

GUIDELINES FOR FAIR AND ETHICAL HIRING OF PART-TIME MINISTRY PERSONNEL
BY PASTORAL CHARGES WITHIN CAMBRIAN PRESBYTERY

When a Pastoral Charge invites a minister to walk with them in covenant relationship, each party enters into the relationship with a high level of trust.

The ministry person trusts that the Pastoral Charge has deliberately and honestly completed the process of looking at the theological foundations, visions of mission and ministry, styles of working together, and personalities within the Pastoral Charge; that their financial situations past, present, and future have been assessed; and the potential for lay leadership determined.

The Pastoral Charge trusts that the ministry person is in agreement with the goals and objectives of the Pastoral Charge, possesses the knowledge, skills, experience and enthusiasm to work with the pastoral charge on those goals, and has a clear sense of call to the position being offered.

Continuing in the area of trust, Cambrian Presbytery has requested that all pastoral charges within its boundaries recognize that it is not only prudent, but entirely necessary, to fully examine their needs for ministry personnel, in relationship with the needs of neighbouring United Church pastoral charges, and that the possibility of closer, more formal relationships between one or more pastoral charges be explored.

The definition of a “closer, formal relationship” may well involve the sharing of ministry personnel resources, time management expectations, and needs in terms of each pastoral charge’s financial situation. To this end, “A Toolbox – Exploring Relationships with Neighbouring Pastoral Charges” was deemed mandatory for use by all Pastoral Charges within Cambrian Presbytery, as part of the Joint Needs Assessment process.

The United Church of Canada, as with all mainline protestant denominations, is changing. Resources, both human and monetary, are dwindling, and, as pastoral charges work more and more diligently on assessing their needs and their resources, there is evidence of a growing trend towards hiring “part-time” ministry personnel.

In recognizing this trend, the Visioning Committee of Cambrian Presbytery, was asked to prepare “fair and ethical guidelines for part-time ministry.”

1. Given that part-time ministry personnel positions are becoming increasingly common, care must be taken to identify what part of the work of the Pastoral Charge is going to be done by paid accountable ministry staff, what will be done by other leaders, and what will not be done – when compared to hiring a full-time ministry position.
2. Attention must be given to limiting hours, proportionate remuneration, availability of a manse [or compensate housing allowance] vacation and study leave, working conditions, and time off.
3. Some differences in part-time work are not quantitative, but may well change the character of the service. It will be important, for both the pastoral charge, and the paid accountable ministry person, to jointly monitor the part-time ministry position on an

ongoing basis, in order that the position does not knowingly [or inadvertently] divert itself into full-time work for half-time pay!

4. The following criteria should be part of the monitoring process:
 - (a) There must be an agreed upon understanding of the goals and objectives of the pastoral charge.
 - (b) There needs to be honest recognition of resources – strengths, and abilities of both the ministry person, and the pastoral charge.
 - (c) Record of Call
 - i. In that the Record of Call to a Pastoral Charge states 40 hours per week to be considered “full-time”, all part-time positions must be pro-rated accordingly. Minimum standards for remuneration must be met according to the Salary and Allowances Schedules Applicable to Ministry Personnel of The United Church of Canada.
 - ii. It needs to be recognized by the Pastoral Charge that it is as costly for a minister to live in a community while working in a part-time position, as working full-time. If a manse is available perhaps the ministry person could be offered its use full-time. If the Pastoral Charge does not have a manse, a relevant housing allowance will need to be negotiated.
 - iii. Pension and benefits are mandatory in accordance with guidelines of the United Church of Canada in regard to hours of employment. Vacation time*, and study leave* are to be calculated on a proportional basis of the time granted to full-time personnel; and a book allowance paid on a pro-rated basis to that which would have been paid for a full-time position.

NOTE*: this still means that the ministry person will be entitled to one full month of vacation time, and three weeks of study leave.

- (d) Scheduling
 - i. When setting up the expectations for a part-time ministry position, it cannot be taken for granted that ‘part-time’ means the minister will lead ALL Sunday Services within the month.
 - ii. Creative congregations must work with the ministry person to arrive at a schedule that is workable for both. Sample models could take such forms as Sunday Service and Preparation only, which might mean being responsible for all four Sunday Services – but no time expectations for pastoral care, funerals, weddings, etc.
 - iii. When looking at the number of Worship Services a minister will be responsible for during the month, sufficient time must be allowed for preparing the Service – generally seen to be at least 2 - 4 hours for the liturgy and 6 - 8 hours for the sermon. The actual time of presiding at Sunday Worship itself would involve, at minimum, 2 hours.
 - iv. Other models could mean working X number of hours every week of the month; working more hours per week, but only for two weeks in a given month; working X number of hours for X number of

months in a year; working specific ‘blocks’ of time etc., always keeping in mind, that regardless of how it is worked out, the decision around actual time worked, needs to be seen as a covenant to be honoured by both parties.

It is highly recommended that when starting a new pastoral relationship, at regular intervals or when expectations change, tracking of how many hours are being worked as well as the areas in which the hours are being spent be recorded and discussed.

(e) Weddings and Funerals

- i. Sufficient time for funeral and wedding preparation needs to be realistic. Time for Funerals needs to include an initial visit to the family, preparation of the Service, the Service itself [including time with family and friends afterwards]; and the possibility for a follow up visit. Time allowed for funerals could be seen as a minimum of 10 to 12 hours.
- ii. Time allowed for weddings would include two hours *each* for contact and counselling, preparation of the Service, and the Ceremony itself, allowing for a minimum of 6 to 8 hours.
- iii. Part-time ministry personnel should be paid the same honorariums for funerals and weddings as a full-time person as it is anticipated that the time and work involved will be comparable.

(f) Meetings

- i. Adequate time would need to be allocated for Board meetings, meeting with the Ministry and Personnel Committee, and other relevant committees of the Pastoral Charge.
- ii. Because there is a great need for every paid accountable minister and every Pastoral Charge to support the work of the wider church, it must be recognized that each minister must spend part of their time taking part in the work of Presbytery and Conference.
- iii. Pastoral Charges can make significant contributions to the wider work of ‘the church as a whole’, by “freeing” their ministry staff to give 15-20% of their time to the very important work of Presbytery, Conference [and possibly General Council].

(g) Should the Pastoral Charge have expectations that their part-time ministry person will be involved in the wider community surrounding the Pastoral Charge, this will need to be taken into consideration in setting up the time commitment to the Pastoral Charge itself.

(h) Additional Work

- i. There will need to be recognition that at times the ministry person may need to respond to someone in crisis, extra pastoral care needs, more than one wedding or funeral in any given week, etc.
- ii. It will be important for the Pastoral Charge to set either a financial remuneration, or time off in lieu of time worked over-and-above the contracted number of hours per week. The Pastoral Charge M + P Committee will need to meet regularly with the minister to monitor the time situation, and arrange for compensation as set out by the Pastoral Charge, and agreed to by the minister.

- iii. Don't forget the necessity for secretarial assistance. If you don't plan for this, your minister may be spending time doing tasks that a volunteer could easily do instead.

5. As a last note, it will be more obvious when a person working part-time is not "on the job", meaning some people will think that this person is not fulfilling the requirements of the Pastoral Charge because they are home a lot. The Pastoral Charge must be prepared to support the Minister when comments are made about the amount of time they spend away from the work of the church.

6. It is suggested that one of the roles Presbytery can play in this process is to monitor the part-time model, and support both the Pastoral Charge and the paid accountable minister in maintaining a strong, healthy relationship. Perhaps the most helpful thing we all can do for one another is to care! Mutual caring and respect goes a long way to enabling us to live and work together justly as we remember whose we are.

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