



# connex

THE NEWSLETTER OF MINISTRY AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND SERVICES

Issue 22, March 2010

## **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.

## **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 last 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.

## 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	Pensioner Members
Optional health and dental premiums: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$45.03*/month, single person coverage</li><li>• \$128.24*/month, family coverage</li></ul> *Add sales tax if you live in Ontario (8%) or Quebec (9%). Pension premium support: \$4.00/month	Health and dental premiums: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$54.67*/month, single person coverage</li><li>• \$110.28*/month, family coverage</li></ul> *Add sales tax if you live in Ontario (8%) or Quebec (9%).

## 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.

### **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.

### **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

### **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.

## **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.

## **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.

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 sent 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*.

<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 don't 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

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*is the newsletter of the General Council Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services and of the Human Resources Unit.*

This version is intended to be easily viewed online, and printed by members of the United Church's benefits plans, pastoral charge treasurers, M&P Committee members, church boards, presbytery, or anyone that is concerned with the employment situations in any pastoral charge or ministry unit. Printed newsletters are available on request.

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

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