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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA L'ÉGLISE UNIE DU CANADA

TOWARDS 2014

2012 Budget

Three Year Plan Update – Year Two

Presented to the General Council Executive, November
2011

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Towards 2014 Commentary & 2012 Budget

The General Council Office Three Year Plan (2011-2013) was constructed with a goal of a balanced budget over the three year period. We aimed for a surplus in Year 1, close to break-even in Year 2 and a deficit in Year 3 for a net of zero.

The first year of the plan (2011) appears to be on track, as long as the M&S target is achieved. A concerted year end push is contemplated with a new Philanthropy team in place.

There are emerging pressures on the financial picture going forward. At present, the 2012 Budget deficit has worsened by \$800,000 and the overall triennium target is offside by almost \$1.1 million.

A substantial drop in retail sales accounts for most of this gap and action plans are being explored. It is premature to publish a list of possible actions, as a number of other proposals may have budget impact too. An action plan will be presented at the meeting.

The updated three year plan shows the need for difficult strategic thinking as the budget support from the Morrison Bequest (\$2.0 million annually) winds down. Additional projects on the horizon will require choices among alternative strategies. The Finance Committee will be holding meetings with staff over the next year focussed solely on the presentation of these choices and their implications.

Recap of 2011-2013 Plan Context

Exhibits have been updated for most current data.

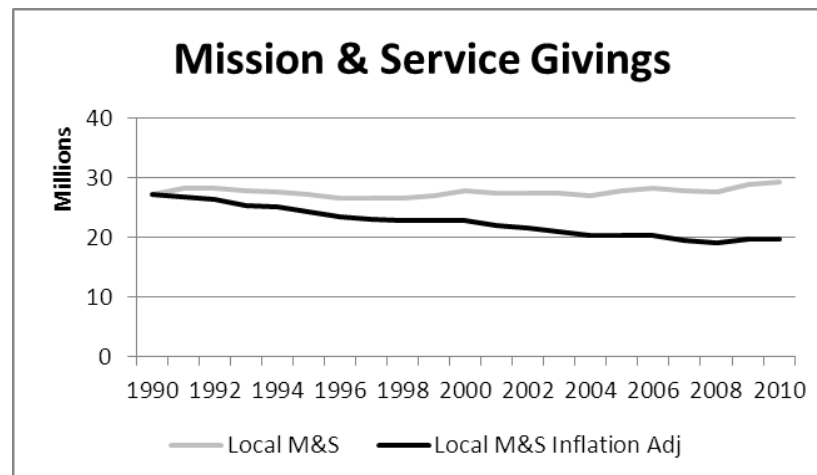


Figure 1

- In planning the financial future for the General Council, it is impossible to ignore the steady decline in givings to its primary source of financial support: the Mission and Service Fund. When adjusted for the effects of inflation, this decline over the past twenty years is obvious (See Figure 1).
- At the same time, when church members are given the chance to participate directly in the work of the church, the response is immediate and generous – as evidenced by our emergency response appeals.

- The role of the General Council Office is being redefined in terms of Identity and Connectionality. In financial terms, the need for givers to the Mission and Service Fund to understand the role of the General Council is clear.

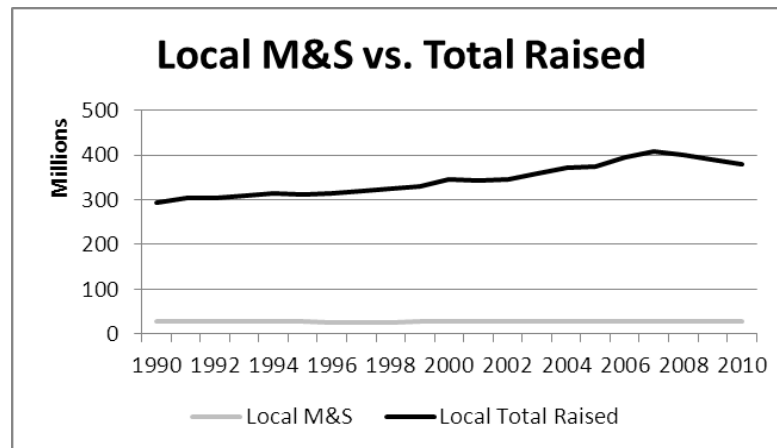


Figure 2

- Figure 2 shows how much money is raised across the whole church compared to the Mission and Service Fund. Clearly, the growth in givings is at the congregational level. In financial terms, the need to connect local members directly to the work of the church is clear.
- Figure 3 shows the decline in congregations. The United Church is losing approximately 50 congregations each year. Many churches are declining as their members age and attendance drops. To reverse the overall trend, a concerted effort to rejuvenate existing congregations and create new ones is needed. In addition, new flexibility is needed in the definition of what constitutes a congregation. If we continue to define congregations in terms of Sunday morning worship in a stone building, we will miss large areas of potential growth. In financial terms, the seeds planted today will need time to grow to the point where they can contribute significantly to the money raised, but they are a key way to reverse the gradual decline currently being experienced.

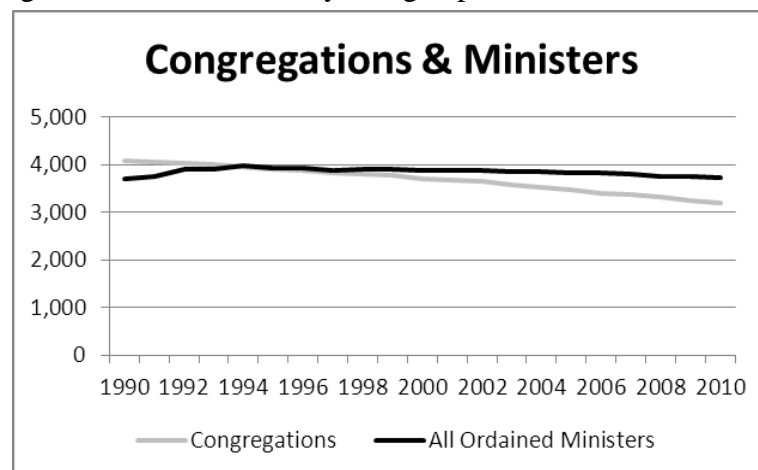


Figure 3

Initiatives with a Financial Impact

- People in Partnership – This new program continues the work of connecting individual congregations to national and international projects, co-ordinated through the General Council Office, over and above the givings to the Mission and Service fund. It provides the opportunity to connect local volunteers and interested citizens to the broader work of the church.
- New Ministries Fund – This fund will enable members to participate in the growth of the church, as well as allowing declining congregations to leave a legacy to those coming after them. Initial applications to the fund are under review.
- Network – Providing consulting services to congregations in need has the potential of helping rejuvenate congregations which might otherwise close or merge continue.
- Philanthropy – Current fundraising initiatives to present a cohesive and comprehensive case for fundraising and to broaden the support beyond the immediate membership have the potential of increasing revenue at both the congregational and national level. The congregations are the financial strength of the church. All national philanthropy programs are aimed at growing the total amount congregations raise, with the hope that the Mission and Service Fund benefits too.
- Use of Technology – The lower cost and higher quality of communications and information technology present new opportunities to save cost, reduce travel and reduce our impact on the environment.
- Simplification – Our emphasis continues to be to simplify the internal procedures and financial reporting, so that we can save time and staff resources, as well as presenting a clear picture of the church's position and available resources.

Principles

- Rolling three year plan, updated annually – Our plan is to look forward three years, continually updating the plan every year, so that we are constantly planning ahead.
- We look for partnerships to share costs and resources – Whether internally with the other courts of the church, ecumenically with other denominations or externally with other partners, we look to pool our resources for greater efficiency and effectiveness.
- We support new, innovative initiatives and ministries – While we continue to support our existing infrastructure and ministries; we recognize that we need to be vigilant for opportunities for innovation and expansion into new ministries.
- We need flexibility, to be able to react to changing conditions – Economic conditions, such as the stock market and interest rates; funding decisions by government bodies and the stability of the church's partners have all changed radically in the recent past. Our planning needs to be able to respond quickly and creatively to this type of change.
- We aim to connect the work to be done to the volunteer resources available – There is a wealth of knowledge and experience in the whole church.

Assumptions

- Negligible inflation for the next three years – Inflation is expected to be less of a concern over the next few years than it has been in the past.
- Relatively stable financial markets – At the time of writing, this assumption seems optimistic. With the church’s conservative portfolio we hope to continue to make a modest income over the next three years.
- Fully funded pension plan – With the large proportion of pension plan participants being retired, we assume that the church will not be called upon to fund any pension plan deficit over the next three years. Should that happen, the plan would need to be updated.

- Specific assumptions

Mission & Service Givings – \$ Millions

	<u>2010 Projections</u>	<u>2011 Update</u>
2009	\$28.9	\$28.9
2010	\$29.8	\$29.4
2011	\$28.8	\$29.3
2012	\$28.4	\$28.8
2013	\$28.0	\$28.8
2014		\$28.8

The original 3 year plan called for a reduction of 5% over three years. The current plan stabilizes M&S at the reduced amount previously forecast for 2012, based on new fundraising plan.

Cost of living adjustment for 2012 1.8%

Constraints

- Reserves will be used for transition expenses and as “seed grain” for new initiatives. The farmer saves the seed grain for future crops. In the same way, we will limit the use of reserves in the annual budget. For 2012 we are very intentionally borrowing from reserves to support fundraising work and will ensure that the loans are re-paid.
- A stable work environment for staff – Working within the economic conditions stated above, we recognize that the staff needs a stable work environment within which to work. We will work to limit the effect on jobs to the greatest extent possible.
- A stable environment for our partners – Our partners, in the church, within Canada and abroad, rely on us for stable funding. To the greatest extent possible we will honour our relationships and give as much notice as practical if they need to change.

Actual - From January 1, 2011 to September 30, 2011

	2011 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Forecast	2012 Budget	2013 Outlook	2014 Preliminary
Revenues						
M&S Contributions	13,867	27,130	27,130	26,815	26,815	26,815
M&S Contributions - UCW	763	2,173	2,173	2,000	2,000	2,000
Retail Sales	1,138	2,084	1,758	1,728	1,699	1,670
Other Revenue & Recoveries	1,399	3,008	2,409	2,207	2,171	2,535
Transfers from Reserves	68	8,115	8,511	8,007	7,698	7,016
Total Revenues	17,235	42,510	41,981	40,757	40,383	40,037
Expenses						
Grants	12,889	16,961	16,663	17,234	17,234	17,259
Staff Costs	9,726	12,990	13,175	13,849	13,988	14,128
Resources	1,286	3,397	2,092	2,447	2,434	2,421
Travel Expenses	497	745	781	739	665	598
Committee Meeting Expenses	1,204	2,391	2,698	2,020	1,818	1,636
Office Costs	2,108	3,100	3,275	3,417	3,472	3,527
Professional Fees	1,107	1,123	1,580	1,333	1,333	1,333
Property and Insurance Expenses	318	512	513	480	480	480
Investment Expenses	90	164	164	160	160	160
Other Expenses			-	5	5	5
Total Expenses	29,226	41,384	40,942	41,685	41,589	41,547
Excess of Revenues over Expenses	(11,990)	1,126	1,039	(927)	(1,206)	(1,510)

(Note: in \$1,000's)

Sensitivity Analysis

In any forecast, some parts are more sensitive to changes in the assumptions than others. For example, the church will pay the same amount of rent next year regardless of changes in the inflation rate, the general economy or the level of givings. Sensitivity analysis looks at the effect on the forecast of assumptions not being met or other changes which the church might experience.

Mission & Service Bequests

Bequests are difficult to forecast due to both their size and their frequency. The decision to leave money to The United Church of Canada may have been made over twenty years prior to the money being received. Bequests can be very large. Some have specific instructions and others have only general guidance. Traditionally, we have averaged about \$2 million per year, although the amount has declined in recent years.

Bequests, or legacy gifts, are one of the current focuses for fundraising. A legacy initiative is in the planning stages, set for launch in 2012. Even if successful, however, the impact might not be immediate.

Investment Income

There is no revenue line for investments, but it still has an impact on the budget. Investment income is earned on the trusts, endowments and reserves. That income then comes into the budget through the Trust & Endowments line and the draws from Reserves.

The impact of large fluctuations in both M&S Bequests and Investment Income is moderated by deferring gains over several years. This averaging process allows the church to continue to bring income into the budget even in a year of low returns.

Expenses

Most of the expenses in the budget are fixed (e.g. rent) or controllable (e.g. salaries). An initiative was started in 2010 to reduce travel and meeting costs by reducing the number of committees, their size and the number of face to face meetings and further 10% reductions are applied each year. Staff travel is also being reduced by focusing on video conferencing and the use of technology.

Response

A financial plan is based on the best available information at the time of the plan. If revenues are lower or expenses higher than planned, the plan will be updated to respond.

Addendum B

FIN9 Investment Policy

Origin: Permanent Committee on Finance

The Permanent Committee proposes:

That the Executive of the General Council accept the Investment Policy to guide the investment decisions in the light of good stewardship and responsible investing.

(The Investment Policy is available for view online at <http://gc40.united-church.ca/gce>)

Background: The investment policy was last updated in 2006. In 2011, the Investment Committee reviewed the policy in light of industry regulations and good governance practices, including responsible investment.

Limits: The former policy made no allowance for leaving money in cash / near cash, which is a practical tactic in times of fluctuating markets, nor did it allow for alternative investments, such as the church's investment in water infrastructure renewal. The new policy remains conservative with a high proportion of fixed rate investments (i.e. bonds).

Previous Policy

	Minimum	Benchmark	Maximum
Canadian Equities	5%	15%	20%
U.S. Equities	5%	15%	20%
International Equities	5%	15%	20%
Income trusts	0%	5%	10%
Fixed Income	35%	45%	55%
Cash	0%	5%	10%
		100%	

Proposed Policy

Asset class (group)	Allocation as a % of market value		
	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>Cash and Short-term securities</i>	0%	5%	25%
<i>Marketable Bonds</i>	30%	40%	50%
Canadian equities	15%	20%	35%
Non-Canadian equities	10%	20%	30%
<i>Marketable Equities</i>	25%	40%	50%
<i>Alternative Strategies</i>	10%	15%	25%
		100%	

Responsible Investment: The Investment Policy has been updated to clarify the parameters under which professional investment advisors can select investments, as well as to broaden the responsible investment mandate beyond screening to include corporate dialogue and advocacy. The update provides a slightly revised version of the screening criteria approved in November 2006 by the General Council Executive. It is anticipated that the Working Group on Socially Responsible Investment and Resource Extraction will make proposals regarding screening criteria, so we will delay more extensive revision until the Group has reported in 2012.

Addendum C**GS51 Youth Forum Court**

Origin: General Secretary, General Council

General Secretary, General Council proposes:

That the Executive of the General Council receive the *Youth Strategy Report* of the Permanent Committee – Programs for Mission and Ministry and take no other action on Manitou (2011)

Background:

Title: Youth Forum Court

Origin: Manitou Conference General Meeting (2011)

Financial Implications: N/A

Staffing Implications: N/A

Source of Funding: N/A

Manitou Conference proposes that: the Executive of the General Council at its November meeting strike a task group or other consultative mechanism to:

- a. Study the Youth Forum Court proposal (attached)
- b. Make recommendations regarding the implementation of this proposal
- c. Report to the 41st General Council 2012 with these recommendations and plans for implementation.
- d. The task group consist of members of the Executive of the General Council including two (2) Youth and Young Adult Members at Large and/or General Council Youth and Young Adult Ministries staff.
- e. The task group consult as needed with the creators of the proposal.

The idea of the Youth Court originated with a number of Young Adults who participated in a ***Youth for Peace*** trip in 2009. The proposal was shared with a number of senior staff (Nora Sanders, Bruce Gregersen and Harry Oussoren) at the General Council Office in the summer of 2009. The General Council's youth and young adult staff was asked to work on the proposal.

The Congregational Education and Community Ministries (CECM) Unit established a Youth Advisory Committee in 2009. Members of the committee included Craig Gibb, Lauren Clark Gallant, Steven Rogers, Andrew Hyde, Sarah Wyatt, Katherine Brittain, and James Ravenscroft and resourced by Amy Crawford and Rick Garland.

The proposal was discussed by the CECM Youth Advisory Committee in October 2009 and again in May 2010. The Advisory Committee felt that the proposal was not the most appropriate way for engaging Youth and Young Adults in the church.

The Advisory Committee shared its reservation about the Youth Court with the creators of the proposal and instead, recommended the development of a Youth Forum Executive and Moderator (see attached). The proposal for a Youth Forum Executive was made to the Permanent Committee – Programs for Mission and Ministry in September 2010. The Permanent Committee received the recommendation and forwarded the proposal to the newly formed *Community in Ministries Unit Wide committee* with the request to develop a Youth and Young Adults strategy for the church. The unit wide committee established a youth and young adult strategy working group.

The Youth Court proposal was revived at the recent TURN event in the fall of 2010. The proposal was forwarded to the Unit Wide Committee who carefully explored the proposal and determined that it was not an effective strategy for engagement. The Unit Wide Committee has offered a Strategy for Youth and Young Adults Ministry to the Permanent Committee.

Addendum D**PCPMM The United Church of Canada 2011 Identity Survey - Executive Summary**
Origin: Permanent Committee Programs for Mission and Ministry

The purpose of the research was to build a portrait of the identity, values and beliefs of the people of The United Church of Canada. The survey was conducted by Jane Armstrong Research Associates, an independent research firm based in Toronto. Data was collected both on-line and by mail.

The information gathered by this survey will help to set the stage for the planning, priority setting and decision-making that will take place at meeting of the 41st General Council in August 2012.

The process used for selecting the modified stratified random sample of the church's more than 3200 congregations resulted in a total of close to 7500 individuals completing the survey questionnaire.

This sample is believed to be the largest number of United Church people surveyed in the church's 86 year history. A 1994 survey conducted by the University of Lethbridge's Reginald Bibby collected data from approximately 2200 people.

Of the 607 pastoral charges that were invited to participate in the survey, 223 participated. The estimated overall survey response rate is 36% - based on the average weekly attendance figures for the 223 pastoral charges that participated in the survey.

The survey results included representation from

- churches in all 13 of the United Church's regional Conferences
- Aboriginal, ethnic and shared ministries
- Pastoral charges ranging in size from the smallest (average attendance under 50) to the largest (over 200)
- Language of worship mostly English

Of the individuals who responded to the survey

- More than twice as many women responded
- All ages 11 and over were included in the sample
- Almost 82% were 50+
- Just under 1% of respondents are Aboriginal
- Almost 86% were born in Canada
- Largely English speaking
- Majority are married/couple
- Most are well-educated
- Representation from a range of sub-groups including, visible minority, persons with disability, gay, lesbian, bisexual, deaf, student, minister etc.

Most of the respondents are regular church-goers who were born and bred "United", and have attended their current congregation, on average, for 23 years. 69% say they have always thought of themselves as United.

A majority of respondents acknowledged the importance of prayer, saying it made a difference in their personal lives as well as in the world. Many people also said it was important to name Jesus in worship, and close to 90% of the respondents acknowledged the legitimacy of other paths to God.

Less than 20 % of the respondents say they read the Bible frequently outside of worship. 32% said they never read the Bible outside of worship.

Most people agreed that church played a significant role in their lives when it came to issues of faith and values, but less so in relation to matters of day-to-day living – work, leisure, raising children and social and political views.

The survey results indicate that most respondents feel a very strong connection to the United Church, particularly to their own congregation. A majority of respondents identify their church involvement as being very important to their faith. This is evidenced not only in people's commitment to attending services, but also in volunteering and supporting the church financially. This sense of membership - of feeling part of the United Church- is stronger at the local level than it is nationally.

There is also a strong correlation between people's sense of community and what they identify as key attributes for a church. These include

- Being a welcoming place for all
- Providing fellowship and support
- Committing to serving others
- Transforming faith into action

On a slightly less encouraging note, there still appears to be work to do with regard to the United Church's commitment to becoming a community that celebrates and promotes diversity. Survey respondents rank intercultural characteristics as their lowest priority when compared with close to 40 other attributes of a church. The average rating however is still significant – ranging from between 5.1-7.5 on a scale of 1-10.

The vast majority of respondents (84%) indicated that they were very comfortable worshipping in church, but less so expressing themselves in meetings (42%).

Respondents were almost equally comfortable with a male (95%) or female (90%) minister. In team ministry they preferred a male/female combination but were also comfortable with two males or two females. In terms of comfort levels with gay/lesbian/bisexual ministers, 50% of the respondents indicated they would be very comfortable. 27% said they would be very comfortable with a transgendered minister.

In terms of people's attitudes regarding the age of their minister, there did not seem to be significant differences, although there is a slight favouring for ministers between the ages of 35-64.

With regard to the role of the wider church, there seemed to be just lukewarm agreement that the church's courts (General Council, Conference and Presbytery) make a positive contribution to

the work of local congregations. On the other hand, a majority of people indicated their support for the work of The United Church of Canada, with responding to emergencies and crises, theological training and advocacy topping the list of priorities.

Most respondents were also in agreement that renewal of the United Church as a national organization is an important goal for ministry in the 21st Century. Almost 80% agreed that “God has important work for the United Church to do, and the United Church is uniquely equipped to do it.”

Awareness of the church’s Mission and Service Fund is very high –almost 95%-with a significant number of people also knowing how the money is used to support the work of the church.

52% of the people who are aware of the Mission and Service Fund give regularly, 29% give occasionally.

Among those who are aware of the Mission and Service Fund, but who do not give, 71% indicate that their primary reason for not giving is that they prefer to give to their local church. 40% of the respondents indicated that they prefer to give to a specific program.

One encouraging finding is that 45% of the respondents who currently give to the Mission and Service Fund indicated that if they were given the option of selecting specific projects for their gifts, that they would do this in addition to what they give now. 25% said they would give to specific programs rather than what they give now to the Mission and Service Fund. 28% were undecided.

It is also interesting to note that a majority of the respondents indicated that they were reluctant to invite non-United Church friends to give to the Mission and Service Fund.

2011 AFFILIATES SURVEY

In addition to The United Church of Canada’s 2011 Identity Survey of church members, Jane Armstrong Research Associates did a second survey – this one focused on Canadians who have some affiliation with the United Church, but who rarely or never attend worship. The purpose of this survey was to explore these individual’s attitudes toward the United Church, why they don’t attend and what could lead them to consider attending. This survey differed from the 2005 Environics survey which was limited to people between the ages of 30-45, who don’t already attend church, or belong to another religion.

The Affiliates Survey was administered on-line, in English, across Canada, to an internet panel of 501 adult Canadians, 18 years of age and up.

Respondents to this survey were almost evenly split between male and female. 46% of the respondents were between the ages of 35-54, with the remaining respondents almost equally split between the ages of 18-34 and 55+.

- 64% of the respondents were married/couple
- 73% indicated they did not have children under the age of 18.

- 65% had completed college/university, post-graduate degree
- 90% said they did not give regularly to the United Church

The results of this survey were as follows

- Mostly positive, though lukewarm, perception of The United Church of Canada (82%)
- A minority (23%) expressed largely tentative plans to attend a United Church in the near future
- 78% indicated it was “not at all” or “not very” likely that they would start attending church in the next year or two
- The top two reasons for not attending were
 - 71% said they were disinclined toward organized religion
 - 68% said church was not a priority
- 31% said they would be “very” or “somewhat” likely to consider making a financial gift to the United Church in the future - 67% said they would not

Amongst those who indicated a very positive response to the United Church, 31% said it was because the church was a welcoming community. 22% said it was because the United Church was progressive/modern.

When asked to weight a variety of reasons for considering the possibility of attending the United Church regularly, the reason given the most significance was that you would be “welcomed and accepted for who you were.”

Addendum E

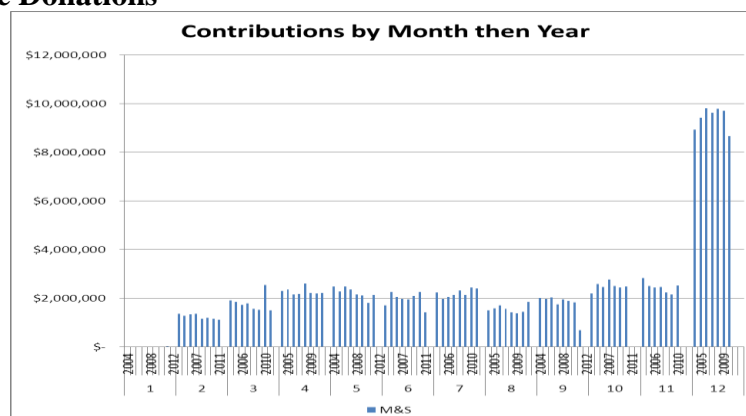
FIN Accountability Report

Origin: Permanent Committee on Finance

Financial Results

The financial results to August 31 were reviewed by the committee. September results and related forecast are included as Exhibit I, along with a financial analysis.

Mission & Service Donations



This chart shows the pattern of M&S receipts by month through the years 2004 to 2011. The pattern is consistent with a few exceptions:

- 2010 March – Receipt of a one-time M&S donation from a congregation as a result of a \$900,000 bequest.
- 2010 December – Major reduction, possibly due to the lack of the normal telephone campaign reminding congregations of the deadline. This campaign will resume this year.
- 2011 June – Reduction due to the postal strike, with an increase in August.
- Note that the December contributions include money received up to the first Sunday in the following February because of the time needed for local Treasurers to do their own books and remit donations received by December 31 to the General Council Office. That is also why there are almost no contributions in January.

Where we stand at August 31

- The year to date total is \$12.7 million, vs. \$13.9 million last year and \$12.5 million average since 2004. Last year's number includes the \$900,000 bequest.
- Last year we raised a total of \$29.4 million. This year's budget is \$29.3 million.
- The \$900,000 gift in 2010 is roughly offset by the \$1 million December drop.
- Conclusion: At this point, Philanthropy is watching the situation carefully and working to maximize returns, but we are not signalling a need to change.

2012 Budget

The 2012 Budget exhibit is included as Exhibit I on page 4 and as proposal FIN 1. For the moment, we are projecting a deficit of almost \$1.1 million for the three year plan. This is 2.7% of the annual operating budget and can be dealt with in the next two years. We are not recommending specific actions at this time, as much will depend on other scheduled discussions that would have budget impact. Possible action plans will be presented at the November meeting. Please note the following changes:

- A loan from reserves of \$400,000 each year for 3 years to fund the Legacy Initiative fundraising expenses, the amount to be repaid in 5 to 7 years. This initiative will add two more Fund Development Officers working at the congregational level where they are most needed, as well as two administrative staff and associated direct costs. A similar loan from reserves of \$250,000 each year for three years to waive PAR fees charged to congregations to incent more PAR participation and revenue growth for both congregations and M&S. There will be annual review to monitor progress and evaluate continuing with this.
- A reduction of \$35,000 per year for 5 years in the amount transferred from the charitable annuities program, reflecting the smaller size of the program and per the report by the actuary. This program continues to be backed by a conservative portfolio of bonds earning a competitive rate of return.
- Retail sales are declining at a much faster rate than expected

Extending the Three Year Plan to 2014

The Permanent Committee on Finance has directed staff to continue on working to extend the current three year plan to 2014, recognizing the significant potential budget changes from such areas as the decrease in funding from the Morrison bequest, the initiatives in pastoral oversight and the implementation of new fundraising initiatives.

Fundraising Initiatives

A description of the fundraising initiative was presented to the Permanent Committee on Finance, an up to date version of which is included separately in the General Council Executive material. The proposed changes include:

- Instead of looking at the Mission and Service campaign as separate from the congregations, view them as one combined campaign for congregations and the denomination.
- Develop resources and support that assist local congregations as well as M&S
- Encourage members to give a gift shared between local expenses and M&S, giving local expenses the priority
- Continue the development of an external brand for a “United Cares” type campaign.

United Church Foundation

2010 was a very good year for the Foundation and 2011 is proving to be the same. Year to date highlights include a gift from the now closed Harmony United Church in Oshawa Ontario to establish a long term New Ministries Fund within the Foundation. This fund will support the New Ministries Program that was created by GCE to support certain projects that will explore new ministry models within the church over the next five years. The Foundation currently has 43 endowed and long term funds totalling over \$4 million. Of these funds 23 are actively granting, six are growing towards the granting threshold and 14 will be activated by bequests. The long term and endowed funds include those that receive applications reviewed by the Joint Grants Committee as well as donor directed and donor advised funds. This spring the first endowment established by a United Church camp was created. Work has progressed in preparing the trusts and endowments of the church for transfer to the Foundation as per the 2009 agreement. In terms of services provided to congregations, the Foundation removed the administrative fee for processing gifts of securities for congregations, mission units and united church-related institutions. Year to date the Foundation has facilitated nearly \$1.9 million in gifts of securities. Further, there are 78 presbyteries, Conferences, congregations and related institutions who have a total of 85 accounts invested in the same Balanced Fund the Foundation uses for a total of approximately \$18 million.

Loan Guarantees

- **Facilitative Loan Guarantees** (per policy) – Loan Guarantees of \$2.2 million are outstanding to St. Luke’s United Church, Wellington Square and Cayuga Community Church. All are on or ahead of schedule.
- **GCE Approved Special Situations** – The Griffith McConnell Residences loan will be paid off from the sale of the property. The Symons Valley loan has been reduced from \$3.1 million to \$2.7 million and is currently being restructured by the Royal Bank. Per the GCE directive, \$500,000 of national loan funds will be used to help with payments over the next two years. The congregation is growing but not at the expected rate.

Calgary Presbytery is working on a larger loan facility secured by real estate and future land sales.

Treasury Fund Investments

At the end of the second quarter, the year to date return on investments was 1.75%, slightly below the benchmark rate of 1.94%, with the strongest area being a 5% return on US equities.

The updated Investment Policy is included as proposal FIN 2 for approval.

Insurance Initiative

The efforts to increase the number of congregations participating in the national insurance program by offering free Directors and Officers insurance for two years have been hampered by higher insurance premiums. In the first half of 2011, 29 congregations left the program, which is down from the previous year. The broker has projected adding 85 – 100 congregations over the next 12 months.

Exhibit I - Budget Analysis & Updated Three Year Plan

From January 1, 2011 to September 30, 2011							
	2011	2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	
	Actual	Budget	Forecast	Budget	Outlook	Preliminary Outlook	
Revenues							
M&S Contributions	13,867	27,130	27,130	26,815	26,815	26,815	
M&S Contributions - UCW	763	2,173	2,173	2,000	2,000	2,000	
Retail Sales	1,138	2,084	1,758	1,728	1,699	1,670	
Other Revenue & Recoveries	1,399	3,008	2,409	2,207	2,171	2,535	
Transfers from Reserves	68	8,115	8,511	8,007	7,698	7,016	
Total Revenues	17,235	42,510	41,981	40,757	40,383	40,037	
Expenses							
Grants	12,889	16,961	16,663	17,234	17,234	17,259	
Staff Costs	9,726	12,990	13,175	13,849	13,988	14,128	
Resources	1,286	3,397	2,092	2,447	2,434	2,421	
Travel Expenses	497	745	781	739	665	598	
Committee Meeting Expenses	1,204	2,391	2,698	2,020	1,818	1,636	
Office Costs	2,108	3,100	3,275	3,417	3,472	3,527	
Professional Fees	1,107	1,123	1,580	1,333	1,333	1,333	
Property and Insurance Expenses	318	512	513	480	480	480	
Investment Expenses	90	164	164	160	160	160	
Other Expenses			-	5	5	5	
Total Expenses	29,226	41,384	40,942	41,685	41,589	41,547	
Excess of Revenues over Expenses	(11,990)	1,126	1,039	(927)	(1,206)	(1,510)	

Overall Financial Position –

- The above financial statement reflects the revenues and expenses associated with the Operating Budget. Revenue and expenses from major self-funding work, such as Pension and Group Insurance, as well as specifically funded work, such as

government grants and emergency relief, have been removed from the statement, but are mentioned below.

- Overall expenses are tracking well against the budget. Mission and Service contributions are \$1.2 million behind last year, as explained above.
 - The overall forecasted surplus of \$1.039 million is consistent with the 3 year plan target amount of \$1.126 million
- **Retail Sales** are running well below the full year budget, and have been forecasted to be under budget by \$326,000.
- **Recovery of Admin costs** includes salaries and other charges rebilled to Conferences and the Pension, etc.
- **Other Revenue** includes property tax rebates, GST rebates, commissions and shipping and handling charges. The property tax rebate for the whole year has already been received.
- **Reserve Transfers** includes all transfers, including designated funds, the Morrison bequest, trusts and endowments. They are forecasted to be \$396,000 above budget due to the previously set aside emergent money (2010) for the aboriginal theological college transition as well as a transfer from the legal fund and work done under the healing fund.
- **Grants** include all payments to external entities, including the Conferences, Canadian and international partners. The forecast shows grants at \$298,000 under budget because of moving the costs of overseas employees to the staff line to conform with external financial statement presentation.
- **Staff Costs** Salaries are under budget year to date due to vacant positions, however we are forecasting \$185,000 over budget due to severance payments.
- **Resources** The cost of sales for retail is included in this expense line along with all of the other costs of producing paper and online content, so it will be under budget when sales are below budget.
- **Travel** is expected to be close to budget, including the budgeted decreases in this area.
- **Committee Meetings** are forecasted to be \$307,000 over budget due primarily to lower than hoped for attendance at the Behold and Rendezvous events. These cost overruns are offset by staff vacancies in the Communities in Ministry unit.
- **Office Costs** are expected to be \$175,000 over budget due to small program cost overruns.
- **Professional Fees** are over budget due to higher fees from Morneau Sobeco as part of the transfer to Aon Hewitt and a fundraising consulting contract. Legal fees are expected to be approximately \$150,000 over budget, covered by the approved drawdown of the legal fund.
- **Property** Insurance costs are slightly higher than budget, and maintenance is below budget.
- **Investment Expenses** Bank fees are expected to be on budget.

Additional Financial Results

- **Donations** of \$1.47 million were received primarily for Africa, Asia and the Dondi project.
- **Other Revenue** of \$1.38 million was received from the Canadian International Development Agency, other partners and property sales.
- **Grants** of \$2.87 million were issued for CIDA work, for relief work in Africa and Asia, and for congregational loans.
- **Three Year Plan Update**

Surplus / (Deficit)	Original	Updated
2011	1,126	1,039
2012	(124)	(927)
2013	(1,002)	(1,206)
Total	0	(1,094)

The increase in the net forecasted deficit over the three year plan is primarily due to the 2011 reduction in forecasted sales being extended into future years.

The Mission & Service contributions have also been adjusted as a result of the analysis supporting the new fundraising plan. The current plan calls for stabilizing the fund at the previously forecasted 2012 amounts.

Longer Term Strategic Issues

The updated three year plan shows the need for difficult strategic thinking as the budget support from the Morrison Bequest (\$2.0 million annually) winds down. Additional projects on the horizon will require choices among alternative strategies. The Finance Committee will be holding meetings with staff over the next year focussed solely on the presentation of these choices and their implications.

Addendum F**Report – Permanent Committee on Governance & Agenda
November 2011**

The committee has met three times since the May 2011 GCE meeting, once in person and twice by conference call.

Preparation for the November 2011 GCE Meeting

The committee spent considerable time and effort planning for the upcoming GCE meeting. We will have a very full agenda. As we near the end of the triennium, we have a large volume of business to prepare for next year's General Council 41 meeting in Ottawa. Both this meeting of

the Executive and next March's meeting will have a great deal of work to do in preparation for General Council. The committee is taking a different approach to some of the agenda items for this meeting. Rather than micromanaging the scheduling of reports and proposals from the Programs and MEPS Permanent Committees, we have allocated a block of time to each committee to manage as they see fit.

We continue to read your evaluations closely, and attempt to adjust the agenda to accommodate your concerns and suggestions. We have scheduled the voting members' time with the Moderator as a breakfast meeting. We have moved the communion service to Sunday. We have chartered a bus to bring you from your hotel to the meeting on Sunday morning so that we are not delayed by the late start of subway service. There is no scheduled governance education as we near the end of the triennium and face increasing pressure on agenda time.

Of course our decision making around the future location of the General Council office is a major piece of work to be done. We met with Brian Cornelius, co-chair of the Accommodations Task Group, to discuss how best to do this work. You will see that our proposal is to do this work in four time slots, spread over our 3 day meeting. We hope this will allow us the maximum amount of time for both formal and informal information sharing, discussion and discernment. There will be a section of this process held in-camera, so that confidential information may be shared.

We will be using sessional committees for the first time in two years. We expect this will help us to deal with our very full agenda. Response sheets are included with the workbook, and will be available at the meeting. Please use these to address issues being dealt with in sessional committees other than your own. Our hope is that all significant issues will be raised in the sessional committees, so that plenary time will not need to be used to raise new ones.

The agenda belongs to you. We have fashioned the draft agenda to the best of our ability so that appropriate time is allocated to each item. We expect the agenda table will make recommendations for adjustments as the meeting proceeds. However the ultimate decision about time allocation belongs to the Executive as a whole. Any unfinished business will either have to go to the sub-executive or be postponed to our March 2012 meeting.

Governance Issues

Much of the work on governance that the committee has been dealing with recently is either advisory to other groups, or in the early planning stages. Hence this work will be reported back to the Executive either by other groups or by our committee at a later time. One specific proposal we are bringing to this meeting would set the dates for meetings of the Executive in the 2012-2015 triennium.

We continue to meet with Cynthia Gunn and Alan Hall around the simplification work. We are highly impressed with the quality and quantity of work that has been done on this project. The committee reviewed an internal discussion paper, *Toward More Faithful Governance*, addressing issues of the size and composition of General Council and its Executive. The paper has been referred to staff for additional research and discussion and will come back to the committee at a

later time. The committee also looked specifically at membership requirements and length of appointment for members-at-large on the Executive. More work is required prior to presenting a proposal. We continued our discussion on the issue of polity around church membership. It is apparent that the many facets of this issue do not allow for a quick or easy change in polity to be proposed. Work involving staff and the committee continues.

An article in the September 6, 2011 issue of *The Christian Century* quotes Cardinal John Henry Newman as saying that the church is shaped by the dynamic interaction of three elements: worship, theological reflection, and institutional governance. Each element individually is subject to corruption; it is when the three work together in creative tension that the church is at its best. For our upcoming meeting our worship will be coordinated by Maggie MacLeod and aboriginal members of the Executive, and our theological reflector will be John Lawson, United Church minister from Guelph. We encourage you all to take the time to read your workbook and reports thoroughly and carefully, and come prepared to work faithfully at the large volume of important work before us.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul Stott, Chairperson
On behalf of the committee

Committee Members:

Shirley Cleave	Charles McMillan
Nora Sanders	Paul Stott
Mardi Tindal	Stéphane Vermette
Karen Smart (Staff Resource)	

Addendum G

Moderator's Accountability Report

Origin: Mardi Tindal, Moderator

As we gather in mid-November, I will be praying with the words of Matthew 25:14-30, known as the parable of the talents. I will be asking for God's blessing on our meeting that we may exercise an ever-deepening generosity with the gifts given to and through our community.

I am struck by how the *five talents* in this Gospel passage parallel the *five loaves* in Matthew's earlier account (14:13-21.)

It is often tempting to echo the disciples' words, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish..." However, both stories remind us that we are called to live with an attitude of *abundance*; the Spirit moves us to create *true abundance* for peoples of our church and for the Earth.

Scripture calls us to return to habits of the heart such as those which I offered to our May 2011 meeting.

I am beginning my fourth round of *Spirit Express* Conference visits, as I write this, and I am grateful for plans that have been made for abundant sharing within the church in Hamilton and London Conferences. In addition to all kinds of visits with lay and ordered folks who are engaged in all kinds of vibrant ministries, this particular week holds the promise of conversations to be had in six town hall meetings, taking place in churches and community venues, from Six Nations territory to the Niagara Peninsula Islamic Society, and even on a train! With one another's encouragement, we are responding with hope to the challenges before us, especially those of climate and ocean change.

Normal attendance at these events has been about 70 to 80 people. Since we last met in May, over 200 people attended the town hall gathering hosted by Sackville United Church, and about 100 the evening before, co-hosted by St. Andrew's United in Halifax and the Halifax Interfaith Climate Justice Network. I look forward to visiting Newfoundland and Labrador Conference later this fall and Grand Council of the All Native Circle Conference next summer. These will complete my official visits of at least six days with each Conference.

Encouragement and **pastoral care** continues to be the primary focus of my visits and writing.

During our time together in May as voting members of the General Council Executive, I told you of my reservations about an upcoming article to be published in the *National Post* on May 14. I hoped that the article would have been published by the time of our last meeting so that we could talk about its potential effect on leaders and members. Since that was impossible, you allowed me the opportunity to tell you about my unease about how the article might be framed, and about what I told the writer. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to prepare you for what might come to you as leaders throughout the church.

The article was published a week later. You likely saw my immediate response on my blog. Amazingly, that blog posting has garnered 4,000 views, at last count. Many conversations, online and face-to-face, resulted because of the article and my response. Some church members took the opportunity to discuss about questions such as "the minimum standard" by which we welcome people into our community of faith, with their congregations, for example. I received positive, engaged responses from a number of you and from others within our church and beyond. I suspect that other media opportunities arrived due to this article: I had the opportunity to give a live, seven-minute interview on CTV Halifax's well viewed Live at Five program, for instance.

Also, I've blogged about our eagerness to talk about our faith, an eagerness that I see reflected in how energetically much of the church is engaged in discussing Remits 6A, 6B and 6C.

Among the many, mostly enthusiastic, responses to the media attention last May, I was particularly taken with this e-mail comment:

I am a real admirer of the United Church, and your resistance to embrace a false orthodoxy. I find the UCC to have a mature and measured response to a complex world. I wish more institutions had that same inner strength. I definitely see my own life issues and questions reflected in your interesting and nuanced approach to theology and the world.

The writer went on to describe his interest in my spiritual approach to environmental concerns. It turns out that he's a prominent voice in the ecological movement and occasionally worships in one of our congregations, though it's not clear to me that he's been noticed.

Then there was Raheel Raza's letter to the editor of the *National Post* (May 19). Raheel was one of those who came to mind in what the reporter, Charles Lewis, described as my "long pause" after he asked about the "minimum requirement" for people to join our community of faith:

As a Muslim adoptee of The United Church of Canada (in what other Church would you see this?), she wrote about the United Church's warm, inclusive welcome to her and friends of diverse faiths, which she suggests epitomizes Canada. She also spoke of our church's capacity to "think outside the box" and our commitment to religious literacy.

It was a joyful responsibility to preach at new ministries services in both Maritime and Bay of Quinte Conferences last spring. In Bay of Quinte, I served as the theme speaker, addressing Conference President Jean Wilson's Tree of Life theme. I have represented you through pastoral visits and calls to the church in numerous challenging circumstances such as those resulting from the Goderich tornado and Camp Berwick hurricane, and to the broader national community (e.g., at the state funeral for Jack Layton).

Pastoral visits are often joyful. I visited Eden Mills United Church in July, helping celebrate its 150th anniversary as well their leadership in the congregation's effort to become North America's first carbon neutral community. I had a similar experience with Etobicoke's St. James United this summer, where I was told they found faithful encouragement within my "Where is the Hope after Copenhagen?" letter and ongoing soul, community and creation work. Preaching and visiting with the Atlantic School of Theology summer students was another summer highlight.

Preaching at the national Worship Matters event in June gave me an opportunity to reflect upon the effects of worship, and why it really does matter, in our church. I chose to employ the metaphor of *ecotone* which has been picked up and used by a number of others since. I joined with women moderators of The United Church of Canada by offering our leadership at the September 2011 Western Women's conference. Together, we addressed the theme question, "How then shall we live for the seventh generation?" Following that it was a privilege to preach and lead community building with members of our Partners Advisory Council when meeting with staff leaders in late September.

My pastoral letter addressed to ministry personnel – and lay members – was published in the July/August edition of *The United Church Observer*. In that note, I highlighted the concerns I've heard about clergy health over the first two years of my term. All ministry personnel were alerted to this in case they don't read the Observer.

To help our church, and Canadians, mark the tenth anniversary of the tragedy of September 11, 2001, I participated in a new podcast, engaging in a "ten years later" dialogue with University of Toronto Professor and Toronto Star writer, Dr. Stephen Scharper. Also, I offered a video prayer to the church. The prayer received over 1,000 views that week, and was used in many congregational worship services that day.

By contributing a foreword for the upcoming book marking United Church Women's 50th anniversary, as well as an article for an upcoming issue of *Gathering*, and regular blogs (on average, 600 views each), in addition to tweeting, I am afforded the opportunity to encourage the United Church with the written word.

I embraced gracious invitations to spend a brief time with permanent committees meeting at the General Council Office in late September.

Truth and reconciliation work continues to be important. I was grateful for the invitation to participate in, and speak to, the National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering in August which coincided with and marked the 25th anniversary of our church's 1896 Apology. While there, I preached at the Sunday service with the congregation of Prince Rupert United Church. Since then, I have met again with the Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools Committee and look forward to participating in upcoming national Truth and Reconciliation Commission gatherings in Halifax, Victoria and Saskatoon. My fall letter in Infopac encouraged involvement in KAIROS related theme work this year.

Conversations about right relations work increasingly involves conversation about right relationship with Earth. During the National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering, and at Rendez-Vous, I heard several concerns expressed about the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline. The question of how to protest with the greatest integrity as people of faith is one which I discuss with my advisory committee. The guide which our church prepared on civil disobedience (in the mid '80s) is still a valuable resource to faithful discernment.

The joy of encouraging youth and youth leaders continued with the invitation to address the opening gathering of Rendez-vous, and to participate with leaders and participants throughout that weekend. Rendez-vous accepted my challenge to show us how to plan such national gatherings with a lower carbon footprint; the report prepared by Larissa Kanhai is a resource to both the GC41 Planning Committee and to the church as a whole. It reads in part, "The desire and good-will toward environmental efforts are not sufficient – a mandate must be set, a plan and budget created, a mode of measurement established, and it must all be evaluated." These words echo what I'm hearing from both young and old church members, indicating that we are more ready than ever to establish organizational carbon emissions targets and measure our progress in meeting them. This is an opportunity to live with greater integrity as we ask governments and others to do the same.

Interfaith leaders' efforts are now focused on preparing for faithful witness at and before the United Nations COP17 (Conference of Parties) talks on Climate Change to take place late this year in South Africa. A new table of Canadian faith leaders emerged at our first meeting as the G8/G20 Interfaith Religious Leaders' Summit, and we continue to find a new shared voice together. As I write, we are finalizing an unprecedented Call for Leadership and Action on Climate Change. The General Secretary of the Mennonite Church in Canada and I will carry these words to the World Council of Church's witness at the COP17, responding to the call for our solidarity from church leaders elsewhere. Before then, we will meet with representatives of all Canadian political parties on Parliament Hill in late October, within an Interfaith Forum on

this subject. We shared in a similar action related to poverty last March. I also attended the National Prayer Breakfast and related events in May.

I am increasingly focussing my attention on planning for 41st General Council 2012, and am continuing my work with the Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda as we approach next summer's General Council meeting.

Plans for the national Moderator's event, "Earth Day 2012: Soul, Community and Creation", approved at May 2011 Executive meeting, is going well. Some events and items for that day include developing a shared liturgy for April 22, 2012 (the second Sunday following Easter Sunday), and a real-time refreshment hour at 3:00 p.m. ET, that day. Working with Bruce Sanguin at Naramata last summer has also helped me prepare.

I remain deeply grateful for all of the support and help received in serving the church from this office. Following your May decision on a proposal from the General Secretary, David MacDonald now offers his advice and support in relation to my theme work, especially in planning for the Earth Day event, as well as in interfaith efforts related to COP17.

In addition to official Conference visits, 340 additional invitations have been received as of October 1, 2011.

Diana Chapman Walsh in Trustworthy Leadership writes, "... leadership consists in part of shaping and maintaining very intentional and specific holding places where people can get on with doing difficult 'adaptive' work that the organization needs them to do." Such adaptive work requires courageous honest conversations that employ habits of the heart. Our circle times have helped to guide my pastoral efforts in the church. They give us all the opportunity to be with one another in ways that are counter-cultural for many of us, and where we are invited to speak to whatever "other matters" we carry to our meetings that fall outside of our agenda.

I look forward to making the way with you, for spirited abundance during our meeting in November.

Addendum H

Aboriginal Ministries Council Accountability Report

Origin: Ray Jones, Chairperson

Introduction: This report highlights the work of the Aboriginal Ministries Council as was set out in the framework "A Vision of New Beginnings." It begins with a preface that names the vision and hope for the Aboriginal Ministries Circle and Council as it evolves with the United Church of Canada.

At the inaugural meeting of the Aboriginal Ministries Council (September, 2009) reflections on the Eagle and the Mouse emerged. The Eagle soars higher and takes in the broader view while the Mouse is engaged on the ground, (in ministry.) The Eagle can see further and can spot potential dangers, while the tenacity of the Mouse provides him/her with a knowledge of the terrain (the context.)

While this reflection was being shared across the country, since that inaugural meeting, other stories have emerged that honour the intercultural nature of the communities that the Aboriginal Ministry Council/Circle represents and serves.

A teaching on the Raven emerged during a meeting of the British Columbia Native Ministries in 2010, Haida Gwaii, BC. While the Eagle flies close to the Creator and provides clarity of vision; the Raven has the capacity to fly further.

Artist, Connie Dickens, creator of the logo for the 2011 National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering suggests that the grouping of the animals signify the Aboriginal communities coming together and the many people gathered. The Eagles in the centre depict the aspirations of the group and the Ravens on the side signify the ability to go the distance and travel far and wide, into new territory.



The Spirit Bear reminds each person of their uniqueness, just as the Spirit Bear is unique. The Wolf and Whale were added to the final version to further reflect the nature and identity of Aboriginal people across Canada” *(Taken from background information on the logo created for the 2011 National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering)*

SPIRITUAL HEALING

National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering

The National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering (NASG) was held in Tsimshain Territory, Prince Rupert, BC, August 19-21, 2011. Since the creation of the Aboriginal Ministries Council/Circle this is the second such event. A commitment has been made to ensure that the NASG will take place every three years. Previous to the NASG were twelve similar “Consultations” held sporadically since 1980. These consultations gave rise to the movement to empower and equip Aboriginal people for ministry/spiritual leadership in Aboriginal community and the wider church.

Approximately 93 participants, including Moderator Mardi Tindal; special guests, General Council Office and Conference staff, attended the 2011 event.

Tsimshain Elders Leonard and Mona Alexcee offered their leadership to the event, which began with a Grand Entry.

Guest Speaker, Adrian Jacobs, a member of the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy from Six Nation, Ontario, a noted author and lecturer with 20 years of experience in Aboriginal Ministry, offered reflections on the theme: “Honouring Spiritual Diversity.” Adrian also spoke on the gifts and challenges on a number of topics: reconciliation; leadership, Eldership; diabetes and reclaiming of health; the value of Aboriginal story and way of life.

Adrian remarked on how the United Church of Canada is living in a kairos moment and how we all must work hard to move forward, for our people who are calling out for help.

Participants representing the 53 Aboriginal congregations across Canada each had an opportunity to offer a reflection and symbol of their ministry.

Appreciation was expressed on how thirty years of consultations and gatherings have had positive and transformative impact on the wider church.

There is great hope in the youth and young adults who are stepping forward to offer leadership, as well as hope in the All Native Circle Conference and the newly formed Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre. The dreams of the Elders who came before us are coming true. It was felt that the church must remain rooted in God, Creator as we move forward to strengthen our spiritual healing.

Opportunity was given to the participants to engage the various areas of work within the church: Basis of Union and Crest, Governance, Indigenous Justice/Residential School; National Elder Process and Wabung (Aboriginal Theological schools.)

An abundance of ideas, concerns was received by the Pastoral Charges during the small group breakouts. The Aboriginal Ministries Council will review and incorporate this information as they continue to live into their mandate.

Overall, the feedback received by Pastoral Charges on the event as a whole, was positive. Participants felt engaged and inspired.

Community voices emerged affirming the development of future NASG's would continue to include:

- ❖ Inspiration
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Youth
- ❖ Nurture Leadership

Approximately 7 hours of audio/visual tape has been collected from the event, offering capacity for development of resources that will offer possibilities for resource development for ongoing engagement with congregations, schools, Presbyteries and Conferences.

National Elder:

A Subgroup appointed by the Council continued to meet throughout the year. The following is the framework they developed and delivered at the NASG.

Through prayerful discernment a National Elder will be selected at the National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering. Trusting in the Spirit, direction will emerge:

1. The three regions will gather (ANCC, BC Native Ministries, Ontario/Quebec Aboriginal congregations of the Hamilton-Toronto-Bay of Quinte-Montreal/Ottawa, London Conferences) to reflect on the following questions:
 - a. How might we encourage and nurture engagement with the Elders within our regions over the next three years?
 - b. Are we ready to name a National Elder from our region?

If so:

Is there someone from your region that reflects the spiritual values named and is able to fulfill the role as it is currently outlined?

Is that individual willing to discern fulfilling this role?

If not:

What can we do in the interim? i.e.: consult broadly within our region, consider local understanding of Eldership and protocol, etc.

This process generated excellent conversation at the NASG. The community input received will be reviewed at the September meeting. And, further directions will be set at a future meeting of the Elder Subgroup.

The following are points of consensus from the three constituencies:

1. The process needs youth involvement.
2. Aboriginal culture values the need for more than one Elder. A balance of male and female is important.
3. Need to reflect regional diversity.
4. It is important and appropriate to take time to develop this leadership.
5. We need to take this conversation back to Aboriginal Pastoral Charges/Outreaches.

Healing Programs:

The United Church of Canada's Healing Fund Council met in May, 2011 to consider 52 applications to the Healing Fund. Fourteen proposals were approved for total granting of \$189,000.

The following is a summary of the approved projects:

- Celebrating Our Language, Kanehsata:ke, Quebec -The Mohawk Language Custodian Association teaches the Kanien'kéha language through plays to encourage the community to learn to speak their language through their talents and bring healing to the Elders, youth, local schools and community members.
- Onkwehonenweha (Our Ways), Ohsweken, ON - A group of grass roots individuals who came together to revive some of almost lost traditional teachings of the Onkwehnowe and to provide 2 weeks of activities for families and /or individuals who do not know about the traditional systems.
- For Our Future Reclaiming the Culture, Cochrane, ON - The Inahepanik (Opportunity) Community Centre aims to restore, strengthen and protect First Nation Heritage by learning about the culture. To reinforce the traditional culture values in events that talk about the seven sacred teachings for culture pride, self-determination and children, youth, elder participation.
- Kakina KeKa Minoyamin (We All Heal Together) Cote First Nation, SK. - This project consists of a 5 day workshop with the delivery of a holistic youth development. A cultural initiative to utilize the cultural resources to assist in the healthy development of the youth.
- Residential School Survivors Healing Circles, Standoff, AB - The Blood Tribe community proposed a program to address healing and wellness needs through a series of

20 healing circles for residential school survivors who suffered childhood abuse, injury and/or neglect.

- Land of the Cedar: Two-Spirits, One Circle, Vancouver, B.C. - Healing Our Spirit BC Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Society hosting the 23rd International Two-Spirited Gathering to enable a program for two-spirited people to learn about their cultures, heritage, ceremonies, healing practices and inherent and civil rights.
- Moving Towards Healing, West Vancouver, B.C. - The Red Road HIV/AIDS Network is to facilitate healing initiatives for individuals and families impacted by both the history of the Residential School system and HIV/AIDS. The impetus for the development of this program grew from the reality of the increased near epidemic level of HIV.
- New Brunswick Residential School Survivor Helping Gathering, Upper Kinsclear, NB - The Mi'kmaq Maliseet Healing Networking Centre undertakes healing, outreach, public education and research activities to address the healing needs of Indian Residential School Survivors and their families. The gathering is for the purpose of mutual support, enhancing healing processes, knowledge and skills
- Language & Cultural Camp, Kitwanago, B.C. - Wilp Si'Satxw House of Purification Society to provide a cultural camp for youth aged 13-18 years. This will offer life skills, and experiential training on horseback trail riding and traditional fishing practices, acculturation and traditions.
- Language Immersion Canoe Course, Tofino, B.C. - The Hesquiaht Language Program will take students from Kyuquot/Checleset, Ehatesaht, Nuuchalthlaht, Hesquiaht, Tla-o-qui-aht and Ahousaht for a month long camp as a way to nurture the culture to move towards healing the near lost language and teachings of the canoe making at a remote ancient Hesquiaht village site.
- Biidaaban, Chippewas of Nawash, Neyaashiinigmiing First Nation, ON - The Nawash Three Fires Society group will have a series of cultural events that will assist members in the development of positive Anishinaabe cultural identity, practices, and assist and support those who are struggling with addiction and coping with loss through the effects of the residential school era.
- The Provincial Elder's Gathering 2011, 100 Mile House, B.C. - The Canim Lake Band Elders assist in this gathering to allow the younger generation to demonstrate respect and honour to their Elders and reconnect with their traditional heritage and continue the circle of healing and eliminate the legacy of pain.
- Reconnecting the Generations through Arts and Crafts, Big Trout, - The Kitchenukmaykoosib Inninuwug Homecoming committee's initiating a 3 day workshop to learn the principles and practice of community art. There will be engagement in traditional art activities strengthening cultural traditions and intergeneration ties.
- Survival of the Kaska Language and Traditional Arts, Watson Lake Yukon Territory - The Liard Aboriginal Women's Society offers a bi-weekly language classes and traditional craft group with survivors of the residential schools and youth living in Watson Lake, YK, Good, Hope Lake and Lower Post, BC.

BUILDING CAPACITY

The National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering provided opportunity for the Community Capacity Development Coordinators (CCDC's) to introduce a framework for engagement with pastoral

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charges/outreach. Phase one of congregational development will begin in late 2011 and will continue to be the focus of the CCDC's work in 2012.

This phase of community development will form cluster groups that will consist of 3 - 5 pastoral charges/outreach; a local Elder; as well as Conference and/or Presbytery staff. The cluster will meet with the CCDC in community for a three day process. The focus is as follows:

- Congregational Development
- Resource Development
- Training and Leadership Development

This engagement will involve addressing the priorities previously set by them through the Aboriginal Steering Committee: Aboriginal people's vision of spiritual healing, stewardship, and economic well-being. Together they will develop a transitional work plan that offers movement toward self-determined, self-sustaining, vibrant communities of faith engaged in stewardship and leadership programs that serve to strengthen the spiritual lives of the communities they serve. It is important to note that this clustering process is just one approach toward these goals.

The Community Capacity Development Coordinator's role is to facilitate this process; and they are accountable for listening to communities for the purpose of developing capacity within Aboriginal ministries and are responsible for assisting congregations and leaders to transition their ministries into the future.

STEWARDSHIP AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

In collaboration with Mission through Finance, and the All Native Circle Conference steps have been taken to build capacity for congregations who are interested in maintaining a charitable registration. This is a meaningful step for some Aboriginal congregations.

There are follow-up actions subsequent to this conversation:

- Investigate the possibility of submitting a "batch" of applications.
- Provide a training session on registration application and annual filing process.
- Aboriginal Ministries Circle and All Native Circle Conference will possible identify candidates for registration and gauge degree of local interest.

During the September 2011 meeting, the Aboriginal Ministries Council met with David Armour, Directory of Philanthropy.

The Council developed the following statement in preparation for that conversation:

The United Church of Canada must take seriously its commitment to Aboriginal ministries to see that justice and fairness prevail across the church as we walk the journey together. The Aboriginal Ministries Council laid out the following stepping stones essential to the endeavour during their September, 2011 meeting:

1. *Ensure Aboriginal pastoral personnel (lay, ordained, or commissioned) are found to serve in communities where there is a history of United Church of Canada presence.*

2. *Ensure manses and churches owned by the United Church of Canada are kept in a state of good repair and manses meet the basic requirements set out in the Manual.*
3. *Ensure a “cost of living” allowance for ministry personnel serving in remote and isolated communities where the living costs are exorbitant.*
4. *Use technology as well as local media to improve communication to remote and isolated communities.*
5. *Assure that people attending meetings of the church are provided with cash to cover meals and expenses enroute.*

The Aboriginal Ministries Council was formed to work along with the bureaucracy of The United Church of Canada to remove hurdles and stumbling blocks that have impeded development of Aboriginal Pastoral Charges. The needs must be dealt with in a concrete manner that goes beyond being “documented and shelved.”

As the voice of the Aboriginal Ministries Council emerges so will the Aboriginal view of stewardship evolve. Much is done in Aboriginal communities in terms of the stewardship through the ministry of food and other in-kind commitments.

VISION OF COMMUNITY

The Aboriginal Ministry Council continues to develop the Terms of Reference; as well as a Terms of Reference for the National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering.

Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre

In partnership with Communities in Ministry, the Executive Minister, Aboriginal Ministries Circle continued to facilitate the process of amalgamation between the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre and the Francis Sandy Theological Centre. The Joint Board’s meeting in May 2011 led to the approval of the proposal developed by the Wabung group as well as the bylaws of the amalgamation agreement.

The Executive Minister (non-voting member) was appointed by the Joint Board to facilitate the selection process for the Keeper of the Circle. Three members from each of the former Aboriginal Theological schools are represented on the Committee. The Search/Selection Committee is currently in process.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ray Jones, Chair (representing, British Columbia Native Ministries)

Committee Members:

Grafton Antone, Francis Sandy Theological Centre

Chris C. Bolton, British Columbia Native Ministries

Jake Charles, Ontario/Quebec Aboriginal Congregations

Jules Lavallee, Traditional

Lewis D. Coffman, rep. for the Executive of the General Council

Rosalyn Cole, Inuit/Metis Community

Susan Gabriel, Ontario/Quebec Aboriginal Congregations

Alvin Dixon, Vancouver School of Theology

Lark Kim, Intercultural and Diverse Communities in Ministry

Lorna Pawis, All Native Circle Conference

Martha Pedoniquotte, Ontario/Quebec Aboriginal Congregations

Grant Queskekapow, Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre

Bernice Saulteaux, All Native Circle Conference

Dixie Shilling, Ontario/Quebec Aboriginal Congregations

John R. Thompson, All Native Circle Conference

Lori Lewis, British Columbia Native Ministries

Jim White, British Columbia Native Ministries

Addendum I

MEPS25 Human Resources Policy Changes

Origin: Permanent Committee, Ministry and Employment Policies and Services

The Permanent Committee Ministry and Employment Policies and Services **proposes:**

That the Executive of the General Council approve the following policies:

- Job Evaluation
- Recruitment and Selection of Staff
- Moving Costs
- Resignation
- Continuing Education
- Sabbatical Leave

Background:

The rationale for recommended changes to the attached policies follow:

Job Evaluation

- Committee members are currently described by their unit. It is being recommended that the committee members be described by their function/type of position.
- A statement has been added about how many members constitute a quorum for decision-making.
- It is being recommended that the following statement be deleted: “The Executive Officer of the Ministry and Employment Unit may develop or change procedures through which all jobs can be reviewed on a consistent basis”. The introduction to the HR Policy Manual makes the same statement for all policies. This is therefore redundant.
- As the “Terms of Reference” for the Job Evaluation Committee are out-of-date, and this policy covers all salient points of the original Terms of Reference, all references to “Terms of Reference” have been deleted.

Recruitment and Selection of Staff

- It is being recommended that elected members will only be part of Search and Selection Committees for positions that are affirmed by the Executive of the General Council

(Conference Executive Secretaries, General Council Officers, Executive Ministers/Officers), and it is therefore not a requirement for other positions.

- The composition of the Search and Selection Committee has been streamlined, with recommendations that some positions with a higher profile (some Program positions, for example) may require an elected member to be part of the committee.
- It is also being recommended that the following statement in the “Transfers” section be removed: “employees being transferred may be subject to a probationary period”. If an employee is transferred and it does not work out, a probationary period does not minimize the cost of termination pay. All years of service in the General Council and Conference Offices need to be considered – not just the probationary period – if termination is necessary.

Moving Costs

- It is being recommended that a staff person who has been relocated must remain in the position for one year, or reimbursement for the pro-rated costs must be paid back. Currently, the staff person must remain for 3 years.

Resignation

- It is being recommended that the amount of notice an employee is required to provide their employer be changed. The policy currently requires extended notice for as much as three months. This is not enforceable, and is not consistent with Employment Standards. It is being recommended that the policy be changed to say that the expectation is two weeks of written notice, with consideration being made for a longer notice period if possible.

Continuing Education

- The recommendation is to remove the section on reimbursement guideline percentages. The practice is to have a specified amount available for employees which is then approved by the supervisor, and paperwork flows through Ministry and Employment who track continuing education expenses.
- It is recommended that the paragraph stating that the annual study leave must be approved by the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment be changed to say that the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment must be consulted prior to granting the leave. This ensures consistency across the General Council Office and Conference offices as to how study leave is being used.

Sabbatical Leave

- It is being recommended that the purpose of the Sabbatical be modified to allow for leaves exploring transformational change and expansion of the church, and for both personal and professional growth.
- The current Sabbatical Leave policy gives authority to approve sabbatical leaves to the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment. The suggested revisions change the tone of the policy to speaking more about consensus, with final sign-off being the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment and the supervisor.
- It is also being recommended that the timing of the leave may be approved by the supervisor after consultation with the unit/Conference leader, and that the timing does not need to be approved by the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment.

MEPS: Appendix A - Human Resources Policy Changes

Origin: Permanent Committee, Ministry and Employment Policies and Services

To: The Executive of the General Council

Date: November 12, 2011

Job Evaluation Policy 1.3
Page 1 of 2
Reviewed September 2011

Job Evaluation

Purpose

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing a fair and equitable job evaluation system for all positions in the General Council and Conference Offices. Job evaluation determines the category of a position using a structured method to measure the size of jobs, in relation to the demands and outputs of the role. The process takes into account internal equity, established benchmarks, and external market comparisons.

Policy

A Job Evaluation Committee will be maintained to review requests for job evaluations. A position must be evaluated on current duties and responsibilities. The Job Evaluation Committee assumes that every job is being performed competently.

Procedures

1. The Job Evaluation Committee will be made up of the following members (**minimum number**):

Chair	Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit, or designate
Programs and Conciliar Relations	4 staff appointed by the General Council Officers
Conference Offices	2 staff appointed by the General Council Officer Conciliar Relations
Office of the Moderator and General Secretary	1 General Council Officer appointed by the General Secretary
Staff Council Representative	1 Staff Representative appointed by the Staff Council

- **Chair, Ministry and Employment Unit (Executive Officer, or designate)**
- **1 General Council Officer**
- **1 Senior Management Group member**
- **1 Program Coordinator staff member from the General Council Office**
- **1 Administrative staff member from the General Council Office**

- **1 Conference Executive Secretary or Speaker**
 - **1 Administrative staff member from a Conference office**
2. The Job Evaluation Committee will review job descriptions brought forward to the Ministry and Employment Unit approved by the senior staff person of the employing unit or Conference. The committee may, from time to time, ask for certain groupings of jobs to be updated and submitted for categorization review.
 3. **A quorum will be comprised of half the members of the committee, including the Chair.**
 4. All communication regarding outcomes will be made by the Ministry and Employment Unit to the senior staff person of the employing unit or Conference.
 5. The effective date for evaluations will be the first of the month following the date the finalized job description is received by the Ministry and Employment Unit.
 - ~~6. The Executive Officer of the Ministry and Employment Unit may develop or change procedures through which all jobs can be reviewed on a consistent basis. The Terms of Reference for the Job Evaluation Committee are available to all employees upon request through the Ministry and Employment Unit.~~
 7. Should an employee request that the categorization be reconsidered, there is an appeal process as follows:
 - Step 1:

Employees may appeal the categorization of their position to the Ministry and Employment Unit within one month of the date of notification, if after discussing the job description with the supervisor, it is subsequently found that all relevant position information was not included in the job description. Upon presentation of a more accurate job description, the Job Evaluation Committee will consider the appeal.
 - Step 2:

If the incumbent is not satisfied with the response from step 1, s/he may appeal the decision to the General Secretary, who, along with advice from the Executive Officer of the Ministry and Employment Unit and the General Council Officer of the employing unit **or Conference Executive Secretary**, will reconsider the relevant information received. A final and binding decision will then be made.

Recruitment and Selection of Staff

Purpose

The United Church of Canada is committed to ensuring a fair and consistent recruitment and hiring process in all units and at all occupational levels in the General Council and Conference offices.

Policy

When a vacancy occurs, the job description will be reviewed by the employing unit/Conference. If required, a new/revised job description will be prepared by the employing unit/Conference, and a signed, dated copy will be sent to the Ministry and Employment Unit. Approval levels are indicated on the job description form. Proposals for new staff positions must be approved as indicated on the appropriate form, prior to submission for categorization. See Position Approval Policy.

The Ministry and Employment Unit is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate procedures are followed in all recruitment and selection processes.

Procedures

- 1) Appropriate approval must be obtained and communicated, in writing, to the Ministry and Employment Unit in order to begin the process for all positions in the General Council and Conference offices.
- 2) Recruitment for all positions will include postings, advertisements, and the use of agencies, as deemed suitable. For internal candidates, please refer to the "Transfers" section in this policy.
- 3) The approval/**appointment** level to hire is listed on Tables 1a and 1b.
- 4) Candidates will be interviewed by a Selection Committee, the members of which are listed on the Committee Representation Tables 2a and 2b. The Ministry and Employment Unit will assist the Hiring Committee as requested or as required.
- 5) Hiring approval/**appointment** for all positions is as follows:

Approval or Appointment Levels – General Council Office	Table 1a
General Secretary and Moderator	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The General Council	
Positions Reporting to the General Secretary	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Executive of the General Council and General Secretary for General Council Officers, Executive Ministers/Officers• General Secretary for other positions	
All Other Positions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Council Officer or Executive Minister/Officer	

Approval or Appointment Levels – Conference Offices	Table 1b
Conference Executive Secretary/Speaker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Council Officer, Conciliar Relations, and the Executive of the General Council 	
All Other Positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conference Executive Secretary/Speaker, and/or Search and Selection Committee, and/or Staff Committee depending upon the Conference structure 	

- 6) Search and Selection Committee Representation (Minimum Requirements) **for committees with elected member participants**: It is desirable that members reflect regional representation, lay/ordered, ethnic diversity, and gender balance, and every effort will be made to accomplish this. Depending upon the nature of the position, members with appropriate technical skills may also be represented.

Composition of the Search and Selection Committee will be reviewed in advance by the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit, to ensure consistency throughout the organization as it relates to the hiring process.

Committee Composition – General Council Office	Table 2a
Administrative/Technical/Program/Specialist/Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate supervisor 1 Ministry and Employment Unit facilitator (acts as staff resource) Consideration should be given to including other members of the organization, depending upon the nature of the position There may be positions with high visibility within the United Church where it is recommended that an elected member also be included 	
Executive Minister/Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Secretary Chair of related Permanent Committee or designate 1–2 Executive of the General Council members as designated by the General Secretary or his/her designate 1 Ministry and Employment Unit facilitator (acts as staff resource) 	
General Council Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Secretary Chair of the related General Council committee, or designate 2 Executive members appointed by the General Secretary or his/her designate 1 Ministry and Employment Unit facilitator (acts as staff resource) or an executive search professional 	

Committee Composition – Conference Office	Table 2b
Administrative/Technical/Program/Specialist/Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference Executive Secretary/Speaker or designate • 1 human resources representative acting as staff resource (Staff Committee member or designate, or staff member from Ministry and Employment Unit, General Council Office, depending upon the Conference structure) • Consideration should be given to including other members of the Conference, depending upon the nature of the position • There may be positions with high visibility within the United Church where it is recommended that a Conference Executive member also be included 	
Conference Executive Secretary/Speaker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Council Officer, Conciliar Relations • 2-3 representatives selected by the Conference Executive, or designate • 1 human resources representative acting as staff resource (Staff Committee member or designate, or staff member from Ministry and Employment Unit, General Council Office, depending upon the Conference structure) 	

7) Reference checks ~~with past/current supervisors~~ are required ~~in the case of~~ for all hirings. (internal transfers/promotions and external candidates).

8) Transfers:

- An eligible internal candidate must advise his/her supervisor of his/her intent to apply prior to submitting an application.
- All internal candidates in all employing units or Conferences will be given consideration for any vacancies for which they are qualified.
- For transfers of categories 1–7 that occur within the immediate employing unit or Conference, staff may be moved directly into a vacant position without posting the position.
- An employing unit, in consultation with Ministry and Employment, may move a term employee into the permanent position during the term without posting the position, provided that the term staff has **previously** gone through the full cycle of the search & selection process.
- Any position changes between Conferences, and Conference and General Council Office are considered transfers or promotions, and not a new employment relationship.
- Reference checks or consultation with past/current supervisors **will be conducted** ~~are considered to be good practice in the case of~~ **for** all internal transfers and promotions. The hiring employing unit has the option of doing this directly with the current supervisor or having the Ministry and Employment Unit act on its behalf.
- ~~Relevant work history, or details from employee files that may have a bearing on the position being pursued, may be shared with the hiring employing unit at the discretion of the Ministry and Employment Unit. Unless such information has a direct bearing on the position being pursued, confidentiality of employee files will be maintained in relation to hiring employing units.~~

- Start dates will be negotiated between the supervisors, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit.
- ~~Staff transferring to a new position may be subject to a probationary period, at the discretion of the employing unit. See Probation Policy. All terms of appointment and letters of offer are prepared and finalized by the Ministry and Employment Unit.~~

Moving Costs

Purpose

The United Church of Canada reimburses eligible permanent, full-time employees in categories 8 and higher for their actual housing search, moving, storage, and travel expenses to the extent that they are reasonable and/or properly authorized. This policy applies when staff positions are filled by staff from other parts of the country who are required to move to accept employment.

Policy

Eligible employees who are required to move to accept employment will be reimbursed for reasonable and/or properly authorized moving and related costs. The new staff member must remain in her/his position **for a minimum of one year**. If the staff person terminates employment within that year, s/he will reimburse the United Church on a pro-rated basis.

Procedures

1. When the Ministry and Employment Unit becomes aware of an upcoming move, the "Moving Guidelines Information" package will be provided. The guidelines include all relevant details on moving expenses any other related information.

Resignation

Purpose

~~This outlines the policy and procedures related to the resignation of an employee.~~ **The United Church of Canada has expectations related to the resignation of an employee.**

Policy

Employees planning to end their employment with The United Church of Canada must formally notify their employing unit/**Conference in writing**. ~~Reasonable notice is expected as outlined below.~~ ***It is expected that 2 weeks of written notice will be provided, with consideration being given to a longer notice period if possible.***

Procedures

- ~~1. The normal expectation of notice for staff in categories 1-3 is a minimum of two weeks; for staff in categories 4-6, a minimum of one month; and in categories 7 and higher, a minimum of three months.~~
- 2. Formal notification will be made in writing to the employing unit/Conference, with a copy to the Ministry and Employment Unit. The resignation date is the last day an employee is physically at work.**
3. An exit interview will be conducted by the Ministry and Employment Unit or its designate.
- ~~4. The Ministry and Employment Unit is responsible for tracking turnover statistics. The reason for leaving will always be reported to the Ministry and Employment Unit for this purpose.~~

Continuing Education

Purpose

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting the ongoing professional development of its employees and provides the opportunity for continuing education for permanent employees. This policy outlines the continuing education opportunities for employees in the General Council and Conference offices.

Policy

Continuing education opportunities such as training, skills development, education, or professional development may be available for employees if the continuing education is directly related to an employee's current work, known future work or anticipated areas of expansion at the United Church.

Permanent employees in categories 8 and higher may be provided with up to three weeks (15 working days) per year, of continuing education leave, also known as annual study leave, upon the approval of the immediate supervisor.

Permanent staff, in category 7 who were employed prior to December 2008, will continue to be eligible for this benefit.

Continuing education programs are subject to the approval of the immediate supervisor, who will determine whether the continuing education opportunity will facilitate the work of the church and will be of mutual advantage to the employee and the employing unit.

~~Funding of continuing education is subject to budget constraints. For continuing education programs that are taken as a graded course, reimbursement will be made upon submission of proof of successful completion from an accredited institute of learning. Other continuing education programs may be paid beforehand if appropriate (for example, a seminar where payment is required before attending).~~ **Final approval of the continuing education program rests with the General Council Officer, Conference Executive Secretary or Speaker, Executive Ministers/Officers, and supervisors, in consultation with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit.** Approval of the continuing education leave is subject to the requirements (skill level, time, etc.) of the workplace, **as well as budgetary considerations.**

Procedures

- 1. A formal request will be made by the employee to the supervisor. Approval must be obtained in advance of the continuing education event.**
- 2. Employees have access to specified amounts each year, and these amounts will be subject to yearly budgetary considerations. This information is available through Ministry and Employment Unit.**
- 3. For continuing education events which are graded courses, half the approved amount will be paid upon registration, and the second half upon successful completion of the course and presentation of the grade obtained.**
- 4. There is no provision for carrying over unused continuing education amounts from year to year.**

5. Requests for time off during normal working hours to participate in continuing education and professional development opportunities, and which are not categorized as continuing education leave, may be granted by the immediate supervisor in consultation with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit.
6. Prior to granting continuing education leave, also known as annual study leave, the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit, must be consulted by the person approving the leave **to ensure consistency of policy application.**

Procedures

1. ~~The following guidelines may be followed when determining how reimbursement will be made:~~
 - ~~Directly Job/Skill Related: 100% (directly related to one's current work, and/or identified as an area for improvement or approved as being directly related to known future work)~~
 - ~~Somewhat Job/Skill Related: 80% (not deemed essential, but which could have immediate value in fulfilling the current job requirements)~~
 - ~~Potentially Job Related: 50% (less value to current position, but more value in the future of the employing unit — e.g., staff in non-program roles taking a religious studies course)~~
 - ~~Unrelated: 0%~~

Sabbatical Leave Policy 2.15

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Reviewed September 2011

Sabbatical Leave

Purpose

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting the ongoing professional and vocational development of its employees and provides the opportunity for a Sabbatical Leave for permanent staff in categories 8 and higher. The purpose of Sabbatical Leave is to provide time for an employee to enrich skill levels, further professional abilities, and become better equipped to serve on the cutting edge of her or his area of ministry. The result may be an individual who is revitalized to continue her or his work.

Policy

Permanent staff in categories 8 and higher may apply for Sabbatical Leave after five full years of employment, and again at successive five-year intervals. The Sabbatical Leave may be for a period of up to twelve weeks long with full salary and benefits, not including travel costs, in a reasonably intense and disciplined program that is approved by **the immediate supervisor, Conference Executive Secretary/Speaker, and/or the corresponding General Council Officer of the employing unit, in consultation with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit**, at least six months prior to the leave.

Permanent staff, in category 7 who were employed prior to December 2008, will continue to be eligible for this benefit.

Sabbatical Leave may be combined with continuing education leave (also known as annual study leave), vacation, and/or unpaid leave of absence to extend the term. The appropriate length of a Sabbatical Leave depends on many factors and will be determined by the immediate supervisor, and the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit. A Sabbatical Leave must be completed within a one-year period.

Procedures

- 1. The program for study undertaken must be clearly job related, either to one's current position, or to a known change in position in The United Church of Canada. It may also be related to an area of expansion in the church, which includes training to enable growth into other areas, or helping to equip staff for transformational change. The intent is to enable staff to grow personally and professionally and to assist the church in reaching out.**
- 2. The timing of the Sabbatical Leave, as well as the general area of focus, will be approved by the supervisor. The employee may then start to make plans regarding the Sabbatical Leave activities, before the final proposal has been formally approved.**
- 3. Sabbatical Leave must be approved by the supervisor, Conference Executive Secretary/Speaker and/or General Council Officer, and after consultation with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit. The approval process is meant to be consultative in nature in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the leave being proposed. Once consensus has been received, the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit and supervisor will formally approve the leave.**

4. ***The employing unit and General Council Officer and/or Conference Executive Secretary/Speaker*** of the employing unit are responsible for determining the number of leaves to be requested per year for the unit, based on the needs of the unit, taking into consideration the unit's budgetary limitations and work requirements. Because of this, it may not be possible for a unit to grant a Sabbatical Leave at the time requested.
5. A Sabbatical Leave proposal will be discussed in the early stages of development with the applicant and the supervisor in the employing unit/***Conference, with the Conference Executive Secretary/Speaker and/or General Council Officer of the employing unit/Conference***, and with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit.
6. ***Consultation and review of the Sabbatical Leave proposal must be reviewed at least six months before the proposed start date. Specific details are to be provided in writing no later than two months before the start of the leave.***
7. Upon completion of the Sabbatical Leave, the employee will provide written **and/or oral reports as determined when the Leave was approved.**

MEPS Report: Effective Leadership & Healthy Pastoral Relations



**EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP & HEALTHY
PASTORAL RELATIONS
COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT**

REPORT OF FINDINGS

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings and outcomes of the *Effective Leadership & Healthy Relationships Collaborative Research Project*, which was conducted to address the core concerns related to pastoral relations, and to establish recommendations for improving the health of pastoral relationships within the UCC.

The core method used to gather data for the *Effective Leadership & Healthy Relationships* study was to survey the population of ministry personnel and lay leaders in key positions associated with pastoral relations, offering as much opportunity to participate in the survey as possible through online and paper-based surveys. As responses to the survey were being collected, MNP tracked some of the demographics of the survey respondent groups to identify United Church constituencies that were underrepresented in the survey results. In most cases, under-representation from the online survey was addressed through distribution of paper surveys. 1,757 individuals participated in the survey (online and via mail).

In the case of Aboriginal Ministries, Ethnic Ministries, and French Ministries, the project's steering group recognized the potential language and cultural barriers associated with the survey, and chose additional research methods to ensure that information was gathered from these constituencies. The unique perspectives of Chaplaincies and individuals who had been the subject of a 363 Review were also solicited through focus groups and interviews.

Throughout the analysis of survey results and data gathered through focus groups and interviews, several overarching themes arose that indicate strengths in the United Church's current pastoral relations policies and practices, along with several overarching themes that call for further improvement.

The key strengths identified are as follows:

- Connections between pastoral charges/ministry units and ministry personnel are strong.
- Ministry personnel are generally satisfied with their career and are optimistic about the future of the Church.
- Ministry personnel are functioning fairly similarly across the church, suggesting that while pastoral relations policies and processes need to be flexible enough to meet various contextual needs, they do not need to be crafted to address demographic differences.
- There is general support for the current Minimum Salary Schedule.

The key areas for improvement identified are as follows:

- It is generally felt that there is too much policy and process required for managing pastoral relations, and that the policies and processes are generally applied too rigidly. There is a general call for simplification of pastoral relations policies and processes, along with an openness of policy administrators to consider each situation with "thoughtfulness and good will".
- There is a general need for more professional-level support to assist pastoral charges with ministerial compensation and performance management. It is generally felt that reliance on volunteer effort is hampering the Church's ability to effectively manage pastoral relations.
- There is support for shifting the responsibilities of Presbytery to focus less on pastoral oversight and discipline, and more on collegial support for ministry personnel.
- There is significant frustration among ministry personnel. Many ministry personnel feel powerless to affect changes in the Church. Many believe that the Church doesn't practice what it preaches and often feel that the Church doesn't hear their concerns. There is also significant concern among ministry personnel about the future of their career.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP & HEALTHY PASTORAL RELATIONS STUDY
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

- There is a need to ensure that candidacy processes do not present unnecessary barriers for potential candidates for ministry.
- Minority groups within the Church agree that pastoral relations policies and processes do not meet their needs. There is a desire to see policies and procedures enhanced to accommodate a wider range of needs and situations.
- In significant numbers, those who participated in this study felt that there is a disconnection between the various courts of the Church. There is a need to strengthen the connection between the General Council Office and pastoral charges, ministry units, and ministry personnel to in turn strengthen the health of pastoral relations.
- There is a desire for enhanced compensation for ministry personnel serving in remote locations.

These key strengths and opportunities for improvement are further defined in section 3.0 General Findings – Overall Themes Arising from the Study. The remainder of the report provides more details on the outcomes of the research project's data collection and analysis:

- Section 4.0 Overall Findings presents the outcomes of the analysis of all data collected through surveys, focus groups, and interviews, and is organized according to the themes of our research (Pastoral Relations, Pastoral Oversight and Discipline, Compensation, Recruitment for Ministry, and Overall Satisfaction with The United Church of Canada).
- Section 5.0 Summary of Focus Group & Interview Findings presents the outcomes of focus groups and interviews with individuals associated with Aboriginal Ministries, Ethnic Ministries, French Ministries, Chaplaincy, and 363 Reviews.
- Complete survey questions results, as well as background information about project-related communication and focus group and interview questions, are provided in appendices.

2.0 BACKGROUND & RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Ministry within the United Church of Canada (UCC) has been recognized as a critical component to the nurturing of the church's faith—congregations, local ministries, and special ministries are the roots of the UCC and its face in many communities, and the church's ability to live out its mission relies on the strength of the church at the community level. In turn, the health of the church at the community level relies on the church's ability to maintain healthy relationships with ministry personnel. Over time, concerns about pastoral relations have arisen related to remuneration of ministry personnel, the oversight and discipline structure, the pastoral relations system of policies, and recruitment of new ministry personnel.

The General Council (GCE) established the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies (PC-MEPS) to support GCE's commitment to ensuring that all personnel systems are fair, equitable, and demonstrate consistent values. As part of this work, four task groups were formed to develop recommendations for improvements to pastoral relations policies and ministry personnel remuneration, oversight and discipline, and recruitment. The research needs of these four task groups formed the basis for the *Effective Leadership & Healthy Relationships Collaborative Research Project*. This research project is being conducted to address the core concerns related to pastoral relations, and to establish recommendations for improving the health of pastoral relationships within the UCC.

The methodology used to gather information for this research project was developed to meet the following criteria:

- The need to ensure representation from a broad range of demographics including gender, age, location, ethnicity, and job category
- The need to develop question sets that meet the needs of the four task groups while being able to result in data that is sound, analyzable, and interpretable, and that can be aligned with other UCC initiatives
- The likely need to use multiple methods of gathering data
- The likelihood of higher-than-normal requirement to use paper-based surveys
- The need to meet an aggressive budget and to demonstrate good stewardship of the funds allocated to this initiative

2.1 METHODOLOGY OF DATA GATHERING

The core method used to gather data for the *Effective Leadership & Healthy Relationships* study was to survey the population of ministry personnel and lay leaders in key positions associated with pastoral relations, offering as much opportunity to participate in the survey as possible. To ensure that we could maximize opportunities for participation while managing costs, an electronic, web-based survey was distributed as widely as possible. This was followed up with the distribution of a paper-based survey to a random sampling of individuals. Following the gathering of all survey data, focus groups and interviews were conducted to ensure a complete understanding of the pastoral relations issues being faced by all constituency groups. Each element of this data gathering approach is described below.

2.1.1 COMMUNICATION

Prior to the start of our data gathering, a communication plan was developed to manage distribution of information regarding the project and invitations to participate in the research. Prior to the launch of the online survey:

- A press release was drafted and distributed by the General Council Office
- Information was posted and updated on The United Church of Canada web site

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- In December 2010, an email was sent to every email address in the contact database providing information about the collaborative research project and notification of when survey invitations would be distributed
- A postcard was produced and distributed to every pastoral charge through the mailing of the January issue of Connex.
- Articles were written in the May 2010, December 2010, and March 2011 issues of Connex providing information about the purpose of the collaborative research projects and updates on its status.
- Messages were posted in online message boards of interest at WonderCafe and the Church Leadership Network.

2.1.2 SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

The survey that was used as the primary data collection tool for the *Leadership & Healthy Relationships* study had to meet the related but different research needs of PC-MEPS's four task groups.

To develop the survey, MNP:

1. Conducted its own initial research into the background of the various task groups and the overall objectives of the research project
2. Gathered the research needs and proposed survey questions of each task group.
3. Analyzed the collated research questions to identify gaps and opportunities to streamline the questions with amalgamated questions or refined wording.
4. Developed a draft survey that would gather as much of the desired information as possible while ensuring that the questions would accurately measure what the task groups were seeking to research.
5. Reviewed the draft survey with the task groups and the research project's steering group to get feedback and ultimate commitment to the questions being asked.

Web-based and paper-based versions of the survey were then developed and readied for distribution.

2.1.3 WEB-BASED SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

To develop the survey distribution list, MNP worked with staff resources from the General Council Office to gather contact information for all ministry personnel and lay leaders of interest to this research project. Out of 6,761 individuals, email addresses were available for 3,852 people on the distribution list. In December 2010, MNP sent an email notice to these 3,852 individuals to announce the upcoming survey and to test the validity of the email addresses. 413 of the notice emails were returned as undeliverable, and another six people replied wishing to unsubscribe from survey notices. For some but not all of the 413 bounced contacts, we had alternate emails, so in January 10, 2011, MNP distributed 3,824 survey invitations by email, confident that at least 3,433 were being sent to active email accounts (meaning only that the accounts are live, but not necessarily that those accounts are being monitored by the intended recipient). The survey invitations included a link to the web-based survey as well as contact information for questions about the *Effective Leadership & Healthy Relationships* study or for technical assistance with the survey.

The web-based survey closed on February 11, 2011, after being open for 33 days. 1,119 people responded to the survey. In order for the results of the survey to be statistically significant, we required 367 responses. We can say with 95% certainty that the results presented in this report are accurate to within a margin 2.5%.

2.1.4 PAPER SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

The constituency list for the *Effective Leadership & Healthy Relationships* survey included 2,936 individuals for whom the General Council Office did not have an email address on record. For budgetary reasons, MNP had 1,600 paper surveys available for distribution by mail. MNP employed a random selection process for selecting the constituents to receive a paper copy of the survey.

The intent for paper survey distribution was to target constituency groups that were under-represented in the results of the web-based survey before randomly selecting paper survey recipients from the remaining population. Based on survey responses as of January 14, 2011, it was determined that the paper-surveys would target All Native Circle Conference and Synode Montreal and Ottawa constituents as well as all Presbytery Secretaries, Presbytery Chairs, and Pastoral Relations Committee Chairs. All individuals from these constituency groups who only had a mailing address were selected to receive the paper-based survey. From the remaining population of individuals without email addresses on record, MNP assigned each individual a unique identifier and randomly selected 1,538 of those unique identifiers to receive a paper survey. As a result of this process, the distribution of our 1,600 paper surveys was allocated by Conference and Role as follows:

<i>Representation by Conference</i>		
Conference	Number of Paper Copies	% of Total
Alberta and Northwest Conference	146	55%
All Native Circle Conference	45	100%
Bay of Quinte Conference	132	47%
British Columbia Conference	110	53%
Hamilton Conference	163	52%
London Conference	170	57%
Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference	111	57%
Manitou Conference	32	43%
Maritime Conference	191	50%
Montreal and Ottawa Conference	122	55%
Newfoundland and Labrador Conference	74	51%
Saskatchewan Conference	141	61%
Toronto Conference	163	58%
Grand Total	1600	

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Representation by Role

Role	Number of Paper Copies	% of Total
Ministry Personnel	130	58%
Board Secretary	749	54%
M & P Committee Chair	736	54%
Presbytery Secretary	5	100%
Presbytery Chairperson	6	100%
Education & Students Committee Convenor	5	100%
Conference Executive Secretary	1	100%
Interview Board Chairperson	4	100%
Pastoral Relations Chairperson	9	100%
Personnel Minister	0	0%
Grand Total	1600	

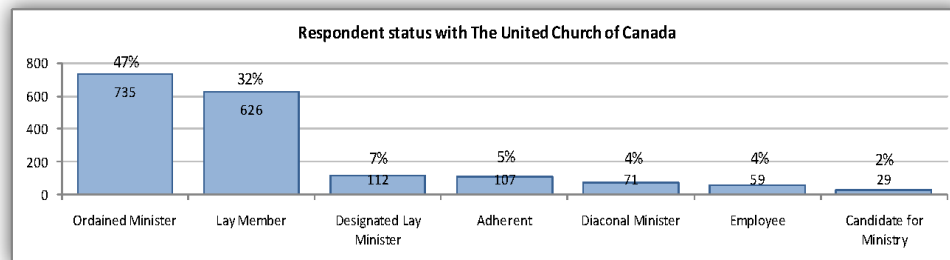
Note: % of Total is based on the total number of individuals in the constituency list for whom only a mailing address was available, not the complete constituency list.

After distribution of the paper-based survey, the final number of individuals who participated in the survey overall (online and via mail) was 1,757.

2.1.5 RESULTING SURVEY RESPONSE

Respondent Status

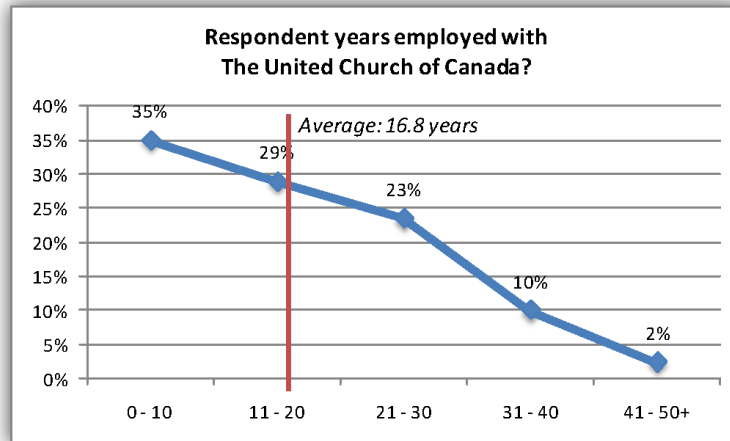
As shown below, a significant percentage of survey respondents (43%) were Ordained Ministers, with the second highest representation being Lay Members (37%). Ministry personnel made up a combined 53% of survey respondents.



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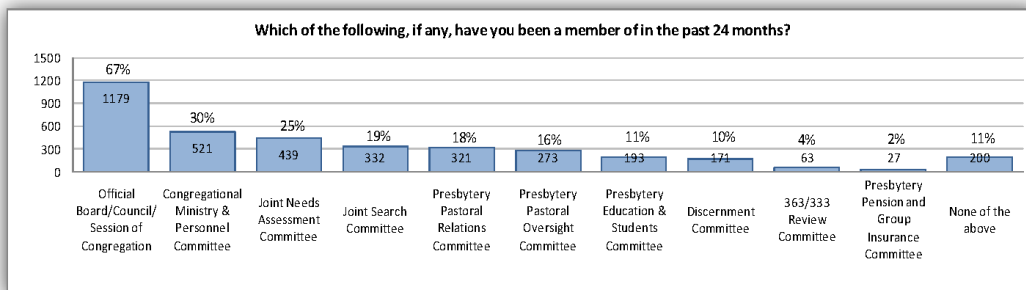


On average, respondents who are employed by the Church have worked for the Church for 16.8 years, with 71% working full-time.



During focus groups, attempts were made to balance the representation between ministry personnel and lay members. Despite the imbalance of responses between Ordained, Diaconal, and Designated Lay Ministers, we were able to correlate survey results with each type of ministry to allow us to present any key differences in responses between Ordained, Diaconal, and Designated Lay Ministry.

As shown below, respondents had a wide range of experience with various volunteer positions within the Church, with the majority of respondents (67%) being a member of a pastoral charge's Official Board/Council/Session in the past 24 months.



60% of respondents had served in more than one of these areas in the last 24 months. Within the past 24 months, 30% of ministry personnel served on a Joint Needs Assessment Committee, 23% on a Joint Search Committee, 28% on a Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee, and 24% on a Pastoral Oversight Committee.

The vast majority of respondents (94%) were not associated with any specialized ministry, with the remaining respondents identifying themselves as belonging to Ethnic Ministries (1.9%), Aboriginal Ministries (1.6%), Chaplaincy

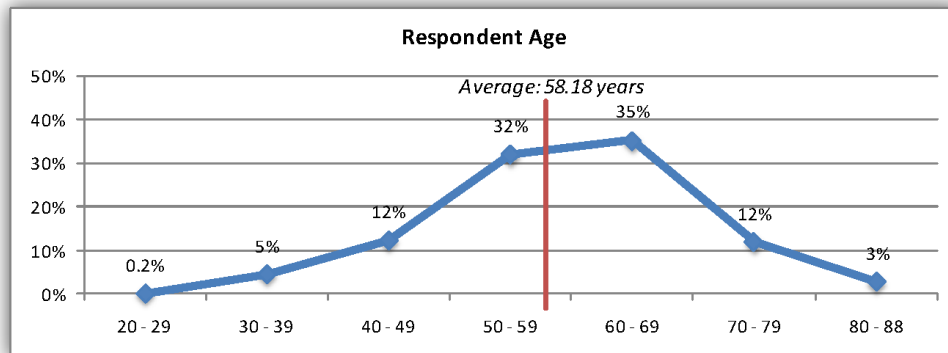
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(1.2%) and/or French Ministries (.4%). Focus groups were held with each of these ministries to enhance the studies' understanding of the key pastoral relations issues faced by these groups.

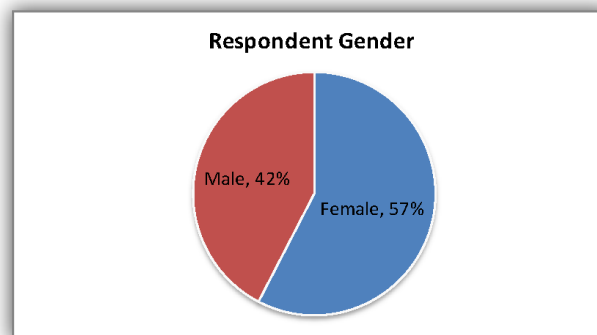
Respondent Age

On average, respondents were 58.18 years of age, with approximately 84% of respondents being over the age of 48.



Respondent Gender

The gender of respondents was split fairly evenly (58% female and 42% male). The majority of female respondents who are ministry personnel have been in ministry for less than 15 years and, while 65% of male ministry personnel have more than 15 years of experience. Also, more than twice as many female ministry personnel and employee respondents work part-time as compared to men. Throughout the survey, there were several differences among male and female responses, however, the cause of these correlations cannot be confirmed, and may simply reflect the significant differences in years of experience between the male and female respondents.



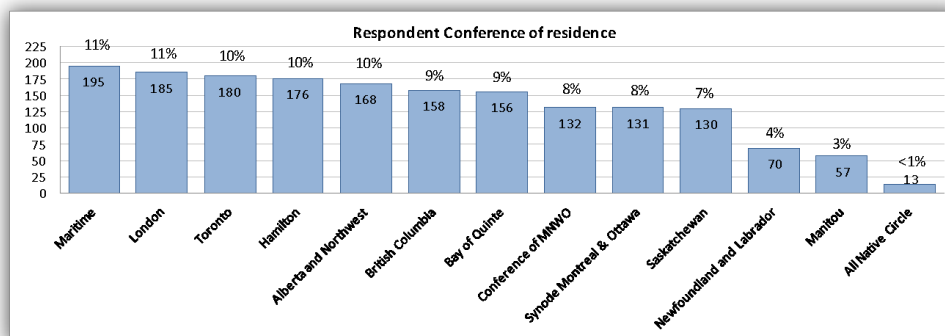
Respondent Location

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Almost 90% of respondents indicated that their primary location within the Church of the pastoral charge, with the remaining respondents being divided fairly evenly among Presbytery, Conference, General Council, mission units, and other locations.

As shown below, survey participants were generally evenly divided across Conferences, with Maritime Conference providing the highest response rate and Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitou, and All Native Circle Conferences providing the lowest response rates.



Half of respondents are in communities with populations of less than 10,000 people, with 26% of respondents indicating that they are in large urban centres of 100,000 people or more. Attempts were made during focus groups to increase representation from conferences and community sizes with lower survey participation rates.

2.1.6 FURTHER RESEARCH WITH UNDER-REPRESENTED DEMOGRAPHICS

As responses to the survey were being collected, MNP tracked some of the demographics of the survey respondent groups to identify United Church constituencies that were underrepresented in the survey results. In most cases, under-representation from the online survey was addressed through distribution of paper surveys. In the case of Aboriginal Ministries, Ethnic Ministries, and French Ministries, the project's steering group recognized the potential language and cultural barriers associated with the survey, and chose additional research methods to ensure that information was gathered from these constituencies. The unique perspectives of Chaplaincies and individuals who had been the subject of a 363 Review were also solicited through focus groups and interviews.

- Aboriginal Ministries**—Through the online and paper-based surveys, we received 26 responses from people identifying themselves as associated with Aboriginal ministry, making up 1.6% of survey respondents. To solicit further perspectives from Aboriginal people, MNP attended a Keewatin Presbytery meeting as well as an Aboriginal Ministries Circle meeting. During these meetings, we asked for general perceptions of the primary blessings and challenges related to ministerial recruitment and education, compensation, and pastoral oversight experienced in Aboriginal Ministry. Through these two venues, participation from people associated with Aboriginal ministry increased to 60 individuals, and the overall findings from Aboriginal Ministries are summarized in section 5.1 Aboriginal Ministries Perspective below.
- Ethnic Ministries**—Through the online and paper-based surveys, we received 32 responses from people identifying themselves as associated with Ethnic ministry, making up 1.9% of survey respondents. Working with the Program Coordinator for Ethnic Minority Ministries & Leadership Development at the General Council Office, the project's steering group developed a strategy for soliciting input from people associated

with ethnic ministries through interviews. We developed a streamlined survey that contained 35 key multiple-choice questions from the initial survey, as well as additional questions to allow respondents to describe their general perceptions of the blessings and challenges related to ministerial recruitment and education, compensation, and pastoral oversight experienced in Ethnic Ministry (this survey is provided in Appendix A). The Program Coordinator for Ethnic Minority Ministries & Leadership Development coordinated contact with members of Ethnic Ministries during which the purpose of the survey was described and translation of questions provided as needed. Following this contact, 18 individuals provided responses to the survey either through a telephone interview or by completing MS Word version of the survey and returning it to the Ethnic Minority Ministries & Leadership Development office. The overall findings pertaining to Ethnic Ministries are summarized in section 5.2 Ethnic Ministries Perspective.

- **French Ministries**—Through the online and paper-based surveys, we received 6 responses from people identifying themselves as associated with French ministry. MNP conducted a focus group to solicit further feedback from individuals associated with French Ministries. The overall findings pertaining to French Ministries are summarized in section 5.3 French Ministries Perspective.
- **Chaplaincy**—Through the online and paper-based surveys, we received 12 responses from people identifying Chaplaincy as their primary location within the Church. Recognizing the distinct relationship of Chaplaincy to the pastoral relations policies and practices of the Church, further information was sought, through a focus group, from chaplains who had responded to the survey and indicated that they would be willing to participate in further discussions with MNP. The overall findings pertaining to Chaplaincy are summarized in section 5.4 Chaplaincy Perspective.
- **Subjects of 363 Review**—The online and paper-based surveys gathered perspectives on the 333 and 363 review processes from anyone who indicated that they had experience with these reviews. The survey did not, however, ask individuals to identify whether they had been the subject of a 363 review. Based on the outcomes of the survey, which suggested that 363 reviews were generally not a healthy process for the subjects of the reviews, MNP conducted interviews with a random selection of individuals who had recently been the subject of a 363 review. The overall findings from these interviews are summarized in section 5.5 363 Reviews.

3.0 GENERAL FINDINGS – OVERALL THEMES ARISING FROM THE STUDY

Throughout the analysis of survey results and data gathered through focus groups and interviews, several overarching themes have arisen that indicate strengths in the United Church's current pastoral relations policies and practices, along with several overarching themes that call for further improvement.

3.1 CURRENT PASTORAL RELATIONS STRENGTHS

Connections between pastoral charges/ministry units and ministry personnel are strong. Many ministry personnel consider their pastoral charge/ministry unit to be their primary employer, and generally people see the biggest concerns of pastoral relations residing within the relationships between the various courts of the church, rather than within the pastoral charge/ministry unit. With twice as many ministry personnel saying that they feel most accountable to the congregation(s) that they serve than to the wider church, ensuring the health of pastoral charges and the relationships between pastoral charges and ministry personnel would contribute significantly to the workplace health of ministry personnel.

Ministry personnel are generally satisfied with their career and are optimistic about the future of the Church. Despite areas of frustration, a combined 95% of ministry personnel indicated they are somewhat or very proud of being ministry personnel with the Church, and 50% believed the Church is a better than average employer. Ministry personnel also report being satisfied with their level of compensation, receiving adequate continuing education opportunities.

Ministry personnel are functioning fairly similarly across the church. The study anticipated that the opinions and experiences of ministry personnel would differ based on demographics such as age, years of employment, gender, and so on. However, very few significant differences were found. This suggests that while pastoral relations policies and processes need to be flexible enough to meet various contextual needs, they do not need to be crafted to address demographic differences.

There is general support for the current Minimum Salary Schedule. Respondents feel that the minimum salary levels should not be raised and that maximums should not be introduced. It is believed that raising minimum salary levels could harm pastoral charges/ministry units who already struggle to afford the cost of salaries, while implementing maximum salary amounts would harm those pastoral charges/ministry units who are currently able to offer higher compensation to attract the ministry personnel and skill sets that they need.

3.2 KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

It is generally felt that there is too much policy and process required for managing pastoral relations, and that the policies and processes are generally applied too rigidly. The introduction to *The Manual* describes both its significance and its limitations, culminating in the statement that "*The Manual* is meant to be used within the context of Christian community. When we use *The Manual* carefully and respectfully, our pastoral care for one another is enhanced. For *The Manual*'s full value to be realized, its provisions must be not only known, but also applied with thoughtfulness and good will. Despite this background, many people have experienced having the policies and procedures implemented in a manner that does not take unique needs and circumstances into consideration. Many have been left feeling frustrated or alienated by what they have experienced as the Church's rules. There is a general call for simplification of pastoral relations policies and processes, along with an openness of policy administrators to consider each situation with "thoughtfulness and good will".

There is a general need for more professional-level support to assist pastoral charges with ministerial compensation and performance management. It is generally felt that reliance on volunteer effort is hampering the Church's ability to effectively manage pastoral relations. Often, volunteers do not have the full expertise required to fulfill their duties well. The processes associated with pastoral relations require significant volunteer time, and are affected by volunteer shortages and burnout. Ineffective communication with ministry personnel regarding performance along with poor pastoral oversight processes were clearly the primary concerns related to pastoral relations. The predominance of these concerns lends support for implementing structures that can provide professional-level support to pastoral charges regarding ministerial performance reviews and oversight. It also lends to support for programs such as Starting Well, which provide ministry personnel with role clarity early in their careers.

There is support for shifting the responsibilities of Presbytery to focus less on pastoral oversight and discipline, and more on collegial support for ministry personnel. Among ministry personnel of all types, ages, and years of service, peers are seen as a primary source of support when dealing with the stresses and difficulties of ministry, and collegial conversations about the job is significantly rated as the primary kind of job-related support that ministry personnel most often seek. This, combined with the sense that ministry personnel who serve on Presbytery committees are faced with a dilemma in needing to both support and discipline their peers, suggests that there would be value in shifting the focus of Presbytery to serve as a source of support to ministry personnel, allowing a different court of the church to manage oversight and discipline.

There is significant frustration among ministry personnel. Many ministry personnel feel powerless to affect changes in the Church. Many believe that the Church doesn't practice what it preaches and often feel that the Church doesn't hear their concerns. There is also significant concern among ministry personnel about the future of their career. Declining church membership is creating concern for the future employment opportunities for ministry personnel. Despite being proud of ministry as a career, many do not expect candidacy levels to increase, and despite being optimistic about the future of the church, they are not optimistic that the church will have enough strong candidates for ministry in the future.

There is a need to ensure that candidacy processes do not present unnecessary barriers for potential candidates for ministry. Candidacy process are among those processes that are considered long and cumbersome, and is seen to be biased towards pastoral charge ministry and potential candidates with a United Church history and background. Also, the ability for the Church to identify suitable candidates for ministry depends on the ability of volunteers to keep their personal biases out of the process of assessing candidates for ministry.

Minority groups within the Church agree that pastoral relations policies and processes do not meet their needs. While it is generally understood and appreciated that policies and processes are intended to ensure fairness and consistency across the Church, minority groups such as Aboriginal ministries, Ethnic ministries, and chaplaincies regularly experience poor and ineffective application of policies and procedures that are not appropriate or do not recognize the unique circumstances of their ministries. There is a desire to see policies and procedures enhanced to accommodate a wider range of needs and situations.

In significant numbers, those who participated in this study felt that there is a disconnection between the various courts of the Church. There is a need to strengthen the connection between the General Council Office and pastoral charges, ministry units, and ministry personnel to in turn strengthen the health of pastoral relations.

There is some desire for enhanced compensation for ministry personnel serving in remote locations. Several study participants highlighted level of inequity that the current compensation model presents for ministry personnel serving in remote locations. The inability to adequately cover the higher cost of living in remote locations, along with the inability to offer compensation that would attract ministry personnel to these locations were frequently raised throughout the study. While many ministry personnel would not consider a remote call or appointment if an isolation allowance were offered, significant numbers of people see some appeal to such an allowance or could see

the appeal if provided the right information. This suggests that it would be worth developing and testing a detailed isolation allowance model as a means of addressing some of the challenges that remote communities face in attracting ministry personnel.

4.0 OVERALL FINDINGS

This section provides a synthesis of data gathered through surveys, focus groups, and interviews. It highlights what the study revealed about pastoral relations, pastoral oversight and discipline, ministry compensation/remuneration, and recruitment for ministry. Where significant differences occurred in how one constituency group responded as compared to other groups or the whole survey population, these observations were noted—where no differences between constituencies is indicated, it can be assumed that any differences in response rates were not statistically or socially relevant.

4.1 PASTORAL RELATIONS

Survey respondents view the biggest concerns regarding pastoral relations as ineffective communication with ministry personnel regarding performance (21%), followed closely by poor pastoral charge oversight processes (16%). Of the general survey population, a significant 16% of respondents indicated they had no concerns regarding pastoral relations, and within Ethnic ministries respondents, this rate was doubled to 33% of respondents indicating they had no concerns regarding pastoral relations. Of the ministry personnel respondents, Designated Lay Ministers were most likely to have no concerns (12% of Designated Lay Ministers, as compared to 10% of Diaconal Ministers and 6% of Ordained Ministers). Respondents had the opportunity to name their own concerns about pastoral relations, and although no other issue was raised more frequently than ineffective communication with ministry personnel regarding performance and poor pastoral charge oversight processes, several respondents indicated that their biggest concerns are too many and too complicated process that require too much time and lead to volunteer burn-out, as well as processes relying on inadequately trained or skilled volunteers. Other concerns raised included pastoral relations issues not being dealt with efficiently or effectively, lack of clergy support, inconsistency in how policies and processes are applied, poor communication, and unrealistic or unclear expectations.

The perception of the adequacy of training for Ministry & Personnel Committee members was divided, with a nearly even split between agreement and disagreement with the adequacy of training. Respondents from British Columbia, Toronto, and All Native Circle Conferences indicated the highest levels of satisfaction with Ministry & Personnel Committee training, while respondents from Bay of Quinte and Hamilton Conferences indicated the lowest levels of satisfaction. M&P Committee skill and knowledge was also identified as a leading pastoral relations concern. Despite these results, respondents generally feel that M&P Committees should play a stronger role than they do today in overseeing, supervising, and evaluating ministry personnel. During a focus group with individuals representing the overall survey population, participants indicated that the most important duties of the M&P Committee (those duties around which M&P Committees should play a stronger role) are to facilitate communication and liaison between congregations and ministry personnel, and to be the body within the congregation to whom ministry personnel and other staff can receive support in areas such as clarifying job expectations and priorities, planning for future learning opportunities, and evaluating performance.

Opinion is generally split over the value of shifting pastoral relations responsibilities to the conference level, with 35% seeing no value while a combined 33% saw at least some value. Believing that this divide stemmed from a lack of understanding among survey respondents about what responsibilities would be shifted, this area was tested further through a focus group with a group of individuals that represented the overall survey population. Rather than being asked about the value of shifting responsibilities from one court to another, participants were asked whether pastoral charges could use more outside support and what types of supports would be beneficial to provide an indication of the types of responsibilities that could be shifted to more professional-level resources. Participants indicated that more professional-level support would be valuable related to anger management, conflict management, compensation (technical guidance on compensation policies and processes), and conducting joint needs assessments (to move the JNAC process beyond a paperwork process and into a process focused on helping

pastoral charges to more accurately discern where their challenges lie and what type of ministry support they need). In all areas, participants felt that the support offered should be “a walking with, not a doing for” type of support.

While some ministry personnel say that they feel most accountable to the wider church, twice as many ministry personnel said that they feel most accountable to the congregation(s) that they serve. This would suggest that ensuring the health of pastoral charges and the relationships between pastoral charge and ministry personnel would contribute significantly to the workplace health of ministry personnel.

It is generally believed that pastoral relations processes are too cumbersome, take too long, and require too much volunteer effort. People feel trapped by administrative processes offer no clear value to the pastoral charges and delay the work that they are trying to accomplish. There is also a significant level of concern that disciplinary processes are not always properly applied, and that there is ineffective communication with ministry personnel regarding performance. These areas are generally seen as critical areas in which to make improvements in order to improve pastoral relations.

During the focus groups on Aboriginal ministries, Aboriginal ministers described the isolation that they face in many forms—the communities that they serve in tend to be geographically remote, but also Aboriginal ministers also have very different life experiences from ministers from other constituency groups, making it difficult to connect with peers in ministry. Greater supports among Aboriginal ministers could be beneficial.

During a focus group with Chaplaincy respondents, participants said that they generally see themselves as working outside of the pastoral relations system, since they tended to have some level of reporting or employment relationship with the organizations that they serve, however, they expressed concern about the fact that pastoral relations policies rarely apply to their circumstances and that few people within their Presbyteries understand how to relate pastoral relations policies and practices to chaplaincy.

Also during the focus groups on Aboriginal ministries and Chaplaincy, participants consistently agreed that the Church’s pastoral relations policies do not take unique circumstances into account. Aboriginal ministries said that the policies are often too rigidly applied, without consideration for the unique circumstances and challenges that the ministries and communities are trying to overcome. For example, Aboriginal communities find it very difficult to fill ministry vacancies and find that the processes and policies restrict their efforts. On the other hand, chaplaincies tend to feel that pastoral relations policies and processes are irrelevant to their ministries, and believe that there is consensus from Presbyteries who generally exclude chaplaincies from their work. Chaplaincy respondents would like to know that the Church recognizes chaplaincy as a valid ministry and to see policies or processes amended so that chaplains don’t face issues that deny their status as ministers such as having marriage licences revoked.

4.1.1 MINISTRY PERSONNEL SUPPORT

Survey indicated many sources of support for ministry personnel, identifying peers or colleagues (78%), Ministry and Personnel Committees (68%), family or partner (67%), and friends (58%) as the largest sources of support when dealing with difficulties and stresses of the job. This support most often came in the form of collegial conversations about the job (71%). Ministry personnel tended to recognize their own sources of support slightly differently from lay members—ministry personnel identified family or partner as more frequent sources of support, and congregational members as less frequent sources of support as compared to lay member respondents. Ordained Ministers rated Presbytery as a lower source of support than any other survey response group.

Within the overall survey group, 26% of respondents (ministry personnel and lay members) indicated that ministry personnel go to congregational members for support in dealing with the difficulties and stresses of the job. 14% of Diaconal and 17% of Designated Lay Minister respondents indicated congregational members as a source of

support, as compared to 23% of Ordained Ministers, while a much larger 63% of Ethnic ministries respondents indicated congregational members as a source of support for ministry personnel.

63% of ministry personnel recognize the congregation(s) that they serve as their primary employer. Most ministry personnel respondents (56%) had difficulty balancing work and non-work demands, and were split over whether they receive enough spiritual guidance (54% somewhat or strongly agree) or not (44% somewhat or strongly disagree). Contrary to the survey average, chaplaincy respondents indicated significantly less difficulty balancing work and non-work demands—during the focus group on chaplaincy, participants credited this difference with the fact that they work in professional environments where work-life balance is valued. Interestingly, chaplains who are employed by the organizations that they serve have significantly less difficulty with work-life balance than chaplains who are funded by Mission Support grants and who are seen by their organizations as volunteers or service providers rather than employees. Many chaplains also have the opportunity to work in teams with other United Church chaplains or in inter-denominational teams, which alleviates some of the need to be available at all hours.

There was universal agreement that ministers need to build stronger collegial relationships with each other. 47% of ministry personnel feel that a structured mentoring program would be of great benefit, with Diaconal Ministers and candidates indicating the most support for this type of program, and with the greatest support for a mentoring program coming from Manitou, All Native Circle, and Toronto conferences. There was no significance in support for a mentoring program based on years of ministry experience, indicating that both potential mentees and mentors would be drawn to a structured mentoring program. On average, most felt they did not receive the level of support they needed from the church, and disagreed over their ability to affect changes within it. Chaplains, who generally indicate feeling most disconnected from the United Church as a whole, were asked what support they need from the Church—during the chaplaincy focus group, participants said that they would like the whole Church to have a better understanding of their context and ministry, and would like the opportunity to develop stronger connections within their Presbyteries (which is often their only link to the United Church of Canada).

4.1.2 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The majority of respondents agreed with the ideas presented in the conflict resolution section of the survey. They believe ministry personnel play an active role in conflict management, approach conflict early and empathetically, and most often view it as a learning opportunity as opposed to a confrontation. The majority of respondents feel that ministry personnel work to resolve conflict in a collaborative manner within the congregation. While the survey's overall respondents generally disagreed (54%) that ministry personnel often act as the final authority in resolving conflict, most respondents from Ethnic ministries somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that ministry personnel were often the final authority in resolving conflict.

4.2 PASTORAL OVERSIGHT AND DISCIPLINE

4.2.1 PASTORAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE REVIEWS

55% of respondents' congregations were visited by a Pastoral Oversight Committee in the last three years. Most found their feedback useful (58%) or very useful (18%). Despite the frequency of visits, more than half of respondents (65%) had not participated in an oversight visit in the last three years (up to 80% of respondents within Ethnic ministries). Respondents from Newfoundland and Labrador, the All Native Circle, and Toronto were much more likely to have not been visited by the Pastoral Oversight Committee in the last three years. Respondents from these conferences were also least likely to have participated in the visit as a congregant or Presbytery representative. While most participants in an oversight visit had access to the Standards of Practice and Ethical Standards document, the degree of its usage during the review was inconsistent, with a combined 58% either rarely or never using it.

Most respondents felt the primary goal of the Pastoral Oversight visit is currently to assess the health of the pastoral charge (59%), ensure that the triennial visits take place (52%), and ensure compliance with policies and procedures (49%). Respondents indicated these should all remain part of the focus of oversight visits in the future, however, when asked what the primary goals of oversight visits should be, the top two responses were assessing the health of pastoral charges (63%) and providing counsel for pastoral charges on matters regarding congregational life (48%), and building connections between pastoral charges and wider church. Unlike the overall survey results, respondents who indicated the Presbytery Office or Chaplaincy as their primary location tended to believe that oversight visits were more focused on oversight and discipline than with empowerment, health, and guidance of pastoral charges, although they indicated that pastoral charge empowerment, health, and guidance should be the focus of these visits in the future. Additionally, respondents in the All Native Circle Conference indicated oversight visits are more likely to focus on empowerment, health, and guidance over discipline by a significant margin (62% versus 39% respectively). Respondents generally felt that personal relationships had at least some influence on an oversight visit, with 43% believing they influenced them in a positive manner.

Survey participants were asked to describe how the early detection and resolution of unrest in a pastoral relationship could be improved. While many respondents felt that no improvements were necessary, most respondents provided perspectives that reflected one or more of the following strategies:

- More open and honest communication, better listening, and people being more receptive to hearing about issues
- Increase the role of M & P Committees in raising potential issues, and work more closely with and provide more support for M & P committees during the resolution of issues
- Improve and increase training for everyone involved in processes of identifying and resolving issues
- Take action and follow up on concerns
- Don't keep troubles hidden under rug, name problems early
- Keep Pastoral Relations well-informed of issues and potential conflicts
- Build a better sense of trust within Presbytery and between pastoral charge and Presbytery
- Ensure more regular contact and visits by Presbytery
- Act quickly to get communication started
- Provide more support for ministry personnel while also keeping ministry personnel accountable
- Make congregations / lay leadership more accountable for pastoral charge health
- Simplify processes for dealing with unrest and make sure the processes are well-understood
- Provide more support and resources overall
- Provide paid, accountable staff for pastoral relations
- Put greater Presbytery/Conference focus on spotting and dealing with potential issues
- Build better JNAC/JSC processes with increased M & P Committee involvement

During a focus group with individuals representing the overall survey population, respondents were asked whether there are boundaries to what Presbyteries should be responsible for overseeing. Respondents generally agreed that Presbyteries are welcome to reflect their observations about the health of pastoral charges but should not be responsible for telling pastoral charges what to do. Participants felt that many pastoral charges are able to do what needs to be done, but do their work in non-standard ways, and therefore participants didn't see value in having the

Presbytery assess compliance with “rules” and processes. Participants also felt that pastoral charges aren’t always open with Presbytery about the issues they are facing and felt that those doing pastoral oversight visits often do not have adequate training on how to conduct an oversight visit in a supportive manner, or how to uncover or deal with issues that arise. Concerns were also raised about how confidentiality is managed, indicating a general lack of understanding or even awareness of when and how pastoral oversight committees should maintain confidentiality. Participants also discussed the difficult situation in which the ministry personnel within Presbyteries are called upon to both support and discipline each other, suggesting that a division of these roles could be valuable.

During the focus groups with Aboriginal ministries, the geographically remote nature of many Aboriginal communities within the All Native Circle Conference and the time and costs associated with travel were raised as issues that make it difficult for Presbyteries to carry out certain Presbytery processes. This challenge, paired with the challenge that many communities face in attracting and retaining ministry personnel, leads to pastoral charges requiring significant amounts of time from Presbytery representatives if formal processes are to be completed properly. Often, the communities do not feel the need for the support of Presbytery but require it in order to comply with Church policies and practices. Many Aboriginal communities simply find that they are not able to comply with Church policies and face consequences such as the inability to call a minister due to the inability to complete a formal JNAC process as frequently as their ministry personnel seek changes in pastoral relations.

4.2.2 333/363 REVIEWS

27% of respondents had some level of experience with 333 reviews. Of these, 14% felt that the reviews were effective, 48% felt that the reviews were somewhat effective, and 30% believed they were not effective at all. Respondents noted these reviews were most often used as a tool to assess a situation at the pastoral charge level as opposed to being used as a disciplinary measure.

25% of respondents had some level of experience with 363 reviews. Only slightly different from the responses regarding 333 reviews, those who had experienced a 363 review were split on its effectiveness; 44% believed it was somewhat effective while 37% indicated it was not. Respondents noted that 363 reviews were most often used as a disciplinary measure rather than to assess a situation at the pastoral charge level.

Overall, a combined 46% either somewhat or strongly agreed that oversight/discipline processes are supportive and remedial rather than punitive. A combined 32% did not agree with this statement, while a sizable 22% indicated they did not know. Most respondents (64%) would be hesitant to submit a formal complaint that leads to a 333/363 review within their pastoral charge. The overwhelming majority felt the process for ending a pastoral relationship within a pastoral charge needs to be less adversarial. Respondents who had experience with a 333 or 363 review and those who did not, all felt the same way about oversight and discipline processes, indicating that past participation or lack of participation in 333/363 reviews has no impact on the extent to which oversight and discipline processes are seen as supportive or punitive and adversarial.

In situations where there is a complaint of ministerial misconduct, 79% of respondents believe it should often or almost always be investigated by an external third party. Ethnic ministries respondents were much less likely to value third-party investigation of complaints, with only 38% indicating that external parties should almost always be involved. 72% of ministry personnel would be open to initiating a 363/333 review to review their performance, even though most respondents would be hesitant to submit a formal complaint that would lead to a 333 or 333 review saying that the Church needs a less adversarial process for ending a pastoral relationship within a pastoral charge.

4.3 COMPENSATION

4.3.1 SALARY & COMPENSATION

Overall, ministry personnel respondents (73%) are satisfied with their current level of compensation, regardless of whether they are currently paid above the minimum salary. Most ministry personnel receive annual cost of living increases, and have more often than not been paid in accordance with the minimum salary scale. 51% are paid a salary above the minimum recommended amount. A sizeable 36% of ministry personnel rely on other sources of income in order to cover the costs of daily living. Most ministry personnel played a role in negotiating their own call and renegotiate it on an annual basis or sooner.

Respondents agree that the salary structure should be easy to understand and administer, eliminate the need for allowances, and that financial support of ministry personnel should be the responsibility of the pastoral charge/ministry unit. Further, they agree that ministry personnel's level of compensation should reflect the cost of living of the region in which they work, additional responsibilities they undertake, and align with the priorities of the United Church of Canada. When asked whether ministry personnel salary structure should be comprehensive and eliminate the need for allowances, respondents were generally split, with 24% somewhat disagreeing, 27% somewhat agreeing, and 28% strongly agreeing. During a focus group of individuals that represented the overall survey population, participants were asked what they understood a comprehensive salary to entail, and what they would like to see considered during the development of a comprehensive salary structure. Participants generally agreed that a comprehensive salary structure is one without additional allowances, and assumed that a comprehensive salary structure would not impact the level of ministry compensation since allowances would simply be rolled into the salary. Participants were divided on whether they favoured the equity of a comprehensive salary structure or the benefit of receiving a housing allowance that could be claimed on income taxes. Participants also felt that regardless of what salary structure was used, pastoral charges that are able to afford it could always offer additional benefits, such as travel costs and additional vacation time for people serving in remote communities, to attract ministry personnel.

Most respondents somewhat or strongly agree (88%) that the salary structure should provide a means to recognize additional skills, experience, education, and responsibilities. Those who agree with this statement tended to also agree (somewhat or strongly) that ministers who take on added responsibilities such as multiple-point pastoral charges, large congregations, and team ministry should be paid more.

Most (70%) feel that raising the minimum ministry personnel salary scale would have a negative impact on pastoral charges and specialized ministries. Within Ethnic ministries, respondents felt differently, with most believing that increasing minimum salaries would have a somewhat or very positive impact on pastoral charges.

47% of all survey respondents do not believe there should be a maximum salary amount for ministry personnel—this disagreement was higher among Ethnic ministries respondents and male respondents. When asked why individuals disagreed with instituting a maximum salary, respondents most commonly believed it would limit a congregation's ability to attract and compensate personnel as they desire and that a specific person's skills, abilities, and contributions may warrant additional compensation. Many respondents also believed that ministry personnel salaries are already too low and should not be further limited by instituting a maximum salary level.

Most feel that compensation should also compensate for communication expenses. 69% receive additional compensation for telephone service. Currently, a much lower number of respondents receive compensation for cell phones (22%) and internet access (25%). Most ministry personnel played a role in negotiating the terms of their own call and renegotiate it on an annual basis or sooner.

During a focus group that represented the overall survey population, participants were asked whether pastoral charges should have more flexibility in determining compensation. Participants generally agreed that pastoral charges should have the ability to adjust compensation to the variety of realities that they face, but also felt that the ability to pay a percentage above minimum salaries and the housing allowance offers this flexibility. Participants also felt that congregants could use some help (education or other support) in determining ways of adjusting compensation beyond remunerations. Pastoral charges that can only offer to pay the minimum salary may not recognize other attractive and affordable forms of compensation.

During the focus groups on Aboriginal ministry, participants generally agreed that the Church's compensation does not meet the needs of those serving in isolated, remote communities, including most Aboriginal pastoral charges within the All Native Circle Conference. The level of compensation is not considered adequate given the significantly higher costs of food, travel, wear and tear on vehicles, and so on.

During the focus group on chaplaincy, participants said they would like to see some work done to deal with the employment inequities that many chaplains face, such as being compensated poorly as casual or hourly employees, or facing significant stress and remuneration concerns when chaplaincies are supported solely by Mission Support grants.

4.3.2 HOUSING

The congregations of 26% of respondents currently have a manse, with 65% of ministry personnel from those congregations currently living in the manse (15% of ministry personnel respondents overall). Manse accommodations were rated as good or very good in 92% of cases. 50% of ministry personnel living in a manse identified their manse as the only suitable housing in their community. In general, only 21% of respondents felt homes did not sell easily in their community.

Most ministry personnel who are currently living in a manse (a combined 56%) would be comfortable receiving a housing allowance and renting their pastoral charge's manse, and 71% of congregations would be comfortable with this arrangement. The level of suitable housing in a respondent's community does not appear to affect ministry personnel's support for receiving a housing allowance and renting the manse from the congregation. Agreement of ministry personnel currently living in a manse is generally split over whether they would prefer to live in a manse or receive a housing allowance and find their own accommodations—38% would prefer to continue living in a manse while 41% would prefer to use the allowance on their own housing (20% have no preference). Ministry personnel who currently receive a housing allowance usually have this allowance reviewed annually.

44% of ministry personnel currently receive a salary top-up for housing. The majority of respondents who receive the housing allowance (54%) receive a housing allowance of 20-30% of their salary. Almost all who felt that they knew how satisfied the ministry personnel are with the level of housing allowance provided indicated that their ministry personnel are satisfied, but 29% of respondents did not know how their personnel felt.

Of the 17% of respondents who self-identified as part of a clergy couple, 62% indicated they were the ones who claimed the Clergy Residence Deduction on their most recent tax assessment.

During the focus groups on Aboriginal ministries, participants frequently spoke of unique housing challenges for Aboriginal ministers who are serving on reservations. Properties on reservation land is owned and managed by the reservation's Band & Council, and housing is typically allocated according to status within the Band. Aboriginal ministers who have (or are perceived to have) left the community for a significant period of time, or who belong to a different Band, have been known to be without housing or to have housing given to them then taken away. Aboriginal ministers shared stories of having to live in a community's only hotel for years, of being offered a home as a condition of settlement but finding that the home was not available when they arrived in the community, and of

leaving the community for a short period of time for studies or to serve elsewhere temporarily and returning to find that their home had been given to someone else. The condition of housing on reservations is also typically lower than in urban areas, and too often, if there is housing available to serve as a manse, it is not in livable condition. The Church's policies and practices related to manse housing and housing allowances are inapplicable in these types of circumstances.

4.4 RECRUITMENT FOR MINISTRY

4.4.1 CALL & SETTLEMENT

96% of ministry personnel believed it was their responsibility to promote ministry as a career and to support those wishing to pursue it. Most recognized their own call to ministry as stemming from either a transformational experience (29%) or from a minister (21%), with at least 30% of ministry personnel indicating that they recognized their call through congregation-based experiences.

A combined 85% of ministry personnel felt supported by their congregation during their inquiry and candidacy, while a combined 86% feel the pastoral charge/specialized ministry they are currently a part of would do the same for a new ministry candidate. Ministry personnel respondents indicated that financial support (54%) along with a simplification of the process (48%) would have been the most helpful additional support during their own inquiry and candidacy process. Better access to resources and simplification of processes were more significant needs for those who went through the candidacy process more recently (within the last 15 years) than for those who went through the process more than 15 years ago. Pro-active encouragement and support from congregations and ministry personnel, fair compensation and financial support for candidates, and a strong personal sense of call were the most common suggestions to encourage potential leaders to become candidates for ministry, while 27% of respondents indicated that a lack of fair compensation and restrictive salaries are reasons why potential candidates would be discouraged from pursuing ministry. The lack of a positive and optimistic church culture and the prevalence of complex administrative processes were also identified as key issues that would discourage people from pursuing ministry as a career.

When asked to describe their understanding of what "call to ministry" is all about, 29% of respondents described it as listening to the voice of the Spirit and choosing to follow, and 16% of respondents described it as living out one's faith by serving others and sharing one's love of Christ. When asked what a congregation's role is in calling forth ministers, 31% of respondents indicated that the congregation's role is to nurture an individual's call through guidance, affirmation, love and support, and 29% of respondents described the congregation's role as recognizing the leadership and personal qualities of potential candidates and encouraging and supporting the individual's discernment process.

47% of respondents indicated that an isolation allowance would not make them seriously consider a remote call or appointment, while 34% felt that it would, and another 20% were undecided. Within certain conferences (All Native Circle Conference and Saskatchewan Conference), more ministry personnel agreed than disagreed that an isolation allowance would provide some appeal.

Through the focus groups on Aboriginal ministries, people from Aboriginal pastoral charges feel that the call process puts them at a disadvantage for attracting and retaining ministry personnel. The process puts them in competition with non-Aboriginal pastoral charges, and they feel that Aboriginal ministry is not attractive enough for ministry personnel to make the competition fair.

During various focus groups, participants believed that the Church should work to raise the profile of different types of ministries. For example, chaplaincy participants indicated that there is a lack of recognition of chaplaincy as a form

of ministry that requires the same skills as other forms of ministry—several chaplains mentioned being faced with the prejudice that anyone can be a chaplain, that it doesn't require special education and competencies. Aboriginal ministries participants also spoke of the need for the Church as a whole to recognize and value their ministries through greater support in finding ways of making policies and practices meet the unique needs of their ministries and communities.

4.4.2 EDUCATION & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Respondents were very satisfied with the continuing education opportunities available to them, and all but 8% had participated in at least one opportunity in the last 12 months. 88% of congregations provide continuing education opportunities on an annual or more frequent basis. Most frequent continuing education opportunities were available in the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario, in which no one reported *not* having had any continuing education in the last two to three years and 99% of respondents had attended continuing education annually or more frequently than annually. Continuing education rates were also very high in Alberta and Northwest conference. All Native Circle and Newfoundland and Labrador conferences had the highest percentage of people who had continuing education opportunities less often than every two to three years.

The most common areas of continuing education were theological reflection (50% of respondents) and leadership development (47% of respondents), with preaching and worship, transformational leadership, social justice and activism, and biblical studies also being popular areas of continuing education. The same educational opportunities are generally being pursued by ministry personnel of all types, genders, and years of service, although conflict resolution tends to be preferred by Designated Lay Ministers, theological reflection and transformation leadership tend to be preferred by Diaconal Ministers, preaching and worship tends to be preferred by Ordained Ministers, and social justice and activism tends to be preferred by both Designated Lay and Diaconal Ministers.

40% of ministry personnel respondents found the support from their presbytery regarding continuing education to be only adequate, with a decent amount of respondents indicating a less than adequate (27%) or totally inadequate (15%) level of support. Respondents from Manitou and Saskatchewan conferences found Presbytery's continuing education support to be significantly better, with 75% indicating that it is adequate or better, followed by Newfoundland and Labrador Conference who also indicated higher than average satisfaction. On the other hand, 55% of respondents from Bay of Quinte Conference and 53% of respondents from Toronto Conference indicated that support for continuing education from Presbytery is less than or totally inadequate.

Those who participated in the *Starting Well*, *Take Care*, and *Making the Most of Retirement* programs usually found at least some value from them. Most believe a mentoring program would be of great benefit.

During the focus groups on Aboriginal ministries, respondents agreed that the "home-grown" approach of educating Aboriginal people for roles in ministry is generally working well. Aboriginal communities face the reality that their communities do not generally attract non-Aboriginal ministers from less remote areas of the country, and Aboriginal communities find value in having people from their own communities sent to train at Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre (DJSRC) or the Francis Sandy Centre to then return to serve their community in ministry. People associated with Aboriginal ministries express the perspective that their community members who have offered themselves as candidates for ministry are training to provide ministry within the community, not as a minister who is available to the wider church. With this perspective in mind, communities have raised concern over DJSRC's approach that does not allow their students to fulfill their field placements in their home congregations, offering instead the opportunity to have the communities get more involved in the ongoing development and support of ministry students.

Aboriginal ministers also conveyed the importance of continuing to have an institution such as DJSRC that provides ministry training for Aboriginal people. They spoke of the need for Aboriginal students to spend significant time learning about the merging of their traditional spirituality with the United Church's faith and ethos, and preparing for

the realities of ministering to Aboriginal communities, which is not provided as a focus at other theological colleges. They also spoke of the significant differences in educational experiences between people raised in Aboriginal communities and those who were raised in the dominant education system in Canada—the experience of an education within Aboriginal communities prepares young people for life within those communities, but does not prepare them to be successful in the style of post-secondary education offered at the Church's main theological schools.

4.5 OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Across all survey respondent demographics, 63% of respondents either somewhat disagreed (37%) or strongly disagreed (25%) that the Church practices what it preaches in its decisions and actions. During various focus groups, when asked what this dissatisfaction might be related to, participants spoke about instances where the General Council Office has been seen to make decisions that are contrary to what the GCO states as United Church values, such as recent staffing changes at the General Council Office where there was a loss of staff associated with areas that the Church has named as priorities, such as youth ministry. Focus group participants also spoke of feeling like the Church is expanding its bureaucracy while losing a sense of what the rules are trying to accomplish.

Most respondents are at least somewhat optimistic (58%) about the future of The United Church of Canada, with 20% being very optimistic while 20% are not optimistic. Ordained Ministers, ministry personnel with more than 15 years of experience, men, and respondents from Bay of Quinte and Toronto conferences were among the least optimistic about the future of the Church, while candidates for ministry and respondents from All Native Circle and Alberta and Northwest conferences were among the most optimistic.

While optimistic about the future of the Church, most respondents are not confident that the Church will have enough candidates for ministry in the future. Confidence in the future number of candidates for ministry varied across the country, with Newfoundland and Labrador and Saskatchewan Conferences being the least confident, and Synode Montreal and Ottawa and All Native Circle Conferences being the most confident. Participants during a focus group that represented the overall survey population suggested that the church will not have enough candidates for ministry in the future due to low wages for ministry personnel, declining numbers and sizes of congregations (and the general acceptance among United Church members that this decline is inevitable and out of our control), lack of clarity about the role of Ministers within the Church and from society in general, and a need to better describe the value of ministry as a career.

Ministry personnel generally indicated that the expectations their congregations place on them have not changed over time. Those who indicated that their congregations' expectations have changed most commonly indicated that there have been increased stress related to growing the congregation and working to stop church decline, increasing expectations to build trusting and healthy relationships within the congregation, and higher expectations for skills related to worship, education, and programming. A combined 94% of ministry personnel indicated they are somewhat or very proud of being ministry personnel with the Church, with those who have less than 15 years of experience, women, and Diaconal Ministers and candidates are among the most proud. A significant 51% of ministry personnel believe that the Church is a better than average or excellent employer, regardless of gender and type or length of ministry.

4.5.1 COMPARISONS TO THE ISOLATION STUDY

In 2005, the United Church of Canada conducted a study of isolation in ministry. Several of the questions asked in 2005 were again asked as part of the *Effective Leadership & Healthy Relationships Collaborative Research Project* to measure any changes in these indicators of job satisfaction of ministry personnel. Most of the indicators saw a

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positive or negligibly negative change, with the exception of the belief that the Church practices what it preaches, where disagreement nearly doubled.

Question (Agreement Scale)	% who somewhat or strongly disagree	
	2005 <i>Isolation in Ministry Study</i>	2011 <i>Effective Leadership & Healthy Relationships Study</i>
Positive Changes		
I have difficulty balancing my work and non-work demands.	32%	42%
I feel powerless to affect changes in the Church.	47%	52%
Negative Changes		
The Church practices what it preaches in its decisions and actions.	34%	62%
I receive the level of support that I need from the Church (e.g., emotional, resources)	41%	50%
I am receiving the amount of spiritual guidance that I need in my life.	47%	44%

5.0 SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP & INTERVIEW FINDINGS

As described in the Methodology section of this report, MNP tracked the survey participation rates according to several demographics including Conference, status within the Church, and type of ministry. Through this tracking, it was determined that the survey was producing findings for which Aboriginal Ministries, Ethnic Ministries, French Ministries, and Chaplaincy were under-represented. Focus groups and interviews were conducted to ensure that the study included a good understanding of the key pastoral relations issues facing these constituency groups.

It is important to note that survey responses from individuals associated with Aboriginal Ministries, Ethnic Ministries, French Ministries and Chaplaincy, as well as the outcomes of focus groups and interviews with these constituency groups, are included in the results presented throughout this report. However, the information gathered from each constituency group is presented in this section to provide a holistic view of the key pastoral relations issues facing these groups. This additional research cannot be shown to be statistically representative of the constituency groups, but the information is provided as a narrative to describe the key areas of concern and opportunities identified through this additional research.

5.1 ABORIGINAL MINISTRIES PERSPECTIVE

The following information regarding Aboriginal ministries was gathered through two focus groups that included ministry personnel, lay members, and staff from across the All Native Circle Conference.

5.1.1 PASTORAL RELATIONS

Aboriginal ministers face isolation in many forms—the communities that they serve in tend to be geographically remote, but also Aboriginal ministers also have very different life experiences from ministers from other constituency groups, making it difficult to connect with peers in ministry. Greater supports among Aboriginal ministers could be beneficial.

People associated with Aboriginal ministries tend to agree that the Church's pastoral relations policies are often too rigidly applied, without consideration for the unique circumstances and challenges that the ministries and communities are trying to overcome. For example, Aboriginal communities find it very difficult to fill ministry vacancies and find that the processes and policies restrict their efforts.

5.1.2 PASTORAL OVERSIGHT & DISCIPLINE

Given the geographically remote nature of many Aboriginal communities within the All Native Circle Conference, the time and costs associated with travel makes it difficult for Presbyteries covering geographically disperse communities to carry out certain Presbytery processes. This challenge, paired with the challenge that many communities face in attracting and retaining ministry personnel, leads to pastoral charges requiring significant amounts of time from Presbytery representatives if formal processes are to be completed properly. Often, the communities do not feel the need for the support of Presbytery but require it in order to comply with Church policies and practices. Many Aboriginal communities simply find that they are not able to comply with Church policies and face consequences such as the inability to call a minister due to the inability to complete a formal JNAC process as frequently as their ministry personnel seek changes in pastoral relations.

Ministers in Aboriginal communities frequently describe a key challenge associated with the role of retired ministers within their communities. It is not uncommon for Aboriginal ministers to serve the Church within their own communities, where they continue to reside once they retire from ministry. As elders within their communities

(formally or informally recognized), retired ministers continue to garner the respect and deference of community members and to retain influence within the pastoral charge, which poses a challenge for new ministers who are offering their own leadership within the church and wider community. Education and support for both retired and current ministers would be valuable in raising awareness of the affect that this dual leadership has on the pastoral charge and in providing clarity on a new role that retired ministers can offer within their community.

5.1.3 COMPENSATION

Aboriginal ministers who are serving on reservations face unique housing challenges. Properties on reservation land is owned and managed by the reservation's Band & Council, and housing is typically allocated according to status within the Band. Aboriginal ministers who have (or are perceived to have) left the community for a significant period of time, or who belong to a different Band, have been known to be without housing or to have housing given to them then taken away. Aboriginal ministers shared stories of having to live in a community's only hotel for years, of being offered a home as a condition of settlement but finding that the home was not available when they arrived in the community, and of leaving the community for a short period of time for studies or to serve elsewhere temporarily and returning to find that their home had been given to someone else. The condition of housing on reservations is also typically lower than in urban areas, and too often, if there is housing available to serve as a manse, it is not in liveable condition. The Church's policies and practices related to manse housing and housing allowances are inapplicable in these types of circumstances.

Generally, people associated with Aboriginal ministries agree that the Church's compensation does not meet the needs of those serving in isolated, remote communities, including most Aboriginal pastoral charges within the All Native Circle Conference. The level of compensation is not considered adequate given the significantly higher costs of food, travel, wear and tear on vehicles, and so on.

5.1.4 RECRUITMENT FOR MINISTRY

The "home-grown" approach of educating Aboriginal people for roles in ministry is generally working well. Aboriginal communities face the reality that their communities do not generally attract non-Aboriginal ministers from less remote areas of the country, and Aboriginal communities find value in having people from their own communities sent to train at Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre (DJSRC) or the Francis Sandy Centre to then return to serve their community in ministry. People associated with Aboriginal ministries express the perspective that their community members who have offered themselves as candidates for ministry are training to provide ministry within the community, not as a minister who is available to the wider church. With this perspective in mind, communities have raised concern over DJSRC's approach that does not allow their students to fulfill their field placements in their home congregations, offering instead the opportunity to have the communities get more involved in the ongoing development and support of ministry students.

Aboriginal ministers conveyed the importance of continuing to have an institution such as DJSRC that provides ministry training for Aboriginal people. They spoke of the need for Aboriginal students to spend significant time learning about the merging of their traditional spirituality with the United Church's faith and ethos, and preparing for the realities of ministering to Aboriginal communities, which is not provided as a focus at other theological colleges. They also spoke of the significant differences in educational experiences between people raised in Aboriginal communities and those who were raised in the dominant education system in Canada—the experience of an education within Aboriginal communities prepares young people for life within those communities, but does not prepare them to be successful in the style of post-secondary education offered at the Church's main theological schools.

People from Aboriginal pastoral charges feel that the call process puts them at a disadvantage for attracting and retaining ministry personnel. The process puts them in competition with non-Aboriginal pastoral charges, and they feel that Aboriginal ministry is not attractive enough for ministry personnel to make the competition fair.

5.1.5 GENERAL PERSPECTIVES

Discrimination, both from outside and from within Aboriginal communities, poses many challenges for Aboriginal pastoral charges. Ministry in Aboriginal communities is different from other United Church ministries in many ways, stemming both from traditional and current Aboriginal culture and from the experiences of life on reserves. In many communities, there is tension between traditional and Christian teachings, and pro-Native attitudes lead to a stigma being attached to belonging to the United Church or wanting to become a United Church minister. Growing up facing racism in its many forms and living life in a remote community leads to a different kind of faith and spirituality, one in which:

- The notion of “congregation” is not centred around the meeting place of a church building, as many ministers in Aboriginal communities are doing ministry without a building when there is no property available to the congregation or the church building is too much disrepair.
- The purpose of ministry is seen as a ministry of presence, of simply being with the people to respond to needs with the Spirit.
- People throughout the community feel connected to the minister, and ministers are expected to serve the community regardless of whether or not they attend church.

This view of “ministry” and “faith community” is often seen to be contradictory to the policies and practices of the Church—for example, communities who believe that models of ministry should be flexible and responsive to the needs of each individual community become frustrated by the need to follow policies that seems to supersede the needs of the individual in favour of standardization across the Church.

During our focus group conversations, some people expressed concern that the United Church does not have much of a future in Aboriginal communities because of all of the challenges expressed above. Others, however, said that there are signs of hope as people from Aboriginal communities show interest in ministry as a career and as The United Church of Canada and Aboriginal communities continue to expand on their commitment to finding better ways of working together.

5.2 ETHNIC MINISTRIES PERSPECTIVE

The following information related to Ethnic ministries was gathered through responses to the general survey that were provided by people indicating themselves as associated with Ethnic Ministries, as well as responses to a shorter survey that was developed specifically for Ethnic ministries and distributed through the support of the General Council Office’s Program Coordinator for Ethnic Minority Ministries & Leadership Development.

Based upon the answers of the 48 individuals surveyed who identified themselves as being associated with within Ethnic ministries, 70% of respondents were Ordained Ministers. Lay members made up the remaining respondents. Ethnic ministries had a greater number of part time staff than the general survey population, with only 59% working full time compared to the overall 71% of full time workers. In the past 24 months, 52% of respondents were members of the official board/council/session of their congregation, slightly lower than the survey average. Ethnic ministries demonstrated a greater level of participation in their Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee as well as their congregational Ministry and Personnel Committee and Joint Needs Assessment Committee. Some conferences were not represented in the responses from Ethnic ministries, as no respondents indicated they resided in the All Native Circle, Newfoundland and Labrador, or Saskatchewan. Whereas the overall survey responses came from an

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even mix of small and large community sizes, the responses of ethnic ministries came mostly from larger communities, with only 15% of respondents coming from a community of under 10,000 people.

5.2.1 PASTORAL RELATIONS

55% of respondents see the congregation(s) that they serve as their primary employer. They view the biggest concern regarding pastoral relations as ineffective communication with ministry personnel followed closely by poor pastoral charge oversight processes. Doubling the overall response, 33% of Ethnic ministries respondents indicated they had no concerns regarding pastoral relations. Ministry personnel indicated many sources of support, identifying their peers or colleagues, family or partner, ministry and personnel committees, and friends as the largest sources of support when dealing with difficulties and stresses of the job. Notably, 63% of respondents listed congregational members as a source of support, more than double the 25% of all respondents who did so. This support most often came in the form of collegial conversations about the job.

Most respondents had difficulty balancing work and non-work demands, but believed they received enough spiritual guidance slightly more than average. Respondents were split over whether or not they receive the level of support they need from the church and their ability to affect changes within it. Overall, 55% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Church practices what it preaches in its decisions and actions.

There was universal agreement that ministers need to build stronger collegial relationships with each other. While respondents overall were generally split, Ethnic ministries felt the training Ministry & Personnel Committee members receive was adequate. In overseeing, supervising, and evaluating ministry personnel, respondents feel M&P committees should play a stronger role than they do today.

Conflict Resolution

The majority of respondents agreed with the ideas presented in the conflict resolution section of the survey. They believe ministry personnel play an active role in conflict management and work to resolve it in a collaborative manner within the congregation. They approach conflict early and empathetically, and most often view it as a learning opportunity as opposed to a confrontation. While the survey's overall respondents disagreed, most respondents from Ethnic ministries somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that ministry personnel were often the final authority in resolving conflict.

5.2.2 PASTORAL OVERSIGHT & DISCIPLINE

51% of congregations were visited by a Pastoral Oversight Committee in the last three years. Most found their feedback useful (50%) or very useful (33%), slightly more than average. 80% of respondents had not participated in an oversight visit in the last three years. This is a lower level of participation compared with the 64% who had not participated from the total respondents sampled. While most participants in an oversight visit had access to the Standards of Practice and Ethical Standards document, the degree of its usage during the review was inconsistent, with a combined 50% either rarely or never using it. Most felt the primary goal of the Pastoral Oversight visit is currently to assess the health of the pastoral charge, ensure compliance with procedures, and to ensure that the triennial visits take place. Respondents indicated that these should remain the focus in the future, as well as providing training for Ministry & Personnel Committees. Respondents felt that personal relationships had a greater level of influence on an oversight visit than the survey average, with 52% believing they influenced them in a positive manner.

333/363 Reviews

27% of respondents had some level of experience with 333 reviews. 50% felt that the reviews were somewhat effective, a key point of differentiation from responses overall. Respondents noted these reviews were most often used to assess a situation at the pastoral charge level.

Only 12% of respondents had some level of experience with 363 reviews. Those who had experienced a 363 review were split on its effectiveness. Out of 10 respondents, 4 believed it was somewhat effective while 5 indicated it was not effective. Respondents noted that 363 reviews were most often used as a disciplinary measure rather than to assess a situation at the pastoral charge level.

A combined 46% either somewhat or strongly agreed that oversight/discipline processes are supportive and remedial rather than punitive. A combined 34% did not agree with this statement, while a sizable 27% indicated they did not know. Most respondents would be hesitant to submit a formal complaint that would lead to a 333/363 review within their pastoral charge. A strong majority felt the process for ending a pastoral relationship within a pastoral charge needs to be less adversarial.

In situations where there is a complaint of ministerial misconduct, 38% respondents believe it should almost always be investigated by an external third party, with 23% indicating "often" and another 23% indicating "seldom". A less-than-average 57% would be open to a 363/333 review of their own performance.

5.2.3 COMPENSATION

The responses of Ethnic ministries respondents mirrored the overall results of the compensation section of the survey aside from two key differences. Overall, survey respondents tended to not favour a maximum salary amount for ministry personnel, however, 57% of respondents from Ethnic ministries were in favour of a maximum salary amount. Respondents from Ethnic ministries also felt that increasing minimum ministry personnel salary scales would have either a somewhat positive or very positive impact on pastoral charges, as opposed to the general results of the survey which indicated that most felt the impact would be negative.

Housing

The results of the housing section of the survey were affected by the low participation rate from Ethnic ministries. Out of a total of 30 respondents who completed this section of the survey, only three individuals currently live in a manse, and seven are in a congregation that has a manse. Combined with non-responses, this meant that most questions about housing arrangements were answered by two to five respondents, making it difficult to generalize these results to all Ethnic ministries. However, the responses that were provided reflected the same overall themes established by the whole survey population with one notable exception—most of the Ethnic ministries respondents indicated that they receive a housing allowance of more than 40% of their salary, which was higher when compared to the survey average of 20-30% of salary.

5.2.4 RECRUITMENT

Ethnic ministries' responses from this section of the survey echoed those compiled from all survey respondents. The most common areas of continuing education were theological reflection, leadership development, biblical studies, and transformational leadership.

5.2.5 OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Most respondents are at least somewhat optimistic (51%) about the future of The United Church of Canada. A combined 92% of ministry personnel indicated they are somewhat or very proud of being ministry personnel with the Church, and most believed the Church is a better than average (49%) or excellent (22%) employer.

5.3 FRENCH MINISTRIES PERSPECTIVE

The following information regarding French Ministries was gathered during a focus group. Given the low level of survey responses from people associated with French Ministries (0.4% of total responses), survey information is not provided in this section.

5.3.1 PASTORAL RELATIONS

During the French Ministries focus group, participants described the struggle to apply many of the pastoral relations processes to their ministries. Due to the typically small congregation sizes, many simply have an official board, with no other committees such as Ministry & Personnel Committee, and the pastoral oversight processes and tools don't fit this governance structure.

Many Francophone ministry personnel are serving an English-speaking congregation while also supporting a small or newly-forming French Ministry. Pastoral relations needs ensure that these ministry personnel get the support that they need to continue this work.

Focus group participants indicated that The Manual doesn't provide enough guidance for new ministries and would like to see work done on expanding policies that support ministers in the process of growing new ministries.

Focus group participants also indicated that it would be beneficial to include inter-cultural questions in the Joint Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) process that would get pastoral charges to look at the cultural realities of the pastoral charge and of the community around them. Participants felt that the JNAC process needs to assess the potential transformational opportunities available to the pastoral charge, and encourage pastoral charges to address these opportunities. Participants also wanted to find ways of ensuring that the Joint Search Committee process accurately matches linguistic and cultural abilities of ministry personnel with pastoral charges where these skills and gifts can be put into service of the Church, and of ensuring that ministry personnel are not unfairly evaluated by JSCs based on cultural differences or not having English as their first language. They called for the development of policy that would name and address potential discrimination and linguistic-chauvinism within the JNAC and JSC processes.

Focus group participants pointed out that the mandatory racial justice training provided by the Church does not cover the linguistic tensions and issues with cultural difference that exist within the United Church, and would like to see cultural justice incorporated.

5.3.2 PASTORAL OVERSIGHT & DISCIPLINE

During the French Ministries focus group, participants explained that Pastoral Oversight Visits tend not to occur among French Ministries because of the small numbers of congregations or ministries within that group. Small numbers of French Ministries makes it difficult to get pastoral oversight work done, and also makes the oversight role awkward as people within French Ministries tend to know everyone else within French Ministries collegially and find it difficult to be put into supervisory roles over one another. Within Montreal Presbytery, there is a vision and transformation committee that works closely with ministers or lay worship leaders when a new French ministries site is identified—this provides for a helpful form of oversight early in those ministries.

French Ministries are often formed as part of an existing congregation, and so pastoral oversight and other pastoral relations processes are not conducted with or do not relate to the French Ministry alone—the French Ministry is addressed more as an outreach of the rest of the congregation. French Ministries are also often offered based on the passion and language abilities of the minister—to support the vitality and growth of French Ministries across the Church, oversight visits need to ensure that the French Ministry is being supported through integration with the larger congregation and ministry personnel made available. Also, oversight of these ministries

When Francophone ministry personnel (or ministry personnel of other ethnic minorities) are serving congregations that are not a part of the French Ministries constituency, oversight of these ministries needs to encourage the congregation to support their ministry personnel to offer ministry in their minority language. Training for those doing oversight and JNAC work needs to encourage these processes to consider the ethno-linguistic and cultural diversity of the congregation and surrounding community—the process should determine whether the congregations should be encouraged to reach out with an Ethnic or French Ministry.

Oversight visits tend to focus on ensuring that pastoral charges are meeting the minimum requirements and expectations, and extra work tends not to be valued within that process. When a pastoral charge is reaching out to the community around it, this tends not to be recognized and further encouraged, and when the pastoral charge is neglecting to reach out to the community around it, the oversight process doesn't tend to recommend that this outreach happen, especially when the pastoral charge is financially stable and relatively healthy. French Ministries as a constituency is still growing, and would benefit from an increased focus on encouraging outreach within Francophone communities. In this time of declining church attendance and finances, oversight is focused on maintenance and the ability of pastoral charges to sustain themselves—instead, we should be helping pastoral charges to transform and find ways of being vital in these changing times.

5.3.3 COMPENSATION

Ministers who speak more than one language should be seen as potential sources of mission and outreach. Ministry personnel who speak additional languages or have a different ethnic or cultural background need to receive adequate compensation to allow them to use these skills and perspectives to grow new ministries. Many Francophone ministry personnel are contributing to new or small French Ministries while also supporting a pastoral charge full time, and are not provided additional compensation for their work with the French ministry. This contributes to an inequity in compensation for those working with French Ministries and can lead to burn out. However, it is also understood that many pastoral charges cannot afford to pay their ministry personnel above minimum salary, and so ministry personnel are committing to supporting French Ministries with their additional effort.

Of the French-speaking congregations that are supporting their own ministry personnel, none of them can afford to pay more than the minimum salary due to how small and/or how new the congregation is. Francophone ministers in are receiving less housing allowance and salary for doing the same work as other ministry personnel within the same city. These ministry personnel often face the stress of not knowing whether their ministry will be able to continue to offer full time employment or have to drop to part-time due to save costs. Also, with so few Francophone ministry personnel, there is more pressure to represent the constituency on committees within the various courts of the Church. Focus group participants suggested that the issues related to salary equity could be better managed if all ministry personnel were paid through a national payroll pool.

It would have a positive effect for The United Church as a whole if ministers who speak multiple languages and are offering special ministries were given additional compensation; however the current compensation model only takes years of experience into account when determining what category you are in. Added compensation would encourage ministry personnel to go after certain education and training, such as taking on a new language. This type of additional compensation would only work, however, if ministry personnel were paid from a national payroll pool, otherwise pastoral charges would likely choose ministry personnel who only possess the skills that the existing congregation requires to avoid paying a higher salary.

5.3.4 RECRUITMENT FOR MINISTRY

Contrary to the general survey response in which people generally lack confidence that the Church will have enough suitable candidates for ministry in the future, participants in the French Ministries focus group were very confident that there will be enough candidates coming from French-speaking congregations. Their belief is that as a new ministry, French Ministries is in a mission-driven state focused on growth, which encourages people to promote ministry as a career and identifying people within the community who could be of benefit to French Ministries.

Focus group participants identified key challenges faced by Francophone candidates for ministry, including:

- Difficulties in succeeding in ministry training and education for those who do not speak, read, and write English well.
- Limited opportunities for ministry personnel focus on French Ministries alone.
- The ease by which the discernment process of Francophone candidates can be negatively influenced by the perspectives and biases of volunteers who may not recognize and value the skills and experiences of people who come from different backgrounds

When discussing the discernment and candidacy process, focus participants expressed concern that there is no process for appealing decisions of Education & Students Committees, and the need to rely on the committees to be highly skilled at recognizing a diversity of gifts for ministry. They felt that sometimes the focus of discernment and candidacy is on finding those who already match United Church culture, rather than on those who can bring diverse experiences to the Church and could learn about the shared beliefs of the Church through their education.

When asked what might discourage people from choosing ministry as a career, focus group participants felt that there is a lack of excitement in ministry, a lack of vision for doing new and exciting things in the Church that makes ministry less appealing to young people.

5.3.5 OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Within the overall population that responded to the *Effective Leadership & Health Relationships* survey, 63% said that the Church doesn't practice what it preaches. When asked what might be contributing to this sentiment, participants in the French Ministries focus group described a "survival of the fittest" attitude within the Church. They felt that pastoral charges are very protective of their own funds, contributing far more funds to their own survival than to outreach ministries and new ministries that could contribute to growth of the Church overall. Ministries that work with people who need it the most are also ministries that can't be expected to be self-sustaining. Many French ministries and other minority ministries are under-valued even though they are transformational ministries and hold great potential for the future of the United Church of Canada. Focus group participants generally agreed that they would like to see the Church find better ways of directing funds and energy into initiatives and outreach that could be transformational for The United Church of Canada.

Focus group participants also discussed the Church's desire to be an intercultural church. However, the United Church has not allowed certain ethno-minority congregations to join because of differences in theology and ethos while allowing leeway for United Church congregations that do not want to be inclusive or affirming. Some focus group participants have had personal experience of being discriminated within the Church, and feels that the Church doesn't address this injustice through practices or policies.

5.4 CHAPLAINCY PERSPECTIVE

5.4.1 INVOLVEMENT IN THE UNITED CHURCH (Q1-5)

The survey gathered the responses of eleven people located within the chaplaincy. Nine of the respondents were ordained ministers, with the remainder identifying as lay members. Four of the respondents were employed by the United Church, two full-time and two part-time, and had been employed by the church for an average of 18 years. The remaining seven were not employed by UCC, with most being employed as Chaplains within the Canadian Forces.

5.4.2 PASTORAL RELATIONS

Generally, chaplaincy respondents view the biggest concern regarding pastoral relations as ineffective pastoral relations policies. During the focus group, participants said that they generally see themselves as working outside of the pastoral relations system, since they tended to have some level of reporting or employment relationship with the organizations that they serve. Focus group participants expressed concern about the fact that pastoral relations policies rarely apply to their circumstances and that few people within their Presbyteries understand how to relate pastoral relations policies and practices to chaplaincy. Several focus group participants also commented on witnessing the frequency with which pastoral relations policies inhibit rather than supporting the work of Presbytery and pastoral charges due to overly bureaucratic processes.

Survey respondents indicated many sources of support, identifying their peers or colleagues, family or partner, ministry and personnel committees, and friends as the largest sources of support when dealing with difficulties and stressors of the job. This support most often came in the form of collegial conversations about the job, as well as debriefing specific instances.

Contrary to the survey average, chaplaincy respondents indicated less difficulty balancing work and non-work demands. Focus group participants credited this difference with the fact that they work in professional environments where work-life balance is valued. Interestingly, chaplains who are employed by the organizations that they serve have significantly less difficulty with work-life balance than chaplains who are funded by Mission Support grants and are seen by their organizations as volunteers or service providers. Many chaplains also have the opportunity to work in teams with other United Church chaplains or in inter-denominational teams, which alleviates some of the need to be available at all hours.

Most chaplain survey respondents believed they received enough spiritual guidance. Most felt they did not receive the level of support they needed from the church, and disagreed over their ability to affect changes within it. When asked what support they need from the Church, focus group participants said that they would like the whole Church to have a better understanding of their context and ministry and the opportunity to develop stronger connections with their Presbyteries (which is often their only link to the United Church of Canada).

Overall, the majority of respondents disagreed that the Church practices what it preaches in its decisions and actions. When asked what might have contributed to this overall response, focus group participants spoke of the Church recognizing chaplaincy as a form of ministry while issuing a statement of ministry (currently on the national web site) that describes any ministry other than congregational ministry as an individual calling of the personnel involved.

There was universal agreement that ministers need to build stronger collegial relationships with each other. Most respondents strongly disagreed that Ministry and Personnel Committee members received adequate training. Also, in overseeing, supervising, and evaluating ministry personnel, respondents are split over whether M&P committees should play a stronger or lesser role than they do today.

Focus group participants described two very different chaplaincy circumstances and relationships with the church—regardless of the type of organizations served, chaplains who are employed by those organizations do not require as much from the pastoral relations system as other ministry personnel, other than the desire to feel connected to the Church and to feel valued as a legitimate ministry. Chaplains who are funded by Mission Support Grants, however, are experiencing a wide range of employment stresses from compensation inequities to feeling disconnected from the Church. When asked what they would like the Pastoral Relations Policy task group to know as it carries out its work, focus group participants expressed a desire to see aspects of pastoral relations updated to include the realities of chaplaincy. Specifically, they would like to see some work done around the employment inequities that many chaplains face, such as being compensated poorly as casual or hourly employees, or facing significant stress and remuneration concerns when chaplaincies are supported solely by Mission Support grants. They would like to know that the Church recognizes chaplaincy as a valid ministry and change policies or processes so that chaplains don't face issues that deny their status as ministers such as having marriage licences revoked or having to ask to be retained on the Roll of Presbytery.

Conflict Resolution

The responses of chaplaincy regarding conflict resolution were the same as the survey average.

5.4.3 PASTORAL OVERSIGHT & DISCIPLINE

None of the survey respondents had participated in a Pastoral Oversight visit in the last three years, resulting in most of the questions from this section of the survey being left unanswered. Focus group participants explained that most chaplains are supervised by and/or have their work overseen by individuals within the organizations that they serve, and generally feel that these individuals, and the organizations' oversight processes, are effective. Contrary to the survey average, the majority of chaplain respondents believed that personal relationships influence the results of a Pastoral Oversight visits in a negative manner.

333/363 Reviews

Most respondents had not participated in either review process, resulting in most of the questions from this section of the survey being left unanswered. However, the results still allowed MNP to make the following general observation based upon questions all respondents completed. Aside from incomplete questions on the purpose and effectiveness of 333/363, chaplaincy responses followed the same trends as the survey average, indicating supportive oversight processes, hesitancy to submit a complaint leading to a 333/363 review, and indicating the need for a less adversarial process for ending pastoral relationships.

5.4.4 COMPENSATION

Chaplaincy produced results in line with the survey average in the compensation section of the survey. One point of minor difference was that respondents were split over whether or not the responsibility for financial support of ministry personnel should rest with the pastoral charge/ministry unit, with 50% strongly disagreeing with the statement, and 50% somewhat or strongly agreeing.

Focus group participants who are employed by the organizations that they serve said that they are very satisfied with the compensation. Beyond salary, these organizations provide the chaplains with other human resource support such as full benefit packages and union membership. Some of these are covered by unions and feel that their compensation is well protected. Focus group participants also said that chaplains funded by Mission Support Grants face less satisfactory and sometimes inconsistent compensation.

Housing

The housing section of the survey was not completed by the majority of respondents, resulting in an amount of data below what was needed to form significant observations.

5.4.5 RECRUITMENT FOR MINISTRY

The results of this section of the survey mirrored the survey average with a set of small exceptions. Most respondents did not negotiate the terms of their call or appointment. As several respondents were members of the Canadian Forces, their deployments likely affected the results of the question. Respondents from chaplaincy were mostly confident or somewhat confident that the church would have enough candidates for ministry in the future. On average, respondents overall did not believe this to be true, indicating a key difference within chaplaincy.

During the focus group, participants mentioned again the lack of recognition of chaplaincy as a form of ministry that requires the same skills as other forms of ministry—they have been faced with the perspective that anyone can be a chaplain.

5.4.6 OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Most respondents were optimistic about the future of The United Church of Canada. All except one respondent were somewhat or very proud of being ministry personnel with the Church.

Chaplains are well aware of the unique nature of the ministries that they serve, and would like to see the Church make better use of the expertise and experience that they have gained. For example, some military chaplains would like to see the General Council Office seek their advice when the Church is drafting responses to international conflicts, and some University chaplains feel their expertise could be valuable to work on emerging church models.

5.5 363 REVIEWS

To explore the effectiveness of the 363 review process and the impact that this process has on the individuals under review, MNP conducted interviews with randomly selected individuals who have been the subject of a 363 review process in recent years. Despite the small number of interviews, the consistency in responses to our questions suggests that the feedback we received is representative of the 363 review experience.

The interview participants expressed appreciation for the fact that this study is taking into account the perspective of people who have gone through the review process. The interview process asked participants to share their personal perspectives and opinions of the 363 review process, but all of the interview participants demonstrated a willingness to also provide their most objective reflections on the process and recommendations for its improvement. The information provided in this section is a summary of the data gathered through the interviews.

Interview participants recognized that the intended purpose of 363 reviews is to do an honest assessment of the health of a pastoral relationship and the effectiveness of ministry personnel. However, in their experience, all of the participants said that the reviews felt punitive and intent on finding fault. When describing their experience of the 363 review process, all of the interview participants described it as a very negative and damaging experience. They spoke of the degree to which they were isolated and alienated from Presbytery and people in the congregation, a lack of support for the ministry personnel under review, and an inadequate level of consultation with the individuals under review. Participants provided the following comments when reflecting on their 363 review experience:

- I kept hearing Presbytery saying "we have to protect the congregation," but there was never any mention of protection or support for the minister.
- It was assumed I was in the wrong.
- [Presbytery] assumed things were good before I got there. The review raised a lot of anecdotal information, but since the pastoral charge had not had a Pastoral Oversight Visit in decades, Presbytery didn't have factual information about the health of the pastoral charge before I was appointed, and I was held responsible for the poor health of the pastoral charge
- As soon as [the review] is ordered by the Presbytery, the member of ministry is helpless in it. There is no ability to step back and talk about the situation. Once the review is in play, the minister has to just let it take its course. There was little chance to respond to what people say. It becomes a "he said, she said" document with no verification of facts.
- You feel that you are on trial, and you are, but without the protection of a formal legal process.
- There were volunteers going through the motions and doing the activities of the review, but without experience or wisdom to understand how to use the process to accurately assess the situation.
- The Church began to behave like an institution under threat of legal action rather than an institution there to provide care, compassion, or some form of mediation to support the right relationship.
- I was told I was not guilty, but the Church has never had the trust in me since.
- The person who did the review absolved me, yet the Presbytery held me accountable.
- This has been very difficult, and there is no one to go to about that. It has been pretty painful, and it's hard to find a way to forgiveness and reconciliation and the things I believe the Church is about.
- [This was] the worst experience I've had in my life. I had no support. [The process] didn't recognize the trauma it caused to me and my family.
- I had difficulty finding another job and had to move away.

In the experience of the interview participants, many ministry personnel do not receive regular performance reviews from their pastoral charge, and others experience performance reviews that are too informal to raise important issues. For these ministry personnel, performance issues are not addressed before becoming large enough to require Presbytery intervention.

The participant's reviews were initiated in a variety of ways, some initiated by the pastoral charge, some by the ministry personnel themselves, and others through a request for a 333 review for which Presbytery decided to conduct a 363 review for efficiency. Some of the participants had welcomed the review when it began and others had not. Regardless of the level of anticipation, with all of their reviews over, none of the participants would want to experience such a review again.

The feeling that the participants had of being isolated, of being assumed guilty, and of being involved in a litigious process left all of the participants feeling that the 363 review process was adversarial and focused on blame and discipline. Interview participants had varying degrees of opportunity to offer their perspectives on the situation during the review process, ranging from being adequately consulted by the external reviewer to having limited opportunity to participate and feeling the need to have their own legal counsel. Participants also experienced a wide range of support from their Presbyteries, with some individuals receiving effective support from Presbytery, some receiving limited support (such as sympathy from peers without tangible support) and still others receiving no support at all. As a result of this range of consultation and support, some interview participants felt that they were heard during the review process while others felt completely unheard and misunderstood.

Generally, the review processes provided recommendations to either terminate or not terminate the pastoral relationship, but provided limited identification of steps that could be taken to resolve the conflict or improve the effectiveness of the ministry personnel.

The 363 review processes described by participants resulted in either the individual's termination, or the individual choosing the leave the pastoral relationship after the conclusion of the review. Despite several instances in which the review found no fault with the ministry personnel, none of the individuals chose to remain in the pastoral relationship. After the ending of the pastoral relationship, most of the participants found it difficult to find employment within or outside of the Church.

When asked if they would be willing to initiate a 363 review process in the future, several of the participants said that they would want to find a way of addressing issues in a pastoral relationship, but most said that they would not initiate a 363 or 333 review process as they don't see those review processes as being helpful or the best way of dealing with pastoral relationship issues.

Some possible directions for restructuring the 363 review process were tested with the interview participants. When asked if they felt that the 363 process would be improved if the policy directed ministry personnel and the pastoral charge to work collaboratively, with Conference or Presbytery staff support, to assess the situation and plan remedial steps before initiating a formal review, all of the participants felt that this would improve the process. Participants added that the process should be facilitated by someone outside of the pastoral charge's Conference or Presbytery, to protect ministry personnel from the biases and impact of personal relationships within their Conference and Presbytery. Participants also added that steps should be taken to ensure that the collaborative approach is engaged in thoroughly before a review process is launched. Participants agreed that it would be helpful if tools for conflict resolution, including using a Conflict Resolution Facilitator, were made available to pastoral charges and ministry personnel without needing to make a formal written complaint.

Interview participants generally agreed that, in theory, Conferences could be better equipped than Presbyteries to be responsible for ministry personnel oversight and discipline. However, several participants felt that their Conference's staff is currently no more objective nor better equipped than their Presbytery to manage oversight and discipline. Some participants also felt that the Presbytery's familiarity with the individuals involved in a review is an asset to the review process, rather than a liability, and would fear that Conference would not always have the background knowledge needed to conduct an effective and fair review based on their distance from the community involved in the review process.

When asked if the review process would be more effective if it were conducted by one qualified reviewer rather than a committee of peers, all of the participants indicated that skill level is more important than the number or location of reviewers. Some participants suggested that using a group of two or three qualified reviewers would best serve the process by providing higher reviewer skill level as well as multiple reviewer perspectives on what emerges through the review process.

Participants generally felt that it would be helpful if the 363 review policies included definitions of certain terms that would help people to make better choices as they engage in the review process. For example, defining the difference between destructive and constructive conflict might help people to understand how to better to engage in conflict management. Defining what a healthy pastoral relationship looks like might help people to set clear goals for what their review could be trying to accomplish.

Participants were asked whether they felt it would be helpful if the policy provided specific examples of situations that would require a formal review process versus situations where other options for conflict resolution should be considered first. While participants generally felt that examples would help to clarify the policy, they also generally agreed that the current 363 review process is too flexible and too open to interpretation. Several participants

indicated that the importance of the review process and the significant impact on the life of the person under review should be considered a mandate for developing a clear set of processes and rules (rather than guidelines and examples of policy application) and for ensuring that the process is carried out only by qualified individuals who are skilled at assessing the root cause of conflict and identifying appropriate actions for issue resolution. Despite their negative reactions to their experience of the 363 review process, the interview participants engaged at length in discussing ways in which the review process could be improved. The interviews resulted in the following recommendations:

- Develop a process that supports the pastoral charge and ministry personnel through the process of having difficult conversations and dealing openly with the issues at hand, prior to the initiation of a 363 review process—participants felt that the 363 review process is so formal and adversarial that it is always likely to result in the ending of the pastoral relationship regardless of the outcomes of the review. They recommend that the 363 review process should be used as a last resort, and other steps should be taken to help resolve issues while focusing on restoring health to the pastoral relationship.
- Engage professionals in the review process—participants felt that volunteers do not always follow the right process, are not always able to maintain objectivity, and do not always recognize the impact that their actions have on the process and individuals involved.
- Ensure that both the congregation and the ministry personnel have appropriate support—beyond naming someone to provide support, it is recommended that the Church develop methods for ensuring that the individuals under review are receiving meaningful support and are not being treated as guilty before the findings of the review are compiled.
- When conducting a review of ministry personnel, always conduct a simultaneous review of the pastoral charge—participants recommended that an assessment of the effectiveness of ministry personnel should always be done with a thorough understanding of the context within which the ministry personnel is working.
- Require that accusations be substantiated with evidence—some interview participants felt that a court of law would have been a safer place to deal with the conflict since the 363 review process resulted in decisions being made based on people's perspectives, opinions and accusations. Participants recommended that the process be improved to limit the influence of hearsay.
- Develop a structured process that delays involvement of legal staff from the General Council Office until after some conversation about the issue has occurred—some interview participants felt that early involvement of legal staff made the review process a litigious one right from the start, and did not allow an opportunity to choose a healthier path for the review process.
- Provide more effective means of compensation for ministry personnel whose income is affected by the review process—the process of having to apply for compensation takes too long and is too risky in cases where the ministry personnel's compensation is cut off by the pastoral charge as soon as the review process begins, especially given that ministry personnel are not allowed to seek any other appointments while a review is being conducted.

The interviews conducted regarding 363 reviews highlighted the need for the Church to recognize that the launch of any review will impact the pastoral relationship, regardless of the outcome. The process of conducting a formal review of a minister's effectiveness calls their character into question (intentionally or unintentionally), and it will be difficult to develop a process that would prevent any hard feelings and that would allow people to simply continue the pastoral relationship even if the minister is absolved of any wrong doing.

The nature of our interview process was to gather the perspectives and opinions of the interview participants rather than to conduct thorough investigations of the 363 review process. That being said, some of the stories that we heard from interview participants suggest that in some cases, pastoral charge members have been able to launch a

363 review process based on their own biases or discriminations, and that, likely unintentionally, the formality of the review process took on a life of its own and compounded the discrimination in the eyes of the individual under review. In one of these cases, the review process itself seems to have further damaged the pastoral relationship despite the review's result of finding no fault or misconduct with the ministry personnel. In other cases, the stories suggest that at times a 363 review process is initiated by members of the pastoral charge or ministry personnel who were not willing or able to enter into conflict and work to resolve issues within the pastoral charge—in these cases, the 363 review process may have been launched prematurely, as a means of avoiding dealing with issues and having difficult conversations. Many people find conflict difficult, and many people are not well-equipped to handle organizational conflict in a structured and effective manner. Our interviews raised more than one instance where the pastoral charge and ministry personnel may have been well-served through external conflict management support prior to launching the 363 review process.

Our interviews acknowledged the fact that, as all humans do, members of a pastoral charge or Presbytery have their own biases and perspectives, and are not always able to isolate these from the review process. The stories shared during the interviews suggested that in some cases, individuals participating in the review process did not always uphold the values or beliefs of The United Church of Canada. Despite what the policies and procedures dictate, the Church's structure is not such that the everyday actions of individual members of pastoral charges and Presbyteries can be monitored, and so there is significant support for developing a process that puts responsibility for these important reviews in the hands of individuals who are skilled at conducting such assessments.

Addendum K**PMM9 Youth and Young Adult Strategy Report****Origin: Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry****The Permanent Committee Programs for Mission and Ministry proposes:****That the Executive of the General Council affirm the principles of the General Council's Youth and Young Adult strategy; affirm the framework of the strategy and;****Direct the General Secretary, General Council to explore an increase to the Vision Fund of \$100,000 in the 2012 budget cycle.****BACKGROUND:**

In the spring of 2011, the Communities in Ministry/ Communautés et ministères Unit-wide Committee charged the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry (PCPMM) to develop a General Council strategy for Youth and Young Adult Ministry. The strategy was to be specific, measurable, attainable, and relevant, time bound, and would lay before the church what could be expected over the next triennium from the General Council with regards to Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

The Strategy before you for consideration builds on the work of reports made to the 35th, 36th and 37th General Councils and more specifically the report *Called and Equipped: The Youth Ministry Training Consultation* made to the Education for Church Leadership Coordinating Committee in 2005. It is focused primarily on the role of the General Council with regards to Youth and Young Adults Ministry.

The basic principle of the strategy is that the role of the General Council with regards to Youth and Young Adults is primarily one of focusing on leaders.

Instead of trying to minister and serve youth in the United Church directly, the church is more efficient if General Council supports and equips leaders (especially those in regional settings) who can, as a result, better serve the young people and youth leaders with who they are in relationship.

The following suggestions were explored and subsequently rejected:

1. Promotional Campaign
Similar to "We Are Camp". Not deemed a priority, hoped that First Third Association will help communicate values more effectively.
2. Youth Court
Deemed to separate youth, rather than integrate them, it was seen to serve youth who are already connected to the structures of the church.
3. Youth Forum Executive
Deemed to be too costly, other means of engaging youth at General Council Office deemed higher priority.
4. Young Adult Intentional Communities

Deemed too programmatic, would rather seek to partner with grassroots ministries as they identify this as a priority.

5. YAYA Consultancy Team

Deemed inefficient, given the possibilities of Regional Ministries and other bodies (EDGE, First Third Association) to meet these needs.

The Strategy is built on a number of assumptions:

Joel 2:28 states: *Then I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.*

Assumptions about Youth and Young Adults:

- have gifts, skills, and wisdom to offer
- should have a voice at decision-making tables
- have mutually transformative relationships with the church
- create energy and conflict
- require both age-specific and intergenerational opportunities to develop Christian community

Assumptions about Youth and Young Adult Ministry:

- is the shared responsibility of the entire church
- happens best in local contexts with local leadership
- takes place in multiple forms, contexts, times and relationships
- is successful when young people are transformed by, and agents of transformation through, the gospel of Jesus Christ

Assumptions about the United Church of Canada:

*We sing of a church
seeking to continue the story of Jesus
by embodying Christ's presence in the world...
To embody God's love in the world,
the work of the church requires the ministry and discipleship
of all believers.*

From *A Song of Faith*

The United Church of Canada is:

- comprised of many different embodiments of ministry. Some ministries have a local scope (i.e. congregations, community ministries, etc.), some have a regional scope (i.e. presbyteries, conferences, etc.), and the General Council alone has a national scope. All of these different forms of ministry have different areas of focus and spheres of responsibility. All together, they make up the ministry of the United Church of Canada. For the United Church of Canada to live up to its potential in YAYA ministry or any other ministry field, all levels of the church need to work cooperatively, communicate effectively, and carry out their duties with the diligence and excellence required of Christian service.
- governed by the General Council in a select few areas
- committed to seeking the full participation of those on the margins

Assumptions about the General Council:

- that it is focused primarily on issues of Identity and Connection.
- that it is shifting away from an expertise oriented programmatic approach to ministry
- that it is in a position to create a system whereby YAYA Ministry can thrive, primarily by connecting and equipping leaders

Assumptions about Regional Ministries:

- that they are in a position to provide support to congregational leaders in the form of training, relationships and consultation, and ministry to youth and young adults in the form of supplemental programming and leadership opportunities

Assumptions about Local Ministries:

- that they are the primary location where authentic relationships with youth and young adults take place.

United Church YAYA Ministry at a Glance:

General Council	Connection <i>focus on leaders</i>	Identity <i>focus on leaders</i>	YAYA Ministry of the United Church of Canada
Regional Ministries	Leader support & development <i>focus on leaders</i>	Supplemental programs <i>focus on YAYA</i>	
Local Ministries	Authentic relationships with YAYA <i>focus on YAYA</i>	Faith formation <i>focus on YAYA</i>	

Framework of the General Council's Youth and Young Adult Ministry Strategy

This strategy sets the direction of the General Council YAYA Ministry until the rise of the 42nd General Council

This strategy has five areas of focus: *networking; leadership development; credentialing; mission engagement; and events.*

Within those areas of focus, the strategy commits the General Council to areas of work that: a) model exemplary youth ministry; b) partner with exemplary YAYA ministries; c) improves networks for support and communication; and d) seek policy changes in areas where General Council has the mandate to operate.

General Council's Youth & Young Adult Strategy	
Identify	Connection
Leadership Development *Internship Program *General Council Youth Forum	Networking * Regional YAYA Leaders Gathering *National Association

<p><i>*Continuing Education</i> <i>*Raising Profile of Campus Chaplaincy & Camps</i></p>	<p><i>*Integration of young people in the work of the General Council</i></p>
<p>National Gathering <i>General Council Youth Forum</i> <i>Connections</i> <i>Rendez-vous</i></p>	
<p>Credentialing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pathways to Paid Accountable</i> • <i>Partnership with AST</i> 	
<p>Mission Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship Program • Student Christian Movement (SCM) & World Student Christian Fellowship (WSCF) • Global & Ecumenical • Exemplary Mission Related Program 	

Networking

As part of General Council's commitment to fostering connection in our church, the YAYA Strategy seeks to create more intentional networks, especially for those in leadership roles. Under this strategy, the General Council commits to the following pieces of work:

- Creation of a Regional YAYA Staff Network:
General Council commits to hosting an annual, gathering for regional YAYA staff people. . The purpose of the gathering will be for information sharing, relationship building, continuing education and advising on key issues.
- Development of a National First Third Association:
General Council commits to the development of a national association of first third ministry practitioners. First third ministry is a term used in describing the collection of ministry fields that serve people between the ages of 0 to 30 – roughly the first third of life. A first third ministry association would be made up of leaders (volunteers and paid accountable) from the various circles of youth ministry, campus ministry, camping ministry and children's ministry.
- Integration of Young People in the work of General Council:
General Council commits to educating the units and committees of the General Council on how to make possible the full participation of young people. General Council also commits to an orientation session for General Council Executive members on how to elicit the full participation of young people.

Leadership Development

Part of General Council's work in providing connection in our church, is to connect leaders with the people, resources and opportunities they need to succeed. The development of leaders in YAYA ministry, therefore, is part of the strategy's focus, and the General Council commits to the following pieces of work:

- Development of a Regional Internship Program:

The Regional Internship Program will annually place 6 young adults, for 8 month periods, in a qualifying regional YAYA ministry, such as a presbytery or conference YAYA program, a campus ministry, community ministry, camp or education centre. Internships will be for 20 hours per week, and therefore accessible to students studying at university or college.

- **New Funding for Continuing Education in YAYA Ministry & Reorganization of Vision Fund:**
The General Council, therefore, commits to making funds available, through a *reorganization of the Vision Fund*, to leaders seeking to pursue continuing education in the field of YAYA ministry. General Council will secure funds that will increase the Vision Fund's annual allotment to \$200,000 – setting aside \$50,000 annually for continuing education bursaries. Special consideration will be given to leaders from remote settings.
- **General Council Youth Forum:**
The YAYA Strategy affirms the key role Youth Forum plays in shaping young leaders and seeks to continue the development of this program.
- **Raising the profile of Campus Ministries:**
The General Council commits to raising the profile of Campus Ministries among the YAYA ministries of the United Church

The General Council commits to designating one Sunday a year as “Campus Ministry Sunday” and creating resources for congregations to celebrate God’s presence and transformative work on campuses in worship.

- **Raising the profile of United Church Camping:**
The General Council commits to continuing to offer “Connections” a bi-annual gathering of United Church Camping leaders for the purposes of information sharing, support, and continuing education.
The General Council commits to raising the profile of United Church Camping among the YAYA ministries of the United Church, and to continuation of “Camping Sunday” and creating resources for congregations to celebrate God’s presence and transformative work at camp in worship.

Credentialing

The meaning of ministry in our denomination has been an ongoing conversation over the last decade or so. What kinds of ministry positions will serve our church now and into the future? Who gets to be in ministry positions? What qualifications and training do they need?

The YAYA Strategy seeks to legitimize the unique ministry of those called by God to work with young people. Such legitimization is difficult, given the variety of forms and contexts in which YAYA leadership takes place, but it comes over time with clear communication, realistic expectations and a variety of pathways to accreditation that are accessible, rigorous and offer fitting preparation for the ministry to which leaders are called.

Mission Engagement

New models of YAYA ministry are moving away from a focus on Christian education and the downloading of belief from one generation to another. Instead, they embrace methods whereby people enter relationships marked by service and engagement with God’s mission in the world.

Instead of sitting and learning, youth ministry today is more about doing and reflecting and sharing transformative experiences in community. The YAYA Strategy seeks to partner with and resource initiatives within our church that get young people engaged with God's mission, such as:

- Global and Ecumenical Engagement
The YAYA Strategy recognizes the good work being done by Partners in Mission and affirms its continued role in engaging young people with God's mission.
- Raising the profile and connection with SCM and WSCF
- New Funding for Exemplary Mission Program

National Gatherings

National gatherings serve a unique role in the overall ministry of the United Church of Canada. They can be costly, labour intensive and logistically difficult. But they also serve as important opportunities to connect on a national scale and communicate clearly about denomination-shaping issues that relate to YAYA ministry. They do not substitute for long-term local ministries, but hopefully energize and inspire participants to create meaningful opportunities in their regional and local settings. The YAYA Strategy affirms the important roles played by three YAYA-specific national events (Youth Forum, Camping Connection, and the National Youth Event (such as Rendez-vous) and the importance of exhibiting a YAYA presence at national events open to the wider church.

Reorganization of the Vision Fund

The General Council, therefore, commits to making funds available, through a reorganization of the Vision Fund, by increasing the total amount available in the fund from \$100,000 to an annual allotment to \$200,000.

\$100,000 of which will be available annually as seed money for local YAYA initiatives, as per current Vision Fund guidelines.

The Reorganized Vision Fund		
Seed Fund	Bursaries	Grants
\$100,000 (existing) for local YAYA Initiatives	\$50,000 (new) for Continuing Education Bursaries for YAYA Leaders	\$50,000 (new) for Three (3) Year commitment to Two (2) Special Projects
Existing Criteria	Criteria Needed	Criteria Needed

The YAYA Strategy recognizes that while there are more training opportunities available to United Church YAYA leaders, these programs often remain inaccessible due to cost, especially for volunteer leaders who have no budget for continuing education. \$50,000 would be available annually for continuing education bursaries to leaders seeking to pursue continuing education in the field of YAYA ministry.

The final \$50,000 would be available as a grant - \$25,000 each year over the upcoming triennium - to two prominent mission-related programs (such as the GO Project or Future Quest or the development of an Intentional Community for Young Adults, etc.).

Addendum L

PMM8 Trans/gender Diversity Working Group

Origin: Permanent Committee Programs for Mission and Ministry

The Permanent Committee Programs for Mission and Ministry proposes:

That the Executive of the General Council forward the following proposal and accompanying report to the 41st General Council:

The Executive of the General Council proposes that the 41st General Council affirms its commitment to the full inclusion of Transgender – Gender Variant individuals into the membership of the United Church of Canada, and supports the Civil and Human rights of Transgendered persons in the society.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2008 the following motion from the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario was received by the Executive of the General Council and referred to the General Secretary, General Council.

That the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario request General Council Executive to instruct the appropriate units and committees to develop appropriate resources, in consultation with a representative group of transgender people within Affirm United and The United Church of Canada, that will encourage the participation and ministry of transgender people in the life of the church and to prepare individuals and churches to receive such participation and ministry; and

that a representative group of transgender people within The United Church of Canada shall be invited to report on progress made in regard to participation within The United Church of Canada and the development of education and advocacy concerning civil and human rights by The United Church of Canada, and to make additional suggestions, to the 41st General Council.

In August 2009, The 40th General Council meeting in Kelowna approved a proposal from Hamilton Conference (HAM 4):

Affirming the Participation and Ministry of Transgender People Within The United Church of Canada and Supporting Their Civil and Human Rights (HAM 4) Motion: Bob Johnson/Stephen Mills GC 40 2009 - 086

That the 40th General Council 2009:

1. Encourage all congregations of The United Church of Canada to welcome transgender people into membership, ministry, and full participation;
2. encourage that all settings of The United Church of Canada learn about the realities of transgender experience and expression, including the gifts and callings and needs of transgender people, and are encouraged to engage in appropriate dialogue with transgender people;
3. that the General Secretary, General Council be encouraged to develop appropriate resources, in consultation with a representative group of transgender people within Affirm United and The United Church of Canada, to encourage the participation and ministry of transgender people in the life of the church and to prepare individuals and churches to receive such participation and ministry;
4. that the General Secretary, General Council, in cooperation with Affirm United's Affirming Ministries Program, be encouraged to develop a program of education and advocacy, in consultation with a representative group of transgender people within The United Church of Canada, and then to provide leadership in advocating for the human and civil rights of transgender people; and
5. that a representative group of transgender people within The United Church of Canada shall be invited to report to the 41st General Council 2012 on progress made in regard to participation within The United Church of Canada and the development of education and advocacy concerning civil and human rights by The United Church of Canada, and to make additional suggestions.

INTRODUCTION:

The issue of our *identity* is a foundational concern for the church, as expressed by the 40th General Council and the General Council Executive in May 2010. Identity is equally as important for individuals—including our multiple identities such as race, culture, language, abilities, and sexual orientation—with gender being a foundational identity.

Being transgender is a spiritual state, and what needs to be understood is the soul. The trans person is forced to peer deeply into their own soul in order to confront and evaluate what the meaning of their life is, in a way that others rarely need to do. These are spiritual questions that go to the fundamental nature of being. The 'correction' is neither the correcting of gender nor of correcting sexuality—it is unifying the body and soul and not a correction at all. For the Trans person, being true to their own originality is a spiritual issue because it is the way in which we physically embody the spiritual truths within us.

Transgendered people merit the acknowledgment of their sacredness, their otherness, simply because they are human beings who hold within themselves a grain of the sacred as we all do. They too have voices and are seeking the truth. They too by their presence in the world sanctify all life. Those who stand outside of the trans community need to learn to listen and respond to

the crying out of the trans person and the response to this cry should be an embrace which signifies the holiness, dearness, sacredness and depth of another human being.¹

COMMON TERMS:

Gender or Gender Role: *Gender* - masculine and feminine - is somewhat of a social construct which may differ from culture to culture. The World Health Organization defines gender as referring to *the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women* (such as behaviour and appearance).

Gender Identity: *Gender Identity* refers to our innate, deeply felt sense of being male, female, both or neither. It can be different from the biological sex we were assigned at birth. Many people (but not all) who are living this experience refer to themselves as “transgender.” Medical research scientists are now able to conclude that gender identity is likely set in the brain before a child is born. This identity guides the child in how to behave and interact with others. Gender identity is separate from sexual orientation.

Gender Queer or Gender Neutral: Refers to individuals who may identify as both male and female, neither male nor female, or as falling completely outside the gender binary. Individuals, who identify as Gender Queer or Neutral, may describe their identity as fluid and/or changing and may work to challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system.

Transgender: *Transgender* is used to refer to anyone who has a gender identity that is different than their biological or assigned sex, and/or expresses their gender in ways that differ from societal expectations for men and women. *Transgender* is separate from sexual orientation, and transgender people may identify as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or asexual.

¹ Adapted from “The Heart/Spirit, Not the Head/Mind: Being Transgendered is a Spiritual Phenomena and not a Psychological Condition” Presented at the Sixth International Congress on Sex and Gender Diversity at Manchester Metropolitan University, 2004, by Kenneth Dollahide, Ph.D.

THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

God has brought forth human beings as creatures who are male, female, and sometimes dramatically or subtly a complex mix of male and female in their bodies. Human cultures have created a broad diversity of roles for men and women, and have sometimes created roles for people named as neither male nor female often revered and respected roles. Rules of appearance in the Bible, such as in Deuteronomy 22:5 [wearing clothes of the opposite sex], are certainly among the rules criticized by Jesus as focused on outward conformity rather than inward integrity grounded in the acceptance of God's love. There are numerous biblical affirmations of the goodness of creation and the love of God for all people, including Genesis 1, Psalm 139, John 1: 1-5, Acts 10: 34-43; and Galatians 3: 26-29 which calls on those who are baptized to put on Christ like a garment and to look past human divisions to become one person in Christ.

Trans people are currently offering valuable ministry within the United Church of Canada, both as lay people and as clergy. The United Church of Canada in numerous program activities in all expressions of the church has affirmed the positive virtues carried by men within traditional cultures, by women within traditional cultures, while also calling for the transformation of gender roles that are oppressive of men or women, or otherwise not fully reflective of Christian values.

Christian trans people have sometimes experienced rejection and non-acceptance within some expressions of The United Church of Canada and in other expressions of Christ's Church, and are in need of a welcoming Christian community where they are valued as Christian people. Many settings of the United Church of Canada have little understanding of trans people; of how to meet their needs and make them feel welcome; of how to integrate their gifts and capacities for ministry into the life of the church; and of how to integrate them into liturgy and expressions of worship.²

THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING TRANS PERSONS IN THE CHURCH

Over 193 persons who identify themselves as transgender and 159 who identify as significant other, family, friend and ally have participated in a survey conducted by the Trans/Gender Diversity Task Group on being transgendered in the United Church. The following information is as of May 10, 2011.

38% of respondents are members/adherents of the United Church, while 38% identify themselves as former members, prospective new members, or regular visitors of a United Church. The remaining 24% of respondents are most likely people who have visited a United Church, and/or are related to a member of the church.

Respondents were asked to rate their experience in the United Church, as a trans person or ally. 15% checked extremely affirming, while 26% found it to be somewhat affirming. 35% of respondents found their experience to be neutral (neither affirming nor negative), while 18% found it to be somewhat negative, and 6% identified their experience as extremely negative.

² GC40 Policy: Affirming the Participation and Ministry of Transgender People Within The United Church of Canada and Supporting Their Civil and Human Rights [GC 40 2009 - 086]

STRATEGIES

It is imperative that all levels of the church provide leadership on the issue of gender identity/diversity/trans people. Audiences that need to be addressed include: general membership; clergy and other ministry leaders; youth and young adults, and their ministry leaders; children and young teens, and their ministry leaders; courts of the church, including General Council Office, Conferences, and Presbyteries; education centres and theological schools; and trans people and their families.

In seeking to address the issues the Working Group makes the following recommendations:

1. *As to its processes that the General Council Office modify its forms where possible to provide a range of options for gender identification, including which pronoun to use.*

Example:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Transmasculine (i.e. FTM)
- ☐ Transfeminine (i.e. MTF)
- ☐ Genderqueer or Androgynous
- ☐ Two Spirited
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to disclose

What pronouns do you prefer? _____

Rationale: Having an option beyond two boxes – gender binary – is important in order to be inclusive to communities that otherwise would have previously been excluded, to acknowledge the differences that exist within gender, to build awareness and provide education around the diversity of gender, and to become more aware of the demographics of our church. In order for all communications to be respectful of the people we're communicating with, knowing which pronoun to use is of primary importance.

2. *Advocate with the various institutions –government, insurance companies and all other - who manage and work with information concerning United Church of Canada employees- for change in terms to move beyond gender binary categories.*

Rationale: While we affirm that requesting people to identify gender has the historical impact of excluding those who does not fit in the traditional binary categories, and would like it to be removed from forms; we also acknowledge that we deal with systems that categorize data for statistical and demographic purposes and that the church interfaces with government and civil society systems.

3. *Propose a policy for the replacement of historical documents such as ordination, commissioning and baptismal certificates, when requested by any individual who claims a new gender identity and changes names.*

Rationale: Changing documentation is a real barrier for trans people in our society. We believe the church should take a leadership role in this area by replacing certificates when requested. (*Certificates* include: confirmation, ordination, commissioning, recognition of

DLM, baptism, etc.). Acknowledging the limiting factor that in most cases original documents cannot be replicated, the new documents meet the need of the person who has transitioned of certificates that reflect their new names and re-claimed gender identity.

4. *Research the cost of providing extended physical and mental health coverage for persons in gender transition who are employed by the United Church of Canada and to make the coverage available.*

Rationale: Coverage is inconsistent across the country and varies from province to province. This is an opportunity for the church to take a leadership position on an important issue regarding these medically necessary procedures.

5. *Encourage all United Church of Canada ministries to provide appropriate washroom facilities for people to use without harassment, and make single stall washrooms available in accordance with provincial laws. .*

Rationale: We make this recommendation in order to provide a safe place for trans people to use the facilities. This is a common barrier experienced by trans people in our society.

6. *Encourage gender specific groups within the United Church of Canada to be welcoming and inclusive of trans people.*
7. *Provide training and resources for Education and Students Committees, Conference Interview Boards and Conference Personnel Ministers to assist them in their work and support of trans candidates and ministry personnel.*
8. *Appoint a working group in partnership with the MEPS Permanent Committee to research and develop further the following recommendations and formalize a protocol for ministries whose paid accountable staff is transitioning their gender identity.*
9. *That the General Council Office contract with a number of consultants to work with Conference and Presbytery staff and ministry personnel beginning the process of transitioning.*

Rationale: Experience has proved that since this is a new area of engagement for most people within the church, special expertise is necessary.

10. *Identify a procedure to provide resources for the Ministry Personnel and space for the congregation (ministry) to engage in education and discernment when the ministry personnel begins the transition process while in the pastoral relationship.*

Rationale: Processes need to be in place to assist congregations and ministries in dealing with the implications of transitioning. Ministry personnel in particular need support and time to engage a life changing transformation without damaging their call and without making it the sole focus of their ministry.

MEMBERS OF THE TASK GROUP:

Rev. Robin Sherman, Chair (Gender Justice Advisory Committee)
Rev. Christina Bellsmith
Moses Kanhai (PC-PMM representative)
Rev. Cindy Bourgeois
Ruth Bramham
Rev. Liz Carter-Morgan
Ryan Tristin Chapman

Deborah Laforet (corresponding member from PC-PMM)
Maryann Skinner (corresponding member from PC-PMM)

Alcris Limongi (General Council Office, Staff Resource)
Jordan (Judy) Sullivan (General Council Office, Staff Support)

Addendum M**Pension Board Accountability Report****Origin: Pension Board*****Report***

The past year has been another busy, challenging and productive one for the Board and its Committees. In addition to the general management of the Plan, other priorities include a review of the Plan's design and funding, setting up an ad-hoc group (the Asset Liability Research Group) to investigate investment strategies to support the pension promise into the future, the transition to a new provider of administrative service, and finalizing the documentation of the governance structure adopted in 2004 and commencing the development of supporting policies such as a Responsible Investment Process Guidance document and funding policy.

As outlined in the communications policy, the Board strives to provide information to interested parties on an open and comprehensive basis. Again this year, an Annual Report on the Plan was distributed in mid-June to Plan members and to pastoral charge Treasurers. Further refinements were made to the format and production of the Report to improve readability and reduce production costs. Each active member also received an individualized pension benefit statement and three issues of the *Foresight* newsletter to provide timely information.

Through the Annual Report and the Foresight newsletter, Plan Members have been advised that the Pension Board is considering the future sustainability of the Plan and that some "course corrections" may be required. The Pension Plan Advisory Committee (PPAC) is reviewing the Plan's design to ensure its sustainability, relevance, and affordability. This ongoing review could result in changes to the Plan, including increasing contribution rates and decreasing accrual rates for future service; and the recently formed Asset Liability Research Group met frequently to look at investment strategies that will support the pension promise into the future.

Overview

As outlined in last year's report, there are a number of growing uncertainties and trends which threaten the sustainability of the Plan and its ability to provide a secure and stable retirement income to Plan members unless some adjustments are made. Among these uncertainties and trends are:

- Investment yields remain very low and threaten to be below the targets assumed in the Plan for the foreseeable future. Ongoing uncertainty about the North American and European economies and related stimulative monetary policies are key factors here. Yields on fixed income investments have declined to very low levels, and equity values have lost much of the value recovered since the 2008 losses and continue to be very volatile. Such low investment yields have very significant impacts on the Plan, particularly if, as seems quite possible, they continue at depressed levels for years to come. While recent investment performance compares reasonably well with many other pension plans (allowing for differences in investment style), two key benchmarks/targets have not been met in the past 11 quarters.
- As outlined in Section 6 below, an estimate of the Plan's funded position at December 31, 2010 shows that our Plan is no longer fully funded on a "going concern" basis. This is in spite of reducing somewhat the reserve for potential benefit improvements. It should also be noted that an asset smoothing approach is used in this estimate and thus losses since 2008 are not fully recognized.
- Mortality reductions continue to arise, resulting in payment of pension benefits for a longer period.
- The demographics of the Plan membership have changed considerably over the past 12 or so years, primarily because of a steadily increasing age of entry into Church employment (and thus into Plan membership). This has a negative impact on the funded position of our Plan.
- Contribution levels have been recognized for some time as being lower than those for most other pension plans. (The most recent change, in 1999, was a reduction in contribution rates.) While the Board strives to avoid frequent changes in contribution rates, it may be timely to consider higher rates.

In response to these and other factors, the Board has initiated a review of the Plan's design and funding. Both the Pension Plan Advisory Committee and the Asset Liability Research Group (a working group of representatives from PPAC, the Investment Committee and the Board) have made great progress in their respective projects. We will continue to provide information to the Executive as this review proceeds.

As in previous reports, the balance of the Accountability Report comments on several specific aspects of the Plan's operation.

1. Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures (SIPP):

As recommended by the Implementation Task Group, with input from the Investment Committee, the Pension Board approved the current SIPP at its September 22, 2010 meeting.

As previously advised, the responsible investment (“RI”) and proxy voting sections were restated in the December 2008 revision to the SIPP as high level policies rather than detailed processes. To support these policies, the RI Review Group looked for current best practices that are appropriate for the Plan in light of the limited resources available to pursue RI. In documenting the Plan’s RI process, it has become manifest that RI is evolving and is currently somewhat poorly defined in nature. The resulting document, the RI Process Guidance, reflects this and is expected to be dynamic and will evolve to reflect developments in the field. Given this fluidity and in the absence of broad consensus in the industry about how and when to apply RI criteria, especially social and environmental criteria, the RI Process Guidance document contains a preamble to provide readers with this background information as a point of reference.

Consistent with the Pension Board’s communication policy, the process provides for ‘interested parties’ to provide input into the Investment Committee’s review of the Fund’s holdings on environmental, social or governance issues. This may go some way to fostering an air of openness around the operation of the Plan’s RI Policy and provides the Investment Committee with another source of RI intelligence.

In this regard, the Pension Board received a request that it become a lead plaintiff in a class action against Sino Forest and associated parties. In this case, the Board decided to take no action since, to do so, would exceed the capacity of the Fund’s and the Board’s resources to appropriately oversee and manage both the proceedings and the use of the name of the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada.

Following consultation with the Investment Committee, the RI Process Guidance document was approved at the Pension Board’s October 13, 2011 meeting.

As part of the RI Process, the Pension Board continues to look for opportunities to pursue RI in an efficient and sustainable manner with consistent application across all asset classes. With this in mind, the Pension Board renewed its affiliate membership of the Shareholder Association for Research and Education (“SHARE”) and engaged SHARE for its Goldcorp-only engagement service until December 31, 2011. To supplement this, the Pension Board has joined the Canadian Coalition for Good Governance (“CCGG”) for a one year trial period. CCGG’s membership is drawn from Canada’s largest institutional investors who, cumulatively, effectively have control of every large company in Canada and thereby provides CCGG with boardroom access to discuss governance issues with these corporations. While CCGG’s initial focus was on governance, it is now broadening its view to incorporate environmental and social issues as part of the governance process.

Finally, as reported last year, the Pension Board approved the appointment of Glass Lewis to provide proxy voting services to the Plan. Effective January 1, 2011, Glass Lewis began voting the Plan’s proxies in line with Glass Lewis’ standard voting guidelines, which for the first time ensured that the proxies were voted consistently across the Plan’s portfolio.

2. Investment performance of the Fund:

At June 30, 2011, annualized returns for the Fund (the investments supporting the Plan) were as follows for one to five year periods:

One Year	10.9%	96 th	percentile ranking*
Two Year	8.1%	100 th	"
Three Years	2.8%	62 nd	"
Four Years	2.1%	44 th	"
Five Years	4.3%	63 rd	"

*Compared to other pension plans with assets greater than about \$1 billion where RBC Dexia is the custodian.

Second quarter performance of 0.24% (versus Q2 2010 of -1.6%) resulted from a partial retrenchment in the North American equity markets. Bonds, private debt, and mortgages continued to provide positive performance in the quarter. The Fund's ranking versus industry peers was at the 54th percentile for the quarter as a result of the Fund's conservative asset mix.

The market value of the Fund at June 30, 2011 was \$1.099 billion, down about \$18 million from the previous quarter but up about \$61 million from the same time last year.

Twelve third-party managers conduct the day-to-day investment activities for most (95%) of the Fund, under careful oversight and review by the Investment Committee. Following the Investment Committee's decision at its September 15, 2010 meeting to terminate the contract with the US Growth Equity manager, Friess Associates, the funds were held in an index fund with the Fund's transitional manager, State Street Global Advisors, on an interim basis. At its February 23, 2011 meeting, the Investment Committee approved the transfer of these assets and the Europe, Africa and Far East ("EAFE") assets at Sprucegrove to Sprucegrove's Global Pooled Fund. This move provides the Fund with exposure to emerging markets but also delegates the US/EAFE allocation decision to the investment manager on a daily basis.

After a period of maintaining a conservative, asset preservation tactic with the Fund being underweight in equities, the Investment Committee has now completed a return to parity by actively increasing the equity position. As a result, the Fund has moved from a 1% underweight position in equities in 2010 to a current 1% overweight position versus the Fund's policy of 50%. This has been achieved by actively reducing the fixed income position from 51% in 2010 down to 49% of the Fund at June 30, 2010.

The Investment Committee has maintained its long-standing position of not hedging currency exchange risk exposure on the 23% of the Fund that is invested in non-Canadian assets. However, currency policy remains a standing agenda item for the Investment Committee.

3. 2010 audited financial statements:

The audited financial statements for the Fund of the Pension Plan were reviewed by the Audit Committee and were recommended for approval by the Board. At its May 17th meeting, the Pension Board approved the financial statements as distributed.

These statements were filed in accordance with the regulatory requirements, and portions of the information were included in the Annual Report to Plan members. Copies are available upon request or online:

<http://www.united-church.ca/files/minstaff/pension/annualreport.pdf>

4. Changes in the Plan's auditor, actuary, external legal counsel and other service providers:

During the year no formal reviews or other changes were made with respect to existing service providers.

5. Material administration activities and administration services performance:

The day-to-day administration of the Plan moved to Morneau Shepell (previously Morneau Sobeco) as the 3rd party administrator effective January 1, 2005 to protect against aging systems and to facilitate reliable and up-to-date services (e.g. a website) to Plan members. However, the service from Morneau Shepell did not meet the needs of some of the membership, nor of the Ministry and Employment Unit. Following a formal tendering process, the Pension Board, with support of the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment, approved the recommendation to move the third party administrative services to Aon Hewitt effective July 1, 2011.

In the run up to this live date, staff communicated key developments to Plan Members, most notably the administrative black-out period in advance of the live-date. As a result of the administrative black-out period, Aon Hewitt has faced a backlog of cases to process. Aon Hewitt continues to work through this backlog and is prioritizing cases based on the effective date of the event rather than date of receipt. As part of the implementation process to ensure Aon Hewitt calculates member benefits correctly, all calculations are reviewed by staff at the General Council Office. While this ensures that a high standard of accuracy is maintained, it adds to the turnaround time.

The black-out period also applied to invoicing of those pastoral charges not enrolled in the pastoral charge payroll service, so Morneau Shepell did not issue invoices for June and July. Initially, the plan was for Aon Hewitt to issue invoices in July covering June, July and August. However, these were delayed as Aon Hewitt refined its invoicing system and were issued in August 2011. As a result, there is some delay getting back to normal.

6. Funded status of the Plan:

Mercer, the Plan's actuarial advisor, provided an estimate of the Plan's funded status as at December 31, 2010 in support of the Pension Obligation disclosed in Note 5 in the 2010 Audited Financial Statements. The update was based on a lower assumed rate of return on Plan assets (5.0% p.a.), a lower assumed benefit improvement rate (1% p.a.) and the smoothed fair value of assets at December 31, 2010. Additionally, while the Fund's investment performance improved during 2010, it was still below the long term assumption used in the valuation (i.e., 5.5% per annum). As a result, the long term implications for the funded status of the Plan are unclear. For comparison, the results from this update and the last filed valuation are (in \$ millions, on a going concern basis – i.e., assuming the Plan continues indefinitely):

Valuation date	31.12.2010 (in millions)	31.12.2009 (in millions)
Actuarial value of assets	\$1,219.3	\$1,276.0
Actuarial value of liabilities	\$1,272.3	\$1,241.0
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$53.0)	\$35.0

On the basis of the estimate, the Plan is underfunded on a going concern basis. Work commissioned by the Asset Liability Research Group shows that based on the Plan's current asset mix, the funded position will have deteriorated further during 2011 as a result of a marked decline in equity markets and bond yields. However, on the basis of promises made to date, on a wind-up basis, the Plan remains fully funded.

The deficit on a going concern basis is inconsistent with the provision in the Statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles that "Funding levels must ensure a high level of certainty regarding the security of benefits under the Plan". As noted in the overview above and as reported to the Executive at its May 7-9, 2011 meeting, the Pension Board is undertaking a comprehensive review of the sustainability of the plan in its current form. To achieve this, the Asset Liability Research Group commissioned an Asset Liability Study to look into the volatility of the Plan's funded position and help the ALRG understand the risks to the Plan. In particular, this study has considered the sustainability of the current Plan design and the design options being considered by PPAC. A second phase of the Asset Liability Study will look at how potential investment strategies address volatility, which will help the ALRG design a more sustainable investment strategy.

7. Amendments to the Plan since the previous report:

As advised last year, the Pension Board restated the Plan Text resulting in several amendments effective January 1, 2011. The Plan Text was subsequently filed with the regulators within the prescribed timescales.

8. Compliance:

All administration practices have complied with regulatory requirements and the Plan Constitution (not Text). All filings were made on time including the Plan Text effective January 1, 2011, the 2010 Audited Financial Statements, the 2010 Investment Information Summary, the 2010 Annual Information Return, the Employee's Pension Plan Income Tax Return, the Quarterly Survey of Trusteed Pension Funds, the 2010 Census of Trusteed Pension Funds and the Pension Sector Assessment.

9. Results of any pension governance reviews:

The Board has almost completed its work to document the recommendations in the Report of the Task Group on the General Council Executive as the Pension Plan Administrator which the Executive approved in the fall of 2003. Of the 34 items in the project plan, all have been completed except for a final review by the Plan's legal advisor, Hicks Morley, to assess the set of governance documentation from the view point of completeness, internal consistency and how it compares to best practices from a legal perspective.

Comments have been received from Hicks Morley and are being reviewed by the Implementation Task Group ("ITG") leading to a number of updates in the documentation. Notably the Pension Board has now approved the updated Primary Stakeholder Communications Policy and the Investment Committee, Pension Plan Advisory Committee and Staff Terms of Reference. The main item left for review is the Code of Conduct.

During its work, the ITG identified several other aspects of the Plan's operations which need to be documented and is proceeding to develop that documentation. As noted in the item

above, the RI Process Guidance document (see item 1) that supports the responsible investment and proxy voting policies contained in the SIPP has now been approved by the Pension Board. The ITG also finished documenting the Indemnity and Insurance in place to protect members of the Executive and its delegates from monetary loss due to a claim that they failed to meet their duties and obligations as the legal administrator. A summary of the Indemnity and Insurance has now been added to all of the Plan's Key Document and Orientation Handbooks. The ITG will continue to work on the other six outstanding processes including the funding policy and plan adviser review process.

Finally, following the sub-Executive of the General Council's February 15, 2011 meeting, the selection criteria contained in Section F.1.(c) of the Pension Board Terms of Reference have been amended to include:

“(c) The aggregate skills, knowledge, experience and expertise of the membership will include the capacity to articulate the theological values and perspectives of the United Church”

This change to the Terms of Reference which makes explicit what was previously implicit, and others identified in the course of the Hicks Morley review are being presented to the Executive for approval at this meeting.

10. Other information that the GCE requested:

None

11. Other information that the Pension Board feels is appropriate:

Since the last report, the Executive has made 3 appointments to the Pension Board:

Name	Term	Start Date
Malcolm Boyle	1 st	December 2010
Gordon How	3 rd	December 2010
Reta Robertson	3 rd	December 2010

The Pension Board began addressing succession planning issues, as five members have entered their third and final term. In support of the Pension Board's succession plan, the Pension Board is looking to increase the bench strength of the Pension

Plan Advisory Committee and increase its membership from the minimum. This could also provide the Pension Board a source for future Board members. The Pension Board is forwarding a recommendation to the Nominations Committee for the appointment of two new Pension Plan Advisory Committee members at this time.

Since the last report to the Executive of the General Council, the Board met four times, the Pension Plan Advisory Committee met five times, the Investment Committee met four times, the Asset Mix Sub-Committee of the Investment Committee met four times and the Implementation Task Group met five times. In addition, the Pension Board established the Asset Liability Research Group at its September 22, 2010 meeting to facilitate a more

integrated approach to the investment of the Plan's assets in support of the Plan's liability profile, so as to help ensure the long term sustainability of the Plan. This new group has met nine times since its inception. A great deal of time and energy by many volunteers has been directed toward the effective management of the church's defined benefit pension plan which has over \$1 billion in assets for the benefit of about 8,900 members.

All the work at the Committee and Task Group level is reported to the Board for oversight or approval. At the Board meetings, Staff and Committee work was reviewed and the following items were approved:

<i>Meeting Date</i>	<i>Items Approved</i>
<i>December 7, 2010</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Updated Primary Stakeholder Communication Policy.</i>• <i>Affiliate membership of SHARE until December 31, 2011.</i>• <i>Engagement of SHARE for its Goldcorp-only Core Engagement Service for the calendar year 2011.</i>• <i>2011 Pension Plan Budget.</i>• <i>2010 Audit Plan.</i>• <i>Appointment of Cameron Hunter as Chair of the Pension Plan Advisory Committee</i>
<i>March 22, 2011</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Membership in the Canadian Coalition for Good Governance ("CCGG") for one year.</i>
<i>May 17, 2011</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Indemnity and Insurance section for inclusion in the Plan's Key Document and Orientation Handbook.</i>• <i>2010 Audited Financial Statements.</i>

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for December 6, 2011.

Recommendation

That the report of the Pension Board be received for information.

Pension Board Members:

Charles Black (Chair), BA, FSA, FCIA, CLU
Paul Robert Batho, BMath, FSA, FCIA, CFA, ICD.D
Malcolm Boyle, BA, MA, LLB
Glen Elliott, AICB
Gordon McCamus Hall, BSc, FSA, FCIA, ICD.D
Gordon How, BSc, BD, DMin, MBA, DD
Linsell A. Hurd, BA, MDiv, STM
Paul Purcell, BSc (Hons), FSA, FCIA, CFA

Reta Robertson

Gordon Staples, BAsC, MBA, PEng

William G. Tynkaluk, BA, CFA

Staff Support:

Linda Begley, Manager, Pension and Benefits

Dan Foster, Pension Fund Investment Manager

Alan Hall, Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment

Erik Mathieson, Acting Executive Officer, Financial Services