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- Church Board/Office



connex

IMPORTANT UPDATES FROM PC-MEPS

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Letter from the Editor

The One Thing

Sisters and brothers in Christ, peace be with you! Although summer has come to an end, it's my hope that you will continue to find time to relax, reconnect with loved ones, and reflect on the busy-ness that can consume us through the year.

Recently the lectionary brought us the gift of the story of Jesus' visit with Mary and Martha, and Jesus' advice that although we may be "worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing" (Luke 10:41). Figuring out that "one thing" is a tricky business; there's no easy answer, like yes to prayer and no to dishes. Discernment is required: the skill or gift of perceiving and selecting what is most important in a given situation. When Jesus comes to dinner, yes, drop the chores and be with him! But we can't *always* drop the laundry or the quest for justice in favour of more time for prayer and study. Chores need our attention once in a while, as do bill payments, difficult discussions, and regular check-ups!

Some days we discern that it is time to act. Other days we realize it is time for consultation and prayerful reflection. Thanks be to God that we are not alone in our discernment, and that beyond the powerful assistance of the Holy Spirit and the communion of saints, we are accompanied by brothers and sisters across the church who are serious and passionate about discerning the way in these times of transition.

In these pages you will read of many situations where wise and prayerful discernment has happened, is happening, and will happen. Join me in praying for the leadership of our church—that our ability to discern with wisdom and grace will only grow stronger, God being our helper. Shalom!

—Erin Sterling

Connex Is for Everyone

Connex is made available to all members of the pension and benefits plans (ministry personnel and lay employees) and to all pastoral charges, but *not* to the large number of volunteer members working on personnel committees and groups.

To ensure that our volunteer members, who work closely with ministry personnel and lay employees in presbyteries and pastoral charges, are aware of updates and news, we have developed a *Connex* routing list (see above at left).

The person responsible for the pastoral charge office mail should use the routing list to make sure all relevant people (M&P Committee members, for example) are informed that a new issue of *Connex* is available. Although not every issue will have information pertinent to everyone on the routing list, awareness of *Connex*'s availability will assist volunteers with their roles within the church.

All issues of *Connex* are available for anyone to view online, save to a computer, and print. You can find them at www.united-church.ca/communications/newsletters/connex.

Your Benefits: TRANSITION TO HEWITT

The transition of pension and benefits administration from Morneau Sobeco to Hewitt is scheduled for April 1, 2011. All changes affecting plan members and treasurers will be fully summarized and communicated before that time. Some of the changes we expect with Hewitt's administration are detailed below.

Hewitt to Become Aon Hewitt

On July 12, 2010, Hewitt announced that in November 2010 it will be merging with Aon Consulting to form Aon Hewitt, a worldwide human resources company. This will not impact the agreements the United Church has already made with Hewitt, but once the merger is finalized in mid-November, references to our new pension and benefits administrator will change to "Aon Hewitt."

Fewer Forms to Fill Out

Hewitt is developing a new system in which members and treasurers will have fewer forms to complete. After April 2011, many administrative items that currently require forms (such as enrolment or life-event changes) will be completed by contacting Hewitt directly, either through the call centre or by logging on to your Hewitt benefits resource website.

Student Status Verification

Currently, members must certify the student status of all dependent children aged 18 and over in October of each year. As of April 1, 2011, Hewitt will require this confirmation by the dependent child's birthday instead of in October. Hewitt will send members a reminder three months before the child's birthday; if no certification of student status is received by the child's birthdate, benefits coverage will cease as of that day.

Benefits Coverage While in Search of a Call

Right now, participation in the pension and benefits plans is automatically extended to ministry personnel in search of a call, and it is the member's responsibility to opt out if he or she does not wish to remain in the plans. After April 1, 2011, Hewitt will **not** assume members want to participate. Membership in the pension and benefits plans will cease at the end of a pastoral relationship, and ministry personnel who want to continue to participate in the plans while they are in search of a call will have to contact Hewitt directly to make their selections.



Change of Address?

If you are paid through the payroll service (ADP direct deposit), you must ask your treasurer or payroll administrator to update ADP any time your personal information changes: address, phone number, or banking information, for example. **This applies only to active and retired supply ministry personnel.**

Pensioner members, please contact the Human Resources Unit to change your address or other personal details.
Call: 1-800-268-3781 ext. 3161
E-mail: HumanResources@united-church.ca

Your Benefits

PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

You are eligible for reimbursement only if your practitioner is a registered psychologist or accredited Master of Social Work (MSW), legally practising within the scope of his or her licence.

PLEASE NOTE: "Reasonable and customary limits" to fees apply. Green Shield will reimburse you according to a per visit (not a per hour) maximum.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Employee Assistance Program provided by Shepell-fgi offers active members immediate, confidential short-term counselling for any concern.

This is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Contact Shepell-fgi by phone: 1-800-387-4765. The website is full of helpful resources: www.shepellfgi.com.

Policy and Processes Updated Resources for Ministry Vocations

The Manual, 2010

The new edition reflects significant changes to the policies that govern Designated Lay Ministry and Congregational Designated Ministry. These changes are the result of decisions made at General Council 40 (2009). Of the 22 proposals related to these ministry roles that were considered at GC40, 13 were either carried by the General Council or referred to the Executive of the General Council for further work.

The procedural policy for discernment and recognition for lay ministry has been removed from *The Manual*. This material, in a more succinct form, is now part of the updated handbooks for Designated Lay Ministry (DLM) and Congregational Designated Ministry (CDM), available in the Handbooks and Guidelines area of the United Church's website.

Designated Lay Ministers Policy and Procedures

Congregational Designated Ministers Policy and Procedures

To clarify roles and assist with communicating changes, the combined resource has been separated into two specialized handbooks. A priority in the new handbooks was clarification of the process for the path from education to recognition.

Discerning a Call

This resource (which includes forms and a detailed description of the consultative and discernment processes) is essential for those taking their first step on the path to any ministry in the United Church, including lay leadership, outreach, and community ministries. It is also helpful for the individuals, faith communities, and committees that support those who feel the call to ministry.



Updated Pastoral Relations Resources		Web Address
Handbooks and Guidelines	Admission to the Order of Ministry	} www.united-church.ca/handbooks
	Discerning a Call (DIS 200)	
	Designated Lay Ministers Policy and Procedures	
	Congregational Designated Ministers Policy and Procedures	
Forms	Pastoral Relations (PR)	} www.united-church.ca/forms
	Candidacy (CAN)	
	Designated Lay Ministry (DLM)	
	Admission (ADM)	

The resources in the chart, as well as most resources from the Human Resources Unit, are available for free online. You may read them onscreen, save them to your computer, or print them out. Translations into French are under way and will be posted as they become available.

You can also order printed-and-bound copies from United Church Resource Distribution (UCRD).

PLEASE NOTE: A shipping and handling fee applies when you have copies mailed to you.

Visit: www.UCRDstore.ca



Call toll-free: 1-800-288-7365

PC-MEPS: NEWS AND UPDATES

DLM Program Coordinator Announced

Calling Lakes Centre (www.callinglakes.ca) is pleased to announce that the Rev. Dr. Jennifer Janzen-Ball was appointed Designated Lay Ministry Program Coordinator, effective September 1, 2010.

Jennifer is an experienced specialist in adult education. She developed and delivered training for the well-known Racial Justice Workshops for Church Leaders (a directive of General Council 39) taking place in various locations across the country. The positive feedback General Council Office has received on the high quality and accessibility of this training program is no surprise to the Human Resources Unit: Jennifer is extremely talented.

She has served in several pastoral charges and was the national co-coordinator of the Student Christian Movement for 18 months. The Designated Lay Ministry program will benefit greatly from Jennifer's expertise and deep commitment to lifelong learning.

ADP Dedicates Client-Service Team to United Church Treasurers

As of August 3, 2010, ADP has a dedicated, six-person client-service team for the pastoral charge payroll service of the United Church. The new, dedicated number means that United Church-related calls will be handled by service representatives familiar with the complexity of pastoral charge payrolls.

1-877-377-4784

The dedicated phone line is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (eastern standard time). From 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in British Columbia) this number will forward callers to the non-dedicated line, where simple questions can be answered. More complex issues will be forwarded to the dedicated team for follow-up the next business day.



Treasurers: Important!

We have become aware that some ministry personnel and lay employees are not receiving their pay statements.

It is a condition of employment in Canada to receive a statement of wages and deductions for each payroll period (monthly, for most United Church pastoral charges and ministry units)—and we want to make sure our personnel are not being left out.

Pay statements are included with the payroll reports for each pastoral charge. It is the responsibility of the treasurer or payroll administrator to distribute the pay statements to all persons paid through the pastoral charge payroll service.

Please contact ADP's dedicated United Church service line for assistance: 1-877-377-4784.



To receive e-mail notification when a new issue is online (instead of a print copy), contact us at 1-800-268-3781 ext. 3161 or PC-MEPS@united-church.ca.



Ministry Personnel Support

The United Church of Canada • L'Église Unie du Canada

1,300 United Church leaders
(lay, ordained, youth, music, volunteer)

41 groups representing a wide range
of interests and discussions

News, events, and announcements from General
Council Office and from across the denomination

Join the conversation!

<http://churchleadership.united-church.ca>

Need connex help?

Connex is the newsletter of the General Council Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services and of the Human Resources Unit. For additional copies to circulate to your M&P committee, church board, congregation members, or presbytery representatives, or to comment on **Connex** or suggest content for future issues, please contact the editor, Erin Sterling:



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