Governing Body Responsibilities - Summary

According to *The Manual*, the Governing Body (Council, Board, Official Board, Church Council, etc.) is the primary leadership body responsible for the overall spiritual, financial, administrative, and strategic oversight of the Community of Faith. The exact structure may vary, but the responsibilities remain the same.

1. Spiritual Leadership and Pastoral Oversight

The governing body is responsible for the spiritual life and mission of the congregation, including:

- Admitting and removing members
- Approving transfers of membership
- Supporting faith formation and Christian education
- Ensuring the proper administration of Baptism and Communion
- Overseeing worship life
- Providing for pastoral care and visitation
- Encouraging outreach, evangelism, and social justice ministries
- Determining appropriate use of church facilities for ministry purposes

2. Financial Stewardship

The governing body has overall responsibility for the congregation's finances by:

- Overseeing fundraising activities
- Authorizing expenditures and disbursements
- Monitoring the approved budget
- Providing financial leadership and accountability
- Authorizing borrowing when necessary

It ensures that financial resources are used to support the mission and ministry of the Community of Faith.

3. Records and Corporate Responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for maintaining official congregational records, including:

- Membership rolls
- Historic membership records
- Records of adherents and children

- Registers of baptisms, marriages, and funerals

These records have both pastoral and legal significance.

4. Ministry Personnel and Pastoral Relations

The governing body:

- Deals with pastoral relations matters as authorized by the congregation or pastoral charge
- Works with the Ministry and Personnel Committee
- Participates in search and appointment processes when required
- Supports healthy relationships among ministry personnel and the congregation

5. Property Oversight

While Trustees hold legal title to property, the governing body:

- Gives directions to Trustees regarding property matters
- Sets priorities and ministry goals for property use
- Makes recommendations regarding major property decisions

Trustees are required to follow lawful directions of the governing body and Regional Council.

6. Leadership Development

The governing body:

- Recruits and nurtures lay leaders
- Oversees nominations processes
- Recommends individuals for roles such as:
    - Licensed Lay Worship Leaders
    - Sacraments Elders
    - Candidates for ministry

7. Accountability and Governance

The governing body:

- Establishes committees, teams, commissions, or task groups
- Assigns mandates and budgets
- Monitors outcomes rather than managing every activity directly
- Ensures all groups in the congregation remain accountable to the Community of Faith

All organizations and ministry groups in the congregation are accountable to the governing body.

8. Relationship with the Wider Church

The governing body:

- Elects representatives to Regional Council
- Receives and transmits proposals to Regional Council
- Shares information and decisions from Regional and General Council
- Represents the congregation in conversations about pastoral relations, amalgamation, realignment, or disbanding when authorized

9. Reporting and Communication

The governing body must report to the Community of Faith at least annually on:

- The life and work of the congregation
- Financial condition, including assets, liabilities, income, and expenses

Note: The governing body is also responsible for completing annual statistical and information reports required by the wider church including Community of Faith (CoF) Profile, Annual Report, and Self-Assessment.

A Simple Summary

A Governing Body's primary role is to:

Provide faithful leadership and oversight for the spiritual life, mission, people, finances, property, and future direction of the Community of Faith, while ensuring accountability to both the congregation and the wider United Church of Canada.

The governing body should focus on both **strategic leadership** (vision, priorities, mission, goals) and **operational oversight** (ensuring policies, budgets, and mandates are followed), while empowering committees and ministry teams to carry out the work of the church.