



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHURCH PRACTICES SERIES

JULY 2022



GTA Region



WELCOME

Over the last few years serving as GTA Regional Director in the Western Ontario District, it became clear that there were some common challenges facing church leaders in the Greater Toronto Area.

As a result, we decided to develop The Church Practices Series to assist our leaders in addressing these challenges in their unique context.

In the following few pages, you will find links to interviews with those with an academic perspective on these challenges and those who have personally worked to address them. In addition, you will find links to resources and a curated summary of what we have seen in our research.

We hope this package helps spark conversation as we work together to see our region impacted for God.

Joel Spiridigliozzi with Jonathan Gallo



GTA Region



INTERVIEWS

WATCH / LISTEN HERE: [HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/727774716/911768E599](https://vimeo.com/727774716/911768E599)

GUESTS:



Dr. John Pellowe
CEO
Canadian Centre for Christian
Charities
<http://cccc.org/>



Dan Disabatino
Secretary / Treasurer
Western Ontario District PAOC
ddisabatino@wodistrict.org



Joel Spiridigliozzi
Regional Director - GTA
Western Ontario District PAOC
joel@wodistrict.org



Mark Collins
Regenerate Director
Western Ontario District PAOC
mcollins@wodistrict.org

Taking the Next Step

Canadian Centre for Christian Charities - <https://www.cccc.org>

The CCCC is a valuable organization that member churches can obtain education, templates, and assistance in developing their organization and board. One highly recommended resource is [Serving as a Board Member](#) book and video series.

Western Ontario District Help. Email joel@wodistrict.org

We are here to help pastors and boards grow healthy. We offer a variety of tools and seminars for you and your board, including:

- Board Meetings – Rules of Order
- What Pastors Can Do To Help the Board Do Its Work
- The Uniqueness of Church Boards
- Respecting a Pastor's Contribution
- Registered Charities Are Not Businesses
- Important Choices Every Board Member Needs To Make
- How A Caring Board Can Help Its Pastor Be Successful
- Good & Poor Governance
- What the Bible Says About The Board & Staff Relationship
- Discernment Leads to Good Decision Making
- The Bible's Place In A Leader's Life
- The Importance of Vision & Prayer
- Accountability and Leadership

KEYS TO LEADING AN EFFECTIVE BOARD SYSTEM

Throughout history, the church has chosen various methods of organization and leadership. Local churches affiliated with the PAOC and WOD agree to be organized and operate in ways outlined in the PAOC General Constitution and By-Laws can be found [here](#), and the WOD Constitution and By-Laws are found [here](#).

CONSTITUTION

A Church Constitution codifies how the church will work together. It contains several sections that articulate:

Prerogatives: charitable purposes, affiliation

Beliefs: statement of faith, ordinances, practices, position papers

Membership: Who can be a member and be involved in leadership and decision-making.

Roles: Pastor, staff, board members

Guidelines: decision making, limitations, duties, accountability, discipline, restoration, conflict resolution, finances.

The PAOC offers a standardized local church constitution that can be obtained from your local WOD office. While elements of local church constitutions might differ slightly from church to church, they must continually be updated to reflect the changes made at the General and District conference every few years.

Staff must be familiar with the updated church constitution and bylaws.

NATURE OF THE BOARD

The role and function of the board are to be clearly articulated in the church constitution.

In some churches, the board serves as the only leadership council of the church concerned with both spiritual and business matters. In other churches, there is a separate Elder or Advisory Board that, along with the Lead Pastor, determines the spiritual and visionary direction of the church. In that model, the elected board takes the advisory direction in consideration in decisions related to finances and business.

The level of involvement of the church board can vary from church to church. The church board is primarily concerned with guarding the vision, writing policies, approving finances, and supporting the Lead Pastor. In some cases, the board is also involved in overseeing ministries in the church or fulfilling a ministry role. The following diagram shows the difference between a Policy Board, a Managing Board, and a Working Board.





Each church is at a different stage, so it is essential to determine where along the continuum of governance your board must be involved and where staff and other volunteers can lead. As churches grow, ministry workers increase, and there is a greater ministry specialization, the board will become policy-focused.

INTEGRATION

Building an effective board to lead the church begins with a healthy integration process. An integration or assimilation process is a clear path of involvement of people from first-time visitors to leaders of leaders. This path might look like the following: visitors > attenders > members > leaders > board members.

This is different than a discipleship path. A discipleship path might look like the following: salvation > baptism > Spirit baptism > new believers' class > in a group / class > serving > spiritual markers > discipling others

Your integration path is focused on the individual's involvement in the organization. Your discipleship path ensures a depth of spiritual growth for those involved in the church community and the board. Members become the core pool from which individuals are nominated and elected to the board. Growing a mature membership base is one aspect that is critical to building a solid community led by a healthy board.

NOMINATION & ORIENTATION

Clear role descriptions, expectations, and guidelines presented in written form and delivered in an orientation meeting help guide the nomination and screening process and set the board's culture.

Pastors should be aware of the makeup and relationship of the board members to each other. While alignment to the church constitution is important, healthy boards have a variety of leaders with diverse backgrounds, cultures, perspectives, and experiences. The experience of incoming board members often shapes their perspective and expectation of the Pastor and other board members.

ONGOING TRAINING

It is important for church board members to receive onboarding and ongoing training. Onboarding helps to orient the new board member into their role and responsibilities. Training helps board members understand the culture of the church, their legal obligations, relationship with staff and the congregation, confidentiality, parliamentary procedure, decision-making practices, writing policies, reading financial reports, and more.

THE PASTORS ROLE

The Pastor is essential in serving alongside the church board and leading the governance system. A pastor needs to continually grow in their ability to facilitate board meetings, build relationships within the church board, and provide ongoing training for board members. In addition to providing spiritual care, the Pastor should bring the board a growing understanding of organizational best practices (vision development, staff management, accounting, legal, insurance, HR, policies, procedures, etc.) and be able to connect the church with the right external advisors who can help the church navigate various issues requiring a professional opinion.

THE BENEFITS

Healthy boards offer many benefits to the strength and support to the leadership and future of the local church. Healthy boards provide an opportunity for senior leadership, focused on the day-to-day, to reflect and review what is happening in the organization. This type of perspective is invaluable to continued growth and success. A healthy board also offers support for the Pastor; together they can speak as representatives to the community and the church. Finally, if there is a transition, healthy boards help to provide stability to the organization in navigating transitions.

Have a story or experience that you would like to share? Section meetings are a perfect place to debrief. We would also love to hear from you and help pass on what you have learned.