



# connex

THE NEWSLETTER OF MINISTRY AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND SERVICES

## The Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services (PC-MEPS)

### Ready to Tackle a Large Workload This Triennium

At General Council 40 last summer, many proposals were passed to the Executive of the General Council (GCE) for further work or implementation. Work involving ministry personnel policies and programs now comes to PC-MEPS.

Some of the work builds on decisions made at GC39—especially that of the Ministry Compensation Task Group and the Working Group on Isolation in Ministry.

See the sidebar to get an idea of the many different steering, task, and working groups associated with the Permanent Committee. Some of the work of these committees will not affect the wider church, but important decisions regarding compensation,

isolation, oversight and discipline, and the candidacy pathway will.

It is important to both PC-MEPS and the staff working in the Human Resources Unit that those persons who are most affected by any policy and process changes enacted at the behest of the General Council and the GCE are kept informed of developments as they occur.

Information in *Connex* is intended for ministry personnel and lay employees, Ministry and Personnel committees, treasurers, church board members, and anyone who would like to know how proposals initiated by members and brought to General Council are acted on at the committee level.

Prayer shawls and stoles at GC40



### PC-MEPS

#### Committees; Task, Steering, and Work Groups: 2010 and Beyond

##### Committees:

Financial Assistance  
Grievance

##### Steering Groups on:

Candidacy Pathway  
Oversight and Discipline of Ministry Personnel  
Pastoral Relations Policy  
Recruitment

##### Task Groups on:

Counselling by Ministry Personnel  
Demographics of Ministry Personnel  
Disability Policy and Procedures  
Ministry Compensation  
Sexual Abuse Policy Review

##### Working Groups on:

Candidacy Pathway  
Communications Review  
Human Resources Policy Review  
Isolation in Ministry

Watch future issues of *Connex* for more updates on work from these groups.

Questions? Contact PC-MEPS (see back page).

## Ministry Compensation Task Group

### Work Begins on GC39 Initiative

The Ministry Compensation Models Project Report submitted to and approved in principle by GC39 included a directive to examine and develop policy around compensation of ministry personnel in the United Church that would reflect the current realities of the vocation of ministry.

The Permanent Committee established the Ministry Compensation Task Group in fall 2009 to research, explore, and build policy around comprehensive salary and clergy couples, and to examine salary structure, location-related compensation, and other issues.

The task group members are: Jim Allen (Lay, Montreal and Ottawa), Ted Black (OM, Hamilton), Wayne Flewelling, Chair (Lay, Alberta and Northwest), Debra Kigar (Lay, Hamilton), Roland Legge (DM, Saskatchewan), and Tracy Murton (Lay, Saskatchewan), along with staff from the Human Resources Unit, including Lee Corlett, Compensation Program Coordinator.

Updates to the work of this committee will appear in future issues of *Connex*.

## Dispensing Fees: Green Shield Update

Green Shield adjusted their reimbursement policy for pharmacy dispensing fees, effective January 1, 2010, due to pressure exerted on them when they renegotiated their arrangement with pharmacies.

Previously, the maximum deductible for drug prescriptions filled by members was \$10.99. Dispensing fees are no longer capped at this amount and members will now be responsible for paying the full dispensing fee.

To find out what the dispensing fee is at your pharmacy and to ensure you are not paying more than necessary, speak with your pharmacist. This information is often available online. Enter “dispensing fees” in a search engine (Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc.).

If you have questions, please call Green Shield at 1-888-711-1119.

## Taxable Benefit for Group Insurance

Core life insurance, an employer-paid premium, is a federal taxable benefit that needs to appear on the employee's T4/ Relevé. For Quebec residents only, core accidental death and dismemberment and core health and dental premiums, both employer-paid, are provincial taxable benefits that also need to appear on the employee's Relevé.

Prior to ADP processing of United Church payrolls, the United Church Pension and Benefits Centre calculated the monthly taxable benefit for group insurance. This appeared on the pastoral charge invoice as “Fed. / Prov. Taxable Benefit.”

Because system functionality for the calculation of the taxable benefit for group insurance has not yet been developed, we need treasurers to provide the taxable-benefit-for-group-insurance amount to ADP when submitting new salaries for 2010.

We regret the confusion this caused. We are developing a new process so treasurers won't have to calculate the taxable benefit amount. Watch for updates in future issues of *Connex*.

## Health Care Changes in Alberta

The Alberta government has made major changes to provincial drug coverage, and announcements expected this spring may reflect further changes.

Of primary impact to our health plan members are the changes to the Seniors Drug Plan: participation is now optional and seniors must apply for coverage. There will also be premiums associated with coverage.

For information on how these changes affect you, please contact Alberta Health Services ([www.albertahealthservices.ca](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca)) or call one of the following numbers.

Red Deer and locations farther north:  
1-877-753-2170

Locations south of Red Deer: 1-877-957-9771

## Retiring? Let the Pension and Benefits Centre Know!

If you are preparing to retire this year, please contact the United Church Pension and Benefits Centre (1-888-657-4607) three months before your retirement date. The centre will send you the paperwork to initiate your pension and, if applicable, to change your benefits information.

It's important to do this about three months ahead of time to ensure your pension payments will start on the first of the month following your retirement date. The pastoral charge, presbytery, or Conference will not necessarily notify the centre on your behalf.

## Third-Party Service Providers of Benefit Plans

At General Council 40 Saskatchewan Conference put forth a proposal to change the arrangements with our pension and benefits plans service providers. In response, Human Resources staff are reviewing options and preparing to report to the oversight bodies: the Pension Board and the Permanent Committee.

The aim is to balance providing plan members with the best service with optimum stewardship of the plans' resources. Updates will be reported as they become available.

# Pastoral Charge Payroll Service

## Special Notice: New ADP Earning Codes

Implementation of the pastoral charge payroll service is in the final stages: staff in the Human Resources Unit have gathered feedback and made improvements in the reporting system. We are grateful to all who have taken the time to provide feedback. After working with ADP, we are pleased to announce the following four improvements to the pastoral charge payroll service.

<b>1</b>	ADP can now process honorariums, including the production and filing of the T4 and T4A Summary with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The ADP earning codes are:
	EN38 HONORNTX    for honorariums processed not subject to tax
	EN44 HONORTX    for honorariums processed subject to CRA lump-sum tax
<b>2a</b>	There are new ADP earning codes (in addition to the previously existing default codes) for Housing Allowance. If ADP is to process the Housing Allowance subject to deductions for ministry personnel who <b>don't</b> qualify for Clergy Residence Deduction (CPP, EI, and income tax), please provide ADP with one of the following earning codes:
	EN24 HOUSATAX    for cash housing allowance
	EN29 HOUSBTAX    for non-cash housing benefit (manse)
<b>2b</b>	The previously used default codes assumed everyone qualified for the Clergy Residence Deduction. If the ministry personnel doesn't qualify, the default code must be changed to one of the new codes listed in Part A. These are the default codes:
	EN19 HOUS ALL    for cash housing allowance
	EN30 HOUS BEN    for non-cash housing benefit (manse)
<b>3</b>	ADP has new earning codes for taxable allowances (subject to income tax, CPP, and EI). The ADP earning codes are:
	EN41 MILE TAX    for taxable allowances related to mileage/travel
	EN43 TELE TAX    for taxable allowances related to telephone use
	EN42 EDUC TAX    for taxable allowances related to continuing education
	EN20 TXB ALLW    remains a general earning code for taxable allowances
<b>4</b>	ADP has a new earning code for processing continuing education as an expense, not subject to taxes. The earning codes for processing expenses are:
	EN39 EDUC EXP    for expenses related to continuing education
	EN51 MILEAGE    remains an earning code for expenses related to mileage/travel
	EN53 TELEPHONE    remains an earning code for expenses related to telephone use
	EN 52 EXPENSE    remains a general earning code for expenses

For a complete list of ADP earning and deduction codes, visit [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca). Search for and select "Pastoral Charge Payroll Service," then select "Ongoing Support," and then select "Earning and Deduction Codes."

For questions about ADP earning and deduction codes, or if you would like a hard copy of the ADP earning and deduction codes mailed to you, please contact Human Resources.

E-mail: [HumanResources@united-church.ca](mailto:HumanResources@united-church.ca)

Call: 1-800-268-3781 ext. 3161

**NOTE:** Please watch for rate changes, effective July 1, 2010. These will be announced in *Connex* 23.



Photo: Design Pics

## Tax Information

### Deductible Health Expenses for 2009

You can claim deductibles and dispensing fees, as well as unpaid balances after reimbursement from the church's benefits plan. This information is detailed on the "explanation of benefits" portion of your reimbursement from Green Shield (or Manulife, for claims made before April 1, 2009).

Green Shield (or Manulife) can provide a 2009 summary of benefits received. Please note: a fee may be charged for the summary.

Call the insurer directly.

Green Shield: 1-888-711-1119

Manulife: 1-800-667-5165

Check the Canada Revenue Services website for information specific to your situation: [www.cra-arc.gc.ca](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca). Under "Information for Individuals" select "Topics for Letter M" and then look under "Medical Expenses."

### Active Members

Optional health and dental premiums:

\$45.03\*/month, single person coverage

\$128.24\*/month, family coverage

\*Add sales tax if you live in Ontario (8%) or Quebec (9%).

Pension premium support: \$4.00/month

### Pensioner Members

Health and dental premiums:

\$54.67\*/month, single person coverage

\$110.28\*/month, family coverage

\*Add sales tax if you live in Ontario (8%) or Quebec (9%).



Photo: Design Pics

## Summer Closing for Churches

If your pastoral charge closes over the summer and you have employees submitting United Church pension and benefits remittances through the payroll service, you will need to reconcile remittances missed over the summer months.

To do this, we recommend one of the following options:

1. Rather than pay the employee's salary for 10 months and not pay a salary for two months, annualize the 10 months of salary over 12 months. This way, the employee will receive pay for all 12 months of the year and there will be no gap in the processing of United Church pension and benefits remittances.
2. Immediately prior to the summer closure, make an adjustment to pension and benefits remittances for the one or two (depending on the length of the summer closure) months. To calculate the one-time adjustment amounts to pass on to ADP, use Tools for Treasurers (Lay/Ministry). Go to [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca). Search for and select "Budgeting Tools for Treasurers," and then select "Tools for Treasurers" (Lay/Ministry).

**NOTE:** To ensure uninterrupted benefits coverage, please provide Anna Di Vito ([adp-pay@united-church.ca](mailto:adp-pay@united-church.ca) or 1-800-268-3781 ext. 3114) with the option you plan on using to cover remittances not deducted and submitted over the summer months.

## Planning for Summer

### Uninterrupted Payroll Processing

If you normally receive an input call from ADP prior to payroll processing and know that you will not be available over the summer to receive the call, you should plan to have an alternative arrangement in place.

You can choose to add a back-up ADP authorized contact to administer the payroll over the summer or you can arrange with ADP to have your payroll run "AS IS." Your ADP service representative can provide you with further information—including what forms you may need to complete—to ensure uninterrupted payroll service over the summer.

**NOTE:** If no special arrangements have been made with ADP, and ADP is not able to get in touch with the contact person by the end of the scheduled input day, ADP will run the payroll "AS IS" for all salaried staff (ministry personnel and non-ministry personnel). ADP will not process the payroll for casual/hourly employees since their hours may change from one pay period to the next.

## Shoulders to Stand On

*A wise friend once said: "We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us."*

Bequests and other estate gifts are the "shoulders" on which exciting areas of God's mission through the United Church stand. Legacies

- keep United Church congregations open
- send United Church personnel overseas
- feed the hungry and shelter the homeless
- allow partners to visit the sick and work with those in prison
- support counselling for students far from home
- answer the call for emergency relief

*The church needs you to leave a legacy.*

We have stood on the shoulders of others; future United Church folk will need to stand on our shoulders. When you update your will, please remember a ministry of the United Church in your estate plans.

Contact Alice at 1-800-268-3781 ext. 2024 or by e-mail at [giving@united-church.ca](mailto:giving@united-church.ca).

## connex

**Connex** is the newsletter of the General Council Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services and of the Human Resources Unit. For additional copies to circulate to your M&P committee, church board, or congregation members, or to receive e-mail notification when a new issue is online instead of a print copy, contact us at 1-800-268-3781 ext. 3161 or [PC-MEPS@united-church.ca](mailto:PC-MEPS@united-church.ca).

To comment on **Connex** or to suggest content for future issues, please contact the editor, Erin Sterling:



c/o PC-MEPS  
The United Church of Canada  
3250 Bloor St. West, Suite 300  
Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4  
E-mail: [PC-MEPS@united-church.ca](mailto:PC-MEPS@united-church.ca)