



## Minutes for the Board Meeting of Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church

Tuesday, Aug 20, 2024 - **APPROVED**

Attendees (virtual attendance marked with \*):

- Board Members – Heather Kistner, Lynn Hixson, Maddie Kulpa, \*Steve Drevik, Noel Arring, \*Rob Bray, \*Mebbie Jackson, Roy Kersey, \*Bella Thomas-Wilson, \*Devon Miller
- Ex-Officio Members – Chris Buice, Claudia Pressley, Catherine Farmer-Loya, \*Barbara Lamm, Carol Villaverde
- Guests – Denise Coleman, AB Coleman

**Meeting chaired by Board President Heather Kistner**

**Minutes recorded and submitted by Board Secretary Maddie Kulpa**

**Opening Words & Chalice Lighting** – read by Heather

### **Announcements & Reminders**

Heather reviewed Board Member duties, and announced that Lynn will be taking responsibility for helping the Board stay on top of those duties.

- Maddie advised that there is a subchannel in Teams with links to Sign-Up Genius for Board Member on Duty and Pantry Restocking.
- Regarding BMOD script: Lynn has started a habit of ending with words of welcome and encourages each Board member to use Worship Web to find their own greeting to read each time. Updated script is still in the works; signup genius script is outdated. Claudia asks for a standard phrase to be used to cue David to start the music. Lynn and Catherine will collaborate on the script with input from the Worship Committee, which will be ready by the Sept. meeting.
- Noel asked about safety concerns while on duty; Claudia advised to find a staff member to handle the issue. Noel brought up incident reports and safety concerns, and suggests that we revamp our first aid kits and put together a safety manual. Heather has already been thinking about safety and security, and these concerns will be addressed.
- Heather asked for all Board members to sign up for 3-4 BMOD shifts and one RE Sunday through the end of the calendar year.

Consent agenda & meeting format

- Maddie reviewed the concept of a consent agenda, requesting that Mgm't Team reports be submitted to the Officers a week and a day before each Board meeting, which will then be distributed to the Board with a week for review.
- Maddie also points out that this format will require Board members to commit to reviewing reports before each monthly meeting.
- Heather asked that any Board members who are struggling with meeting expectations reach out to herself or another officer.
- Carol asked if Program Council should submit a report, and Heather agreed.
- Claudia asked if the SPC would like to provide prompts for the reports. AB responded that the Board will make that decision.
- Discussion was had about who needs to receive the reports, it was agreed that they would be sent to one of the 4 officers.

### **Congregation Comments & Questions**

None present

### **Consent Agenda**

Board Meeting Minutes from June 2024

**Approval of the minutes was moved by Lynn and seconded by Roy.  
Passed with 8 affirmatives, no negatives, one abstention.**

### **Board Projects**

Communication

- Maddie asked the Board to discuss when everyone feels comfortable to move away from using the board email as a regular course of discussion.
- September meeting will include a role-call for everyone being comfortable with Teams. Maddie will follow up with individuals she knows aren't regularly using Teams already.
- It was asked how the Board can share the email address with the congregation to encourage communication. It is currently on the website "Leadership" page and listed on the order of service.

Building & Grounds Committee

- As a Board Committee, B&G reports to the Board and should have 2 co-chairs, and is encouraged to have a Board member involved (in place of liasons which have been discontinued).
- B&G is the remaining Board Committee who is not currently formed. Eventually, it might include 2 sub-committees who focus on inside or outside concerns.

- Heather asked Board member(s) interested in being on the Committee to tell her today or tomorrow. This Board member could be an active member or ex-officio, depending on the preferences of the committee.
  - Steve noted that he has already notified Heather of his interest.

#### Security Team

- Heather expressed her desire to develop a committee/task force focused on security. AB suggested including cybersecurity in this new group's purview. Noel suggested a Volunteer Team to perform an assessment to make recommendations on how to structure this new group. Maddie suggested we ask this Volunteer Team to review the entire Safe Congregations policy.
- Roy asked if there was research done and/or practices put in place after the shooting. Chris answered that there were some practices put into place that can be revisited. There was a safety team that had some differences in opinion at the time. Catherine clarified that there are two dimensions, physical and perceived safety.
- Noel suggested we give the volunteer team a short deadline to complete their assessment/recommendations. Roy suggested that we form this Team by the next Board meeting. Claudia advised that we have congregational members with certain expertise in this area. Heather will follow up with individual members soon to get their thoughts.

#### Board Charter & Manual

- Lynn, Maddie and Denise will begin drafting a Board Manual with a charter and other policies. They asked for a volunteer who is comfortable in Teams to work with them mostly online to develop these documents by the end of the fiscal year or sooner.
- Maddie pointed out that the existing Governance Manual is on the website's Leadership page but is outdated and needs to be preserved in a physical copy too.
- Denise asked Rob to join the group, and he agreed. Maddie will set up a subchannel in Teams to begin this work.

#### Safe Congregation Policy review – Appendices A & B

- The current policy was originally voted on in 2016 and updated in 2019. It mentions a Right Relations team that we have never had in place.
- Heather asked the Board to review the policies. Maddie already did a close read, and discussed some similarities and differences.
- Heather asked to pass the policy by the next Board meeting. Maddie asked if we needed to pass a policy that is already in place, and suggested instead that the Board affirm the policy and establish the Right Relations team mentioned in the policy. There is already interest in creating such a Team, probably under another name.
- Heather does not like the phrase "Disruptive Behavior", Claudia suggests an alternative of "Safety and Civility..."

- Denise and Heather are going to identify point people who are interested in starting a Right Relations Team, and then let that Team lead the revisions to the Safe Congregation policy as a whole.
- Chris advised that we keep a clear line between the existing Spiritual Care Team and this new Right Relations Team.

#### Order of Service

- Heather asked the Board to think about how to revamp the Board page in the back of the Order of Service.
- Noel suggested we also discuss announcements as well. Lynn stated that if we had projection screens, the announcement could be projected as people enter the sanctuary. Noel received some historical record for how we used to do announcements, and she wonders why we do announcements at the beginning of the service. Chris said that we have previously not had extensive morning announcements, and it can be off-putting to new visitors. Noel suggested a digital announcement kiosk, and AB confirmed that he and Barbara are already discussing the options; a digital projection screen could also be used.
- Noel reminded the Board that she and Maddie are working as the Communication Volunteer Team, and will have suggestions for this type of topic soon.
- After further discussion, Heather suggested the Board might go ahead and vote to discontinue Sunday morning announcements. It was suggested that the discussion be continued on Teams before a final decision is made. Maddie will start a dialogue thread for further discussion.

#### **Board Committees Status Updates – Appendices C & D**

- AB reviewed the 6 steps identified as the things the church needs to do to move from “surviving to thriving”.
- 1) Shared Aligning Vision – Board's responsibility will be refining the mission statements.
- 2) System Thinking Leadership – already approved by last year’s Board; sorts the Governance of the church under 3 categories: Board, Staff, and Program Council.
  - Barbara spoke about her desire to restructure and rename the Program Council. She would prefer if the Council was a Board Committee instead of free standing, with co-chairs being appointed by the Board instead of voted in by the congregation. In her opinion, this would eliminated confusion between the Council and the RE/Music programs, and would encourage better management under the Board.
  - Maddie asked if that change would happen with a Board vote, or a by-laws change. Claudia confirmed that would need to be a change of by-laws. Maddie advised that if Barbara and Carol agree as co-chairs, they could present a proposal to the Board by the end of the calendar year to be voted on at the next congregational meeting.

- 3) Communication, Collaboration, and Coordination – the existing Communication Volunteer Team will be working on streamlining our communication channels.
- 4) Efficient Process/Workflows - standing teams will function as process teams, while volunteer teams will function as project teams.
  - The Strategic Planning Committee advises that all Standing Teams be moved under the Management Team – Worship, Tech Support, Membership, Welcoming Congregation, Spiritual Care
  - SPC recommends additional Volunteer Teams that have not yet been formed – Conflict Management/Restorative Relations, Mobilizing for Democracy, Mobilizing for Climate Justice.

### Membership Committee

- Lynn provided an update from the Membership Committee. Upcoming Sunday is Quuestions, this month's topic is the LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation, and Lynn invites anyone on the Board to attend. Next month starts Starting Point sessions. Virtual Coffee Hour is being restarted soon and will be hosted by the Membership committee but they need more volunteers. Realm database is being updated and cleaned by a sub-committee.

### Action Items

- Lynn will work on an updated BMOD script, with Catherine's input and notes from the Worship committee. This will be available by the September Board meeting.
- Board members are asked to sign up for 2 BMOD and 1 RE Sunday through the end of the calendar year.
- Heather will chat with Board members about putting together the Security Volunteer Team.
- Maddie will set up a subchannel for herself, Lynn, Rob, and Denise to start working on a Board charter and other documents.
- Heather and Denise will identify people to present a Right Relations draft for the next Board meeting, who will then review the appropriate section of the Safe Congregation policy.
- Maddie will start a dialogue on Teams about announcements.
- Barbara and Carol will propose a by-laws change and a draft charter to move Program Council under the Board as a Committee by the December Board meeting.

**Closing Words** – read by Heather

## **APPENDIX A – TVUUC CURRENT SAFE CONGREGATIONS POLICY**

### **XVII. Disruptive Behavior**

The Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church (TVUUC) has enjoyed a long tradition of peace, fellowship, and civility within its congregation. Each Sunday we affirm our commitment to be a free and open church community where differences are respected. In order to secure our tradition of civility and inclusion, we recognize the need to address the presence of behaviors that may challenge our sense of individual and communal safety and

well-being. Disruptive behaviors include any actions that inhibit or interfere with our ability to fully participate in congregational activities. Therefore, the following shall be the policy of

the Church if and when such a challenge may arise:

A. Situations involving disruptive behavior will be brought to the attention of the President of the Board of Directors and the Minister who may refer the situation to the Right Relations Team. The Board of Directors will be notified of this action.

B. The Right Relations Team will investigate the matter using this policy for guidance.

C. If an immediate response is required, it will be undertaken by the Senior Minister (if available), and/or the leader of the group involved. This may include asking the offending person or persons to leave, or suspending the meeting or activity until such a time as it can safely be resumed. If further assistance is required, the Police Department may be called. Any time any of these actions are undertaken without the Minister being present, the Minister and the President of the Board of Directors must be notified. All plans for follow up steps will be referred to the Right Relations Team.

D. Persons identified as being disruptive will be responded to as individuals of dignity and worth.

E. Information concerning the alleged incident(s) that led to concern will be systematically collected from the concerned parties by delegated Right Relations Team members and documented before any action is take.

F. To aid in evaluation the problem and determining the appropriate response, the following

points will be used in assessing the nature and severity of referred problems.

☐ Dangerousness: Is the individual a source of threat or harm to persons or property?

☐ Disruptiveness: What is the extent of disruption to Church function?

☐ Congregational Integrity: How likely is it that existing or prospective Church members will be driven away by the alleged behavior?

TVUUC Safe Congregations Policy, approved by Board of Directors on 9-17-2019 16

☐ Causes: Why is the disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the Church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?

☐ Probability of Change: How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?

☐ History: What has been the frequency and the degree of disruption caused by the individual in the past?

G. The Right Relations Team will meet to assess the findings and decide on a course of action, with the following four levels of response recommended to them.

1. Level One: A Right Relations Team member or members contacts the person named

as the source of the disruption and informs them of the nature of the concern. The person's viewpoint of the matter will be elicited, valued, and documented. Right Relations Team members will then assess the situation.

2. Level Two: If the basis of the original concern is determined to be valid, this finding will be clearly communicated to the person in question and if necessary, a contract for clearly defined behavior change may be negotiated. Such communication and contract will be documented.

3. Level Three: If the person in question refuses to respond to the communication of concern for the behavior, refuses to negotiate a contract, refuses to abide by a contract, or is engaging in behavior of sufficient severity, he or she may be excluded from the Church Community and the Church premises for a specified period of time, with reasons for such action, and conditions for return, clearly communicated and documented.

4. Level Four: The person in question is permanently excluded from the Church Community and the Church premises with steps taken as needed to enforce the integrity of the decision.

H. Should the Right Relations Team decide that exclusion or expulsion from the Church Community is necessary, they will consult the Board of Directors prior to action being taken.

I. The four levels of response recommended by this policy may be applied in the order determined by the Safe Congregation Right Relations Team and the Board of Directors in their judgment.



J. If appropriate, the Right Relations Team may offer referrals for professional services.

K. All documentation developed in the course of investigating and resolving allegations of disruptive behavior will be kept confidential. The President of the Board of Directors will be responsible for determining access to such documentation and for ensuring its security.

## APPENDIX B – SAMPLE UUA DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY

### POLICY REGARDING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

While openness to a wide variety of individuals is one of the prime values held by our congregation and expressed in our denomination's purposes and principles, we affirm the belief that our congregation must maintain a secure atmosphere where such openness can exist. When any person's physical and/or emotional well-being or freedom to safely express his or her beliefs or opinions is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly, even if this ultimately requires the expulsion of the offending person or persons.

There have been times when disruptive behavior of an individual in the church building or on the church grounds has led members to voice their concerns about one or more of the following:

1. Perceived threats to the safety of any adult or child;
2. The disruption of church activities;
3. Diminishing appeal of the congregation to its potential and existing membership.

The following shall be the policy of \_\_\_\_\_ in dealing with these issues:

1. If an immediate response is required, this will be undertaken by the Minister(s), if available, and/or the leader of the group involved. This may include asking the offending person or persons to leave, OR suspending the meeting or activity until such time that it may be safely resumed. If further assistance is required the Police Department may be called. Anytime any of these actions are undertaken without the Minister(s), the Minister(s) must be notified; a follow-up letter detailing the offense and the action taken because of the offense, should be written and distributed to the Minister and the Board President.
2. Situations not requiring immediate response will be referred to an ad hoc committee appointed by the Board. The committee will respond in terms of their own judgment observing the following:
  - a. The committee will respond to problems as they arise. There will be no attempt to define "acceptable" behavior in advance.
  - b. Persons identified as disruptive will be dealt with as individuals. Stereotypes will be avoided.
  - c. The committee will collect all necessary information.
  - d. To aid in evaluating the problem, these points will be considered:
    - DANGEROUSNESS – Is the individual the source of a threat or perceived threat to persons or property?
    - DISRUPTIVENESS – How much interference with church functions is going on?
    - OFFENSIVENESS – How likely is it that prospective or existing members will be driven away?
  - e. To determine the necessary response, these points will be considered:

*SAMPLE - POLICY REGARDING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR*

- CAUSES – Why is the disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
  - HISTORY – What is the extent, if any, of disruption cause in the past?
  - PROBABILITY OF CHANGE – How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?
- f. The committee will decide on the necessary response on a case by case basis. However, three levels of action/response are recommended:
- LEVEL ONE – The committee shall inform the Minister(s) of the problem and either the Minister(s) or a member of the committee shall meet with the offending person or persons to communicate the concern.
  - LEVEL TWO – The offending individual(s) is excluded from specific church activities for a limited period of time, with reasons and conditions of return written and made clear (with a copy going to the offender and one going into congregational files)
  - LEVEL ONE or LEVEL TWO action taken may be appealed to the Executive Committee of the Board, and/or the Minister(s).
  - LEVEL THREE – The offending individual is permanently excluded from church premises and all church activities. Before this is carried out, the committee will consult with the Board and the Minister(s). If it is agreed that the expulsion take place, a letter will be written and sent by the Minister to the individual outlining the expulsion, the individual's rights, and any possible recourse.

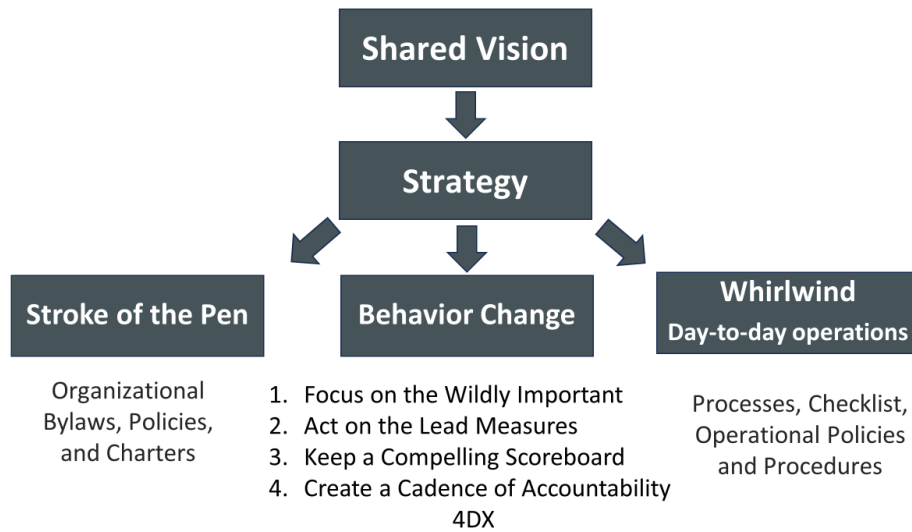
\_\_\_\_\_ strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, opinions and life experiences. However, concern for the safety and well-being of the congregation as a whole must be given priority over the privileges and inclusion of the individual. To the degree the disruptive behavior compromises the health of this congregation, our actions as people of faith must reflect this emphasis on security.

*SAMPLE - POLICY REGARDING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR*

## **APPENDIX C - SPC PRESENTATION**

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## Strategic Planning Committee Strategy Execution



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## TVUUC “Stroke of the Pen” Structure

**Bylaws** - The rules and regulations that govern TVUUC’s internal affairs. They help to ensure that TVUUC is managed in a fair and equitable manner and that the rights of its members are protected. The congregation approves Bylaws at Congregational meetings.

**Policies** - Formal Guidelines or rules that guide decision-making and the achievement of rational outcomes. They serve as a framework for behavior and set expectations for actions. TVUUC’s Board generally adopts policies and are subject to change by the same body. Policies can be recommended by any of the church’s official groups.

**Policies pertain to church-wide roles and rules.**

**Charters** - These documents define a particular group's purpose (mission) and values. They guide how the group operates and ensure all members are aligned with its purpose and TVUUC’s covenant. Charters can be proposed to the Board, Management Team, or Program Council by church stakeholders and are subject to Board approval.

**Charters pertain to specific Groups.**

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## BYLAWS SUPPORTING GROUP POLICIES

Group Policies would be developed by or submitted to the Board. The Board would develop the Committee Policy, the Management Team would develop the Standing Team Policy, the Program Council would develop the Program Policy, and The Strategic Planning Committee would develop the Volunteer Team Policy.

- **Committees** - Related to church governance and Board functions (like Goal Deployment)
- **Programs** - Groups related to church service, special interests, community involvement, activism, and community partnerships.
- **Standing Teams** - Teams involved with ongoing processes that support worship services and day-to-day operations
- **Volunteer Teams** - Recruited talent for short-term commitments and specific tasks for major projects and initiatives using **weekly sprints**.

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## TVUUC Committees (Governance)

**Committees** – 5 Board Committees and 2 Elected Committees

- Board Committee Chairs are approved by the Board
- Board Committee members are selected by their Board-appointed Chair
- Elected Committee members are elected by the Congregation and must be church members.

Board Committees	Elected Committees
1. Strategic Planning	1. Leadership Development
2. Personnel	2. Endowment Fund
3. Stewardship	
4. Finance	
5. Building and Grounds	

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE CHARTER REQUIREMENTS

All Board and Elected Committees, as well as the Management Team Charter, will be rewritten by September 30, 2024, to include the following:

- Desired Results (Purpose)
- Standard Agenda
- Decision-Making Process
- Measures for Success and Scorecard (Aligned with Church Goals)
- Methods to Track Progress and Keep Each Other Accountable
- Escalation Process for Decisions and Conflict

All other Team and Program Charters are rewritten at the discretion of the Management Team and Program Council.

## TVUUC BOARD/CHURCH GOALS

1. Create a Fast, Focused, and Flexible Structure to optimize and focus TVUUC's resources on accomplishing its Mission and Shared Vision.
2. Identify, develop, and grow the necessary human resources (stakeholders) essential to TVUUC's growth and influence as driven by its Mission.
3. Grow TVUUC's financial resources to provide secure and predictable sources of funds and a reasonable cost structure.
4. Improve TVUUC's ability and focus to connect generations through Common Goals and Initiatives.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

- A. Identify priorities and policy recommendations concerning the best use of TVUUC’s communication tools and infrastructure in conjunction with the Church Communications Volunteer Team and the Management Team by September 30, 2024. **G1 and G4**
- B. Finalize Website infrastructure and remove the “Under Construction” caption by September 15, 2024. **G1 and G2**
- C. Publish the approved Policies and Charters for the Board Committee, Elected Committees, and the Management Team by September 30, 2024. **G1 and G2**
- D. Recommend Capital Campaign focus and resources to the TVUUC Board of Directors by December 15, 2024. **G3 and G4**
- E. Reconfigure the Budgeting and Reporting Process to take advantage of best practices, institutional knowledge, and Realm capabilities by October 15, 2024. **G3**

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

### Execute and Track Objectives using MS Planner and Viva Goals

OBJ	Lead	Co-Lead	Support
A.	Noel	Maddie	
B.	A.B.	Bill	Ryan
C.	Denise	Heather	
D.	Kathy	Crystal	Mary, A.B.
E.	Heather	A.B.	Crystal, Noel

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

### Priority Processes – Accountability, Responsibility, and Support

Processes	Committees (A)	Standing Teams (R)	Volunteer Teams (S)
Church Communications	Strategic Planning	Management Team	Church Communications Volunteer Team
Building Updates and Maintenance	Building and Grounds	Management Team	B&G Volunteer Teams
Grounds Updates and Maintenance	B&G	Management Team	B&G Volunteer Teams
Accounting and Budgeting	Finance Stewardship	Management Team	Fund Raising Volunteer Team
Executive Accountability	Personnel Strategic Planning		President's Council

### TVUUC Shared Aligning Vision

- **Core Values** - What is at our core? Why are we here?
- **Covenant** - How will we bring those values into the world through relationships?
- **Mission** - What are we here to do? What is our work?
- **Vision** - What do we want to be?

Necessary Conditions	Primary Purview
Core Values	Senior Minister
Covenant	Committee of Shared Ministry
Mission	Board
Vision	Congregation
Strategic Planning and Goal Setting	Board and Board Committees



## APPENDIX D – VOLUNTEER AND STANDING TEAMS

*The Strategic Planning Committee and TVUUC Board President started discussing these concepts with the Senior Minister March 2022*

# SIX Alignment Principles for Organizational Systems

Shared Aligning Vision

System Thinking Leadership

Reflective Practice (Plan-Do-Check-Act) through Communication, Collaboration, and Coordination

Stable Efficient Processes or Workflows

Willing and Able Stakeholders (Staff and Volunteers)

Leading and Lagging Measures - Financial, Stakeholder Satisfaction, Efficiency, Learning and Growth

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### TVUUC Shared Aligning Vision

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- **Covenant** - How will we bring those values into the world through relationships?
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Necessary Conditions	Primary Purview
Core Values	Senior Minister
Covenant	Committee of Shared Ministry
Mission	Board
Vision	Congregation
Strategic Planning and Goal Setting	Board and Board Committees

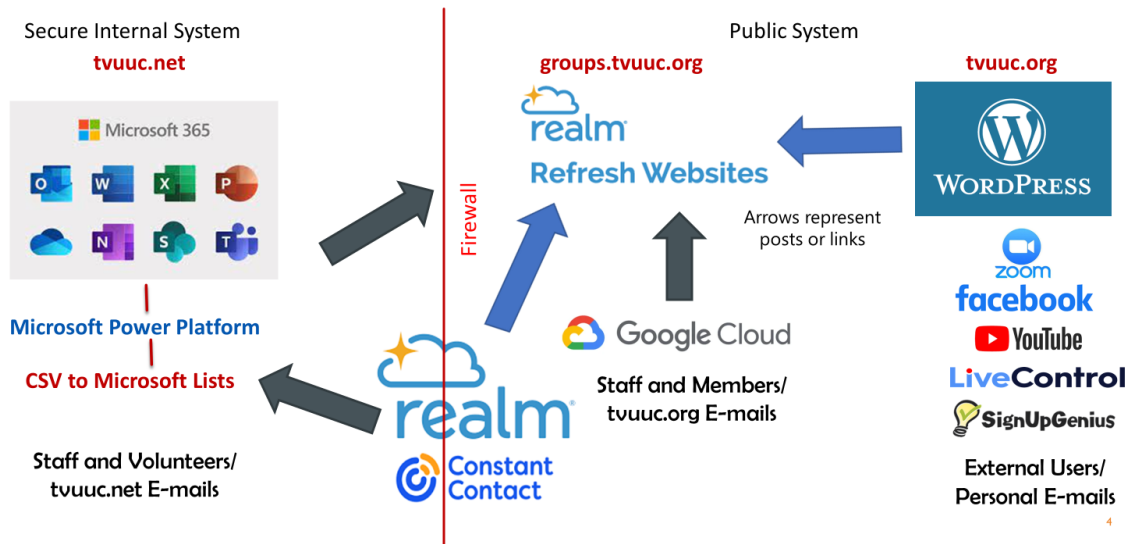
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## Policy Governance to Strategic Governance (Systems Thinking Design)



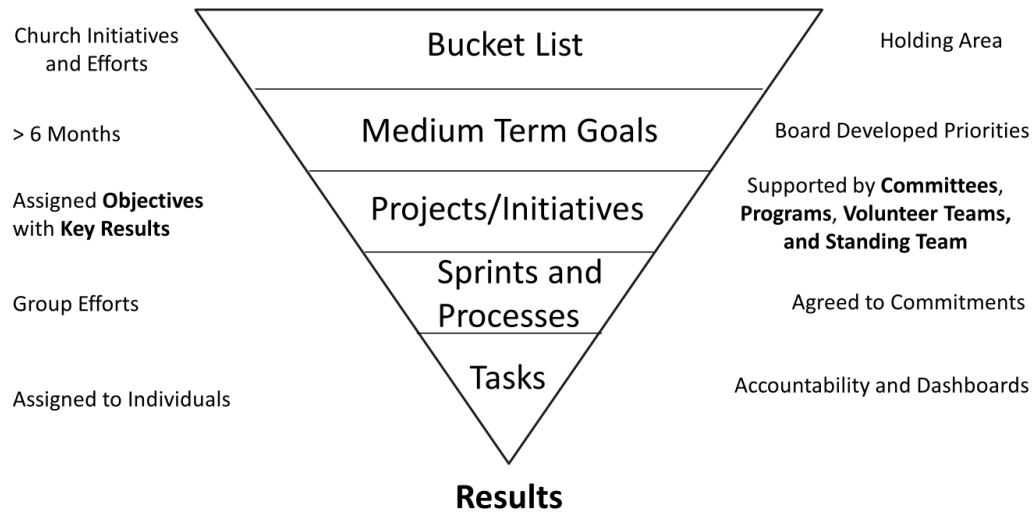
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## Communications, Collaboration and Coordination



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## Policy and Goal Deployment (Execution)



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## TVUUC Committees (Governance)

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**Board Committees**

1. Strategic Planning
2. Personnel
3. Stewardship
4. Finance
5. Building and Grounds

**Elected Committees**

1. Leadership Development
2. Endowment Fund

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## TVUUC VOLUNTEER TEAMS - PROJECTS

### Current or in the works Volunteer Teams

1. Technology Support Team – Information Technology
2. Sustainable Strategy Team – Structure and Culture
  - President's Council Volunteer Team (Advise Board Officers)
  - TBA - Leadership Standing Team (Worship, Programs, Governance)
  - Staff/Volunteer Development Volunteer Team (Develop and deliver programs/resources)
3. Church Communications Team
4. BG Volunteer Teams
5. TBA – Conflict Management Team/Restorative Relations
6. TBA - Mobilizing for Democracy Team
7. TBA - Mobilizing for Climate Justice Team

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## TVUUC STANDING TEAMS - PROCESSES

### Priority Standing Teams

1. Worship Team
  2. Services Technical Support Team or A/V Team
  3. Membership Team
  4. Welcoming Congregation Team
  5. Spiritual Care Team
- ❖ Coordinate with the Management Team and are responsible for process development and improvement.

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