



connex

IMPORTANT UPDATES FROM MINISTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

Please circulate to ✓ Treasurer ✓ M&P Committee
 ✓ Ministry Personnel ✓ Lay Employees ✓ Church Board/Office

IN THIS ISSUE

- Supervised Ministry Education Learning Sites
- Straight Talk about Your Pension Plan
- October Is Clergy Appreciation Month!
- ADP Update: special insert

The Office of Vocation: Almost One Year

The first of January marked the birth of the Office of Vocation. Over its first nine months, this newborn is discovering how to process information, when to act and when to refer, how to communicate, how to build relationship, how to gain confidence, and how to move in accordance with God and the United Church's vision for its work. Here are a few snapshots of its early days.

- Twenty people gather in a room at the St. Albert Retreat Centre, Alberta. The Board of Vocation is meeting with members of the Northern Spirit Regional Council and staff, listening to our Indigenous Elders, discerning how to work with authenticity and respect as an intercultural church, and clarifying responsibilities.
- The Standards for Accreditation Committee discusses ways to welcome ministry personnel from other denominations who want to serve the United Church without becoming United Church ministers.
- A local effectiveness support committee surrounds a minister with encouragement and accountability as the minister embarks on new learning and experience to increase their competence.
- The Remedial Committee meets for the third time in a month to listen carefully to a ministry personnel about her hopes for new learning opportunities. In another case, these committee members delight in affirming the successful completion of a directed program and restored good standing.
- The Response Committee takes seriously a concern raised by a congregant about their minister and

determines the process that will ensure a fair hearing from all the parties. The committee discerns whether a matter should be referred back to the regional council or whether an interim measure is necessary in response to a criminal charge against a ministry personnel.

- The Credentialing Committee interviews and recognizes a new educational supervisor and designates an Intentional Interim Minister.
- A candidacy board meets for two days conducting several interviews as the board looks for promise, suitability, and readiness.
- A staff team creates, through small working groups, resources to implement the new admission process this fall, anticipating that our records will be better, our communications positive, and a strong foundation for supporting our leaders laid.

This baby was born to reduce the number of elected members involved in ministry formation, oversight, and discipline, and to simplify process and increase consistency, timeliness, and competence. With less than a tenth of the elected members previously involved, we are grateful for the hard work and commitment of everyone serving in the Office of Vocation and trust that the Spirit continues to inspire as energy is freed up for mission. Over the coming year the committees within the Office of Vocation will share their stories.

—The Reverend Dr. Jenny Stephens is the Office of Vocation Coordinator and Team Leader.

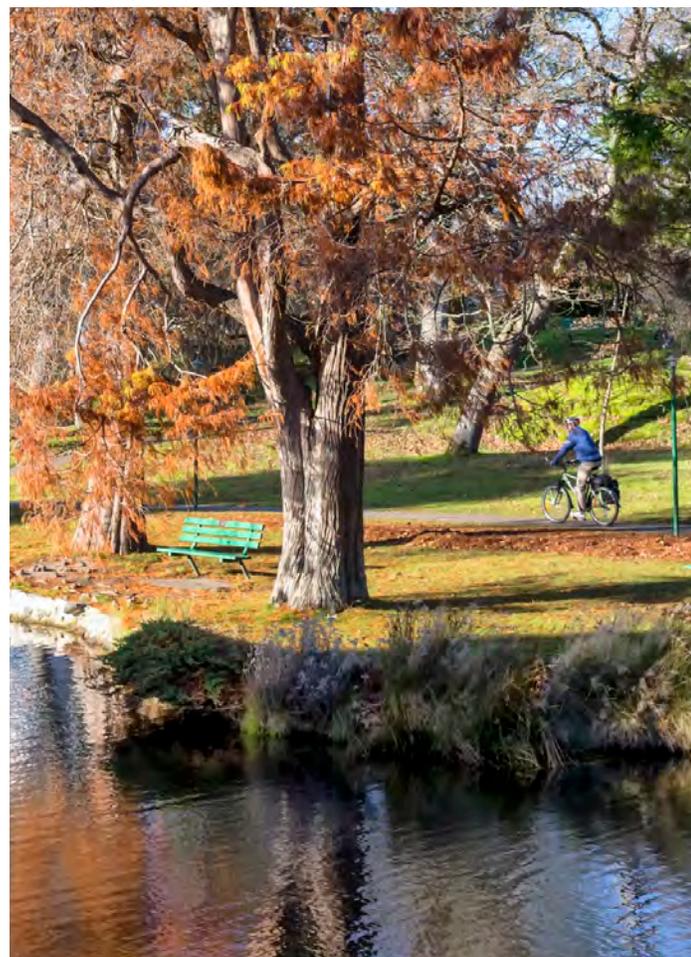
Supervised Ministry Education Learning Sites



Candidates for ordained ministry and designated lay ministry are required to complete Supervised Ministry Education (SME) as part of the pathway to become ministry personnel. Candidates are appointed and receive salary and benefits. Your community of faith is invited to become a learning site where a candidate can complete their SME. Your regional council liaison can help you decide whether this opportunity is right for your community at this time. This could happen when you are in pastoral transition, or a candidate could become part of your existing staff team.

What's in It for Communities of Faith?

- Candidates doing their SME often approach their role with enthusiasm and fresh perspectives to what it means to be the church today. You may have a candidate who wants to explore new possibilities and is open to making mistakes and learning from them.
- As a community of faith, consider what you are looking for in a minister. At this time, does your community have the time and resources to devote to this worthwhile and exciting opportunity?



Some Practicalities

- One of the main responsibilities of the learning site is to set up a Lay Supervision Team (LST). The LST is a group of three to seven people associated with your community of faith who support the candidate in their learning. This group meets with the candidate about once a month to reflect on what the candidate is learning and to help them better understand the inner workings and ministry of the community of faith. The LST is trained by someone from the Office of Vocation, including how to write evaluations for the candidacy board.
- The candidate has an Educational Supervisor they meet with regularly to reflect theologically on their experiences. The Office of Vocation chooses the supervisor for the candidate.
- All SMEs must be in a half-time ministry position at least, where the candidate serves in an appointment.

Grants

Two grants are available to support SME learning sites.

- If you appoint a candidate who lives more than 500 km away, you can apply for a grant to help with the moving costs.
- A pastoral charge with financial barriers can apply for a grant to enable them to increase the number of hours per week of an SME appointment. For example, a pastoral charge that can afford only a half-time salary could use the grant to increase the ministry position to three-quarter time.

Next Steps

Watch the video *Becoming a Supervised Ministry Education Learning Site* on the United Church YouTube channel:

<https://youtu.be/d3XLv0sw1RE>.



For more information, refer to the handbooks *Candidacy Pathway: Supervised Ministry Education* and *Learning Covenant* on www.united-church.ca/handbooks. The Office of Vocation minister for your area can answer any questions you may have.

Straight Talk about Your Pension Plan

The number of pensioners is higher than the number of active (currently contributing) plan members.



At the end of 2018, only 3,259 of the total 9,381 plan members were active (currently contributing). That's just over one-third! Even more striking—more than half of those active members are already over age 55.

This makes investment returns even more important because the contributions from such a small group can't possibly provide all the cash needed to make the nearly \$70 million in annual pension payments.

For more facts about the pension plan, view the 2018 *Pension Annual Report* at www.united-church.ca/leadership/church-administration/pension (scroll to downloads at bottom).

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR PENSION PLAN >>>
SEARCH "pension" > united-church.ca

Responsible Investment

Through SHARE, the plan works with companies on important environmental, social, and governance issues. Two examples are:

Dollarama Inc.

In June 2018, Dollarama Inc. published its first sustainability report in response to long-term engagement by the Pension Plan about human rights risks in the company's global supply chain. While the Plan welcomed this step toward more transparency, the Plan presented a shareholder proposal at the Dollarama annual general meeting asking the company to establish and report on more effective due diligence processes to identify and address risks to human rights from its business. While the proposal received just 11 percent of the total shareholder vote, the company responded by announcing the addition of staff capacity to allow for supply chain auditing in the next year. The dialogue on next steps continues.

TC Energy

In May, The United Church of Canada Pension Plan presented at the annual general meeting of TC Energy (formerly called TransCanada), calling on the company to disclose policies, practices, and performance indicators related to respecting internationally-recognized standards for Indigenous Peoples' rights. The proposal received 10.2 percent shareholder support. The low vote was somewhat expected, but the proposal did accomplish the goal of centering our engagement with TC Energy on the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). In response to negotiation around our proposal, TC Energy released a long-awaited Indigenous relations policy for all operations; it references UNDRIP. TC Energy is also now providing additional information about its approach to Indigenous relations on its website. The dialogue will continue with the aim of strengthening the company's practices to align with UNDRIP.



Benefits Centre: Address Changes



If you are an active employee (currently working), address changes must be made through your payroll administrator at your place of work. Addresses are payroll-driven, so if the Benefits Centre changes the address on your pension and benefits records but the payroll file submitted monthly still has old information, the error will keep coming back. Please check your pay stub—the address on it matches what your payroll administrator has on file.

October Is Clergy Appreciation Month!



The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

1 Timothy 5:17 NIV

Why Celebrate?

- Although ministry is a calling from God and most ministers could not imagine doing anything else, it is still challenging and stressful.
- Many ministry personnel find their work isolating even though they are surrounded by people all the time.
- Ministry personnel don't always get to hear what they are doing right, only what they could improve on.
- Through appreciating our current leaders, we encourage others to consider these roles in the future.

What You Might Do

- **Pray** for your minister and those in church leadership.
- **Ask** your minister why they went into ministry and what they love about it.
- **Write** a thank-you card, e-mail, or letter of appreciation.
- **Invite** the minister or other church leaders out for coffee or a meal.
- **Get creative** and have fun showing your minister and your church leaders how much you appreciate their hard work!



God's World Needs Leaders



Photo: © Edgar Ballon | Dreamstime.com

CONTACT US

Connex is the newsletter of the Ministry and Employment Unit at the General Council Office and The Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada.

United Church Benefits Centre: 1-855-647-8222

(update personal information; start pension)

Benefits@united-church.ca

Disability@united-church.ca

Pension@united-church.ca

Green Shield Canada: 1-888-711-1119 greenshield.ca
(questions on coverage for health and dental; online tools; reminders)

Pastoral Charge Payroll Service: 1-800-268-3781, ext. 3132 or 2757
payroll@united-church.ca

Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP): Confidential, 24/7
1-800-387-4765 (English), 1-800-361-5676 (français) shepell.com

Ministry and Employment Unit at GCO: 1-800-268-3781
MinistryandEmployment@united-church.ca



ADP Update

Audit of Contact Information

The ADP (Automatic Data Processing, Inc.) Authorized Contact list will be revised in late fall. We are asking that you please provide us with your information **no later than November 15, 2019**. The United Church of Canada will update the contact list based on the information you provide. Contacts other than those provided will be removed from the ADP Authorized Contact list.

Please e-mail your information to contacts@united-church.ca and include the following:

Employer Information

- ADP Company Code
- Pastoral charge name
- Pastoral charge address
- Telephone number
- Name and mailing address for payroll information (i.e., forms/correspondence/updates)

Authorized ADP Payroll Contacts

Primary Contact Name

- E-mail address
- Telephone number

Secondary Contact Name

- E-mail address
- Telephone number

Clergy Residence Deduction (CRD)

If ministers wish to have their taxable income reduced by the CRD amount at source (pay by pay) for 2020, they need to apply to Canada Revenue Agency (and Revenu Québec for ministers who work in Quebec) for authorization. To receive the approval before the beginning of 2020, applications should be submitted by **November 1, 2019**. Once Canada Revenue Agency and Revenu Québec (if applicable) provide their written authorization (a letter of authority), you can direct ADP to process the approved CRD amount using the ADP payroll form. Note that ADP *does not* require the letter of authority.

Trial Run for 2019 T4/Relevé 1

In October, ADP will produce the T4/Relevé 1 Trial Run. This is an opportunity for you to review and confirm that relevant information is correct. Please contact the United Church pastoral charge payroll services team to report any corrections (see over).

The T4/Relevé 1 Trial Run will be posted on Reports On Internet (ROI). To retrieve the Trial Run on ROI: select folder “YE TAX Forms Trial Run,” enter your ADP company #, and search. If you do not have access to ROI, contact ADP Client Services to have your T4/Relevé 1 Trial Run mailed (subject to applicable delivery charges).

Payroll Schedule/Input Deadlines

Your payroll schedule from ADP was mailed to you last March/April. Please review the pay dates and input dates, especially the dates that fall on holidays or non-business days.

If your pay date falls on a holiday or non-business day, you will need to modify either your input date or your pay date to ensure that you meet the funding agreement. Should you wish the pay date to be the day before a holiday or non-business day, please contact ADP Client Services directly at 1-877-377-4784 to request a change to your input date and pay date.

2020 Minimum Salaries for Ministry Personnel

Minimum salaries for ministry personnel have been adjusted to reflect the annual cost of living increase. For 2020, the cost of living increase is 1.9 percent. To see the new minimums and other compensation-related information, go to www.united-church.ca and search “salary.” Then select “2020 Minimum Salaries for Ministry Personnel” from the Downloads section at the bottom of the page.

If you have questions, please contact the pastoral charge payroll services team (below).

Effective January 1, 2020

- Minimum salaries: **1.9 percent increase to the 2019 minimum salaries**
- Continuing education and learning resources: **\$1,442 annually**
- Travel: **\$0.42 per kilometre**
- Visiting ministry personnel: **\$216 daily rate**
- Remote manse allowance: **\$2,599**
- Manse heating cost to be paid by ministry personnel: **up to \$800 annually**

Have Questions or Need Assistance?

Please contact the United Church pastoral charge payroll services team:

- Benilda Raymundo, Manager, Payroll Services: 416-231-7680 or 1-800-268-3781, ext. 3132, braymundo@united-church.ca
- Eileen Dai, Payroll and Compensation Analyst: 416-231-7680 or 1-800-268-3781, ext. 2757, edai@united-church.ca

For information, updates, and forms, please refer to the Pastoral Charge Payroll Service webpage: www.united-church.ca/leadership/church-administration/pastoral-charge-payroll-service.