CHURCH GOVERNANCE AND THE ROLE OF SUPERINTENDENTS

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

EMMU TRAINS SUPERINTENDENT MINISTERS

20 AUGUST 2024

XHANTI T. MHLUBULWANA

SERVES AS MCSA – LAY PRESIDENT

My Brief

- **EMMU Training of Ministers who serve as Superintendents**
- **Church Governance and the Role of Superintendents**

Learning Objectives

- Understand key principles of governance.
- Recognize the importance of governance and accountability.
- Apply governance principles in institutional leadership and management.
- Identify strategies to enhance accountability.

The Purpose of the session

- Explain the importance of governance and accountability in the MCSA.
  - It is the centre that must hold, so that things to not fall apart!
- Highlight the role of the Superintendent as the official head of the Church in the Circuit in ensuring effective governance.
  - The fiduciary duty of being the HEAD of the CHURCH!

Superintendency in the MCSA
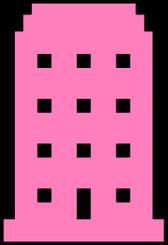
Office

Duties

obligations

Superintendent Minister, L&D 7.16-7.18

- Official Head of the MCSA in the Circuit
- Exercise Authority and Carry Out Duties subject to:
    - Direction of Conference
    - Laws and Disciplines
- Line of responsibility, CQM & The Bishop *(Direct Line Management)*

Superintendents Appointment Process

- Process integrity is important at appointment
  - Ordained Minister – unless Connexional Executive directs otherwise
  - The Connexional Executive Appoints
  - The Bishop consults and recommends
    - DEC
    - Resident Minister(s) and Circuit Stewards in the Circuit *prior recommending* the appointment by the Connexional Executive

L&D Governance Implications – Superintendents

- Official Head of the Church in the Circuit – 7.16
- Circuit Headship Authority rooted – Conference, L&D – 7.16
- Bishops Approval (Deputize) – Line of Authority - 7.17
- Spiritual Pastoral Leadership – Resident Ministers and their families
- Overseer – Work Performance Standards and Reporting (Character and Effectiveness of ALL Leaders); Membership and Candidature various orders; Circuit Preaching Plan
- Preside over all Meetings
- Integrity of Circuit Records (Archiving)
- Inventory
- Reports to Synod
- Preside over the elections of Cir. Stewards (Share Addresses and Contacts)
- Mission Leadership
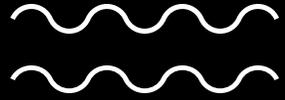- Financial Governance – incl. Mission Groups

Governance Defined

- Governance refers to the framework of rules, practices, and processes by which an institution is directed and controlled.

- Governance encompasses
  - Decision Making and Implementation
  - Policy making
  - Rules and procedures
  - Monitoring and accounting of activities
  - Ethical standards and practice

Governance Seeks to Close the Gaps ...

A Christ Healed Africa

- 'Knowledge-Principle-Practice Gaps'
- Systems Gaps
- Behavioural related factors and gaps
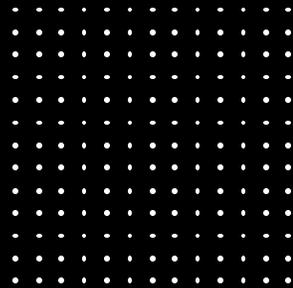
Context

- COVID-19 hit while still grappling with the 21st Century Challenges
- New Global Realties
  - Inequality
    - *Drivers: l*ocation, gender, age, parental background and race (double effect) – [World Bank SACU]
  - Globalised Trade
  - Social Tensions
  - Climate Change

Context Matters

- Population Growth
- Ecological Overshoot
- Geopolitical Tensions
- Radical Transparency
- Rapid Technology and Scientific Advancement

Context Continues

- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2015)
- Africa 2063 Agenda
- ALL the above focused at *Value-Creation* in a *Sustainable* Manner

The MCSA Challenge of Sustainability

- Development of Technical Competencies
- Investments into Human Capital and
- Systems Management and or Thinking

Covid-19 Economic Impact

Global economic depression

High Unemployment

Increasing Poverty

Exposed Inequality

The Problem Statement

Circuit Assessment Arrears Dec 2020 about R32.1 Million, by Jan 2022 R57,2 Million and R52,6 Million by May 2022

55% made by X5 Districts R28.9 Million

45% made by X10 Districts R23.6 Million

Compliance Governance Deficits – 4S's/4C's/4U's non-submissions

- **In 2019 – 1 161 (57%) : Only Received 876 of 2 037 Expected**
- **In 2020 – 1 330 (65%) : Only Received 707 of 2 037 Expected**
- **2021 further increase to 67% non-compliance**
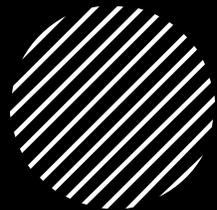
Governance Deficits

- The Quality of Decisions – *Eskom Test*
- The implementation of Decisions
- The Impact of Decisions

Ecclesiastical Governance
(Mokgothu, 2014)

- **Governance could be**
  - Corporate
  - Local
  - National or
  - International
- **Ecclesiastical Governance**
  - Based on the broad fundamentals of general governance
  - *But unique to church context*
  - *Any biblical or spiritual imperatives*

Accountability Defined …

An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions" Merriam-Webster

- To report and explain self
- To be answerable
- To be liable and take blame

In organisations accountability has to be institutionalised

- Regular
- Established
- Acceptable standards
- Affirmations or Sanctions

Rationale for Governance and Accountability

The Church is both Human and Divine (Rev. Dr. Sidwell Mokgothu, 2014)

Human

- **Has to be subjected to legal demands of society**
- **Can learn from management sciences**
- **Is made up of human beings**
- **With multiple identities and involvements**

Divine

- **Is more than just ourselves**
- **Is about God's business**
- **Together A Discipleship Movement**

Ecclesiastical Polity

Ecclesiastical or Church Polity has to do with two concepts

• Ecclesiology – the theology of the church and its organisation
• Polity – church governance

There are several types of polity

• Episcopal
• Presbyterian
• Congregational
• Connexional
• African indigenous [Single- Elder]
• Charismatic

It includes

• Conditions of membership
• Mutual relations of members
• Powers and duties

Biblical Foundation for Ecclesiastical Polity

- The first Church governance meeting held in the bible is in Acts 1:23-26, when Matthias was elected to succeed Judas Iscariot

- The Early Church always understood Christ to be the supreme head or authority of the Church
    - Eph. 1:22 ; Eph. 4:15; Col 1:18

- The Church was to be governed through Spiritual Leadership

- There are different categories of this leadership with different interpretations and roles
    - Bishops - overseers
    - Presbyters – elders or clergy
    - Deacons – servants
    - Pastors
    - Evangelists

- God's directive to Moses to appoint elders to assist him is always seen as a remote foundation of church governance in the Old Testament
    - Numbers 11:16; 24-25

Methodist Connexionalism

The foundation for Methodist Ecclesiology is Connexionalism

Connexionality = *"… all leaders and congregation are connected with a network of loyalties and commitments that support, yet supersedes, local concerns."*

Connexionality is not "Autonomy, compartmentalisation and individualism"

Connexionality is more about "Mutuality, Inclusiveness, Solidarity, and Sharing of Resources"

We are connected in "vision, mission, accountability and oversight"

Pillars of Methodist Governance

3. Ordinances

2. Traditions

1. Bible

Pillars Described

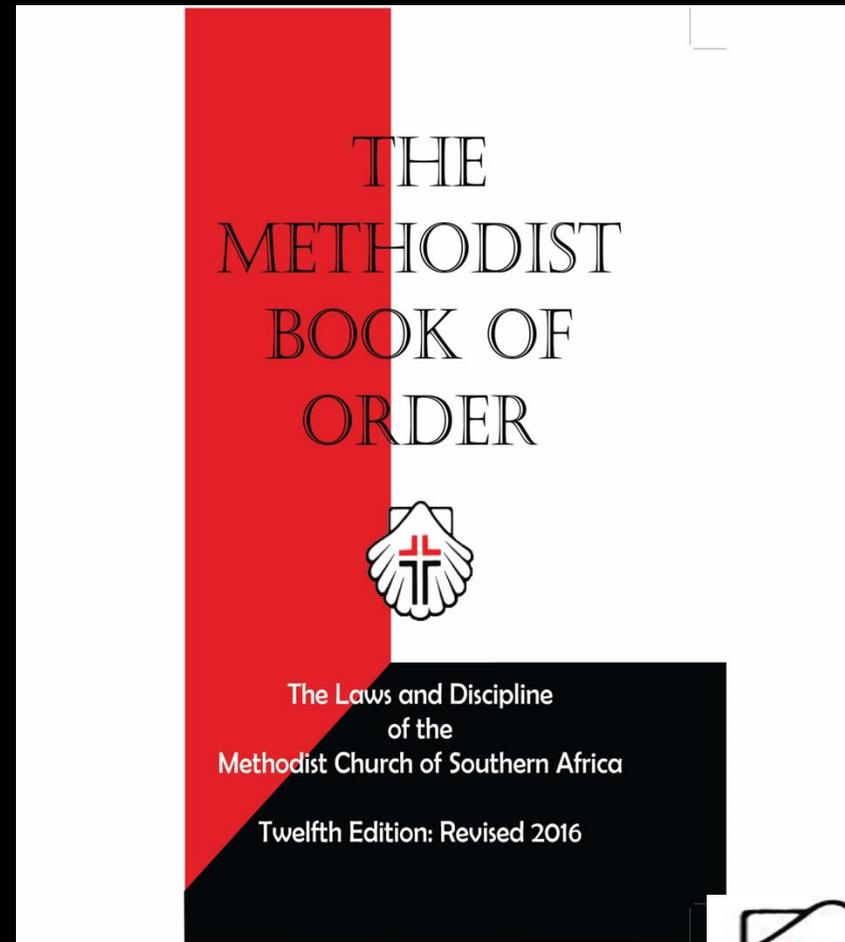|	
1. The Bible	• Scriptural Holiness • Supreme Rule of Faith (L&D 1.5) • Theology • Doctrines
2. Traditions	• Usages (L&D 1.27) • Practices • Policies
3. Ordinances	• L & D • A Mission Tool • Provides for Leadership and Administrative responsibilities • Discipline and Justice

The Laws and Discipline

Provides as to how the MCSA Structures Operates and Governance/Polity Implications

The 2013 Year book page 87 para 43.1 and 43.2 in page 88 provides for more work to be done with regard to the election and preparation of the Leaders for effective governance and operations of the Church.

Some of these changes have now been incorporated in the 12th Edition of the L&D.

THE METHODIST BOOK OF ORDER

The Laws and Discipline
of the
Methodist Church of Southern Africa

Twelfth Edition: Revised 2016

Separation of Powers

- Separation of powers is **a doctrine of constitutional law under which the three branches of governance are kept separate:**
    - **Executive – CE, DEC/DMT, Cir. Exco, Soc Exco**
    - **Legislative – Conference, Synods, CQM, Soc Leaders Meeting, Annual Society Meeting, Class Meeting**
    - **Judicial – Disciplinary, Mediation, Arbitration, courts, etc.**
- This is also known as *the system of checks and balances*
- *Each branch is given certain powers so as to check and balance the other branches.*

Church Structure

LEVEL	STRUCTURE	OFFICERS
Connexion (L&D Chp.5)	Conference / CE	Presiding Bishop
		Lay President
		General Secretary
		Unit Directors
District (L&D Chp. 6)	Synod / DEC	District Bishop
		District Lay Leader
		District Synod Secretary
		District Conveners/Secretaries
Circuit (L&D Chp. 7)	Circuit Quarterly Meetings / CEC	Superintendent
		Ministers
		Circuit Stewards
		Other Circuit Leaders
Society (L&D 7.33)	Society Leaders meeting/SEC	Resident Ministers
		Society Stewards
		Other Society Leaders
Class/Fellowship/Cluster (L&D 3.14-15)	Class Meeting (Members)	Class Leaders

Governance is Oversight

Monitor and Oversee Circuit Executive Actions: -

- implementation of laws
- application of budgets
- strict observance of L&D and the Organisational Constitutions
- effective management of departments, divisions, mission groups and or units
  - Coordination and alignment to common vision and missionary priorities

- the action of overseeing something
  - Supervision
  - Superintendence
  - Charge
  - Administration
  - Management
  - Government
  - Direction
  - Control
  - Custody

MCSA Structures Composition beyond 40:40:20 compliance

Skills – Talents

Experience

Diversity

Independence

- To discharge governance roles and responsibilities objectively and effectively
- Independent Judgement

CQM structure supports continuous improvement, ensures performance of the Circuit is effective

- Appropriate Balance & Diversity to benefit Quality

CQM – Cultivates Culture of Good Governance and Accountability

- The exercise of ethical and effective leadership by the Synods as a governing body of the Circuit, towards achieving the following governance outcomes: -

  - Ethical Culture

  - Good Performance

  - Effective Control

  - Legitimacy

Soc. Leaders Meeting

CQM

Synod &

Conference

Legitimacy Defined

- Legitimacy is commonly defined in political science and sociology as **the belief that a rule, institution, or leader has the right to govern**.

- Legitimate has several legal meanings. When it is used as an adjective, it means **lawful, or right**.

Sources of Legitimacy

- Ethical or justice arguments
- Participation and deliberation
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Coherence; and
- Effectiveness

Principles of Good Governance

Transparency: Open communication and clear processes.

Accountability: Responsibility for actions and decisions.

Equity and Inclusiveness: Fair treatment and participation.
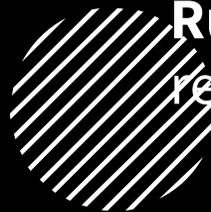
Responsiveness: Timely and appropriate decision-making.

Consensus-Oriented: Mediating different interests to reach a broad consensus.

Effectiveness and Efficiency: Optimal use of resources to meet the needs of the institution.

Rule of Law: Adherence to legal frameworks and regulations

Integrity Definition

- The word integrity comes from the Latin – it means
  - Whole or complete
  - Soundness; uprightness
- The perceived fit between the espoused and the enacted values
- *Doing the right thing, for the right reasons, no matter the cost*
- *It is and ingredient of our character: Who we are when no one, but God sees us*

Integrity

Maintain	Maintain high ethical standards
Manage	Manage conflict of interest and loyalty
Maintain	Maintain independent thinking and decision making
Protect	Protect the reputation of the organisation
Act in	Act in the interest of the members and other stakeholders

Where conscience allows – dissent

The Role of Heads of Institutions in Governance

Alignment to the MCSA Vision, Mission & Conference Platform of Work

Ensuring Circuit Policies, Usages align with the institution's goals.

Leading by example in ethical conduct and decision-making.

The functioning of the Circuit (Governing Body in a Circuit)

- Governance Leadership by the Superintendent should ensure the optimal functioning of the Circuit & CQM as the Governing Body.

- Circuit Superintendent is the Chairperson of the CQM – the Governing Body in the Circuit

The Functions of the Circuit

Mutual encouragement and support amongst various Societies.

Facilitates sharing of resources – Human and Material

- Circuit structure enables the strong to help the weak (Solidarity) – Methodist Ethos

Cross-pollination of people and ideas

The Circuit

CQM – Governing Body

Leadership, CQM governing body charged with oversight of the Circuit

- Responsible for the life of the Circuit (holds Societies and Mission Groups Accountable)

Administers the affairs of the Circuit

CQM extends and consolidates the work of the Church in the Circuit

- **Circuit centered approach** *(Centralization) versus*
- **Society Approach** *(Decentralization)*
  - **Which Approach best promotes mission (CQM Decision) is a CQM decision**

CQM Cont.

Cooperation

Coordination

Set Mission Priorities

Focus and Encourage

Affirmations and Sanctions (as needed)

CQM to ensure cooperation between Societies

Circuit goals are coordinated at CQM level

CQM determines mission priorities, plans objectives and goals

---

CQM - October generally accepted as Circuit Planning and Evaluation Meeting

---

Receives Conference Message to Methodist People (Listening Statement)

CQM's and Governance

CQM determines Mission Groups establishment, *to accomplish the set goals.*

Financial Planning and Budgeting.

Elections of office bearers to make the Circuit Effective.

CQM appoints Circuit Executive to ensure efficient management, oversight and implementation of decisions and goals.

CQM undertakes quarterly Monitoring and Evaluation of life in the Circuit.

Measures the effectiveness of the Circuit in terms of Mission Objectives established (per Planning Meeting)

Reports on the work done by Mission Groups every CQM

CQM - Governing Body

Leadership, governing body charged with oversight

- The ***principles of King IV on Corporate Governance*** dictates on **"Leadership, ethics and corporate citizenship"**
  - The governing body should lead ethically and effectively.
  - The governing body should govern the ethics of the organisation *in a way that supports the establishment of an ethical culture.*
  - Responsible corporate citizenship.

Class Meeting	Society Leaders Meeting
Annual Society Meeting	CQM
Synod	Conference

CQM - Governing Body

Strategy, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

- The governing body should appreciate the organisation's core purpose, its risks and opportunities, strategy, and mission/ministry model, performance and sustainable development are *all inseparable elements of the value creation process*.

- The governing body should ensure that reports issued by the organisation *enable stakeholders to make informed assessments of the organisation's performance and its short-, medium- and long-term prospects*

Governance Functional Areas

Risk governance

Technology and information governance

Compliance governance – 4C's, 4U's, 4S's

Our Connexionality and governance

Assurance – Continuous Quality Improvement/Assurance …

Governance Functional Areas and Compliance … Let's be pragmatic

- **Risk Governance** – Insurances, Inventory and related …
- **Communication, Technology and Information Governance** – Information Systems, Social Media Policy, Identity and Branding Policy, Trade Marking … Accreditation of Suppliers (MCSA Identity)
- **Compliance governance** – 4C's, 4U's, 4S's
  - 67% Non-Compliance (2021) on the increase
  - Historical Sections, Outlawed 2011 Lesotho Conference – Yet very active with huge governance implications …
- **Connexionality and Governance** – need for bold courageous decisions … Race, Gender, Tribal/Ethnic issues and Stationing

Circle of Officers Who Run the Governance

```
        Ministers

Members            Lay Leaders

        Professional
           Staff
```
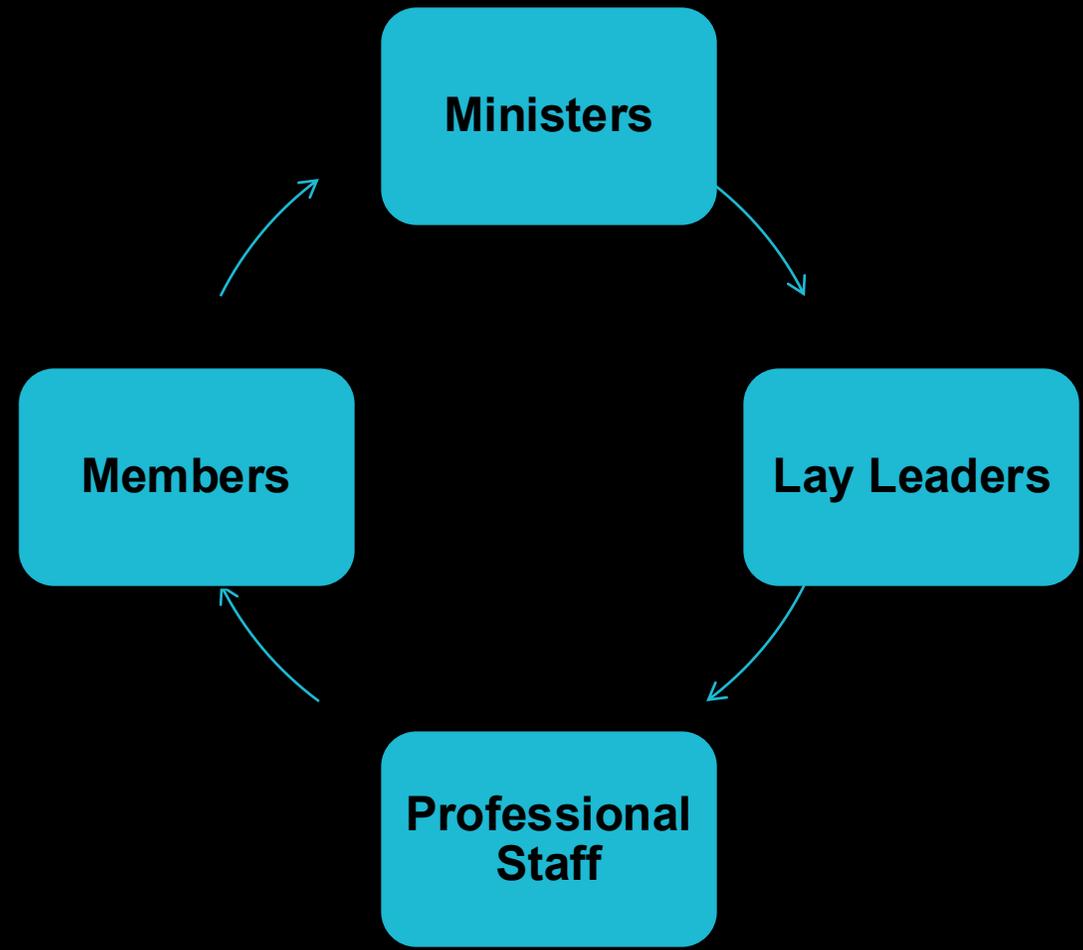
Governing Structures and Delegation

CQM as custodian of good governance

CQM Composition – Independence, appropriate balance of skills and diversity (beyond 40:40:20)

CQM must ensure - Effective structures, sub-committees, mission groups and clarity on delegation of authority

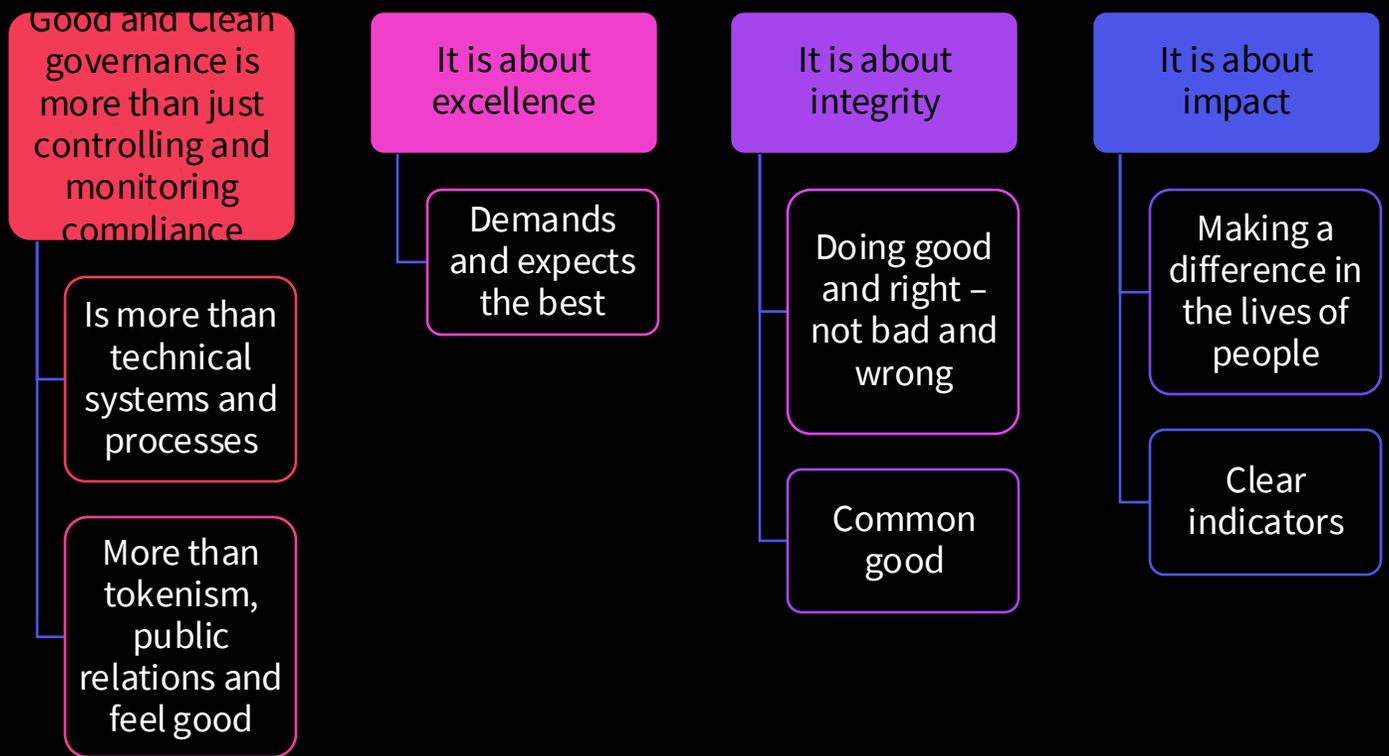CQM (Circuit) to ensure performance evaluation, in terms of mission/ministry *'evangelism + social action'* and governance

Cir. Executive attends to relationships – Team Ministry, working relations – '*leadership not only a task but relationship*'

Good and Clean Governance

Good and Clean governance is more than just controlling and monitoring compliance

- Is more than technical systems and processes
- More than tokenism, public relations and feel good

It is about excellence

- Demands and expects the best

It is about integrity

- Doing good and right – not bad and wrong
- Common good

It is about impact

- Making a difference in the lives of people
- Clear indicators

Circuit Accountability as a Body/Institution

Definition of Accountability:

The obligation of an institution and its leaders to account for their activities, accept responsibility for them, and disclose the results in a transparent manner.

Types of Accountability:

Internal Accountability: Within the institution, including staff and departments.

External Accountability: To stakeholders, such as government bodies, the public, and other external entities.

Mechanisms to Ensure Accountability

- **Audits and Reviews:** Regular financial and performance audits.
- **Reporting:** Transparent and timely reporting to stakeholders.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Channels for stakeholders to provide input.
- **Code of Conduct:** Ethical guidelines for behavior and decision-making.
- **Performance Evaluation:** Regular assessment of institutional and staff performance.

Challenges in Ensuring Accountability

- Lack of transparency.

- Inadequate communication.

- Resistance to change.

- Conflicts of interest.

Strategies for Enhancing Governance and Accountability

- **Leadership Development:**
  - Training programs for heads of institutions to enhance leadership skills.
- **Policy Reforms:**
  - Implementing policies that promote transparency and accountability.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:**
  - Involving stakeholders in decision-making processes.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:**
  - Regular monitoring of institutional performance and governance practices

Enemies of Good Governance (Mokgothu, 2014)

Mediocrity
- Acceptance sub-standard/poor work and laziness
- Celebration of ordinariness and average work
- Reluctance to stretch ourselves

Populism
- The obsession to please and be validated

Self-service
- Egos

Fear
- Lack of courage to take risks and make mistakes

Apathy
- Lack of concern, interest, significance and appreciation

Resistance to learning and personal development

Lack of consequences
- No costs or penalties

Competition
- The temptation to be seen as better than others

References Used

- Active Citizenship Matters

- Ethical Leadership and Political Culture in Local Government

- Good Governance Learning Network

- Johnson Andrew. 2018. *Organisational Culture & Change Management*, Inaugural Leadership Development and Investment Symposium. October 2018 SMMS (Unpublished)

- Local Government in Action

- Mehana CV. 2015. *Church Governance*. BMC 40th Annual Convocation, July – UJ (Unpublished).

- Mhlubulwana TX. 2021. *Use of Church Data for Decision Making*. Central District Circuit Stewards Consultation. Promosa Methodist, Potchesftroom. (Unpublished)

- Mokgothu RS. 2014. *Cultivating A Culture of Good Governance in the MCSA*, BMC Lekgotla. Nov.2014 Springs (Unpublished)

- Putting Participation at the Heart of Development and Development at the Heart of Participation

- Recognising Community Voices

- UN: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific: What is Good Governance

COMMENTS
QUESTIONS
ENGAGEMENTS
?

THE END!