



Governance Board Policies

Our Savior Lutheran Church
13611 Laurel-Bowie Road
Laurel, MD 20708-1563

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Desired Outcomes describe the ends or purposes of our church. Desired Outcomes policies, or ends policies, describe what results we are here to achieve, who the recipients will be, and the cost of those results. These policies do not address means, methods, activities, or specific programs. Every policy in this section must address either results, recipients, or cost. Desired Outcomes reflect the never-ending work of the Board¹ in determining what the church will attempt to accomplish in the future.

1.0 Global Desired Outcomes Policy

The desired outcome of Our Savior Lutheran Church is to be an expanding Christian community of devoted and passionate followers of Jesus in the greater Laurel area using the natural talents, spiritual gifts, and other resources that God provides.

1.1 Recipients

Our Savior Lutheran Church will continue to reach out to people with the love of Jesus Christ in Word and action,

1.1.1 As a regional church, primarily ministering to people in the greater Laurel area, and

1.1.2 As a Great Commission church, ministering to other communities in God's kingdom.

1.2 Desired Results

Our Savior Lutheran Church will be an expanding Christian community of devoted and passionate followers of Jesus.

1.2.1 Each individual at Our Savior will feel valued, cared for, and equipped for service as a part of the family of Our Savior from birth to life's end.

1.2.2 Our Savior's people will live out their faith in meaningful ways, consistent with their gifts and calling.

1.2.3 Our Savior will be a culturally-diverse community of believers united in Christ.

¹ The "Governance Board" is referred to simply as the "Board" throughout this document.

1.2.4 Our Savior will be a place where God's children are nurtured spiritually, physically, and mentally; intentionally passing on the faith to the next generation.

1.2.5 Our immediate neighbors will experience God's love through Our Savior.

1.3 Costs

Our Savior Lutheran Church will use the resources God provides to accomplish God's work including tithes, offerings, tuition and fees, donations and grants, endowments, loans, natural talents, and spiritual gifts. The Board will maintain financial oversight and authority over all financial matters of Our Savior Lutheran Church, and will appoint a Treasurer and Financial Secretary to perform tasks in those areas according to guidelines established by the Board and by the LCMS Synodical Treasurer's Manual, and will ensure that the incumbents are bonded.

1.4 Core Values

Followers of Christ at Our Savior Lutheran Church will uphold the following core value areas:

1.4.1 Missions

1.4.2 Discipleship

1.4.3 Service

1.4.4 Relationships Centered in Christ

1.4.5 Children and Families

1.4.6 Cross-Cultural Diversity

1.5 Major Target Areas (TAs) for Achieving the Congregation's Vision

Major target areas will be established by the Board through a process of surveying members and groups in the Congregation for their ideas. Target areas will be directed at accomplishing the congregation's current vision: *Our Savior Lutheran Church will be a Spirit-filled, Christ-centered community equipping God's people for God's work.* The major target areas for the FY 2009 Ministry Action Plan (MAP) will be:

1.5.1 Training in spiritual accountability

1.5.2 Increasing spiritual formation and enrichment

1.5.3 Strengthening Open Arms ministry

1.5.4 Strengthening our relationship with New Hope

1.5.5 Growing small group ministry

1.5.6 Developing a plan to use church arts as an outreach ministry

1.5.7 Developing standard operating procedures

1.6 Ministry Action Plan (MAP)

A Ministry Action Plan (MAP) will be the Congregation's major ministry management tool. It will be a Christ-centered document springing from the Congregation's Vision. Each MAP will cover one year. Each year's MAP will tackle a number of Major Target Areas (TAs). Each TA will be addressed by creating/completing one or more Projects. A MAP will be created each fiscal year to address TAs established for that year. As a MAP is executed during a fiscal Year, a new MAP will be created for the next FY. These concurrently running MAP creation and execution cycles are reflected in the following table² that will be used as a guide in establishing these cycles.

MONTH	RESPONSIBILITY	MILESTONE
<i>January</i>	<i>Pastor</i>	<i>Report to Congregation on Current Fiscal Year (CFY) Ministry Action Plan (MAP) execution progress. [Hard copy. Meet if necessary.]</i>
January	Board & Pastors	Discuss/establish methods for obtaining Next fiscal Year (NFY) MAP input (Target Areas/Projects) from Congregation.
February	Congregation	Provide NFY planning input to Board.
March	Board	Analyze Congregation input. Prioritize & select Target Areas (TAs) to be addressed in NFY. Forward NFY TAs to Pastor as drivers for NFY MAP. Track NFY unaddressed TAs for future reference by all.
March - June	Congregation	Coordinate with Staff to put individual talents to work on NFY Ministry Action Teams (MATs) and MAP Projects.

² Milestones in the current year cycle are shown in italics. Milestones for the next year cycle are shown in regular type.

MONTH	RESPONSIBILITY	MILESTONE
March - June	Pastors & Staff	Prepare proposed NFY MAP to address NFY TAs including specific: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry Action Teams (MATs) needed. • Members of Congregation to be on MATs. • MAP Projects needed to address TAs. • Members of Congregation to work on TAs/Projects. • Budget requirements for each MAP Project.
<i>April</i>	<i>Pastor</i>	<i>Report to Board on CFY MAP execution progress – copy to Congregation.</i> Report to Board on NFY MAP creation progress.
<i>May</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Meet. Normal business. Elect new Board Members.</i>
July	Pastor	Submit proposed NFY MAP and OSLC Budget to Board.
August	Board	Review proposed NFY MAP and OSLC Budget for reasonableness in meeting OSLC desired outcomes/TAs.
<i>September</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Meet. Normal business. Vote on NFY MAP and Budget.</i>
<i>October</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Begin fiscal year 1 October. Begin accomplishing 1-year Projects in CFY MAP. Projects end on 30 Sep.</i>
<i>November</i>	<i>Pastor</i>	<i>Report to Board on CFY MAP execution progress – copy to Congregation.</i>

Acronyms: MAP = Ministry Action Plan TA = Target Area NFY = Next Fiscal Year
 CFY = Current Fiscal Year MAT = Ministry Action Team

EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS

Executive Limitations policies address staff means—what the Senior Pastor and staff may and may not do. They define the out-of-bounds lines. These policies communicate what behaviors, methods, and practices are acceptable and not acceptable. Unless restricted by the policies, all other reasonable actions are considered acceptable. This approach empowers the staff from needing to delay action until the Board can approve each new initiative. It also allows the Board to responsibly minimize involvement in the details of day-to-day operations. These policies are addressed to the Senior Pastor rather than the entire staff. The Senior Pastor is held accountable that all staff actions fall within the boundaries established by these policies.

2.0 Global Executive Limitations Policy

The Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unlawful, immoral, imprudent, or inconsistent with the Christian faith, the Constitution, By-Laws, policies, and Mission of Our Savior Lutheran Church.

2.1 Finance

The Senior Pastor shall not allow the Church's financial resources to be received or expended without proper oversight and safeguards or fail to report on the Church's financial activity in an accurate and timely manner.

2.1.1 The Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow a financial plan that develops a fiscal year budget after the beginning of the fiscal year.

2.1.2 The Senior Pastor shall not fail to conduct a financial review in accordance with the laws of the state of Maryland.

2.1.3 The Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow a financial plan that is built on unsound assumptions about financial conditions. Financial conditions are defined as projected earnings/contributions, operating costs, other income/expense, and transfer from investment income.

2.1.4 The Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow a financial plan that allows an unsound financial condition that jeopardizes the achievement of Our Savior Lutheran Church's Mission and Vision.

2.1.5 The Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow a financial plan that is enacted without approval from the Governing Board and the Congregation.

2.2 Communication/Support to the Board

The Senior Pastor shall not permit the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work. The Senior Pastor shall not allow the Board to be unaware of:

- 2.2.1 Anticipated adverse media coverage.
- 2.2.2 Hiring, promoting, demoting, or firing staff.
- 2.2.3 Death or serious illness of staff.
- 2.2.4 Conditions affecting the work, health, or safety of staff.
- 2.2.5 Lawsuits against the congregation.

2.3 Personnel

With respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the Senior Pastor may not cause or allow conditions that are unfair, undignified, disorganized, or unclear, or shall not operate without a written personnel manual that is in compliance with local, state, and federal laws. The Senior Pastor shall not fail to:

- 2.3.1 Update the Board on any changes in the Personnel Manual.
- 2.3.2 Acquaint staff with their rights and responsibilities as spelled out in the Personnel Manual.

2.4 Strategic Planning

The Senior Pastor shall not fail to develop a three to five year church vision that is approved by the congregation. The Senior Pastor shall not fail to develop an annual Ministry Action Plan that will support that vision and address the current target areas.

2.5 Compensation/Benefits

The Senior Pastor shall not allow compensation that does not fall within the ranges identified in the personnel policies. The Senior Pastor shall not change his own compensation/benefit package.

2.6 Ministries

The Senior Pastor shall not allow programs and other services that do not contribute to the achievement of the Desired Outcomes.

2.7 Senior Pastor Succession

In order to protect the congregation from the sudden loss of Senior Pastor services, the Senior Pastor shall not operate without a written plan for his functions to continue in his absence. Further, the Senior Pastor shall not:

2.7.1 Fail to have a plan for emergency situations to ensure the continuation of pulpit ministry.

2.7.2 Fail to have a plan, with the assistance and approval of the circuit counselor and the District President's office, for either interim or vacancy ministry, in the event the Senior Pastor vacates his office.

2.7.3 Fail to have a plan that ensures that at least one other rostered worker is familiar with the daily operation of the church and Board policy manual.

2.8 Issues of Privacy

With respect to interactions with all in association with Our Savior Lutheran Church, the Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, undignified, or unnecessarily intrusive. The Senior Pastor shall not:

2.8.1 Use methods of collecting, reviewing, transmitting, or storing members' information that fail to protect the individual or collective privacy of congregational members.

2.8.2 Fail to establish with staff a clear understanding of what may or may not be expected regarding issues of privacy.

2.9 Asset protection

The Senior Pastor shall not allow church assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked. The Senior Pastor shall not:

2.9.1 Fail to provide insurance against liability losses to Board members, staff, and the church.

2.9.2 Fail to maintain the church property, buildings and equipment.

2.9.3 Allow the church and Open Arms Child Development Center to operate without a written Crisis Management Plan.

2.9.4 Fail to ensure that accounting practices and principles adhere to those recommended by the LCMS (see the Synodical treasurer's manual).

2.10 Gifts and Bequests

The Senior Pastor may not operate without a plan for the congregation to promote and receive gifts and bequests. The Senior Pastor shall not permit the congregation to accept gifts and bequests that run counter to the congregation's values and policies.

BOARD-SENIOR PASTOR RELATIONSHIP

Board-Senior Pastor Relationship policies address how the Board and Senior Pastor relate to each other. In general, the Board speaks with one voice and all Board authority is delegated through the Senior Pastor. This means that the Senior Pastor reports to the Board as a whole, not to individual Board members, officers of the congregation, nor Board committees. This also means the Board works only with the Senior Pastor and does not direct the work of staff or volunteers.

3.0 Global Board-Senior Pastor Relationship Policy

The Board sets policy and delegates implementation to all staff and volunteers through the Senior Pastor by virtue of his divine call from God through the congregation. The Senior Pastor is accountable to the Board and keeps the Board informed of policy implementation and the overall health and spiritual condition of the congregation.

3.1 Unity of Board Decisions

The Board speaks with one voice through motions passed officially by consensus. Officially passed motions of the Board are binding on the Senior Pastor.

3.2 Accountability of the Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor is the Board's only link to operational achievement and conduct, so that all authority and accountability of staff, as far as the Board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Senior Pastor.

3.3 Delegation to the Senior Pastor

The Board shall delegate authority only to the Senior Pastor except for assignments of its own work to committees or consultants.

3.4 Reporting to the Board

The Senior Pastor will report on the overall health and spiritual condition of the congregation on a monthly basis in a manner desired by the Board.

3.5 Monitoring the Senior Pastor's Performance

The Board shall ensure that the Senior Pastor receives an annual performance review. The Board shall measure the Senior Pastor's performance against Board policies, may suggest to the Senior pastor in what ways his performance may be increased, and may bring to the Congregation's attention exceptionally high or low performance. The Board's performance appraisal shall consist of four sections:

- Desired Outcomes
- Executive Limitations
- Ministry Action Plan
- Professional Development

3.6 Monitoring Frequency

All policies that instruct the Senior Pastor will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the Board. The Board can monitor any policy at any time by any method, but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule.

Finance	Monthly
Communication/Support to Board	Annually
Personnel	Annually
Target Areas	Bi-Annually
Compensation and Benefits	Annually
Senior Pastor Succession	Annually
Asset Protection	Annually
Gifts and Bequests	Upon Occurrence
Congregational Health	Monthly

GOVERNANCE PROCESS

Governance process policies describe the standards of behavior for individual Board members and the Board as a group. These policies describe the way the Board operates. They clarify the governing style of the Board, role of the Board Chair, Board member conduct, Board member responsibilities, and the use of committees. If any Board process issue arises that is not specified by these policies, the Board Chair should guide Board process. The Board represents and serves the members of the congregation.

4.0 Global Governance Process Policy

The purpose of the Board, on behalf of the baptized membership, is to see to it that Our Savior Lutheran Church fulfills its Vision and Mission while avoiding unacceptable actions and situations.

4.1 Governing Style

The Board will govern lawfully with an emphasis on: (a) practicing outward vision rather than an internal preoccupation, (b) encouraging diversity in viewpoints, (c) focusing on strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (d) clearly distinguishing between Board and Senior Pastor roles, (e) making collective rather than individual decisions, (f) looking to the future rather than the past or present, and (g) being proactive.

4.1.1 The Board shall exercise its governing authority as a whole. No individual Board member may exercise such authority except as instructed by the Board.

4.1.2 The Board will direct, control, and inspire the organization by carefully establishing broad written policies that reflect the Board's values and perspectives. The Board's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term impacts outside the staff organization, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.

4.1.3 The Board will monitor and discuss the Board's process and performance at each meeting. Self-monitoring will include comparison of Board activity and discipline to policies in the Governance Process and Board-Senior Pastor Relationship categories. The Board will ask the following questions as part of this review:

- Did we progress in our skills for developing and monitoring policy?
- Did we avoid discussion of staff issues?
- Did we act with courtesy and respectfulness toward each Board member?

- Did we communicate effectively and openly with the Senior Pastor and with each other?
- Did we adhere to Board policies?

4.1.4 The Board will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policy-making principles, respect of role, and ensuring the continuance of governance capability.

4.1.5 Continual Board development will include orienting new Board members in the Board's governance process and periodically discussing governance process improvement.

4.1.6 The Board will allow no officer, individual, nor committee of the Board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling its commitments.

4.1.7 The Board shall strive to make decisions by consensus deferring to simple majority voting only when the Chair believes consensus cannot be reached.

4.1.8 The Board shall establish an annual policy review calendar to coordinate the review of every policy at least once a year.

4.2 Board Members' Code of Conduct

The Board commits itself and its members to Biblical, ethical, professional, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate Christian behavior when acting as Board members. Members must have loyalty to the congregational membership, un-conflicted by loyalties to staff, other organizations, and any personal interest.

4.2.1 Members must avoid conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.

4.2.2 Members may not attempt to exercise individual undue influence over the organization.

4.2.3 Members will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature. In other words, what is said here stays here.

4.2.4 Members will follow these guidelines during their meetings: stay on topic, respectfully listen to one another, state opposing viewpoints in a respectful manner,

foster open and honest dialogue to arrive at consensus, be sensitive to the feelings of others, and participate fully in the meetings.

4.2.5 Board members will support all decisions, without regard to the member's personal position on the issue. Members will speak with one voice about any decision made by the Board.

4.3 Board Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities of the Board, as trustees of the congregation, are those that ensure effective organizational performance.

4.3.1 The Board has direct responsibility to communicate with the Baptized Membership of Our Savior Lutheran Church.

4.3.2 The Board shall create written governing policies that address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations including:

- Desired Outcomes: Organizational results, recipients, and cost.
- Executive Limitations: Constraints on executive authority that establish the prudent and ethical boundaries within which all executive activity and decisions must take place.
- Board-Senior Pastor Relationship: How authority is delegated, its proper use monitored, and role and accountability of the Senior Pastor.
- Governance Process: Specifying how the Board conceives, carries out, and monitors its own tasks.

4.3.3 The Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee for electing Board members.

4.4 Board Officer Roles

The Board Officers are specially empowered members of the Board who ensure the integrity of the Board's process and occasionally represent the Board to outside parties. The congregation elects persons who will be on the Board. Following that election, the Board members elect which of them will hold specific Board offices.

4.4.1 The Chair of the Board shall:

- Establish the agenda for Board meetings in compliance with the policy calendar established by the Board.
- Preside at all meetings of the Board and congregational assembly.

- Arrange for an annual performance appraisal of the Senior Pastor focusing on progress in accomplishing Desired Outcomes and compliance with Executive Limitations.
- Discuss and review corrective actions with individual Board members when they violate their responsibilities. When resolution cannot be obtained with an individual Board member, the Chair shall in Executive Session of the Board conduct a review of the policy and develop recommendations for any necessary corrective actions. If the Board member in question is the Chair, then this responsibility falls to the remaining Board members.
- Act in all areas of Board management left unstated within these policies as long as this action is not in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws or other Board policies.
- Remain accountable for his or her authority when delegated to another.

4.4.2 The Vice-Chair shall:

- Preside at all meetings of the Board and congregation assembly in the absence of the Chair.
- Assume responsibilities delegated by the Chair.

4.4.3 The Secretary shall:

- Record the official minutes of the Board meetings and congregational assemblies and direct their distribution to the members of the Board, the Senior Pastor and others requested by the Board.
- Preserve the approved minutes for the archives.
- Preserve regular and special reports made to the Board and, at its direction, make summaries or copies of them available to its members.
- Maintain the official Board Policy Manual.

4.5 Cost of Governance

Because governing poorly costs more than learning to govern well, the Board will invest in its governance capacity. Board skills, methods, and supports will be sufficient to ensure governing with excellence.

4.5.1 Training and retraining will be used liberally to orient new members as well as to maintain and increase existing member skills and understandings.

4.5.2 Annual monies will be budgeted to cover the cost of training and retraining, including any personal expenses incurred for such training.

4.5.3 Outside monitoring assistance may be arranged so that the Board can exercise confident control over organizational performance.

4.6 Board Committees

Board committees are temporary and formed at the discretion of the Board to accomplish specific, short-term objectives. These committees may or may not include members of the Board.

4.6.1 Board committees are to help the Board do its job. They will not interfere with current staff operations.

4.6.2 Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Senior Pastor.

4.7 Annual Agenda Planning

[Note: This assumes that election of Board members is staggered with three new Board members each year.] To accomplish its responsibilities with a governance style consistent with Board policies, the Board will follow an annual agenda that: (a) completes a review of all policies annually, and (b) coordinates the continual improvement of Board performance.

4.7.1 The cycle will start with the Board's development of its agenda for the next fiscal year (September through August).

- Board education for itself related to Desired Outcomes will be arranged in the first quarter (October through September).
- In the second quarter (January through March), the Board begins obtaining Ministry Action Plan input from the congregation, using a variety of methods including consultation with selected groups.

4.7.2 The cycle will conclude on the last day of April so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing a one year segment of the Board's most recent statement of Desired Outcomes and Target Areas.

4.7.3 The annual Board calendar of events will include the following:

Month	Action
May	Conduct May Congregational Assembly Meeting. Congregation elects new Board members.
June	Board members elect Board officers. Returning Board members Update new Board members on Target Areas. Conduct a team building activity.
July	Supply budget guidelines to Senior Pastor. Review Governance Process policies. Prepare for congregational assembly.
August	Prepare for Congregational Assembly.
September	Receive proposed budget from Senior Pastor. Receive report from Senior Pastor on progress on Target Areas. Conduct September Congregational Assembly meeting where budget and MAP are submitted for approval.
October	Begin fiscal year.
October - December	Arrange for Board education related to Desired Outcomes that will occur during the year.
November	Receive Pastor's report on MAP progress.
January	Review Board-Senior Pastor Relationship policies.
February	Obtain Congregational input for Target Areas.
March	Conduct Board retreat to develop next fiscal year major target area list.
March	Review Executive Limitations policies.
March	Appoint Nominating Committee for congregational elections.
April	Receive report from Senior Pastor on progress toward current Target Areas. Prepare for Congregational Assembly. Review Desired Outcomes policies. Appraise Board process.
May	Conclude Board cycle and celebrate.

4.7.4 The Board may revise any Board policy at any time. Requests for changes may come from members of the congregation, members of the Board, or the Senior Pastor. These requests should be dealt with in a timely manner.

4.7.5 The Board shall conduct an annual self-appraisal to identify areas and actions for improvement. The self-appraisal shall focus on:

- Board structure
- Board members
- Board meetings
- Board policies
- Fiduciary responsibility
- Organizational performance
- Executive development
- Communication and compliance
- Overall effectiveness