

Synod of the Trinity

Our Ends

Carver: ends define "which owner-oriented results are to be achieved, for whom, and at what cost;" ends focus on an organization's reason(s) for existence—its mission.

The Synod's **primary end** is:

As part of the Body of Christ, the Synod of the Trinity, through the responsible use of shared resources, supports and challenges member Presbyteries to be vital, innovative, and faithful in their collaborative and distinctive callings.

The **secondary ends** of the Synod are:

- **Connecting presbytery leadership for coordination, spiritual support and sharing best practices.**
- **Encouraging innovation in, between and among presbyteries through the use of human, programmatic and financial resources.**
- Providing services of education and nurture as requested by member presbyteries.
- Extending partnership of member presbyteries in joint and shared mission and ministry.
- Nurturing relationships within the larger church for the purpose of greater witness.
- **Fostering conversation and action for the promotion of social righteousness.**

Our Values

*Organizational values are literally **behaviors** by which an organization carries out its essence.*

Affirming the interdependency and mutuality of the Councils of the Church, our ends, policies, and structure are built upon these values:

- Connecting and Partnering
- Learning Together
- Living the Good News Where God Has Placed us
- Engaging a Larger Picture

Our Model of Governance and Leadership

Together we have chosen a governance and leadership approach modeled after John & Miriam Carver's Policy Governance®. The Synod's adaptation of the Carver model highlights the stewarding role played by the Synod Assembly and its Governing Commission on behalf of the Synod's primary stakeholders—the member presbyteries and their congregations (those whom Carvers call "owners")—while also empowering the Synod Executive to lead and to work closely with staff and volunteers to implement the Synod's ends. The Synod's governance and leadership approach is clearly expressed in our Policy Manual which has been carefully aligned with our Book of Order. Our By-Laws and Standing Rules are similarly aligned.

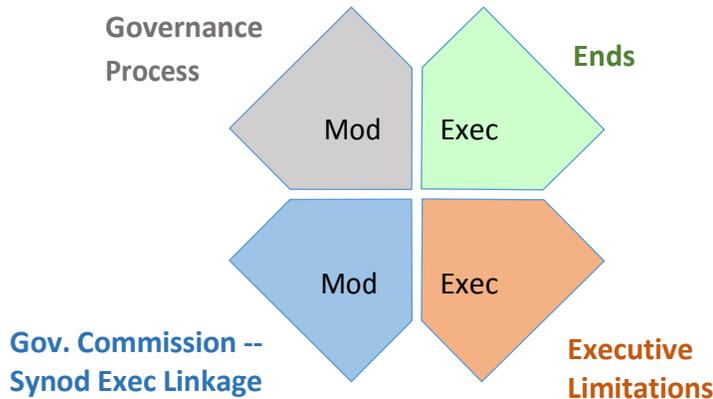
Policy Governance® is based on four philosophical pillars, namely:

- Accountability, Servant Leadership, Clarity of Group Values, and Empowerment

In this governance model, the board (that is, the Governing Commission working on behalf of the Synod Assembly) attends to the Synod's primary documents—articles of incorporation, by-laws, standing rules, minutes; and a policy manual, which is a set of comprehensive policies that address decisions about organizational "ends," the board's own job, linking governance to management (staff), and management "means" (including executive limitations). Everything else is implementation, which is the responsibility of staff and volunteers led by the Synod Executive. That is, strategic plans, marketing plans, or anything other than the board's primary documents are the Synod Executive's responsibility.

Synod of the Trinity

Our policy manual is divided into **four types of policy**, and the framework looks like this:



Ten Principles of Policy Governance®

- 1) The board represents the interests of the "owners" (i.e., its direct constituency).
- 2) The board speaks with one voice or not at all.
- 3) Board decisions should predominantly be policy decisions.
- 4) Boards should formulate policy by determining the broadest values before progressing to more narrow ones.
- 5) A board defines and delegates, rather than reacts and ratifies.
- 6) "Ends" determination is the pivotal duty of governance.
- 7) The board's best control over staff "means" is to limit, not prescribe.
- 8) A board must explicitly design its own products and processes.
- 9) A board must forge a linkage with staff (management) that is both empowering and safe.
- 10) Performance of the executive director must be monitored rigorously, but only against policy criteria.

Theological Reflections on this Model of Governance and Leadership

The Carver model is based on the relationship between power and love. Carver does not explicitly base his governance approach on a Judeo-Christian or any other religious system. Yet it is clearly compatible with a Christian theological framework.

God granted both freedom and responsibility to humankind. Our governance model takes seriously both of these values. Boards are free to represent their constituencies according to their own understanding of what is needed as long as they do so responsibly as stewards of the trust given to them. Executives/staff are free to interpret and implement the board's intentions as long as they do so within a boundary of specific limitations and for the purpose of carrying out the organization's stated *ends*. (*Ends* address what benefits are created for which beneficiaries and at what cost.)

God created people to enjoy freedom in life; God also desires that they steward well God's resources. This freedom and responsibility, this power and love, go hand in hand. The board enjoys power conferred by the constituencies in exchange for accountable and transparent governance to accomplish the organization's ends.

Thus themes like ownership, empowerment, transparency, clarity and accountability in Carver's model provide an appropriate basis for governance in a Christian context. Being good stewards (what Carver calls governing) involves trusting relationships, clarity of expectations, empowerment and spaciousness to make creative decisions within the safety of explicit limitations. The outcome of good stewardship—good governance—is not only effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness, but also fruitfulness.