

**ELGIN PRESBYTERY
HANDBOOK
JUNE 15, 2010**
www.elginucc.org

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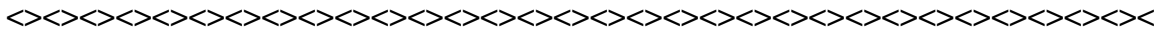
WELCOME!

If you are new to Presbytery (or even just this Presbytery) then the information found in this Handbook may be new to you. If you are an old hand, then an occasional perusal never hurts.

Presbytery is part of the governing structures of The United Church of Canada. It has responsibilities, for overseeing, equipping, and encouraging pastoral charges in fulfilling their missions. It can be a place to network with other people, learn from each other, and enter into a special community of people working to support the church. It does include some meetings, but then, meetings aren't all bad. Ron Rolheiser, a Roman Catholic priest and well-known spiritual writer, once wrote a wonderful meditation about meetings. He reminds us that being with others at a meeting is foundational in our faith. Ron Rolheiser writes, *Our search for God should take us not just into private places of quiet and contemplation but, equally, into meeting rooms.*

(The full column by Ron Rolheiser is available online at, http://www.ronrolheiser.com/columnarchive/search_detail.php?rec_id=237)

Once again, Welcome to Presbytery and See you at the meeting!



DID YOU KNOW?

THE PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK is to help each Member of Presbytery understand the nature, structure, responsibilities and membership of Elgin Presbytery.

What is a Presbytery?

United Church polity (the way we are organized) divides responsibility for running the United Church among the four **Courts of the Church**.

These are:

- ❖ Session of the Pastoral Charge (or local counterpart e.g., Unified Board, Official Board, Church Council, etc.)
- ❖ Presbytery
- ❖ Conference (Elgin Presbytery is part of London Conference)
- ❖ General Council (This is the national level)

The purpose of Presbytery is to work together to support and oversee the Ministry of the United Churches within its boundaries as set out in *The Manual* as amended from time to time.

Each Member of Presbytery should have the following important materials: a **Presbytery Handbook** (15/06/10) and access to the current **Manual**. The Presbytery Handbook is available from the Presbytery Secretary or from the Presbytery website. *The Manual* is usually available in hard copy from the local Pastoral Charge or Minister. It is also available online at <http://www.united-church.ca>.

What is *The Manual*?

The Manual of The United Church of Canada provides the means by which the Church may do its work; and also safeguards the members. These are the rules of the road to which we all must adhere. The first section of *The Manual* is the **Basis of Union**; this is our basic doctrine and law. It may only be changed by action of the General Council and the Presbyteries - the latter dealing with a remit. Remits are proposals that have been sent to Presbyteries to consider and vote on. The numbered sections of *The Manual* (001 - 858) are the **by-laws**, which can be changed, without notice, by the General Council. Changes are reflected in the latest printing of *The Manual*. This Handbook refers to the 2007 edition. In the case of a substantive discrepancy between this Handbook and *The Manual*, *The Manual* takes precedence. If there is a discrepancy pertaining to an issue about which *The Manual* is not definitive, this Handbook takes precedence.

Elgin Presbytery (hereinafter “Presbytery”)

Purpose: To lead, support and walk with our pastoral charges as they seek to live out the good news of Jesus Christ, and to grow as members of his body.

To exist and act in accordance with the pertinent sections of the most current version of *The Manual* of the United Church of Canada

Values: The Members of Presbytery hold these values as we seek to fulfill our purpose:

- healthy and loving relationships
- health of pastoral charges
- education and training
- communication
- loyalty to our call as Christians

Member:

The Members of Presbytery (both lay members and members of the Order of Ministry) are as defined in *The Manual* of the United Church of Canada, as amended from time to time.

**Member
Duties:**

- Six (6) meetings per year (*see Process below*)
- Participation and use of gifts / skills on one Presbytery Team
- Communicate among Congregation/Pastoral Charge, Members and Presbytery
- Members are responsible to send regrets if unable to attend Presbytery meetings; otherwise the Member will be marked as absent

Process:

- Bi-Monthly Meetings – September, November, January, March, April and June
- 3rd Tuesday of the month
- Dinner at 6:00 p.m. when available (*revised 21/09/10*)
- Meeting at 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- Meetings to be held at various church or other locations within the Presbytery as can be arranged by the Executive
- Meetings in November, March and June shall include a workshop component

Executive

- Purpose: Leadership, care and oversight of the life of Presbytery.
- Accountability: To London Conference Executive and to the congregations/pastoral charges of Presbytery through the Members of Presbytery
- Duties:
- To act in accordance with section 322 of *The Manual* of the United Church as amended from time to time
 - To act on behalf of the Presbytery between meetings
 - To meet on the alternate months of Presbytery or as required
 - To arrange Presbytery meeting locations
 - To ensure, support and encourage Presbytery Teams
 - To deal with ongoing issues within the Presbytery
 - To engage in any opportunities for leadership development
 - To provide minutes in a timely fashion to the Communication Team for posting on the Presbytery website
 - To make recommendations to and report actions taken to Presbytery
- Profile:
- To be active members within a congregation or ministry within Presbytery
 - Leadership skills to support and enable the ongoing work of Presbytery
 - A willingness to promote a positive relationship among congregations/pastoral charges, Presbytery and the work of the Executive
- Resources:
- The most current United Church *Manual* and other resources found on the General Council and Conference websites
 - General Council and Conference Staff
 - London Conference Executive
- Executive Members to include (10):
- Past Chairperson
 - Chairperson
 - Chair Elect
 - Presbytery Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Chairperson or one (1) representative from each of Communication Team, Faith Formation & Justice Team, Ministry & Personnel & Education Team, Finance & Administration Team and Worship Team (5)

Chairperson

- Purpose: Coordinate the overall activities / ministry of Presbytery
- Accountability: Presbytery and London Conference Executive
- Duties:
- To act in accordance with section 370 of *The Manual* of the United Church, as amended from time to time
 - To prepare the Executive agendas and, with the Executive, prepare the agendas for each Presbytery Meeting
 - To chair all meetings of Presbytery and the Executive and, when absent, to ask a past chairperson to chair the meeting
 - To support and encourage the chair-elect and offer guidance
 - To sign documents on behalf of Presbytery
 - Ex officio member of all Presbytery Teams
 - To attend London Conference Executive and to report on behalf of Presbytery
- Duration: Two (2) year term and a two (2) year term as Past Chairperson
- Profile:
- Member of or Ministry Personnel with a congregation/pastoral charge of Presbytery
 - Knowledge of the United Church organization, policies and procedures
 - Willingness to support, encourage and, with the Executive, call people to accountability
 - Previous experience as a member of Presbytery
- Resources:
- The most current United Church *Manual*
 - National and Conference Staff and websites
 - Members of Presbytery and the Executive
 - Other Presbytery Chairpersons

Chair-Elect

- Purpose: To provide continuity of leadership
- Accountability: To the Chairperson and the Executive
- Duties:
- To co-chair the Nominating Team
 - To prepare for progression to chairperson position by assisting the present Chairperson in special projects or overseeing the work of any appointed ad hoc committees/teams
 - To attend and to participate in Presbytery and Executive meetings
 - Ex-officio member of all Presbytery Teams
- Duration: Two (2) year term followed by a two (2) year term as Chairperson and a two (2) year term as Past Chairperson
- Profile:
- Member of or Ministry Personnel with a congregation/pastoral charge in Presbytery
 - Have knowledge of the organization, policies and procedures of the United Church
 - Willingness to support and encourage the Chairperson and the Executive
 - A willingness to undertake the commitment of time and responsibility
- Resources:
- The most current United Church *Manual*
 - The Chairperson of Presbytery and the Executive

Past Chairperson

- Purpose: To act as a resource and support the Chairperson of Presbytery
- Accountability: To the Executive
- Duties:
- To support the work of Presbytery
 - To co-chair the Nominating Team
 - To attend and to participate in Presbytery and Executive meetings
 - To chair the Executive and Presbytery when the Chairperson is absent
 - To act as parliamentarian for the Presbytery
- Duration: Two (2) year term
- Profile:
- A willingness to promote a positive relationship between the congregations/pastoral charges and Presbytery
 - To be a support and encourage the Chairperson
- Resources:
- The most current United Church *Manual*
 - Conference staff
 - National Church staff

Presbytery Secretary

- Purpose:** To be responsible for correspondence and information to and from the Members/ Representatives of Presbytery and congregations/pastoral charges
- To take accurate account through minutes the action of Presbytery and its Mission and Ministry
- Accountability:** To the Chairperson, the Executive and Presbytery
- Duties:**
- To act in accordance with section 371 of *The Manual* of the United Church, as amended from time to time
 - To take accurate minutes of all Executive and Presbytery Meetings
 - To distribute to all pastoral charges by email, regular mail or posting on the Presbytery website meeting minutes in a timely fashion and within ten (10) days after the meetings
 - To accurately manage minutes and records
 - To ensure reasonable notice by email, regular mail or posting on the Presbytery website is given of the Executive and Presbytery Meetings
 - To accurately manage records and correspondence, both received and sent, and forwarded as necessary to members/representatives of Presbytery or appropriate Teams
 - To provide necessary information to the Communication Team
 - To provide support to the Chairperson of the Presbytery
- Duration:** Three (3) year term with a renewable three (3) year term
- Profile:**
- A person with both written and verbal communication skills
 - Knowledge and experience with technology
 - A willingness to promote a positive relationship between the congregations/pastoral charges and the Presbytery
 - A willingness to undertake the commitment of time and responsibility
 - A willingness to participate in all aspects of the life of the Presbytery
- Resources:**
- The Chairperson and the Executive
 - London Conference and national staff and website
 - The most current United Church *Manual*

Treasurer

- Purpose:** To provide the treasury function for Presbytery
- Accountability:** To the Finance & Administration Team, Presbytery and the Executive
- Duties:**
- To act in accordance with section 372 of *The Manual* of the United Church, as amended from time to time
 - To serve as a member of Presbytery and the Executive
 - To serve as a member of the Finance & Administration Team
 - To manage the treasury functions and to follow the directions, from time to time, of the Executive or the Presbytery
 - To follow the United Church's Financial Handbook for Congregations
 - To work closely with the Conference Office Administrative Support/Finance Staff Person
- Duration:** Three (3) year term with a renewable three (3) year term
- Profile:**
- Knowledge & experience in treasury functions or equivalent
 - Willing to provide a police check and references
 - Good communication and written skills
 - Understanding and knowledge of The United Church of Canada
- Resources:**
- The most current United Church *Manual*
 - Financial Handbook for Congregations
 - Presbytery Executive
 - National and London Conference Staff and website
 - Conference Office Administrative Support/Finance Staff Person

Ministry Personnel

- Purpose:** As a member of Presbytery, he/she will encourage and support Members to Presbytery and act as a liaison among Presbytery, congregations/pastoral charges and the wider church
- Accountability:** To Presbytery and the Executive
- Duties:**
- Will attend and participate in Presbytery meetings
 - To support the lay member(s) to learn and share the story of Presbytery
 - To raise the awareness of the role of Presbytery and foster the development of mutual respect and support
 - To be a member of a Presbytery Team and to participate in its work
- Duration:** Duration of call or appointment in Presbytery
- Profile:** It is the responsibility of all called or appointed Ministry Personnel to be members of Presbytery
- Resources:**
- The most current United Church *Manual*
 - Presbytery Teams
 - United Church of Canada website
 - London Conference website
 - National and London Conference Staff
 - United Church Resource Distribution Centre
 - Ministry & Personnel Handbook

Members

- Purpose:** Represent their congregations/pastoral charges pursuant to section 310(b) of *The Manual* of the United Church, as amended from time to time and to be liaisons between their congregations/pastoral charges and Presbytery.
- Accountability:** To Presbytery and the Executive
- Duties:**
- To report back actions and information from the Presbytery meeting to the congregation/pastoral charge and its Council/Board/Official Board
 - To support Ministry Personnel to learn and share the story of Presbytery
 - To be a member of one of the Presbytery Teams and to attend Team meetings
 - To attend and to participate in all Presbytery meetings and, if unable to, to ensure that the alternate is brought up to date on issues of Presbytery and attends the meeting
 - To be a liaison between congregation/pastoral charge and Presbytery
 - If more than one member from a congregation/pastoral charge is a member of Presbytery, information should be shared among them.
- Term:** At the discretion of the congregation/pastoral charge
- Profile:**
- To be connected to the life, mission and ministry of the congregation/pastoral charge
 - To be the communicator and be willing to participate in all aspects of the life of Presbytery
 - A willingness to undertake the commitment of time and responsibility for all Presbytery meetings and Team meetings
 - A willingness to promote a positive relationship between the congregation/pastoral charge and Presbytery
- Resources:**
- The most current United Church *Manual*
 - United Church of Canada and London Conference websites
 - National and London Conference Staff
 - Presbytery and the Executive
 - The congregation/pastoral charge

Communication Team

Purpose: To be the main source of communication among Presbytery, all Members of Presbytery and the Teams of Presbytery

Accountability: To Presbytery and the Executive

Duties:

- To maintain and update the Presbytery website (www.elginucc.org) on a ongoing basis
- To provide easy access to communication materials for all Members of Presbytery to share with their congregations/pastoral charges and beyond
- To help create, evolve and share the story of Presbytery
- To provide relevant information to all Teams of Presbytery
- To report to and submit recommendations to Presbytery
- To receive relevant information including minutes from all Teams of Presbytery to be made available to all Members of Presbytery
- To have the Chairperson or a representative attend Executive Meetings

The duties of the team shall include those as described in section 381 of *The Manual* as it may be amended from time to time

Duration of Term: Three (3) year term with a renewable three (3) year term

Profile:

- Member of Presbytery
- Knowledge of technology and the internet
- The ability to communicate in a clear and concise manner
- Able to work in a team and individually
- the Presbytery Secretary will be a member of this Team

Resources:

- www.elginucc.org
- United Church websites and information
- General Council and Conference Staff

Faith Formation & Justice Team

Purpose:

- To provide faith formation opportunities for people of all ages
- To support the ministry of Pearce Williams Christian Centre
- To bring awareness of issues of justice, peace, and equality to Presbytery
- To provide opportunities for advocacy and action in favour of the well-being of all God's creation

Accountability: To Presbytery and the Executive

Duties:

FAITH FORMATION:

- To provide opportunities for spiritual growth for people of all ages
- To support the ministry at Pearce Williams Christian Centre
- To encourage congregations within Presbytery to make the ministry of Pearce Williams Christian Centre part of the ministry and mission for their congregation
- To support a network for Youth Ministry
- To offer events for Children and Young Teens
- To provide support to congregations. e.g. Seniors, Children, Youth, Young Adults and Family Ministry
- To raise awareness of new resources available for Ministry and Mission
- To arrange and/or offer workshops within the Presbytery and from time to time offer workshops at the Presbytery Meetings

JUSTICE:

- To raise awareness of justice issues both local and global
- To inform of work being done in the wider church and participate in Conference committees
- To work toward the shalom/harmony of all God's creation
- To have a passion for social justice and seek out individuals who will go beyond information and awareness into actively walking the talk
- To encourage the work of justice through promoting materials prepared and distributed at the national and conference level

- To report to and submit recommendations to Presbytery
- To have the Chairperson or a representative attend Executive meetings
- To provide to the Communication Team in a timely fashion meeting minutes to be posted on the Presbytery website
- The duties of the Team shall also include those set out in sections 385, 387 and 393 of *The Manual* as amended from time to time

Duration: Three (3) Year term with a renewable three (3) year term

Profile:

- Member of Presbytery
- Understanding and/or experience in Education and Faith Development
- Knowledge of resource and technology
- Willingness to undertake the commitment of time and responsibility
- Has a passion for justice
- Willingness to learn, educate and advocate justice issues
- Able to work in a team to achieve goals in a timely manner
- Have a strong desire to turn their passion and the passion of others for social justice into action

Resources:

- The most current United Church *Manual*
- Technology – websites etc. (including London Conference and General Council)
- Congregations offering new and creative ministry opportunities
- Resources available through the United Church Distribution Centre
- General Council and Conference Staff and websites
- Municipal Governments
- Government of Canada
- Government of Ontario

Ministry & Personnel & Education Team

- Purpose:** To provide leadership and ensure due process in the preparation, selection and maintenance of pastoral relationships within the Presbytery's pastoral charges
- Accountability:** To Presbytery and the Executive
- Duties:**
- To lead congregations within Presbytery through Joint Needs Assessment and Joint Search processes
 - To ensure that pastoral relationships remain fair and just
 - To organize triennial visits between pastoral charges and Presbytery
 - To visit and/or find visitors for triennial Presbytery visits between pastoral charges and Presbytery
 - To ensure that appropriate training happens for all ministry and personnel processes
 - To report to and submit recommendations to Presbytery
 - To have the Chair or a representative attend Executive meetings
 - To provide to the Communication Team in a timely fashion meeting minutes to be posted on the Presbytery website
 - The duties of the Team shall include those described in sections 332, 333, 346, 360 – 363, 382 and 389 of *The Manual* as amended from time to time
- Duration of Term:** Three (3) year term with a renewable three (3) year term
- Profile:**
- Member of Presbytery
 - Knowledge of / willingness to learn United Church of Canada Joint Needs Assessment and Joint Search processes
 - Knowledge of / willingness to learn and promote employment standards of The United Church of Canada, and provincial and national standards.
 - Able to work in a team to achieve goals in a timely manner
- Resources:**
- The most current United Church *Manual*
 - Pastoral Relations Handbook
 - General Council and Conference Staff
 - Government of Canada
 - Government of Ontario

Finance & Administration Team

Purpose: To provide guidance and oversight of the finances and properties of Presbytery
To provide resources to congregations/pastoral charges
To support the Presbytery Treasurer

Accountability: To Presbytery and the Executive

Duties:

- To offer guidance and support to the Presbytery Treasurer
- To receive Team budget requests and develop the Presbytery budget to be approved
- To recommend to Presbytery a basis of assessment to meet the budget
- To inform the congregations/pastoral charges of assessments and to record their contributions
- To ensure all transactions are completed as approved and directed by Presbytery
- To provide stewardship education
- To be a support to congregation/pastoral charge treasurers and trustees by providing educational resources and workshops
- To follow guidelines dealing with Real and Personal Property within the current United Church *Manual*, as amended from time to time
- To be responsible for the Archives, and assist congregations in records retention
- To report to and submit recommendations to Presbytery
- To have the Chair or a representative attend Executive meetings
- The duties of the Team shall include those described in sections 334, 335, 383, 384, 386 and 390 – 392 of *The Manual* as amended from time to time

Duration of Term: Three (3) year term with a renewable three (3) year term

Profile:

- Member of Presbytery
- Understanding and/or experience in Finance and Administration
- Knowledge and willingness to learn *Manual* requirements
- Able to work in a team to achieve goals in a timely manner

Resources:

- The most current United Church *Manual*
- The Financial Handbook of The United Church of Canada
- General Council and Conference Staff
- Government of Canada/Government of Ontario

Worship Team

- Purpose:** To provide worship at the Presbytery Meetings, to organize Covenanting Services and to be a resource to congregations/pastoral charges
- Accountability:** To Presbytery and the Executive
- Duties:**
- To provide worship every time Presbytery gathers, by delivering the worship or by arranging for others to organize and lead worship
 - To work with congregations/pastoral charges to select a date and develop a service of covenanting involving the congregation/pastoral charge and the leadership within the Presbytery
 - To continue to explore cutting edge worship experience and to offer this to Presbytery and congregations/pastoral charges
 - To be a positive role model within the Presbytery
 - To liaison with congregations/pastoral charges as requested
 - To report to and submit recommendations to Presbytery
 - To have the Chair or a representative attend Executive meetings
 - To provide to the Communication Team in a timely fashion meeting minutes to be posted on the Presbytery website
- Duration of Term:** Three (3) year term with a renewable three (3) year term
- Profile:**
- Member of Presbytery
 - Knowledge of varied worship styles and technology
 - Willingness to offer cutting edge worship experience and take risks
 - Willingness to undertake the commitment of time and responsibility
- Resources:**
- The most current United Church *Manual*
 - Technology – various websites
 - United Church Worship Resources
 - Congregations within London Conference and other United Church Congregations and churches of other denominations offering new and exciting worship experiences
 - General Council and Conference Staff

Nominating Team

Purpose: To recruit and welcome people for the work of the Presbytery

Accountability: To the Executive

Duties:

- To welcome new Members to Presbytery
- To assess individual gifts
- To fill vacancies within Presbytery and the Executive
- To develop a self-nominating process similar to London Conference and General Council
- To report to and submit recommendations to Presbytery
- To present names of potential Members-At-Large

Duration: Two (2) year term with a renewable two (2) year term

Membership: Chair-Elect and Past-Chair
Chairs of Communication Team and Faith Formation & Justice Team (followed in a two (2) year rotation with Chairs of Ministry & Personnel & Education Team and Worship Team)
Three (3) members recruited and appointed by the Executive

Profile:

- Knowledge of Presbytery and its members
- Clear written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to discern gifts and strengths of members within Presbytery

Resources:

- Presbytery

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