

## **REVISED EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND HEALTHY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL (MARCH 2011)**

### **Background**

Over the last decade the Permanent Committee has undertaken numerous initiatives to assess policies and practices related to pastoral relations. The various studies have examined current practices and requirements, considered best practices in other churches, professional and not-for-profit organizations, and developed proposals for consideration. These initiatives included:

- the Isolation in Ministry project (2002-2006) which engaged a major research survey conducted in partnership with the research division of Warren Shepell (2005);
- the Oversight and Discipline of Ministry Personnel project (2002-2012) which produced the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice policy (2006) and two major reports (2008 and 2011);
- the Working Group on Isolation in Ministry (2006-2008);
- the Task Group on Demographics of Ministry Personnel, which reviewed the current and projected demographic for ministry personnel, and the implications for recruitment, retention, and the pension and benefit plans (2008);
- the Pastoral Relations Policy Review Steering Group, mandated to review all policies in The Manual related to pastoral relations (2009);
- the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships Collaborative Research Project and survey (2010), supporting task groups related to Pastoral Relations, Oversight and Discipline, Candidacy, and Compensation, with nearly 1'700 participants.

Several actions were directed to by the Executive of the General Council. The following actions included:

- in response to proposals to the 39th General Council (2006) (GS3, GS23, BC4, LON3, TOR4, BC, MNWO1 and GC94) the Executive of the General Council called for evaluations of oversight, discipline, and pastoral relations processes;
- in November 2007, the Executive of the General Council reviewed the report "Simplifying Policies and Procedures Related to Pastoral Relations Report and Resolutions" received by the 38th General Council (2003). In the 2003 report it was stated that, "*Pastoral Relations, Oversight and Ministry Vocation presbytery work is often difficult, draining, and overwhelming.*" The Executive affirmed the intent, and referred it to the General Secretary for consideration in ongoing work, that, "*complex pastoral relations policy implementation be lodged with Conference and General Council staff positions freeing pastoral charges and presbyteries to nurture strong pastoral relations.*"
- In May 2010 the General Secretary's report "Planning for a Future Grounded in Faith and Action" and the subsequent motion of the Executive of the General Council directed that proposals be developed to simplify pastoral relations processes and shift responsibilities for some or all pastoral relations from Presbyteries to Conferences. The report envisioned Presbyteries being freed from the administrative burden of increasingly complex human resource and regulatory work so that its leadership can focus more on supporting local

ministries in their mission and ministry and foster a sense of greater support and collegiality among ministry personnel. The report also suggested that simplified processes would encourage a greater range of ministry possibilities by being more open and adaptable.

### **Rationale**

Ministry and mission are actively engaged throughout The United Church of Canada, whether one is serving at the Pastoral Charge, the presbytery, the Conference or the General Council, at the shelter or the hospital, with global partners, ecumenical partners, or community partners. We work for complex systemic change and we work for simple moments of grace. We pray, we praise and we act.

In 1925, this new United Church of Canada stated its conviction that:

*“we receive it as the will of Christ that His Church on earth should exist as a visible and sacred brotherhood ... for the public worship of God, for the administration of the sacraments, for the upbuilding of the saints, and for the universal propagation of the Gospel ....”* (Basis of Union, Articles of Faith XV *Of the Church*).

In *A Song of Faith* (39<sup>th</sup> General Council 2006) the United Church sings of the church’s 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 a community held and inspired by God, corrected and comforted,  
instrument of the loving Spirit of Christ,  
creation’s mending.”*

While mission and ministry take many forms and are engaged in many places, and with varying scope, the primary place of mission and ministry continues to be our local congregations. In more than 3,300 churches, large and small, lives are daily transformed for a moment, a month or a lifetime. At times of birth and death, of trial and triumph and every time in between, members and ministers witness to a Presence that is eternal; a Promise that is steadfast; and a Hope that gives life.

Congregations and other local ministries are not solely dependent upon paid accountable ministry personnel\* but it is in our tradition to call up individuals to vocations of ministry leadership. (Statement on Paid Accountable Ministry 40<sup>th</sup> General Council)

Effective paid accountable leadership and healthy pastoral relationships among ministry personnel, the local ministry and the governing bodies<sup>†</sup> of the Church are critical components to

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\* “Paid accountable ministry personnel” refers to ordained, diaconal and designated lay ministers called or appointed to a paid ministry position.

the faithful and vital fulfillment of God’s mission that we sing of in The United Church of Canada. It is crucial that the policies and procedures supporting the initiation of these relationships, the on-going support and accountability of them, and the conclusion of them be flexible and transparent. It is also important that they be responsive to particular contexts of region and culture. The 2,400 ministers serving in active calls and appointments throughout the church are among The United Church of Canada’s greatest assets in responding to the call 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.  
(A New Creed 1968, rv 1995)*

The Isolation in Ministry Study (2005) demonstrated a direct correlation between the health of pastoral relationships and the levels of burnout, depression, anxiety and stress among ministry personnel. The Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships research project (2010) also concluded that ensuring the health of these relationships is critical to enhancing the health of ministry personnel and their practice of ministry. The health of ministry personnel and their effectiveness directly impact the health and the effectiveness of the local congregation and its mission. Congregations are better equipped to celebrate, live, love, seek and proclaim. Strengthen the health of ministry personnel and the relationships between them, the congregation and the governing bodies of the church and the ministry of The United Church of Canada is strengthened. Research indicates that twice as many ministry personnel say that they feel more accountable to the congregation(s) that they serve than to the wider church. Ensuring the health of pastoral charges and the relationships between pastoral charges and ministry personnel would contribute significantly to the workplace health of ministry personnel.

This report addresses the goal of effective ministers and healthy pastoral relationships. In doing so it does not in any sense intend to reduce the significance or value of lay leadership and employees within local ministries, or their valued call to ministry. This report recognizes that “*While there may be elements similar to employment, the essential nature of the relationship is a covenant*” with the local ministry, the governing bodies of the church, and God” (Statement on Paid Accountable Ministry 2009). Recognizing that paid accountable ministry is both a vocation and a profession, the Church holds a commitment to engage ministry personnel and local ministries with policies that are fair, just and consistently applied (Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services Guiding Theological Perspectives).

### **The Present Model – A Critique**

The current model for pastoral relations has continued without any substantial change for several decades. The most significant change occurred in 1997 and modified the tasks of search and selection to fill a “vacancy.” The mandatory “joint pastoral relations committee” was replaced with the two-step process of needs assessment, followed by the declaration of a vacancy and search. What has not changed over several decades are the model’s assumptions:

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† “Governing bodies” refer to the Courts of the church: the local church board, council, or session, the presbytery, Conference, and General Council.

- that church members, ordered and lay, would be able to support the model on a voluntary basis;
- that most church conflicts could be resolved informally;
- that in the face of unresolved conflict, the minister could be advised to request a change in pastoral relations;
- that problems and disagreements would be resolved “in-house” and rarely involve intervention from outside of the church;
- that government employment legislation and human rights codes have minimal relevance to church policies;
- that most ministry positions are full-time;
- that most churches provide the minister with a manse;
- that most ministry personnel are willingly mobile.

The model required for current and future pastoral relations needs cannot be based on these assumptions. This has been demonstrated by research conducted between 2009 and 2011. During this General Council triennium, the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services established several task groups to consider aspects of effective leadership and pastoral relationships. In support of these task groups, a major research project, called “The Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relations Study,” was conducted. Nearly 1,600 pastoral relations leaders and ministry personnel responded. This high rate of response is considered statistically significant, meaning that there is 95% certainty that the results of the survey are accurate to within a margin of 2.5%. The findings of the survey were further tested by conducting four focus groups and several telephone interviews.

The research revealed several key findings:

- there is a need for more professional-level support to assist pastoral charges with ministerial compensation and performance management;
- respondents were concerned that volunteers with limited knowledge and experience are asked to manage the human resource aspects of pastoral relationships, often leading to unfavorable and inconsistent outcomes;
- respondents reported ineffective communication with ministry personnel regarding performance and poor pastoral charge oversight processes;
- the ministry and personnel committee dilemma: members are required to be both parishioners and employers;
- there is significant frustration among ministry personnel with many left feeling powerless to affect change and worrying about the future of their career;
- ongoing, supportive performance evaluation is mostly not provided to ministry personnel with most Ministry and Personnel Committees not equipped to assess professional ministry leaving presbytery to intervene only when a crisis erupts.

- locally managed pastoral relations contributes to inconsistent application of policies and standards;
- there is support for shifting the responsibilities of presbytery to focus less on pastoral oversight and discipline, and more on collegial support for ministry personnel, mission and programs.
- an overlap of responsibilities between decision making bodies (pastoral charge, presbytery, Conference) creates redundancies and poor use of resources, i.e. people repeating the same work;
- ethno and linguistic specific congregations agree that pastoral relations policies and processes do not meet their needs;
- high turnover of volunteers increases the burden of training and results in a limited repository of skill and knowledge;
- needs assessment, search and selection processes take too long; many pastoral charges report spending a year or more without permanent ministry leadership;
- presbytery, as a close circle of peers, is seen as being incapable of acting impartially in review panels and disciplinary proceedings;
- disciplinary responsibilities of presbytery hinders collegiality and peer support among ministry personnel

In the summer of 2011 the Permanent Committee integrated the findings of the studies and steering groups into a new model for pastoral relations work. At the request of the Executive of the General Council the conclusions and proposed model were tested further with the church. Between November 2011 and February 2012, 17 focus groups reaching every Conference, and another online survey with more than 700 respondents were undertaken. The culmination of these consultations is a revised model for pastoral relations.

### **A Revised Pastoral Relations Model**

The revised proposed model for pastoral relations described below outlines the essential ingredients for pastoral charges, community ministries, presbyteries and Conferences to manage the initiation, support, and conclusion of pastoral relationships. If the model is adopted, further procedural policies ensuring consistency and fairness would be developed for the approval of the Executive of the General Council. The procedural policies would be less prescriptive than *The Manual* policies currently are and would be designed to be flexible enough to be contextualized according to regional ethos, geography, organizational structures, and available resources.

### ***Beginning a pastoral relationship***

The new model for pastoral relations work emphasizes the importance of achieving a “good fit” between the ministry site and ministry personnel and ensuring that the relationship gets off to a strong start. The model has four essential components to accomplish these outcomes: 1) ongoing

mission clarity, 2) intentional ending of existing relationships, 3) articulation of clear expectations, and 4) denomination-wide support for searching and selecting new leadership.

#### *Mission plan for pastoral charge*

A key component for the new model is the ongoing clarification and articulation of the mission and ministry of the pastoral charge or community ministry. The presbytery will have oversight responsibility for ensuring that ministries are able to articulate their unique ministry goals. Occasional on-sight visits would be supplemented by forward-looking annual reports to presbytery naming the hopes, dreams, new ventures, and planned programs for each ministry. The settled or appointed ministry personnel would facilitate this purpose-work of the ministry. When requested, presbytery members would be available for support. The presbytery will enable skill development, ensuring that ministry personnel and local church leaders are able to engage the required process.

A key aspect of the annual report will be naming the leadership skills and capacity needed to fulfill the mission. The ministry and personnel committee will play a key role in connecting mission to leadership requirements. When changes in leadership needs are identified, the pastoral charge engages the appropriate steps within the pastoral relations model described below.

Key to this model is the availability of Regional Ministers, whose role is to support the recruitment and pastoral relations work of the church. (See more about Regional Ministers under *Implications* below.)

#### *Supporting healthy beginnings*

Over the past 15 years, The Episcopal Church in the United States has developed a program known as “Fresh Start.” The new model for pastoral relations will include an intentional program for starting new pastoral relationships; either the Fresh Start program, or a similar program made available through the General Council Office. The Fresh Start program offers 22 educational modules that support the beginning of a new pastoral relationship. The program has a proven record of creating healthy pastoral relationships by equipping clergy and laity with tools for success. Very little adaptation would be required to deploy this program in the United Church and the cost of sharing in the program would be negligible. The first few modules of the program would be engaged in the last months of the existing pastoral relationship, others during the time between ministry personnel (if any) and other modules during the first 12–18 months of the new pastoral relationship. Information about the program can be found here:

[www.episcopalfreshstart.org/](http://www.episcopalfreshstart.org/)

#### *Creating a position profile*

The creation of a position profile in the new model is a far less onerous task than in the current model. Since the congregation will have a current, timely and contextual statement of its mission and leadership needs, no new needs assessment work is required. A Placement Opening is drafted, specifying the terms, the eligibility requirements, and whether the placement is Permanent (no time limit) or a time-limited Appointment. The Regional Minister is called upon to help draft the position description, and to ensure that it meets any legislative or policy requirements. The Placement Opening is then submitted to the Conference Placement Committee for approval. (The Placement Committee is described under *Polity Changes* below.) The request

to the Placement Committee will specify whether the pastoral charge is requesting the Opening to be filled by the Placement (Settlement) Committee, or whether the pastoral charge will proceed with Search, Selection and Call.

#### *Search, selection and call*

A Search and Selection process is established by the pastoral charge. It proceeds with the support of the Regional Minister. The Regional Minister is responsible for acting as a staff resource for the search process. He or she may participate in any aspect of the process at his or her discretion in person, or remotely by teleconference or video conference. The Regional Minister assures that due process is followed and ensures access to the names of available candidates. In geographically large Conferences, the Placement Committee may develop a pool of volunteers to work with the Regional Minister to fulfill these responsibilities.

When the name of a minister has been approved by the pastoral charge the name is presented to the Placement Committee. , The Regional Minister will ensure that credentials have been verified, reference checks have been completed, procedures have been followed, and all standards have been met. Logistical requirements of the change in pastoral relationship also will be supported by the Regional Minister (transfer of presbytery/Conference membership, pension, benefit and payroll issues, etc.).

#### *Supporting pastoral relationships*

The new model is distinct from the current model by emphasizing the ongoing, proactive support of the pastoral relationship. The process does not wait for a crisis before intervening. The key components of this aspect of the model are: 1) supporting new pastoral relationships, 2) conducting joint ministry reviews, 3) informal intervention, and 4) formal procedures.

#### *New pastoral relationship support*

The Fresh Start program, or equivalent, will play a significant role in the startup of the new pastoral relationship. The Regional Minister will work with the pastoral charge, minister and presbytery to select the modules of the program to engage in the ensuing months. The program is flexible and easily adapted for the context of the pastoral charge, ministry personnel, and the resources of the presbytery.

#### *The ministry review*

At regular intervals determined by the Conference the Regional Minister will formally meet with each ministry personnel and representatives appointed by the church board or council. The purpose of the review is to consider the pastoral relationship needs for the coming period and will include a review of issues such as: continuing education, vacation and other leaves, ministry goals, and compensation and allowances. Resources will be made available by the General Council Office to support the review process. The goal of the review is to coordinate the efforts of the minister, the presbytery, and the Conference, to ensure that every possible support is in place to make possible effective leadership, and a healthy pastoral relationship.

#### *Informal intervention*

The Conference is empowered to intervene in a pastoral relationship when there are indications that consultation may be helpful. At the consultative stage, the Conference will respond through

staff, usually the Regional Minister. Options for information gathering and resolution include, but are not limited to: a listening team, a conflict resolution facilitator, individual or small group conversations, assistance from Conference staff or committee with expertise in the subject of the concern, or other types of assessment.

#### *Formal procedures*

When informal interventions have not produced results to the satisfaction of the Conference Executive (or its sub-executive, a commission, or body to which responsibility has been delegated by the Executive) then formal procedures may be followed. The Conference may decide to initiate a review following the policy and procedures proposed in the Oversight and Discipline Report appended to this report. In most cases, a trained reviewer will be engaged, and the report will recommend to the Conference appropriate remedial actions.

#### *Ending pastoral relationships*

The new pastoral relations model also takes seriously the importance of finishing well. The components are: 1) requests to end a pastoral relationship, 2) supporting healthy endings, 3) formal disciplinary procedures, and 4) considering interim ministry.

#### *Request to end pastoral relationship*

Permanent ministry placements are without time-limit. They may be ended by the Conference with 12 weeks' notice at the request of either the ministry personnel or the pastoral charge. Fixed-length appointments may be ended with one week's notice for each month of the appointment, to a maximum of 12 weeks' notice. The pastoral charge may request that the pastoral relationship be ended by following the procedures outlined in procedural policies approved by the Executive of the General Council. The Regional Minister is available to consult with ministry personnel and the pastoral charge as they negotiate the ending of a pastoral relationship.

#### *Supporting healthy endings*

Once again, the Fresh Start Program, or its equivalent, will be available to provide tools for assessing the pastoral relationship, identifying significant learning, and applying new wisdom to the next pastoral relationship. The Regional Minister will provide staff support for this process.

#### *Formal disciplinary procedures*

There will be times when the pastoral relationship is ending as the result of formal disciplinary actions. One of the options the Conference has in concluding a formal review is to end the pastoral relationship, and/or to order a formal hearing to consider placing the minister's name on the Discontinued Service List. The Conference Executive may recommend that the Placement Committee appoint an Interim Minister to the pastoral charge to address unresolved issues, or to consider other leadership appointment options.

#### *Considering interim ministry*

The Placement Committee of the Conference may consider the wisdom of appointing an interim minister to a pastoral charge at any time. The Committee will consider information provided by the pastoral charge, the presbytery and the Regional Minister.

## **Implications of the New Model**

### ***Polity changes***

The extensive research and consultations leading to this proposal indicate a broad-based desire to decrease the administrative responsibilities of the court of the presbytery. The new model places the management and administration of pastoral relations work in the court of the Conference where it will be supported by trained staff. The model also releases and equips the presbytery for the relational and discernment work of pastoral relations.

Currently the presbytery plays the pivotal role in managing and administering the initiation, support and oversight of the pastoral relationship, with the tasks performed primarily by volunteers. The presbytery initiates and provides leadership for Joint Needs Assessments and Joint Searches (the “Joint” in both referring to a joint endeavour by presbytery and the local ministry). It declares “vacancies,” and approves calls. The presbytery may also appoint ministry personnel for a fixed pastoral term. In addition, the presbytery provides pastoral oversight of the on-going ministry and oversight and discipline of ministry personnel. It also has responsibilities in both formal and informal conflict resolution processes. For the most part, presbyteries do not have paid accountable staff and this work is undertaken by lay leaders from the local congregations and by ministry personnel within the boundaries of the presbytery.

The Conference Settlement Committee has the authority to “settle” ministry personnel to pastoral relationships without time limit, usually in response to a “call.” The Settlement Committee may also approve pastoral charge requests for settlement directly by Conference.

Remits would be required to fully implement some aspects of this proposed model.

### ***Responsibilities of Conference in the new model***

In the proposed model, all placements will be made by the Conference through its Placement Committee in response to requests from pastoral charges. Placements will include permanent pastoral relationships (without time limit) either in response to a request for placement, or in response to a call being issued. Placements may also be time-limited appointments. Both ordered and lay ministry personnel may be assigned to permanent or time-limited appointments. The Regional Minister, along with the Executive Secretary, will provide information and guidance to the Placements Committee, but all decisions regarding pastoral relationships will be made by the Committee and reported to the Conference. These new responsibilities of Conference expand the current responsibilities of the Settlement Committee.

The proposed model also expands the Conferences’ role in oversight and discipline matters. Three years of intensive research and deliberation by the Oversight and Discipline Steering Group led to the conclusion that regular, ongoing, supportive oversight of ministry personnel is essential to effective leadership and healthy pastoral relationships. It is also integral to the integrity of any formal processes of review or discipline. By placing jurisdiction and resources for both with the Conference, a higher level of competence and consistency can be applied meeting standards and expectations of due-diligence, timeliness and transparency.

*Responsibilities of presbyteries/districts in the new model*

The key role of presbytery will be to create spaces for imagining new opportunities for participating in the ministry of Jesus Christ and nurturing relationships for living out ministry together. This work will include supporting pastoral charges and community ministries in the tasks of clarifying and articulating their mission and of identifying leadership needs.

Relieved of the management and administrative aspects of pastoral relations, the presbytery will be better resourced to engage in programs for mission, ministry, stewardship and education. A recent proposal “Toward 2025: A Justice Seeking/Justice-Living Church” describes the opportunity in these words:

*“Preparations for the church’s centenary in 2025 offer an opportunity for us to live into this change of heart and institution, to refocus from institutional survival, let go of structures that hinder our discipleship in today’s world, and find new ways of being and acting together. It is an opportunity to be intentional about the changes we want to see between now and 2025 and the steps we need to take to get there. Key elements of becoming the church we want to celebrate in 2025 include working toward the commitments the church has made to be a justice-seeking and justice-living church as part of:*

- *living faithfully in the midst of empire*
- *building right relations with indigenous peoples*
- *becoming an intercultural church*
- *eliminating discrimination within the church*
- *as well as other areas”*

Change of this kind will require congregations and presbyteries to be places of creativity, vision, and trusting relationships. Creating such spaces is more plausible if presbyteries are not primarily bound by the functions of pastoral relations administration, ministerial oversight, and disciplinary processes.

***Staff Resources***

*Regional ministers*

Regional Ministers, Area Ministers, or Superintendents are normative in most denominations that have high congregational autonomy, as does the United Church. For example, the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, of the Uniting Church in Australia, has three regional ministers for each of its eight presbyteries. This includes one regional minister for pastoral care covering between 54 and 109 congregations—which is a ratio of approximately 30 to 60 ministry personnel for each regional minister. The Baptist Church in the Maritimes and Newfoundland has appointed seven regional ministers, each supporting a similar number of congregational ministers. In the Anglican Diocese of Ontario, there are 44 parishes, and 16 diocesan staff, some of whom support pastoral changes and oversight policies on behalf of the bishop. Conference Ministry Associates in the United Church of Christ are deployed throughout the Conference at a ratio of approximately one regional staff for every 40 congregations.

To successfully implement this model for the United Church, Regional Ministers would be required at the ratio of one Regional Minister for every 55 active ministry personnel. This

number includes the current complement of Conference Personnel Ministers. The Regional Minister would report to the Executive Secretary of the Conference. He or she will not have decision-making authority on pastoral relations matters; such decisions remain with the members of the church through the executive of the Conference or a delegated body.

### ***Funding the Model***

#### *Employer funded*

The primary financial implication of the proposed model is the addition of 30 new staff positions, in addition to the 13 current Conference personnel minister positions. The eventual cost of 30 new staff positions, including employer costs and office costs is 2.5 million dollars per year.

The cost of sustaining an adequate pastoral relations system is a direct result of providing paid, professional ministry personnel to pastoral charges. The direct beneficiaries of an improved pastoral relations system will be pastoral charges and community ministries who are served by ministry personnel. Therefore, the cost of the pastoral relations system should be borne by pastoral charges and community ministries as an employer cost, proportional to the benefit received. In other words, this cost is most similar to the cost for restorative care, employee assistance, or the core group health plan. Money to administer the pastoral relations system should not be taken from money given for Mission and Service.

The simplest and fairest way of assessing this cost is Pensionable Earnings. Based on the current number of ministry personnel and their salaries, an additional 2.1% of pensionable earnings would be added to the current 13.7% employer costs collected for the pension fund, group insurance, restorative care and the employee assistance program. If the current cost of Conference personnel minister salaries is also included in the assessment, 3% of pensionable earnings would be required (rather than 2.1%), and would free up over \$1 million for new Conference and presbytery programming.

A further financial implication that is difficult to calculate but must not be discounted is the potential for increased revenues to pastoral charges as leadership becomes more effective and pastoral relationships become healthier. There would also be cost savings resulting from reduced conflict resolution expenses, relocation costs, and litigation. Shorter transition periods between permanent ministry personnel appointments would lead to greater congregational stability and health.

#### *Subsidy based on needs*

If all 43 Regional Ministers, including current personnel ministers, are paid from an employer assessment, money would become available to subsidize pastoral charges and community ministries for whom the additional 3% assessment is unachievable.

### **Implementation**

Implementing a major new model for effective leadership and healthy pastoral relationships denomination-wide would be challenging. Implementation would need to be done in stages, to be tested, and modified by experience. It would be valuable to initiate partial implementation, with feedback mechanisms to indicate whether the desired outcomes are being achieved.

### *Evidence-based evaluation*

Whether the model is implemented in whole or in part, evidence must be gathered to measure where the model is achieving the anticipated outcomes and where further modifications are required. Measures should be in place to evaluate the stated outcomes of:

- improving the “fit” of pastoral relationships as reported by ministers and pastoral charges
- increasing the number of ministers and pastoral charges who report having a “healthy relationship”
- increasing the number of ministers to state that they receive the support they need to perform their ministry well
- decreasing the number of ministry personnel who report that they feel isolated
- increasing in the financial health of pastoral charges

### **Proposal to the Executive of the General Council**

It is proposed that the Executive of the General Council:

- receive the report
- recommend to the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council the adoption of the principles that:
  - the discernment and articulation of mission and ministry leadership needs and the support and nurture of pastoral relationships and ministry personnel (active and retired) are the responsibility of the pastoral charge and the presbytery;
  - the management and administration of the pastoral relations processes related to placement, oversight and discipline are the jurisdiction of the Conference;
  - the Executive of the General Council be directed to further consider and act on procedural policies for the implementation of these principles as they are developed and tested;
  - recommend to the 41st General Council that Category 2 remits be authorized to test the will of the church to move the responsibility for the initiation, support and conclusion of pastoral relationships and the oversight and discipline of ministry personnel from the presbytery to the Conference.

Additional reports and research results are available on the GCE website (<http://gc40.united-church.ca/en/gce>).

- Simplifying Policies and Procedures Related to Pastoral Relations Report (2003)
- Exercise of Discipline of Ministry Personnel (2006)
- Planning for a Future Grounded in Faith and Action (2010)
- Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relations Collaborative Research Project (2011)
- Report on Isolation in Ministry (2011)
- Oversight and Discipline Policies of The United Church of Canada (2011)
- Pastoral Relations Principles, Model and Policy Recommendations (2011)