

Pastoral Charge Supervisor Policy

The purpose of the policy statement is to guide the appointment of a Pastoral Charge Supervisor when the Community of Faith has no called or appointed ministry personnel.

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General Background:

The Manual of The United Church of Canada (2026, I.2.5.2) requires the regional council to appoint a Pastoral Charge Supervisor to support Pastoral Charges when no regularly appointed or called ministry personnel are in place. This is typically a time-limited arrangement, often required during a transition or disruption, or during a candidate-supply ministry. The Pastoral Relations Commission also has the authority to create, review, and implement policies related to pastoral charge supervision, and to name or remove Pastoral Charge Supervisors. The Shining Waters Pastoral Relations Commission delegates the Pastoral Relations Ministers to appoint Pastoral Charge Supervisors and to report these appointments to the Pastoral Relations Commission.

Who can be Pastoral Charge Supervisors:

The regional council is responsible for appointing a member of the regional council (Ordered or Lay) to the pastoral charge as a pastoral charge supervisor. The regional council may also appoint a pastoral charge supervisor in any other situation it deems appropriate.

Situations Requiring Pastoral Charge Supervisors:

The appointment of a Pastoral Charge Supervisor might occur in the following situations:

- a. Change in Pastoral Relations: Most commonly, this occurs when a change in pastoral relations has left a pastoral charge without a called or appointed minister.
- b. Leave: When ministry personnel are on leave (parental, medical, compassionate, sabbatical), a pastoral charge supervisor is appointed for this period of time.
- c. Student/Candidate: When a student is serving as the supply minister in a pastoral charge, a pastoral charge supervisor is required to oversee the work of the congregation. This person is distinct from an educational supervisor or mentor appointed to fulfill the requirements of a supervised ministry education site. For the Supervised Ministry Education (SME) site, the pastoral charge supervisor may serve for up to 24 months.

- d. Candidate for Admission: When a minister is in the process of admission to The United Church of Canada from another denomination, a pastoral charge supervisor is required to oversee the work of the congregation. This person is distinct from an educational supervisor or mentor appointed to fulfill the requirements for admission.
- e. Ethnic Ministry: Pastoral charges that fall under the category of ethnic ministries are able to have ministry personnel who are ordained in another denomination, and these persons are not required to seek admission into The United Church of Canada. However, a pastoral charge supervisor must attend all meetings of the governing body.
- f. Ecumenical Shared Ministries: Pastoral charges that share a ministry with another denomination also require the presence of a pastoral charge supervisor at all meetings of the governing body.
- g. Though the appointment of a Pastoral Charge Supervisor is intended to be short-term, lay-led communities of faith may require a Pastoral Charge Supervisor for the long term.

Responsibilities/Tasks:

Role

The pastoral charge supervisor:

- a. oversees the work and ministry of the pastoral charge.
- b. is automatically a trustee, must be granted access to trustee records upon request, and may assume the role of Chair of the Trustees if the situation warrants it.

Meetings

The pastoral charge supervisor:

- a. has the authority to call congregational meetings, trustee meetings, and meetings of the governing body. They must do so when required by The Manual and may do so at their own initiative at any time. The meeting must meet the requirement to properly inform the congregation by providing the necessary notice.
- b. must be present at meetings of the governing body and at congregational or annual meetings to have a quorum. Without their presence, no motions can be passed.
 - I. It is important for the community of faith to work with the pastoral charge supervisor to find a suitable date and time for meetings.
 - II. While it is preferable to have in-person meetings, there may be issues that are in place (e.g., distance, weather, ...) which make meetings by telephone or online connection advisable.
 - III. It is the decision of the pastoral charge supervisor, in discussion with the governing body, how they would like to join the meeting, whether in person, online, or Hybrid.
 - IV. The agenda and supporting documents will be sent to the Pastoral Charge Supervisor in a reasonable time before the meeting.

- c. is eligible to serve as chair of the governing body and trustees and is required to ensure a chair has been elected for the pastoral charge governing body, the trustees, and meetings of the congregation and pastoral charge.

Sacraments & Membership

The pastoral charge supervisor:

- a. works with the Communities of Faith to ensure that communion and baptism are made available. While the pastoral charge supervisor may not preside or make arrangements, they will provide the names of people for the congregation to contact.
- b. is not responsible for sacraments if the pastoral charge supervision is for the SME appointment, as the SME candidate has sacramental privilege.
- c. works with the community of faith and the Pastoral Relations minister to ensure that a Sacraments Elder is chosen by the community of faith and trained if the community of faith does not have access to someone who is able to administer the sacraments and who is not likely to be calling ministry personnel any time in the foreseeable future. (see Sacrament Elders Policy: [Sacrament Elders Policy](#))
- d. ensures individuals seeking to become full members of the congregation are received according to The Manual.

Pastoral Care

The pastoral charge supervisor:

- a. can assist the pastoral charge in ensuring that pastoral care, weddings, and funerals can take place by providing a list of names of persons who may be available on a contract or on-call basis, encouraging the congregation to organize a lay visitors team, or reaching out to a neighbouring congregation to form a ministry-sharing agreement.

Reporting

The pastoral charge supervisor:

- a. will report to the regional council Pastoral Relations Commission and Communities of Faith Commission at the end of their term as supervisor, or after every twelve months if their appointment is ongoing before March 31.
- b. will consult with the Pastoral Relations and Communities of Faith Support Minister if they have any concerns regarding the state of the pastoral charge and ministry personnel.
- c. will ensure that the Community of Faith completes their annual report.
- d. will consult with the Pastoral Relations and Communities of Faith Support Minister and evaluate the length of their appointment.

Cost

- a. The Pastoral charge is responsible for paying the pastoral charge supervisor's mileage, accommodations, or per diem expenses while the supervisor is on duty for pastoral charge supervision.
- b. If a pastoral charge requires their supervisor to provide pulpit supply, they must pay the Pulpit Supply rate. (See Pulpit Supply Policy: [Pulpit Supply Policy](#))
- c. After six (6) months of the appointment, the Pastoral Charge pays the pastoral charge supervisor an honourarium each month at the current pulpit-supply rate for the remainder of the appointment. This payment is due on the last day of each month.
- d. If a congregation receives approval from the Regional Council to become a lay-led congregation before the six (6)-month period is complete, the pastoral charge will begin paying the pulpit-supply rate to their Pastoral Charge Supervisor, starting in the month of regional approval.
- e. Pastoral charges must issue a T4A to pastoral charge supervisors who receive more than \$500 in a calendar year.

Support to the Pastoral Charge Supervisors and Communities of Faith:

The Region, through the Pastoral Relations and Communities of Faith Support Minister, will offer ongoing support in polity, policy and training to Pastoral Charge Supervisors and sites.

The Region has a responsibility to ministry sites experiencing chronic vacancy. The ongoing needs of the ministry are covered by neighbouring clergy through the normal function of Pastoral Charge Supervision. The Region, through the Pastoral Relations Commission and the Communities of Faith Commission, shall initiate a broader conversation on alternative pastoral coverage and staffing models to better preserve and strengthen the United Church's ministry presence in the area.