

Pulpit Supply Policy and Best Practices

The purpose of the policy and best practice statement is to guide communities of faith in considering options for pulpit supply.

Date Approved: January 25, 2022	Review date by Pastoral Relations Commission: January, 2023
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Accountability and support: who is on the pulpit supply list?

The Regional Council is responsible for keeping and sharing with our Communities of Faith, a list of individuals who are approved as accountable to the Regional Council to provide pulpit supply services for communities of faith. This includes: active ministry personnel; retired Ordained, Commissioned, and Designated Lay Ministers who are in good standing and in compliance with United Church requirements for mandatory trainings and police record checks and are endorsed as available for pulpit supply; and those who have been licensed as Licensed Lay Worship Leaders (LLWL). It also includes candidates for ministry in Shining Waters Regional Council who have been approved by our Candidacy Board to enter the candidacy pathway to ministry. These candidates for ministry are also in compliance with United Church requirements for mandatory trainings and police record checks.

Exploring Issues of Liability

When the Regional Council provides names of those appropriate for pulpit supply, it is ensuring the community of faith that appropriate “Duty of Care” has been exercised in the oversight of these persons. In the United Church, the community of faith reserves authority over its worship life and can invite whoever they choose to lead in worship or preach, but when people are invited outside of those for whom the Regional Council has exercised its “Duty of Care”, the accountability for that “Duty of Care” rests with the community of faith.

Principles and policies around Pulpit Supply

- Pulpit supply is not intended to be an ongoing approach to sustaining ministry. Lay-led congregations should not rely upon a single LLWL, retired order of ministry or DLM or clergy from other denominations for continuous long-term leadership;
- A person providing pulpit supply may cover three consecutive Sundays a month, to a maximum of 15 services per year, in one community of faith. Alternatively, a person may lead services for one complete month in a six-month period in one Pastoral Charge. If asked to lead worship for more Sundays, the pulpit supply provider is to seek the approval of a Pastoral Relations Minister before agreeing to do so.
- It is acknowledged that there may be circumstances where availability of LLWLs and other pulpit supply options are limited and it may be not possible to have a wider variety of persons providing leadership. In these circumstances the community of faith is directed to be in communication with a Pastoral Relations Minister and to request direction and support;
- Worship resources (printed, video, technology links) and other support to communities of faith are available through General Council Office website: <https://united-church.ca/worship-resources>

CRA Requirements for a T4A

Communities of Faith paying more than \$500 in a year to anyone whose services they engage for worship leadership are required by law to file a T4A with CRA and to provide it no later than February 28 of each year. Please note that it should not be necessary for your pulpit supply providers to ask you for their T4A. It must be supplied as an expression of CRA compliance.

Remuneration for Pulpit Supply

Pulpit supply minimum rates for ministry personnel are provided annually by the General Council Office. The minimum daily rate for 2022 is \$224. This covers a full working day, or any portion thereof, and is not linked to any specific number of hours served. The parties may negotiate a higher daily amount but cannot negotiate a lower amount. In addition, the community of faith must reimburse the visiting ministry personnel for travel and incidental expenses (i.e., meal allowance and accommodations, as necessary). The minimum daily rate is applicable to ministry personnel only.

However, the community of faith is encouraged to remunerate LLWLs in accordance with the Minimum Salaries & Reimbursements rate for Visiting Ministry Personnel, including travel, issued by General Council each year. It is to be noted that this rate is a minimum. When leading worship on a multi-point community of faith, it is intended that the anyone leading worship would receive above the minimum rate for one Sunday, but not necessarily the full rate for each worship service.

Oversight of the Regional Council

Oversight is exercised through the pastoral charge supervisors who are named by the Regional Council to ensure that communities of faith live their mission within the ethos of The United Church of Canada. Communities of faith which disregard the direction of the pastoral charge supervisor in regards to compliance with this policy, may be subject to review and discipline by the Regional Council.