. You’re not just leading and informing, but equipping and transforming the human spirit in your work with members of your team.*

## ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order is a set of rules for conduct at meetings, that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion. Organizations using parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed order of business. Below is a typical example:

Call to order.

Roll call of members present. Reading of minutes of last meeting. Officers reports.

Committee reports.

Special orders — Important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting.

Unfinished business.

New business.

Announcements.

Adjournment.

Members express themselves in the form of moving motions. A motion is a proposal that the entire membership take action or a stand on an issue. Individual members can:

1. Call to order.
2. Second motions.
3. Debate motions.
4. Vote on motions.

There are four Basic Types of Motions:

1. Main Motions: The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor, and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
2. Subsidiary Motions: Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled, and is voted on before a main motion.
3. Privileged Motions: Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
4. Incidental Motions: Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

How are Motions Presented?

1. Obtaining the floor - wait until the Chairman recognizes you.
2. Make Your Motion — speak clearly and in the affirmative, "I move that we ..."
3. Wait for Someone to Second Your Motion
4. If there is no second to your motion it is lost.
5. Expanding on Your Motion - speak in favor of your motion; all have a chance to respond
6. Putting the Question to the Membership - The Chair asks to vote on the question. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.

Voting on a Motion. There are several methods used to vote, including:

1. By Voice — The Chairman asks for “aye”, or “no”. Any member may move for an exact count.
2. By General Consent — The Chairman can say, “if there is no objection ...” The membership shows agreement by their silence; however if one member says, “I object,” the item must be put to a vote.
3. By Ballot — Members vote on a slip of paper. This method is used when secrecy is desired.
4. There are two other motions that are commonly used that relate to voting.
  - a. Motion to Table — This motion is often used in the attempt to “kill” a motion. The option is always present, however, to “take from the table”, for reconsideration by the membership.
  - b. Motion to Postpone Indefinitely — This is often used as a means of parliamentary strategy and allows opponents of motion to test their strength without an actual vote being taken. Also, debate is once again open on the main motion.

Parliamentary Procedure is the best way to get things done at your meetings. But, it will only work if you use it properly.

1. Allow motions that are in order.
2. Have members obtain the floor properly.
3. Speak clearly and concisely.
4. Obey the rules of debate.

**Most importantly, *BE COURTEOUS.***

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