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- Treasurer
- M&P Committee
- Ministry Personnel/
Lay Employees
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E&S Rep.
- Church Board/Office



connex

IMPORTANT UPDATES FROM PC-MEPS

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Transition to Aon Hewitt July 1, 2011

Treasurers, Note: Helpful Addendum to ADP Agreement

A communication was recently sent to all treasurers in the United Church alerting them to an important task required for the transition to the new pension and benefits administrator, Aon Hewitt. As explained in recent issues of *Connex*, the administration of the pension and benefits plans will move from the current administrator, Morneau Sobeco, to Aon Hewitt on July 1, 2011.

Currently, treasurers are responsible for determining who should be paying premiums to the group benefits plan and, for those with optional coverage, how much those premiums are. Treasurers are also responsible for instructing ADP when to stop deductions.

After the July 1, 2011, transition, Aon Hewitt will assume responsibility for informing ADP what the benefits deductions should be for each member. This will reduce the workload for treasurers.

The current agreement allows only ADP—and those at the General Council Office who provide support to pastoral charges—to act on instructions from authorized contacts at pastoral charges that use the payroll service. For ADP to have permission to act on Aon Hewitt's instructions about deductions for group benefits, treasurers will need to sign an addendum to their ADP service agreement.

The addendum was sent out at the end of February and should be completed and returned to ADP as soon as possible. If you have not received an addendum or if you have any questions about the request, please contact the Ministry and Employment staff (see updated contact information below).

Hello, Ministry and Employment: Who Are You

Since the General Council Office unit previously known as "Ministry and Employment Policies and Services" was renamed "Human Resources" some 18 months ago, there has been confusion about what exactly we do!

"Human Resources" was perhaps too corporate for our unique organizational structure, so in a recent renaming of all the units of the General Council Office, the unit responsible for the working relationships for ministry personnel across the United Church and lay employees in Conference and General Council offices is now... Ministry and Employment!

Aside from the unit name and our e-mail address, everything is the same! Our new e-mail address is: **MinistryandEmployment@united-church.ca**.



Treasurers: Summer Closure?

The May issue of *Connex* will have details on making payroll arrangements. Or, contact Ministry and Employment at **MinistryandEmployment@united-church.ca** or 1-800-268-3781 ext. 3161.

Members: Up-to-Date Contact Details

The move to the new pension and benefits administrator, Aon Hewitt, is scheduled for July 1, 2011. Planning for the move is top of the mind for many in the Ministry and Employment unit, and we are busy ensuring that information and records are up-to-date and ready for the big move.

As members of the United Church's pension and benefits plans, all you have to do in the transition is

1. take note of Aon Hewitt's contact information once it is available. This information will be supplied to you closer to the transition date.
2. update your personal contact information (if applicable).
 - Retired persons, or persons **not** paid through the pastoral charge payroll service (ADP) should contact the Pension and Benefits Centre (Morneau Sobeco) at: 1-888-657-4607 or by e-mail: united-church@hroffice.ca.
 - Members paid through the payroll service must ask their treasurer or payroll administrator to update their personal contact information with ADP. This information is then sent to the Pension and Benefits Centre.
 - Ministry personnel who continue to use pastoral charge addresses for personal communication should consider changing this to a personal residence to ensure communications are not delayed or misdirected.



IMPORTANT: Black-Out Period Announced

Requests to the current Pension and Benefits Centre should be submitted by May 1. There is currently no guarantee that paperwork will be processed in May; if it is not, information will be transferred to Aon Hewitt for processing after the July 1 transfer date.

THIS AFFECTS: retirement requests, new-hire notifications, changes of beneficiary, death claims, drug cards (will not be sent out). NOTHING new will be processed from May 1 to July 1.

THIS MEANS: If a minister intending to retire on July 1, 2011, does NOT return the completed option election form and all other required documents by April 29, the first pension payment (including any arrears) will not be issued until August.

Processed 2011 Salaries Yet?

By now, pastoral charges and ministry units using the pastoral charge payroll service should have sent notices of salary changes for 2011 to the payroll service provider, ADP. The United Church Pension and Benefits Centre does not need notification. Check your payroll reports after you have sent new information to ADP, to confirm that your changes have been processed correctly. For help reading the ADP payroll reports, visit: www.united-church.ca, and search for "Understanding Payroll Reports," a document you can read online or download. If you are unsure how to access your payroll reports, call the United Church's ADP service line at 1-877-377-4784.

Pre-Retirement Seminars Regularly Scheduled All Year

It is important to know how the benefits and pension of the United Church work as you consider retirement. The United Church has offered pre-retirement seminars for a number of years, but costs and demand have required a shift to a telephone and computer format. The teleconference seminars are held on the first Monday of each month except in July, August, December, and January.

It's easy to "attend" a pre-retirement seminar!

Contact the Ministry and Employment unit to get the details.

or

Visit www.united-church.ca and search for "pre-retirement seminars." You'll link to all the information, including dates and times, the phone number to access, and the presentation to follow along with during the seminar.

or

Ask us to send you the presentation in hard copy so you can follow along as you listen in!

Congregational Finance Webinars for Treasurers Online, Anytime



Congregational Finance Program Coordinator Erik Mathiesen and Compensation Program Coordinator Lee Corlett have teamed up to offer a comprehensive information webinar: "Focus on New Treasurers." This has been recorded and stored on the Internet site Vimeo.

Webinars on a variety of congregational finance issues have been planned and will be recorded and archived here: <http://vimeo.com/album/1517634>.

Pay Stub Information: What Is PPS?

Now that 90 percent of the pastoral charges and ministry units of the United Church have their payroll administered by ADP, standardized pay stubs are being issued. These stubs provide information on deductions that may not have been well explained in the past.

One recent question to Ministry and Employment was: “What is PPS and why are you taking \$4.00 off my paycheque?” Good question!

Pensioner Premium Support, or PPS, has been an element of the benefits package for all employees in the United Church since health and dental coverage was extended to pensioners, many years ago. This \$4.00 deduction for all Active members of the church’s benefits plans ensures that pensioners of the United Church are able to afford the costs of these benefits in retirement.

All Active members of the plan, whether they take core or optional coverage, are assessed this contribution. This is a premium for health and dental benefits, and can be claimed on your income tax as a medical expense (see *Connex Xtra*, December 2010). All participating employers in the Group Benefits plans contribute $\frac{1}{3}$ of 1 percent of pensionable earnings as their share.

It is a condition of employment in Canada that all employees receive a pay stub detailing deductions in a pay period. If you are not receiving a pay stub regularly, please speak to your treasurer or payroll administrator.

Treasurers, if you aren’t sure how to get the pay stubs for your ministry personnel and lay employees, please contact ADP at 1-877-377-4784.



2011 Collaborative Research Project

“Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relations”: Thank You!

To all those who completed the online survey in January and February, and who continue to participate and provide information in smaller focus groups: *Thank you so much!*

The survey involved a time commitment and there were some technical glitches; despite these challenges the response rate was excellent. The next steps for the Collaborative Research Project include collating the survey data and presenting it to the various working and task groups of the Permanent Committee for Ministry and Employment Policies and Services (PC-MEPS) throughout the spring. The information will be studied by these groups, and reports will be made to PC-MEPS in September.

Connex will update you on the findings when they become available. Stay tuned!

GCE Decisions and Next Steps

Planning for a Future Grounded in Faith and Action

People across the United Church have been wondering how pastoral relations processes may change after the Executive of the General Council (The Executive) directed the General Secretary in May 2010 to initiate consultations on “clarifying and redefining the roles of the courts of the church.”

The motion specifically directed consultations on the possibility of simplifying pastoral relations processes and shifting responsibilities for some or all aspects of pastoral relations from presbyteries to Conferences.

Input from the constituencies most affected by these kinds of decisions is being sought through a number of avenues, including the Collaborative Research Project’s “Effective Leadership and Healthy Relationships” survey that was recently conducted, and through the work of the Steering Group on Pastoral Relations Policy Review.

Recommendations of the Steering Group will go to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services (PC-MEPS), which is composed of elected members who will consider the recommendations and make further recommendations to The Executive.

The Executive will, in turn, examine those recommendations and send a proposal to the 41st General Council for a final decision. The 41st General Council will be held in Ottawa in August 2012. The full text of The Executive’s motion can be read here: http://www.united-church.ca/files/communications/news/general/100503_motion.pdf.



Lenten Wanderings

Though it's only the end of January as I write this, it seems very appropriate to be writing for a Lenten issue of *Connex*. My life, at home and in the church, feels a lot like wandering in the wilderness these days. Recently I have come to truly appreciate the notion that the people of God *needed* to take a 40-year journey to the promised land, if only so that the adults arriving in this new place would be folks with no memory of Egypt or of slavery, or of a life other than one of journeying and trusting in God. Only babies born in the wilderness were qualified to be the new leaders and God-followers in this promised land. How difficult it is for us adults, with strong memories and deep passion for the church as we have known it, to consider giving it all up and trusting God to bring us into something new...

Lent is a searching time, a preparing time that can be painful and difficult. As individuals, we are challenged to look at the choices we have made over the past year: how we have spent time, allocated money, and focused our energy and prayer. As congregations, we face a wilderness of limitations: of time, of volunteers, of frail buildings, of increasing costs, while still hearing the powerful call: "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people" (Matthew 4:19).

The volunteers and staff at the Ministry and Employment unit are walking with you in this Lenten journey—working to support congregations and ministry staff, seeking new resources for the church and new expressions of discipleship for a changing world, and listening for the Spirit's call as we streamline existing processes and develop new ones. Thank you for joining with us: by participating in the Collaborative Research project, by offering your volunteer time to a wider church commitment, or by choosing to pray for the work of this unit and for the United Church as a whole. God has gifted us with one another and it is in partnership that we will find a way forward, trusting in the One we follow.

Christ's peace,

Erin Sterling



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 MinistryandEmployment@united-church.ca.

Compared Your Current Insurance Rates Yet?

The **United Church of Canada Group Home & Auto Insurance Program** is underwritten by Waterloo Insurance Company. It offers

- 20 percent discount on home and auto insurance
- other discounts in addition to the group discount, e.g., multi-vehicle, multi-policy, etc.
- no interest or service charges/fees for monthly payment plans
- convenient payment plans with a variety of payment options

This is available to United Church employees, active pension plan members, pensioners, and dependants residing in the same household.

To receive your exclusive rates, be sure to mention your United Church affiliation. For more information, please call one of these numbers:

Residents of Ontario

1-877-582-5817

(HUB International)

Residents of Quebec

1-888-542-4811

(Waterloo National Call Centre)

All other provinces

1-866-247-7700

(Waterloo National Call Centre)



Need
connex
help?

Connex is the newsletter of the General Council Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services and of the Ministry and Employment 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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