

The United Church
of Canada



The United Church
of Christ

Measures for Mutual Recognition of Ministers

The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ entered into a Full Communion relationship in 2015 that included recognition of each other's ministers. The following processes have been established for the orderly exchange of ministry personnel provided for in the full communion agreement.

It is noted that calling/appointing bodies and ministers are responsible for adhering to the required immigration laws, pension and health care for employment in Canada and the United States.

To be eligible for service under this agreement ministers must have served as an ordained or diaconal minister in the originating denomination for at least three years. Ministers contemplating serving within this partnership are advised that the process will take a significant period of time to meet immigration and church requirements.

Coming to The United Church of Canada

Applicants shall submit to the General Council Office of The United Church of Canada:

- Through the United Church of Christ Conference where standing is held, their validated United Church of Christ ministerial profile (this includes confirmation of good standing and current Criminal Background Check)
- An Oxford Document Criminal Background Check valid within the last six months
- If the minister resided in Canada at any point over the previous seven years, a Level 2 police check valid within the past six months will also be required
- Demonstration of familiarity with the history and polity of The United Church of Canada (done in consultation with the General Council Office)
- Confirmation of completion of two web-based study programs that all United Church of Canada ministers are required to complete: ***Boundary Issues for Church Leaders and Racial Justice Awareness***. Each study process is available on-line four times a year, takes approximately 3–4 hours to complete and may be found at united-in-learning.com
- A personal statement of interest in serving in The United Church of Canada and how their journey of faith relates to ministry in The United Church of Canada

All submissions and requests for further information must be sent to:

The United Church of Canada
Ministry and Employment Office
3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 200
Toronto, Ontario M8X 2Y4
or ministry@united-church.ca

Following receipt of the materials listed above, the applicant will be invited to an online interview with the General Council Office of The United Church of Canada. The primary focus of the interview will be the understanding of the context and ministry of The United Church of Canada and the applicant's interest in serving in the church.

Upon completion of the above process General Council staff will make a determination as to whether or not the applicant is eligible to serve in The United Church of Canada. If it is determined that the applicant is not eligible to serve, the General Council Office will indicate if or when the applicant may reapply.

If the United Church of Christ applicant is determined to be eligible, by the General Council Office for mutual recognition in The United Church of Canada, the United Church of Christ minister will:

- Receive an invitation to prepare and file a ministry profile on [ChurchHub](#), the online registry of ministry personnel in The United Church of Canada. United Church of Christ ministry partners are responsible for applying and seeking an interview with a United Church of Canada community of faith that is registered on ChurchHub as seeking to call or appoint a minister.
- While a call is without term limit, an appointment must be renewed by mutual agreement of the minister, community of faith, and regional council. A time-limited appointment may create additional immigration challenges.
- Maintain all on-going requirements for good standing in The United Church of Canada and all ongoing requirements for standing in the United Church of Christ as determined by the Association and the Committee on Ministry. If a United Church of Christ ministerial profile expires while in the search process, or any complaint of misconduct, disciplinary action or criminal charges emerge, the United Church of Christ Conference Minister of the Association where standing is held will notify The United Church of Canada General Council Office. This action or charge may result in withdrawal of Ministry Partner status and eligibility to serve in the host denomination.

Coming to the United Church of Christ

All United Church of Canada ordained and diaconal ministers desiring to receive a call in the United Church of Christ must submit and complete the following:

- Contact the United Church of Christ Conference related to the geographic area where they intend to seek a call:
 - Ministries Opportunities Listing: oppsearch.ucc.org
 - Map of UCC Conferences: ucc.org/about-us_conference
 - Directory of UCC Conferences: ucc.org/about-us_conference_conference-map
- Provide a letter of good standing completed by The United Church of Canada Vocation Minister for the regional council of their membership
- Provide a copy of current Ministry Personnel CV
- Provide a copy of the current Police Records Check Level 2 dated within the last 6 months
- If the minister resided in the United States at any point over the previous seven years an Oxford Document Criminal Background Check will also be required.
- Demonstrate familiarity with the history and polity of the United Church of Christ
- Provide a personal statement of interest in serving in the United Church of Christ and how their journey of faith relates to ministry in the United Church of Christ

Upon submission of all required documents and at the determination of the Conference Staff, ministry personnel paperwork may be submitted by a Conference Staff member to a local church Search Committee within that Conference for consideration.

- If called to a congregation, The United Church of Canada minister must apply to the Committee on Ministry in the Association in which the church is located for Dual Standing for the duration of the call. This process includes an in-person interview with the Committee on Ministry.
- Maintain all on-going requirements for standing as determined by the Association and the Committee on Ministry and all on-going requirements for continued good standing in The United Church of Canada.

If a United Church of Canada minister's good standing status changes while in the search process, or any complaint of misconduct, disciplinary action or criminal charge emerge, then The United Church of Canada Office of Vocation will notify the Conference Minister of the Association where standing is being sought in the United Church of Christ. This action or charge may result in withdrawal of eligibility to serve the host denomination.

Specialized Ministry Settings

Ministers desiring to serve in a specialized ministry setting through Mutual Recognition should contact their Conference or Vocation Minister. The United Church of Canada does not grant Ministry Partner status for non-United Church recognized ministries. Otherwise, applicants are requested to follow the same procedures established for service in a local congregation or community of faith. Once approved for partnership by the host denomination ministers may then seek employment directly through the specialized ministry setting.

Membership

United Church of Canada ministers will retain standing in their regional council as well as in the local United Church of Christ congregation where they serve. United Church of Christ ministers will retain membership in a United Church of Christ congregation within their current Association as well as in the appropriate United Church of Canada regional council. This process allows the minister to have standing in both denominations.

Disciplinary Process

Ministry partners must maintain good standing in their originating denomination and continue to meet its ongoing requirements for good standing in the denomination being served. In the event of any complaint of misconduct, disciplinary action or criminal charges the processes of the host denomination will be followed. This may result in a withdrawal of eligibility to serve in the host denomination. The originating denomination will be advised when any review is initiated and any subsequent determinations made by the host denomination. The ongoing ecclesial standing will be determined by the originating denomination.

Final November 2016

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