

## Sacraments Elders Policy

The purpose of the policy statement is to guide communities of faith in considering options for Sacraments Elders.

Date Approved: November 26, 2024	Review date by Pastoral Relations Commission: 2027
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### The Role

A sacraments elder is a full member of a community of faith who has been licensed by the regional council to administer the sacraments within their community of faith, which is without a settled or appointed member of the order of ministry. When a congregation is in need, it may identify and invite those who have gifts and interests for becoming a sacraments elder to act in this capacity once they have received the required training which is provided by the Regional Council. Sacraments elders are licensed only to preside at sacraments in the pastoral charge where they are a member. The role is voluntary; in other words, there is no fee for service.

Shining Waters sacraments elders are licensed for the pastoral year, from July 1 to June 30. The license will be renewed annually.

### Policies and Procedures

The policies about licences to administer the sacraments can be found under Pastoral Relations, section I.2.4 in The Manual. The policy about sacraments elders can be found under Pastoral Relations, paragraph (c) of section I.2.4.1. The policy about pastoral charge supervisors and the sacraments can be found under Pastoral Relations, section I.2.5.2 b. This section of the sacraments elder resource includes additional policies and procedures that must be followed.

This section applies to a layperson who

- (a) is a member of The United Church of Canada
- (b) has been recommended by the governing body of their pastoral charge to be licensed as a sacraments elder
- (c) is willing to take a course of preparation to be licensed
- (d) is willing to become a member of the governing body of their pastoral charge once licensed

The process set out below must be followed.

\*Pastoral Relations Minister(s) are given the power to represent the Pastoral Relations Commission of the Regional Council in the process from 1-5.

1. The regional council identifies, or the pastoral charge self-identifies to the region, the need for a sacraments elder.

2. The regional council confirms that the pastoral charge has a pastoral charge supervisor, who is responsible for ensuring that the sacraments are administered.
3. The pastoral charge recommends a layperson who would be suitable for licensing as a sacraments elder.
4. The regional council assesses the applicant, considering formation and accountability.
5. The regional council requires the applicant to take a preparation course that is appropriate to their background and experience by a mentor assigned by a pastoral relations minister. In addition to the preparation course, the applicant must take Racial Justice and Boundary training.
6. When the preparation course is completed, the recommendation on the applicant's suitability from the Mentor will be brought to the pastoral relations commission for approval.
7. The Pastoral Relations Commission can grant a licence for a 12-month term, renewable upon request from the governing body and recommendation of the mentor.
8. The sacraments elder becomes a member of the governing body of the pastoral charge.
9. The licence automatically ends with the appointment or call of a ministry personnel.

The policy and procedures for sacrament elders are found in the UCC resource Sacraments Elders Handbook – January 2020 [ PDF | 47 pages] [https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/handbook\\_sacraments-elders.pdf](https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/handbook_sacraments-elders.pdf)

### Sacraments Elder Training

Shining Waters Regional Council requires that all lay people wishing to become a Sacraments Elder for their community of faith do mandatory training by a mentor appointed by a Pastoral Relations Minister.

### Other Considerations

The role of sacraments elder is voluntary – there is no remuneration expected. In addition, sacraments elders are not expected to lead the whole worship service, although they may participate in other parts if they wish.

### Community of Faith Request Application

This application is the formal request of the pastoral charge for the appointment/re-appointment of a sacraments elder.

Please note: sacraments elders DO NOT complete this application. The community of faith will need to apply to the Shining Waters Regional Council to have their sacrament elder licensed.

Online Sacraments Elders application form: <https://shiningwatersregionalcouncil.ca/pastoral-relations/sacraments-elders/application-form/>