

# Handbook for Joint Search Committees

Revised November 2007



The United Church of Canada  
L'Église Unie du Canada



Copyright © 2007  
The United Church of Canada  
L'Église Unie du Canada  
3250 Bloor St. West, Suite 300  
Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4  
Canada  
1-800-268-3781 or 416-231-5931  
[www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca)

Permission is granted to photocopy this document for United Church congregational and pastoral relations work.

## Contents

Welcome to the Joint Search Process <i>The Manual</i> section 054 (d) .....	5
Purpose of This Handbook .....	5
The United Church <i>Manual</i> .....	6
Theological Rationale for the JNAC and JSC Processes .....	7
Checklist for the Joint Search Process .....	8
The Joint Search Process .....	10
1. Presbytery/district declares a vacancy. The Manual, sections 051.1, 053.1, and 058(f) .....	10
2. Presbytery/district appoints two representatives to the Joint Search Committee of the pastoral charge. The Manual, sections 058(f) and 389(b) vii .....	10
3. Pastoral charge or official board/church board/church council appoints representatives to the JSC. The Manual, section 053.1(d) .....	11
4. Pastoral charge establishes a budget for the joint search process. ....	11
5. Presbytery/district representative chairs the first meeting of the JSC. The Manual, section 054(b) .....	11
6. JSC determines the process for the JSC. The Manual, section 054(b).....	13
7. JSC reports to the pastoral charge. ....	15
8. JSC reviews the report of the Joint Needs Assessment Committee. ....	16
9. Another option for matching ministry personnel and your needs—settlement. ....	16
10. Categories of eligible ministries. ....	17
11. Specialized ministries.....	19
12. JSC upholds human rights in its process.....	22
13. JSC finds applicants for call or appointment.....	23
14. JSC develops a model for decision making.....	24
15. JSC communicates promptly with all applicants.....	25
16. JSC evaluates each applicant based on written submission.....	26
17. JSC checks eligibility with Conference personnel minister.....	26
18. JSC conducts interviews.....	26
19. JSC evaluates each applicant based on the interview. ....	28
20. JSC checks references.....	28
21. JSC evaluates selected applicants based on visiting/observing. ....	30
22. If you are in a multiple-staff pastoral charge.....	30
23. JSC conducts second interviews with short-listed applicants.....	30
24. JSC negotiates the terms of call or appointment with one applicant. The Manual, section 054(d) .....	31
25. Chair of JSC or chair of presbytery/district Pastoral Relations Committee sees current Police Record Check. The Manual, section 054(d) .....	32
26. JSC prepares a report and recommendation.....	32
27. Chair of JSC contacts chair of pastoral charge to call meeting of pastoral charge chaired by presbytery/district representative. The Manual, sections 047(b) iii, 048, and 112(b) iii.....	32
28. JSC recommends one applicant and terms of call or appointment to meeting of pastoral charge. The Manual, sections 047(b) iii and 112(b) iii .....	33
29. Pastoral charge votes to accept recommendation and seeks approval of presbytery/district through its Pastoral Relations Committee. The Manual, section 047(b) (iii).....	33

30. Presbytery/district Pastoral Relations Committee recommends call/appointment to presbytery/district. The Manual, section 060(b) .....	33
31. Presbytery/district approves call/appointment and forwards paperwork to Conference Settlement Committee and current presbytery/district of the applicant. The Manual, section 060(a) and (c) .	33
32. Conference Settlement Committee issues warrant to covenant. Section 061(b) .....	34
33. JSC purges its records.....	34
34. JSC celebrates its work with a party!.....	34
35. Pastoral charge holds covenanting service for new pastoral relationship. The Manual, section 061 .....	34
Appendix A: References from <i>The Manual, 2007</i> .....	35
Appendix B: Suggested Protocol for Reference Checks .....	36

## **Welcome to the Joint Search Process** *The Manual section 054 (d)*

You are reading this because you have entered into the joint search process. This is the second part of a two-step process, beginning with a joint needs assessment and concluding with a joint search. At this point, the report of the Joint Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) has been accepted, a vacancy has been declared, and you are now ready to begin the search process.

The word *joint* means that this process is undertaken jointly by the pastoral charge and the presbytery/district in which the pastoral charge is located. All ministry personnel positions are accountable both to presbytery/district and the pastoral charge, and therefore both courts of the church are responsible and involved.

The purpose of the Joint Search Committee (JSC) is threefold:

- to find a minister(s) to join in your pastoral charge's mission and ministry
- to negotiate the terms of the call to the minister
- to ensure that a covenanting service occurs to celebrate this new pastoral relationship with the minister(s), pastoral charge, presbytery/district, and other staff

How long the process will take varies. The JSC needs time to complete its work, so the exact time frame cannot be predetermined.

Be aware that it will take time after your decision is made until the call is issued. After the JSC has made a decision and concluded negotiations with the applicant, several steps are necessary to complete the call or appointment process, including receipt of a vulnerable sector (level 2) police records check. First, a congregational meeting must be held to receive approval from the congregation. This requires notification on two successive Sundays, and the meeting can be held on the second Sunday. Then the recommendation/approval of the congregation must be sent to the Pastoral Relations Committee of presbytery/district and the presbytery/district, including confirmation of receipt of the current vulnerable sector (level 2) Police Record Check. This will often depend on the timing of the Pastoral Relations Committee and presbytery meetings.

If necessary, presbytery/district will help a pastoral charge find a supply minister for the time between ministers.

### **Purpose of This Handbook**

This handbook has been prepared to support all members of the Joint Search Committee in their work.

Every JSC needs to complete all of the steps in the process. See page 8 for a checklist of these steps, which are expanded upon in this handbook.

Each member of the Joint Search Committee *must* have a copy of this handbook. Please make copies for all members of the JSC.

## **The United Church *Manual***

*The Manual* contains the polity and by-laws that govern our work as community in The United Church of Canada. In this handbook, references to *The Manual, 2007*, are noted where they are appropriate. Appendix A also lists references from *The Manual, 2007*.

## **Theological Rationale for the JNAC and JSC Processes**

Ministry is the work of the whole people of God. The United Church of Canada believes in “the priesthood of all believers,” which means that all people are invited to participate in the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world. Through our baptism, each of us is called to some expression of ministry. Ministry is lived out in every vocation, whether business, education, medicine, trades, services, farming, or any of the ways people make life richer for others.

Each of us has particular gifts, knowledge, and experiences, and each of us is called by God to use those gifts and abilities for the well-being of the community of faith. We are reminded in the letter to the Colossians, “whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus” (3:17). After Jesus’ baptism, he began his life work of preaching, teaching, and healing. This was his ministry, and this is what we recognize as our ministry. We share with him this work when we, too, are baptized into the community of Christ’s followers or when we choose to be part of the life of the church.

As disciples of Christ, we are called by God to create and sustain our communal life of faith. To fulfill this calling, people of faith have organized themselves into communities, orders, and institutions. The United Church of Canada, as an institution, requires some of its members to accept leadership positions intended to build up and maintain the organized, institutional life of the community of faith. Members of the church choose from among themselves those who voluntarily, or with compensation, respond to this calling. Some, after discernment and study, are called to paid accountable positions as “ministry personnel.”

Some ministry personnel are members of the Order of Ministry. They are commissioned to a ministry of education, service, and pastoral care (Diaconal Ministers), or they are ordained to a ministry of word, sacrament, and pastoral care (Ordained Ministers). Members of the Order of Ministry maintain membership in the wider church, through the presbytery/district. They are expected to serve and represent The United Church of Canada as a denomination even while they are serving a pastoral charge or congregation.

Other ministry personnel are members of the laity. Some have education and life experience that enable them to serve ministries of word, sacrament, and pastoral care as Designated Pastoral Ministers. Some have skills and experience that qualify them to serve, working in congregations or outreach ministries in the areas of education, service, and pastoral care. All lay ministry personnel have membership in a presbytery/district while they are appointed to serve in paid accountable ministries.

The local church (the pastoral charge) and the wider church (the presbytery/district) jointly select ministry personnel to serve a pastoral charge. In your work of assessing the ministry needs of your pastoral charge, you will be exercising your own expression of ministry. You will be using your own gifts and abilities to help name and discern the kind of ministry your pastoral charge needs so that your community of faith can minister to one another, the wider community, and the world. When we do this work, we are doing our part in bringing all of us closer to the realm of God. Blessings in your work.

## Checklist for the Joint Search Process

- 1. Presbytery/district declares a vacancy. Sections 051.1, 052, and 058(f)
- 2. Presbytery/district appoints two representatives to the Joint Search Committee of the pastoral charge. Sections 058(f) and 398(b) vii
- 3. Pastoral charge or official board/church board/church council appoints representatives to the JSC. Section 053.1(d)
- 4. Pastoral charge establishes a budget for the joint search process.
- 5. Presbytery/district representative chairs the first meeting of the JSC. Section 054(b)
- 6. JSC determines the process for the JSC. Section 054(b)
- 7. JSC reports to the pastoral charge.
- 8. JSC reviews the report of the Joint Needs Assessment Committee.
- 9. Another option for matching ministry personnel and your needs—settlement.
- 10. Categories of eligible ministries.
- 11. Specialized ministries.
- 12. JSC observes human rights in its process.
- 13. JSC finds applicants for call or appointment.
- 14. JSC develops a model for decision making.
- 15. JSC communicates promptly with all applicants.
- 16. JSC evaluates each applicant based on written submission.
- 17. JSC checks eligibility with Conference personnel minister.
- 18. JSC conducts interviews.
- 19. JSC evaluates each applicant based on the interview.
- 20. JSC checks references.
- 21. JSC evaluates selected applicants based on visiting/observing.
- 22. If you are in a multiple-staff pastoral charge.
- 23. JSC conducts second interviews with short-listed applicants.
- 24. JSC negotiates the terms of call or appointment with one applicant. Section 054(d)
- 25. Chair of JSC or chair of presbytery/district Pastoral Relations Committee sees current Police Record Check. Section 054(d)
- 26. JSC prepares a report and recommendation.
- 27. Chair of JSC contacts chair of pastoral charge to call meeting of pastoral charge chaired by presbytery/district representative. Sections 047(b) ii, 048, and 112(b) iii
- 28. JSC recommends one applicant and terms of call or appointment to meeting of pastoral charge. Sections 047(b) iii and 112(b) iii
- 29. Pastoral charge votes to accept recommendation and seeks approval of presbytery/district through its Pastoral Relations Committee. Section 047(b) (iii)
- 30. Presbytery/district Pastoral Relations Committee recommends call/appointment to presbytery/district. Section 060(b)

- 31. Presbytery/district approves call/appointment and forwards paperwork to Conference Settlement Committee and current presbytery/district of the applicant. Section 060(a) and (c)
- 32. Conference Settlement Committee issues warrant to covenant. Section 061(b)
- 33. JSC purges its records.
- 34. JSC celebrates its work with a party!
- 35. Pastoral charge holds covenanting service for new pastoral relationship. Section 061

## The Joint Search Process

### 1. **Presbytery/district declares a vacancy.** The Manual, sections 051.1, 053.1, and 058(f)

Presbytery/district

- files the appropriate forms with the Conference
- communicates with the chair of the official board/church board/church council that the report and recommendations of the Joint Needs Assessment Committee have been accepted and a vacancy has been declared
- establishes a Joint Search Committee
- names the presbytery/district representatives who have been appointed to the JSC (see steps 2–3)
- if the pastoral charge has chosen to go to settlement, go to step 9

### 2. **Presbytery/district appoints two representatives to the Joint Search Committee of the pastoral charge.** The Manual, sections 058(f) and 389(b) vii

Your Conference or presbytery/district may have specific requirements for presbytery representatives (such as training, experience, etc.). Please check.

Some Conferences and presbyteries/districts offer regular workshops and training sessions for presbytery representatives.

Normally, one ministry personnel and one lay representative will be appointed by presbytery/district. Presbytery/district will consider appointing to the JSC at least one of the representatives who served on the JNAC.

Presbytery/district *cannot* appoint an incumbent minister, including a supply, congregational designated minister or interim minister currently serving that pastoral charge, to serve on the JSC.

The roles/expectations of presbytery/district representatives are as follows:

- Chair the first meeting.
- Guide the process, without exerting inappropriate influence.
- Liaise with the Pastoral Relations Committee.
- Suggest questions.
- Direct possible applicants to the JSC.
- Do *not* screen possible applicants.
- If requests for information are received from applicants, encourage those applicants to put any questions to the JSC either in writing or at an interview.
- Participate in all decision making as representatives of the wider church.

### **3. Pastoral charge or official board/church board/church council appoints representatives to the JSC.** The Manual, section 053.1(d)

The official board/church board/church council appoints a minimum of two representatives to the JSC. The normal practice is to appoint four to six members. In a multiple-point charge, each congregation should appoint at least one representative.

The appointments may be made at the pastoral charge meeting to approve the JNAC report, or the pastoral charge may authorize the official board/church board/church council to appoint representatives, pending approval by presbytery/district and declaration of a vacancy.

The pastoral charge must consider the following when appointing members to the JSC:

- Representatives must be full members of the pastoral charge (section 054(a) ii).
- Representatives have the confidence of the pastoral charge.
- Representatives reflect the various areas of the life and work of the pastoral charge: committees or groups, age, gender, and involvement in the pastoral charge.
- Representatives are committed because there will be many meetings to attend in a relatively short time, often once a week.
- Representatives can maintain confidentiality. (Refer to step 6) for more on confidentiality.)
- Some members of the JNAC can provide continuity to the JSC.
- New members may provide a fresh perspective.
- Representatives are able to listen, discern, and follow through with paperwork.

No incumbent ministers or other staff or their families can be appointed to the Joint Search Committee.

The Ministry and Personnel Committee *cannot* replace the Joint Search Committee in the event of a change in the pastoral relationship or a vacancy (section 244(b)).

### **4. Pastoral charge establishes a budget for the joint search process.**

A budget for a JSC is important. It may include items such as the cost of postage, advertising, and travel expenses for applicants or committee members. This budget will be very general until the JSC meets and decides how they will do their work.

Moving and settlement costs may also be incurred in the process.

### **5. Presbytery/district representative chairs the first meeting of the JSC.**

The Manual, section 054(b)

The JSC reviews the report of the JNAC.

The JSC cannot change the JNAC's Ministry Personnel Description or the recommendations in the JNAC report without seeking approval from the pastoral charge and the presbytery/district.

### **Getting to know one another**

At the first meeting, take time to get to know one another:

- Share your perceptions of how the pastoral charge is feeling.
- Express your excitement, hopes, and fears.
- Share the gifts each person brings to the process.

### **Information required**

The presbytery/district Pastoral Relations Committee provides the following to the presbytery representatives and the chair of the JSC:

- a copy of this handbook
- motions of presbytery/district
- any relevant information on housing, salary, and other allowances such as study, book, and travel (section 036 and the annual *Salary and Allowances Schedules Applicable to Ministry Personnel*)
- any relevant information about Conference/presbytery policies or practices
- a schedule of Pastoral Relations Committee and presbytery meetings to help establish timelines
- information on contacts, processes, and timelines related to settlement in your particular Conference

The following documents should be provided by the pastoral charge:

- a copy of the JNAC report
- motions of the board/council or the pastoral charge

There is a tendency to want to get right into the work of finding a minister. However, the JSC is encouraged to follow the process described in this handbook and not to vary.

You may wish to compile a contact list of all members of the JSC and possibly resource people, such as the chair and secretary of presbytery/district, the chair of the Pastoral Relations Committee, and the Conference personnel minister.

### **Choosing the chair**

The JSC chooses a chair, who is responsible for

- calling and chairing meetings of the JSC after the first meeting
- in cooperation with the corresponding secretary, corresponding with all applicants, including those who are not short-listed
- communicating with the pastoral charge about the progress of the JSC (this can be done at worship or in a newsletter; this work can also be shared among the committee members)—refer to step 7

### **Choosing the recording secretary**

The recording secretary keeps the minutes/record of each meeting. The minutes/record should include the attendance, an overview of discussions, and a description of the practices and

procedures used by the JSC. This will provide a record of the work of the JSC. Any motions are also recorded.

Most of the discussion and information shared at JSC meetings is confidential.

### **Choosing the corresponding secretary**

The corresponding secretary is responsible for

- keeping a record of the dates of receipt of applications and response to all correspondence and retaining copies of all correspondence, including e-mail
- acknowledging all correspondence immediately
- in consultation with the chair, responding to all applicants to confirm that their application has been received and indicating an anticipated date when it will be determined which applicants will be interviewed
- in cooperation with the chair, receiving applications, making copies, and distributing them to JSC members
- in cooperation with the chair, communicating immediately with all applicants who will not be further considered. The letter might note that the committee appreciated receiving a résumé or meeting the applicant, but after prayer and deliberation, you will not be pursuing further conversation/discussions with the applicant. The letter might include something like the following: “Thank you for your interest in our ministry position and for the time you have given to us. We pray that wherever your ministry takes you, you and the people you serve will be blessed.”

### **Other roles/duties**

Members of the JSC need to be involved in a variety of ways, including

- offering hospitality at the time of interviews: welcoming and introducing the applicants, and perhaps offering a tour of the church, including the sanctuary and offices
- contacting applicants’ references
- visiting and observing applicants after an interview has taken place (often as many members as possible try to visit)

## **6. JSC determines the process for the JSC.** The Manual, section 054(b)

At an early meeting of the JSC, discuss the following topics and establish a practice/policy for each.

### **Worship and prayer**

Each meeting of the JSC should begin and end with worship or prayer. Prayer invites the Spirit to be part of the meeting and reminds us that God is part of the journey. Resources can be found in *Voices United* and other United Church publications.

### **Quorum** The Manual sections 001 and 054(b)

Decide how many members of your committee must attend for a quorum.

At least one representative from presbytery/district and one representative of the pastoral charge must be present for each meeting.

### **Confidentiality Section 054(b)**

It is essential that the JSC agree on confidentiality issues at the beginning of the process and review them along the way. While confidential details are not shared outside the committee, transparency of the process is essential.

There is a difference between secrecy and confidentiality. Secrecy can be a tool that gives power to the people “who know” and excludes all others. Confidentiality in the JSC process means that the name and personal information of each applicant are confidential and cannot be shared with anyone outside the committee, including family members. Even if specific names are not used, JSC members should not, at any time, be discussing outside the committee anything about the applicants, such as their qualifications and answers to interview questions.

The JSC needs to agree on how much of their work is disclosed, to whom, in what manner, and how often. Information about the progress of the JSC should be communicated on a regular basis to the pastoral charge.

Individual members of the JSC, including presbytery/district representatives, are not to have informal discussions/meetings with potential applicants. Any discussions are conducted only at the interviews.

When the joint search process ends, JSC members must continue to maintain confidentiality and not discuss who the applicants were and why certain ones were not chosen.

### **Conflict of interest**

Those appointing members to the JSC, those who are approached to serve, and those who do serve must strive to avoid conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts.

A conflict of interest occurs when an individual makes a decision, is present when a decision is made, or participates in making a decision in carrying out his or her role that may directly or indirectly confer a benefit on the individual or any person with whom the individual does not deal at arm’s length, and at the same time knows that in making the decision there is an opportunity to further his or her private interest or the private interest of a party with whom the individual does not deal at arm’s length.

Whether an individual “does not deal at arm’s length” with another person depends on the facts of the particular situation. In all cases, however, it includes the individual’s spouse, members of the individual’s family (both immediate and more distant), friends, close neighbours, and close work colleagues.

Whether the decision “confers a benefit on the individual or any person” also depends on the facts of the particular situation. It includes such things as an increase in salary, approval of employment or a call or appointment, and election to a particular office.

There are two aspects to conflict of interest: (1) People must not be in an actual conflict of

interest, and (2) they must not appear to be in a conflict of interest to those outside of the process. It is critical to avoid both actual and perceived conflict of interest. If someone participates in a decision when she or he is in a conflict of interest—either real or apparent—the decision may be subject to appeal or a legal challenge as a result.

It is because of the potential for conflict of interest that any staff member of the pastoral charge cannot be appointed to the JSC. The same applies to spouses and other family members of staff.

Committee members need to make the committee aware of any possible conflict of interest or bias as soon as possible. The credibility of a JSC could be at stake if the pastoral charge learns that anyone with a conflict of interest took part in the decision making.

### **Involving the incumbent(s) in the pastoral charge**

In a multi-staff pastoral charge, incumbent(s), ministry staff, and other personnel are normally not involved in the process. Refer to step 22.

### **Meeting schedule**

It is important to establish a schedule for meetings so the committee can accomplish its tasks in a timely manner.

Many committees meet weekly at the beginning of the search process. Meeting dates for interviews will depend on the availability of members and applicants. Remember that there will also be times when your committee will visit applicants during Sunday morning worship.

### **Decision making**

Each committee decides what process they will use to make decisions.

It is also important to choose a way to evaluate each applicant. Every member of the JSC must use the same criteria to evaluate résumés, interviews, and visits.

Allow room for the Spirit in your process.

## **7. JSC reports to the pastoral charge.**

It is important to keep the pastoral charge informed of the JSC's progress. As a committee, decide how and when to report regularly. The chair or a designate may be given the responsibility for communicating with the pastoral charge.

Information that can be shared includes the names of the committee members, the number of meetings held, the number of inquiries received, and the number of interviews. You may want to inform your pastoral charge that the same criteria are used to review all applicants, that all applicants will be asked the same questions during interviews, and that you will be following up on all references.

The presbytery/district representative does not need to be present when information/update reports are made to the board/council or congregation.

## **8. JSC reviews the report of the Joint Needs Assessment Committee.**

JSC members need to review the JNAC report and be familiar with the Ministry Personnel Description developed by the JNAC and approved by the pastoral charge. The Ministry Personnel Description includes a position description, a list of desired skills, and the terms of the position. The JSC cannot change the Ministry Personnel Description without approval of the pastoral charge and the presbytery/district.

Your pastoral charge may have specific situations that need to be addressed.

### **Change in number of ministerial staff**

In the case of multiple staff when ministry personnel will be reduced and a new Ministry Personnel Description developed, the JNAC determined whether current ministry personnel are eligible to apply for the new position. Usually, if the new Ministry Personnel Description is considerably different from the old one, a vacancy will be declared, with current ministry personnel receiving a minimum of 90 days' notice and being eligible to apply for the new position (Opinion 04-010-0 August 17/04).

If the pastoral charge agrees with the JNAC's recommendation, there is a request to end pastoral relations. Usually, current ministry personnel have the right to apply for the new position but are not automatically assured of the position.

## **9. Another option for matching ministry personnel and your needs—settlement.**

Pastoral charges may request that their vacancy be filled through the settlement process (sections 440–454). If a pastoral charge decides to go to settlement, it has an obligation to contribute \$1,000 to the Ministry and Employment Policies and Services Settlement Pool to help with the moving costs of the Ordinands/Commissionands (section 030(b)).

Settlement can happen at three points in the process:

- The recommendation of the JNAC may request settlement. Or,
- Immediately after the vacancy is declared. In this case, it is not always necessary to form a Joint Search Committee. Or,
- After a Joint Search Committee has been formed. Usually this happens at some point during the search process, when the committee determines that settlement is the best option.

The pastoral charge and the presbytery/district must approve the request for settlement (sections 043 and 057).

Each Conference deals with the actual settlement process somewhat differently, but all must follow the procedures in *The Manual*. Generally, requests must be received by the Conference Settlement Committee by early to mid-March.

Any member of the Order of Ministry may request settlement, and all new Ordinands and Commissionands must accept their first placement through settlement (sections 043 and 443). Remember, not all newly ordered ministers are young, but most are enthusiastic! Many bring

years of experience from other careers. You must not assume that an Ordinand will be in category A of the salary allowances.

Requests from all pastoral charges and applicants are considered yearly at a meeting of the National Transfer Committee in April. At that meeting, applicants are transferred to a specific Conference for placement later by the Conference Settlement Committee (sections 710–713).

## **10. Categories of eligible ministries.**

You *must* confirm the eligibility of each applicant before inviting the person to an interview. This involves a reference check with your Conference personnel minister to ensure the applicants are ministry personnel in “good standing” in the United Church.

It is important for a Joint Search Committee to know who is eligible for ministry positions in the United Church. Here are the categories of eligibility:

### **Eligible for call**

Only members of the Order of Ministry of The United Church of Canada are eligible for a call. These are Ordained and Diaconal Ministers.

#### *Diaconal Minister*

A Diaconal Minister is a member of the Order of Ministry who has been commissioned to the ministry of education, service, and pastoral care.

#### *Ordained Minister*

An Ordained Minister is a member of the Order of Ministry who has been ordained to the ministry of word, sacrament, and pastoral care.

### **Eligible for time-limited appointment**

#### *Interim Minister*

An Interim Minister is a member of the Order of Ministry or a Designated Lay Minister who, based on appropriate training and experience, has been appointed by the presbytery/district to an interim ministry.

#### *Designated Lay Minister*

“Designated Lay Minister” means a lay member of the United Church appointed by a presbytery to serve in paid accountable ministry in a pastoral charge or other presbytery accountable ministry, in a position designated by the presbytery as accountable to the presbytery. A Designated Lay Minister may be recognized as such by the Conference when they have completed an appropriate educational program, including educational supervision during the program, to the satisfaction of the presbytery and the Conference. Once recognized by a Conference, a Designated Lay Minister may be appointed by any presbytery to serve in paid accountable ministry in a pastoral charge or other presbytery accountable ministry. This category does not include persons serving as Candidate Supply, Intern Supply, Student Intern, or Student Supply.

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

A new DLM/CDM program is being implemented that governs and equips lay members of the United Church to serve in paid accountable leadership for worship, pastoral care, education, and service in the church.

An Implementation Team has been established at the General Council Office to coordinate this work based on the appointment and recognition process set out in sections 343 and 345 of *The Manual, 2007*. *The Manual* defines and provides policy by-laws related to Designated Lay Ministry (DLM) and Congregational Designated Ministry (CDM).

Since an array of program supports is still in development, the Implementation Team is being guided by a timeline that will phase in the new DLM/CDM model over the next 26 months. This will allow input from individuals, committees, and courts of the church, and will allow the transition to be managed well, with as little disruption as possible.

New procedures will not be effected all at once, nor will they happen until the various constituencies (education and students committees, pastoral relations committees, etc.) have been adequately advised, resourced, and trained.

Until DLM is fully functional, the existing Staff Associate, Lay Pastoral Ministry, and Congregational Accountable Minister (SA/LPM/CAM) policies and processes will remain in effect for those in, or preparing to begin, training and designation for lay leadership. It will also be operative for those who facilitate the related processes or preparations. Information explaining the Designated Lay Ministry and FQA in detail can be found on The United Church of Canada website ([www.united-church.ca/en/minstaff/pastoral](http://www.united-church.ca/en/minstaff/pastoral) – Designated Lay Ministry).

### *Ordained or Diaconal Supply*

An Ordained or Diaconal Supply is a member of the Order of Ministry of another denomination whose credentials have been approved, and who has been appointed by the presbytery/district to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry.

### *Retired Supply*

A Retired Supply is a retired member of the Order of Ministry who is appointed by the presbytery/district to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry.

### *Student Supply*

A Student Supply is a Candidate who is currently studying at a university or theological school who is appointed by the presbytery/district to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry.

### *United Supply*

A United Supply is a member of the Order of Ministry appointed by the presbytery/district to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry

## **Eligible for time-limited appointment with a pastoral charge supervisor**

### *Candidate Supply*

A Candidate Supply is a Candidate who has successfully completed the educational requirements for commissioning or ordination but has yet to be commissioned or ordained, and who is appointed by the presbytery/district to a pastoral charge, usually full-time.

## **Eligible for time-limited appointment with a pastoral charge supervisor, an educational supervisor, and a lay supervision team**

### *Intern Supply*

An Intern Supply is a Candidate who has obtained the Testamur and is fulfilling in a presbytery/district appointment the requirement for supervised experience in preaching and pastoral work.

### *Ministry-Based Ordination Student*

A student in the Ministry-Based Ordination Program must have a half-time appointment to a pastoral charge while studying half-time. The pastoral charge must be designated a learning site, and both a pastoral charge supervisor and an educational supervisor must be appointed.

## **11. Specialized ministries.**

### **Aboriginal Ministries**

For purposes of changes in pastoral relations in All Native Circle Conference, please contact the Conference office for guidance and direction.

### **Ethnic Ministries**

Ethnic Ministries pastoral charges are generally identified with an “EM” designation in the United Church *Year Book* alphabetical directory.

When there is a change in pastoral relations in an Ethnic Ministries pastoral charge, all the usual procedures of the United Church must be followed—that is, notifying presbytery/district, setting up a Joint Needs Assessment Committee, setting up a Joint Search Committee following the approval of the report of the JNAC, and declaring a vacancy.

The presbytery/district names culturally sensitive and respectful representatives to work with the pastoral charge on the JNAC and JSC committees.

At the same time, the presbytery/district should notify the Ethnic Ministries Unit of the General Council of the change in pastoral relations. The Ethnic Ministries Unit is responsible for pastoral relations support for Ethnic Ministries pastoral charges. When necessary, the unit identifies an appropriate person to be a corresponding member to the Joint Needs Assessment Committee and the Joint Search Committee, to assist in supporting ethno-cultural sensitivity in the processes and to act as a language resource.

As with any call, only qualified ministry personnel can be called to an Ethnic Ministries pastoral charge through a Joint Search Committee process. When a qualified ministry personnel is

appointed from outside The United Church of Canada, the normal admissions processes must be followed. Both the Ethnic Ministries pastoral charge and the person called must be aware of the admissions requirements when the appointment is issued.

Presbytery/district should notify the Ethnic Ministries Unit once a call is accepted or an appointment is made. The Ethnic Ministries Unit will support admissions processes and work with the appropriate General Council Office units, presbytery/district, and pastoral charge.

**Interim Ministry** The Manual, section 054.1

If it is determined that the pastoral charge should have an Interim Minister, the presbytery/district representatives need to check on the availability of interim ministers in your Conference.

Interim ministry is a prime time for reviewing the membership, its needs, and its ways of organizing, and for making decisions on how to best use your resources.

Interim ministry may also be a time for healing in the pastoral charge and for putting the service of the former minister in perspective. It is a time of letting go of the former minister and discarding old expectations, wounds, patterns, and baggage. Only when the pastoral charge has let go of the former minister can a new minister be fully accepted.

During this interim ministry time, a pastoral charge must redefine a sense of purpose and direction and what distinguishes it from other churches in the community.

Also during this time, the pastoral charge prepares to receive a new leader and makes arrangements for call, covenanting, and start-up for its new minister.

For interim ministry to be successful, a transitional team must be in place before the appointment of the Interim Minister to work closely with the Interim Minister. Together, the minister and the team help guide the pastoral charge in changes that are needed and help everyone prepare for the new minister.

**Settlement** The Manual, sections 440–454

The report of the JNAC may recommend that the vacancy in the pastoral charge be filled through the settlement process. Normally, “settlement” refers to the first pastoral charge an Ordinand or Commissionand is “settled” into. The pastoral charge must request settlement by filling in MEPS Form 427 PQ: Record of Pastoral Charge Request for Settlement and forwarding it to presbytery/district through the presbytery representatives on the JNAC.

Settlement can happen at three points in the process:

- The recommendation of the JNAC may request settlement. Or,
- Immediately after the vacancy is declared. In this case, it is not always necessary to form a Joint Search Committee. Or,
- After a Joint Search Committee has been formed. Usually this happens at some point during the search process, when the committee determines that settlement is the best option.

Any member of the Order of Ministry may request settlement at any time during his or her ministry career. *Remember: Many Ordinands and Commissionands are entering ministry as a second career.* These individuals bring with them a variety of gifts and experiences. For these reasons, a candidate for settlement is not necessarily in category A of the salary allowances.

#### *The settlement process*

Requests from all pastoral charges and applicants are considered yearly at a meeting of the National Transfer Committee in April. At that meeting, applicants are transferred to a specific Conference for placement later by the Conference Settlement Committee (sections 710–713).

Both the pastoral charge and the presbytery/district must approve the request for settlement (sections 043 and 057). This request is then forwarded to the Conference Settlement Committee. Check with your Conference personnel minister for deadlines and Conference procedures.

The actual matching process varies from Conference to Conference, but in all cases committees work hard to match the skills and gifts of the applicants with the needs of the pastoral charges. It may be that not all vacancies can be filled. Contact your Conference Settlement Committee for more information.

If a pastoral charge decides to go to settlement, it has an obligation to contribute \$1,000 to the Ministry and Employment Policies and Services Settlement Pool to help with the moving costs of the Ordinands/Commissionands (section 030(b)).

Where a vacancy is not filled by a Settlement Committee, the vacancy may return to a Joint Search Committee to begin or resume a call process.

#### **Ecumenical shared ministries**

There may be an opportunity to share ministry personnel with a congregation of another denomination. There are different processes for this, so check with the Conference personnel minister.

#### **Student supply ministries**

Candidates for Ordained or Diaconal Ministry may be appointed to a pastoral charge while preparing for ordination or commissioning. As Candidates, their home presbytery/district Education and Students (E&S) Committee must give approval to each appointment (using FFE Form 203(b): Approval of Appointment) indicating that they are “ready” for such an appointment.

Each appointment must be to a presbytery/district–declared vacancy, and the Candidate is paid according to the national salary schedule. She or he is appointed as Student Supply. (See *The Manual*, Definitions, section 001.)

#### **Ministry-Based Educational Programs for Ordination** The Manual, section 722.1

Candidates for Ordained Ministry in one of the approved Ministry-Based Educational Programs for Ordination may be appointed to a pastoral charge as part of their educational program, in fulfillment of their Supervised Ministry Education requirements (see *The Manual*, sections 722

and 722.1). The Ministry-Based Educational Programs for Ordination are ways to earn the Master of Divinity (M. Div.) degree in part-time study while serving under presbytery/district appointment. The program normally encompasses five years of half-time study with a half-time appointment.

Such Candidates are understood to be Student Supply appointments (usually half-time) and, in addition to the conditions above, are appointed to a site that has been approved by the Conference Internship and Educational Supervision Committee as a “learning site” and has an educational supervisor and a lay supervision team in place for the duration of the appointment. All appointments must be approved by both the Conference Internship and Educational Supervision Committee and the theological school through which the Candidate is registered.

To qualify for participation in this program, the pastoral charge needs to become an approved learning site by completing FFE Form 208: Application by a Pastoral Charge and Supervisor to Be Approved for Use in Supervised Ministry *in addition to the Joint Needs Assessment process.*

The presbytery/district must recommend the site to the Conference Internship and Educational Supervision Committee as a learning site, and also approve the educational supervisor. All terms of the appointment need to comply with *The Manual* and (at least) the minimum salary schedules of the General Council.

For further information, please contact the Conference personnel minister.

## **12. JSC upholds human rights in its process.**

The United Church of Canada supports the protection of basic human rights, abolition of discrimination in all its forms, and adherence to legislated provincial/territorial human rights codes.

Human rights law is based on the principle that employment decisions should be based on the applicant’s ability to do the job rather than on factors that are unrelated to job requirements, qualifications, or performance. Prohibited grounds of discrimination in various Canadian jurisdictions include:

- race
- ancestry
- place of origin
- citizenship
- colour
- family status
- gender
- sexual orientation
- disability
- age
- marital status
- political affiliation
- record of offences
- receipt of public assistance

Advertising, application forms, and interviews must not include any questions that relate directly or indirectly to prohibited grounds of discrimination. Asking questions to solicit information in any of these areas is inappropriate and could be challenged as a violation of human rights.

Interview questions must not go beyond seeking information related to a person’s suitability for the position. For example, you cannot ask applicants directly or indirectly for their age or place of birth, their marital status, whether they have or are planning to have children, or what their childcare arrangements are.

Applicants might volunteer some of this information without being asked, but the JSC should not seek further information on the matter or use the information in determining who is the best applicant for the job.

Every member of the JSC has a responsibility to ensure that no human rights are violated. Challenge one another to be fair and to follow a process that treats all eligible applicants equitably.

Here are only a few of the practical and legal issues related to human rights that a JSC must consider in searching for, selecting, and calling a minister:

- You may not discriminate based on the distance an applicant will drive to work.
- While a church is in a covenant relationship with a minister, it is also an employer in a legal sense, meaning that obligations, defined in provincial and federal law and in United Church policy, are assumed by the church as employer.
- A call is without time limit and may be terminated by 90 days' notice by either the minister or the pastoral charge, subject to approval by the presbytery/district *or* by discipline or oversight action by the presbytery/district (MEPS Form 435 CPC: Record of Call to Pastoral Charge).

### **13. JSC finds applicants for call or appointment.**

There are both formal and informal ways to find applicants.

#### **Put your name where it will be seen!**

Ensure that presbytery/district has completed MEPS Form 425 V: Record of Pastoral Charge Vacancy and that your pastoral charge is on the monthly National Vacancy List, which is available to all ministers through the Conference personnel minister.

Consider placing your advertisement on the Web. Your Conference, presbytery/district, or pastoral charge may have a website, or use *The Observer* website ([www.ucobserver.org](http://www.ucobserver.org)). Be aware of privacy issues and the need to ensure removal of information in a timely manner.

Placing an advertisement in *The Observer* takes at least six weeks, but because it has a large circulation, the wait can be worth it.

#### **Compile a list of prospective applicants**

Use as many methods as possible to compile your list, and then contact individuals to invite them to apply. Some sources include:

- The monthly National Availability List lists ministers who are considering a change in pastoral relations. This can be obtained from the Conference personnel minister. This list should not be shared beyond your committee.
- Check the *Year Book*, which lists every United Church minister.
- Invite recommendations from members of the pastoral charge and others.
- Ask your Conference personnel minister.

**State a closing date**

It is customary to state a closing date for applications.

If a closing date is established and published on the National Vacancy List, in advertisements, or in letters, applications received after that date should be set aside while the first applicants are evaluated. The committee should not solicit other applicants after the closing date.

If no suitable applicant is found, you will have to decide whether to extend the deadline and solicit further applicants, consider settlement, or ask presbytery/district to appoint a supply minister.

An open-ended process allows for emerging opportunities, but at some point a final date for applications is necessary. Remember that an excellent applicant could be lost because she or he accepts another call or appointment while waiting for you to make an offer.

**Correspond with prospective applicants**

The corresponding secretary sends a letter to all prospective applicants, inviting them to consider applying for the position and sending them an information package.

The information package should reflect your ministry and mission. Don't try to present yourselves as something you are not. Make sure to include

- a copy of the JNAC report. This is important because it provides an assessment of your pastoral charge and community.
- some further information about your pastoral charge, such as the annual report, any brochures you have developed to describe your mission and ministry, and a copy of the worship folder.
- information about your local area/community. Consider including the addresses of relevant websites to help applicants do their own research, too.

**Request information from applicants**

In your package to prospective applicants, outline the information you want to receive from them.

Most applicants will send a résumé. In addition, you may request MEPS Forms 401 IS and 402 IS, the Ministry Personnel Information Sheets. These provide a profile of the minister's interest in pastoral functions and skills, special training, recent continuing education experiences, community and other interests and hobbies, church involvement, and references.

A request for references usually includes the names of both clergy and lay people. You may wish to ask for a reference from someone outside the church. Some applicants also send reference letters.

**14. JSC develops a model for decision making.**

While you wait for applications to arrive, your committee has important work to do.

Develop a method to evaluate each applicant based on the written submission, interviews, reference checks, and observations of the applicant leading worship or a workshop. If members of the JSC attend worship or a workshop to observe an applicant, please let the applicant know!

Review the JNAC report to determine criteria. The Ministry Personnel Description should help you identify tasks, duties, and roles of the position and related background knowledge, skills, and experience that are desired or required.

The JSC then needs to determine the “must have” and “want to have” criteria, characteristics, and experience of the individual, based on the Ministry Personnel Description developed by the JNAC and approved by the pastoral charge. These may include

- pastoral skills
- preaching skills
- educational skills
- concern for social justice
- experience relevant to a particular type of ministry
- ability to work with young adolescents (or another age group)
- interest and experience in a particular area of ministry, such as stewardship
- strong interpersonal skills

Determine whether your committee will review each application when it is received, or whether you will read and evaluate all applications at the same time. All members, including presbytery representatives, should review all applications.

Whatever you decide, remember that this information is confidential and JSC members may not share the names or any personal information about the applicants with anyone outside the committee.

## **15. JSC communicates promptly with all applicants.**

All applicants, including those not selected, should leave the process feeling that they have been treated fairly and with respect.

Communicating with all of the applicants is very important. As the process continues, keep in touch with applicants by phone, e-mail, or letter.

- Confirm with all applicants that their application has been received, and provide a date when you will determine which individuals will be interviewed.
- Contact applicants if you need more information, including additional references.
- Contact those applicants you want to consider, indicating your interest and offering a general timeline for the next steps.
- Notify those who will not be considered by sending them a letter immediately. There is no need to provide them with any further information. Keep in mind that some applicants may ask why they were not considered.
- After a decision is made, and after the applicant has agreed to the terms of the call, notify all others who were interviewed that another applicant has been selected.

The letter might include something like the following:

I am writing on behalf of the Joint Search Committee of \_\_\_\_\_ United Church.

Our committee enjoyed meeting with you on (*date*). It was a pleasure to meet you and get to know you. After much prayer and deliberation our committee has extended a call to another candidate.

We thank you for your interest in our ministry position, and for the time you have given to us. We pray that wherever your ministry takes you, you and the people you serve will be blessed.

#### **16. JSC evaluates each applicant based on written submission.**

All members of the JSC should read each submission. There should be no preselection of the applicants by the chair or the person who received the application.

Using the criteria developed by your committee, each member completes an assessment of each applicant independently. Usually it's possible to sort applicants into three groups:

- those who appear to be suitable
- those who appear to be unsuitable because they do not fit the established criteria
- those about whom there is a difference of opinion among committee members or a need for more information

In most situations, you cannot and should not interview everyone. You are not obliged to interview any applicants. If there are no suitable applicants, consider seeking more applicants or consider other options.

Be careful of human rights issues. Don't let gossip or things you hear informally through your network cause you to dismiss an applicant.

#### **17. JSC checks eligibility with Conference personnel minister.**

Check the eligibility of all applicants you are considering with your Conference personnel minister.

#### **18. JSC conducts interviews.**

Remember that in interviews you are representing your pastoral charge. The following courtesies will make a good impression:

- Arrange transportation and accommodation if necessary.
- Assign someone to greet the applicant at the interview location.
- Provide a comfortable setting for the interview.
- Provide name tags for all JSC members.
- Have JSC members introduce themselves, indicating their position and interest.
- Always begin the interview with prayer.

- Provide a clear description of the process, ensuring there are no surprises for the applicant.
- Provide specific information on when the applicant will hear from the committee.
- Assign someone to accompany the applicant out to her or his car or transportation .

### **Prepare for interviews**

Presbytery/district representatives should tell JSC members how they would like to be involved in the interview. There may be appropriate questions for the presbytery/district representatives to ask, such as questions relating to presbytery and Conference involvement.

Always communicate the JSC process to the applicants and make sure the process is the same for each applicant.

It is a good idea to specify in advance the time allotted for the interview. One to one and a half hours should be sufficient, including time at the end for the applicant to ask questions.

Most importantly, your committee should come to each interview fully prepared and organized. Otherwise, you will not get an accurate assessment of the applicant, and the interview will end up being too general. Plan the interview questions and who will ask them.

### **Interview questions**

At times it will be necessary to ask an unscripted follow-up question to get more information. All questions should be related to the position description, since the goal is to find the best match for your position. Generally, the same questions should be asked of all applicants, although responses will likely require different follow-up questions.

These questions are simply examples. Your committee may want to use some of them, but you should develop your own specific questions related to your specific ministry personnel position.

- Why are you considering a change in pastoral relations?
- What innovative things have you been part of in your current pastoral charge?
- What was your biggest challenge in your current pastoral charge, and how did you deal with it?
- What do you think you would bring to ministry here?
- What do you consider to be your strengths in ministry? Your weaknesses?
- What would be a brief statement of your faith?
- What is your understanding of ministry and your particular role in it?
- How would you describe your style of working in a team with other colleagues?
- How have you worked with Ministry and Personnel Committees?
- How do you manage your working time? Handle stress? Deal with conflict?
- What continuing education have you participated in? What plans do you have for further continuing education?

It cannot be overemphasized how important it is for you to develop your own specific questions related to the Ministry Personnel Description so the best applicant can be identified.

Some feel that questions related to an applicant's specific past performance help in evaluating him or her. Again, such questions should relate specifically to the position. For example:

- Tell us about a time when you had to deal with a major problem in a church. How did you handle it? What was the outcome?
- Tell us about a time when you initiated a project and how you involved members of the pastoral charge.
- Can you describe your faith journey?
- What do you do for spiritual renewal?
- Tell us about a time when you supported or encouraged a pastoral charge vision.

As noted earlier, interviews must honour human rights. For example, if the applicant mentions his or her marital status or ethnic origin, do not pursue the issue but move back into questions related to the job description.

Let the applicant know at the beginning of the interview that she or he will have time at the end to ask questions of the JSC. You may want to designate one person to answer these questions or have this person direct questions to the most appropriate person to answer them. Just as the JSC is seeking the best applicant, the applicant is seeking the best match. Therefore, it is essential that the JSC be honest in its responses and not mislead the applicant about the position.

If unsolicited information has been obtained about the applicant, acknowledge this and allow the applicant to respond.

### **Wrapping up**

Ask for additional references, if necessary.

Let the applicant know when the JSC will communicate with him or her again.

## **19. JSC evaluates each applicant based on the interview.**

Allow time for individual reflection and recording of impressions and comments by your committee members.

Accurate and clear notes will help later when you are discussing applicants, particularly if more than one applicant is interviewed in a short period of time.

## **20. JSC checks references.**

It is important to confirm facts stated in résumés and to contact named references—in fact, it is the obligation of the JSC to do so. Whether the JSC wants to have detailed discussions with the people providing references before or after the first interview is up to the committee. Usually reference checks are done following the interview. Often, the information the applicant provides in the interview can lead to more specific questions to ask of references. However, two interviews may not be possible and reference checks may generate questions the candidate ought to be asked.

“Prior to initiating a pastoral relationship (call, appointment, or internship), a minimum of two

references are to be interviewed.” Designate two committee members who will together make all reference calls. This could be done by a conference call which would include two JSC members. The name of each reference, the date, and the names of the interviewers should be recorded. Check only those references provided by the applicant. If necessary, you can ask for further references. Sometimes a reference suggests another person to contact. Additional references should be checked only with permission of the applicant. (See appendix B –Reference Checks)

Normally, one of the references is from the applicant’s current or most recent pastoral charge. If you feel that the references provided do not provide a wide enough spectrum of individuals, you can ask the applicant to provide others. For example, if the applicant ministered at two churches and provided references from only one, you may want to request a reference from someone at the second church. Some committees ask for a reference from someone the applicant was in conflict with but was still able to work with effectively.

### **Questions to ask**

It is important that the JSC members speaking to the references know in advance what specific information will help the committee finalize its decision. In addition to the “screening” questions, general questions such as “What are the applicant’s strong points?” can be valuable.

Specific questions can lead to more information. An example of such a question is “Was there ever a time the applicant had to initiate a project, gain the support of others, and see it through to its conclusion? If so, how did the applicant do it?”

All questions, of course, should be related to the requirements of the position and to the specific skills the committee is seeking in an applicant. Here are some examples:

- How long have you known the candidate?
- In what context do you know the candidate?
- Do you work with the candidate, or are you friends?
- Would you welcome this person back?
- Had this person not left, what goals would you have been working on?
- If I were to send this candidate to deal with your wealthy grandfather who has early-stage dementia, would you be comfortable?
- If this candidate was working alone with your two-year-old granddaughter, would you be comfortable?
- Do you have any concerns about this person working with vulnerable people in our congregation?
- Can you describe any part of the candidate’s journey of faith?
- Please tell me of an incident that confirmed for you the applicant’s abilities as a minister.
- What are some examples of how the applicant’s abilities as a minister improved while she/he was in your pastoral charge?
- No one does everything equally well; we’re all better at some things than others. Would you give me an example of an area of ministry where your pastoral charge helped the applicant become a better minister?

- If the applicant should be called to move to our church, what will you miss about his/her ministry in your pastoral charge?

As well, the JSC members doing reference checks could ask for comments on the applicant's honesty, reliability, and respect for others. Here are two specific questions related to screening:

- Are you aware of any characteristics of this applicant that would raise questions about her/his ability to work well in this ministry?
- To the best of your knowledge, has this person ever been convicted of any criminal offence for which a pardon has not been granted, or has this person been subject to disciplinary action as a result of a complaint that has been proven?

### **21. JSC evaluates selected applicants based on visiting/observing.**

Following an interview, several members of the JSC may attend worship or other events to observe preferred applicants. Make sure the minister knows you will be attending a service. Then, when you get there, don't all sit together. Members of the pastoral charge will know why you are there!

If an applicant lives at a distance, the presbytery/district representative may be able to arrange for him or her to preach at a closer church. Or audiotapes or videos may provide alternatives to visiting.

As a committee, prepare criteria to evaluate each applicant you observe. Consider such things as how the applicant relates to people before, during, and after the service and how people in the pastoral charge relate to one another and to visitors.

### **22. If you are in a multiple-staff pastoral charge.**

Incumbents in multi-staff situations cannot be members of the JSC, but the committee can solicit information from them. Staff members cannot attend interviews of applicants.

When you are close to offering a call or making an appointment, it is usual for the incumbents to meet with the applicants. This should be an informal meeting. Sometimes an incumbent meets with applicants and then reports to the JSC. Sometimes two members of the JSC observe the meeting and report back to the JSC. If JSC members are present, the same members should be present for all meetings and conversations.

The report of the JSC (step 26) should include references to information about these meetings/conversations.

### **23. JSC conducts second interviews with short-listed applicants.**

If you choose to conduct a second interview, discuss the Ministry Personnel Description if this discussion did not happen at the first interview.

This is also the time to discuss the remuneration package. The terms must be at least the minimums set by The United Church of Canada and Conference and presbytery/district policies (section 036).

The annual *Salary and Allowances Schedules Applicable to Ministry Personnel* indicate the minimum for each category (see [www.united-church.ca/en/minstaff/hr](http://www.united-church.ca/en/minstaff/hr)) to download the schedules or obtain the information from the presbytery representative.

If the JNAC report indicated a maximum category, there is no point trying to change that. Although there are ministers who receive just the minimum, others have received and will request a salary above minimum. Your committee needs to be aware of this.

Discuss housing and the presbytery/district housing allowance. If there is a manse, find out whether the applicant is interested in living there and whether she or he has any special needs or considerations. The housing allowance for all presbytery-accountable ministers in a pastoral charge must be the same. The only change can be pro rata for part-time service.

Book allowance and support for study and continuing education should be considered carefully. Check whether your Conference or presbytery/district has a minimum allowance for books and study.

Sometimes, after a second interview with a preferred applicant, the JSC meets briefly and then offers the position to the preferred applicant immediately.

#### **24. JSC negotiates the terms of call or appointment with one applicant.**

The Manual, section 054(d)

The JSC must decide on one applicant who fits the criteria you established. The committee decided early in the process whether decision making would be by consensus or majority vote. If there is dissent, this must be kept confidential.

The chair of the JSC may wish to let the Finance Committee and the Ministry and Personnel Committee know that the decision and offer will be made soon. Remember that confidentiality is essential—no names or personal details can be shared.

The chair contacts the applicant to offer him or her the position and arrange a time to meet. The whole JSC need not be present at this meeting, but the committee gives the chair and several others the authority to negotiate the terms.

Complete the relevant MEPS forms. Make sure you are using the most recent forms, which are available from the presbytery/district representative or [www.united-church.ca/en/forms](http://www.united-church.ca/en/forms).

- For a call, complete MEPS Form 435 CPC: Record of Call to Pastoral Charge.
- For an appointment or interim appointment, complete MEPS Form 433 AP: Record of Appointment to Pastoral Charge.
- For a settlement, complete MEPS Form 427 PQ: Record of Pastoral Charge Request for Settlement.
- If a manse will be part of the package, complete MEPS Form 436 MI: Manse Information Summary Sheet.
- If the applicant will be moving from another presbytery/district, complete MEPS Form 451 TR: Record of Transfer.

**25. Chair of JSC or chair of presbytery/district Pastoral Relations Committee sees current Police Record Check.** The Manual, section 054(d)

The United Church of Canada has a legal, moral, and spiritual duty to care for and protect participants in our church programs.

Before a name is presented for call or appointment, a current vulnerable sector check (Level 2) Police Record Check is required from the selected applicant. The Police Record Check must be dated no earlier than six months before the date of presentation to the JSC unless otherwise indicated by the committee in its selection criteria.

- For a call, complete MEPS Form 435 CPC: Record of Call to Pastoral Charge—Police Record Check seen and noted by two members of the JSC or designates.
- For an appointment, complete MEPS Form 433 AP: Record of Appointment to Pastoral Charge—Police Record Check seen and noted by two members of the Pastoral Relations Committee.

**26. JSC prepares a report and recommendation.**

Prior to the meeting of the pastoral charge to receive the report of the committee, the JSC prepares a brief report for the pastoral charge and presbytery/district. The report may include the names of JSC members and a summary of the activities of the committee, including the number of meetings, the number of applications received, and the number of interviews. The report must not include any names or personal details of applicants.

The report should outline how the applicant meets the criteria of the Ministry Personnel Description approved by the pastoral charge. The report may also provide an account of the budget.

The report should be available to all members of the pastoral charge and to all current ministry personnel and staff before the meeting, allowing enough time to inform their deliberations and decisions.

The name of the applicant is *not* included in the report.

**27. Chair of JSC contacts chair of pastoral charge to call meeting of pastoral charge chaired by presbytery/district representative.** The Manual, sections 047(b) iii, 048, and 112(b) iii

The notice of meeting to receive the report and recommendations of the JSC must be read during worship and may be inserted in the order of worship on two successive Sundays. The meeting may be held on the second Sunday immediately following worship (section 047(b) iii).

Before notice of this meeting is made public, written notice is given to the secretary of presbytery/district and to ministry personnel settled in or appointed to that pastoral charge. The secretary of presbytery/district must promptly inform the presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee.

The convenor of the Pastoral Relations Committee or an appointee chairs the meeting. Members of the JSC should attend. Only people with full membership in the pastoral charge are eligible to

vote on pastoral relations matters, including calls and appointments.

**28. JSC recommends one applicant and terms of call or appointment to meeting of pastoral charge.** The Manual, sections 047(b) iii and 112(b) iii

The chair of the JSC presents the recommendations and at least three motions to the pastoral charge:

- a motion naming the person to be called or appointed and outlining the terms
- a motion requesting presbytery/district to approve the call or appointment and the terms
- a motion that the JSC be disbanded following a covenanting service

**29. Pastoral charge votes to accept recommendation and seeks approval of presbytery/district through its Pastoral Relations Committee.** The Manual, section 047(b) (iii)

Following the meeting of the pastoral charge to approve motions to receive the report and recommendations, the secretary of the board sends a letter to the secretary of presbytery/district that includes the date of the meeting, the name of the presbytery/district representative who chaired the meeting, and the motions passed by the pastoral charge. The presbytery/district representatives ensure that the MEPS forms are completed and sent to the Pastoral Relations Committee.

**30. Presbytery/district Pastoral Relations Committee recommends call/appointment to presbytery/district.** The Manual, section 060(b)

The presbytery/district representatives ensure that the recommendations move through the presbytery process.

The presbytery/district Pastoral Relations Committee is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations to presbytery/district. It is important to know when the Pastoral Relations Committee and presbytery/district meet to ensure there are no unnecessary delays in getting this approval.

**31. Presbytery/district approves call/appointment and forwards paperwork to Conference Settlement Committee and current presbytery/district of the applicant.** The Manual, section 060(a) and (c)

- For a call, complete MEPS Form 435 CPC: Record of Call to Pastoral Charge.
- For an appointment or interim appointment, complete MEPS Form 433 AP: Record of Appointment to Pastoral Charge.
- For a settlement, complete MEPS Form 427 PQ: Record of Pastoral Charge Request for Settlement.
- If a manse will be part of the package, complete MEPS Form 436 MI: Manse Information Summary Sheet.
- If the applicant will be moving from another presbytery/district, complete MEPS Form 451 TR: Record of Transfer.

### **32. Conference Settlement Committee issues warrant to covenant.** Section 061(b)

The Warrant to Covenant is notification in writing from the chairperson or secretary of the Conference Settlement Committee that a member of the Order of Ministry has been settled in a recognized full-time or part-time ministry in the presbytery/district. This is sent to the secretary of the presbytery/district. The covenanting cannot occur until the Warrant to Covenant form has been received by presbytery/district. A Warrant to Covenant form is not issued for appointments.

### **33. JSC purges its records.**

Each member of the JSC should shred or destroy any confidential information, including names, comments from interviews, and so on.

When the JSC process ends, the JSC members must continue to maintain confidentiality and not discuss who the applicants were and why certain applicants were not selected.

The résumé and Ministry Personnel Description of the successful applicant is given to the chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee. All other résumés must be destroyed. Any notes taken or used in the evaluation process must also be destroyed.

The résumé, call or appointment form (MEPS Form 435 CPC or 433 AP), and job application are among the information required to be maintained in the working file for ministry personnel by the pastoral charge. Any of these documents should be provided to the chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee for inclusion in that file. The JSC report is maintained by the secretary of the church board/council in the normal course as a business record.

### **34. JSC celebrates its work with a party!**

### **35. Pastoral charge holds covenanting service for new pastoral relationship.**

The Manual, section 061

The service cannot be held until the Warrant to Covenant form (MEPS 456 WC) has been received and signed by the Settlement Committee chair.

The covenanting service is a very important recognition and affirmation of the covenant that exists among the pastoral charge, the minister, and the presbytery/district.

Each presbytery has its own policy or practice for covenanting services. Many pastoral charges ensure that all staff are included in a covenanting service, while others covenant only with ministers.

## **Appendix A: References from *The Manual, 2007***

The following sections may be useful during the joint search process:

036	Salary, Allowances, and Benefits
043	Application for Settlement
047	Notice of Meeting (to consider pastoral relationship)
048	Chairperson (of pastoral charge meeting to consider pastoral relationship)
051.1	Limitation on Declaration of Vacancy
052	Joint Needs Assessment Committee
053.1	Pastoral Charge Action in Response to Needs Assessment
054	Joint Search Committee
055	Extension of Call
057	Settlement
058	Presbytery Action in Response to Needs Assessment
060	Calls
061	Act of Covenant
112	Notice (of meeting of pastoral charge)
244	Ministry and Personnel Committee
389	Pastoral Relations Committee
440–454	Settlement Committee
710–713	Transfer Committee

## **Appendix B: Suggested Protocol for Reference Checks**

Prior to the initiation of a pastoral relationship (call, appointment, or internship) a minimum of two references are to be interviewed by a minimum of two members of the search committee or appointing body; using guidelines to be provided by the General Secretary, General Council.

Checking references is one of the most useful sources of information about an applicant's past performance or accomplishments in ministry. Although the reference check may sometimes be the only source of information on a given qualification for ministry, it is most often used to corroborate, clarify, or add to information that has already been gathered. Here is some practical information that will help the JSC get the most out of the reference check.

Reference checks are used for two purposes. The first is the evaluation of reliability and qualifications. The second is the evaluation of other abilities, skills, personal suitability, or other qualifications for ministry.

You want the information obtained from references to be as useful as possible. This means that the information must be relevant to the qualifications being assessed and present a balanced appreciation of the applicant's qualifications for ministry.

### **Suggestions for reference checks:**

1. Designate two Joint Search Committee members who together will make all reference calls.
2. Get applicant's consent to check references in all circumstances.
3. Reference checks could be done by a conference call that includes two Joint Search Committee members.
4. Reference interviews are composed of direct queries with the supplied references of the applicant.
5. The name of each reference, the date, and the names of the interviewers should be recorded.
6. Usually reference checks are done following the interview. Often, the information the applicant provides in the interview can lead to more specific questions to ask of references.
7. It is important to confirm facts stated in résumés and to contact named references. In fact, it is the obligation of the JSC to do so. Whether the JSC wants to have detailed discussions with the people providing references before or after the first interview is up to the committee.
8. Cross-reference the applicant's work history with résumé claims.
9. Check only those references provided by the applicant. If necessary, you can ask for further references. Sometimes a reference may suggest another person to contact. Additional references should be checked only with permission of the applicant.
10. JSC members may want to verify previous employment by contacting previous employers to confirm dates of employment, the position held, and eligibility by contacting the Conference personnel minister through the presbytery representatives on the JSC.
11. Ensure honesty.