



The United Church of Canada
L'Église Unie du Canada

Overseas Personnel Policy Handbook

August 2009

Overseas Personnel Policy Handbook



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L'Église Unie du Canada



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In 2002 much of the work of the former Division of World Outreach, including the oversight of Overseas Personnel, was moved to the newly created Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations (JGER) Unit of The United Church of Canada.

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Supported by the
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PREFACE

This handbook has been prepared by The United Church of Canada to set out the regulations that define the relationship between the church and overseas personnel appointed by the United Church.

In certain circumstances, the United Church has worked bilaterally or multilaterally with partner churches or agencies in the mutual development of appropriate overseas personnel relationships. In such cases, the application of some regulations contained in this handbook may be modified. The United Church encourages its partners to collaborate in developing working regulations appropriate to prevailing understandings and conditions in their own area.

These regulations are approved by the General Council's Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations (JGER) Unit Committee. Ongoing consultations with partner churches and agencies may also lead to suggested changes. Regulations are, therefore, under continuous review and may be amended at any time on decision of the JGER Unit Committee. However, in practice, when changes are proposed that would significantly affect overseas personnel, advance notice of intention to amend is provided, giving opportunity for those affected to share any reactions to the proposals with the unit.

JGER staff is responsible for implementing the handbook regulations. In case of a disagreement concerning the interpretation of the regulations, overseas personnel may seek a ruling from the Executive Minister of the JGER Unit. An appeal to the JGER Unit Committee can be made should circumstances warrant. The appeal procedures to be followed in such circumstances are set out in Appendix C to this handbook.

Before appointment, all overseas personnel are required to become familiar with the handbook regulations and indicate in writing their willingness to abide by them. In practice, dialogue between overseas personnel and the JGER staff provides the participatory mechanism through which the United Church's regulations are applied.

1. SELECTED STATEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS RELATED TO GLOBAL MISSION

1.1 UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA STATEMENTS

1. The Commission on World Mission: 1966

The church should recognize that God is creatively and redemptively at work in the religious life of all mankind [sic].

Christians have much to learn, as well as to contribute, through dialogue with people of other faiths. Their special responsibility is to present the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus in humble and sincere dialogue in ways which will respect each other's integrity.¹

Critical to the path of the United Church understanding of mission has been the *Report of the Commission on World Mission*, the principal recommendations of which were adopted by the 22nd General Council in 1966. This report broke new ground in calling on the church to establish relationships of partnership with the younger churches to which the United Church and its predecessor denominations originally had sent missionaries. It also offered a significant critique of the way in which historic mission (often unwittingly) had assumed Western enculturation as integral to the gospel. Moreover, it announced the possibility of a new paradigm for the work of theology. The quotation above points to what the authors of the report envisaged as the emergence of a new world context: The interpenetration of cultures through travel, immigration, and new forms of communication would lead ultimately to the reality of one world. This global civilization would not be based on superficial homogenization but rather on cross-cultural connection and interaction.

The report notes that the theology of the early church was formulated as the outcome of intimate and continuous encounter between the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the Greco-Roman patterns of thinking and living. And today, the report argues, a like dynamic is possible in the encounter with other world faiths. Thus, what is needed in carrying out mission is not the presentation of precisely defined formulations to people of other faiths, but a mission

conducted in a way that will facilitate intimate, continuous and creative encounter between the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the thinking of people who have come through neither the Hebraic nor the Graeco-Roman traditions, or of other people for whom these traditions have lost much of their meaning.²

Such interaction would necessitate a “reconceptualization” of theology and approach. The church would have to move beyond its Western rationality to approaches more Eastern in

¹ *Record of Proceedings of the 22nd General Council, 1966 [ROP 1966]* (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1966), pp. 435–36.

² *ROP 1966*, pp. 425–26.

form, entering the risk of dialogue in which the participants do not come from a common historical or philosophical tradition. In such encounter, Christians may be led to a deepened understanding of their own faith.

It is important to note that the report does not endorse the simple substitution of dialogue for evangelism. Rather, it urges the church to define its mission as including a dialogue with other world faiths “in which are tied together both the evangelism that proceeds by listening and the evangelism that proceeds by speaking.”³ Indeed, the report uses strong and traditional language in describing the content of the Christian missionary message:

*The primary basis of the missionary imperative lies in the Christian’s conviction that God sent Christ to penetrate [sic] the world and to redeem humanity from within; that Christ founded a community of people, forming the church, to continue the work He had perfectly initiated; and that the events of Christ’s life, death and resurrection, provide both the pattern for the church’s mission and the dynamic for its performance.... Contemporary Biblical studies have reinforced the conviction that the missionary imperative arises fundamentally out of God’s act in sending Christ and in establishing the Church to continue His work.*⁴

At the same time, there is a repeated reminder that missionary endeavour must eschew any sense of cultural superiority and learn to listen as well as to speak: “[T]he Christian must make special efforts to encounter men of other faiths, and to enter into persuasive dialogue with them, only in ways that will engender mutual trust.”⁵ The new missionaries must also be prepared to let go of any control over the outcome of the endeavour. The distinctive role of the missionary in other religious communities “is basically to present the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and release it to become a formative force in the life of that community.”⁶

Excerpted from Appendix D: The Commission on World Mission of “That We May Know Each Other: Toward a United Church of Canada understanding of the relationship between Christianity and Islam in the Canadian context,” a statement on United Church-Muslim relations, adopted by the 39th General Council in August 2006.

³ ROP 1966, p. 426.

⁴ ROP 1966, p. 341.

⁵ ROP 1966, p. 354.

⁶ ROP 1966, p. 343.

2. The Basis and Purpose of Christian World Mission: 1974

God is constantly at work in the world. God draws men and women to Godself and restores them to full humanity. We see this full humanity in Jesus Christ, the New Man.

God's mission embraces every part of the world, every race of people, and every aspect of life. The responsibility of the Church of Jesus Christ is equally wide. This responsibility involves complete openness and interdependence in sharing God's resources.

God's mission defines the task of the Church of Jesus Christ and the vocation of its people. We find the content and style of our mission in the person and presence of Jesus Christ. We find the power to perform it in the Holy Spirit.

God's mission determines what the Church of Jesus Christ must be. God calls us to discipleship. God makes God's way known to us as we study God's Word and seek to relate it to the world. God nourishes us through the life of prayer. God builds up our fellowship in faith, hope, and love as we gather for worship and disperse for service.

God's mission determines what the Church of Jesus Christ must say. God calls the Church to speak God's liberating Word. God looks to us to point to God's activity as Creator and Provider. God demands of us prophetic utterance based on our discernment of the signs of the times. God has chosen us as the bearers of God's good news of forgiveness and new life, and as the agents through whom God calls men and women to repentance and commitment to Jesus Christ.

God's mission determines what the Church of Jesus Christ must do. God calls the Church to show forth God's redeeming love. God calls us as the community of Christ the servant, to be ourselves a servant community. God asks us to accept and care for all people as God loves all. God engages us to struggle for justice against the oppressive forces that subvert the quality of human life. The struggle for justice involves doing away with those social, economic, and political structures which exploit people. Justice demands structures which involve maximum participation of people in the exercise of political power at all levels. The Church struggles not only for the freedom of people from evil structures but for their total liberation as seen in Jesus Christ.

Effectiveness in mission calls both for boldness in proclaiming the Gospel and for willingness to receive insights from people of other faiths and convictions, constantly alert to the corrective of God's Holy Spirit. The Church, while aware of its unique calling, must cooperate with all who seek justice and mercy. It requires from us costly service for Christ, through the commitment of our lives and the stewardship of our time and possessions. Confident in God's help, the Church of Jesus Christ commits itself.

1974 Statement (edited 1991)

3. The United Church of Canada’s Understanding of “Global Partnership”: 1988, 2000—Summary statement

This summary of The United Church of Canada’s understanding of partnership in God’s mission was affirmed by the 37th General Council in 2000. The original statement approved by the 32nd General Council in 1988 follows in 1.1.4.

“Partnership” is the term that best captures the essence of how churches around the world choose to work together as equal partners out of a common commitment to God’s mission for the world.

In 1988, the General Council of The United Church of Canada affirmed a Division of World Outreach statement on partnership. In it, partnership is described as becoming involved with others in God’s mission for wholeness of life, especially with those who suffer the effects of systems of injustice. Partnership brings people together in community for mutual empowerment through the sharing of gifts. We believe that movement towards a more just, participatory society will be fostered through the building of relationships of respect, and the sharing of resources, experiences, and values among people. We acknowledge the need for mutual accountability, trust, honesty, forgiveness, and persistent love, which requires long-term commitment.

The sharing of financial resources is one aspect of partnership, but there are many others. The United Church of Canada has partnerships with national churches, ecumenical organizations, church agencies, and other organizations around the world. Some of these partnerships have evolved from overseas mission work that dates back more than 100 years. Other partnerships have evolved from more recent contact and collaboration. These partnerships have a variety of facets. Some involve the sending and receiving of personnel; others include financial sharing; some include the sharing of information or program resources; and an increasing number include a range of efforts to increase contact between members of local congregations, presbyteries, or Conferences with appropriate counterparts through exchanges, twinning arrangements, or other visits.

Resource sharing acknowledges that all are called to participate in God’s mission. Resources must be shared to enable that mission to take place. We uphold the just sharing of resources, recognizing their variety (human, financial, material), and that no one body controls all the resources for God’s mission. The United Church is one partner among many in God’s mission in the world. The goal of partners sharing equally in decisions concerning the distribution of resources was agreed upon among churches that participated in the World Consultation on Resource Sharing in 1987 at El Escorial, Spain. We are committed to applying the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Guidelines that emerged from that meeting, but ensuring the participation of partners in the decision-making of our church is a continuing challenge.

In partnership, the sharing of resources enriches peoples’ lives in a way that is more than symbolic. The act of sharing reflects our belief that all resources are God’s and that we are called to contribute to more just patterns of resource distribution. Through partnership, the

mission and witness of the churches in other parts of the world becomes part of God's mission in our country.

4. Seeking to Understand “Partnership” for God’s Mission Today: 1988, 2000

Statement of The United Church of Canada. Approved by the 32nd General Council, 1988. Re-affirmed by the 37th General Council, 2000:

Over the years, The United Church of Canada's involvement in overseas mission has undergone many changes. The process continues. In the 19th century Canadians carried the gospel to people who had never heard it. Converts were made. Small Christian communities grew and became national churches in which national leadership was developed. The missionaries stepped aside, taking roles in support of national leaders. In time, complete responsibility was assumed by nationals and missionaries were invited to fill assignments as determined by the national church.

Parallel changes have taken place in financial relationships. In the beginning, financial support came entirely from the West. In many places, however, the goal of self-support was pursued almost from the beginning. Local congregations gradually achieved self-support and eventually most denominational structures also achieved this goal. Overseas funding became less and less critical to the ongoing life of the churches. Today, most overseas funding is for special programs like theological education, pioneer evangelism, social service programs, or development programs in poorer communities. Unfortunately, the negative effects of present economic structures ensure that this kind of special funding will continue to be necessary even while churches struggle to support their own internal life and work. This, in brief, is our history.

Given this situation, what are we in the United Church suggesting when we use the word “partner” to describe our relationship with the churches or agencies with whom we work? The term suggests some kind of equality of contribution to a common task. If that were the only definition, the term would be inappropriate for the present. During the period in which nationals and missionaries shared leadership in newly emerging churches and overseas finance was still a critical component of the new churches' budget, it might have been appropriate, but is it today? To think of ourselves as full “partners” in the life and work of the churches with whom we are associated overseas is presumptuous. It is our partners in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America who make the witness, suffer the persecution, absorb the defeats, and celebrate the victories of being faithful to Christ in those places. Our level of participation makes us junior partners at best.

In fact, our partnership is not primarily in the life and work of our partners. It is rather a partnership *with* them in God's mission. As Jose Chipenda reminded us at our Division's 1987 Annual Meeting, the mission is God's mission. We believe that God has given primary responsibility for mission in any particular place to the people of that place, but not all the gifts needed for the fulfillment of mission are necessarily to be found in that place. And so we believe God calls us to be in partnership one with another, so that we can contribute to

one another the gifts we have to offer for mission. For some this understanding of mission makes the image of companion more helpful than partner as we journey together in God's mission in this ever more interdependent Global Village world.

If this is an accurate description, then we have a problem. If we have some role in God's mission with our partners overseas, then is it not a natural corollary that they must have some role in partnership with us in God's mission in this country? We try to recognize this through our Mutuality in Mission program, but how deeply has this awareness permeated the thinking of United Church people? In particular, how conscious are people of our church's role as one partner *among many* in God's mission to the world? How many see the work of the Division of World Outreach as facilitating that kind of cooperation between partners? Many, unfortunately, still see the DWO as the Division with responsibility to carry out the United Church's mission to the rest of the world.

The United Church of Canada has been a supporter of the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources program of the World Council of Churches. If this program is to have any reality in the life of The United Church of Canada, the whole church must see itself as one partner among many needing to share its gifts and receive the gifts of others so that God's mission can be faithfully pursued. The DWO can facilitate the sharing of the gifts our church has to offer our partners, but until the whole United Church knows itself to be involved in a sharing process we will never be able to adequately facilitate the sharing of our partner's gifts within The United Church of Canada.

In keeping with the above understanding of partnership, the Division has attempted to define the nature of the relationships it maintains with partners overseas.

Partnership means becoming involved with others in God's mission for wholeness of life especially on behalf of the poor and powerless. Partnership brings people together in community for mutual empowerment through the sharing of gifts, recognized as gifts freely given by God for the benefit of all, not possessions which some may control. We need the gifts our partners can share with us. They have gifts of spiritual and theological insight, of faithfulness in witness, the experience of costly discipleship. We acknowledge that these gifts carry a higher value in kingdom terms than some we offer. 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 recognize 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.

August 1988

5. Mending the World: Whole World Ecumenism: 1997

The 36th General Council in August 1997 approved the report *Mending the World*, which contained the distillation of a decade-long conversation with the church on the subject of ecumenism. In 1992, the 34th General Council had authorized its Interchurch Interfaith Committee to issue the study document “Toward a Renewed Understanding of Ecumenism.”

The *Mending the World* report included the responses of literally hundreds of people to the study document. The process laid bare the strong conviction among church members that God, who loves this world, works for its mending, and calls the church to make this work its first priority.

Among other things, the 36th General Council in August 1997:

Affirmed the *Mending the World* report

- for clearly linking the United Church’s historic and ongoing commitment to be both a united and uniting church with “God’s work of healing, sharing the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and making common cause with all people of good will, whether they be of faith or not, for the creation of a world that is just, participatory and sustainable”
- as a lens through which the work of the Church can be reviewed and assessed in terms of the whole world understanding of ecumenism

Committed itself

- to continue and build on “our historic commitment to seek the unity of the body of Christ”
- to continue to nurture and foster faithful relationships with others in the Christian family, in national and global inter-church structures, through the ecumenical coalitions, and with partner churches around the world
- at the same time to seek conversations and partnerships in mission with other sisters and brothers in God’s wider human family
- to use the *Mending the World* report as a lens through which all the work of the General Council is reviewed on an ongoing basis

Offered to the whole United Church

- the *Mending the World* document, and especially its “Affirmations”, as a resource and tool for use as a lens through which individuals and households, congregations and other mission units may prioritize their response to God’s call to commit ourselves and our resources to work with God for the transformation and healing of the whole human family in a universe that is respected as the creation of God

Invited congregations

- to review their mission statements and activities through the lens of the report

- to pursue actively partnerships for mission with other Christian communities and other faith communities and all people who seek healing and wholeness in God’s world.

Invited presbyteries and Conferences

- to support congregations as they deepen and strengthen their faithful participation in God’s mission
- to encourage increased support of the Mission and Service Fund
- to review their mission statements and activities through the lens of the report and to encourage related corporations to do the same.

Excerpts from *Mending the World Report*

Prelude

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel used to tell the story that when God, the Holy One, gets up in the morning, God gathers the angels of heaven around and asks this simple question: “Where does my creation need mending today?” And then Rabbi Heschel would continue, “Theology consists of worrying about what God worries about when God gets up in the morning.”

Margaret Atwood writes, “The facts of this world seen clearly are seen through tears; why tell me then there is something wrong with my eyes?”

“As [Jesus] came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, ‘If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace!’” (Luke 19)

We hold the conviction that the world is at the centre of God’s concern. In the words of the Psalmist, “The earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it, the world and those who dwell therein.” (24:1) The world is at risk because there are those who, refusing to see through tears, seek dominion and use the instruments of military, economic, political and cultural power to that end. God, who sees clearly through tears, is grieved by the estrangement of God’s children from one another and from the created order. God works, at the beginning of the day as at the end, for the mending of creation.

Life in the “whole inhabited earth” (oikoumene) is life in relationship. We are bound up with one another and with the world of nature—not just to our kinfolk, or our kind.

We are thus led to speak of “whole world ecumenism,” naming the search for justice for God’s creatures and healing for God’s creation as the church’s first priority, and joining with other persons of good will in the search for justice, wholeness and love.

Our passion for the transformation of the world is rooted in our relationship to God in Jesus Christ. God, who is absolute love, mercy and justice, yearns for mending of creation, calling us to see the world through God’s tears, and to bend ourselves as church to the task of “worrying about what God worries about when God gets up in the morning.”

An Affirmation

We believe that the Church's passion to be involved in the transformation of the world is grounded in its relationship to God in Jesus Christ⁷

We believe that God calls the Church
to do separately only what it cannot do with others
to care for itself in order to care for others
to set basic human needs above institutional enrichment
to give and not to count the cost⁸

We believe that God calls the Church to help build a culture
of non-violence and respect
of solidarity and just economic relationships
of tolerance and truthfulness
of equal rights and partnership between men and women⁹

We believe that God calls the Church
to profess its faith in ways that honour God's love for all people and creation
to make decisions that demonstrate an unqualified commitment
to justice, peace and compassion
to work in partnership with all who seek the health and well-being
of the whole creation
to discern and celebrate God's Spirit
in people of other religions¹⁰ and ideologies
to stand first with the poor¹¹

We believe that God calls the Church
to do justice and love kindness
to show courage in the face of evil
to seek reformation for itself and society
to share God's liberating and empowering work
to trust in God¹²

We believe that God yearns for the healing of all creation, and calls the Church to share that yearning by joining now with other persons of good will in the search for justice, wholeness and love. (*From Mending the World report, 1997*)

⁷ Santiago de Compostella, WCC, 1995

⁸ St. Ignatius Loyola

⁹ Stanza based upon the Global Ethic, 1993

¹⁰ Stanza based upon the chapter 'Whole World Ecumenism' in the study document "Toward a Renewed Understanding of Ecumenism", 1994, (phr. 1-3), the Report of the Commission on World Mission, 1996, (phr. 4).

¹¹ 'In his beatitudes, his healings, and his table fellowship with outcasts and sinners, Jesus declares God's special concern for the oppressed. God sides with the poor, not because of their virtue, but because of the suffering; not because of their suffering but because they have been sinned against.' (from "Engaging the Powers," Walter Wink, p. 112).

¹² Stanza based upon Micah 6.8 and the Creed of The United Church of Canada.
Policy Handbook for Overseas Personnel
The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada

6. Statement and Affirmations on Global Partnership: 2008

In 2006 The Executive of the General Council authorized a review of United Church partnership principles, practices and guidelines in the context of empire. A two-year review process led was received in November 2008 by the Executive of the General Council.

The Executive of the General Council

1. approved the “Statement on Global Partnership” (2008) as affirmations to guide the global partnership work of The United Church of Canada for this time, and directed the General Secretary, General Council, to develop and implement a comprehensive educational plan
2. directed the General Secretary, General Council, to explore options for more effective consultation with global partners concerning programming and budgeting decisions that have an impact on global partnership
3. affirmed the goal of increased participation of the whole church and, specifically, of congregations in global partnership through the continued development of programs that strengthen this engagement
4. celebrated and affirmed the many expressions of global partnership emerging in the church as expressions of the church’s commitment to engage in God’s mission and called the church to live out the values and principles identified in the “Statement on Global Partnership”

A Statement on Global Partnership (2008)

God is Holy Mystery, beyond complete knowledge, above perfect description. Yet, in love, the one eternal God seeks relationship.

So God creates the universe and with it the possibility of being and relating. God tends the universe, mending the broken and reconciling the estranged.

God enlivens the universe, guiding all things toward harmony with their Source.

In and with God, we can direct our lives toward right relationship with each other and with God. We can discover our place as one strand in the web of life. We can grow in wisdom and compassion. We can recognize all people as kin.

(from A Song of Faith)

Therefore The United Church of Canada affirms the following principles to guide its practice of global partnership:

1. Right Relations at the Heart of God’s Mission. The United Church of Canada continues to learn from a history of engagement with the experiences of partners in the global South, marginalized peoples, and partners in justice throughout Canada. In particular, from the experience of First Nations’ peoples and from the contribution of feminist thought, the church is learning to speak of striving for right relations at the heart of God’s mission. *The church believes that right relationships flow from an understanding that relationship is central to the nature of God and that the Spirit calls us to live relationships that reflect Christ’s character of justice and love.*

2. Resistance to Principalities and Powers. Jesus, whom we seek to follow, announced the coming of God’s reign, not of domination but of peace, justice, and reconciliation, and therefore calls us to struggle against the principalities and powers that seek to undermine a world of justice and love. The world is at risk because there are those who seek domination and use the instruments of military, economic, political and cultural power to that end. The church’s participation in God’s mission of necessity involves resistance to these powers of empire. The church believes the primary mechanisms of resistance involve the creation of alternative communities, based in right relationships that seek a transformed world. The injustice of our world finds primary expression in concentrations of wealth in nations and individuals through continuing net transfers of wealth that impoverish the global South and benefit the global North. *The United Church of Canada and its members, who are complicit in and benefit from this global transfer, are called to work with partners in Canada and throughout the world for systemic change in support of just economic systems and a world transformed by love.*

3. Global Partnerships Are Lived Expressions of Right Relationships. “Global partnerships,” the expression that we use to speak of our shared work in God’s mission with churches and organizations around the world, are first and foremost to be lived expressions of the right relationships toward which God calls us. This means that partnerships will give attention to the values that guide them, seeking to deepen understanding and practice to more fully model for the world relationships based on respect, mutuality, trust, reciprocity, and transparency. Deep listening and mutual learning are fundamental characteristics of partnership. Partnership finds expression through differing identities of language, culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, and many other factors that frame our perceptions and interaction with one another. *The church is called to pay attention to how different identities impact the ways in which decisions are made and to whose voices are heard in the functioning of global partnerships.*

4. Humility and Critical Self-Reflection. In a postcolonial context of mission, the church continues to live into the meaning of past histories of mission, including the historic mission among First Nations people in Canada and global mission of the past two centuries. The non-Native church’s inability to understand the depth of spirituality of First Nations peoples in Canada, and, globally, the complicity of the church with imperial and colonial powers and the confusion of gospel and culture all reveal an arrogance that denied the essence of respect at the heart of right relationships. *Humility and critical self-reflection are essential characteristics for participation of the church in God’s mission for this time. The church, however, is called not to paralysis but to boldness in its search for renewed patterns and models of engagement in partnership.*

5. God’s Mission Is Meant to Be Undertaken in Partnership. Because right relationships are at the heart of God’s mission we believe that mission is meant to be undertaken in partnership. In part, we believe that this is so because no one community has the full resources needed for God’s mission. Money is never alone sufficient; wisdom, vision, activity, creativity, and friendship are all needed for the fullness of God’s purposes. Learning to receive from partners is a particularly challenging skill for the church to adopt as it seeks to work in partnership. Most important, our experience has taught us the importance of

partnership in God's mission as a faithful check on our tendency to view the world and God's mission through perceptions moulded by complicity in empire. In other words, partners need each other to see the world and themselves more clearly. *The church is called, therefore, to seek partnerships in all aspects of its participation in God's mission.*

6. Resource-Sharing Is Fundamental. Because we live in a world of profound financial inequality, resource-sharing remains a fundamental component of global partnership. The unjust distribution of resources in the world means that particular care must be given to theological questions of ownership of resources and shared power and decision-making over their distribution. *The church believes that its resources are entrusted to it by God for effective partnership in God's mission and, therefore, that careful attention must be paid to how financial decisions reflect a commitment to shared power.*

7. Ecological Justice. The church believes that living in right relationship means acknowledging the interconnection of all of creation. Our engagements in global partnership cannot be separated from our commitments to the sustainability of creation. God's mission, the United Church has affirmed, is concerned with healing the whole world and bringing all of creation into relationships of mutual respect. All activities addressed toward partnership, whether concerned with human rights, ecological justice, peace making, or relief and development are interrelated and mutually dependent. *In global partnership, the church is committed to caring for the integrity of creation and in its practices of partnership limiting the ecological impact of its activities.*

8. Justice and Charity. God calls us in right relationship to address the brokenness of our human life and community. The church seeks not only to address the immediate suffering present in the world but also to address the habitual and systemic forms of injustice, violence, and hatred that sustain the present suffering. Acts of love and immediate responses to human suffering (sometimes called charity), must never be disparaged because relieving suffering is always the first claim of right relationship. Yet charity alone denies the fullness of love found in justice and undermines the fullest demands of the right relationships that God requires of us. *The church is called to celebrate acts of love that address direct human suffering while upholding transformative justice as the expected outcome of all forms of partnership.*

9. Partnership with People of Other Faiths and Beliefs. We believe that God's call to right relationship is to the whole world, and anyone who seeks the healing of creation is involved in God's mission. Partnership in God's mission is necessary between people of different faiths and beliefs. Indeed, we believe that God's call to right relationship invites us to break through barriers of belief, language, and culture for the sake of the world which God loves. *The church will continue to seek out partnerships that encompass and extend beyond traditional boundaries of faith and belief.*

10. Partnership Involves the Whole Church. Global partnership is meant to transform the world, including ourselves. We affirm that it is a process into which God calls the whole church. The United Church will maintain a strong national global partnership presence, and will seek ways of expanding avenues for participation of congregations, community ministries, educational centres, and others in these relationships. This will of necessity involve innovative approaches, especially in the context of reduced funding capacity. The

church also affirms the many varied expressions of partnership that are emerging at local and regional levels as signs of responsiveness to God’s mission. *The church will seek to provide resources and advice to ensure that these initiatives are reflective of the best principles and practices of global partnership.*

7. Principal Reasons Why The United Church of Canada Sends Personnel to Overseas Partners

The United Church of Canada seeks to share with partner churches and agencies in other parts of the world in God’s mission, embodied in Jesus Christ, for wholeness, love, and justice for all people and creation.

1. To respond to a request from an overseas partner

The initiative comes from the overseas partner; we do not create the position or need. In dialogue with our partners, we explore how, when, and where United Church personnel can be meaningfully involved with them in doing God’s mission in their context.

2. To provide solidarity and nurture partnership

As members of the Christian community, we attempt to share with people overseas in their life and mission with its struggles and victories, sorrows, and joys. This involves empathetic participation and fellowship. It helps put a human face on partnership, making it more viable and real, especially at the grassroots level.

3. To provide skills

We attempt to fulfill a direct need by providing particular skills; people sent with the skills requested are present in the overseas context as co-workers.

4. To experience the gospel with new eyes

There are many aspects of the gospel that we have not experienced in our Canadian context. We go to learn the gospel through “new eyes.”

5. To share our faith perspective

We go to share our understanding of the gospel of Christ with love and sensitivity for the people and their culture.

6. To interpret the mission of the church back in Canada

Using our overseas experiences and learnings, we interpret the mission of the global church to Canadians.

7. To work for global justice

By making local and global connections, we assist Canadians in their understanding of economic and political structures that perpetuate injustice in all its forms. We then facilitate and support appropriate actions that lead to greater global justice.

8. To be an advocate

We have a responsibility to advocate for the people who have shared their lives with us. We can be a voice for the voiceless in national and international forums, while we work toward the time when all will be heard.

Approved by the Global Mission Personnel Committee, Division of World Outreach, 1998

1.2. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. **The *El Escorial Principles on the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources*—World Council of Churches (1987)**

The United Church adopted the El Escorial Principles (www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/regional/life.html), the result of the World Council of Churches' Consultation on Ecumenical Sharing of Resources, held in El Escorial, Spain, in 1987 as the basis for understanding and practising resource sharing with partners.

2. **Gender Justice Guidelines—Division of World Outreach, The United Church of Canada (1988)**

In 1998, the former Division of World Outreach of The United Church of Canada held a four-day consultation to engage in a process of looking at gender justice and its relationship to partnership. The consultation was an attempt to further deepen the DWO's commitment to living out the goals of the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women in Church and Society. There were 30 participants, including nine global partners, members of the United Church from across Canada, and several United Church staff. The result of that process is a document we refer to as the Gender Justice and Partnership Guidelines (www.united-church.ca/files/partners/genderjustice.pdf [PDF 14 pp/62 KB]).

In 2002 much of the work of the former Division of World Outreach moved to the newly created Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations Unit of The United Church of Canada. The Gender Justice and Partnership Guidelines continue to be a living embodiment of our commitment to transform structures and systems within the United Church to be faithful to God's vision for humanity and to engage with global partners in a mutual struggle to promote gender justice. Work continues on the implementation and tracking of how the guidelines are being used.

3. **To Seek Justice and Resist Evil: Towards a Global Economy for All God's People—37th General Council, The United Church of Canada (2000)**

The 37th General Council in August 2000 received the Division of World Outreach document *To Seek Justice and Resist Evil: Towards a Global Economy for All God's People* (www.united-church.ca/sales/publications/400000040) and recommended it for study and implementation in all spheres of the church's life. The document called The United Church of Canada to see global economic injustice, to discern or judge what this means for our Christian faith, and to act in common mission for justice. Based on stories from global partners, it challenges us to a deepened understanding of the global economy and appropriate action for justice.

4. Living Faithfully in the Context of Empire—39th General Council, The United Church of Canada (2006)

“In the 21st century world of empire, Caesar commands, God calls. Whom will we serve?” With this question—indeed, challenge—begins *Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire* (www.united-church.ca/economic/globalization/report), a report produced by the Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations (JGER) Unit for the 39th General Council.

The Empire Report, as it is commonly called, builds on *To Seek Justice and Resist Evil: Towards a Global Economy for all God’s People* (approved by General Council in 2000), which described, analyzed, and denounced “the global reality of systemic economic injustice.” The Empire Report documents how economic globalization is becoming more complex and insidious and is exponentially increasing the pain and misery experienced by the vast majority of God’s people.

5. A Song of Faith—39th General Council, The United Church of Canada (2006)

The 37th General Council (2000) directed the Committee on Theology and Faith “to produce the draft of a timely and contextual statement of faith, with a view to circulation throughout the whole church for study and response while honouring the diversity of our church and acknowledging our place in a pluralistic world and in an ongoing and developing tradition of faith, with interim reporting to the 38th General Council.”

In a subsequent motion, the General Council also directed that “in the preparation of a timely and contextual statement of faith, the Committee on Theology and Faith give priority to engaging the church in conversation on the nature of the church (ecclesiology), ministry and sacraments” (37th General Council, *Record of Proceedings 2000*, p. 191).

The Committee on Theology and Faith invited congregations, groups, individuals, and ecumenical and interfaith partners to participate in the conversation and consultation process for the development of a new statement of faith. This Committee presented the proposed statement of faith to the 39th General Council in 2006. The English version (www.united-church.ca/beliefs/statements/songfaith) was approved by that General Council. The French version was completed and authorized for use in 2007.

6. Call to Purpose—39th General Council, The United Church of Canada (2006)

“Call to Purpose: A message from the church to the church” (www.united-church.ca/files/organization/governance/calltopurpose.pdf [PDF: 1 p/25 KB]) was affirmed by the United Church’s 39th General Council in 2006. The Council directed it to the Executive of the General Council to inform the Executive as it gives leadership to the church in its expression of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

7. Reviewing Partnership in the Context of Empire—The Executive of the General Council, The United Church of Canada (2008)

The United Church has partnerships with organizations around the world. We are united with these partners in our commitment to fulfilling God’s global mission.

Because the context for engaging in mission is continually affected by social, economic, and political changes, it’s appropriate periodically to review the principles on which these partnerships are based, and the way in which they are lived out.

The United Church, in close consultation with global partners, reviewed its principles and practices of global partnership in 2007–08. This review was grounded in recent articulations of the nature of empire and the call to live faithfully in resistance to its forces.

The report “Reviewing Partnership in the Context of Empire” (www.united-church.ca/files/partners/global/partnership_review.pdf [PDF: 28 pp/145 KB]) was approved by the Executive of the General Council in November 2008.

2. THE JUSTICE, GLOBAL AND ECUMENICAL RELATIONS UNIT

2.1 Mandate

The General Council's Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations Unit shall have lead responsibility for justice initiatives, global partnerships, and ecumenical and interfaith relations;

Offer leadership that strengthens the church's engagement in God's mission embodied in Jesus Christ of justice, peace, and care of creation, locally and globally, facilitating the sharing of resources with global, ecumenical, and interfaith partners.

As approved by General Council Executive, 2001

2.2 Unit Vision, Purpose, and Goals (2009)

Vision

Called to live faithfully in the context of empire and informed by the witness of our partners, we are inspired by "A Song of Faith" in which *we sing of God's good news lived out, a church with purpose:*

*faith nurtured and hearts comforted,
gifts shared for the good of all,
resistance to the forces that exploit and marginalize,
fierce love in the face of violence,
human dignity defended,
members of community held and inspired by God,
corrected and comforted,
Instrument of the loving Spirit of Christ,
creation's mending.*

We sing of God's mission.

(excerpt from "A Song of Faith," statement of faith approved by the 39th General Council, 2006)

Statement of Purpose

As the JGER Unit, we commit to working collaboratively with the courts of the church, with General Council units, with ecumenical partners, and with people's movements, networks and groups

- to prophetically proclaim with the whole church God's mission of justice, peace, and love
- to resist and challenge systems of exploitation and marginalization
- to work for transformative justice in church and society

- to build sustainable Earth community and life-giving economies
- to ensure the mutual and just sharing of God's resources for the realization of God's mission
- to be a learning community open to self-examination, that is transformed by our engagement in the church and the world
- to celebrate signs of God's grace—daring witness for all life—manifested in the work for justice

Goals

1. That The United Church of Canada embraces justice-making as integral to faith and mission.
2. Congregations and individuals, courts and ministries of the United Church engage in education, theological reflection, social analysis, advocacy, and action for a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.
3. The United Church of Canada and Canadian, Aboriginal, and global partners share gifts, human, financial, and other resources, in a just and equitable way, so that all may participate in God's mission for fullness of life.
4. Deepen right relationships of accompaniment, solidarity, mutual respect, and accountability with ecumenical and interfaith partners, grassroots organizations, local communities, people's movements, and ecumenical, interfaith, and multi-sectoral networks.
5. Engage with Canadian, Aboriginal, and global partners in public witness and advocacy, addressing systemic injustice, critical needs and care of creation, for just, equitable, and sustainable communities.

(Adopted by the JGER Unit Committee, April 18, 2009)

3. THE WORK AND RELATIONSHIPS OF OVERSEAS PERSONNEL

3.1 The Role of Overseas Personnel

The United Church of Canada participates in mission through relationships with partner churches and agencies overseas. As a result of personnel needs identified in consultations with these partners, the JGER Unit recruits and sends overseas personnel. Overseas personnel are appointed to work within the structures of the partner church or agency, and to be responsible and accountable to authorities within those structures. It is expected that overseas personnel, with God's help, will become integrated into the life and work of the partner church or agency, working in an atmosphere of mutual cooperation, respect, and loyalty.

The United Church accepts financial responsibility for overseas personnel according to the terms of the appointment negotiated and agreed to by overseas personnel, JGER Unit, and the partner church or agency. The partner church or agency is responsible for day-to-day supervision, support, and assignment of tasks for overseas personnel within the confines of the appointment. Although overseas personnel are responsible to the United Church, the partner church or agency to which they are appointed becomes the direct supervisor. Overseas personnel should expect to be treated in the same manner as are national colleagues within the partner's structures, having the same rights and entitlements, while being subject to the same restrictions, frustrations, and disciplinary measures.

If for any reason it should prove impossible to accept this role, overseas personnel must inform the United Church and ask to be removed. Similarly, the partner church or agency has the right to request that the United Church withdraw a person if it considers that the overseas personnel can no longer function constructively in the position to which the person was appointed.

3.2 Relationship to Government of Country of Residence

(Paraphrased from the Minutes of the 24th General Council, 1972, page 203)

Expatriate overseas personnel enter a sovereign state not by right, but by invitation. It is expected that overseas personnel will respect and obey the national laws and duly constituted authorities of the nation in which they are living. However, particularly when confronted by a situation in which basic human rights are violated and social injustices perpetrated, the receiving partner church or agency, the sending church, and overseas personnel may feel called by God and the tenets of the Christian faith to make statements that have political connotations and may be regarded by the authorities within the nation as subversive. Overseas personnel in such a situation should be guided by faithfulness to God's call, attention to the consequences to the receiving church or agency and its people, the wisdom and experience of the receiving partner, and United Church Global Partnership staff.

3.3 Relationship with National Colleagues

The nature of the calling to serve overseas and the selection process itself tend to result in the appointment of highly skilled, strongly motivated individuals who look upon their assignment overseas as an exciting and challenging opportunity to work toward God's realm.

The United Church expects overseas personnel to remain sensitive to the fact that, although they have much to offer in their field of expertise, they are living and working in a culture that is not theirs. The adjustment to cultural differences in work styles, work, and personal relationships is one that takes emotional energy, commitment, sensitivity, and time. The fresh perspectives and new enthusiasms brought to the partner church or agency by overseas personnel must always be balanced by the experienced knowledge of overseas colleagues.

Overseas personnel may, on rare occasions, be approached by authorities within the receiving nation and asked to provide information about the receiving partner church or agency and/or its personnel. It is not the role of overseas personnel to participate in such activities or to act in any way that may damage a partner or overseas colleagues.

The witness of overseas personnel is strengthened as it demonstrates the patience, kindness, and love of Christ. It is expected that overseas personnel and national colleagues will work together to create a living and working environment of mutual tolerance and respect.

3.4 Relationship to The United Church of Canada

The relationship of overseas personnel to the United Church is twofold:

As Appointees of The United Church of Canada

An agreement is signed, the terms of which are stated in the individual contracts agreed to by the United Church's JGER Unit, the overseas personnel, and the partner, and which are defined by the guidelines in this handbook.

Overseas personnel relate to the United Church primarily through the JGER Unit and specifically the People in Partnership Program Coordinator and the appropriate Regional Program Coordinator. In Canada, the primary staff contact and supervisor for overseas personnel is the People in Partnership Program Coordinator (before departure and during home assignment). In the country of service, overseas personnel are responsible to and relate to the JGER Unit through the appropriate Regional Program Coordinator.

The United Church has the right to recall overseas personnel if, after consultation with the person and the agency with which the person is serving, this course of action is deemed advisable.

As Colleagues in Mission

Overseas personnel and the United Church are complementary participants in mission, with special responsibility for related ministries outside Canada and Bermuda. The United Church is concerned about assisting overseas personnel so they may be well-equipped for the work to which God has called them. The United Church is deeply concerned about the future directions in mission, about the changing roles of overseas personnel, priorities in mission, involvement in critical issues of social justice, greater mutuality in mission with overseas churches, and other aspects of involvement in mission around the world. The insights of overseas personnel on these and other issues are essential and are valued by the United Church at large. For that reason, overseas personnel are invited to consider these and other issues and to communicate frequently with the United Church expressing their reflections, ideas, and concerns. In return, it is expected that overseas personnel will constantly seek to promote mutual goodwill and confidence between the United Church and the overseas agencies the church seeks to serve.

Overseas personnel who have returned on home assignment and are living in Canada at the time may be asked to participate in a JGER Unit Committee Meeting within six months of their return to Canada.

3.5 Relationship to the Mission and Service Fund

The appointment and service of overseas personnel is made possible through the United Church's Mission and Service Fund and its unified budget. Overseas personnel should not solicit special gifts of funds or resources from Canada at any time, nor promote any project outside The United Church of Canada's budget. All overseas personnel are expected to encourage support of the regular work of the United Church through the Mission and Service Fund.

Where unsolicited special gifts are offered, overseas personnel are free to accept them, but any donation in excess of \$50.00 received by a person for her/his work or for any purpose that is not purely personal shall be reported to the church or other agency under which the person serves and shall be used as directed by such agency.

Special gifts to be used overseas, and for which a Canadian tax receipt has been issued, must be forwarded through the United Church General Council Office. These gifts will be forwarded on a quarterly basis from the General Council Office through overseas partners. Only gifts for legitimate work of our partners may be accepted.

3.6 United Church Property and Furnishings

No property may be purchased in the name of The United Church of Canada or its JGER Unit, or any United Church property sold, or any major construction undertaken on United Church property (regardless of the source of the funds) without the approval of the United Church. The sale of any property registered in the name of The United Church of Canada

requires authorization by the General Council or the Executive of General Council, on the recommendation of the United Church's JGER Unit Committee.

Overseas personnel may not use United Church or partner agency funds for the purchase of property overseas. If overseas personnel use personal savings for the purchase of land or the erection of buildings, they do so without claim on the United Church for reimbursement and they accept all liabilities related thereto.

Furnishings provided and paid for by The United Church of Canada should be sold or disposed of in consultation with JGER. If sold, the proceeds of the sale are to be determined by the JGER Unit.

3.7 Annual Reports

All overseas personnel are required to submit an annual report of the work in which they have been engaged, including copies of reports made to the church or agency where they are serving. As these reports serve a wide variety of purposes, the following points should be kept in mind in their preparation:

1. They are read and studied by staff and members of the JGER Unit.
2. They are used in preparing the JGER Unit reports and resources.
3. They provide supplementary material for other publications, either directly as complete articles, as illustrations of a general topic, or as resource material for stories and background information.
4. They are useful to other writers preparing study books and other mission education materials.

While the complete report of each person may not be published, it is important that these annual reports contain an account of the highlights and special aspects of the year's work, as well as regular activities. Where two or more overseas personnel are jointly involved in one piece of work, they may prepare separate reports, or a joint report bearing both signatures.

Overseas personnel are encouraged to report on their problems and frustrations as well as on their satisfactions and successes. If, however, personnel wish to write on matters of a confidential nature for the information of JGER Unit or other General Council staff, this material should be written on a separate sheet that will not be circulated.

Annual reports should be sent to the JGER Unit by January 15 of each year, with a copy to the appropriate authority in the area of service. Reports should be forwarded to the appropriate Regional Program Coordinator in the JGER Unit.

3.8 Relationship to the Church in Canada

3.8.1 Through Mission Interpretation

The JGER Unit seeks a variety of ways to engage Canadians and overseas partners in active relationship. Essential to this process is the mission interpretation work of overseas personnel.

“Letters from Overseas” are a rich source of firsthand information to the constituency of the United Church. They share information about the life and issues of the partners with whom the overseas personnel work in order to strengthen the capacity of Canadians to understand global realities and engage in appropriate solidarity action.

“Letters from Overseas” are sent to the Education for Justice staff of the JGER Unit and then prepared for distribution. These letters are also circulated to United Church publications for their use.

In addition, overseas personnel are encouraged to write articles for *Minutes for Mission*, *The Observer*, *Mandate*, and other publications.

During home assignment, overseas personnel are expected to undertake mission interpretation in their home Conference and sometimes in other Conferences. Mission interpretation plans are a result of consultation among overseas personnel, the home conference, and the People in Partnership Program Coordinator.

3.8.2 Through Appointment as Commissioners to General Council

Overseas personnel who are appointed by the United Church shall not be eligible for election as commissioners to the General Council by a Conference, but overseas personnel who are members of the United Church shall be entitled to representation at each General Council on the basis of one commissioner for every 18 such overseas personnel, but in any case at least three commissioners, chosen as follows:

1. Normally, there shall be an equal number of members of the Order of Ministry and lay members, and at least one commissioner from each of the major areas of the work of the JGER Unit.
2. Such commissioners shall be elected by ballot from the overseas personnel, who will be on home assignment in Canada at the time of the meeting of the General Council.
3. The appropriate General Council working unit shall furnish the General Secretary of the General Council with a list of all its overseas personnel who will be on home assignment in Canada at the time of the meeting of the General Council, and the General Secretary of the General Council, in consultation with the lead staff of the appropriate General Council working unit, shall prepare the ballot, send out the same, receive the returned ballots, and report the result thereof to the lead staff of the appropriate General Council working unit and to the elected commissioners. (See *The Manual, 2007*, of The United Church of Canada, Basis of Union Section 8.4 and By-Law 502.)

4. THE APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEAS PERSONNEL

4.1 The Basis of Appointment

The United Church appoints overseas personnel in response to requests from overseas partner churches and agencies. It is the policy of The United Church of Canada to give consideration to each partner-approved request.

4.2 Candidates for Appointment

The United Church appoints men and women, either single or as couples, with or without dependent children, based on the qualifications and acceptability of the applicant to fulfill the requirements of the position identified by the partner church or agency.

When applicants apply as couples, normally each spouse is appointed as overseas personnel. Each is subject to the same review of personal qualifications and selection procedure even though only one spouse may be assigned to a position with an overseas partner.

4.3 Qualifications

Qualifications are of two kinds, professional and personal.

1. Professional:

Normally, qualifications shall be the same as required for exercise of the profession in Canada, or as specified by a requesting agency. The expectation is that the applicant will have both training and experience in her/his particular vocation.

2. Personal:

- a. A sound Christian faith, a deep personal commitment to Christ. The expectation is that the candidate will be an active member of a Canadian church, seeking to live out the gospel as a member of his/her community of faith as well as in the community at large.
- b. Character and personality such as to commend the Christian faith to others.
- c. Ability to cooperate and work closely with others on a team; willingness to live under the authority of others and to subordinate personal points of view in the interests of group harmony.
- d. Intellectual discipline and alertness.
- e. Good physical condition, mental and emotional stability and maturity; good self-esteem; in touch with her/his own needs, strengths, and limitations.
- f. Indication of adaptability and flexibility in dealing with change and ambiguities, with a demonstrated capacity to cope with the unusual.
- g. Willingness and ability to live a simple lifestyle.

- h. Sensitivity to cultural diversity and awareness of global issues and events.
 - i. Commitment to global justice.
 - j. Commitment to learning another language and culture, including openness to learning what the gospel means in that cultural context.
 - k. Acceptance of The United Church of Canada's understanding of mission and partnership.
 - l. Willingness to work under the direction of the partner.
3. Some Limitations:
- a. Applications are not encouraged from people for at least one year after a major life change (e.g., marriage, separation, divorce, widowed, etc.).
 - b. Normally, applications are not encouraged from families with children who are teenagers. Exceptions can be made, but only after very careful consideration of the advisability of doing so.
 - c. Applications are not encouraged until five years have elapsed following alcohol or drug rehabilitation.
 - d. Applicants who are not members of The United Church of Canada, or who have received their theological training in an institution not affiliated with or accredited by the United Church, may be required to state their position regarding the Statement of Faith and policy of The United Church of Canada.

4.4 Types of Overseas Personnel Appointments

The United Church of Canada appoints overseas personnel in one of three “streams”, or as “associates”:

1. **Stream “A” Standard** appointments are for an initial term of four years that may be renewable. A mid-term home assignment period is planned after two years of service. These positions receive compensation similar to United Church clergy, with benefits and pension. Travel, housing, and insurance are also provided. **Stream “A” Specialist** appointments are for personnel with specific skills and cross-cultural competence (including necessary language skills) who are called to a short period of overseas service, based on the explicit needs of the partner churches or institution.
2. **Stream “B”** appointments are for terms of six months to two years. Individuals receive “stipend-based” compensation in the form of a living allowance, as well as travel, insurance, housing and other support. Individuals may contribute to financial costs.
3. Short-term, **Stream “C”** appointments are usually six months or less. No compensation is provided. Individuals may contribute to their financial support. Travel, insurance, and accommodation are usually provided.
4. **Overseas Personnel Associates** are individuals appointed to partner organizations that assume complete responsibility for salary and all other benefits, including international travel costs.

Global Learning Opportunities (internships, self-funded sabbatical possibilities and self-funded volunteer positions) are offered by a number of United Church global partner

organizations. These opportunities are usually short-term, ranging from several weeks to several months, and focus on learning and exposure as well as skill-sharing. In most cases, costs of global learning opportunities are self-funded, and the full responsibility of participating individuals. Some financial support is available for youth and young adults.

4.5 Non-discrimination in Appointments

Candidates for overseas service through the JGER Unit of The United Church of Canada are chosen on the basis of ability, qualifications, and suitability for an open position. Because some overseas partner organizations may impose conditions or limitations, it might not be possible to appoint certain otherwise qualified candidates for certain positions. If the JGER Unit considers such conditions or limitations to be reasonable in the circumstances, it may appoint the best-qualified candidate who satisfies the conditions or limitations that have been imposed by the partner.

4.6 Procedures Leading to Appointment

1. After an initial inquiry to the Conference or the JGER Unit at the General Council Office, the inquirer will be asked to meet informally with the Conference Global Mission Personnel Facilitator (whose contact information is on the United Church listing of requests from overseas partners), *or* the national People in Partnership Program Coordinator for an initial personal contact.
2. The interview with the Conference Global Mission Facilitator provides an opportunity for inquirers to share information about education, experience, and motivation on an Initial Information Form. The Facilitator will share information about current requests for personnel from United Church partners and the process for application and appointment with the United Church.
3. Where there is the possibility of a suitable overseas position, normally the inquirer will participate in a two day Mission Discernment Event as arranged by the People in Partnership Program Coordinator. This is an opportunity to meet other inquirers and to explore goals, gifts, and limitations as they are related to being a person in mission overseas. Together, participants try to discern how God is active in the world, what the mission challenges are in today's world, and what the role of the church and ourselves, as individuals, might be in an overseas context.
4. The applicant will complete the Application Form, which includes a statement of Christian faith and motivation for service overseas, and provide five references.
5. The applicant will participate in a psychological assessment and discernment process conducted by the JGER Unit's psychological consultant. A summary, confidential report is prepared for the People in Partnership Program Coordinator. Information is shared as background for the interview committee on a need-to-know basis only.
6. The applicant will be interviewed by an interview committee mandated by the JGER Unit Committee. Appointment is made by the JGER Unit Committee on the recommendation of the interview committee.

7. All appointments are subject to the following conditions:
 - i. a positive recommendation for overseas service from the JGER Unit's medical consultant based on a thorough medical examination, and approval of application for insurance from the JGER Unit's overseas medical insurance carrier
 - ii. a satisfactory outcome from a Police Records Check through the Canadian Police Information Centre via the RCMP
 - iii. partner approval
8. The candidate will attend the ecumenical orientation course in July or January or a designated equivalent.

The screening process usually takes at least five to six months. For some countries, it can take an additional number of months to obtain a work permit. It is wise to allow the better part of a year in making an application.

4.7 Statement to Be Signed by Candidates after Appointment by the JGER Unit Committee

(The specific terms of the appointment are set forth.)

The undersigned accepts this appointment on the terms above and acknowledges that the appointment is subject to the terms set out in The United Church of Canada's *Overseas Personnel Policy Handbook*, which sets forth the conditions of appointment by The United Church of Canada, and the undersigned accepts conditions set out in the said Handbook. The undersigned acknowledges that the conditions in the area to which the undersigned is being sent may well be different in many respects from those in Canada. The undersigned hereby releases The United Church of Canada from any and all claims arising out of or in any way in connection with the undersigned's appointment as an overseas personnel of The United Church of Canada or the carrying out of that appointment except for any such claims which might arise out of the gross negligence of The United Church of Canada.

The undersigned agrees to indemnify and save harmless The United Church of Canada from all claims, actions, suits, and demands of any kind arising out of or in any way in connection with the appointment of the undersigned as an overseas personnel of The United Church of Canada, the way in which the undersigned carries out such appointment, or any other matter arising out of or in connection with any such appointment, except for any such matters which arise out of the gross negligence of The United Church of Canada.

The undersigned and The United Church of Canada agree that the relationship between the undersigned and The United Church of Canada shall, for all purposes, be governed by the laws of the Province of Ontario.

4.8 Commissioning

A Commissioning Service shall be held, prior to the departure of overseas personnel, in the local church or court of the church as agreed by the overseas personnel and their Conference. The People in Partnership Program Coordinator shall initiate arrangements. The Conference Facilitator will coordinate the service. She/he shall represent the United Church's JGER Unit at the Commissioning Service and present the candidate with a Bible or other suitable Christian resource on behalf of the JGER Unit.

4.9 Orientation and Training

Orientation for new appointees focuses on an orientation course that all candidates are expected to attend, unless the JGER Unit indicates otherwise.

Appointees receive regular home assignment stipend while attending orientation courses. Under special circumstances a housing allowance may be negotiated.

4.10 Language Study

Language study may be required. A speaking knowledge of the language is an asset for effective work.

4.11 Proceeding to the Area of Service

Normally, overseas personnel begin receiving a stipend at the beginning of orientation and leave for their area assignment as soon after orientation as is feasible.

If circumstances beyond the control of overseas personnel prevent a timely departure for the area of service, the personnel will continue on stipend and will be available for assignment at the direction of the JGER Unit. If the delay is longer than three months, they may be allowed up to two weeks of personal time immediately prior to departure.

4.12 Power of Attorney and Wills

Overseas personnel are strongly advised to appoint a power of attorney to facilitate the conduct of business affairs in Canada. Similarly, overseas personnel proceeding overseas are advised to make a will and to notify the JGER Unit of its location.

STREAM “A” APPOINTMENTS

5. TERMS OF SERVICE

5.1 Types of Appointments

5.1.1 Stream “A” Standard Appointments: Long-Term Service: Initial Four-Year Terms, Full Support

Stream “A” Standard appointments are for personnel with special skills, cross-cultural competence, and a commitment to longer-term service and accompaniment, appointed in response to the invitation of partner churches or institutions. Language and cultural competence is required of Stream “A” personnel, either before appointment or through study after appointment. These positions receive compensation similar to United Church clergy, with benefits and pension. Travel, housing, and health insurance are also provided. These positions are for an initial term of four years that may be renewable. A mid-term home assignment period is planned after approximately two years of service overseas. Subsequent terms include two to three years overseas, and include a period of mission interpretation in Canada.

Terms of service for Stream “A” Standard appointments are laid out in Section 5.2 and following.

5.1.2 Specialist Appointments: Short-Term Service: 3- to 12-Month Terms, Full Support

Stream “A” Specialist appointments are for personnel with specific skills and cross-cultural competence (including necessary language skills) who are called to a short period of overseas service, based on the explicit needs of the partner church or institution. These positions are highly skill-based, time-limited, and task-specific. Language and cultural competence are pre-requisites of Stream “A” Specialist appointments. Compensation is decided on a short-term contract basis, according to each specific situation, but never exceeds the compensation and benefits of Stream “A” long-term appointments. The appointment term includes a period of mission interpretation in Canada. *N.B.: The remainder of Section 5 applies only to Stream “A” Standard appointments.*

5.2. Standard Length of Term

5.2.1 First Term

The normal length of the first term is four years overseas. Approximately half-way through the first term there will be a **mid-term home assignment**. After the completion of the first four-year term, there will be an **end-of-term home assignment**.

5.2.2 Subsequent Terms

Subsequent terms will normally extend from two years to no more than three years overseas, calculated from the date of arrival in the area of service and depending on the nature and requirements of the assignment.

5.3 Length of Home Assignment

1. Years of service are calculated from the date overseas personnel are entered on the payroll of the United Church's JGER Unit. In all cases, travel time is calculated as part of home assignment time. During home assignment overseas personnel are under the direction of the JGER Unit.
2. In the initial four-year term of service, a **mid-term home assignment** will take place after approximately two years overseas. This home assignment shall be approximately two months in length, and include up to six weeks of mission interpretation. Annual vacation of one month may be added to **mid-term home assignment** (see Section 5.3.8 below).
3. Following the completion of the first four-year term, there will be an **end-of-term home assignment**.
 - a. Overseas personnel **completing** service normally will be entitled to one month of home assignment for each full year of service. The home assignment period may be extended for mission interpretation purposes.
 - b. For overseas personnel **continuing** in service, the overseas personnel, the partner church or agency, and the JGER Unit will consult about the length of each home assignment. It is expected that negotiations will begin based on the understanding that the normal entitlement is one to two months for each year of service in the current term.
4. After multiple terms of service, the **final end-of-term home assignment** will normally be one month for each of the first four full years of service plus one month for each additional two years of service, to a maximum of 12 months (pro-rated for a period less than two years). In the event that a person accepts paid employment prior to completion of the agreed length of pre-retirement/withdrawal home assignment, employment with the JGER Unit, including stipend and allowances, will be terminated.
5. On withdrawal from service prior to the completion of one term, overseas personnel are entitled to one month of home assignment for each complete year of service, the minimum being one month.
6. On withdrawal from service prior to the completion of a second or subsequent term, overseas personnel are entitled to a minimum of one month of home assignment for each completed year of the uncompleted term, or a maximum of the final home assignment period to which they would have been entitled at the conclusion of the last full term, less the last home assignment taken, plus one month for each complete year of service in the unfinished term.
7. Home assignment will be mandatory after a term of three years except in extraordinary circumstances when special permission may be granted by the JGER Unit for further

extension at the request of the overseas church or agency. This would be contingent on medical approval and concurrence of the overseas personnel.

8. Annual vacation attached to mid-term and end-of-term home assignment (see Section 7.1.): Overseas personnel should consult in advance with the Regional and People in Partnership Program Coordinators if they wish to add annual vacation to any home assignment time in Canada.
9. Final term of service: The scheduling of the final term of service for overseas personnel nearing retirement age is a matter for consultation and decision in each individual case involving the overseas personnel, the JGER Unit, and the partner church or agency. This consultation considers, among other things, the time remaining before normal retirement and the need for pre-retirement home assignment. (See also Section 9.)

5.4 Terms of Home Assignment

The timing, duration, and activities pursued during a home assignment period are worked out in consultation between the JGER Unit, the partner church or agency, and the personnel. All overseas personnel on home assignment are under the supervision of the JGER Unit. While time in Canada during home assignment may include vacation time, it is primarily an opportunity for a change in activity which will enable the overseas personnel to achieve a variety of objectives.

1. For overseas personnel **continuing** in service, the purpose of an **end-of-term home assignment** is
 - a. to obtain needed rest, medical care, and mental and spiritual refreshment;
 - b. to re-establish family and church relationships;
 - c. to prepare for more effective service on return to the area of service through personal and professional development studies;
 - d. to undertake assignments as requested by the partner church or agency;
 - e. to share with the JGER Unit and the Canadian church in helping to create a better understanding of the church's participation in God's mission;
 - f. to update one's understanding of the church and national life in Canada in order to better represent The United Church of Canada on returning to the area of service.
2. For overseas personnel **withdrawing** from service, the purpose of a **final end-of-term home assignment** is
 - a. to obtain needed rest, medical care, and mental and spiritual refreshment;
 - b. to re-establish family and church relationships;
 - c. to prepare for transition to ministry and life in Canada;
 - d. to undertake assignments as requested by the JGER Unit;
 - e. to share with the JGER Unit and the Canadian church in helping to create a better understanding of the church's participation in God's mission;
 - f. to update one's understanding of the church and national life in Canada to facilitate re-entry and engagement in Canadian church and society.

3. Scheduling of mission interpretation and other duties:
 - a. **Mid-term home assignment:** Overseas personnel will receive two weeks free of mission interpretation responsibilities at the beginning of the **mid-term home assignment**. This mid-term home assignment is approximately two months in length, and includes up to six weeks of mission interpretation. The initial unassigned period is to be used for meetings with General Council staff, and preparation for mission interpretation.
 - b. **End-of-term home assignment:** Overseas personnel will receive up to one month free of mission interpretation responsibilities at the beginning of an **end-of-term home assignment** period and for the last two weeks of this home assignment. The initial unassigned period is to be used for meetings with General Council staff, medicals, and preparation for mission interpretation and other duties as assigned.
4. A satisfactory medical report is required during the first month after arrival for an **end-of-term home assignment**, prior to proceeding with other home assignment activities (see Section 8.6.1).
5. Allocation of time among the activities set out in 5.4.1 above shall be done in consultation with the People in Partnership Program Coordinator. Negotiation of the allocation of home assignment time will begin prior to home assignment, through a consultative process involving the JGER Unit, the personnel, and the partner church or agency. Overseas personnel should normally anticipate major engagement in mission interpretation. When recommended by the partner, periods of study or engagement in special ministries may be considered by the JGER Unit during the negotiation of home assignment activities. It is expected that such study leave could normally be accommodated within the regular home assignment period.
6. Mission interpretation plans are a result of consultation among overseas personnel, the home Conference, and the People in Partnership Program Coordinator.
7. In the event that during or on completion of home assignment overseas personnel withdraw from service for personal reasons, the stipend and allowances received by the person in excess of the amount for which they are eligible under Section 6.5.1 may be repayable to the JGER Unit.

5.5 Return to Area of Service

Overseas personnel return to the area of service after home assignment only on the invitation of the appropriate partner church or agency, with the JGER Unit's concurrence.

5.6 Debriefing

A debriefing session is arranged for overseas personnel returning to Canada as soon as possible after arrival. Debriefing time is spent with the People in Partnership Program Coordinator and the relevant Regional Program Coordinator. It is intended to allow an opportunity for overseas personnel to reflect on their experiences and share their learnings with the JGER Unit.

Overseas personnel also meet with the unit's Finance Liaison and Education for Justice staff.

Medical appointments may also be scheduled while overseas personnel are in Toronto for debriefing.

When possible, arrangements will be made for participation in the ecumenical mission personnel program run by the Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries.

5.7 Re-entry Program for Overseas Personnel

An ecumenical Re-entry Program for Overseas Personnel is held in twice a year as numbers warrant, usually in July and October. Overseas personnel who have arrived in Canada at least one month before the beginning of the program are to participate in the program at the JGER Unit's expense.

Returning overseas personnel can also be an important resource for new overseas personnel during their orientation program, which may be held in July at the same time as the re-entry program.

6. STIPEND AND ALLOWANCES

Compensation for Stream “A” overseas personnel is made up of an annual base “stipend” and is supplemented by various annual allowances for housing, resettlement, reimbursement of utilities in excess of an annual maximum, and, where warranted, a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) allowance and a children’s education bursary. The annual stipend and allowances are divided into equal monthly payments.

All Stream “A” overseas personnel are members of the United Church’s Group Insurance (extended health benefits), Long-Term Disability, and Pension Plans.

All overseas personnel are urged to consider the financial implications of overseas service carefully. The employment circumstances for overseas personnel are very different from those of Canadians continuing to live and work in Canada. Ongoing financial planning is strongly recommended.

6.1 Stipend

6.1.1 Stipend Policy Presuppositions

1. All adults who go overseas as overseas personnel of the United Church are “appointed.”
2. Appointees for whom job placements are arranged by the JGER Unit in consultation with a partner church or agency, either prior to departure or during the term of service, are “assigned.”
3. The stipend paid to overseas personnel, while intended in part as compensation for services rendered, is not intended to be a salary in the usual “marketplace” sense, based on an evaluation of the worth of various skills. It is, rather, a form of compensation designed to cover the normal living expenses of overseas personnel in order that they may be free to participate fully in mission. This remuneration is referred to as a “**stipend.**”
4. The starting stipend for overseas personnel is, therefore, provided equally to all appointees regardless of training, qualifications, experience, or the particular circumstances or demands of the position to which the person is appointed.

6.1.2 Stipend Steps and Increments

1. Step 1 of the Stream “A” overseas personnel stipend scale is roughly equivalent to the United Church’s Pastoral Relations “A” level salary before increment (i.e., the minimum starting salary established by the General Council for a minister in a pastoral charge in Canada.)
2. The Stream “A” overseas personnel stipend scale moves in 5 percent increments to Step 2 and Step 3. Increases to the stipend will be made according to the length of overseas service. Overseas personnel continuing in service for a second three-year term move to Step 2 at the beginning of their fourth year of service. Overseas personnel continuing in

service for a third three-year term move to Step 3 at the beginning of their seventh year of service.

3. Cost of living increases recommended by the relevant General Council Unit Committee and approved by the General Council Executive will be applied to the overseas personnel stipend scale. (These increases are in addition to the stipend increments described above.)
4. Single parents receive an additional 30 percent above the single stipend.

6.1.3 Payment of Stipends

Overseas personnel must maintain a bank account (or equivalent) in Canada into which their stipends, allowances, and reimbursements will normally be deposited. Most banks will arrange for regular transfers upon request to a bank account that overseas personnel establish in their place of service. Such arrangements should be made before departure.

Overseas personnel serving in areas where stipends are transferred to the national church to be paid locally may request the deduction of a regular amount from their stipend to be deposited in their own Canadian account. Because of the lead time required in the preparation of salaries, notice of at least six weeks prior to the normal pay day (15th of each month) is required to initiate or change such a procedure.

6.1.4 Commencement of Stipend

For overseas personnel in regular employment at the time of appointment, the stipend shall normally commence when acceptance of the United Church appointment through the JGER Unit requires termination of previous employment. In other circumstances, the date of the stipend's commencement shall be as arranged by the JGER Unit.

6.1.5 Couples

1. When couples are appointed to overseas service by the United Church, there may be one formal "job" assignment or there may be two—one for each spouse.
2. When there are two assignments, each spouse will receive a single stipend, taxable in his/her name. Both spouses will be employees of the United Church and members of its Group Insurance, Long-Term Disability, and Pension Plans. (As per regulations of the Canada Revenue Agency, overseas personnel couples split a "couples" housing allowance.)
3. When there is one assignment, the couple can choose to receive
 - a. two single stipends (one in each spouse's name as above), or
 - b. receive 150% of a single stipend paid in the assigned spouse's name. Only the assigned spouse will be an employee of the United Church and a member of its Group Insurance, Long-Term Disability, and Pension Plans.
4. The normal expectation is that both spouses appointed by the United Church will be available to serve in the partner church or agency to which the "assigned" spouse has been sent as particular family circumstances permit. It is recognized that some unassigned appointees may have competencies in urgent demand by other organizations

in the community. The unassigned spouse may accept a position with another organization only after consultation with and permission from the United Church and the partner church or agency. (See Section 6.1.6 below for regulations regarding acceptance of compensation for these positions.)

6.1.6 Couples: Outside Employment

In the event that a non-assigned spouse wishes to accept paid employment with any organization other than the partner church or agency to which his/her spouse is assigned, he or she shall have the option of either ceasing to receive stipend from the United Church, or turning over any compensation received from the outside employment to the partner or to The United Church of Canada.

In determining which choice to make, the appointee should bear in mind that the amount of compensation to be turned over to the partner or the United Church will be the net income after payment of all employment expenses including income tax (owing in Canada and/or in the area of service).

The choice to cease receiving a stipend from the United Church means that contributions to The United Church Pension Plan, to the Canada Pension Plan, and to Employment Insurance will be discontinued.

If one spouse chooses not to receive a stipend from The United Church of Canada, the other spouse will receive a single stipend (i.e., the other spouse cannot receive 150 percent of a single stipend as outlined above in Section 6.1.5, item 3.b.)

Should the resigning spouse decide that he/she wishes to return to employment with the United Church, he/she must apply for re-appointment through the People in Partnership Program Coordinator. Re-appointment will be subject to approval by the JGER Unit Committee.

6.1.7 Voluntary Stipend Reduction

Overseas personnel may choose to accept a voluntary reduction in stipend below the level to which they are entitled. A request for such a reduction must be made in writing to the JGER Unit.

6.1.8 Income Tax

Overseas personnel paid by The United Church of Canada are considered, for Canadian Income Tax purposes, to be residents of the Canadian province in which they last filed income tax. They are, therefore, obliged to file a Canadian Income Tax return each year using the appropriate provincial form. In many overseas countries, overseas personnel are also obliged to file local income tax returns and pay income tax to the government of the country of residence.

In filing Canadian Income Tax returns, overseas personnel who pay local taxes overseas are usually allowed to deduct from Canadian taxes payable the amount of tax paid to the government of the country of residence. (A receipt substantiating such payments must be submitted with the Canadian tax return.)

If income tax paid to the government of the country of residence exceeds what overseas personnel are allowed by Canada Revenue Agency to claim against their Canadian tax liability, the JGER Unit will refund the difference. In calculating The United Church of Canada's liability, only taxes related to income received from the United Church may be included.

Each year, the United Church forwards to all personnel overseas the necessary information to file their Canadian Income Tax returns.

6.2 Allowances

Annual allowances are reviewed and approved by the JGER Unit Committee.

6.2.1 Housing

1. While overseas, adequate furnished housing is normally the responsibility of the partner requesting overseas personnel. This will be negotiated by the Regional Program Coordinator, in consultation with the People in Partnership Program Coordinator, along with other terms of service, including any necessary subsidy, prior to appointment and/or the arrival overseas of personnel. This free housing received by overseas personnel is considered a taxable benefit.
2. When overseas personnel are in Canada they receive a cash housing allowance that is added to monthly stipend payments.

6.2.2 Resettlement

The United Church provides a "resettlement allowance" to overseas personnel to assist with some of the costs associated with returning to Canada after overseas service.

Since 1997, this resettlement allowance has been paid on a monthly basis to all Stream "A" overseas personnel. The allowance is paid with the monthly stipend so that personal tax liability for the payment is minimized.

Overseas personnel are urged to set up an automatic withdrawal savings/investment plan at their local bank so that resettlement funds are accumulated for use upon withdrawal from service. The use of a monthly withdrawal RRSP savings/investment plan may offer some tax advantages to individuals. Overseas personnel are encouraged to explore these options with their local bank manager or other financial adviser.

6.2.3 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)

Because the cost of living varies from place to place overseas, a cost-of-living adjustment is calculated for each overseas personnel stipend. This adjustment should provide overseas personnel with approximately the same purchasing power overseas as their stipend would provide in Canada. A cost-of-living adjustment will result only in an addition to the original stipend. (No negative COLA is applied.)

Cost-of-living adjustments are regularly updated through services provided by an international organization specializing in this work.

Additional income tax liability for overseas personnel attributable to the addition of cost-of-living allowance to taxable income in Canada is the responsibility of the JGER Unit. Claim forms are distributed each year to facilitate application for reimbursement.

6.2.4 Heat, Light, and Water

The JGER Unit reimburses the cost of heat, light, and water in excess of the annual amounts allowed.

6.2.5 Allowances Related to Children

1. Canadian Child Tax Benefit

While parents are resident overseas, they are entitled to receive the Child Tax Benefit from Health and Welfare Canada. When leaving for overseas it is advisable to notify Health and Welfare Canada, indicating your plans to leave the country and requesting that they deposit your monthly allowance cheques into your Canadian bank account.

Depending on provincial requirements, Health and Welfare Canada may ask that The United Church of Canada, as the Canadian employer, complete some forms confirming the employment status of overseas personnel. These forms can be sent directly to the People in Partnership staff of the JGER Unit.

In order to maintain eligibility it is necessary to submit to Health and Welfare Canada a copy of the annual income tax Assessment Notice received from the Canada Revenue Agency, confirming the filing of a tax return.

2. Bursary Assistance

Bursary assistance shall be made on the basis of JGER's "Post-Secondary Training Assistance Plan." (See Appendix B.)

3. The United Church of Canada Group Insurance Benefit

In the event of the death of overseas personnel receiving a stipend from the United Church and contributing to The United Church of Canada Group Insurance Plan, dependent children will be eligible for benefits under the Pension and Group Insurance Plans, as defined in the constitutions of those plans.

6.3 Transportation (work-related)

1. The United Church assumes that the requesting partner church or agency will provide for the work-related transportation of the personnel they request.
2. Whenever a partner church or agency requests the service of overseas personnel, the job description will identify the transportation requirements of the position.
3. In the event that the requesting partner church or agency requires a subsidy to enable it to provide for such transportation at the standard to which a national colleague would be entitled in the same circumstances, such a subsidy may be negotiated with the United Church.

6.4 Home Assignment Stipend and Allowances

6.4.1 Administrative Procedures

1. Home assignment commences the day *after* departure from the area of service and terminates on the date of arrival in the area of service.
2. Transfer from area stipend to home assignment stipend, or from home assignment stipend to area stipend, shall be on the first day of the month if home assignment begins or ends on or before the 15th of the month, or on the first day of the next month if home assignment begins or ends on or after the 16th of the month.

6.4.2 Housing

1. Gross Home Assignment pay is made up of the *base stipend plus housing allowance plus resettlement allowance*.
2. The United Church of Canada does not accept responsibility for arranging home assignment accommodation for overseas personnel. The United Church will consider covering some costs related to short-term, bridge housing while overseas personnel search for longer-term accommodation. The United Church urges overseas personnel to contact family and friends in Canada to assist them in searching for suitable accommodation.

6.4.3 Continuing Education Assistance

1. Overseas personnel may apply for continuing education assistance while on home assignment or while in the area of service.
2. Overseas personnel may ask to use up to one-third of their home assignment period for study. They may also request a deferment of study time for one home assignment (calculated according to the length of that home assignment), to be added to study time during the next home assignment.

6.5 Completion of Service: Stipend and Allowances

6.5.1 Termination of Stipend and Allowances on Completion of Final Home Assignment

The termination date for the stipend and allowances on completion of pre-retirement and pre-withdrawal home assignment is the last day of the month.

6.5.2 Study Assistance

Within six months of receiving their final stipend from the United Church and following one regular term of service overseas, returning overseas personnel may apply for financial assistance for study or training (including “career assessment”) to facilitate their re-entry into Canadian employment. The amount of study assistance is determined using the following formula:

1. On completion of 10 years of service or more: up to a maximum of 20 percent of the current year’s single overseas personnel stipend ($20\% \times \text{single stipend}$)
2. Prior to completion of 10 years of service the maximum level of assistance shall be prorated on the basis of 10% percent of the allowance in (1) for each year of service, up to 10 years. ($10\% \times (20\% \times \text{single stipend}) \times \text{years of service}$).

A study plan should be submitted to the People in Partnership Program Coordinator outlining the program of study, projecting the costs, and summarizing briefly how the program will assist the overseas personnel’s re-entry into Canadian life.

6.6 Withdrawal: Shared Travel Costs

When overseas personnel, on their own initiative, withdraw from service prior to the completion of a term, the United Church will only be responsible for the proportion of all return travel costs (any term) and shipping costs (first term) that the completed portion of the term bears to the anticipated whole term. Overseas personnel bear all remaining costs.

7. VACATION/LEAVE OF ABSENCE/ SICK AND COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

7.1 Annual Vacation

Terms of appointment provide personnel with one month of holiday each year. It is expected that overseas personnel will make provision for this in their work schedule in consultation with the partner church or agency. If holiday schedules coincide with home assignment and overseas personnel are considering taking their holiday time in Canada, the Regional Program Coordinator and People in Partnership Program Coordinator must also be consulted.

7.2 Leave of Absence

This is a special arrangement with the United Church through the JGER Unit that may be granted to overseas personnel who wish to temporarily postpone their return to the area of service.

1. Application must be made in writing, stating reasons for the request, and indicating plans for a return to service with the United Church.
2. Normally, a leave of absence shall be for a period of not more than two years.
3. A leave of absence may be extended at the discretion of the JGER Unit for one further year on written request by the personnel stating reasons for the request and indicating a date of availability for return to service.
4. On completion of (2), or (3) if authorized, a leave of absence shall be terminated unless the personnel has indicated a firm date of availability for return to service.
5. During the period of a leave of absence all financial responsibilities of the United Church are suspended unless otherwise arranged when the leave of absence is negotiated. Individuals may continue membership in the Pension and Group Insurance Plans for up to one year of a leave of absence by applying to the Human Resources Unit and paying both employer and employee premiums.
6. When a leave of absence or an extension thereof is granted, the United Church, through its JGER Unit, will immediately notify the partner concerned.
7. Persons who have resigned are welcome to request re-appointment (see 7.3 following).

7.3 Procedure for Re-application for Appointment after Withdrawal from Service

Candidates who have previously served in overseas appointments with the United Church, who ended their employment with the United Church, and who wish to re-apply for a new appointment, can follow the normal application process.

The process for re-appointment shall include

1. invitation by an overseas church or agency

2. participation in a mission discernment event
3. normal interview process
4. medical clearance
5. participation at the ecumenical orientation program or an equivalent specialized course

For overseas personnel who are re-appointed, a covenanting service, held in the home congregation, may be more appropriate than a commissioning service.

7.4 Sick Leave: Area of Service/Canada

1. Sick leave, with stipend, in the area of service may be granted by the United Church's JGER Unit in consultation with the area of service authority, the overseas personnel, and on the recommendation of the JGER Unit's medical consultant, in consultation with the attending physician.
2. In the event that return to Canada is recommended by the JGER Unit's medical consultant, sick leave of up to three months may be granted with a home assignment stipend but without transfer to home assignment status (the current term would be completed after the sick leave, followed by a regular home assignment).
3. If sick leave extends beyond three months, a transfer will be made to home assignment status. The length of home assignment and future appointment will be determined through consultation (overseas personnel, medical consultant, JGER Unit, Area).
4. If sick leave extends beyond six months, the overseas personnel will be transferred to disability status and will receive benefits under the disability provisions of the Group Insurance Plan.
5. If a return to Canada is recommended and the period of sick leave is clearly for three months or less, the United Church will be responsible for travel costs for the family member who is ill plus one parent, if that person is a dependent child. If the period of sick leave is either indefinite or clearly long-term, the United Church will be responsible for the travel costs for the entire family, possibly to include the return of all personal effects depending on consultation (overseas personnel, medical consultant, JGER Unit).

7.5 Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave may be granted under special circumstances, such as the illness or death of a parent or child. Arrangements are to be negotiated with the Regional Program Coordinator and the People in Partnership Program Coordinator.

1. *During Overseas Assignment:* Two months maximum, with stipend continued at area rate. Travel shall be a personal responsibility unless leave can be coordinated with home assignment.
2. *During Home Assignment:* One month on stipend.

If leave is desired for a period longer than that provided in (1) and (2), the situation will be assessed on its merit.

8. HEALTH

8.1 Medical Consultant

The JGER Unit retains the services of a medical consultant for the purpose of safeguarding the health of overseas personnel. All overseas appointments are subject to receiving clearance from the JGER Unit's medical consultant (Section 4.6.7).

8.2 Medical and Dental Expenses

8.2.1 Area of Service

1. While overseas personnel are in the area of service, medical expenses covered in Canada by provincial health insurance plans are covered through Compass International's Insurance Programme for Canadians Working Abroad. This insurance coverage is purchased by the JGER Unit. It works on a reimbursement basis. For overseas personnel who are enrolled in the United Church's Group Insurance Plan, Compass is the "first payer" for all medical and prescription drug expenses.
2. The United Church of Canada's Group Insurance Plan, which is compulsory for all overseas personnel receiving full stipend, includes a Supplementary Health Care Plan which augments the benefits normally covered by provincial health insurance plans (and, therefore, are covered under the Compass International plan). This includes some prescription drugs (not covered under the Compass plan), dental expenses, and, for overseas personnel, lab and X-ray charges. The details of coverage are available from the relevant General Council Unit. Expenses in this category should be reported on the appropriate claim form (dental or medical) and forwarded directly to the United Church's Group Insurance Provider for processing. Reimbursement cheques will be forwarded to the address on the claim form.
3. Overseas personnel who travel out of their country of service will continue to be covered under the Compass International plan during that time, but only when said travel is communicated *in advance* to the JGER Unit through the People in Partnership staff.

8.2.2 Home Assignment

While on home assignment, overseas personnel will continue to be covered under the Compass International plan through a special "furlough coverage" provided by that plan. The People in Partnership staff will notify Compass when this coverage is required. Upon return to Canada for *final* home assignment, overseas personnel will be required to reactivate their provincial health insurance coverage immediately. Until the provincial health coverage goes into effect, the Compass International plan will cover all personnel under its "medical extension benefit," which has been prepaid by the JGER Unit.

There may be some expenses not covered under the Compass International plan that the United Church will cover.

8.2.3 Personal Time in Canada

Overseas personnel will be covered for up to one month per year of personal time (vacation) in Canada under the Compass Plan. If that month is exceeded, Compass will impose a surcharge that will be the responsibility of the overseas personnel.

8.2.4 Travel Expense

1. *Overseas:* Travel expenses related to medical and dental care while in the area of service must be approved in advance by Compass International. In some cases, the JGER Unit may supplement this coverage.
2. *In Canada:* Necessary travel expenses related to required home assignment medical examinations or related treatment (see Section 8.6) should be submitted to the JGER Unit.

8.2.5 Children Studying in Canada

When children return to Canada for study, either secondary or post-secondary, they must give the JGER Unit advance notice of their arrival date so that interim insurance can be arranged. They must apply for regular provincial coverage upon their arrival in Canada. Medical coverage costs not covered by “premium assistance” from provincial governments are covered by the United Church, in addition to regular bursary allowances.

8.3 Procedure for Medical Expense Reimbursement

8.3.1 Area of Service

1. Compass International reimburses overseas personnel for medical expenses that in Canada are normally covered by provincial health coverage. Overseas personnel pay for the initial expense and submit a claim to Compass International. Receipts should be attached to the Compass reimbursement form, providing translation where necessary, and the Canadian dollar equivalent. If medical expenses are predicted to be sizable (in the case of emergency or otherwise), overseas personnel should contact the emergency medical assistance provider under contract with the underwriter for the Compass International plan. The emergency medical assistance provider is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Among other services, it provides evacuation and travel assistance. Its personnel will assess the situation, offer clear direction, and if it all possible, arrange for medical and related bills to be paid directly.
2. Expenses (medical, X-ray, lab, prescription drugs, dental, etc.) covered by Supplementary Health Insurance provisions of the United Church’s Group Insurance Plan should be submitted on forms provided, attaching receipts and providing English translation. The Group Insurance company converts expenses from the local currency to Canadian dollars based on the exchange rate on the date the claim is received. Reimbursement cheques are sent to the address or bank (for direct deposit) as noted on the claim form.

8.3.2 Home Assignment

While on home assignment, medical expenses will continue to be reimbursed by Compass International as in the area of service. Emergencies will also be handled through the emergency medical assistance provider as in the area of service. Expenses covered by the Group Insurance Plan will continue to be submitted to the plan using the claim forms supplied.

8.3.3 Timing of Submissions

Submissions may be made at any time during the year. Please note that the annual deductible portion of expenses covered by the Supplementary Health Insurance provisions of the Group Insurance Plan is calculated on a calendar year basis. Expenses are included in the year in which they are received.

8.4 HIV Testing and Protective Measures

8.4.1 Testing for HIV Antibodies

1. Testing on a voluntary basis:

Overseas personnel or candidates for overseas work may be tested for HIV antibodies on a voluntary basis, except where testing is required by the host country.

2. When required by the host country:

Some overseas partner organizations or their respective countries require that persons who are to be posted in their countries submit the results of a negative test for AIDS and HIV. The United Church agrees to honour that requirement. For those countries requiring HIV testing, no appointment will be made by the United Church unless a candidate has complied with this requirement.

The United Church strongly recommends that persons who have been involved in the following high-risk situations have the HIV testing before they go or return overseas:

1. Anyone who has had blood transfusions or has given blood in an overseas situation of risk (Note: Overseas situations of risk may include the use of non-sterile equipment including needles or syringes, where there was not a “safe” blood supply, or where sterilizing procedures are not practised consistently)
2. Anyone who has had inoculations in an overseas situation of risk
3. Anyone who is a medical caregiver
4. Anyone who has any reason to believe he/she has been involved in other high-risk situations

If the results of an HIV test are positive, the United Church strongly recommends that the person discuss all the implications with his/her physician. The JGER Unit’s medical consultant advises that anyone who tests positive should remain in Canada for his/her own

health and safety. Consequently, the United Church will not appoint for overseas service or authorize the return to the field of a person who tests HIV positive.

8.4.2 Liability

The United Church will be responsible for the medical coverage of overseas personnel who may test HIV positive during or after service, while they are in the employ of the United Church, up until the time the person's provincial health plan becomes effective.

8.4.3 Protective Measures

The United Church will provide relevant information relating to AIDS and HIV testing to all new overseas personnel appointees before they leave Canada. This education is to be provided by the Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries as part of their Orientation Conferences. *Attendance at these sessions will be mandatory.*

8.4.4 Medical Care

In regard to major medical and surgical procedures that may be required by overseas personnel, the JGER Unit medical consultant recommends that such personnel seek to have those procedures carried out where there is a "safe" blood supply. If a hospital or clinic cannot test for HIV antibodies, then the blood is not considered safe.

When a "safe" blood supply cannot be located in the country of assignment, then the JGER Unit recommends that overseas personnel have any major medical or surgical procedures done in a hospital of a neighbouring country that can provide "safe" blood.

Where this is not possible or advisable, and on the advice of a local medical adviser and the JGER Unit's medical consultant, the United Church is prepared to bring such personnel back to Canada.

8.4.5 Pastoral Care

The United Church through the People in Partnership Program Coordinator will undertake to ensure provision of appropriate pastoral care and counselling as needed for any candidates or overseas personnel relating to the issue of AIDS and HIV testing. Provision will be made by the United Church for professional counselling in the area in which such overseas personnel or candidates live.

8.5 Annual Medical Examination in the Area

1. Maintenance of good health in the area is primarily the responsibility of the overseas personnel.
2. An annual medical examination, though not mandatory, is recommended as a means of assisting overseas personnel in a practical and effective way to maintain good health.

3. Overseas personnel are advised and encouraged to have an annual medical examination by a physician of his/her own choosing. Confidentiality between overseas personnel and the examining physician in the area is encouraged whenever possible.
4. Overseas personnel, or the examining physician with the consent of the personnel, may correspond directly with and seek help from the JGER medical consultant at any time. Such consultation will be facilitated by the People in Partnership Program Coordinator.
5. The JGER medical consultant will not receive an annual medical report from the examining physician unless the overseas personnel requests that one is sent.
6. The JGER medical consultant, however, in special circumstances and at his/her discretion may
 - a. request that the personnel have an annual medical examination or a repeat examination.
 - b. request specifically that a medical report be sent to him/her.
 - c. share relevant information with the Regional Program Coordinator and the People in Partnership Program Coordinator, so that they are able to make responsible decisions concerning the personnel's welfare or continued service. Only person(s) having direct decision making responsibility will be given the essential confidential information.

8.6 Re-entry Medical Examination

1. Examination during each home assignment is compulsory
 - a. to determine the overseas personnel's present state of health and to advise them of any abnormality found and treatment required
 - b. to satisfy the JGER Unit that the person's health is such that a further appointment overseas may be recommended
2. If a further period of service overseas is contemplated, the person must receive approval from the medical consultant for his/her return to the area of service.
3. Overseas personnel are encouraged to use this opportunity to obtain any medical or surgical treatment indicated and to seek any help with emotional or psychological problems that may become manifest.
4. The examination may be done by the JGER Unit's medical consultant, a family physician, or a physician recommended by the medical consultant. If the examination is not done by the JGER Unit's medical consultant, a medical report must be forwarded to him/her for evaluation.
5. The examining physician will discuss his/her findings and recommendations with the person and send a complete report to the JGER medical consultant.
6. Special investigations may be requested by the JGER medical consultant, by the physician doing the examination, or by the personnel, in consultation with the examining physician.
7. There should be only one home assignment examination and this will be done at the beginning of the home assignment. A repeat examination may be requested, if indicated.

8. If any subsequent treatment is required, the person is encouraged to see a physician of his or her own choosing and this, therefore, need not necessarily be the home assignment examining physician.
9. The medical consultant will recommend to the JGER Unit one of the following:
 - a. the person's health is such that he/she may return overseas;
 - b. the person's health is such that he/she should not return overseas;
 - c. the person's health is such that he/she may return overseas under certain specified conditions.

9. RETIREMENT FROM SERVICE

9.1 Retirement Age

Retirement of overseas personnel serving with the United Church normally shall be in accordance with Section 365.1(b) of the United Church *Manual, 2007*. Depending on the requirements of the assignment, normally the final term of service will be planned to conclude so that the period of pre-retirement home assignment terminates, as nearly as possible, on June 30 coincident with or following the attaining of age 65.

The Manual, 2007, Section 365.1 (b) states:

365.1 Retirees.

- (b) Ministry Personnel may retire as early as age fifty-five (55) and receive a discounted pension. Between ages sixty (60) and sixty-five (65) but after thirty-five (35) years of service, Ministry Personnel may retire and receive a non-discounted pension based on pension credits accrued to the date of retirement. Ministry Personnel who retire at age sixty-five (65) or older receive a non-discounted pension regardless of the number of years of service. The latest date on which Ministry Personnel may start to receive a pension is January 1st following their sixty-ninth (69th) birthday, regardless of whether the Ministry Personnel has retired by or continues to serve in paid accountable ministry after that date.

(2007)

Continued service after receipt of pension may be permitted on a year-by-year basis, subject to agreement by the partner church or agency, the JGER Unit, the JGER medical consultant, and the overseas personnel.

9.2 Residence after Retirement

Normally, the United Church does not encourage personnel to return to the country of service to live after retirement. Indeed, the United Church strongly urges retired overseas personnel to share the gifts and experience they've gained from working with global partners in a continuing ministry and mission with the church in Canada. However, personal circumstances, like marriage/partnership with a national, may affect individual decisions regarding retirement. Should a former overseas personnel return to her/his country of service, he/she no longer has any formal relationship with either the United Church or the partner church.

9.3 Application for Pension

1. All lay and Order-of-Ministry personnel appointed into Stream "A" overseas personnel appointments by The United Church of Canada and receiving full stipend become members of the United Church Pension Plan and Group Insurance Plan. All new appointees are provided with a copy of the current constitutions of the Pension Plan and the Group Insurance Plan and are urged to refer to those documents for details of the benefits, etc.

2. Application for benefits under the Pension Plan is to be made on forms that may be secured from the Human Resources Unit. Applications should be completed and returned to Human Resources three months prior to the anticipated date of retirement. Information may be obtained from Human Resources regarding disability pension, early retirement, settlement if one ceases to be in pensionable service, etc.
3. Overseas personnel are eligible for pension on the first of the month following the month in which pre-retirement home assignment is completed.
4. When overseas personnel attain age 65, they are entitled to receive pension payments from the Old Age Security Pension and the Canada (Quebec) Pension Plans even though they may continue in service. Application forms may be on the Internet through *Service Canada* (www.servicecanada.gc.ca). Applications should be made well in advance to avoid missing the first payment.

9.4 Pensionable Assessment: Overseas Personnel

1. To avoid the distortion of ultimate pension and potential Long-Term Disability benefits because of the addition of area cost-of-living indices to basic stipends, the United Church has established a standard basis of assessment for all overseas personnel. The standard assessment is the equivalent of the home assignment stipend, plus the housing allowance and the resettlement allowance.
2. In the event that overseas personnel choose to accept a voluntary reduction in stipend (see Section 6.1.7), the United Church will, nevertheless, maintain the standard basis of assessment for pension purposes.

10. CHILDREN

10.1 Education of the Children of Overseas Personnel

1. Overseas

The United Church pays all tuition fees for the children of overseas personnel in attendance at approved pre-primary (one year), primary, and secondary schools.

The United Church also assumes responsibility for transportation costs for children attending school at some distance from their homes. Where appropriate school facilities are not available, the United Church will be responsible for the cost of correspondence courses. Textbooks and uniforms (or other charges that would be a personal expense in Canada) are a personal expense.

For those overseas personnel who are obliged to send their children away to boarding school, the United Church pays the cost of room, board, and travel. The cost of all trips between home and school, necessitated by school policy, is covered by the United Church.

2. In Canada

When children of overseas personnel are authorized to attend secondary school in Canada while their parents are in the country of service, the United Church pays that portion of their fees and board not covered by bursaries, scholarships, or other school aid. This is done provided that the selection of the school is approved by the JGER Unit. Summer vacation, if the student is gainfully employed, is excluded from this arrangement. Similar provision is made for those who are boarding in private homes and attending local schools. In such circumstances, room and board costs are to be worked out in consultation with the JGER Unit. This provision shall apply also in cases where a parent is authorized to return to Canada with children for educational purposes. (See Section 8.2.5 for medical insurance coverage while students are in Canada.)

10.2 Return of Children to Country of Service for Part of Term

1. Children attending high school will normally return to the country of service with their parents following home assignment, provided facilities are available for at least one further year of study, unless other arrangements are made with the JGER Unit.
2. Where facilities are not available in the country of service for more than one year of further study, parents may elect to have their children remain in Canada, and the United Church will grant assistance as provided in Section 10.1.2.

10.3 Visit to Country of Service by Children Studying in Canada

The United Church will provide one air economy return fare to enable a dependent child attending school in Canada to visit his/her parent(s). This is done on condition that

1. the dependent child has been overseas with the parent(s) for at least one full term of service prior to remaining in or returning to Canada for study;
2. the dependent child is studying at the high school or post-secondary level;

3. if there were no visit, there would be a separation between the parent(s) and dependent child of at least two years.

10.4 Overseas Personnel Children Studying in University

1. Children of overseas personnel may elect domicile either in Canada or in the country of service during their university course.
2. For those in Canada at the time of entering university who elect to return to the country of service to continue university study, the United Church will provide the cost of travel to that area one way, in addition to the regular bursary for university study.
3. For those in the country of service at the time of entering university, the United Church will provide the cost of one-way travel to Canada, in addition to the regular bursary (see Appendix B).
4. The United Church is not responsible for medical expenses. Students must make arrangements for personal medical coverage.
5. The United Church is not responsible for the cost of local travel from the place of domicile to the university centre, whether in Canada or abroad.

11. TRAVEL COSTS

11.1 Travel of Overseas Personnel

1. Travel to and from the area of service is normally by air. In the event that a person chooses to travel by sea or land, the United Church's liability shall be the air economy fare, direct route, calculated on the date of departure from/to the area.
2. Direct route travel time is home assignment time but it's not part of the free time allowed within a home assignment period. However, there is no restriction on personal travel while going to or from the area of service, provided the travel can be accommodated within the free time provided at the beginning or end of a home assignment. In the event that travel other than direct air economy routing is chosen, the United Church's liability shall be the air economy fare, direct route.
3. Overseas personnel are urged to take advantage of special fare arrangements that may be available either through organizations that cater to overseas personnel travel or otherwise. When such flights can be arranged, the United Church's responsibility shall be the actual cost of such travel.
4. When overseas personnel plan to return to the area of service after home assignment, the United Church pays the cost of one return trip, by direct route, from the area of service to the point in Canada that the overseas personnel elects as his/her home assignment domicile. If home assignment study at some other point in Canada or in the USA is authorized by the JGER Unit, the United Church pays, in addition, the cost of one return trip to the place of study.
5. General guidelines:
 - a. If a stopover is required for direct travel, the United Church may cover costs for up to a 24-hour stay.
 - b. When overseas personnel travel by other than a direct route, the travel allowance shall be the actual expense up to a maximum equal to the cost of "economy" air travel by the direct route, plus baggage allowance.
 - c. When overseas personnel returning to Canada plan to travel by other than a direct route and expect to be more than a week en route, adequate notice must be given through the Global Mission Personnel office to the Compass International plan for health insurance purposes.

11.2 Baggage, Overseas Relocation, and Shipping Allowances

1. The United Church will pay carrying charges by the most direct route and the most economic carrier on baggage in excess of the allowance provided by an airline ticket from a Canadian domicile to the area of service as set out below:
 - a. baggage allowances are meant to cover the cost of the overseas personnel's personal effects only
 - b. baggage allowances may not be shared with other overseas personnel, except within a family

2. Initial Baggage and Shipping Allowances:
 - a. an Excess Baggage Allowance
Overseas personnel proceeding to their country of service may take with them luggage in excess of the air carrier allowance. See Appendix A for details.
 - b. an Overseas Relocation Allowance
This one-time allowance may be used for purchase of items in country of service.
3. Baggage allowance for an appointee who resigns by personal choice before completion of their first term of service will be the initial allowance unless otherwise authorized by the United Church.
4. Returning Baggage and Shipping Allowances from the area of service to a Canadian domicile when resigning or retiring:

Initial Excess Baggage Allowance and, if requested, a contribution toward actual shipping costs

Note: Overseas personnel returning home for resignation or retirement may use these regulations or the regulations in force when they were appointed (the earliest regulations are dated June 1969).
5. Returning to the area of service following regular home assignment:

25 percent of current Excess Baggage Allowance
6. If personnel use their Return Shipping Allowance to ship personal effects
 - a. Insurance: the United Church will pay the insurance premium up to a total insured value of \$5,000 on baggage shipments within the limits defined in this section. If the baggage shipment exceeds the limits of United Church responsibility, insurance costs will be pro-rated between overseas personnel and the United Church on the same basis as other costs. Insurance coverage must be arranged by the overseas personnel.
 - b. Customs Charges: The United Church will pay the customs charges on outgoing baggage up to the allowable maximum weight or cubic measure, except on electronic equipment, cameras, and musical instruments, or items of furniture that are personal property.
 - c. Baggage should be arranged in one shipment.

11.3 Storage of Personal Effects

The storage of personal effects in Canada is a matter for private arrangement and is a personal expense.

11.4 Insurance on Personal Effects

Overseas personnel are advised to carry comprehensive insurance on their personal effects while in the area of service. Loss of, or damage to, personal effects is considered a personal responsibility except under extraordinary circumstances, such as war, where special consideration will be given by the JGER Unit.

STREAM “B” APPOINTMENTS

Personnel in Stream “B” are those who offer themselves for terms of six months to two years overseas. Individuals receive orientation, preparation, international travel and medical insurance, housing, and other support. Individuals may contribute to personal costs. If circumstances warrant, they may also receive “stipend-based” compensation in the form of a living allowance.

This category includes Amity appointments as well as appointments of overseas personnel associates.

12. TERMS OF SERVICE

Stream “B” personnel are appointed to terms of six months to two years in length, with the provision that the term may be extended with the consent of the partner, the overseas personnel, and the JGER Unit.

13. GOALS OF SERVICE

1. To respond to partners’ requests for personnel to fill certain short-term needs
2. To provide an opportunity to learn first-hand about the life, work, worship, and witness of Christians in different cultures and countries
3. To enable overseas personnel to share their faith, knowledge, skills, and personal presence in the service of Christ with a partner church or ecumenical agency, with an emphasis (where appropriate) on training others in the partner institution to continue the work
4. To facilitate the involvement of Canadian congregations, presbyteries, and Conferences in the ministry of overseas personnel
5. To strengthen the ties between the United Church and overseas partners, promoting an understanding of the global and local nature of God’s mission

14. SCREENING, SELECTION, APPOINTMENT, COMMISSIONING, AND ORIENTATION

The guidelines outlined in Section 4, “The Appointment of Overseas Personnel”, apply equally to Stream “A” and Stream “B” overseas personnel appointments made by the JGER Unit. Note below the particular processes for Amity and overseas personnel associate appointments (Sections 20 and 21).

15. FINANCES

15.1 Personal Contribution

Overseas personnel in Stream “B” are encouraged to cover whatever costs their circumstances permit. However, the lack of financial resources alone should not prevent them from making a contribution in an overseas assignment.

15.2 Financial Support

Financial support will be negotiated with each appointee within the following parameters:

1. the JGER Unit’s responsibility includes recruiting, screening, psychological testing, orientation, international medical insurance, return travel costs, debriefing, and the re-entry program;
2. the appointee does not become a member of the United Church Pension Plan or Group Insurance Plan;
3. the appointee does not receive a resettlement allowance;
4. the appointee is provided with a baggage and relocation allowance;
5. where circumstances indicate, a basic living allowance may be paid, negotiated in consultation with the receiving partner and the appointee, up to a maximum of 50% of the current Stream “A” Stipend—Step 1;
6. the JGER Unit assumes no financial responsibility for dependents;
7. accommodation is provided by the requesting partner;
8. expectations regarding mission interpretation are negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

15.3 Home Assignment

Arrangements for home assignment for Stream “B” personnel will be made on a case-by-case basis. Stream “B” personnel are encouraged to engage in mission interpretation upon return whether or not they are able to complete a formal home assignment period. Home assignments that include mission interpretation or other duties may be worked out in consultation with the People in Partnership Program Coordinator. If circumstances warrant, Stream “B” personnel may receive a stipend and a housing allowance during home assignment. The length of home assignment will normally be for no more than one to two months for each full year of overseas service. The home assignment period may be extended for mission interpretation purposes.

16. VACATION/LEAVE OF ABSENCE/SICK AND COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

16.1 Annual Vacation

The terms of appointment provide for one month of holiday each year. It is expected that overseas personnel will make provision for this in their work schedule in consultation with the partner church or agency. If holiday schedules coincide with home assignment, and overseas personnel are considering taking their holiday time in Canada, the Regional and People in Partnership Program Coordinators must also be consulted.

16.2 Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave may be granted under special circumstances, such as illness or death of a parent or child. Arrangements are to be negotiated with the Regional and People in Partnership Program Coordinators. Travel shall be a personal responsibility. Leave may be up to two months maximum. If leave is desired for a longer period, the situation will be assessed on its merit.

17. PROCEDURE FOR RE-APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT AFTER WITHDRAWAL FROM SERVICE

Candidates who have previously served in overseas appointments with the United Church, who ended their employment with the United Church, and who wish to re-apply for a new appointment, shall follow the normal application process.

The process for re-appointment shall include:

1. invitation by an overseas church or agency;
2. participation in a mission discernment event;
3. normal interview process;
4. medical clearance;
5. participation at the ecumenical orientation program or an equivalent specialized course.

For overseas personnel who are re-appointed, a covenanting service, held in the home congregation, may be more appropriate than a commissioning service.

18. HEALTH

18.1 Medical Consultant

The JGER Unit retains the services of a medical consultant for the purpose of safeguarding the health of overseas personnel. All overseas appointments are subject to receiving clearance from the JGER Unit's medical consultant (Section 4.6.7).

18.2 Medical and Dental Services

1. Area of Service

While overseas personnel are in the area of service, medical expenses covered in Canada by provincial health insurance plans are covered through Compass International's Insurance Program for Canadians Working Abroad. This insurance program is paid for by the JGER Unit and it works on a reimbursement basis.

Overseas personnel who travel out of their country of service will continue to be covered under the Compass International plan during that time, only when said travel is communicated **in advance** to the JGER Unit through the People in Partnership staff.

2. On Return to Canada

Upon return to Canada, overseas personnel will be required to re-activate their provincial health insurance coverage immediately. Until this coverage goes into effect, the Compass International plan will cover all personnel under its "medical extension benefit," which has been prepaid by the JGER Unit.

There may be some expenses not covered under the Compass International plan that the United Church will cover.

3. Personal Time in Canada

Overseas personnel will be covered for up to one month per year of personal time (vacation) in Canada under the Compass plan. If that month is exceeded, Compass will impose a surcharge that will be the responsibility of the overseas personnel.

4. Travel Expenses

- a. Overseas: Travel expenses related to medical and dental care while in the area of service must be approved in advance by Compass International. In some cases, the JGER Unit may supplement this coverage.
- b. In Canada: Necessary travel expenses related to re-entry medical examinations, or related treatment (see Section 18.6), should be submitted to the JGER Unit.

18.3 Procedure for Medical Expense Reimbursement

1. Area of Service

Compass International reimburses overseas personnel for medical expenses that in Canada are normally covered by provincial health coverage. Overseas personnel pay for the initial expense and submit a claim to Compass International. Receipts should be

attached to the Compass reimbursement form, providing translation where necessary, and the Canadian dollar equivalent. If medical expenses are predicted to be sizable (in the case of emergency or otherwise), overseas personnel should contact the emergency medical assistance provider under contract with the underwriter for the Compass International plan. The emergency medical assistance provider is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Among other services, it provides evacuation and travel assistance. Its personnel will assess the situation, offer clear direction, and if it all possible, arrange for medical and related bills to be paid directly.

2. Reimbursement

Compass International will convert the expense from the local currency to Canadian dollars based on the exchange rate on the date the claim is received. Reimbursement cheques are sent to the address noted or to the bank (for direct deposit) as noted on the claim form.

3. Timing of Submissions

Submissions may be made at any time during the year.

18.4 HIV Testing and Protective Measures

18.4.1 Testing for HIV Antibodies

1. Testing on a voluntary basis:

Overseas personnel or candidates for overseas work may be tested for HIV antibodies on a voluntary basis, except where testing is required by the host country.

2. When required by the host country:

Some overseas partner organizations or their respective countries require that persons who are to be posted in their countries submit the results of a negative test for AIDS and HIV. The United Church agrees to honour that requirement. For those countries requiring HIV testing, no appointment will be made by the United Church unless a candidate has complied with this requirement.

The United Church strongly recommends that persons who have been involved in the following high-risk situations have the HIV testing before they go or return overseas:

1. Anyone who has had blood transfusions or has given blood in an overseas situation of risk (Note: Overseas situations of risk may include the use of non-sterile equipment, including needles or syringes, where there was not a “safe” blood supply or where sterilizing procedures are not practised consistently)
2. Anyone who has had inoculations in an overseas situation of risk
3. Anyone who is a medical caregiver
4. Anyone who has any reason to believe he/she has been involved in other high-risk situations

If the results of an HIV test are positive, the United Church strongly recommends that the person discuss all the implications with his/her physician. The JGER Unit’s medical consultant advises that anyone who tests positive should remain in Canada for his/her own

health and safety. Consequently, the United Church will not appoint for overseas service or authorize the return to the field of a person who tests HIV positive.

18.4.2 Liability

The United Church will be responsible for the medical coverage of overseas personnel who may test HIV positive during or after service, while they are in the employ of the United Church, up until the time the person's provincial health plan becomes effective.

18.4.3 Protective Measures

The United Church will provide relevant information relating to AIDS and HIV testing to all new overseas personnel appointees before they leave Canada. This education is to be provided by the Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries as part of their Orientation Conferences. *Attendance at these sessions will be mandatory.*

18.4.4 Medical Care

In regard to major medical and surgical procedures that may be required by overseas personnel, the JGER Unit medical consultant recommends that such personnel seek to have those procedures carried out where there is a "safe" blood supply. If a hospital or clinic cannot test for HIV antibodies, then the blood is not considered safe.

When a "safe" blood supply cannot be located in the country of assignment, then the JGER Unit recommends that overseas personnel have any major medical or surgical procedures done in a hospital of a neighbouring country that can provide "safe" blood.

Where this is not possible or advisable, and on the advice of a local medical adviser and the JGER Unit's medical consultant, the United Church is prepared to bring such personnel back to Canada.

18.4.5 Pastoral Care

The United Church through the People in Partnership Program Coordinator will undertake to provide appropriate pastoral care and counselling as needed for any candidates or overseas personnel relating to the issue of AIDS and HIV testing. Provision will be made by the United Church for professional counselling in the area in which such overseas personnel or candidates live.

18.5 Annual Medical Examination in the Area

1. Maintenance of good health in the area is primarily the responsibility of the overseas personnel.
2. An annual medical examination, though not mandatory, is recommended as a means of assisting overseas personnel in a practical and effective way to maintain good health.

3. Overseas personnel are advised and encouraged to have an annual medical examination by a physician of his/her own choosing. Confidentiality between overseas personnel and the examining physician in the area is encouraged whenever possible.
4. Overseas personnel or the examining physician, with the consent of the personnel, may correspond directly with and seek help from the JGER medical consultant at any time. Such consultation will be facilitated by the People in Partnership staff.
5. The JGER medical consultant will not receive an annual medical report from the examining physician, unless the overseas personnel requests that one is sent.
6. The medical consultant, however, in special circumstances and at his/her discretion, may
 - a. request that the personnel have an annual medical examination or a repeat examination.
 - b. request specifically that a medical report be sent to him/her.
 - c. share relevant information with the Regional and People in Partnership Program Coordinators, so that they are able to make responsible decisions concerning the personnel's welfare or continued service. Only person(s) having direct decision-making responsibility will be given such confidential information.

18.6 Re-entry Medical Examination

1. Examination on return from assignment is compulsory in order to determine the overseas personnel's present state of health and to advise him/her of any abnormality found and treatment required.
2. Overseas personnel are encouraged to use this opportunity to obtain any medical or surgical treatment indicated and to seek any help with emotional or psychological problems that may become manifest.
3. The examination may be done by the JGER Unit's medical consultant, a family physician, or a physician recommended by the medical consultant. If the examination is not done by the JGER Unit's medical consultant, a medical report must be forwarded to him/her for evaluation.
4. The examining physician will discuss his/her findings and recommendations with the overseas personnel and send a complete report to the JGER medical consultant.
5. Special investigations may be requested by the JGER medical consultant, by the physician doing the examination, or by the overseas personnel, in consultation with the examining physician.
6. If any subsequent treatment is required, the personnel is encouraged to see a physician of his or her own choosing.

19. TRAVEL COSTS

19.1 Travel of Overseas Personnel

1. Travel to and from the area of service is normally by air. In the event that a person chooses to travel by sea or land, the United Church's liability shall be the air economy fare, direct route, calculated on the date of departure from/to the area.
2. In the event that travel other than direct air economy routing is chosen, the United Church's liability shall be the air economy fare, direct route.
3. Overseas personnel are urged to take advantage of special fare arrangements that may be available either through organizations that cater to overseas personnel travel or otherwise. When such flights can be arranged, the United Church's responsibility shall be the actual cost of such travel.
4. General guidelines:
 - a. If a stopover is required for direct travel, the United Church may cover costs for up to a 24-hour stay.
 - b. When overseas personnel travel by other than a direct route, the travel allowance shall be the actual expense up to a maximum equal to the cost of "economy" air travel by the direct route.
 - c. When overseas personnel returning to Canada plan to travel by other than a direct route and expect to be more than a week en route, adequate notice must be given through the Global Mission Personnel office to the Compass International plan for health insurance purposes.

19.2 Baggage and Overseas Relocation Allowance

1. The United Church will pay carrying charges by the most direct route and the most economic carrier on baggage in excess of the allowance provided by an airline ticket from a Canadian domicile to the area of service as set out below:
 - a. baggage allowances are meant to cover the cost of the overseas personnel's personal effects only
 - b. baggage allowances may not be shared with other overseas personnel, except within a family
2. Initial Baggage and Shipping Allowances:
 - a. **an Excess Baggage Allowance**
Overseas personnel proceeding to their country of service may take with them luggage in excess of the air carrier allowance. See Appendix A for details.
 - b. **an Overseas Relocation Allowance**
This one-time allowance may be used for purchase of items in country of service.
3. Baggage allowance for an appointee who resigns by personal choice before completion of their first term of service will be the initial allowance unless otherwise authorized by the United Church.

19.3 Storage of Personal Effects

The storage of personal effects in Canada is a matter for private arrangement and is a personal expense.

19.4 Insurance on Personal Effects

Overseas personnel are advised to carry comprehensive insurance on their personal effects while in the area of service. Loss of, or damage to, personal effects is considered a personal responsibility except under extraordinary circumstances, such as war, where special consideration will be given by the JGER Unit.

20. APPOINTMENTS TO THE AMITY FOUNDATION IN CHINA

20.1 Process, Requests, and Terms

1. *Process:* Appointments are made by the Amity Foundation (Teachers' Project) in China. The United Church recruits, screens, and recommends suitable persons for teaching in China for final appointment by the Amity Foundation. The appointees are then placed in post-secondary institutions in China that have requested teachers.
The United Church of Canada participates in this program at the invitation and on the terms of the Amity Foundation. This project began in 1985.
2. *Personnel Requests:* The Teacher's Project of the Amity Foundation seeks English language teachers to serve in post-secondary institutions, mostly in the provinces of East China. Schools located in remote areas or having no access to foreign teachers are on Amity's priority list.
3. *Qualifications:* The position requires Christian faith and experience in a Christian church and community; the ability to be a sensitive Christian presence in the midst of changing social developments in China; a willingness to embrace a simple lifestyle; an ability to adapt and "make do"; an interest in sharing skills with students and colleagues in a country with a different culture; an eagerness to promote friendship and mutual understanding; and the ability to learn from others as well as to teach.
The preference is for single persons, or couples if both teach and they have no children, and persons under the age of 68.
4. *Terms:* Appointees should be available to serve for two years. However, Amity must renew the appointment at the end of the first year.

20.2 Financial Arrangements: Amity Appointees

1. *Stipend:* The stipend is paid by the university in China to which the appointee is assigned, subsidized by the Amity Foundation. These two Chinese organizations are the employer. The United Church of Canada pays a block grant to the Amity Foundation to cover the stipend and Amity administrative expenses related to each United Church appointee.
This stipend provides a living wage in China which is significantly higher than the wage received by Chinese counterparts. However, the remuneration paid is not equivalent to a North American stipend and will not cover much beyond day-to-day living expenses.
2. *Travel:* The JGER Unit is responsible for arranging and covering the costs of return travel to China. The JGER Unit will pay for the most economical and direct air flight. If this routing entails a stopover, the JGER Unit will be responsible for costs related to food and accommodation during the stopover. Additional costs incurred for special routings requested by overseas personnel are a personal expense.
3. *Visa:* Each appointee must apply to the Chinese Consulate for a work visa and will bill the JGER Unit for the cost.

4. *Medical insurance:* Teachers enjoy the privilege of China's public medical care system, which should be sufficient for most needs. However, medical insurance coverage is provided through Compass International as outlined in Sections 18.2 and 18.3 above.
5. *Screening, interviewing, and orientation costs:* These costs are borne by The United Church of Canada.
6. *Grant in lieu of pension:* To compensate for the fact that during their term Amity appointees will not be able to contribute to Canadian employment insurance programs or the Canada Pension Plan, The United Church of Canada will pay those appointees who would, under normal circumstances, be making contributions to these plans. Payment will be the equivalent of the annual employer's contribution (single or family) to the United Church and Canada Pension Plans plus annual employment insurance premiums.
These payments will be taxable to the appointee and consequently subject to Canadian tax laws.
7. *Grant for teaching aids:* The United Church will pay a one-time grant of \$500 to a single person or a couple for the purchase of teaching aids prior to departure from Canada.

20.3 Medical: Amity Appointees

In addition to the regular medical examination required, the government of China requires all prospective teachers to have an HIV test and to secure a proper affidavit to this effect. This test should be done through a local public hospital, which will also be required to issue a health certificate as per instructions.

20.4 Application Process and Timeline: Amity Candidates

The normal United Church selection process will apply. Normally, the JGER Unit sends the names of recommended persons to the Amity Foundation for approval by mid-March. Amity gives its final approval in April.

20.5 Orientation: Amity Appointees

The appointee is required to attend the ecumenical Orientation Conference in July and the Amity language and orientation program in China in August.

20.6 Re-entry and Home Assignment: Amity Appointees

Following completion of service in China, appointees are entitled to one month of home assignment for each full year of service. During this period, a bursary that's equivalent to the current level of the JGER Unit home assignment stipend and housing allowance will be paid.

The JGER Unit's People in Partnership Program Coordinator will coordinate the debriefing of Amity appointees upon their return to Canada. Appointees are expected to participate in an ecumenical re-entry program, at the cost of the JGER Unit.

21. APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEAS PERSONNEL ASSOCIATES

Overseas personnel associates are appointed to churches or agencies that assume responsibility for salary and other benefits, including medical insurance coverage, while in the area of service, as well as a portion of travel costs.

The JGER Unit provides a bursary equal to a stipend to all associates during their pre-departure period and during their home assignment following service in accordance with regulations which apply to Stream “A” appointees.

Travel costs are normally the responsibility of the employing agency.

All other terms of appointment, service, and return to Canada related to Stream “A” appointments apply.

Note: Teachers appointed to schools related to The United Church of Christ in Japan may be appointed either through Stream “A” or Stream “B” as overseas personnel associates, with the understanding that the schools will provide full financial support for any such appointments. (*DWO Executive October 18, 1996*)

STREAM “C” APPOINTMENTS: SHORT-TERM VOLUNTEERS, UP TO ONE YEAR

Short-term, Stream “C” positions are usually six months or less. These appointments are for people who offer themselves for voluntary, short-term overseas service in response to requests for personnel to fill specific needs identified by United Church partner churches and agencies. No compensation is provided. Individuals may contribute to their financial support. Travel, insurance, and accommodation are usually provided.

22. TERMS OF SERVICE

Stream “C” personnel are appointed to terms of up to one year, with the provision that the term may be extended with the consent of the partner, the volunteer, and the JGER Unit.

23. GOALS OF SERVICE

1. To respond to partners’ requests for personnel to fill certain short-term needs
2. To provide an opportunity to learn first-hand about the life, work, worship, and witness of Christians in different cultures and countries
3. To enable volunteers to share their faith, knowledge, skills, and personal presence in the service of Christ with a partner church or ecumenical agency, with an emphasis (where appropriate) on training others in the partner institution to continue the work
4. To facilitate the involvement of Canadian congregations, presbyteries, and Conferences in the ministry of the volunteers
5. To strengthen the ties between the United Church and overseas partners, promoting understanding of the global and local nature of God’s mission

24. SCREENING, SELECTION, APPOINTMENT, COMMISSIONING, AND ORIENTATION

The process outlined in Section 4, “The Appointment of Overseas Personnel”, will generally apply to Stream “C” volunteer personnel appointments made by the JGER Unit. In some circumstances, the process may be adapted to suit the timelines and other unique factors in a particular appointment.

25. FINANCES

25.1 Personal Contribution

Overseas personnel in Stream “C” are encouraged to cover whatever costs their circumstances permit. However, the lack of financial resources alone should not prevent them from making a contribution in an overseas assignment.

25.2 Financial Support

Financial support will be negotiated with each volunteer within the following parameters:

1. the JGER Unit's responsibility includes recruiting, screening, psychological testing, orientation, international medical insurance, return travel costs, debriefing, and the re-entry conference;
2. the appointee does not become a member of the United Church Pension Plan or Group Insurance Plan;
3. the appointee does not receive a resettlement allowance;
4. there may be a partial allowance for shipping costs, depending on length of term;
5. where circumstances indicate, a basic living allowance may be paid;
6. the JGER Unit assumes no financial responsibility for dependents;
7. accommodation is provided by the requesting partner;
8. expectations regarding mission interpretation are negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

26. PROCEDURE FOR RE-APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT AFTER COMPLETION OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT

Candidates who have previously served in overseas appointments with the United Church, who ended their volunteer assignment with the United Church and wish to re-apply for a new appointment, should follow the normal application process.

The process for re-appointment shall include:

1. invitation by an overseas church or agency;
2. participation in a mission discernment event;
3. normal interview process;
4. obtaining medical clearance;
5. participation at the ecumenical orientation program or an equivalent specialized course.

In some circumstances, the re-appointment process may be adapted to suit the timelines and other unique factors in a particular appointment.

For overseas personnel who are re-appointed, a covenanting service, held in the home congregation, may be more appropriate than a commissioning service.

27. HEALTH

27.1 Medical Consultant

The JGER Unit retains the services of a medical consultant for the purpose of safeguarding the health of overseas personnel. All overseas appointments are subject to receiving clearance from the JGER Unit's medical consultant (Section 4.6.7).

27.2 Medical and Dental Expenses

1. *Area of Service*

While overseas personnel are in the area of service, medical expenses covered in Canada by provincial health insurance plans are covered through Compass International's Insurance Program for Canadians Working Abroad. This insurance program is paid for by the JGER Unit and it works on a reimbursement basis.

Overseas personnel who travel out of their country of service will continue to be covered under the Compass International plan during that time, only when said travel is communicated **in advance** to the JGER Unit through the People in Partnership staff.

2. *Travel Expenses*

- a. Overseas: Travel expenses related to medical and dental care while in the area of service must be approved in advance by Compass International. In some cases, the JGER Unit may supplement this coverage.
- b. In Canada: Necessary travel expenses related to re-entry medical examinations, or related treatment (see Section 27.5), should be submitted to the JGER Unit.

27.3 Procedure for Medical Expense Reimbursement

1. *Area of Service*

Compass International reimburses overseas personnel for medical expenses that in Canada are normally covered by provincial health coverage. Overseas personnel pay for the initial expense and submit a claim to Compass International. Receipts should be attached to the Compass reimbursement form, providing translation where necessary, and the Canadian dollar equivalent. If medical expenses are predicted to be sizable (in the case of emergency or otherwise), overseas personnel should contact the emergency medical assistance provider under contract with the underwriter for the Compass International plan. The emergency medical assistance provider is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Among other services, it provides evacuation and travel assistance. Its personnel will assess the situation, offer clear direction, and if it all possible, arrange for medical and related bills to be paid directly.

2. *Reimbursement*

Compass International will convert the expense from the local currency to Canadian dollars based on the exchange rate on the date the claim is received. Reimbursement cheques are sent to the address noted or to the bank (for direct deposit) as noted on the claim form.

3. *Timing of Submissions*

Submissions may be made at any time during the year.

27.4 HIV Testing and Protective Measures

27.4.1 Testing for HIV Antibodies

1. Testing on a voluntary basis:

Overseas personnel or candidates for overseas work may be tested for HIV antibodies on a voluntary basis, except where testing is required by the host country.

2. When required by the host country:

Some overseas partner organizations or their respective countries require that persons who are to be posted in their countries submit the results of a negative test for AIDS and HIV. The United Church agrees to honour that requirement. For those countries requiring HIV testing, no appointment will be made by the United Church unless a candidate has complied with this requirement.

The United Church strongly recommends that persons who have been involved in the following high-risk situations have the HIV testing before they go or return overseas:

1. Anyone who has had blood transfusions or who has given blood in an overseas situation of risk (*Note: Overseas situations of risk may include the use of non-sterile equipment, including needles or syringes, where there was not a “safe” blood supply, or where sterilizing procedures are not practiced consistently*)
2. Anyone who has had inoculations in an overseas situation of risk
3. Anyone who is a medical caregiver
4. Anyone who has any reason to believe he/she has been involved in other high-risk situations

If the results of an HIV test are positive, the United Church strongly recommends that the person discuss all the implications with his/her physician. The JGER Unit’s medical consultant advises that anyone who tests positive should remain in Canada for his/her own health and safety. Consequently, the United Church will not appoint for overseas service or authorize a person to return to the field who tests HIV positive.

27.4.2 Liability

The United Church will be responsible for the medical coverage of overseas personnel who may test HIV positive during or after service, while they are in the employ of the United Church, up until the time the person’s provincial health plan becomes effective.

27.4.3 Protective Measures

The United Church will provide relevant information relating to AIDS and HIV testing to all new overseas personnel appointees before they leave Canada. This education is to be provided by the Canadian Churches’ Forum for Global Ministries as part of their Orientation Conferences. *Attendance at these sessions will be mandatory.*

27.4.4 Medical Care

With regard to major medical and surgical procedures that may be required by overseas personnel, the JGER Unit's medical consultant recommends that such personnel seek to have those procedures carried out where there is a "safe" blood supply. If a hospital or clinic cannot test for HIV antibodies, then the blood is not considered safe.

When a "safe" blood supply cannot be located in the country of assignment, then the JGER Unit recommends that overseas personnel have any major medical or surgical procedures done in a hospital of a neighbouring country that can provide "safe" blood.

Where this is not possible or advisable, and on the advice of a local medical adviser and the JGER Unit's medical consultant, the United Church is prepared to bring such personnel back to Canada.

27.4.5 Pastoral Care

The United Church through the People in Partnership Program Coordinator will undertake to provide appropriate pastoral care and counselling as needed for any candidates or overseas personnel relating to the issue of AIDS and HIV testing. Provision will be made by the United Church for professional counselling in the area in which such overseas personnel or candidates live.

27.5 Re-entry Medical Examination

1. Examination on return from assignment is compulsory in order to determine the overseas personnel's present state of health and to advise him/her of any abnormality found and treatment required.
2. Overseas personnel are encouraged to use this opportunity to obtain any medical or surgical treatment indicated and to seek any help with emotional or psychological problems that may become manifest.
3. The examination may be done by the JGER Unit's medical consultant, a family physician, or a physician recommended by the medical consultant. If the examination is not done by the JGER Unit's medical consultant, a medical report must be forwarded to him/her for evaluation.
4. The examining physician will discuss his/her findings and recommendations with the overseas personnel and send a complete report to the JGER medical consultant.
5. Special investigations may be requested by the JGER medical consultant, by the physician doing the examination, or by the overseas personnel, in consultation with the examining physician.
6. If any subsequent treatment is required, the personnel is encouraged to see a physician of his or her own choosing.

28. TRAVEL COSTS

28.1 Travel of Overseas Personnel

1. Travel to and from the area of service is normally by air. In the event that a person chooses to travel by sea or land, the United Church's liability shall be the air economy fare, direct route, calculated on the date of departure from/to the area.
2. In the event that travel other than direct air economy routing is chosen, the United Church's liability shall be the air economy fare, direct route.
3. Overseas personnel are urged to take advantage of special fare arrangements that may be available either through organizations that cater to overseas personnel travel or otherwise. When such flights can be arranged, the United Church's responsibility shall be the actual cost of such travel.
4. General guidelines
 - a. If a stopover is required for direct travel, the United Church may cover costs for up to a 24-hour stay.
 - b. When overseas personnel travel by other than a direct route, the travel allowance shall be the actual expense up to a maximum equal to the cost of "economy" air travel by the direct route.
 - c. When overseas personnel returning to Canada plan to travel by other than a direct route and expect to be more than a week en route, adequate notice must be given through the Global Mission Personnel office to the Compass International plan for health insurance purposes.

28.2 Baggage Allowance

For terms of one year or less, baggage allowance is the personal responsibility of the overseas personnel.

28.3 Storage of Personal Effects

The storage of personal effects in Canada is a matter for private arrangement and is a personal expense.

28.4 Insurance on Personal Effects

Overseas personnel are advised to carry comprehensive insurance on their personal effects while in the area of service. Loss of, or damage to, personal effects is considered a personal responsibility except under extraordinary circumstances, such as war, where special consideration will be given by the JGER Unit.

APPENDIX A

1. CURRENT ALLOWANCES: 2009

Contact People in Partnership staff.

2. CURRENT ALLOWANCES: REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

There are two general rules to guide United Church overseas personnel with regard to expenses.

General Rule #1

Expenses incurred by overseas personnel that are a **direct function of their overseas appointment** are normally eligible for reimbursement. This is particularly true of expenses that would not normally be incurred if working in Canada. To receive reimbursement, overseas personnel are responsible for providing the United Church's JGER Unit (People in Partnership staff) with appropriate documentation, listing all eligible expenses, and including original receipts and conversion from local currency if possible.

The following gives a general description of the kinds of expenses that may be reimbursed and lists some specific examples.

Reimbursable expenses include, *but are not limited to*

- migration and visa related expenses as advised by the United Church's JGER Unit and/or the receiving partner, including
 - necessary regular visa renewal expenses (including travel), following the advice and direction of the receiving partner and having previously informed the United Church's JGER Unit
 - necessary passport renewal expenses (including related travel), having previously informed the United Church's JGER Unit
 - costs related to acquiring particular documentation for visas, work permits or passport renewal
- phone calls to The United Church of Canada
- preventive health care related to overseas service not covered by any of the medical insurance programs of the United Church's JGER Unit, as advised by the unit's medical consultant (e.g., anti-malaria drugs)

Some overseas personnel may incur "work-related" expenses which might reasonably be expected to be paid for by an employer. In the normal course of events, expenses like these which are directly related to overseas personnel work in the field would be covered by the overseas partner. In particular cases where this is not possible, **the receiving partner should consult with the United Church's JGER Unit through the Regional Program Coordinator.**

The United Church is not responsible for costs related to

- purchase of resources (books, office supplies, etc.) by overseas personnel, even if overseas personnel choose to leave these resources with the overseas partner
- purchase of technical and/or electronic equipment by overseas personnel, even if overseas personnel choose to leave these resources with the overseas partner
- purchase of daily household supplies

General Rule #2

If uncertain about the eligibility of a particular expense, personnel should not hesitate to **consult directly with the Regional Program Coordinator or with the People in Partnership Program Coordinator**. However, this should be done *before* the expense is incurred. The worst we can do is say no!

APPENDIX B

POST-SECONDARY TRAINING ASSISTANCE PLAN

1. The Bursary Assistance Plan (Bursary) is designed to provide assistance for post-secondary training for dependent children of regularly appointed overseas personnel on full-time stipend with The United Church of Canada.
2. The plan is funded by the United Church's JGER Unit. The JGER Unit will contribute a monthly amount per dependent child, which shall be added to the parent's stipend. Parents will be informed of the amount and urged to set up a suitable automatic monthly withdrawal savings/investment plan.
3. Contributions for a dependent are made through December of the year in which the dependent reaches his/her eighteenth birthday.
4. Funds should be used for post-secondary education or for some other purpose mutually agreeable to the parent(s) and the dependent, keeping in mind the purpose of the plan.

(Approved October 1996 DWO Executive)

APPENDIX C

APPEAL PROCEDURES

The relationship between overseas personnel and The United Church of Canada is based on trust and collegiality. Differences in understanding regarding the interpretation of the United Church's regulations are normally worked out within this context. However, should overseas personnel wish to appeal any of the regulations of the United Church as set forth in the *Handbook*, the appeal will be directed to the Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations Unit Committee. The JGER Committee may delegate first response to an appeal to a sub-group of elected members.

If, after receiving a response from the body delegated to respond, the personnel is still unsatisfied, she/he may appeal by letter directly to the JGER Unit Committee. The Unit Committee may hear the appeal and rule on the matter, which would be the final adjudication by the unit, or the unit may appoint an Appeal Committee to hear the appeal.

If formed, the Appeal Committee will consist of one member of the Unit, one overseas personnel on home assignment in Canada at the time of the appeal, one person named by the General Council Human Resources Unit, and one member of the JGER Unit staff not directly involved in the decision under appeal. The staff member on the committee will be responsible for convening the committee to hear the appeal, and for reporting the decision to the person concerned and to the JGER Unit Committee for information.

If the person is on home assignment at the time of the appeal, the Appeal Committee will interview the person and the staff member involved. If the person is in the area of service, submissions to the committee will be in writing. The committee may seek other information or interview other persons at its own discretion.

The decision of the Appeal Committee, as determined by a simple majority of the members, will be the final adjudication by the United Church.

An Appeal Committee may be established to adjudicate in the interpretation or application of any regulation of The United Church of Canada already in effect. If, in the opinion of the JGER Unit Committee, the matter in question is not covered by any existing regulation of the United Church, the JGER Unit Committee shall establish new policy to cover the matter and the new regulations will be incorporated into the *Handbook*.

APPENDIX D

SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEAS PERSONNEL

(Implications of the Decision of the 32nd General Council)

The United Church of Canada does not ask candidates for overseas service questions about their sexual orientation, in keeping with the General Council ruling.

If a candidate reveals his or her sexual orientation to be homosexual and declares that he or she would be uncomfortable unless that orientation is known by those with whom the candidate would be working, the United Church would have to share this information with the prospective partner. If a partner is unwilling to accept the candidate under those conditions the United Church would not make the appointment.

If an overseas partner notifies the United Church, in advance of any appointment, that they would be unwilling to accept a homosexual worker, the United Church, through the appropriate Area Secretary, would explain to the partner that United Church policy is such that the United Church does not ask questions in order to ascertain sexual orientation. The United Church would indicate also that it would continue to use all the criteria usually employed to determine the suitability of a person for any personnel request. This would include personal faith in Christ and how that faith is lived out in daily life in obedience to Christ.

However, since the United Church does not ask about sexual orientation, it is not possible for it to guarantee in the future, as it has not been possible in the past, to assure that no undeclared homosexual would be appointed to work with the partner. If this is acceptable to the partner, we would continue to recruit candidates. If it is unacceptable, we would discontinue recruitment for that partner.

(Adopted by the DWO AGM, October 1988)

Note: *The Division of World Outreach/Annual General Meeting accepted this statement in 1988 as an interim guideline. The Global Mission Personnel Committee was asked to expand the terms of the guidelines to cover other possible areas of discrimination. The statement found in Section 4.5 attempts to summarize the commitment to non-discrimination in appointments and the limitations imposed on it by the circumstances of partnership through which the United Church functions.*

APPENDIX E

MARRIAGE OF OVERSEAS PERSONNEL IN AREA OF SERVICE

A. Marriage of Regular Term Overseas Personnel in Service

1. *Concerning the marriage of two persons serving with the United Church and wishing to continue in service as a family:*
 - i. They shall notify the partner church or agency and The United Church of Canada at least two months prior to the date of marriage.
 - ii. Provided that the request to continue in service is approved by both partner church/agency and the United Church's JGER Unit, transfer from single to family category shall be on:
 - the 15th of the month of marriage, if marriage is on or prior to that date;
 - the first day of the month following the month in which the marriage occurs, if the marriage is on or subsequent to the 16th.
 - iii. If either the partner church/agency or the United Church's JGER Unit, or both, are opposed to the request to continue in service as a family, each shall so inform the other in writing within 30 days of receiving notice of the intent to marry. They should then begin a process of consultation to explore available options.

2. *If one party to the intended marriage is not in service with The United Church of Canada but wishes to apply for appointment:*
 - i. Application shall be made at least three months prior to the date of the intended marriage, with such documentation, references, medical reports, etc. as may be required by The United Church of Canada for essential screening procedures.
 - ii. If the application is approved by The United Church's JGER Unit, the effective date of appointment shall be negotiated.
 - iii. If the appointment becomes effective prior to the marriage, transfer from single to family category shall be as provided in (1.ii) above.
 - iv. If the applicant does not qualify for appointment with the United Church, the appointment of the overseas personnel who is party to the marriage may be terminated or continued as shall be decided by the parties concerned (overseas personnel/partner/JGER Unit) in consultation.
 - v. If the appointment is terminated, settlement shall be as provided in the *Handbook*.
 - vi. If the appointment is continued, it shall be on conditions as determined by the three parties (overseas personnel/partner/JGER Unit) in consultation.

3. *If one party to the intended marriage is not serving with The United Church of Canada and is not wishing to request appointment:*
 - i. If the overseas personnel party desires to continue in service, there shall be joint consultation (overseas personnel/partner/JGER Unit) to consider the request. If

the request is favourably considered, future service shall be on conditions as determined in joint consultation.

- ii. If service with the United Church is discontinued, the overseas personnel party shall be eligible for withdrawal from service with settlement as per the *Handbook*.

B. Marriage of Short-Term Appointees

1. The tour may be completed, or terminated, as determined in consultation (overseas personnel/partner/JGER Unit).
2. The United Church assumes no financial responsibility for dependent(s).
3. If the marriage is between two United Church appointees, their future status with The United Church of Canada shall be negotiated.

APPENDIX F

SEPARATION/DIVORCE OF OVERSEAS PERSONNEL IN AREA OF SERVICE

The decision to separate or divorce is a painful one for all concerned. The United Church of Canada exercises a pastoral concern for all those who find themselves in this difficult situation without the support of family networks.

The United Church must also be concerned about the impact of a separation or divorce on the appointment to overseas service agreed to by all parties. Since both members or a couple are appointed as a family by the United Church, a change in marital status may fundamentally change the terms of the appointment.

In light of their two direct concerns, the United Church offers the following guidelines to overseas personnel considering such a decision:

- The United Church, as the employer, expects to be informed as soon as possible of any change in circumstance, including separation or divorce, that will change the terms of the original appointment.
- The United Church, as the employer, expects to be involved, first hand, in any discussions with global partners around the ramifications of a separation or divorce. It is preferable that this conversation take place first between the JGER Unit and the overseas personnel concerned, before involving the partner. Overseas personnel should contact the People in Mission Program Coordinator or the Regional Program Coordinator to begin these discussions.
- The United Church, as the employer, reserves the right, after due consultation with the overseas personnel and the partner, to consider that such a fundamental change in the terms of the original appointment may be grounds for ending that appointment. If a means of finishing the original appointment is agreed to by all parties, then that appointment may continue to its end. There will be no re-appointment to a second term. If either party of the estranged couple wishes to continue in overseas service they must re-apply for appointment.
- The United Church will not accept responsibility for any additional expenses related to the separation or divorce (e.g. additional housing, child care, or transportation expenses).
- If, after due consultation, it is agreed that the appointment should be ended, The United Church of Canada agrees to cover transportation costs back to Canada in full and a pro-rated proportion of baggage costs.
- The United Church may negotiate a contribution toward the cost of a marriage or separation counselling program and the related child care expenses.
- Length of home assignment upon return to Canada will be negotiated in accordance with Section 5.3 of the *Handbook*. Duties of home assignment for each party or the estranged couple will be determined in consultation with the Regional and People in Partnership Program Coordinators.

APPENDIX G

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN IN AREA OF SERVICE

From time to time overseas personnel have decided to adopt children from the host country while in the area of service. This is a personal decision, but since it is one that may impact on the overseas personnel's relationship with the partner, and consequently on the job to which personnel have been appointed, the United Church offers some guidelines for personnel considering this kind of decision:

- All adoptions must be in accordance with the legal requirements of both the host country and Canada.
- It is recommended that overseas personnel discuss the ramifications of the adoption of a child in the host country with a trusted friend or supervisor. This will help the overseas personnel assess the impact of the adoption on relationships with colleagues and the community in which they are living.
- Any expenses related to the adoption are a personal expense.
- The United Church agrees to treat the adopted child as a dependent of the family, following the same guidelines existing for other dependents, as soon as the child is living with the overseas personnel family, whether or not all the legal papers have been completed at that time. (See Section 10.)
- The child cannot be enrolled as a dependent in the Group Insurance Plan until such time as the overseas personnel provide legal proof of adoption or guardianship.

It is **essential** that all legal documentation be completed by overseas personnel before returning to Canada, either on home assignment or on withdrawal from service. If this results in a postponement of return, the United Church's JGER Unit must be notified as soon as possible. Any resulting changes in arrangements must be negotiated with the Regional Program Coordinator, overseas partner, People in Partnership Program Coordinator, and the overseas personnel.

APPENDIX H

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The following theological and policy statements are excerpted from *Sexual Abuse (Sexual Harassment, Pastoral Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Assault) and Child Abuse: Official Policy and Procedures Document of The United Church of Canada*, approved by the 34th General Council in 1992, revised by the 36th General Council in 1997, and revised by the General Council Executive in 2000, 2003, and 2006.

Theological Statement

We affirm: We are not alone, we live in God's world.

God intends for all life freedom from abuse and injustice; God desires for all human beings, created in God's image, mutual respect, care, protection, and empowerment.

We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God.

Sexual abuse, exploitation, and misconduct are destructive to God's people, violating the love we know in Jesus and negating people's ability to develop and use their gifts of creativity and wholeness. We believe God continues to call God's people to love and to respect the Word made flesh, and where there is abuse to seek restorative justice and healing.

We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

God calls the church to resist injustice. That call requires the church to confess and lament times it has turned away from God's call to love and serve others and from its particular responsibility to protect the vulnerable, the weak, and those with limited voice. Recognizing that sexual abuse occurs when one uses her or his power to take advantage of the vulnerability of another and that it is a violation of both individuals and the community, we affirm God's call to the church to be a transforming presence by promoting right relationship within its midst and in the world, in the name of the One who is our judge and our hope.

Some of us are called into leadership in the church. We are set aside and designated as a trustworthy presence among our people. In this leadership role, we have power and authority intended to be used to support the church's ministry and the individuals we serve. When we betray that trust by taking sexual advantage of the vulnerability of someone who seeks our help, it is a particularly egregious form of sexual abuse. This misconduct undermines the integrity of the whole ministry and the whole church. The hospitality code that we learn from the Jewish and Christian traditions mandates us to protect the vulnerable among us.

It is our responsibility as church in order to protect the integrity of the church to call to account anyone who uses her or his office to harm or exploit another. Such a person should not be allowed to represent our church in leadership or to use her or his status to gain access to vulnerable people.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone.

Jesus taught God's way of mutuality and respect, calling people to create and sustain life-giving relationships based on the dignity of each person. God is with us, blessing us and calling us to live with respect and care within that blessing.

Thanks be to God.

Policy Statement (*The Manual, 2007, Section 073*)

073. Sexual Abuse and Child Abuse.

- (a) The United Church will not tolerate, and will seek to eradicate, any behaviour by its members, lay and Order of Ministry, Adherents, or employees that constitutes Sexual Abuse or child abuse. (2007)
- (b) The United Church is committed to providing a safe environment for worship, work, and study in all Pastoral Charges, Congregations, institutions, agencies, organizations, or other bodies that operate under its name. Complaints of Sexual Abuse or child abuse will be taken seriously and will be dealt with in a spirit of compassion and justice. (2007)
- (c) The General Council has approved policies and procedures to deal with complaints of Sexual Abuse. These policies and procedures shall be available from the General Council office and shall be made easily available to any Court or other body of the United Church, which shall consult the approved policies and procedures before taking any action on a complaint of Sexual Abuse. (2007)

These statements have important implications for the Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations Unit and all personnel under its supervision. Overseas personnel should be aware that JGER has “zero tolerance” for sexual abuse and child abuse in all aspects of its life and work.

A. For overseas personnel who are victims of sexual abuse while overseas, the following guidelines are offered:

The United Church, in its theology and praxis, strongly supports the legitimacy of complaints that reveal and challenge harassment, exploitation, and abuse.

Personnel should therefore:

- find at least one, and preferably more, supportive people [nationals] with whom to discuss the matter;
- ask their advice on how to confront the situation;
- if appropriate, confront the harasser and verbalize your discomfort at the behaviour. If direct confrontation is inappropriate, find a third party to act as an effective go-between;
- ask that the behaviour stop;
- keep track of dates and times, witnesses, and other victims who might support you;
- do not allow cultural sensitivity to excuse inappropriate behaviour;
- Inform JGER staff (the appropriate Regional Coordinator and the Program Coordinator, People in Partnership) immediately, regardless of whether or not decisions have been made on further directions in which to proceed.

In situations of alleged abuse, JGER will put the safety of its overseas personnel before all other considerations: arrangements may be made for movement to another location or return to Canada, as well as counselling in the country or in Canada.

JGER staff will provide ongoing support to overseas personnel as the overseas personnel considers laying a formal complaint with the partner church/agency or through the national criminal/legal system.

If the harassment results in violence or sexual assault, victims should seek immediate medical attention, and persons to provide immediate support. Reporting the incident can be a crucial step in stopping the abuse, avoiding further victimization, and obtaining the help and counselling support necessary for healing. Discussion with trusted friends and/or colleagues can be instrumental in working out a strategy that may include obtaining legal support, restitution, change in appointment, and/or return to Canada.

B. When overseas personnel, while overseas, are named as respondents to formal complaints of sexual harassment:

There are three basic ways for a complainant to proceed (either singly or in combination) in making a formal complaint of sexual abuse or child abuse against a United Church of Canada overseas personnel:

1. The relevant procedures of the partner church/agency.
 2. The United Church of Canada General Council staff system complaint procedure.
 3. The United Church of Canada's Sexual Abuse and Child Abuse Policy and Procedures.
- These processes do not need to be consecutive and may indeed happen simultaneously.

1. Relevant Procedures of the Partner Church/Agency

While in the country of service, overseas personnel are under the direct supervision and pastoral care of the partner church/agency. Overseas personnel who engage in any form of sexual abuse (sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, pastoral sexual misconduct, sexual assault) are subject to the relevant procedures of the partner church/agency (fact-finding, analysis, recommendations, and discipline). The partner church/agency and JGER staff (Regional Coordinator, Program Coordinator, People in Partnership, Executive Minister) will consult about appropriate action, as in the case of any alleged wrongdoing, including the early termination of appointment and return to Canada. Overseas personnel are always subject to national laws, and of course may be charged with a criminal offence (sexual assault, child abuse) under the laws of the country of assignment.

2. The United Church of Canada General Council Staff System Complaint Procedure

The United Church of Canada's General Council Human Resources policy and procedures regarding complaints of sexual harassment by any General Council employees govern JGER and its personnel while in Canada or overseas.

A formal complaint of sexual abuse can be made directly to The United Church of Canada's General Council Ministry and Employment Policies and Services Unit or to that Unit through JGER. Overseas personnel named as respondents will be subject to a formal process within the General Council staff system, which will lead to an investigation (fact-finding, analysis, and recommendations).

Policy

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing a harassment-free environment for worship, work, and study. The United Church of Canada has a policy of zero tolerance for

sexual harassment. Complaints of sexual harassment shall be taken seriously and dealt with in a spirit of compassion and justice.

- Sexual harassment is defined as any attempt to coerce an unwilling person into a sexual relationship, or to subject a person to unwanted sexual attention, or to punish a refusal to comply.
- Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Harassment may involve a wide range of behaviours, from verbal innuendo and subtle suggestions to overt demands and physical abuse.
- The United Church of Canada does not tolerate any behaviour by any of its members (lay and Order of Ministry), representatives, or employees that constitutes sexual harassment of any of its members, representatives, or employees. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is prohibited by federal and provincial law.
- The principles and assumptions related to procedures for dealing with cases of sexual harassment are as follows:
 - Sexual harassment is unacceptable in The United Church of Canada.
 - All complaints of sexual harassment need to be taken seriously and will be investigated.
 - The intent of these policies and procedures is to stop the violations of personhood resulting from sexual harassment and to attempt to heal the personal and corporate frailty that we share with all humanity.
 - All policies and procedures need to minimize further distress for the complainant.
 - Each stage in dealing with a case of sexual harassment needs to involve as few people as possible.
 - Everyone dealing with a case should be familiar with the issues involved in sexual harassment.
 - Every effort needs to be made to stop the sexual harassment without grievance procedures.

3. The United Church of Canada's Sexual Abuse and Child Abuse Policy and Procedures

If the overseas personnel is a member of The United Church of Canada, a complaint may be lodged with the overseas personnel's court of accountability (i.e. congregation or presbytery) through the Conference Coordinating Committee. Among other things, a formal complaint may lead to an investigation governed by the United Church's Sexual Abuse and Child Abuse Policy and Procedures.

APPENDIX I

OVERSEAS PERSONNEL AND THE GROUP INSURANCE PLAN OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Stream “A” overseas personnel may become members of The United Church of Canada’s Pension and Group Insurance Plan. The Group Insurance Plan was negotiated with the insurer to ensure coverage of Stream “A” overseas personnel serving outside of Canada, in conditions sometimes very different from the Canadian context. The following information is provided in addition to the Group Insurance booklet to detail this coverage.

Regarding **Long-Term Disability** and the exclusion regarding “war (whether declared or not), insurrection, rebellion, or participation in a riot or civil commotion,” the contract with the insurer indicates: “If your work takes you to a part of the world where these situations are probable, you will be covered but *only if you contact the Human Resources Unit prior to departure.*”

Regarding **Optional Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage (AD&D)**, the contract with the insurer indicates AD&D “does not cover any loss, fatal or non-fatal, caused or contributed to by...declared or undeclared war or any act thereof. If your work with the church takes you to a part of the world where these situations are probable, you will be covered but *only if you contact the Human Resources Unit prior to departure.*”

For overseas personnel, the requirement to “contact the Human Resources Unit prior to departure” is fulfilled if the individual’s name is on the list of overseas personnel provided to the Human Resources Unit by the People in Partnership staff, JGER Unit, from time to time.

Disability and/or AD&D benefits are not payable if the individual was an active participant in the war, insurrection, riot, etc. There is a recognized difference between being an active participant (benefits not payable) and being an innocent bystander or being caught in the crossfire, or assisting others (benefits payable, although the insurer may conduct an investigation into the circumstances).

APPENDIX J

OVERSEAS PERSONNEL AND THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Effective January 1, 1998, The United Church of Canada added an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)—a voluntary, confidential, personal counselling and information service—to the United Church Group Insurance Plan. The provider of this service is Shepell.fgi, a leader in employee assistance plans, with a national network of counsellors and associates.

During the design of the church's EAP, significant effort was made to include overseas personnel as potential users of the plan. One elected member of the national committee which oversees the plan provides ongoing monitoring of the EAP's accessibility to overseas personnel.

Accessing EAP Personal Contact Services

In Canada

The EAP has the potential to offer overseas personnel counselling resources when they are in Canada, whether preparing for first-time overseas service, on home assignment, or completing service with The United Church of Canada. When in Canada, overseas personnel contact Shepell.fgi by telephone, using a no-cost 1-800 telephone number: 1-800-387-4765 (English language) 1-800-361-5676 (French language). Assistance is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The telephone counsellor will normally arrange for face-to-face counselling support, or if required, may provide immediate counselling by phone.

From Overseas

Accessing the plan while overseas can be done in one of two ways:

Access Method "A"

Fundamental to any EAP is the assurance of confidentiality and privacy to the plan member who accesses its resources. No information on any individual ever comes back to the United Church without his/her written consent. However, *if* overseas personnel would like to access the plan through the People in Partnership Program Coordinator, they may do so. A simple request to access EAP services will suffice. The People in Partnership Coordinator will then contact the United Church liaison at Shepell.fgi, pass on the individual's name, and inform Shepell.fgi of the best way to reach the person overseas. Shepell.fgi will take it from there.

Access Method "B"

The other alternative is for overseas personnel to contact Shepell.fgi directly. The name of our liaison staff at Shepell.fgi is Scott Fagan. He can be contacted by phone, by fax, or by e-mail.

By phone: 416-961-0023 (call collect, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year)

1. Identify yourself as overseas personnel of The United Church of Canada.
2. Ask for **Scott Fagan**.
3. If he is unavailable (he doesn't work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year!), you will be asked if you would like to leave a message on his voice mail, or whether you would like to leave a verbal message. You choose.
4. If you do leave a message, make sure you identify yourself again as a United Church of Canada overseas personnel and indicate how and when you can best be reached (by telephone, if at all possible). *No other details are necessary at this point; you are simply making a request for service.*

By fax: 416-961-9339

1. Send your communication to the attention of Scott Fagan.
2. Identify yourself as an overseas personnel of The United Church of Canada.
3. Indicate how and when you can best be reached (by telephone, if at all possible). *No other details are necessary at this point; you are simply making a request for service.*

By e-mail: sfagan@shepellfgi.com.

1. Identify yourself as an overseas personnel of The United Church of Canada.
2. Indicate how and when you can best be reached (by telephone, if at all possible). *No other details are necessary at this point; you are simply making a request for service.*

What Happens Then?

Once Scott has this information (whether received by Method "A" or "B", by phone, fax, or e-mail), it will be passed to a Shepell.fgi counselling manager. This person will contact you directly to get an understanding of your need and to learn what resources you are aware of in your own context to help you resolve your issue(s), and/or to help you determine the best method to access resources. If there is counselling available in your situation, Shepell.fgi will make every effort to provide financial support similar to that being made available to plan members in Canada, so that you can access that support locally. (Given the short-term, problem-solving nature of the EAP service, most cases involve three to six visits with a counsellor.) The provision of this support may involve the submitting of invoices and the reimbursement of costs to you. Shepell.fgi has indicated it is willing to forward reimbursement to your Canadian bank if they are furnished with all relevant information. The Shepell.fgi counsellor can advise you about accessing United Church travel subsidies (normally for travel in-country).

If you are not aware of appropriate counselling services available close by, the counselling manager will explore different options with you. Counselling by phone may be an alternative. Contact with a counsellor by post or by e-mail may be other alternatives. The sharing of written resources on given topics may be yet another. In other words, the Shepell.fgi folks are willing to work with you to see what is possible and what is best for you.

Web-Based Services

Shepell.fgi has a number of resources available through its website, www.shepellfgi.com. New services include “e-counselling” (contact with an individual therapist via e-mail correspondence), a nutrition program, a stress management program, and an assisted program for quitting smoking. The e-counselling service has several aspects, including personal counselling, “chat rooms” moderated by e-counselling specialists, and an electronic “sounding board” which allows a helpful and constructive exchange of ideas and resources for personal and professional support. All personal e-counselling correspondence is “encrypted” for privacy and security. Overseas personnel are encouraged to explore these resources.

The provision of an EAP by the church does not mean that The United Church of Canada’s Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations Unit staff cease to be available for the personal support overseas personnel may seek through JGER staff. The EAP is offered to all members of The United Church of Canada Pension and Group Insurance Plan in the hope that it will serve to increase resources available to individuals and families.

APPENDIX K

RATIONALE AND PROCESS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF OVERSEAS PERSONNEL CANDIDATES

I. Goal of the Overseas Personnel Selection Process

The goal of The United Church of Canada's selection process for overseas mission appointments is to discern, select, and prepare individuals who have suitable qualities of Christian faith, personality, gifts, skills, and experience *and* who can appropriately respond to specific personnel requests from overseas partners of The United Church of Canada.

II. Why does The United Church of Canada require psychological assessment in its overseas personnel selection process?

The United Church of Canada retains a psychological consultant(s) to assist in the determination of the candidate's *psychological readiness at the current time* for overseas mission service.

The consulting psychologist does *not* make the decision about selection or appointment. That decision rests with The United Church of Canada's national Global Mission Personnel Advisory Committee and the JGER Unit Committee. The consulting psychologist provides information on a number of psychological dimensions for the committee. This is considered along with all the other information the committee gleans about and from the candidate during the selection process.

The psychological assessment information is *one* part of the extensive material used by the national Global Mission Personnel Advisory Committee to make a recommendation after interviewing the candidate. This material includes in-depth written material prepared by the candidate, a number of detailed personal and professional references, and one—or two—interviews conducted by an experienced, multi-person interview committee of United Church volunteers and national staff.

It is hoped that each assessment process will be a valuable learning process for the individual being assessed. However, the *purpose* of the assessment is to assist the Global Mission Personnel Advisory Committee in its decision-making with regard to appointments.

III. Process

If, after participating in a Mission Discernment Event, it is agreed that a candidate should continue into the selection process, the People in Partnership Program Coordinator will arrange for the candidate to participate in a process of psychological assessment and discernment. The United Church is responsible for retaining a psychiatrist, a psychiatric social worker, or a clinical psychologist with experience in assessing emotional or mental

illness and a knowledge of the potential stresses faced in moving across cultures. The full cost of the assessment is borne by The United Church of Canada.

In the United Church's overseas personnel screening process, two areas of mental health are assessed:

1. **Mental Illness:** areas of abnormality or weakness in the past or present, which may lead to future problems.

Material is obtained by interview, which considers:

- a. present psychiatric symptoms and medication, if any;
 - b. previous psychiatric history and treatment, if any;
 - c. family history of psychiatric illness.
2. **Psychological Wellness/Health:** the normal functioning of a person in areas such as personality structure, relationships and interpersonal competency, coping mechanisms in times of stress and distress, sense of self, etc.

Information is obtained through psychological tests and a clinical interview conducted by a trained psychologist. In the area of interpersonal competency, the clinical interview will focus on areas such as:

- a. personal relationships with parents, partner, and children;
- b. the applicant's own opinion of his/her personality;
- c. personal history: early development, adjustment, and achievement in school, job satisfaction, experience with drugs and alcohol, sexual experience, general outlook on life, and coping skills.

A variety of test instruments will be used, which may include (but is not limited to) the following:

MMPI-2: Minnesota Multiphase Personality Inventory – 2

TAT: Thematic Apperception Test

MBTI: Myers-Briggs Type Inventory

Rorschach Psychodiagnostic Test

IV. Confidentiality

The assessment does not proceed without the candidate's written permission for the psychological consultant to release a summary report to The United Church of Canada through its People in Partnership Program Coordinator. The content of that report is shared verbally with the candidate and summarized in writing for the candidate. The confidentiality of the report prepared for The United Church of Canada is strictly observed. Information shared with the Global Mission Personnel Advisory Committee is limited to that which relates directly to the assessment of the candidate's current psychological readiness for overseas service.

V. Process for Challenge

Should a candidate be unwilling to release the summary report from the consulting psychologist and if the candidate desires a second psychological assessment, the candidate may arrange one, at his/her own expense. The choice of the psychologist conducting the second assessment must be approved by The United Church of Canada. The interview committee will be informed that the assessment is a second opinion.

VI. Exceptions

Overseas personnel candidates may be exempted from completing a psychological assessment only if recommended by the People in Partnership Program Coordinator and approved by the Global Mission Personnel Advisory Committee.

(As approved by Global Mission Personnel Sending Sub-Committee, March 20, 2000)

APPENDIX L

OVERSEAS PERSONNEL CANDIDATES AND CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECKS

Criminal Records Checks (CRCs) are a process for ascertaining information about an individual's past history of interaction with courts of law, where criminal charges have been laid and a conviction has been acquired. Initial Criminal Records Checks will disclose whether a person does have criminal convictions. In some cases, a more detailed search, requiring fingerprint corroboration, is needed to determine the specific nature of the charges.

In the selection process of candidates for overseas assignments, CRCs through the RCMP's Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) are required by The United Church of Canada. This is required after the selection interview, when a potential assignment for a candidate is being recommended to the United Church's JGER Unit Committee. Human rights legislation prohibits interviewers from asking for evidence of age prior to a position being awarded to a candidate. Since a CRC requires proof of birthdate, the candidate is informed that an assignment would be contingent upon "partner approval, medical clearance, and a satisfactory outcome from a Criminal Records Check."

Candidates will be informed at the point of formal inquiry into overseas service that CRCs are required and that convictions for any violent crimes (e.g., assault, sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse), and any convictions for harassment (e.g., stalking), would normally be considered prohibiting conditions for an assignment as overseas personnel. However, criminal convictions of this sort will be discussed with the Global Mission Personnel Secretary, the Chair of the Sending Advisory Sub-committee, and the Executive Minister of the JGER Unit, to discern the relevance of the conviction to the particular position for which the candidate is being considered. A final decision as to whether a criminal conviction prohibits assignment will be made by the three officers named above. The JGER Unit may seek legal advice as part of this discussion. All conversations regarding Criminal Records Check outcomes will be held in strict confidence (i.e., will not be disclosed outside of the United Church).

The candidate has the opportunity to self-select "out of" candidacy on the basis of the Criminal Records Check. No documentation of the CRC will be kept on candidates who withdraw from the process (i.e., all documents will be shredded). For candidates who proceed and who are successful, the CRC will be kept in their confidential personnel record. The records will be kept for the same duration as is the policy for other personnel files.

For ministry personnel in The United Church of Canada, the JGER Unit will accept verifiable copies of CRCs produced for pastoral relations purposes within one year of applying for an overseas position. For any other individuals, new CRCs must be undertaken as part of the candidacy process for overseas assignments.

The United Church's JGER Unit will reimburse the applicant for the cost of the CRC, at the first level of inquiry. If a conviction is indicated and further procedures are required (fingerprinting, certificate of conviction, etc.), the additional cost is to be borne by the applicant. If the candidate is assigned to an overseas position following further discussion of the convictions, the United Church's JGER unit will reimburse the additional costs to the candidate. Care will be taken in the reimbursement process to guard the candidate's confidentiality at any advanced levels of inquiry.

(Approved by DWO Executive, November 2000)