

Ethical Leadership and Governance

Unity South Central Region



**What's hard about
spiritual center
leadership?**

**Let's start with
expectations.**

**“You can't
expect
everyone to
have the same
dedication as
you.”**
— Jeff Kinney

**“He was swimming in
a sea of other
people's
expectations. Men
had drowned in seas
like that.”**
— Robert Jordan,

Ethical Standards in Governance

The Minister and Board of Directors plays a pivotal role in upholding the spiritual center's ethical standards. Directors must act with integrity, transparency, and accountability to ensure the organization's success and maintain community trust.

Upholding high ethical standards fosters a culture of trust, integrity, and responsible decision-making, which ultimately contributes to the long-term sustainability of the community/spiritual center

The ethics of a minister's role in interactions with a church board of volunteer trustees encompass a wide range of principles, reflecting the complex relationship between spiritual leadership and governance.

The ethical considerations for board members when working with a minister at a church are critical to ensuring a harmonious, effective, and transparent relationship that serves the best interests of the congregation and the church's mission.

Here are key a few ethical guidelines for both Ministers and Board Members:

Ethics : Uphold Integrity and Honesty

Ministers and Board Members should demonstrate high moral character in all interactions, being truthful and transparent with each other. This includes financial transparency, honesty in reporting church activities, and integrity in decision-making.

Respect and Collaboration

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Recognizing the board members as volunteers who contribute their time and skills for the spiritual center's welfare is crucial.

Ministers must also respect the unique position of members of the board, their insights, opinions, and decisions, and promote a culture of collaboration.

Equally, Board Members must respect the unique position of the minister who is a trained leader with goals and objectives to meet and who holds confidential information that cannot always be shared.

Confidentiality:

Confidential information shared within board meetings or in the context of decision-making processes must be treated with utmost confidentiality, safeguarding the privacy of individuals and the integrity of church operations.

Accountability:

Ministers are accountable to the church board for their actions, decisions, and the overall health of the congregation. This requires a willingness to accept constructive feedback, engage in self-reflection, and make changes when necessary.

Board Members are accountable to the community who elected them.

Conflict of Interest:

Ministers and Board Members must avoid situations where their personal interests might conflict with their duties to the church and its congregation.

When potential conflicts arise, they should be disclosed to the board transparently.

Leadership and Guidance:

While the board handles governance, the minister provides spiritual leadership and guidance.

This dual structure requires the minister to lead by example, fostering a spiritual environment while respecting the governance role of the board.

Empowerment and Development:

Ethical ministers seek to empower the board, supporting the development of its members' leadership and governance skills.

This might involve providing resources, education, or facilitating discussions on church governance best practices.

Shared Vision and Values:

Working collaboratively to ensure the Spiritual Center's vision and values are clearly articulated and upheld is essential.

This includes aligning the spiritual center's mission with its activities and decisions, guided by both the minister and the board.

Communication:

Open, clear, and regular communication between the minister and the board is vital.

This helps prevent misunderstandings, ensures alignment on goals and strategies, and fosters a healthy working relationship.

You have a responsibility to speak and a responsibility to listen.

Informed Decision-Making:

Ethical fiduciary responsibility requires the minister and board members to make informed decisions.

This involves due diligence in understanding the financial and operational aspects of the church and seeking expert advice when necessary.

Transparency:

Ethically, ministers and board members should be transparent about the church's financial status and resource allocation with each other and, where appropriate, the congregation.

This transparency fosters trust and accountability.

“Some people think they are in community, but they are only in proximity. True community requires commitment and openness. It is a willingness to extend yourself to encounter and know the other.”

-David Spangler