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CHAPTER 8: THE MINISTRY

¶800 PREAMBLE

It is biblical for the church to set apart particular persons for special tasks of leadership. Such persons bear witness to an inward call of the Holy Spirit and a confirmation of that call by the church. They are set apart by public ordination, including the laying on of hands after the pattern of the early church.

It is the long held conviction of the Free Methodist Church that both men and women are eligible to hold any office of the church, including membership on the Official Board of a local church, or to be ordained to any of the church's ministries, or to be elected to the office of Bishop.

Both gifts and graces characterize men and women the church ordains. Gifts are special endowments of ability. Graces are special qualities of character. Both have their source in the enabling Holy Spirit. Although the church must discern who have such endowments, ordination is always first and foremost an act of God's calling and appointment.

Ordained Free Methodist ministers may carry out their task under appointment to a particular congregation, or they may be given other assignments. In either case, their work will include preaching and teaching the Word of God, intercessory prayer, the administration of the sacraments, pastoral care, and other ministerial activities. Central to the task of the minister is the proclamation of the saving gospel and the winning of people of all ages to Christ. Because vital worship, Christian nurture, evangelistic outreach and social concern characterize a healthy church, ordained ministers commit themselves to equipping the whole body of believers to these ends.

The ordained ministry is both a calling and a profession. It is a calling in that it is a response to a divine summons. It is a profession in that this service is worked out under the direction of the church that sets ministers apart as leaders and requires accountability.

Free Methodist ministers are called to be leaders of God's people. Leadership requires vision, a willingness to dare, an ability to move people to action and the readiness to live with the turbulence change brings. For the person called to leadership, all this is rooted in a deep love for Christ and his compassion for human need. God's resources are abundantly available for all that embrace this task courageously and in radical obedience.

There are three stages to becoming a minister in The Free Methodist Church in Canada. The person feeling the call of God to the ministry is first licensed as a lay minister. The call is tested by service in the local church where initial training begins. Step two involves acceptance by the conference as a ministerial candidate. During this period the candidate prepares for the third step, conference membership as a commissioned minister (honorary) or an ordained minister (full).

Before detailed requirements are given for each stage in becoming a commissioned or ordained minister, in a long Methodist tradition, the following advice is given to all ministers.

¶801 **ADVICE TO THE MINISTER**

1. PERSONAL LIFE

DIVINE RESOURCES

Trust God. His power gives you all things necessary for life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). He has not given you the spirit of timidity, but of love, power, and a sound mind (II Timothy 1:7). Apart from Him, you can do nothing (John 15:5). Spiritual power is mediated to you through Scripture, prayer, the sacraments, the people of God and life itself. Practice the presence of God.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Make private, family, and public prayers of adoration, confession, petition, intercession and thanksgiving a habit. Let prayer be a daily means of grace.

Fast as health permits.

Search the Scriptures systematically, using commentaries. Meditate upon what you read and put into practice what you learn.

Take every opportunity to partake of the Lord's Supper.

Form a covenant with an accountability partner to watch over your spiritual and emotional health and meet with him/her regularly.

ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER

An accountability partner is a mature, discreet Christian of the same gender, preferably outside your congregation. He/she is neither a counselor nor a spiritual director but is a trustworthy person to whom you can confidentially confess personal matters and to whom you may be accountable for progress with respect to those matters. While an accountability partner does not divulge any information to local church or conference leaders, he/she is to urge you to seek counsel (including MEGaP guidance) when circumstances warrant it.

FAMILY LIFE

Be faithful to your marriage vows (I Timothy 3:2). Show honour to your spouse and family in private and public. Parent your children with loving discipline (I Timothy 3:4,5). Build a healthy home life.

FELLOWSHIP

Be open to your peers. Seek their counsel. Meet with them periodically for prayer. Confess your faults. Share your concerns. Take courage from mutual support. Be a part of a pastoral team. Resolve to encourage them.

Develop mature friendships that are supportive of and compatible with your vocation and ministry.

USE OF TIME

Be disciplined. Live an orderly and balanced life. Manage your time well. Resist both laziness and workaholism.

PERSONAL HEALTH

Master and apply the rules of healthy living, especially with regards to eating, rest and exercise. Set an example for those you lead. Avoid substance abuse.

CONVERSATION

Listen patiently; it is more than half of good conversation. Communicate clearly, stating your opinion with tact and kindness. Cultivate a healthy sense of humour. Keep confidences.

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Love your neighbour as yourself. Speak evil of no one. Manage your money wisely and do not borrow from parishioners. Live a simple lifestyle according to gospel values. Keep debts within bounds and model wise and disciplined spending.

Be cautious in receiving gifts, grants, or bursaries. Consider the source of the funding, asking if accepting the gift is consistent with our doctrine and watching for any expectations that may be attached.

Tithe as the starting point for the generous giving of your income.

Maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries in all relationships – especially with those of the opposite sex.

Lead your church in the ethical use of music, words and other media.

Respect your peers in ministry. Keep your ordination vows. Honour the work of your predecessors and successors by treating others as you want to be treated. Pastoral transitions require a fresh start. For the new pastor to establish his/her leadership, the departing pastor needs to leave. If that courtesy was not afforded to you when you arrived, all the more reason for you to break the pattern.

Principles to follow:

- Don't promise the congregation that you will be back.
- Explain to the congregation how your relationship with them will change. Teach on boundaries and closure.
- In situations where you are requested to return to participate in a pastoral role (e.g. baptism/dedication, wedding or funeral), do not accept without first checking directly with your successor and the leadership of the church.
Remind yourself that these significant life-events are opportunities for your successor to develop ongoing relationships. Be prepared with a statement such as: *"I'm honored that you've asked me but since I am no longer your pastor, I'll need to first consult with your new pastor."* No pastoral ministry should occur with former parishioners without the knowledge and consent of your successor.
- If you are remaining in the area, meet with your successor, clarify your relationship with him/her and the church and agree to worship elsewhere in your community for a determined amount of time.

ETIQUETTE AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES

Own an up-to-date book on etiquette and consult it regularly so that you are aware of how to conduct yourself appropriately as a public figure. Additionally, there are guidelines available from the director of personnel's office that you need to follow with respect to requests to officiate at marriages.

2. PROFESSIONAL LIFE

CORE VALUES

Regularly review the eight core values of The Free Methodist Church in Canada and allow them to shape your ministry of leadership.

LEADING THROUGH PREACHING AND TEACHING

Discipline yourself to uninterrupted time for study and prayer so that you come before your people adequately prepared. Seek the Lord's help. Preaching is only effective when anointed by God's Spirit. Use suitable Scriptures for each occasion. Prepare your messages thoroughly. Stay with your subject. Preach to the needs of the people. Expound the scriptures systematically. Seek divine leadership in choice of subjects. Consult the Christian calendar to give balance to your preaching. Communicate profound truths with simple words and speak with conviction. Practice what you preach.

Teach with clarity. Present truth in an orderly way, using a variety of methods. Give opportunity for dialogue.

Seek by preaching and teaching to bring about change in understanding and behaviour.

Avoid plagiarizing. Competent pastors always give proper source credit to things written or published under their name, or spoken by them from the pulpit. In this digital and Internet era, you must not pretend that simply because you are encouraged by online ministry resource sites to use their materials, you can let others believe that all these ideas are yours.

LEADING IN WORSHIP

Plan services of worship with care. Incorporate prayers, Scripture readings, singing, preaching, and regular observance of the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and baptism. Seek a balance between ordered and spontaneous worship. Focus attention on God in all His attributes. Lead the people and teach them to worship. Be aware that you set an example by the way you worship yourself. Involve the congregation, using lay persons wisely and giving appropriate attention to the children.

Give careful thought to your pastoral prayers in advance. Deliver all prayers from your heart. Expect people to experience the presence of God. Whatever the theme of the service, always try to encourage the people before they leave.

LEADING THROUGH PASTORAL CARE AND EVANGELISM

See that attention is given to the care of your people. Balance strategic personal contact with care given through trained volunteers and/or staff. Find creative ways to ensure that a full range of pastoral care is given – e.g. visits, phone calls, cards and notes.

Give special priority to finding, befriending and introducing seeking people to Jesus. Model a personal commitment to the Great Commission yourself and see that others are trained and involved in outreach.

Ensure that attention is given to the sick, elderly, confined, and distressed. See that someone is with your people when they pass through crucial moments: the birth of a child, marriage, tragedy, the bestowment of honour, death.

Make provision for the pastoral counseling of people who seek guidance. Convey by your attitudes and words that you too are interested in their welfare. Ensure that counseling takes place in a professional manner in appropriate settings. Acknowledge the limits of your own counseling competencies/capacities and make responsible referrals when necessary, particularly with regard to legal, financial and medical matters, or other areas beyond your expertise. Interact with those under your care with honesty and love.

Be understanding. In controversy, arrange if possible, for another arbitrator/counsellor, so that you will be free to minister to both parties. This will also keep either party from accusing you of favouritism.

Maintain high professional standards. Conduct yourself always as in the presence of Christ. Do not be careless with confidentiality.

Ensure that new believers, newcomers, children and teens of the congregation are encouraged to join the church and care groups if they are available. See that membership instruction opportunities are provided regularly.

LEADING THROUGH LEADERS

The breadth and strength of any ministry is determined by the quality of its leadership. Resolve to develop Spirit-empowered, growing leaders and readily entrust responsibility to them according to their capacities of spiritual maturity, skill and availability.

Lead your leaders in planning and help them to set goals. Work to extend Christ's kingdom. Mobilize and train your laity for ministries beyond the boundaries of your present congregation. Regularly promote the vision of starting an additional service and and/or a new congregation/church.

Oversee the administration of the church. By good administration, promote the congregation's vision and mission, and work for harmony and growth. Do things in an orderly manner. Try, where appropriate, to make decisions in a consultative manner and to search for consensus so that different views are heard and people respected in the process.

Ensure that boards and committees meet regularly. See that your people have opportunity to discover and use their spiritual gifts and to develop ministry skills.

Share leadership and work cooperatively with both lay and ordained colleagues, respecting their different gifts, qualifications, ministries, and approach to spirituality.

Keep abreast of the activities of the major departments of your church. Have careful records kept of your ministries. Maintain and give summary reports regularly to your official board and conference leaders.

Build relationships with leaders of other churches in your community, promote good will, and seek appropriate ways to cooperate in ministry.

Cooperate with those in authority over you. Model loyalty to your denomination. See that requested reports are sent promptly. Use denominational resources. Participate in the support of CORE ministries and promote the Giving Streams and other general church ministries.

¶805 DISCERNING THE CALL OF GOD FOR CREDENTIALLED MINISTRY

Confirmation of the initial stages of God's call to credentialed ministry in The Free Methodist Church in Canada begins when the leaders of a local church discern and confirm that call by granting a lay minister's license to a member of the congregation. This is how the process of a person being set apart for credentialed ministry begins. In the paragraphs that follow, the requirements of each stage of this process are set out.

The director of personnel, working with the ministerial education, guidance and placement (MEGaP) committee, oversees the steps to credentialed ministry, once a lay minister is recommended for ministerial candidacy.

A document entitled "Steps to Credentialed Ministry" summarizes the credentialing process. It is available through the office of the director of personnel or on the FMCIC website.

¶810 LAY MINISTERS (TRACKING AND NON-TRACKING)

A lay minister is a member of a Free Methodist Church who has been granted a license by the official board. For some lay ministers (tracking), this will be an entry point into the tracking system that ultimately leads to being credentialed either as a commissioned minister or an ordained minister. Other lay ministers (non-tracking) will opt to serve only at the local church level. In either case, before a license is granted, the candidate shall be a member of the church long enough to give evidence of gifts and graces suited to Christian ministry. A hunger for God, a blameless life and a motive to serve are desirable attributes. A lay minister shall be amenable to instruction, supervision, and related discipline to assure growth in grace, knowledge, and usefulness.

The lay minister retains membership in the local church, but the MEGaP committee and the director of personnel's office shall be notified immediately if a license has been issued to either a tracking or non-tracking lay minister. The license must be renewed annually by the official board.

To qualify as a lay minister, the person must meet the following requirements:

- be a member of the Free Methodist Church;
- be available for ministry under supervision of the lead pastor;
- be recommended by the pastor or pastor's cabinet to the official board;
- have completed Bases 1,2,3,4 (or their equivalent);
- The candidate shall be interviewed by the official board to determine the person's call to lay ministry, and quality of spiritual life, and shall be asked questions such as:
 - When and how did you come to know Christ as Lord and Saviour?
 - Do you experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit in your life? Are you open to the call of God to lay ministry
 - What preparations and plans are you making in order to follow God's will for your life?
 - To what type of ministry and witness do you believe you are called?
 - What is your understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith?

- What is your understanding of the doctrine of sanctification?

For non-tracking lay ministers, the person must also meet these additional requirements:

- take and successfully complete the Heart of Canadian Free Methodism foundational course
- demonstrate life-long learning
- actively participate in a small group
- submit a police clearance certificate

The official board may issue a lay minister's license and assign responsibility for counsel and guidance to the pastor and/or the pastor's cabinet. It shall be their responsibility to provide opportunities for lay ministers to develop their gifts in such ways as:

- preaching or teaching the Gospel;
- assisting the pastor in visitation;
- assisting in public worship services;
- participating in a program of witnessing to the unsaved, winning them to Christ, and nurturing them in Christian living.

Lay ministers shall be given regular duties with clear accountability structures.

Though lay ministers maintain their memberships in a local church, they are not eligible to continue to be voting members of an official board once they have been issued a lay minister's license. If they are board members when they become lay ministers, they may complete their terms on official boards, but they may not be re-elected as board members.

Lay ministers are honorary members of the official board. Tracking lay ministers, as part of their training for credentialed ministry, are expected to participate in official board meetings except when the board is dealing with delicate matters related to the life and ministry of the lead pastor or other pastoral staff.

When it is evident to the official board that a lay minister (who desires to enter the tracking system toward ministerial credentials) possesses gifts and graces and a call of God to full-time ministry, the official board may recommend to the MEGaP committee that this person be interviewed with a view to becoming a ministerial candidate in the conference. Official Boards must exercise careful discernment before approving a tracking lay minister. The question to be kept in mind is whether this person would have the gifts and graces to eventually be accepted as a pastor in his/her home church. Prior to this MEGaP interview, the lay minister must have established an accountability partner relationship as per ¶801.1.

It is the responsibility of the lead pastor to annually submit to the director of personnel the names of all tracking and non-tracking lay ministers in the local church. They shall be listed in the records of the director of personnel's office.

The official board shall review each lay minister's license annually for renewal. For each annual renewal, tracking lay ministers are expected to have completed a 3-credit hour course or equivalent. Non-tracking lay ministers are expected to demonstrate evidence of their commitment to life-long learning. When not completed, renewal shall be postponed. The pastor shall keep the records and report the list annually to the director of personnel.

The following 3-credit hour courses shall be taken by tracking lay ministers:

- Heart of Canadian Free Methodism (history and polity)
- Introduction to Bible
- Introduction to Christian Doctrine

***MEGaP**

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- Wesleyan Theology

The Heart of Canadian Free Methodism course is the only course that must be taken through foundational courses provided by The Free Methodist Church in Canada. Equivalencies for the other three courses must be taken at an accredited Bible college or seminary, either in person or by distance education. (Wesleyan Theology may also be taken through a foundational course offered from time to time by The Free Methodist Church in Canada.)

Further annual renewals shall be on the basis of the official board's assessment of effective ministry. Approval for courses for subsequent renewals is available through the director of personnel's office.

The pastor's cabinet, personnel committee or equivalent shall do the annual review and the official board shall grant the renewal, upon their recommendation. The official board may revoke a lay minister's license for violation of its conditions.

A lay minister's license is not normally transferable to another church. In exceptional cases, a lay minister may have charge of a society under the supervision of an assigned ordained minister. In that case, the lay minister will hold membership in the church served.

¶815 MINISTERIAL CANDIDATES

A ministerial candidate is a member of a Free Methodist Church who is seriously pursuing entrance into full-time ministry, has been granted the status of a honorary member of the conference (with voice but not vote) and is under conference supervision in studies and service.

In order to become a ministerial candidate, a lay minister must:

Demonstrate a serious desire to pursue God's call to ministry within the FMCIC by submitting the following to the director of personnel office:

- a copy of the lay minister's licence;
- a resume (Candidates are encouraged to attach personality/ministry aptitude inventory results.);
- required educational transcripts;
- required personal references;
- a ministerial candidate's Statement of Affirmation (see ¶871);
- a police clearance certificate
- written confirmation that an accountability partner relationship has been established
- a reflection paper on his/her call to ministry
- completed Family of Origin assignment
- completed SHAPE profile
- completed Myers-Briggs Type Indicator inventory

Receive the church's confirmations of suitability for ministry by being:

- a lay minister in good standing;
- able to demonstrate leadership ability by establishing a small group;
- endorsed by his/her pastor's personal letter of recommendation. The pastor will assist in the development of an educational and ministry experience plan that will be submitted to MEGaP;
- recommended to MEGaP for ministerial candidacy by the official board (see ¶383B); (board should only recommend a lay minister for ministerial candidacy if the board

- anticipates a recommendation for his/her appointment at its local church once s/he is approved by the conference as a ministerial candidate);
- (if married) spouse and lay minister together meeting with a MEGaP subcommittee for spousal support interview
- cleared by MEGaP if there is a history of divorce (see ¶816);
- interviewed and recommended by the MEGaP committee to the conference;
- approved by the conference and admitted as a non-voting member.

Demonstrate critical thinking and communication competencies by having:

- a high school diploma;
- successfully completed 30 semester credits in an accredited liberal arts or bible college or mature applicants may demonstrate these competencies through life-learning/experience evaluations.

Receive basic orientation for ministry in the FMCIC by:

- successfully completing the following courses:
 - Heart of Canadian Free Methodism (history and polity);
 - Introduction to the Bible; (or an equivalent)
 - Introduction to Christian Doctrine; (or an equivalent)
 - Wesleyan Theology; (or an equivalent)
- successfully completing Bases 1,2,3,4 (or their equivalent)

When the candidate is presented to the board of administration or conference, it will be reported that the candidate has affirmed the following in a signed ministerial candidate's Statement of Affirmation (see form in ¶871).

1. Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour and offer yourself in service to Him as a ministerial candidate in the Canadian General Conference of the Free Methodist Church?
2. a) Will you further equip yourself spiritually, morally, and intellectually for the Christian ministry?
b) For what type of ministry are you preparing yourself – ordained or commissioned? If commissioned minister, what will your specialty be?
3. Having studied *The Manual of The Free Methodist Church in Canada* carefully, do you believe the Articles of Religion and accept the moral vision as articulated in Chapter 6 and do you embrace the purpose, vision, mission, and core values of The Free Methodist Church in Canada? Will you abide by the *Manual's* instructions?
4. Will you submit to the guidance of the conference through the MEGaP committee?

Though ministerial candidates maintain their memberships in a local church, they are not eligible to serve as delegates to the conference once they have been received into the conference as ministerial candidates. If they are delegates when they become ministerial candidates, they may complete their term as delegates, but they may not be reelected as delegates. When ministerial candidates receive appointments to a local church by the MEGaP committee of the conference, they must resign as delegates.

Ministerial candidates continue as honorary members of the official board and are expected to participate in all official board meetings except when the board is dealing with delicate matters related to the life and ministry of the lead pastor or other pastoral staff.

A ministerial candidate or a person recommended to the conference to be received as a ministerial candidate may not serve on the MEGaP committee.

Ministerial candidates maintain their standing in the conference by an annual recommendation of the MEGaP committee.

Ministerial candidates must be appointed by the conference in order to track toward being ordained or commissioned minister. Once appointed, they may solemnize marriages and administer the sacraments. If a ministerial candidate's appointment is discontinued, the ministerial candidate credential is automatically withdrawn and the tracking process becomes 'inactive'. If another appointment request is sent to the Bishop, MEGaP will vote on both the reinstatement of the ministerial candidate credential and the appointment request. If both are approved, the ministerial candidate can resume the tracking process.

A ministerial candidate may be appointed as a church planter upon recommendation to MEGaP from the director of church planting.

¶816 SEPARATION, DIVORCE AND THE MINISTRY

A person who has been divorced or is married to a spouse previously divorced, shall not be admitted to ministerial candidacy, nor to the conference, nor by transfer, nor allowed to be under any type of appointment unless cleared by the MEGaP committee. (See ¶430.2.2.8.). Divorce shall not in itself bar a person from consideration for conference membership, or for an appointment.

When there is marital stress and conflict in a ministerial marriage, ministers are urged to initiate early intervention and to take proactive steps to access, in consultation with conference leadership resources to receive professional help for healing the relationship. If the conflict escalates to the point where it is no longer advisable or healthy for the couple to continue to live together and separation becomes necessary, the minister must immediately apply to the official board for a paid leave of absence so that he/she can focus on regaining marital health.

If the leave of absence is granted and the ministerial couple has not reconciled as the end of the leave of absence approaches, the bishop or designate will meet separately with the pastor and the board to assess the advisability of the pastor returning to serve at the church while separated. If it is agreed that the pastor can continue, the pastor will need to agree to an ongoing month-to-month probationary relationship with the local church, the terms of which (e.g. performance/accountability expectations), will be laid out in writing. If the separation eventually results in a divorce, the following guidance is to be followed.

A minister, who is divorced, must provide MEGaP with a statement of the circumstances of the divorce and be cleared by MEGaP before being considered for an appointment (See 430.2.8.).

He/she also may not remarry unless MEGaP has cleared them. If a minister's fiancé(e) has been divorced, his/her fiancé(e)'s divorce must be cleared by MEGaP prior to marrying. A minister who marries contrary to these guidelines shall be subject to discipline and shall not be re-appointed by the conference until cleared by MEGaP.

If the divorce of a minister (or his/her new spouse) is not cleared, he/she is not in good standing with the conference and shall withdraw from and return his/her credentials to the conference. He/she can be approved for lay membership in a local church.

¶820 COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Commissioned Ministers are persons set apart and credentialed by the conference to serve the people of God and, as Stephen did, on occasion preach God's Word. They may, under special circumstances, be appointed as a supply pastor to lead a church but it is assumed that they will normally work as specialized associate pastors under an ordained minister's leadership.

They are members of local churches and honorary members of the conference. When a commissioned minister transfers his/her membership to a different Free Methodist congregation, appointment to ministry in that congregation does not occur until the receiving church makes a recommendation for an appointment. When a commissioned minister is in transition, they retain honorary membership in the conference.

In order to become a commissioned minister, a ministerial candidate must:

Demonstrate a serious desire to pursue God's call to commissioned ministry within The Free Methodist Church in Canada by:

- submitting a copy of required academic transcripts to the director of personnel's office;
- completing 3 years of full-time ministry experience under (conference) supervision as a ministerial candidate. Ministry experience equivalency credits may be accumulated on a part-time basis under supervision and granted by the MEGaP committee. Once a lay minister has been approved as a ministerial candidate and has been appointed at a local church, retroactive ministry experience equivalency credits may be granted by the director of personnel on an individual case-by-case basis, upon written request.
- submitting a minister's statement of affirmation (See ¶ 872).

Receive the church's confirmation of suitability for commissioned ministry by being:

- a ministerial candidate in good standing;
- (if married after becoming a ministerial candidate) spouse and ministerial candidate together meeting with a MEGaP subcommittee for spousal support interview
- interviewed and recommended by the MEGaP committee for commissioned ministry;
- approved by the general conference or its board of administration for honorary membership in the conference and the commissioned ministry;
- commissioned by the bishop or the bishop's appointee.

Receive basic academic preparation for ministry in the FMCIC by:

- in addition to the courses required for ministerial candidacy, successfully completing, as a minimum, the following prescribed core courses within an accredited and approved (by MEGaP) seminary, college, or directed study program:
 - Systematic theology (3 credits)
 - Elective courses related to the specific commission specialty (e.g. administration, children, pastoral care, youth, worship, etc.) (9 credits)
 - Personal and Church Stewardship foundational course (3 credits)
 - Culture and the Missional Church foundational course (3 credits)
- being certified by the director of personnel's office

Commissioned ministers must annually file a continuing education unit (CEU) report with the director of personnel's office as a condition of maintaining good standing in the conference.

¶821 COMMISSIONED MINISTERS BECOMING ORDAINED MINISTERS

In order for commissioned ministers to become ordained ministers, they must:

- be a commissioned minister in good standing;
- have completed the following prescribed core courses within an accredited and approved (by MEGaP) seminary, college, or directed study program. These minimum credits shall include:
 - Biblical studies (9);
 - Church history (3);
 - Evangelism/church growth/planting (3);
 - Leadership/administration (3);
 - Pastoral theology and practical studies (6);
 - The balance shall be electives distributed among the following three areas: biblical studies, theology, practical studies (12 credits). (Elective courses taken to meet commissioned ministry requirements can be counted toward this requirement.);
- have completed four years of ministry experience under (conference) supervision. Once a lay minister has been approved as a ministerial candidate and has been appointed at a local church, retroactive ministry experience equivalency credits may be granted by the director of personnel on an individual case-by-case basis, upon written request.
- (if married after becoming a commissioned minister) spouse and ministerial candidate together meeting with a MEGaP subcommittee for spousal support interview
- be certified by the director of personnel's office;
- be interviewed and recommended by the MEGaP committee to membership in the conference and ordination;
- by action of the general conference or its board of administration be a member of a conference;
- be ordained by the bishop or the bishop's appointee;
- commit to annually file a continuing education plan with the director of personnel's office and fulfill it as a condition of maintaining good standing in the conference.

¶822 QUESTIONS FOR CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP

Ministerial candidates may be received as commissioned or ordained ministers after completing the required service and educational requirements. They shall submit the minister's statement of affirmation. (See ¶872). (These statements shall become the property of the director of personnel's office.) When candidates are presented to the board of administration or conference, it will be reported that they have affirmed the following:

1. Have you faith in Christ?
2. Have you present assurance that your sins are forgiven?
3. Do you experience purity of heart and life and empowerment for service, through the fullness of the Spirit, and will you through study, counsel, and prayer seek and maintain this experience and lead your people to experience the same?
4. Are you resolved to devote yourself to God and to the work to which He calls you?
5. Will you partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as often as you can?
6. Will you endeavour to communicate the Gospel effectively?
7. Will you see that the people of all ages under your care are properly instructed and cared for?
8. Will you visit, ministering to those within and without the church?
9. Will you recommend fasting and prayer, both by teaching and example?
10. Having studied our *Manual* carefully, do you believe the Articles of Religion and accept the moral vision as articulated in Chapter 6, and do you embrace the purpose,

vision, mission, and core values of The Free Methodist Church in Canada? Will you abide by the *Manual's* instructions?

11. Without being sectarian, will you promote the Free Methodist Church and its ministries in carrying out your work?

¶825 ORDAINED MINISTERS

Ordained ministers (formerly known as deacons and elders) are persons entrusted with the ministry of leadership and set apart for the ministry of the word and sacraments. Membership in the conference and ordination constitutes the acknowledgment of the conference that the person so elected and ordained has fulfilled the ecclesiastical requirements to participate in the larger administrative and leadership roles of the church.

In order to become an ordained minister, a ministerial candidate must:

Demonstrate a serious desire to pursue God's call to ordained ministry within The Free Methodist Church in Canada by:

- submitting a copy of required academic transcripts to the director of personnel's office;
- completing 4 years of ministry experience (at least part time) under (conference) supervision as a ministerial candidate. Once a lay minister has been approved as a ministerial candidate and has been appointed at a local church, retroactive ministry experience equivalency credits may be granted by the director of personnel on an individual case-by-case basis, upon written request.
- submitting a minister's statement of affirmation (See ¶ 872)
- submitting a reflection paper on the meaning of ordination to the MEGaP interview team and the bishop for evaluation prior to the final interview.

Receive the church's confirmation of suitability for ordained ministry by being:

- a ministerial candidate in good standing;
- able to demonstrate leadership ability by establishing and multiplying a small group;
- (if married after becoming a ministerial candidate) spouse and ministerial candidate together meeting with a MEGaP subcommittee for spousal support interview
- interviewed and recommended by the MEGaP committee to membership in the conference and ordination;
- approved by the general conference or its board of administration for membership in the conference and ordination;
- ordained by the bishop

Receive basic academic preparation for ordained ministry in The Free Methodist Church in Canada by:

- in addition to the courses required for ministerial candidacy, successfully completing, as a minimum, the following prescribed core courses within an accredited and approved (by MEGaP) seminary, college, or directed study program:
 - Biblical studies (9 credits)
 - Church history (3 credits)
 - Evangelism/church growth (3 credits)
 - Leadership/administration (3 credits)
 - Pastoral theology and practical studies (6 credits)
 - Systematic theology (3 credits)
 - Personal and Church Stewardship foundational course (3 credits)
 - Culture and the Missional Church foundational course (3 credits)
 - Additional electives distributed among biblical, theological, practical studies (12 credits)

- being certified by the director of personnel's office

Ordained ministers must annually file a continuing education unit (CEU) report with the director of personnel's office as a condition of maintaining good standing in the conference.

In the case of ethnic ministries or on mission fields, ministerial candidates may be ordained having earned fewer than the normally required academic credits or having completed fewer than the full service requirements under the following conditions: circumstances warrant, the MEGaP committee recommends, and the presiding bishop approves.

¶830 ORDINATION CREDENTIALS

Every minister whose ordination is recognized by the conference shall be entitled to credentials from the president of the conference, certifying the fact of the ordination. The president shall remit a duplicate copy of the credentials to the director of personnel's office.

Ministers in good standing who unite with another denomination or are granted permission to withdraw from the Free Methodist Church shall deposit their credentials with the conference office and receive a receipt for them. If they do not deposit their credentials they shall be declared null and void by action of the conference.

Ministers under discipline (i.e., suspended, allowed to withdraw under charges or complaints, expelled) must surrender their credentials to the conference office. In the latter two cases, if a minister refuses or neglects to deposit them, the conference shall by official action declare them null and void.

¶835 RECEPTION FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS AND FROM OTHER FREE METHODIST CONFERENCES

Ministers from other churches and from other Free Methodist conferences who desire to unite with The Free Methodist Church in Canada may be received according to our procedures, provided that they:

- submit a resume (Candidates are encouraged to attach personality/ministry aptitude inventory results.)
- give evidence of appropriate gifts, graces, and usefulness;
- satisfy the conference of holding ministerial orders with another denomination;
- give satisfactory answers to the questions that we ask of lay members for membership (see ¶161) and sign a statement of affirmation (see ¶872);
- complete the Family of Origin assignment
- complete the SHAPE profile
- completed Myers-Briggs Type Indicator© inventory
- submit full academic transcripts to the director of personnel's office;
- complete the Heart of Canadian Free Methodism and the Wesleyan Theology (if no equivalency credit has been granted) foundational courses within three years of being appointed as a supply;
- commit to complete the Personal and Church Stewardship and the Culture and the Missional Church foundational courses as required continuing education units (CEUs) within three years of completing the transfer;
- be certified by the director of personnel's office, interviewed and recommended by the MEGaP committee.

In determining the granting of standing with the conference, equivalency is the criterion. No person may attain ordination status more easily by transfer from another denomination or conference than by following the requirements of *The Manual* for all Free Methodist ministers. The candidates must meet both educational and service requirements. If ministers transferring into the conference fall short of our ordination requirements, they shall have a schedule set by which they will need to meet those requirements.

In recognition of the larger body of Christ, candidates transferring in as ordained ministers shall be given an appropriate certificate acknowledging their ordination by another body in lieu of Free Methodist ordination credentials.

¶840 TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

To transfer to another Free Methodist conference a minister must be ordained and have a certificate of standing from the regional MEGaP committee.

Only a regional MEGaP committee may give a certificate of standing to a minister intending to join another denomination. Membership in the conference and the denomination terminates upon the giving of such a certificate.

A minister who intends to serve outside the conference shall notify the bishop or director of personnel no less than 60 days before the intended transfer. Failing to give such notice, special permission to leave must be obtained from the MEGaP committee whose decision shall be final.

¶845 TERMINATION OF CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP

CREDENTIALS DEPOSITED

In circumstances where it is not possible for ministers in good standing to be located, the MEGaP committee may allow them to deposit their credentials with the conference and withdraw from the conference with the understanding that they can be restored to an itinerating ministry as provided above for located ministers.

DECEASED

Conference members who die during the period between conference sessions shall have their names noted and shall be honoured at the following conference.

DISCONTINUED FROM MINISTERIAL CANDIDACY

The names of any ministerial candidate not recommended to be continued shall be noted as discontinued in the MEGaP report to the conference.

GRANTED A CERTIFICATE OF STANDING WITH VIEW TO TRANSFER

The conference, or in the interim, the MEGaP committee, may grant a certificate of standing to ordained ministers who wish to transfer to another conference.

LOCATED

Located ministers are ordained persons who are not available to be appointed and so are located with their membership at a local church. Ministers who are located may either request the place of their membership or it may be determined by the conference upon the recommendation of the MEGaP committee. In the process, the minister to be located and the minister and official board of the church involved shall be consulted.

Located ministers shall be accountable to the local church for their service but, with respect to their doctrine, character and conduct, they shall be accountable to the MEGaP committee. Located ministers in good standing shall be listed in the records of the conference as local elders, local deacons or local ordained ministers, according to their ordinations.

Location is viewed as a termination of conference membership. Located ministers retain ordination credentials but do not have a voice or vote in the conference unless elected by a local church as a lay delegate. Because located ministers' memberships are fixed at a local Free Methodist Church, they are entitled to vote in the local church.

Located ministers against whom the local church lodges complaints shall appear before the MEGaP committee to answer the complaints. They shall not be disciplined by the local church nor shall they be deprived of ordination credentials without due process being followed by the MEGaP committee.

Located ministers may be restored to an itinerating ministry within the conference as follows:

- The MEGaP committee shall recommend;
- The board of administration shall approve by a majority vote;
- Those who move to reside within the bounds of another conference shall approach the MEGaP committee of that conference requesting that their membership be received. If received, the MEGaP committee of the receiving conference shall locate them;

Between each general conference, the office of the director of personnel shall contact all located ministers to determine whether they are regularly attending the church where their membership has been located.

Located ministers shall conduct themselves as exemplary members of the society where they are located. Those who are not regularly attending (including those where the church has been closed) will be requested to submit written proposals to the MEGaP as to what should be done with their credentials (e.g., deposited with the conference, transferred to another denomination, surrendered, etc.). The credentials of those who fail to respond with proposals prior to the next general conference will be declared null and void by MEGaP.

MEMBERSHIP IN ANOTHER DENOMINATION

A minister who unites with another denomination (in either a ministerial or lay relationship) without having requested or received proper credentials of withdrawal will, upon satisfactory evidence of that fact, be declared withdrawn by MEGaP.

SUSPENSION LEADING TO EXPULSION

Ministers may receive discipline, be restored and have their credentials returned according to the provisions of ¶925.

Ministers under discipline shall surrender their credentials to be filed in the conference office. Those who refuse or neglect to do so shall have them declared null and void by the conference, or in the interim, by the MEGaP committee. (See ¶830).

Suspended ministers retain conference membership but are prohibited from exercising any ministerial functions or conference privileges while suspended.

The membership of expelled ministers is terminated on the date of their expulsion.

WITHDRAWN FROM THE CONFERENCE AND THE DENOMINATION

A minister who has withdrawn from the conference and the denomination shall be so listed. If a minister requests to withdraw while under discipline, the listing shall add the designation, “under complaint.”

WITHDRAWN UNDER COMPLAINT

Ministers who leave the church after complaints have been lodged against them, and who subsequently regain church membership, shall not be allowed to exercise the functions of the ministerial office until they have satisfied the conference to which they belonged regarding the complaints.

¶850 APPOINTMENTS

The MEGaP committee shall appoint ministers to their fields of service according to the policies and procedures outlined in the document: “*Transitions Handbook*.” (See ¶875)

A minister may be appointed to a church without having charge of it; in such cases the administration of it shall rest upon an ordained minister assigned by the bishop.

¶851 MULTIPLE STAFF APPOINTMENTS

When a local church determines that additional appointed pastoral staff is needed, the lead pastor shall consult the director of personnel before any local action is taken. The director of personnel shall represent the conference in the selection and recommendation for appointment.

Appointed assistant/associate pastors who desire a change shall notify the director of personnel and the lead pastor. Official boards that desire a change of appointed staff members shall notify the director of personnel and the staff member. No change shall be made without due process.

If a new lead pastor is to be appointed, it is not mandated by the conference that other staff members must submit their resignations. Each individual church will need to create policy in this regard. (See ¶375.2)

¶852 SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS

In order to nourish a healthy connection with the denomination, all ordained ministers (except retirees) serving in special appointments are required to attend ministers’ conferences, general conferences and regional gatherings and to submit annual continuing education reports as a condition of retaining their ordination credentials.

They are also encouraged to be part of network meetings and to attend a local FM church (if there is one within fifty kilometres.)

The director of personnel shall connect with all ministers serving under special appointment, except supply pastors and transition pastors, at least once between General Conferences.

ATTENDING SCHOOL

Ministerial candidates or ordained ministers may be granted special appointments to further their studies. Such appointments shall name the institution of further education.

CHAPLAINS

Chaplains provide ministry to persons in special situations beyond the local church, such as in the armed forces, prisons, care-giving institutions, and law enforcement agencies. The national MEGaP committee establishes endorsement procedures for chaplaincy. The Free Methodist Church in Canada recognizes the Association of Chaplains, the Free Methodist Chaplains Association of North America, together with its constitution and duly elected officers. Canadian chaplains may hold membership in this association.

CHURCH PLANTERS

Ministers who are planting churches may be granted special appointments to the setting (neighbourhood, village, town) where they are working to establish a church plant.

DENOMINATIONAL MINISTRY

Ministers may be granted special appointments to ministries of the church at large; such as bishop, conference personnel, teachers or administrators in higher education, missionary service, or supply relationship in another conference.

GENERAL EVANGELISTS

Evangelists are persons called of God to promote revival and to spread the Gospel of Christ, but not necessarily to serve pastoral charges or to govern in the church. General evangelists, devoting full or part-time to their ministry, are approved by the general conference or its board of administration to which they are amenable. Evangelists shall be supported from their fields of labour. A local church is responsible to pay evangelists called for special meetings. Generous support of this holy calling is encouraged.

RELEASED FOR SERVICE BEYOND THE DENOMINATION

Ministers may be granted special appointments to serve in ministries beyond the denomination. Their place of service shall be listed in their appointment.

RETIRED

Ministers may retire upon reaching age 65. In exceptional situations, ministers listed as retired may be appointed. The MEGaP committee shall review cases of those seeking early retirement.

SUPPLY PASTORS

Ministerial candidates who are not yet ordained and ministers who are ordained with other denominations may be appointed as pastors of our churches. Because they are not yet members of the conference, they shall be appointed as supply pastors.

TRANSITION PASTOR

Transition pastors have special skills and authority to help a church refocus during a transition. They may be appointed from the current staff or by the conference.

¶853 SPECIAL RELATIONSHIPS

IN TRANSITION

A minister who has been released from an appointment shall be listed as “in transition.” After two years of being in transition, ministers without an appointment shall be located at a local church, be listed as retired, or shall deposit their credentials according to the provisions of ¶845. Ministers who do not indicate a preference at that time will have their credentials deposited.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP

A minister not available for appointment to active ministry may be granted a leave of absence by the conference upon the recommendation of the MEGaP committee. The reason for the leave of absence: for personal reasons, educational reasons or for secular work shall be listed. After a maximum of twelve months on leave of absence, the minister shall be located at a local church or deposit their credentials according to the provisions of ¶845. Ministers who do not indicate a preference at that time, will have their credentials deposited.

LOCATED

Located ministers are ordained persons who are not available to be appointed and so are located with their membership at a local church. Once located, they are eligible to vote and to hold office at the local church, and no longer eligible to vote at conference. They shall be accountable for their service to the local church but, with respect to their doctrine, character and conduct, they shall be accountable to the MEGaP committee.

SUSPENDED

- A minister who has been suspended shall be so listed.
- If a suspended minister has entered into a Covenant of Restoration, he/she will be so listed.

¶855 NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM, NETWORK LEADER MENTORS AND NETWORK LEADERS**1. NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The directors of administration, global and intercultural ministries, church planting, church health and personnel are members of the national leadership team, led by the bishop. The bishop with the help of network leader mentors and network leaders, oversee the spiritual and temporal interests of the churches and pastors. The denomination's two essential responsibilities are to develop personnel to lead the churches and to resource the churches so that congregational health will occur. Each of these responsibilities is assigned to a director. (A more detailed job description exists for each director position.)

When annual conferences are re-instituted, the office of superintendent will also be reinstated, but will need to be redefined as annual conference administrative structures (BOA, MEGaP committees) are developed.

2. NETWORK LEADER MENTORS:

- Are ordained ministers appointed by the bishop after consultation with MEGaP
- Are trained and resourced by the bishop and national leadership team
- Are responsible to cultivate an environment to see the FMCiC's common vision fulfilled by:
 - providing network leaders with support and supervision
 - facilitating the development of regional ministries
 - serving as regional liaisons for the NLT
- A detailed job description is found in ¶881

3. NETWORK LEADERS

- Are appointed by the bishop after consultation with MEGaP.

*MEGaP

Revised January 31, 2016

- Are trained and resourced by the bishop, national leadership team and network leader mentors. (See the Networks Chart ¶460 B.)
- Are assigned to a network leader mentor who will provide them with support and supervision
- Are responsible to cultivate an environment to see the FMCiC's common vision fulfilled by:
 - building relationships with the pastors in the network and being the relational contact point for the NLT
 - planning and facilitating network meetings
 - monitoring the health of local churches
 - monitoring the health of local pastors
 - developing the ministry skill of the pastors in the network
 - being involved in denominational activities
- A detailed job description is found in ¶881

¶860 OFFICE OF BISHOP

The bishop is elected to serve the church as an overseer. This ordained minister functions as a teacher and defender of the faith, a general shepherd, a pastor to the pastors, and an administrator who by good example and faithful application of *The Manual* assures the order of the church. The bishop is to inspire the church by preaching and being an example of one who carries out Christ's great commission.

As the national pastoral leader and chief executive officer of The Free Methodist Church in Canada, the bishop's ministry of leadership encompasses spiritual, governance, administrative and representative dimensions. Overseeing a broad range of persons, teams and activities, the primary responsibilities of the bishop include the development of the spiritual vitality, the administrative effectiveness and the strategic direction of the national church. As chair of the general conference and chief executive officer of The Free Methodist Church in Canada and national leadership team, the bishop guides in the creation of vision and mission for the church today and in the future, leading to the growth and development of the church in Canada. The board of administration is responsible to ensure that a more detailed job description is kept current.

Process for the Election of a Bishop

A bishop will normally indicate to the board of administration no later than six months in advance of a general conference if he/she does not intend to stand for re-election.

When a bishop declines to stand for re-election or when it otherwise becomes necessary to elect a bishop, the following process will be followed:

- 1) A bishop's search committee of no less than four persons will be elected by the board of administration.
- 2) The search committee will survey all lay/ministerial delegates of the general conference for "suggestions" of Free Methodist ordained ministers to be considered.
- 3) The search committee will process the suggestions and from a short list, identify not more than three candidates to nominate for election.
- 4) The nomination(s) will be submitted to the general conference for election. To be elected an ordained minister must receive at least a majority vote.
- 5) The election shall be completed prior to the meeting of the general conference by a deadline set by the board of administration.

***MEGaP**

Revised January 31, 2016

- 6) The board of administration shall ensure that there is a method to confidentially receive and record votes from the lay/ministerial delegates of the general conference.
- 7) The results of the election will be reported to lay/pastoral delegates of the general conference.
- 8) The incumbent bishop will provide orientation to the bishop-elect in the months prior to the meeting of the general conference.
- 9) The bishop-elect will normally be consecrated when the general conference meets or, if necessary, at another time arranged by the board of administration. He/she will not be employed by the general conference until he/she has been consecrated.
- 10) The bishop-elect assumes office at the conclusion of his/her consecration.

If the bishop's office is vacated within six months prior to a general conference, it shall be left vacant for the ensuing general conference to fill.

Bishops shall be amenable to the conference for their character and for the discharge of the duties. They shall report at least annually to the board of administration on the state of the work.

When bishops or former bishops retire, they shall be given the title of Bishop Emeritus provided they have served the church as bishop for a minimum of six years.

The salary of a bishop shall be raised in the CORE budget. The management committee (with input from the personnel committee) has authority to establish the salary of the bishop. Upon retirement the bishop shall receive a pension in accordance with the Ministers Pension Plan of The Free Methodist Church in Canada.

¶ 870 CHARTS, FORMS, RITUALS, DOCUMENTS

¶ 870A DISCERNING THE CALL OF GOD

MEGAP MINISTERIAL TRACKING PROCESS

The Free Methodist Church in Canada™

MEMBER OF LOCAL CHURCH



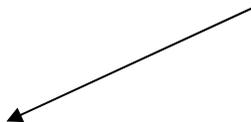
LAY MINISTERS LICENSE

- ISSUED BY OFFICIAL BOARD
- RENEWED ANNUALLY



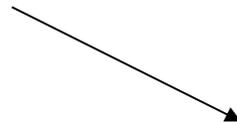
MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE

- RECOMMENDED BY LOCAL CHURCH TO MEGaP*
- CANDIDATE SIGNED AFFIRMATION FORM (intention)
 - indicating preferred track (Par 871)
- DOCUMENTS RECEIVED
- COMPLETED REQUIRED COURSES (12 HRS.)
- INTERVIEWED BY MEGaP
 - recommended to and approved by Board of Administration



ORDAINED MINISTER

- COMPLETED 4 YRS OF SUPERVISED SERV.
- COMPLETED REQ'D COURSES (45 HRS.)
- INTERVIEWED BY MEGaP
 - recommended to and approved by Board of Administration
- ORDAINED AT A LOCAL CHURCH OR GENERAL CONFERENCE
- MEMBERSHIP IN GENERAL CONFERENCE



COMMISSIONED MINISTER

- COMPLETED 3 YRS OF SUPERVISED SERVICE
- COMPLETED REQUIRED COURSES (18 HRS.)
- INTERVIEWED BY MEGaP
 - recommended to and approved by Board of Administration
- COMMISSIONED AT A LOCAL CHURCH
 - specified local church ministry
- HONORARY MEMBERSHIP IN GENERAL CONFERENCE



COMMISSIONED MINISTER TO BECOME ORDAINED MINISTER

- COMPLETED ADDN'L REQ'D COURSES (27 HRS)
- COMPLETED 1 ADDN'L YR OF SUPERVISED SERV.
- SAME FURTHER REQUIREMENTS AS LISTED FOR ORDAINED MINISTER

*MEGaP: Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee

¶871 MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT OF AFFIRMATION

1. Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour and offer yourself in service to Him as a ministerial candidate in the Canadian General Conference of the Free Methodist Church?
2. a) Will you further equip yourself spiritually, morally, and intellectually for the Christian ministry?
b) For what type of ministry are you preparing yourself? Please check one:
_____ ordained
_____ commissioned
c) If commissioned ministry, what will your specialty be?
3. Having studied *The Manual of The Free Methodist Church in Canada* carefully, do you believe the Articles of Religion and accept the moral vision as articulated in Chapter 6, and do you embrace the purpose, vision, mission, and core values of The Free Methodist Church in Canada? Will you abide by the *Manual's* instructions?
4. Will you submit to the guidance of the conference through the MEGaP committee?

All these I affirm before God with a clear conscience.

Name: (please print) _____

Signed: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

¶872 MINISTER'S STATEMENT OF AFFIRMATION

1. Have you faith in Christ?
2. Have you present assurance that your sins are forgiven?
3. Do you experience purity of heart and life and empowerment for service, through the fullness of the Spirit, and will you through study, counsel, and prayer seek and maintain this experience and lead your people to experience the same?
4. Are you resolved to devote yourself to God and to the work to which He calls you?
5. Will you partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as often as you can?
6. Will you endeavour to communicate the Gospel effectively?
7. Will you see that the people of all ages under your care are properly instructed and cared for?
8. Will you visit, ministering to those within and without the church?
9. Will you recommend fasting and prayer, both by teaching and example?
10. Having studied our *Manual* carefully, do you believe the Articles of Religion and accept the moral vision as articulated in Chapter 6, and do you embrace the purpose, vision, mission, and core values of The Free Methodist Church in Canada? Will you abide by the *Manual's* instructions?
11. Without being sectarian, will you promote the Free Methodist Church and its ministries in carrying out your work?

All these I affirm before God with a clear conscience.

Name: (please print) _____

Signed: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

¶873 SERVICE FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF MINISTERS

Presentation of Candidate

[The secretary shall present to the bishop those who are to be commissioned, saying: “Bishop _____, I present to you _____ (reading their names aloud) to be set apart as Commissioned Ministers in the Free Methodist Church.” Then the bishop shall say to the people:]

Dear Friends in Christ: We intend, God willing, to set apart as Commissioned Ministers these who stand before you. We have examined them and we find them to be called by God to this ministry and suited for the same. If anyone knows any reason to the contrary, come forward now and make your objection known.

The Collect

Almighty God, who appointed various orders of ministers in Your church, look with mercy upon these, Your servants, whom You have called. May they be replenished with your truth and adorned with holiness of life, so that both by word and good example, they may serve You faithfully. So may Your name be glorified and Your church built up, through the merits of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

The Old Testament - Jeremiah 1:4-10

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying,

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak for I am only a youth.” But the Lord said to me,

“Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’;
for to all to whom I send you, you shall go,

and whatever I command you, you shall speak.
Be not afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.”

Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me,

“Behold, I put my words in your mouth.
See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms,
to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant.”

The Epistle - I Peter 4:10-11

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

The Gospel - Luke 4:14-19

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and every one praised Him. He went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day He went into the synagogue, as was His custom. And He stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. Unrolling it, He found the place where it is written:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me;
therefore He has anointed me to preach
good news to the poor.

He sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.

Questions for Commissioned Ministers

1. Do you believe you are inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to be set apart as a commissioned minister in the church of Christ, to serve God, promoting His glory and edifying His people?

Answer: I so believe.

2. Do you sincerely believe all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

Answer: I believe them all.

3. Will you diligently read, teach and expound the same, as opportunity is given?

Answer: I will.

4. It belongs to the office of a commissioned minister to serve the people of God in a specialized ministry under the leadership of an ordained minister. Will you do this gladly and willingly?

Answer: I will do so by the help of God.

5. Will you diligently regulate and pattern your life (and that of your family) according to the model and teaching of Christ and make (both yourself (and them), as far as you are able, (a) wholesome example(s) to the flock of Christ?

Answer: I will do so, the Lord being my helper.

6. Will you respectfully obey those who are called to serve as leaders and overseers, following with glad mind and will their godly admonitions?

Answer: I will endeavour so to do, the Lord being my helper

[The candidates shall kneel, and the bishop, laying hands upon the head of each of them in turn, shall say:]

Send Your Holy Spirit upon Your servant (name) for the office and work of a commissioned minister in Your church.

[The bishop shall deliver the Bible to each of the newly Commissioned Ministers in turn, saying:]

Let the Scriptures guide the authority given you this day to set forth God's Word to His people and to serve them in His name.

[Then the following collects shall be prayed:]

Almighty God, giver of all good things, who by Your divine providence has guided these, Your servants, to be set apart to serve Your church; make them, we pray, modest, humble, and constant in their serving and grant to them a ready will to observe all spiritual discipline; that they may always have the testimony of a good conscience and may continue ever stable and strong in Your Son, Christ Jesus. Grant them wisdom for work, patience in ministry and fill them with the holy joy that will give them strength. These petitions we offer in the name of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honour, now and ever. Amen.

Assist us, O Lord, in all that we do with Your most gracious favour and continual help, that in all our works begun, continued and ended in You, we may glorify Your holy name and finally, by Your mercy obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[They shall stand and face congregation, as it stands]

[The bishop shall say:]

Let the Church, represented by those present here as ordained ministers and the congregation, support you as you participate in the opportunities it provides for you to continue to grow and develop as a minister of the gospel.

[Presentation of credentials and congratulations.]

Benediction

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

¶874 SERVICE FOR THE ORDINATION OF MINISTERS

[The secretary shall present the candidates to the bishop, saying: “Bishop _____, I present to you _____ (reading their names aloud) to be ordained as ministers in the Free Methodist Church.” Then the bishop shall say to the people:]

Dear Friends in Christ: All persons who belong to Jesus Christ are called to minister His reconciling work through the Church. But to lead the Church, our Lord calls particular believers to shepherd the people, teach doctrine, administer the sacraments and keep order. Each person who stands before you testifies to such an inward call of the Holy Spirit to the work of an ordained minister.

God calls men and women, but the Church examines them so as to confirm the presence of maturity, good character and the necessary spiritual gifts and personal graces. These persons who stand before you have been so examined and affirmed by conference leaders for ordination.

When people are set apart for this leadership responsibility, they are ordained by the laying on of hands. Paul remembered this moment in his counsel to Timothy when he said: “I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands.” *[2 Timothy 1:6, RSV]*

Whether ordained ministers serve as pastors, teachers, missionaries, chaplains or in unique combinations of these vocations, they need to provide Spirit-filled leadership. In fulfilling the Great Commandment to love the Lord our God, others and to love others, and ourselves; and in fulfilling the Great Commission to go into all the world to make disciples, ordained ministers are God’s gift to the Church.

The leadership of ordained ministers focuses on developing healthy, biblical communities of holy people. These communities multiply disciples, mentor leaders, create new groups and plant new churches. Such Spirit-filled leadership requires vision and courage to move people to obey the Word of God, to walk in step with the Spirit of God and, with joy, to see His church increase.

Rooted in a deep love for Christ and sharing His compassion for people, ordained ministers help to create congregations that are fervent in prayer,

enthusiastic in worship, holy in lifestyle, insistent for justice, caring for the poor, and reaching out locally and globally to invite all people into a life-long relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Collect

Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts, who by Your divine providence appointed various orders in Your church: Give Your grace, we humbly pray, to these who come now to their ordination. Replenish them with the truth of your doctrine and endue them with holiness of life as they keep watch over themselves and all the flock that they oversee.* Help them to faithfully serve before You to the glory of Your great name and to the benefit of Your holy church, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and ever. Amen.

**Acts 20:28*

The Old Testament - Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim; each had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of His glory.”

And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: “Woe is me. For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

Then flew one of the seraphim to me, having in his hand a burning coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth, and said, “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven.” And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.”

The Epistle – I Timothy 4:11-16

Command and teach these things. Don’t let anyone look down on you ..., but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture,

to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

The Gospel –John 15:5, 8-17

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing ... This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.

Dear Friends in Christ, *[Here the candidates may be called by name. And the bishop shall say to them as follows:]*

Each of you has heard in the lessons taken from the Scriptures what dignity and importance belong to this office to which you are called. We have confidence that you have **considered** these things long before this time and that you have clearly determined, by God's grace, to give yourself completely to the fulfilment of your call. It is our hope that with all your strength you will apply yourself wholly to this one thing and direct all your concerns and studies in this direction. May you continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the aid of the Holy Spirit, that by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, you may grow stronger and more mature in your ministry. May you endeavour through the sanctifying power of Christ to be a wholesome and godly example for others to follow.

And now, so that this assembled congregation of Christ may also understand your mind and will in these things, and that your promise may

move you all the more to fulfil your calling, answer plainly these questions, which we ask in the Name of God and His Church.

Questions for Ordained Ministers

1. Do you believe in the Triune God, and confess Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord?

Answer: I do so believe and confess.

2. Do you wholeheartedly love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself ?

Answer: I do

3. Will you be careful to nourish your soul through the disciplined use of the means of grace and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

Answer: I will

4. Do you confidently believe that the Lord has called you to serve His church as an ordained minister?

Answer: I so believe

5. Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine necessary for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and are the unique and authoritative standard for the church's faith and life?

Answer: I am.

6. Will you then, as you exercise your ministry of Word and sacrament and leadership, faithfully study, teach and apply the truth of these Scriptures publicly and privately? Will you teach nothing as necessary to salvation except what can be proved by the Scriptures and, when necessary, graciously correct error?

Answer: I will do so by the help of the Lord.

7. Will you commit to living a holy life according to the teachings and behaviour of Christ so as to be a wholesome example of godliness? (And will you do your best to influence your husband/wife/ family to join you in this commitment?)

Answer: I will do so by the help of the Lord.

8. Will you, in the exercise of your ministry, lead people to faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and as Lord, and disciple them to grow in grace as you lead them to participate together in God's mission to bring wholeness to the church, neighbourhood, community and world?

Answer: I will do so by the help of the Lord.

9. Will you be loyal to the Free Methodist Church, committing yourself, along with those serving with you, to be accountable to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, to *The Manual of the Free Methodist Church in Canada* and to those appointed to oversee your ministry?

Answer: I will

[The candidates shall kneel, the ordained ministers shall be called forward for the laying on of hands, and the bishop shall say:]

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, of Your infinite love and goodness You have given us Your only and dearly beloved son, Jesus Christ, our redeemer and the author of everlasting life. To You we offer our heartfelt thanks. We praise and worship You, and we humbly pray that we may continue always to be thankful for these and all other blessings that come from You. May we mature daily and go forward in the knowledge and faith of Him who died for us, who rose from death and even now lives to make intercession for us. May Your holy name be forever glorified and Your blessed kingdom enlarged, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

[The bishop and the ordained ministers present shall lay their hands upon the head of each of them, and the bishop, addressing each by name shall say:]

The Lord pour upon you the Holy Spirit for the office and work of an ordained minister in the Free Methodist Church now committed unto you by the laying on of our hands. Amen.

[They shall continue to kneel, and the bishop shall deliver the Bible to each one of them in succession and shall say:]

By the power of the Holy Spirit, take authority to serve as an ordained minister in Christ's church. Faithfully proclaim His Word, declare His forgiveness, celebrate the sacraments, care for and lead God's people.

Prayer of Blessing

Most merciful Father, we ask You to send Your heavenly blessings upon these Your servants, that they may be clothed with righteousness and that Your Word spoken by their mouths may have success. Grant us also that we may have grace to hear and receive what they shall deliver out of Your most Holy Word, or shall speak in agreement with the same, as the means of our salvation. May we, in all our words and deeds, seek Your glory and the increase of Your kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Assist us, O Lord, in all that we do with Your most gracious favour and further us with Your continued help, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in You, we may glorify Your name and finally, by Your mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[They shall stand and face congregation, as it stands]

[The bishop shall say:]

Let the Church, represented by those present here as ordained ministers and the congregation, support you as you participate in the opportunities it provides for you to continue to grow and develop as a minister of the gospel.

[Presentation of credentials and congratulations]

Benediction

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessings of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

¶875 POLICIES FOR PASTORAL TRANSITIONS AND APPOINTMENTS IN THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA

The Free Methodist Church in Canada, through the ministerial education, guidance and placement committee, appoints pastors to local churches. While the appointment of pastors by the conference is a historical distinctive of Methodism, the process of making appointments has been modified from time to time to meet the changing needs and expectations of pastors and local churches throughout the history of the denomination.

In keeping with the expressed core values of The Free Methodist Church in Canada and the commitment to empower the local church, the process of appointment has been further modified to involve the local church in a greater and more responsible manner.

1. The bishop declares a pastoral transition through a letter sent to the church and pastor when:
 - a. The bishop agrees in writing to a pastor's signed request to be released from the present appointment. The bishop will advise the director of personnel and the church. The church is to receive at least sixty days notice unless modified by an agreement signed by the director of personnel, the pastor and the delegate(s).
 - b. The bishop agrees in writing to a signed letter of request to the bishop from the chair of the official board and delegate indicating that a strong majority (75%) of the official board has expressed in a recorded vote that they have lost confidence in the pastor's capacity to lead the congregation
 - c. If a performance appraisal of the pastoral leader (see ¶335), based on the current official board approved job description (built locally and reflecting the current vision and stated mission) results in an overall average score below 5.5, the results will be referred to the bishop and the ministerial education, guidance and placement committee (MEGaP) who may declare that the church is in transition. The pastor is to receive at least sixty days notice unless modified by a salary continuance agreement as outlined in ¶880.
 - d. Disciplinary action of the bishop and MEGaP committee necessitates a transition in leadership.
 - e. After an appraisal, it is the opinion of the conference, through the MEGaP committee, that a transition is necessary for the health of the church, the pastor or both.
 - f. At the discretion of the MEGaP committee, the conference appoints a pastor to another charge. The vacancy created by such action places a church in transition.
2. Once a church has been declared in transition:
 - a. The local board will be instructed by the director of church health to establish a pastoral leadership task force (PLTF) of at least four persons who:
 - are members and/or preparing for membership, who have had significant involvement in the local church for more than a year.
 - fairly represent the makeup of the congregation
 - are committed to involvement that may last several months.

- are willing to work in co-operation with the bishop, director of church health and the MEGaP committee.
 - are not local church employees, ministerial candidates or lay ministers who are tracking for ministry within the FMCIC, members of conference or located ministers.
- b. The delegate(s) shall be a member of the pastoral leadership task force.
3. The director of church health or a designee will be assigned to guide the pastoral leadership task force.
 4. The first task of the pastoral leadership task force (PLTF) is to develop a church profile to be given to prospective candidates which should include:
 - a. A clear job description based on the current vision and stated mission approved by the official board. The Job Description Performance Appraisal System (JDPAS), a resource available from the conference at the expense of the local church, is recommended for use in evaluating the present condition of the church's ministry and for communicating the role of the pastor to the MEGaP Committee for presentation to prospective pastors.
 - b. If the JDPAS process is not used, the profile must include the church's present vision, mission, core values and pastoral job description. The pastoral job description should be built on biblical, community and congregational research.
 - c. A profile of the local church will also include:
 - local church description (i.e., building, pastoral history, finances, staff)
 - community information describing the positive life of the village, town or city
 - the preparation of other proposals for pastoral leadership with supporting rationale (For example, a church may need to face the reality that they can only recommend a bi-vocational pastor to give leadership at this time.)
 5. The director of personnel and/or MEGaP committee, in consultation with the PLTF, and using the summary of the profile, will develop a short list of MEGaP approved potential candidates. When a transition pastor has been appointed, he/she should not assume that he/she will be recommended as the new lead pastor. He/she may, however, be considered for short lists. The short list will contain no more than three names. Short-listed pastors will be informed by the PLTF that they are on a short list.
 6. The PLTF will limit its consideration of candidates to the short list. The PLTF will develop an appropriate interview process in consultation with the director of personnel. (See the "Transitions Handbook" available from the director of personnel's office.) All candidates on the short list will have a first interview by telephone or in person, depending on travel distance. Further interviews, after the initial interview, may be limited to only one candidate, and not necessarily extended to all short-listed candidates. An invitation to participate in a worship service at the local church may be offered to only the final candidate.
 7. During this process the chairperson of the PLTF needs to maintain clear and current communication with the candidates and the director of personnel or designate.
 8. The PLTF process will eventually result in the preparation of a recommendation to the bishop for action by the MEGaP committee. A Letter of Understanding (§879) will have been

drafted and signed by the candidate prior to the recommendation being sent to the Bishop. The PLTF will notify unsuccessful candidates in writing.

9. The recommendation should use the following wording: *The Pastor and Board of Name Free Methodist Church, City , Province recommends to the Ministerial Education Guidance and Placement Committee that Candidate's Name be appointed to Church name as Title of Position effective date that the appointment should start.*

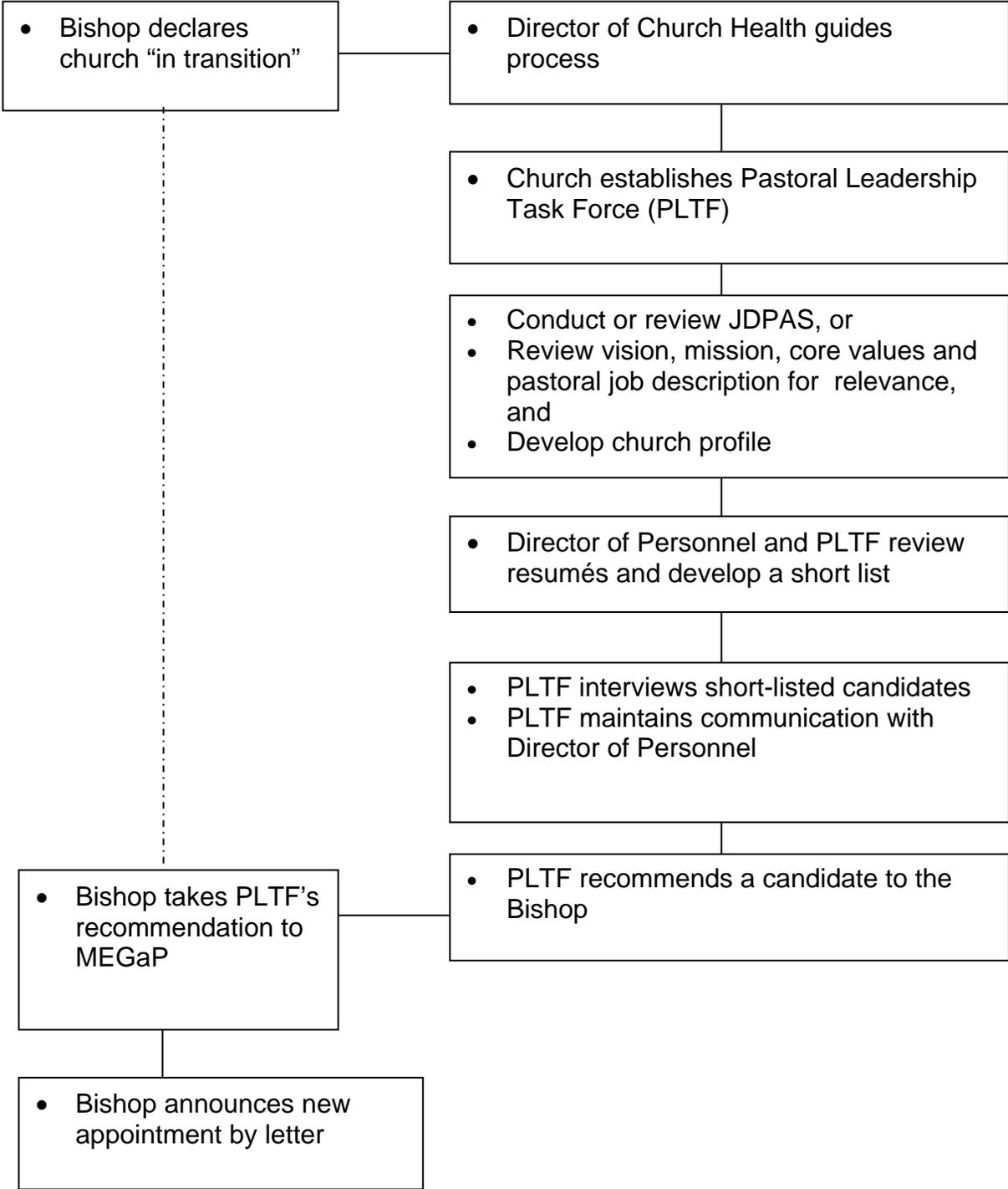
Note: The assigning of a pastor's title is the responsibility of the local church. (See Par. 374.4.) If, in the future, an appointed pastor's title is changed because of a job description change, the local church will inform the Personnel office of the FMCiC of the new title. The only exception to this is in the case of a staff pastor becoming a lead pastor (including assuming a transition lead pastor role). In this case, an appointment recommendation needs to be made to MEGaP.

10. When the MEGaP committee approves the recommendation from the PLTF, the bishop will announce the new appointment, thus completing the process. The PLTF will disband.
11. The receiving church will be responsible for the expenses incurred in the recruitment and moving of a new pastor.

Note: These are the first pages of a document that is used to coach local churches when they go into transition. These pages summarize the policies and process of pastoral transitions as practised in The Free Methodist Church in Canada. The complete *Transitions Handbook* is available from the FMCiC website or the director of personnel's office. The chart on the following page summarizes the whole process.

PASTORAL TRANSITIONS

Church in transition



¶877 A SERVICE OF INDUCTION

THE EXCHANGE OF COMMITMENTS

Bishop (or designee):

Christian friends, we have come at the invitation of this church for the induction of (the Reverend) _____ as pastor of this congregation. Inasmuch as this solemn act involves mutual obligations, I call upon all of you to unite in a covenant of dedication.

(The pastor will stand.)

My colleague in Christ, by the will of God and the appointment of The Free Methodist Church in Canada, you have been appointed as _____ pastor of this church. In order to fulfil this calling, do you now promise to seek the help of Almighty God and submit yourself unto Him who is the Head of the Church, even Jesus Christ our Lord? Do you promise to labour faithfully and diligently in proclaiming the Gospel, both in word and deed?

Answer: I do so promise, the Lord being my helper. Willingly and gladly, I do this day affirm my (ordination vows/call to Christian ministry), believing with all my heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and accepting the Holy Scriptures as inspired of God through the Holy Spirit. It is my sincere desire to devote my life to the ministry of the Word of God, so as to bring credit and not dishonour to the Gospel which I preach, and to fulfill to my utmost ability the office of a good minister of Jesus Christ.

I believe that you, the congregation of _____ Free Methodist Church, are the people among whom I am primarily intended by God to live, to serve as _____ pastor and to lead in ministry. It is in this belief that I now affirm my acceptance of the Conference's appointment.

Bishop (or designee):

Dear Friends, are you persuaded that _____ is the person whom God has brought into this time and place to be the _____ pastor among you and the leader for your ministry? Will you please indicate your positive reply by standing?

Chair of the Official Board:

Members and worshippers, let us affirm our commitment to our new _____ pastor.

The Congregation:

We affirm our membership in the Church of Jesus Christ, renewing this day our vow of faithfulness to our Lord Jesus Christ and to His Church in our city and throughout the world. We believe that you are the person(s) intended by God to be our pastor, and the leader of our ministry. In this belief, we now affirm your appointment as our pastor.

We solemnly covenant to share Christ's ministry with you. We shall endeavour to be sensitive to you and your needs as our co-labourer in the work of Christ's Church. We want to assure you of our confidence, our encouragement, our patience, and our prayers. We promise our strong support to both you (and your family).

Pastor:

I promise to give myself, by the strength and grace of Jesus Christ our Lord, to be sensitive to your needs, singly, in families, or as a congregation. I shall endeavour to help you to grow toward Christian maturity, to stimulate you to love one another and serve one another, to share the fellowship and ministry of the wider Church of Christ in our city and throughout the world. I accept you, the people of this church, as my people.

The Congregation:

We accept you, Pastor _____, as our pastor and the leader of our ministry.

Bishop (or designee):

We who are here as fellow Christians and friends bear testimony that we have witnessed your responses and commitments to each other as pastor and congregation. As an expression of testimony, and to declare our joy and confidence in your coming together for the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to commit ourselves to supporting you in the mission we share, we stand with you.

(All others now stand for the Act of Induction)

Bishop (or designee):

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, on behalf of The Free Methodist Church in Canada, I declare you

(name of pastor)

duly inducted and appointed as _____ pastor of this church and congregation. May the blessing of Almighty God be upon you!

(All remain standing for the Induction Prayer. Pastor _____ will kneel. Members of the church board will stand behind Pastor _____.)

THE INDUCTION PRAYER

Name of person praying

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW PASTOR

Name of person presenting

A Service of Induction

Sunday, _____ (date/year)

_____ pm

At

Free Methodist Church

_____(city)

**¶878 MINISTERS' AND EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS
GUIDELINES**

The Free Methodist Church in Canada

This booklet provides guidelines relating to salaries and benefits for ministers and employees of Free Methodist churches in Canada. They are reviewed by the FMCIC Board of Administration on an on-going basis and this booklet is updated periodically.

The guidelines are for use by churches, ministers, and other appointed staff, to encourage equitable, consistent remuneration practices and personnel policies. Following these guidelines will create an environment conducive to strong ministerial leadership.

The guidelines in this booklet apply to full-time appointed ministers and associates/assistants. Other employees, employed at least 20 hours per week, may participate in the LTD insurance, health care insurance and group life insurance package.

This booklet is a description only of the main features of various Plans. It does not create or confirm any contractual rights. It should be understood that all rights and interpretations will be governed by the various Plans referred to in the booklet, "Government legislation, Church Policy and Administrative procedures."

**MINISTERS' AND EMPLOYEES COMPENSATION
AND BENEFITS GUIDELINES**

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1. EMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

Ministers have responsibility to provide for themselves and their families, and are expected to maintain a lifestyle similar to that of the congregation. However, they may be hesitant to bargain for financial compensation, as this may appear materialistic.

To determine compensation for your minister, investigate what salaries are provided by congregations of similar size, particularly in your area. It may also be helpful to investigate salaries for teachers and principals in your community. Another useful comparison is the average salary of the group your church is targeted to reach. For each comparison, it is important to note any special income tax provisions available to ministers. For most Free Methodist churches, the above information will assist in establishing fair ministerial compensation.

1.1 EMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION - MINISTERS

Total payments fall into a number of categories that recognize the professional necessities of the work. These might include:

- basic salary
- housing (supplied housing or a “Housing Allowance”)
- benefits (Employee and Employer shares)
- travel expenses, including entertainment
- books and professional supplies
- other benefits and allowances.

A finance committee, looking at the list, may think “These are all costs to have a minister on site.” A minister may think, “The first two or three items are part of my salary; the others are expenses connected with my work, and not part of salary.”

To bring consistency to Free Methodist churches in Canada and to ensure conformance to tax laws, the following guidelines should be used:

Ministerial compensation includes only basic salary and housing (or housing allowance).

Travel and entertainment expenses, the employer’s share of benefits, books and supplies, and other allowances are part of the church’s expenses and, although they may be treated in the society’s annual budget as part of the overall cost for having a minister, they are **not** considered as **ministerial compensation** for purposes of this booklet.

1.2 MULTIPLE-MINISTERIAL STAFFING

Multiple staff appointments are detailed in Paragraph 851 of *The Manual*.

1.3 HOUSING ALLOWANCE

The Income Tax Act stipulates that the annual rental value of housing provided by an employer without cost must be included in the employee’s income for tax purposes. Eligible individuals may claim a “clergy” housing allowance deduction on their personal tax returns. To support such a deduction, the employee must obtain a signed certificate from his/her employer confirming eligibility provisions were met in the year. The certificate forms part of the tax return.

To qualify for the clergy housing deduction, a person must satisfy both a status test and a function test. In The Free Methodist Church in Canada, a person must have been granted a Lay Minister's License by the local church policy/official board and must have signed a Ministerial Candidate's Statement of Affirmation (§871) to satisfy the status test. To meet the function test, an individual must be in charge of or be ministering to a congregation or be engaged in full-time administrative service by appointment of The Free Methodist Church in Canada.

Persons who qualify are entitled to claim the lesser of:

- a. The greater of \$1000/month times the number of months the person qualifies for the housing allowance (maximum allowance \$10,000) or one third of gross remuneration for the year
- OR**
- b. the fair rental value of the residence plus the cost of utilities. Utilities do not include property taxes.

BENEFITS PROGRAM

The FMCiC Benefits Program is an important part of the total compensation employees receive. Together with various government plans these benefits help protect them and their eligible dependents against loss of income and unexpected financial burdens resulting from illness, disability or death, as well as providing a continuing income after retirement.

The benefits program is available to both ministers and church employees provided paid employment is a minimum of twenty hours per week.

A Word about Costs

The cost of the benefit program is shared by the employer and the employee. Long-term disability (LTD) premiums are paid fully by employees so that disability income will be tax-exempt.

2. RETIREMENT INCOME PROGRAM

The FMCiC Pension Plan is designed to integrate with benefits payable under the Canada/Quebec Pension Plan to provide employees with continuing monthly income in their retirement years. The four plans from which employees may receive regular income when they retire are:

FMCiC Pension Plan
Canada/Quebec Pension Plan
Old Age Security
Registered Retirement Savings Plan

2.1 FMCiC PENSION PLAN

Participation in the FMCiC Pension Plan is mandatory upon employment as an appointed minister.

Until March 31, 2009 two defined benefit options were available: **Plan A**, where the employee contributed 5.0% of basic salary, housing allowance, utilities. The employer (local

church) paid 5.3% of the same total. **Plan B**, where the employee did not contribute anything and the employer paid 5.2% of basic salary, housing allowance and utilities.

The plan is registered with Canada Revenue Agency (037083). Annual information statements are sent to participants.

On April 1, 2009, Plans A and B were frozen and a defined contribution (DC) component was introduced to the Plan. Key highlights of this defined contribution component are:

- a) Members previously participating in Plan A or B of the defined benefit components will automatically participate in the defined contribution (DC) component.
- b) All Members will be required to contribute a minimum of 3% of earnings (and be allowed to contribute up to a maximum of 12% of earnings).
- c) Each employer will be required to match the Member contributions dollar for dollar on the first 6% of Member contributions as outlined in the table below.
- d) Retirement income will be based on employee and employer contributions plus investment returns.

Member Contribution	Employer Contribution
3%	3%
4%	4%
5%	5%
6%	6%
7%	6%
8%	6%
9%	6%
10%	6%
11%	6%
12%	6%

Details of the FMCIC pension plan, and benefits paid to participants, are contained in a booklet entitled “The Ministers’ Pension Plan of the Free Methodist Church in Canada” which is available from the Ministry Centre or may be downloaded from the FMCIC website at <http://www.fmcic.ca/en/admin-index/ministers-pension>.

2.2 CANADA PENSION PLAN

The federal government administers this mandatory plan. The employee and the employer (local church) make matching contributions. These are payroll deductions at source and the funds are sent to Canada Revenue Agency. The deduction is based on basic salary, utilities, RRSP and the taxable portion of Group Life Insurance premiums. Housing allowance is excluded from this calculation. Information about the Canada Pension Plan maximum monthly benefit is available at www.sdc.gc.ca.

Employee contributions are exempt from income tax.

2.3 OLD AGE SECURITY

The Old Age Security is payable in addition to the Canada/Quebec Pension Plan benefit. It is paid at age 65 assuming that residence requirements are met. Information about the Old Age Security maximum monthly benefit is available from the Financial Benefits section of the Department of Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) website. Call

1-800-277-9914 or 1-800-255-4786 and request an application kit. The relevant information may also be downloaded from their website at www.hrsdc.gc.ca.

2.4 RETIREMENT

Retirement will normally occur during the calendar year in which the minister attains age 65. Contact should be made with the Ministry Centre to arrange for proper forms to be completed for the Minister's Pension Plan.

Employees planning retirement should also contact the local office of Health and Welfare Canada at least 6 months prior to age 65 to complete forms for Old Age Security, Canada Pension, Seniors Drug Card, Employee Health Tax, Medical Card, and Employment Insurance.

3. INCOME PROTECTION PROGRAMS

The Income Protection Programs provides employees with a regular income while they are off work because of sickness or disability. In addition the Government of Canada administers an Employment Insurance program which may provide benefits for any periods of unemployment.

3.1 SHORT TERM DISABILITY/SICK LEAVE

Ministers are normally permitted paid sick leave of 1-1/2 days per month of continuous service in the Canadian Conference, to a maximum of 18 days per calendar year. This is not cumulative and, if not needed, is not carried forward to any succeeding year. If more than 18 days is needed in a year, a local church official board may act to extend the short term paid sick leave.

3.2 LONG-TERM DISABILITY (LTD) INSURANCE*

LTD insurance is to provide on-going income to employees who are unable to fulfill their responsibilities due to illness or injury. The LTD plan is administered by The Free Methodist Church in Canada. LTD benefits apply only after a waiting period of 119 days. Full details are available from the Ministry Centre or may be downloaded from the FMCIC website: <http://www.fmcic.ca/images/stories/administration/Accounting%20Forms/groupbenefits/SLFBookletCanadaEast.pdf> Benefits are calculated on basic monthly salary, housing allowance, utilities (if paid by the local church). The benefit is calculated as follows:

	<u>Gross Monthly Earnings</u>	<u>Coverage</u>
66.7% of the first	\$2250	\$1500
50% of the next	\$3500	\$1750
44% of the balance	<u>\$1703</u>	<u>\$ 750</u>
Maximum	\$7453	\$4000

Monthly premiums are paid in total by employees by payroll deduction. The plan is reviewed annually and information is provided when premium changes are made.

Under certain circumstances, there may also be eligibility to receive disability income payments from the Canada/Quebec Pension Plan.

3.3 EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (EI)

Employment Insurance premiums are deducted by payroll deduction and remitted to Canada Revenue Agency. EI premiums are calculated on salary and housing allowance or, where housing is provided, the “fair rental value” of the supplied housing. The employer (local church) pays 1.4 times the amount contributed by the employee.

If information to apply for Employment Insurance is needed, go to the website:
www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/ei/application/employmentinsurance.shtml
or call 1-800-206-7218.

4. HEALTH CARE PROGRAM

Health Care Insurance Benefits are provided to employees on a cost-shared basis.

4.1 DENTAL INSURANCE*

Employees and their families are covered by a Dental Benefits Plan administered by The Free Methodist Church in Canada through its insurance carrier, Sun Life Financial. Full details of the plan are outlined in the “Employee Group Benefits” booklet produced for The Free Methodist Church in Canada by Sun Life Financial.

Premiums are shared equally by the employee and the employer.

4.2 MAJOR MEDICAL INSURANCE*

Major Medical benefits provide supplementary health care benefits, which include semi-private/ward hospital accommodation, prescription drugs, and miscellaneous other health care benefits. Full details of the benefits are contained in a booklet produced by the company providing the coverage, Sunlife Financial.

The cost is shared equally by the employee and the employer.

4.3 VISION CARE*

A vision care benefit has been added to the current extended health care coverage. The coverage is for eyeglasses or contact lenses for every eligible person. The maximum benefit is \$150.00 per eligible person in any period of 24 consecutive months.

The same deductibles and coinsurance apply to this benefit on a combined basis with the present extended health care

**The LTD Insurance (p. 44), the Health Care Insurance (p. 45) and the Group Life Insurance (p.46) are offered as a total package.*

5. SURVIVOR PROTECTION PROGRAM

5.1 LIFE INSURANCE*

Employees and their families are covered by a group life insurance policy arranged by The Free Methodist Church in Canada. Full details are contained in the “Group Benefits” booklet produced for the FMCIC by the benefit provider.

Premiums are shared equally by the employee and the employer.

Life Insurance Coverages

<u>Employee Age</u>	<u>Employee</u>	<u>Spouse</u>	<u>Child</u>
To Age 64	\$75,000	10,000	5,000
Age 65 – 69	37,500	10,000	
Retiree *	20,000	5,000	

*for those retired prior to January 1, 2009 and are paying 100% of premiums

5.2 OPTIONAL LIFE INSURANCE

All active members and spouses, under age 65, are eligible to apply for Optional Life Insurance Coverage.

The Optional Life Insurance is available in units of \$10,000 up to a maximum benefit of \$250,000. Applications are available at the Ministry Centre and completed applications are to be mailed to the Ministry Centre. The group policyholder’s name is “The Free Methodist Church in Canada.”

6. OTHER BENEFITS

Recognizing the need for refreshment and renewal, each church should have a written policy regarding vacation and days off for all employees. This should be in harmony with the labour laws of the province in which the church is located.

6.1 VACATION - MINISTERS

The following principles are given to local churches as guidance for setting up minimum paid vacation entitlements. An official board is, of course, free to grant more vacation time than is suggested below.

Vacation entitlement is based on the principle of years of conference service under appointment (including time as a supply pastor), not service at a particular church. For example, a minister with 10 years of service in the Canadian Conference is entitled to paid vacation minimums based on that service, even in the first year of appointment to a local church.

Length of service (by Dec. 31 of current year)	Vacation Entitlement
Less than one year	Pro-rata share of 3 weeks (based on completed months of service)
One year but less than ten	Three weeks
Ten years but less than fifteen	Four weeks
Fifteen years or over	Five weeks

A vacation week consists of seven consecutive days including one Sunday.

Vacation entitlement cannot be accumulated. It is to be taken in the calendar year except for special circumstances mutually agreeable to a minister and local church.

Attendance at general conference, family camp, and similar conference functions is part of the minister’s job-related responsibility and not part of vacation time.

All vacation should be scheduled in consultation with the pastor’s cabinet and official board. Vacation days taken must be recorded in suitable records.

Vacations (or the pro-rata share thereof) in a current year should be taken before transition to a new appointment.

6.2 STATUTORY HOLIDAYS

Statutory holidays are in addition to vacation time. Employees are entitled to statutory/provincial holidays annually as follows: The chart below, provided by the government of Canada, displays a list of national and provincial statutory (S) holidays observed in Canada. Holidays exist on the federal level and there are additional holidays for each province and territory. Each province has their own set of stat holidays which are paid days off.

Holiday	Day Observed	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NL	YT	NT	NU
New Year's Day	January 1	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Family Day	Third Monday in February		S	S		S								
Louis Riel Day	Third Monday in February				S									
St. Patrick's Day	March 17													
Good Friday	Friday before Easter Sunday	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Easter Monday	Monday						S							
St. George's Day	April 23													
Victoria Day	Monday preceding May 25th	S	S	S	S	S	S			S		S	S	S
National Aboriginal Day	June 21												S	

Holiday	Day Observed	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NL	YT	NT	NU
Fête Nationale	June 24													
Discovery Day	June 24													
Canada Day	July 1	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Nunavut Day	July 9													S
Civic Holiday	First Monday in August	S			S			S						S
Discovery Day	Third Monday in August											S		
Labour Day	First Monday of September	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Thanksgiving	Second Monday in October	S	S	S	S	S	S					S	S	S
Remembrance Day	November 11	S	S	S				S		S	S	S	S	S
Christmas Day	December 25	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Boxing Day	December 26					S								

In cases where the above day(s) fall on Sunday, an alternative day may be taken.

Statutory holidays are non-cumulative.

Where provincial labour legislation permits additional statutory holidays not scheduled above, that legislation will apply.

6.3 SPECIAL LEAVES

Compassionate Leave

Employees may be granted leave of absence of up to three calendar days, with pay, in the case of bereavement of spouse, parents, brother, sister, children, grandparents, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, or brother-in-law. Further compassionate leave may be granted by the official board due to unusual circumstances (e.g. related special travel needs.)

Maternity, Parental, and Compassionate Family Care Leave

Maternity Leave, Parental Leave, and Compassionate Family Care Leave are granted according to labour law standards.

Special Ministries Leave

Ministers may be granted “special ministries” leave of absence for two weekends per year, exclusive of vacation, for special ministries as approved by the official board.

Continuing Education Leave

Continuing education for ministers is for the development, maintenance, updating, and upgrading of professional skills. These skills, developed in an individual involved in a continuing education program, will help bring the joy and satisfaction of a balanced and fulfilling ministry.

Continuing education refers to learning experiences chosen to enhance one's ministry. These may be either for academic credit or non-credit. Ministers are required to develop a continuing education program in consultation with the ministerial education guidance and placement committee. Where possible, spouses should be included in learning experiences.

Local churches are encouraged to provide financial assistance to ministers for continuing education.

Leave of Absence

Guidelines for a Leave of Absence administered by the local church can be found in *The Manual*, Chapter 3 Handbook, Par. 374.6.

Sabbatical Guidelines

Guidelines for the development of a local church sabbatical policy are available through the director of personnel's office or on the FMCIC website.

6.4 PASTORAL CARE

The Free Methodist Church in Canada recognizes the need to make provision for a confidential clergy care referral system and for counseling resources. The Free Methodist Church in Canada, has some funds, confidentially administered by a member of the MEGaP committee in consultation with the director of personnel, which are available to ministers and their families to assist with counselling costs. Additionally, The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada maintains a confidential Clergy Care Hotline service intended to help ministers, their spouses, and their families. It is available free of charge to any minister. The hotline telephone number is 1-888-5CLERGY (1-888-525-3749).

7. OTHER POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The following list describes a number of matters relating to employment practices that are best understood through clearly-stated guidelines. Some are concerned with a minister's relationship to the local church; others to his/her relationship to the conference.

7.1 TRAVEL EXPENSE

Reasonable reimbursement should be made to an employee for use of a personal vehicle for church-related business. This is unrelated to employment compensation.

To be reimbursed, the employee must submit an account (or log of travel) to the local treasurer. Dates of travel, number of kilometres travelled, and the purpose of the trips should be shown. Trips from home-to-office or any travel of a purely personal nature may not be claimed.

Guidance on current Canada Revenue Agency per kilometre rates are available from the Administrative Services Department at the Ministry Centre

7.2 TRANSITION/TRANSFER/RETIREMENT

It is expected when a minister makes contact with another conference or outside agency regarding a job situation or placement, the director of personnel will be notified. It is also expected that a minister will give 60 days notice if transition is the intent.

7.3 MINISTERIAL MOVES

The costs of moving the pastor's personal property shall be the responsibility of the receiving local church. Where a minister is leaving active ministry, either for taking retirement status or going on long term disability, and incurs moving expenses to relocate to a different place of residency, the conference will assist with such moving expenses to a maximum of \$1000. This policy also applies to the moving costs of a surviving spouse should a minister die while under normal appointment.

All part-time ministers and part-time assistant ministers are responsible for their own moving expenses subject to any provision made with their receiving church.

Ministers moving to another conference, denomination, or other employment must make their own arrangement with regard to moving expenses.

7.4 CENTRALIZED PAYROLL PLAN

Participation in the Ministry Centre's payroll service is mandatory for all local churches. It consists of automatic electronic funds transfers to employees' personal bank accounts on a semi-monthly basis, corresponding withdrawals from the local church's operating funds account, and includes preparation on behalf of the church of all payroll information slips and all Canada Revenue Agency forms required under Income Tax legislation. Details of the plan, and application forms are available from the Ministry Centre or may be downloaded from the FMCIC website

7.5 MALPRACTICE INSURANCE

Each church should carry malpractice insurance on its paid and volunteer staff.

¶879 LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING TEMPLATE

A Letter of Understanding Template is available on the FMCiC website at:
<http://fmcic.ca/chapter-8-forms/>

¶880 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

A Termination of Employment Template is available on the FMCiC website at:
<http://fmcic.ca/chapter-8-forms/>

¶881 THE NETWORK SYSTEM OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA

The Network system of the Free Methodist church in Canada is the primary means by which godly, competent pastoral leaders are supported and kept accountable for leading their congregations to health so that, in health, these congregations can participate in the FMCiC's vision *to see a healthy congregation within the reach of all people within Canada and beyond.*

The bishop, the national leadership team, the network leader mentors and the network leaders work together to cultivate an environment to see the FMCiC's common vision fulfilled.

These leaders:

- thoroughly understand and engage in practices that lead to personal emotional, physical, relational and spiritual health in order to first be healthy themselves and then to model these behaviors to other network pastors;
- thoroughly understand the philosophy of networks, the importance of networks in achieving the FMCiC's vision, and the critical role of the network leader in making any particular network effective through both modeling and coaching;
- thoroughly understand the crucial role of church-health measuring and improvement tools such as the Natural Church Development evaluation and LifePlan to bring about and maintain church health, model the use of such tools in their own churches, and provide encouragement and coaching to other network pastors to regularly use those same tools in their churches.

NETWORK LEADER MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A network leader mentor's role is to:

- 1. Provide network leaders with support and supervision by:**
 - a. Building relationships with network leaders by:**
 - checking in with their network leaders at least bimonthly to ask how things are going with their own church and with the pastors/churches in their networks
 - visiting each network at least once per year
 - b. Monitoring the regional health of networks by:**
 - coaching network leaders on their network meeting planning – dates, logistics, accountability, core themes resources, electives, relationship building activities
 - assisting with the communication of denominational priorities
 - c. Monitoring the regional health of local churches by:**
 - discussing the vigour of the churches in their region with the network leaders

- monitoring the impact of LifePlan tools in the churches of their region
- d. Monitoring the regional health of pastors by:**
- discussing the well-being of the pastors in their region with the network leaders
- 2. Facilitate the development of regional ministries by:**
- encouraging occasional meetings of a cluster of networks
 - proposing new networks as needed
 - orienting new network leaders
 - implementing training responses to LifePlan needs in their region
- 3. Serve as regional liaison for the NLT by:**
- attending training events and helping to identify and prepare resources for reinforcing the core themes
 - assisting in coordinating regional gatherings
 - giving input to MEGaP as requested
 - reporting on the health of networks/pastors/churches to bishop
 - liaising with the director of church planting regarding the progress of church plants in their region
 - discussing solutions for special needs in the churches with the director of church health
 - discussing solutions for pastors in crisis with the director of personnel

NETWORK LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

The network leaders' role is to work with the pastors of his/her network to cultivate an environment to see the FMCiC's common vision being fulfilled by ensuring that someone within the network is:

- 1. Building relationships with the pastors in their networks and being the relational contact point for the FMCiC by:**
- being someone the pastors can call
 - being someone the pastors can expect accountability from through quarterly email check-ins
 - liaising with the director of church planting regarding the progress of church plants in their region
- 2. Planning and facilitating network meetings by:**
- scheduling 3 to 6 network meetings per year (minimum of meeting 6 days/year)
 - scheduling which major theme each meeting will address (Church Multiplication, Clergy Health, Congregational Health, Generosity, Wesleyan Worldview, Missional Leadership)
 - ensuring that the following elements occur:
 - a. within the network meetings
 - **CHECK IN** - listen/celebrate/care
 - **COMMUNICATION** - study/discuss one of the six themes, announcements
 - **COACH** - strategize and train around theme study and progress on LifePlan
 - **COMMIT** - apply MAC (Main point, Application, Commitment) principle to theme, LifePlan and personal health discussions
 - b. between meetings
 - **CONTACT** (Network leader contacts each pastor every 4-6 weeks; all network members send and read each other's quarterly email check-in reports)
- 3. Monitoring the Health of Local Churches by:**
- encouraging the use of church health measurements at network meeting

- emailing the quarterly check-in, reviewing them and forwarding network leader reports to mentors, the director of growth ministries and the bishop
- alerting mentors to discuss churches with special needs with director of church health

4. Monitoring the Health of Local Pastors by:

- asking personal questions during regular (at least monthly) phone contact
- asking if they are meeting with their accountability partners
- implementing a peer coaching set-up in the network
- alerting the mentor to discuss pastors with special needs with the director of personnel

5. Developing the ministry skill of the pastors in the network by:

- ensuring the commitments made during the MAC time at the network meeting are being followed up
- taking significant time in network meetings to learn about, use and share church health tools

6. Involvement in Denominational activities by:

- attending network leader training events (2 multi-day meetings/year)
- assisting in coordinating regional gatherings
- giving input to MEGaP as requested