

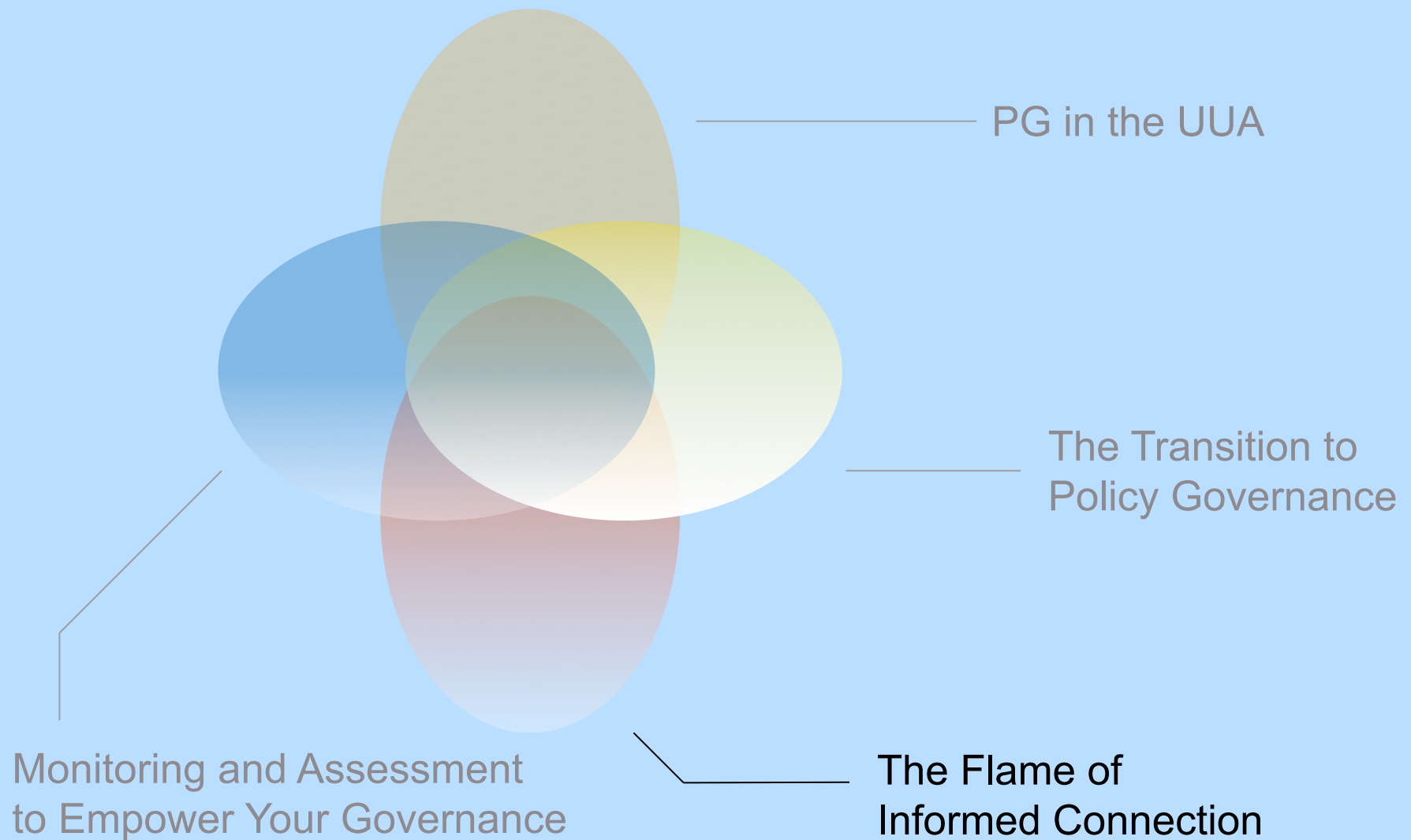


# Welcome to: The Flame of Informed Connection

Facilitated by Unity Consulting

*How could governance liberate the energy and creativity of our congregations to awaken compassion, transform lives, and bless the world?*

Policy Governance® Track  
Four Workshops





Our mission:  
To liberate the leadership of  
progressive religious congregations and institutions to  
awaken compassion, transform lives, and bless the world.



Our core question:  
How can governance liberate  
the energy and creativity of our congregations to  
awaken compassion, transform lives, and bless the world.

# Linkage



# Linkage



“The primary relationship the board must establish, maintain, clarify, and protect is its relationship with its ‘owners,’ keeping in contact with them, and hearing their voices.”  
John Carver & Miriam Mayhew,  
*Carver Guide Series on Effective Board Governance*

# Linkage



## *The spiritual practice of leadership*

Is about transformation

Should be approached with reverence

# Three Enriching Questions



1. Who are our sources of accountability and authority?
2. What powerful question could guide our linkage work?
3. What methodology could best engage our sources of accountability and authority?



# Three Enriching Questions



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2. What powerful question could guide our linkage work?
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# Unity Church-Unitarian Moral Ownership



The moral owners of Unity Church-Unitarian are those who yearn for the Beloved Community and see Unity Church as an instrument for its realization. The Beloved Community is engaged in the work of the spirit. It is community at the highest level of reality and possibility, where love and justice prevail.

# With a Partner: 5 minutes



How might you define your board's sources of accountability and authority?

# Three Enriching Questions



1. Who are our sources of accountability and authority?
2. What powerful question could guide our linkage work?
3. What methodology could best engage our sources of accountability and authority?

“The Art of Powerful Questions”  
by Eric Vogt, Juanita Brown, and David Isaacs

# Three Enriching Questions



“If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on it, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I knew the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than 5 minutes.”

--Albert Einstein

# Powerful Questions: 3 Criteria



Powerful questions:

1. Are open-ended, starting with what, how or why.
2. Fall within our scope to take effective action.
3. Surface and alter our assumptions.

# Questions about Questions



1. What “work” do I want this question to do?
2. What assumptions or beliefs are imbedded in the way this question is constructed?
3. Is this question likely to generate hope, imagination, engagement, creative action and new possibilities or is it likely to increase a focus on past problems and obstacles?

# Five Reasons for Linkage



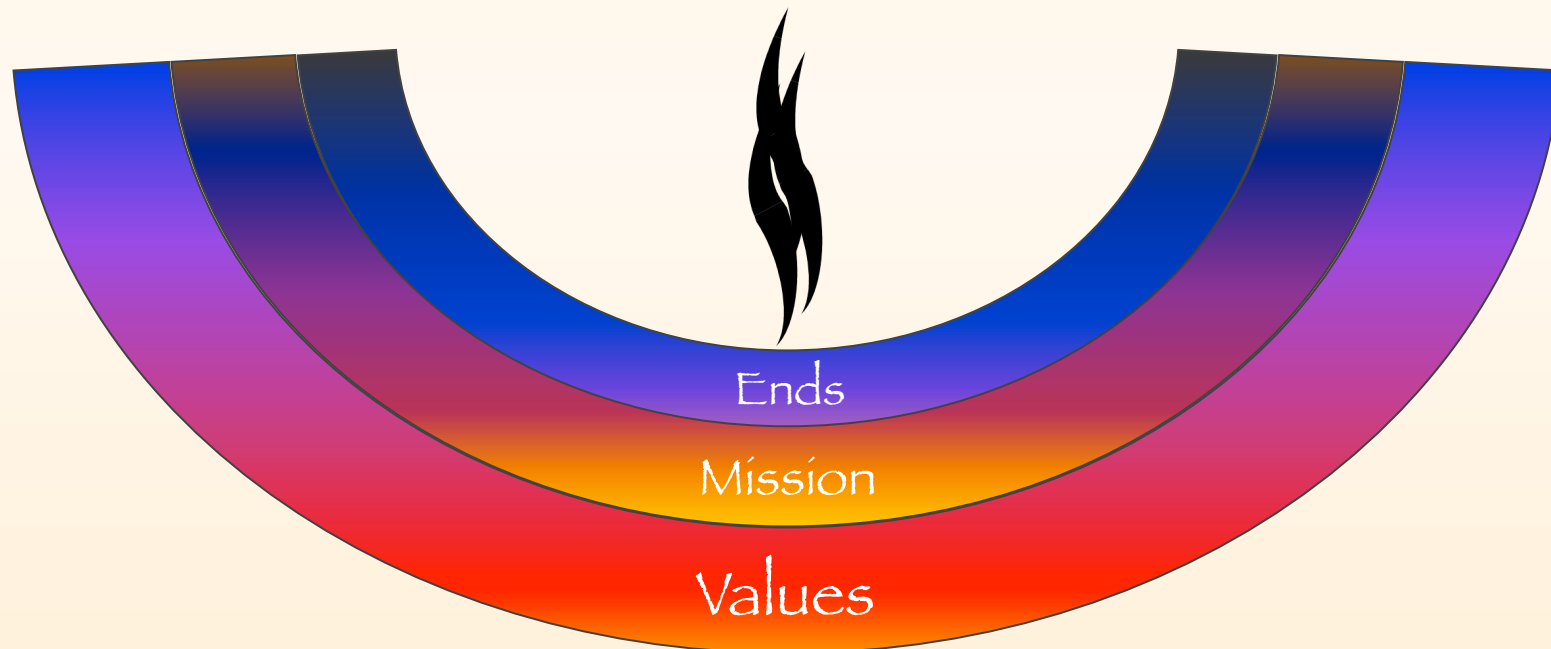
Boards engage in linkage to:

1. Build a relationship
2. Create the future
3. Clarify values
4. Be accountable
5. Educate the owners

*Policy Governance Fieldbook*, Caroline Oliver, Editor; Mike Conduff, Susan Edsall, Carol Gabanna, Randee Loucks, Denise Paszkiewicz, Catherine Raso, and Linda Stier, Authors



# The Nested Bowls



# Powerful Question Examples



**Purpose:** To build a relationship

**Possible Questions (Board to itself):**

- Who shares our values and how could we connect with them about the future we might imagine together?

# Powerful Question Examples



**Purpose:** To build a relationship

**Possible Questions:**

- How could we see our values aligning?
- How could we know one another more deeply?
- What do you care about deeply?

# Powerful Question Examples



**Purpose:** To clarify values

**Possible Question:**

What's our owners' experience of the holy, and how do those experiences reflect the values we should embody in our religious community?

# Powerful Question Examples



**Purpose:** To create the future

**Possible Questions:**

- What could we build on our congregation's strengths for the future?
- What differences could we make in lives now that would transform the quality of lives 25 years from now?
- What could church mean 25 years from now and what could that mean for our church community?
- Who will be living near our church in 25 years and what impact could that have on the differences we want to make now?

# Powerful Question Examples



**Purpose:** To be accountable

**Possible Question:**

- How do our results reflect the advancement of our moral owners' values and dreams? (Presentation)
- How do you see our results reflecting the advancement of your values and dreams? What new insights about our future do these results provoke? (Conversation)

# Powerful Question Examples



**Purpose:** To educate our sources of accountability and authority

**Possible Questions (Board to itself):**

- What information or perspectives have we the board gathered that would help our owners better serve their ownership role?"

# Three Enriching Questions



1. Who are our sources of accountability and authority?
2. What powerful question could guide our linkage work?
3. What methodology could best engage our sources of accountability and authority?



# Success Factors



- Start with the concrete and work up to the abstract.
- Listen effectively to hear people into their deepest truth.
- Respond to feedback as a well-differentiated leader or board.

# Our City Congregation



- Urban congregation
- 600 members
- Senior Minister, Executive Director, Associate Minister, DRE, Social Justice Coordinator, a few part-time staff
- Executive Team of Senior Minister and Executive Director

# Discussion Questions



Did the board:

- Consider its moral ownership?
- Use the criteria for powerful questions to develop the right question for this linkage work?
- Connect with its purposes for linkage?
- Reflect on what the board intends to do with the results of this linkage?