



Conference Mission Support Grants

Supported by the Mission and Service Fund

Policies and Procedures for 2012

Partnership in Mission

The Mission Support program of the General Council is rooted in the belief that all of the resources for mission are a gift of God. As the church of Jesus Christ we are called to participate freely and fully in God's mission. As the one body of Christ we celebrate our partnership in ministry recognizing that the ministry of one part of the church is the ministry of all.

Partnership brings people together in community for mutual empowerment through the sharing of gifts, recognised as gifts freely given by God for the benefit of all, not possessions which some may control.... We give and receive all gifts in trust accepting whatever risk may be involved, believing they are of God and confident that our shared commitment to God's mission calls each of us to a common faithfulness in their use. We recognise the need for mutual accountability, for respect, trust, forgiveness and persistent love, and the need to be ever-conscious of the covenant we share with all those who share with us in God's covenant.

—“Seeking to Understand ‘Partnership’ for God’s Mission Today,” Statement of the General Council 1988, reaffirmed 2000

General Statement

The purpose of the Conference Mission Support Grant is to provide financial support to pastoral charges, outreach ministries/community ministries, and other identified projects that need financial assistance.

Each year the General Council of The United Church of Canada makes funds available to support identified mission activities in Conferences. The Communities in Ministry Unit (CiM), in consultation with the Conferences, allocates blocks of money for Mission Support Grants. These are awarded by the Conferences after careful consideration of expressed needs and church resources. Within the limit of the General Council funds allocated, each Conference has considerable flexibility in establishing its own priorities.

This document sets out the policies and procedures for Conference Mission Support Grants. This includes, as defined by General Council or its Executive, The United Church of Canada policy on salary and allowances to be paid to ministry personnel (see section C on page 4).

Before You Begin, Please Note

The Mission Support Grant process requires the following:

1. Application forms MSG 5 and MSG 7. These are available from your local Conference office. They must be fully completed with required financial documentation attached. They can be submitted by e-mail attachment or regular mail.
2. Proof of charitable status. Have you filed last year's CRA T3010 form? A copy of the certificate must be included with application.
3. Approval by presbytery and/or Conference. Check relevant deadlines for your area.

Once Awarded a Grant, Please Note

4. The Receipt of Funds form accompanying each grant cheque acknowledging that the money will be used for the purposes stated in the application must be signed and returned in a timely manner. If cheques/grants cannot be used for the purposes stated, they are to be returned to CiM as soon as possible.
5. Each grant-receiving mission unit must provide the Conference with an audited or independently reviewed financial statement for the most recently completed fiscal year on or before June 15 to receive the third- and fourth-quarter grant cheque.
6. Outreach ministries/community ministries that receive a grant of \$50,000 or more must provide a quarterly financial statement prior to cheque issuance (up to a three-month lag time is acceptable).
7. All grants must be drawn within 12 months of date of approval.

Policies and Procedures

A. Communities in Ministry Unit (CiM)

This unit determines the policies and procedures for establishing the grants in support of work in the Conferences. When Mission Support Grants have been designated, payments are made by CiM unless advised otherwise by the appropriate Conference staff. Changes in the designation of grants must be approved by the Conference and reported to CiM.

B. Eligibility

1. **Applicants must be registered charitable organizations and provide proof of charitable status with applications. (Proof of pending status, or written mission agreements, are acceptable in certain cases.)**

2. Ministries eligible to receive Mission Support Grant funding are listed by category as follows:

Pastoral Charges or Missions (use application form MSG 5)

The Manual definition of a pastoral charge is “one or more Congregations constituted by a Presbytery into a pastoral unit according to the Polity of the United Church” (*The Manual*, s. 001).

The Manual definition of a mission is “one (1) or more groups of people that are a part of the United Church and that meet for public worship, but not fully constituted as a Pastoral Charge or a Congregation by the Presbytery” (*The Manual*, s. 001).

Outreach Ministries/Community Ministries (use application form MSG 7)

The Manual definition of an outreach ministry/community ministry is “a ministry other than a Pastoral Charge or Mission, that is recognized by the Presbytery or the Conference in which it is located or by a General Council working unit as a valid expression of enabling ministry and that receives financial assistance or supervision from a Presbytery, a Conference, or a General Council working unit. Examples of Outreach Ministries[/Community Ministries] are: hospitals, homes, social service centres, community projects, chaplaincies, and Presbytery or area ministries” (*The Manual*, s. 001).

3. **Applications may include new initiatives and/or development projects to meet particular needs.**
4. **Eligibility limits with regard to both maximum operating budgets and unrestricted investments/reserves allowed are to be established by Conferences.**
5. The following are **not eligible** for Mission Support Grants (other United Church funding sources may be available):
 - Conference administrative staff salaries, allowances, and expenses
 - presbytery staff for administrative and personnel, salaries allowances and expenses
 - pastoral charge sabbaticals and related Sunday Supply

- lay organizations in the United Church
- educational institutions accredited by the United Church
- penalties and fines

C. Salary and Allowances

1. Pastoral charges supported by funds from the General Council are to pay at least the minimum set out in the Salary and Allowances Schedules for Ministry Personnel (www.united-church.ca/minstaff/pastoral/salary/schedule).
2. United Church outreach ministries/community ministries receiving more than 60 percent funding from United Church sources are required to pay at least the minimum set out in the Salary and Allowances Schedules for Ministry Personnel (www.united-church.ca/minstaff/pastoral/salary/schedule).
3. Ecumenical shared ministries appointing personnel from other denominations may use the salary schedules of the other denominations.

D. Settlements to Grant-Receiving Pastoral Charges

1. The Conference Mission Support Staff/Committee is responsible for providing the Settlement Committee with information as requested.
2. The Settlement Committee, when appointing members of the Order of Ministry to serve pastoral charges, missions, or outreach ministries/community ministries largely supported financially by the General Council (e.g. Mission Support Grants) should do so only after consultation with the Conference Mission Support Grant Committee. “The Settlement Committee shall not approve a settlement that will require a larger grant, without the consent of the Conference” (*The Manual*, s. 450).

E. Process for Applying

1. Review application process, deadlines, and Conference-specific eligibility requirements early in your process.
2. Complete **in full** the appropriate application form—that is, the most recent MSG 5 (pastoral charges or missions) form or MSG 7 (outreach ministries/community ministries) form, available from the Conference office or online. *Please note: Only current versions of forms are acceptable.* Be sure to include:
 - a description of the ministry
 - all required financial information
 - required signatures
 - proof of charitable status
3. Submit electronically or by mail for presbytery review. Once reviewed, presbytery forwards the application to the relevant Conference committee, where all applications are considered and decisions for grant distribution are made.
4. Conference staff sign and forward the completed, approved applications to CiM electronically or by paper copy.

F. Receiving Financial Support

1. The **General Council** advances grant payments quarterly to pastoral charges, missions, or outreach ministries/community ministries through the Conference office.
2. **Conference** has the responsibility to cancel any grant as circumstances warrant, and must notify CiM of any changes in a timely manner. Any unused cheques/grants are to be returned to CiM as soon as possible.
3. **Outreach ministries/community ministries** receiving United Church Mission Support funding of **\$50,000** or more must submit a quarterly financial report form before the next cheque will be issued. Statements are accepted with a three-month lag. For example, a June 30 statement is required to receive the quarterly grant paid October 1. Exceptions to this are those involving payroll only.
4. Where personnel in pastoral charges or outreach/community ministries are to be paid directly from Mission Support Grant funds, salaries are paid monthly. Travel grants are issued quarterly to Order of Ministry personnel and Designated Lay Ministry personnel upon submission of MSG 4 (travel expense) form.

G. Financial Accountability Requirements

1. **Pastoral charges** receiving grants are expected to conduct stewardship financial programs on a regular basis. The involvement of Conference and General Council resources is encouraged.
2. **Pastoral charges** receiving grants are required to provide an audited/independently reviewed financial statement for the most recent year in which grants were received to the appropriate Conference staff **by June 1**. Conference staff are required to certify annually to CiM that they have received the statement by returning the Audit Reconciliation Sheet to CiM **by June 15** of each year.

The following is an excerpt from the *Financial Handbook for Congregations 2008* (section 3.5) on audits. The same approach is acceptable for the purposes of financial accountability for Mission Support Grant recipients.

Every year, each pastoral charge or congregation will need to produce an audited or independently reviewed financial statement to the board of trustees. The pastoral charge may choose to engage a public accountant to perform an audit and render an opinion as to the fairness of the financial statements of the pastoral charge. Many public accounting firms are available to perform this service should the pastoral charge pursue this option.

However, in some areas it may be impossible to find an auditor. (Or the cost may be unaffordable.) In this case, the pastoral charge may choose to appoint, as independent reviewer, an individual who understands the role of an independent review of the financial records and is familiar with bookkeeping. Such an individual should be independent of the record-keeping functions of the pastoral charge and at arm's length from the treasurer and bookkeeper. It may be that the pastoral charge is fortunate to have a member who is both able and willing to assume this role. If not, the pastoral charge should seek outside assistance.

The auditor is appointed annually by the pastoral charge or by the Official Board acting on behalf of the pastoral charge.

The audited(/reviewed) financial statements are to be presented to the annual meeting of the pastoral charge. It is recommended that the auditor or independent reviewer be present to answer questions.

3. **Outreach Ministries/Community Ministries** receiving grants are required to make a report on their work and issue an audited/independently reviewed financial statement for the year in which grants were received, sending one copy to the appropriate Conference staff **by June 1**. Conference staff are required to certify to CiM that they have received the statement by returning the Audit Reconciliation Sheet to CiM **by June 15** of each year.

Common Fund

As of June 1 any uncommitted balance from Mission Support Grant funds remaining in each Conference is automatically turned over to a national account called the Common Fund. Each Conference may retain up to \$5,000. Conferences will be advised of the amount in the Common Fund by about mid-June. There is no limit to the amount for which each Conference may apply or receive.

Policies and procedures for use of the Common Fund are the same as those for Mission Support Grants. The Common Fund is to be used for extraordinary expenses, not to provide funding for those that have deficit budgets. An applicant may not have unrestricted investments/reserves.

To apply for funds from the Common Fund, a complete MSG 5 or MSG 7 must be on file or attached with the request for funding.

Applications are received and approved through CiM four times a year on June 15, September 15, October 31, and December 15. All monies in the Common Fund may be allocated at any application deadline.

Mission Support Timetable

1. By **June 15**, Conferences send the Audit Reconciliation Sheets to CiM.
2. By **June 30**, CiM mails to Conference staff:
 - a. Salary and Allowances Schedule
 - b. Policies and Procedures document
 - c. Pastoral Charge Application Forms (MSG 5)
 - d. Outreach Ministry/Community Ministry Application Forms (MSG 7)
 - e. Conference/Presbytery Summary Sheets and Instructions (MSG 8)
3. By **November 15**, Conference staff forwards to CiM:
 - a. completed Pastoral Charge Application Forms (MSG 5)
 - b. completed Outreach Ministry/Community Ministry Application Forms (MSG 7)
 - c. completed Conference/Presbytery Summary Sheets (MSG 8)

Please check with your Conference office for dates and deadlines specific to your Conference.