

ESSEX PRESBYTERY CONSTITUTION

NOTE: Where there is discrepancy or disagreement the current Manual of the United Church of Canada will be followed.

GENERAL DUTIES AND POWERS: C3.4

It shall be the duty of Essex Presbytery as a court of the United Church of Canada to:

- receive and transmit proposals and appeals from lower courts to higher courts within the United Church of Canada.
- deal with matters sent down by the higher courts
- appoint an Executive (see below)
- elect lay members to Conference;
- be accountable to Conference through reports, minutes
- to receive reports from Lay Organizations
- have the right to assess Pastoral Charges to meet expenses including the Conference assessment

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND POWERS:

It shall be the duty of Essex Presbytery as a court of the United Church of Canada to have responsibility for:

- the oversight of the Pastoral Charges (Sec. c3.1.1)
- the oversight of Pastoral Relationships (Sec. c3.3)
- the adoption of measures which promote the mission of the Church within the Pastoral Charges of Essex Presbytery.
The Manual C3.1 to 3.6

A. EXECUTIVE: (Sec.C4)

POWERS: Essex Presbytery Executive

- a) To have the duties and powers of Presbytery and provide for the continuing work of Presbytery between regular meetings.
- b) Executive consists of at least 5 persons one of which shall be a lay person other than a Designated Lay Minister and at least one shall be a member of the Order of Ministry or a Designated Lay Minister. (Sec C4.1.2)
- c) Executive actions on behalf of Presbytery shall be reported to the Presbytery for information and for record in the minutes.
- d) Sub-Executive: A Sub-Executive may be appointed by the Executive with such of its duties and powers as the Executive shall determine. The actions of the Sub-Executive shall be reported through the Executive to the Presbytery for information and for record in the minutes. (Sec C4.2)
- e) Commission The Presbytery or Executive may act by Commission. The Commission shall report its decision to the appointing body in keeping with its terms of reference for record in the minutes. Such decision is not debatable. (Sec.C4.3)

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Executive shall bring to Presbytery recommendations for:

- a) long and short term plans for the spiritual health of Essex Presbytery, its pastoral charges and its members and adherents of The United Church of Canada

- b) changes to the organization of Essex Presbytery that entail a change in policy. Changes to the organization which do not effect a change in policy may be dealt with by the Executive and reported to the presbytery for information. (A yearly review of the structure will take place prior to the beginning of each new Presbytery year and recommendations for such changes will also be discussed.)
- c) receive the report of the Nominations committee prior to the April meeting of presbytery.
- d) receive the reports of the following standing committees which are accountable directly to the Executive: Pension and Group Insurance, Archives and Staff Support.
- e) Special events such as special meetings, activities, learning opportunities
- f) assignment of delegates to the committees and to oversee their orientation and training as presbytery delegates, and assuring an appropriate balance of numbers of Lay and Ordered Ministry personnel
- g) the yearly schedule of meetings for the presbytery and the executive
- h) a yearly focus regarding the mission of the Presbytery in conjunction with but not necessarily following the themes and priorities of London Conference and General Council

The Executive shall ensure that the necessary work of Presbytery is done and coordinated in an effective and organized manner.

MEMBERS:

- 1) Chairperson
- 2) Chairperson-elect
- 3) Past Chairperson
- 4) Secretary
- 5) Treasurer
- 6) Convenors of the following Standing Committees:
 - **Education & Students**
 - **Faith Formation**
 - **Faith In Action**
 - **Finance, Property & Administration**
 - **Ministry & Personnel (2)**
- 7) Presbytery Representative to Conference Executive
- 8) Members-at-large as required (C4.1.2)

The Conference Representative to the Executive shall be a corresponding member.

It is expected that the Chairperson-elect will have had at least one year experience on the Executive of Presbytery within the previous three years to their nomination. The Chairperson-elect will normally serve one year in that position, and the year following will serve as Chairperson for one year. This person would then serve as Past Chair following their term as chairperson.

Nominations and elections of the Executive will be held during the April Presbytery meeting. Those elected assume office at the first regular meeting of the presbytery held

following the rise of London Conference that year with the covenanting service usually taking place during the June meeting of presbytery.

MEETINGS:

Regular Executive meetings will be held on a monthly basis (except during the months of December, May, July and August. Emergency meetings are at the call of the Chairperson. A quorum shall be not less than one-third (1/3) of the members entitled to vote.

CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

Sec. C4.4.1

- a) Shall be to constitute meetings, to preserve order, to take the vote, to announce decisions, to direct generally its business and to perform such other duties as assigned by Presbytery or a higher Court
- b) Shall be an ex officio member of all Presbytery Committees during the term of office
- c) Shall have the right to administer the Sacrament of Holy Communion at regular meetings of Presbytery and its Executive if a Diaconal Minister or a lay person
- d) Shall preside at Special Meetings and Covenanting services
- e) If absent or is a party concerned in any matter before the Court, may be temporarily replaced by an "Acting Chairperson"
- f) Provide leadership in areas of planning, mission and values
- g) Other duties as set by the Presbytery

PAST CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) Assume Chair for any occasion in which Chairperson is not available.
- b) Act as a resource to the Chairperson in matters of the Presbytery
- c) Co-ordinate the annual review of the constitution of Essex Presbytery and present to the Presbytery at the June meeting.
- d) Be the Convenor of the Nomination Committee

CHAIRPERSON ELECT RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) Attend Executive meetings to become familiar with process, committee business and individuals of presbytery
- b) Co-ordinate and plan for the focus of the next Presbytery year.
- c) Maintain, along with the Secretary, a Handbook of Presbytery Policies.

SECRETARY: RESPONSIBILITIES

Sec. C4.4.2

- a) keep a record of the proceedings, transmit it annually to the Conference for review
- b) keep an accurate Roll of members of Presbytery
- c) record and distribute minutes in a timely manner of all meetings including Special meetings and Covenanting services.
- d) Other duties as set by the Manual
- e) Receive and disperse all correspondence in a timely manner.
- f) Manage name tags, presbytery directory and distribution of information
- g) Maintain, along with the Chairperson Elect, a Handbook of Presbytery Policies

B. PRESBYTERY

MEMBERSHIP: As defined in The Manual. Sec. C1.1 to 1.3,2.1 to C2.5.5

RESPONSIBILITIES: As defined in The Manual. Sec. C3,

QUORUM: The quorum for all meetings shall be not less than one fifth of the members of Presbytery of whom not less than one third shall be members of the Ordered Ministry or DLM and not less than one third shall be lay members. (DEFINITION SEC C5.6)

THE CONSENT DOCKET:

In order to expedite business during a Presbytery meeting, a consent docket is prepared and presented with the agenda of each meeting. The consent docket is comprised of facilitating motions for each meeting. The docket is presented as a whole for approval at the beginning of each meeting. However if anyone wishes to discuss an item, it will be removed from the consent docket and placed on the discussion docket (agenda). If clarification is needed, this may come either through a brief explanation, or at the discretion of the chairperson, the time can be placed in a discussion docket.

Essential facilitating motions may include but are not limited to:

- a) that the roll be those persons in attendance in the Court
- b) that all recognized visitors be extended the privilege of being made corresponding members, thus, having voice but not vote;
- c) that all reports be approved as reported by committee representatives and given to the Secretary in writing
- d) that the correspondence be dealt with within the committee to which it has been distributed
- e) that the minutes of the Executive (date) Meetings be received for information only
- f) that all motions be clearly written or typed for the Secretary
- g) that a ballot be used for Pastoral Relations matters only if requested
- h) that the Executive of Essex Presbytery be granted powers of Presbytery upon the adjournment of this meeting until the next scheduled meeting (C4.1.1)

REGULAR MEETINGS: sec C5.1

Regular Meetings shall be held on a scheduled basis with a basic agenda usually as follows and are usually held on the Third Tuesday of the month at various locations in Essex County:

Registration and Name Tags
 Dinner
 Announcements/ Learning Opportunity
 Committee Meetings in Assigned Locations
 Worship
 Plenary Meeting

PLENARY AGENDA
 Welcome
 Constitution of Court
 Opening Prayer
 Approval of Agenda
 Approval of Consent Docket
 Approval of Minutes
 Business Arising
 Correspondence/ Announcements

Committee Reports
Staff Reports
New Business
Adjournment and Benediction

SPECIAL MEETINGS:

- a) Emergency meetings: As defined in The Manual. sec C5.2
- b) Covenanting services which are planned and prepared by the covenanting minister, the pastoral charge and the pastoral relations committee in discussion with the chairperson and secretary of presbytery.

C. ESSEX PRESBYTERY COMMITTEES

All Committees are accountable to Presbytery and do not have the power to act on its behalf. Preparative work, discussion and definition of options should be done in the committee meeting. Each committee should have a Convenor and Secretary to ensure that meetings are productive and business is properly recorded. These committee minutes are not shared amongst all of Presbytery but are the basis for verbal and written reports to Presbytery and Executive as needed. Any item exceeding the mandate of the group, its budget or impacting upon others must be presented to the full court for information and/or decision.

The following standing committees are accountable directly to the Presbytery Executive: Pension and Group Insurance, Archives and Staff Support.

CONVENORS: Elected for a THREE year term and will not normally exceed two consecutive terms. Convenors are responsible for the calling of meetings and ensuring that proper minutes are recorded following approved agenda. Convenors are also responsible to present verbal and/or written reports to Presbytery and Executive. Convenors also assist in the budget process when requesting funding for their specific committee. The committee shall recommend to the nominations committee the committee convenor.

STANDING COMMITTEES: (MANDATORY C4.5.2 SUGGESTED C4.5.5)

1) EDUCATION AND STUDENTS (sec C4.5.3)

The Work of this committee includes:

- a. supervising and overseeing persons preparing for ministry within the United Church of Canada
- b. conducting annual interviews and reporting as required
- c. participating in Discernment Committees
- d. supporting students
- e. overseeing the study program for Licensed Lay Worship Leaders and assessing the readiness of an applicant for licensing and re-licensing

2) FAITH FORMATION COMMITTEE

The Work of this committee includes:

- a. giving leadership and guidance to pastoral charges and presbytery in the use of mass media
- b. encouraging pastoral charges to use the publications and resources of the United Church including the United Church Observer, Mandate, and others.
- c. promoting and being responsible for the Presbytery website and its content
- d. promoting and receiving education opportunities for all ages by being a resource for Christian development programs in pastoral charges and providing workshops related to such programs
- e. recruiting delegates to Youth Forum (Conference and General Council), Young Adults in Transition (YATS) and Children at Conference
- f. encouraging Youth events within the Presbytery
- g. offering retreats for Presbytery members, and ministry personnel
- h. promoting and receiving information regarding Gesstwood Camp and Iona College

3) FAITH IN ACTION COMMITTEE

The work of this committee includes encouraging individuals and congregations to:

- a. respond to issues of social justice, both within Canada and throughout the world, of concern to and on behalf of the Presbytery
- b. respond to the urgent action requests of the General Council in sharing the information with Presbytery
- c. relate to other bodies and coalitions dealing with social justice issues
- d. promote involvement in the work of overseas personnel and our partner churches
- e. promote ecumenical relations and inter-faith relations
- f. promote and receive information regarding the Windsor Downtown Mission and the Windsor Youth Centre
- g. keep the Mission and Service Fund a focus for Presbytery and through them to the pastoral charges.

4) FINANCE, PROPERTY AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Work of this committee includes:

- a. preparing and overseeing the budget
- b. determining of allocations for pastoral charges
- c. overseeing the buying, selling, leasing and improving church properties
- d. overseeing the condition of manses, their furnishing and equipment owned by the pastoral charge, with appropriate recommendations.

- e. ensuring Manse inspection every three years and at a change of Pastoral Relations
- f. recommending to presbytery:actions concerning property matters
- g. applications for mission support grants and funds
- h. advising and assisting pastoral charges with financial and property matters
- i. working with Staff Support Committee of Essex Presbytery re financial support for treasurer, secretary, and presbytery chaplain
- j. being involved in any amalgamation, disbanding or realigning of congregations or pastoral charges in conjunction with Pastoral Relations and Vision and Pastoral Oversight.
- k. requesting, receiving and reviewing Annual Reports from each Pastoral Charge

5. **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

This committee is comprised of Past Chairperson of Presbytery (as Convenor) and one other from executive and four others (2 lay and 2 ordered) from the presbytery membership appointed by executive.

The Work of this committee includes:

- a) receive from the standing committees their recommendation for convenor of their respective committee
- b) proposing each year, and when vacancies occur, names of persons to fill the various offices and standing committees of presbytery
- c) recommending those to act on presbytery related bodies
- d) seeking persons willing to serve on Conference Committees and related bodies

6. **MINISTRY & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE (JOINT COMMITTEE COMPRISED OF PASTORAL RELATIONS AND VISION & PASTORAL OVERSIGHT)**

6A **PASTORAL RELATIONS**

The Work of Pastoral Relations includes:

- a) recommending to Presbytery changes affecting ministry personnel within the Presbytery which may include: requests for changes in pastoral relations; to be left without appointment; transfer of membership; retirement and any other situations arising.
- b) working with pastoral charges at the time of a change in pastoral relations through participating in Joint Needs Assessment Committees (JNAC) and Joint Search Committees(JSC)
- c) recommending to Presbytery calls or appointments within the Presbytery

- d) recommending to Presbytery a member of the Order of Ministry and a lay person to represent the Presbytery on the Conference Settlement Committee, one of which shall be the Convenor of the Pastoral Relations Committee
- e) dealing with pastoral charge conflict situations
- f) being involved in any amalgamation, disbanding or realigning of congregations or pastoral charges in conjunction Finance, Property And Administration

6B VISION AND PASTORAL OVERSIGHT

The Work of Vision And Pastoral Oversight includes:

- a. requesting, receiving and reviewing Annual Reports from each Pastoral Charge
- b. conducting triennial visits to each Pastoral Charge
- c. reviewing housing allowances every three years
- d. providing workshops related to Pastoral Charge Committees (ie Ministry and Personnel, Session, etc.)
- e. being involved in any amalgamation, disbanding or realigning of congregations or pastoral charges in conjunction with Pastoral Relations and Finance, Property And Administration

7. PENSION AND GROUP INSURANCE

- (a) Informing the presbytery and pastoral charges on matters of current interest concerning the pension and group insurance plans;
- (b) taking an active interest in the welfare of plan members and pensioners living in the presbytery, including visiting pensioners living in the presbytery annually and assisting plan members with disability and retirement benefit applications;
- (c) making recommendations for compassionate assistance to the appropriate General Council working unit; and
- (d) reporting to the presbytery on compliance by plan members, pastoral charges, and other employers with the plans.

8. ARCHIVES

Reviewing the records of pastoral charges and minutes of Presbytery committees (sec C4.5.5)

9. STAFF SUPPORT COMMITTEE

The Work of this committee includes:

- a) providing a consultative and supportive agency for the staff of the Presbytery (Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain) and for members of the Presbytery**
- b) reviewing annually staff responsibilities, working conditions and remuneration and making appropriate recommendations to the Presbytery Executive with respect to the foregoing**

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