

# Guiding Principles

Mission Northwest

## PREAMBLE

The following document is designed by Mission Northwest (M-NW) Board to implement a staff-led, policy-governed model modified for the specific needs of M-NW. The Guiding Principles fall into three categories:

- Through “Mission Principles” the Board prescribes for the Executive Minister the ends to be achieved by M-NW.
- Through “Boundary Principles” the Board sets constraints on the means that may be used in pursuit of those ends. (However, the Board is careful not to prescribe any particular means for the Executive Minister and the staff.)
- Through “Accountability Principles” the Board instructs the President of M-NW as its chairperson how to maintain the linkage of the Board with its constituents, the monitoring of Executive Minister performance, and the integrity of the Board’s own process. In any case where these Guiding Principles delegate to the Executive Minister and staff a decision required by the Bylaws to be made by the Board or a standing team, the requirement of the Bylaws will be fulfilled through a vote of the full Board.

These Guiding Principles are not intended to communicate all that we believe and practice. We affirm our commitment to an orthodox and evangelical Christian faith, the value of all persons and cultures, and the variety of legitimate ministries in God’s Kingdom. Through these Guiding Principles, we merely intend to focus the priority outcomes, the ethical boundaries, and the organizational strategy of M-NW through its Board and Executive Minister.

## MISSION PRINCIPLES

*[Defining for the Executive Minister **what difference** this organization exists to make **for whom** and **to what extent**]*

### **MP 1.0 Comprehensive Mission Statement**

Resourcing and developing churches that connect people with Jesus Christ.

#### **MP 1.1 Component: M-NW Ministries.**

The top priority of M-NW will be identifying, resourcing and empowering leaders for church health and church planting. Additionally the focus of M-NW ministries will cluster around leadership development, church transformation, connection, church planting and funding.

*MP 1.1.1 Detail: Leadership Development*

Identifying, resourcing and empowering leaders will be a top priority of M-NW.

*MP 1.1.2 Detail: Church Transformation*

Providing resources and encouragement for church transformation will be a top priority of M-NW.

*MP 1.1.3 Detail: Connection*

Connecting churches to churches and leaders to leaders will be a top priority of M-NW.

*MP 1.1.4 Detail: Church Planting*

Developing new church plants and church restarts will be a top priority of M-NW.

*MP 1.1.5 Detail: Funding*

Developing and expanding financial resources for M-NW and church ministry will be a top priority of M-NW.

**MP 1.2.2 Component: Strategic Partnerships**

A second-level priority of M-NW will be working with evangelical ministries, regardless of denomination, to grow mission-focused churches through alliances and projects that create a win for each ministry and for the advancement of God's Kingdom.

## **BOUNDARY PRINCIPLES**

*[Defining **the limits of acceptable means** that the Executive Minister is hereby authorized to use in achieving the Mission]*

**BP 1.0 Comprehensive Boundary Statement**

The Executive Minister shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unlawful, imprudent, unethical, or unbiblical.

**BP 1.1 Component: Biblical and Moral Integrity**

With regard to teaching and leadership the Executive Minister shall not fail to uphold high standards of biblical teaching and morality.

**BP 1.2 Component: Financial Planning and Budgeting**

Financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the Board's Mission Principles or risk financial jeopardy.

*BP 1.2.1 Detail: Sufficient Information*

The Executive Minister shall not propose budgeting that contains too little information to enable credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, relation of expenditures to Mission Principles, and

disclosure of multiyear planning assumptions.

*BP 1.2.2 Detail: Expenditures within Projected Funds*

The Executive Minister shall not plan expenditures in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period, unless special circumstances are adequately described including a realistic plan to make up the deficit.

*BP 1.2.3 Detail: Board Funding*

The Executive Minister shall not propose budgeting that provides less for Board activities during the year than is set forth in the Cost of Governance Principle, AP1.2.7.

**BP 1.3 Component: Financial Condition and Activities.**

With respect to the actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities, the Executive Minister shall not allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from Board priorities established in Mission Principles.

*BP 1.3.1 Detail: Expenditures*

The Executive Minister shall not expend more funds than have been budgeted over all in the fiscal year with a buffer of no more than 10% of the total budget.

*BP 1.3.2 Detail: Borrowing*

The Executive Minister shall not borrow an amount greater than 20% of the readily marketable securities.

*BP 1.3.3 Detail: Safety Net*

The Executive Minister shall not make expenditures which would drop readily marketable securities below a safety reserve of less than 6-months budgeted expenses.

*BP 1.3.4 Detail: Inter-fund Shifting*

The Executive Minister shall not make inter-fund transfers in amounts greater than can be restored to a condition of discrete fund balances by reliable, otherwise unencumbered revenue within twelve months.

*BP 1.3.5 Detail: Payroll and Debt Settlement*

The Executive Minister shall not fail to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.

*BP 1.3.6 Detail: Government Payments and Filings*

The Executive Minister shall not allow tax payments, if any, or other government-ordered payments or filings to be overdue or inaccurately filed.

*BP 1.3.7 Detail: Purchase Cap*

The Executive Minister shall not make a single expenditure of greater than 5% of the annual budget, aside from staff, non-discretionary expenses, and capital investments.

**BP 1.4 Component: Asset Protection.**

The Executive Minister shall not allow the assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked.

*BP 1.4.1 Detail: Insurance*

The Executive Minister shall not fail to insure against theft and casualty losses to at least 80 percent of replacement value and against liability losses to Board members, staff, and M-NW itself in an amount greater than the average for comparable organizations.

*BP 1.4.2 Detail: Bonding*

The Executive Minister shall not allow unbonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.

*BP 1.4.3 Detail: Facilities and Equipment*

The Executive Minister shall not subject facilities and equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.

*BP 1.4.4 Detail: Liability*

The Executive Minister shall not unnecessarily expose the organization, its Board, or its staff to claims of liability.

*BP 1.4.4 Detail: Purchases*

The Executive Minister shall not make any purchase 1) wherein normally prudent protections have not been made against conflict of interest; 2) of over \$1,000 without having made comparisons of prices and quality; and 3) of over \$5,000 without a stringent method of assuring the balance of long-term quality and cost.

*BP 1.4.5 Detail: Information Protection*

The Executive Minister shall not fail to protect intellectual property, information, and files from loss or significant damage.

*BP 1.4.6 Detail: Auditor*

The Executive Minister shall not receive, process, or disburse funds under controls that are insufficient to meet the Board-appointed auditor's standards.

*BP 1.4.7 Detail: Public Reputation*

The Executive Minister shall not endanger the organization's public image or credibility, particularly in ways that would hinder accomplishment of its mission.

**BP 1.5 Component: Compensation and Benefits.**

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract worker, and volunteers, the Executive Minister shall not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image.

*BP 1.5.1 Detail: Executive Minister Compensation*

The Executive Minister shall not change his or her own compensation and benefits.

*BP 1.5.2 Detail: Promise of Employment*

The Executive Minister shall not promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

*BP 1.5.3 Detail: Market Value*

The Executive Minister shall not establish current compensation and benefits that deviate materially from the geographic or professional market for the skills employed.

*BP 1.5.4 Detail: Term of Compensation*

The Executive Minister shall not create compensation obligations over a longer term than revenues can be safely projected, in no event longer than one year, and in all events subject to losses in revenue.

*BP 1.5.5 Detail: Fairness of Benefits*

The Executive Minister shall not establish or change health or pension benefits so as to cause unpredictable or inequitable situations.

**BP 1.6 Component: Treatment of Staff.**

With respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the Executive Minister may not cause or allow conditions that are unfair or illegal.

*BP 1.6.1 Detail: Personnel Policies*

The Executive Minister shall not operate without concise personnel policies that clarify rules for staff, provide for effective handling of grievances, and protect against wrongful conditions such as nepotism and grossly preferential treatment for personal reasons.

*BP 1.6.2 Detail: Grievance*

The Executive Minister shall not prevent staff expressing a grievance to the Board President when (1) internal procedures have been exhausted, or (2) the employee alleges *either* that Board principles have been violated to his or her detriment *or* that Board principles do not adequately protect his or her human rights (see BP 1.0).

*BP 1.6.3 Detail: Notice*

The Executive Minister shall not fail to acquaint staff with their rights according to these principles.

**BP 1.7 Component: Communication with and Support to the Board.**

The Executive Minister shall not permit the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

**BP 1.8 Component: Real Property.**

The Executive Minister shall not buy, sell, or manage real property in a manner that fails to put maximum resources to work for the mission of M-NW, to facilitate property ownership by autonomous churches, and to aid the broader advance of God’s Kingdom through win-win ventures with other like-minded ministries.

*BP 1.8.1 Detail: Maximum Resources for Mission*

The Executive Minister shall not allow real property of M-NW to remain under-productive when there is an opportunity for it to better advance the current mission priorities of M-NW through its usage, lease, or sale.

*BP 1.8.2 Detail: Property Ownership by Autonomous Churches*

The Executive Minister shall not foster dependence of an autonomous church on M-NW by maintaining M-NW ownership of property rather than offering it to the church for sale or lease at a fair market price less any legally verifiable equity that the church already has in the property.

*BP 1.8.3 Detail: Advancing God’s Kingdom*

The Executive Minister shall not sell or lease real property for general usage when a like-minded Christian ministry is willing and able to obtain it for Kingdom usage for at least 80% of its value on the open market.

*BP 1.8.4 Detail: Certification Prior to Sale*

The Executive Minister shall not finalize the sale of any real property owned directly by M-NW without prior certification by the Board in writing that such a sale violates none of the Boundary Principles and is therefore authorized by current Board policy.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY PRINCIPLES**

*[Defining for the chairperson the standards to uphold for enforcing  
the integrity and fulfillment of the Board’s process]*

### **AP 1.0 Comprehensive Accountability Statement**

The accountability of the Board before God, on behalf of the member churches of M-NW is to insure that M-NW staff, through the leadership of its Executive Minister, (1) achieves the fulfillment of its Mission Principles, and (2) avoids violation of its Boundary Principles.

#### **AP 1.1 Component: Connecting M-NW to Its “Moral Owners”.**

The Board shall maintain an active connection to the “moral ownership” of M-NW: Christ and the churches he has called M-NW to serve.

*AP 1.1.1 Detail: Devotion to Prayer and the Word of God*

Under the teaching and guidance of the Executive Minister, the Board will continually seek the wisdom and leading of Christ as the Lord of His church. To this end, significant attention will be given to prayer and study of Scripture as a group.

*AP 1.1.2 Detail: Constituent Input and Feedback*

The Board will receive input and feedback from member churches to better understand their needs. Periodically the Board will arrange an objective assessment by a competent consulting group.

*AP 1.1.3 Detail: Demographic and Cultural Research*

The Board will invest significant resources each year to enhance its understanding of the needs of people in the communities and cultures where it is planting, revitalizing, and resourcing churches.

**AP 1.2 Component: Maintaining the Process of the Board.**

The Board shall conduct itself with discipline and integrity with regard to its own process of governance.

*AP 1.2.1 Detail: Board Style*

The Board will govern with an emphasis on (1) outward vision rather than internal preoccupation, (2) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, (3) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (4) clear distinction of Board and staff roles, (5) collective rather than individual decisions, (6) future rather than past or present, and (7) proactivity rather than reactivity.

*AP 1.2.2 Detail: Board Job Responsibilities*

The essential responsibilities of the Board are linkage to the people served, definition of guiding principles, and monitoring of the Executive Minister's performance. In addition to these three essentials, the Board shall exercise authority granted to it in the Bylaws and not specifically delegated to the Executive Minister.

*AP 1.2.3 Detail: Board Member Code of Conduct*

The Board commits itself and its members to the following code of conduct:

- a. Board members are bound by the M-NW Board covenant.
- b. Members of the Board must represent unconflicted loyalty to the interests of Christ regarding those whom he has called M-NW to serve (Matt. 28: 18-20). This loyalty supersedes any personal or group interest. A member must disclose any conflict of interest, fiduciary or otherwise, and withdraw from any decision-making affected by it.
- c. Members of the Board must honor the principles and decisions of the Board acting as a whole. They may not foster dissent or attempt to exercise individual authority over the staff or the organization except as explicitly stated in the guiding principles.
- d. Members of the Board must respect the confidentiality of sensitive Board issues and must avoid gossip or other "triangulation" against the practice of direct, biblical resolution. (Examples of sensitive Board issues include: specifying names of individuals and churches in discussions involving dysfunctional behavior or church conflict, topics declared by the Board or President to be "sensitive", and more.)

*AP 1.2.4 Detail: Responsibility of the Chairperson for Integrity of Process*

The chairperson enforces the integrity and fulfillment of the Board's process. The chairperson is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the Accountability Principles as he or she acts to ensure the integrity of the Board's process.

*AP 1.2.5 Detail: Responsibility of the Executive Minister for Visionary Leadership*

The Executive Minister has the responsibility, authority, and accountability to serve as the primary leader of M-NW at every level: constituents, Board, and staff. With respect to the Board, the Executive Minister will provide the primary vision and guidance on all actions except for monitoring of Executive Minister's performance. If a question of process arises with regard to the Bylaws or guiding principles of M-NW, the Executive Minister will defer to the judgment of the Executive Committee.

*AP 1.2.6 Detail: Use of Board Teams*

Board teams will be assigned so as to reinforce the wholeness of the Board's job and never to interfere with the delegation from the Board to the Executive Minister or with the work of the staff.

*AP 1.2.7 Detail: Cost of Governance*

The Board will invest amply in its own governance capacity through training, outside expertise, research mechanisms, and meeting costs.

**AP 1.3 Component: Monitoring the Performance of the Executive Minister.**

The Board's sole official connection to the operating organization of M-NW, its achievement, and conduct shall be through the Executive Minister.

*AP 1.3.1 Detail: Unity of Control*

Only decisions of the Board acting as a whole are binding on the Executive Minister. When the Board is not convened, the Executive Committee acts on its behalf.

*AP 1.3.2 Detail: Accountability of the Executive Minister*

The Executive Minister 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 Executive Minister.

*AP 1.3.3 Detail: Delegation to the Executive Minister*

The Board will instruct the Executive Minister through written principles that prescribe the mission to be achieved and establish the boundaries to be respected, allowing the Executive Minister to use any reasonable interpretation of these principles.

*AP 1.3.4 Detail: Performance of the Executive Minister*

Systematic and objective monitoring of the Executive Minister's job performance will be solely against M-NW accomplishment of the Board's Mission Principles



and M-NW operation within the Board's Boundary Principles.

a. The Executive Minister will be required to write measurable goals each year that correspond to each of the Board's mission principles.

b. Each year the Board shall review the results achieved by the Executive Minister on each of the annual goals, as the basis of either a raise or corrective action.