

# ***Kootenay Presbytery Visitation Guide***

## ***For Presbytery Oversight Visits***

Please place this guide in a binder or folder and keep it in the church office. It should be available to persons in your congregation when they are asked to be a member of a team visiting another congregation.

The guide should also be reviewed by the congregation before a visiting team comes.

Revised October 2009

This Manual may be downloaded directly from  
the Kootenay Presbytery Website

<http://www.bc.united-church.ca/kootenay/>

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## ***A Guide For Presbytery Visitation Teams***

### **<sup>1</sup> Mission Statement of Kootenay Presbytery**

(adopted October 2008)

***“Gifted by the Spirit, Kootenay Presbytery is called to nurture vital and faithful congregations which embody God's love and justice in Jesus Christ.”***

Visits to congregations by presbytery representatives is a requirement laid out in Section 332 of the *United Church Manual*. The visit is primarily pastoral in nature, an opportunity for Presbytery to listen, support, encourage and counsel. It is also, however, a fulfillment of the presbytery's obligation to provide oversight and accountability.

An effective presbytery visit can help a congregation appreciate itself and its gifts. It can also alert the pastoral charge and presbytery to potential problems.

It is the responsibility of the Presbytery Pastoral Oversight Visits Committee to appoint visiting teams and to name a team coordinator (leader). The team may consist of four visitors to larger pastoral charges (where more interviews are likely) and three visitors for visits to smaller pastoral charges. Ideally the team will include clergy and lay, men and women; as well, every effort will be made to ensure that at least one team member has experience in a similarly sized church to the one being visited.

It is the responsibility of all ministry personnel in the Presbytery to participate as a member of visitation teams. Ministry personnel are also asked to name one or two persons from their congregations with the abilities and interests to serve on a visitation team.

This guide contains material which has been developed by Kootenay Presbytery to assist in pastoral visitations. After its use, please reassemble the material and place it in your church file for future use.

An effective visit should include:

1. interviews with ministry personnel
2. interviews with support staff
3. interviews with church leaders (chairpersons of or entire board/council, M&P Committee, Board of Trustees and Stewardship. In some cases, it may also be helpful to conduct interviews with key committee chairs as well.)
4. an overview of facilities
5. a review of church records

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<sup>1</sup> Visitors are asked to keep this mission statement in mind during the visit.

6. a review of the church constitution, if one exists, or policies related to governance and structure.
7. an open meeting with Board/Council and congregation members.

The visiting team is not normally responsible for follow-up of its recommendations after the report is written. The reports are reviewed by the Pastoral Relations Ministry Team and any follow-up action required will be undertaken by Presbytery as set out in the *United Church Manual*.

### ***Purpose of the Visit by Members of Presbytery***

The purpose of the visit to the pastoral charge is:

1. to affirm and celebrate the good things which have been happening in the pastoral charge in a spirit of support, encouragement and counsel;
2. to provide an opportunity for the pastoral charge to do some self-evaluation;
3. to invite the pastoral charge to think about its mission in light of the Presbytery Mission Statement;
4. to explore how the laity and ministry personnel share the ministry of the church;
5. to help identify difficulties or potential problems and to make suggestions and recommendations;
6. to enhance awareness of the larger church (i.e. the total church beyond the pastoral charge);
7. to review pastoral charge records on behalf of presbytery.

The visiting team is prepared to:

1. provide an opportunity for the pastoral charge to share the good things which are happening in its life and work;
2. assist the pastoral charge in discovering things on which they can build;
3. listen to concerns and make suggestions or referrals that may assist the pastoral charge to make creative changes as needed;
4. facilitate communication within the pastoral charge if needed;
5. assist the pastoral charge in gaining some self-appreciation and new perspectives;
6. review pastoral charge records on behalf of Presbytery.

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## ***Guidelines For Presbytery Visitation Teams***

1. **Shared Ministry Visit:** If the team is visiting a Shared Ministry (e.g. Windermere Valley Shared Ministry), it is essential that the team reviews the *Regulations Concerning Shared Ministry*, located in this Manual, particularly the Subsection entitled "Oversight".
2. The coordinator should communicate with the team well in advance to make preliminary plans re: dates, places, and which persons and groups you wish to meet. Make a clear decision as to who will be team leader, and who will prepare the written report.
3. At least six weeks in advance, arrange with the pastoral charge the date, the times, and the places for the visit.
4. As soon as possible follow up with a letter to the minister(s) and the chairperson of the Official Board/Council and the Chair of the Ministry & Personnel Committee, confirming the arrangements and requesting they do the following before the visit:
  - a) Announce the visit and its purpose to the congregation in the Sunday bulletin a few weeks before the visit (a copy of the purpose is on page 4 and a Sample Bulletin Insert is on page A2).
  - b) Schedule meetings with the Ministry personnel, staff persons, church leaders and Board/Council or congregation.
  - c) Send a copy of the pastoral charge constitution, if one exists, or policies regarding governance and structure to the team leader.
  - d) Have congregational records available including marriages, funerals, baptisms, membership, and minutes of the Session, Official Board or Council. It is suggested that the person charged with reviewing the records do so prior to the oversight visit. This would allow for discussion if any issues were to arise from such review.
  - e) Send a copy of the most recent oversight and JNAC reports to the team leader.

This follow up letter may be adapted from the sample letter on page A1 of this guide. Include at least two copies of the Pre-Visitation Data Sheet also in the appendix (page A3).

5. It would be helpful if a member of the team could speak personally to the Board/Council chair and the Ministry and Personnel chair in advance of the visit to clarify the purpose and become aware of any concerns.
6. Read the *Questions For Discussion* (page 7) and use them during the interviews. The information they request is needed for an adequate picture of the pastoral charge. However, they should not be slavishly followed. A straight question and answer format can result in a person or group feeling "interrogated" so try to keep a conversational tone. The Open Session Format (page 12) is a guide as to how to proceed in a meeting with the board and/or congregation.

7. Meet to plan the visit, ensuring that:
- each team member has a role to play in the visit;
  - all visiting team members have read and understand the “Questions for Discussion” and other materials they will use;
  - hymns are selected and prayers are prepared for the open session worship time;
  - you have planned the sequence of the visit;
  - you have the resources needed (felt pen, newsprint, accompanist, etc.);
  - one member of the team will look over the congregational records of funerals, marriages, baptisms, membership list and meeting minutes (see pages 11 and A14);
  - one member of the team is prepared to see that the final report is compiled and sent in.
8. **Give feedback to the pastoral charge during the visit.** It bears repeating that the visiting team needs to affirm the local charge as well to help the people see where growth is needed. In other words it is important for the team to give encouragement to the local pastoral charge and its leaders. Be sure to take a few minutes at the end of the visit to check with the ministers and members of the M&P Committee for any final feedback before leaving.
9. Prepare a complete written report as soon as possible after the visit and **no later than two weeks** (see page 13). The form included in the appendix is recommended (page A7).
- Please send copies to the following (addresses on page A14):
- the Chair of the Pastoral Relationships Ministry Team;
  - the Presbytery Convener, Pastoral Oversight Visits;
  - each ministry personnel;
  - the Official Board or Council for the pastoral charge along with a copy of the evaluation form (page A12);
  - the Conference Minister.
10. Presbytery asks us to seek ideas, programs, events, etc. that may be of interest to other congregations.

### ***Time Line of Events***

6 weeks or sooner	Team leader contacts the pastoral charge to set tentative date and arrangements, then confirms these with the team.
3 weeks	Telephone contact to clarify purpose and note relevant matters. (See A1)
Prior to visit	The team meets to review this manual to determine the role each member will play.
Follow up within 2 weeks	Mail reports (and evaluation form) to pastoral charge and report only as indicated in item 9. above.

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## ***Questions For Discussion***

The following questions are guides to lead to discussions of the life and mission of the pastoral charge. It is hoped that the discussion will cover as many of these topics as possible. There are questions for:

- Ministry Personnel
- Ministry Personnel and Partners
- Team Ministries
- Ministry Personnel and M&P Committees
- Ministry Personnel and Board/Council
- Board/Council
- Stewards or Management/Finance Committee.
- Other Staff

### **Questions for the Ministry Personnel**

1. How do you feel about your ministry in relation to the congregation's mission and/or vision statements?
2. Comment on your ministry in terms of the Presbytery's mission statement "to nurture vital and faithful congregations which embody God's love and justice in Jesus Christ".
3. How would you describe the current overall health of your pastoral charge?
4. What excites you here? Or gives you joy?
5. What challenges you here? Or makes for disappointments?
6. Describe any joys or concerns regarding salary, working conditions, housing allowance, continuing education/book allowance, manse or other benefits?
7. How would you describe your relationship with the pastoral charge generally?
8. Describe your relationship with the Ministry and Personnel Committee, including the process and frequency of reviews of your ministry.
9. Do you feel supported in your ministry here? What are your sources of support? How proactive are you in creating your own support system?
10. What are the ways you nurture and challenge yourself to grow spiritually?

### **Questions for Ministry Personnel and Partner Together**

1. How do you as a couple make space in your lives to grow together? How do you individually and as a couple find support?

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**Questions for a Team Ministry** *(usually asked of team members together, although there may be occasions where a separate interview seems more appropriate)*

1. How do you understand team ministry?
2. Has your understanding of team ministry changed since becoming part of the team? If so, why and in what ways?
3. Is there a clear, shared understanding of team ministry among team members?
4. Is there a clear, shared understanding of team ministry between the team and the congregation?
5. If there are disappointments and conflicts, do you each feel comfortable talking about those together?
6. Do job descriptions support, reflect or hinder team ministry? How?
7. How do you experience the performance of the M&P Committee as to support for the team and each team member?

**Questions for Other Staff**

1. How clear are you about your duties as a staff member? Do you have a current job description?
2. How do the responsibilities of other staff members relate to yours? How clear are you about their responsibilities?
3. What is your relationship with the Ministry and Personnel Committee? How is your work reviewed? To whom are you accountable?
4. Is there a clear distinction between your role as a staff member and your role as a congregation member? If there is confusion, what might you (or some other group in the church) do to alleviate that confusion?
5. Please comment on your level of job satisfaction.

**Questions for Ministry and Personnel Committee**

1. How does the minister(s) establish goals and priorities? What role does the M&P Committee have in working with the minister(s) to establish goals and priorities?
2. Comment on the minister's work load, days off, other time away from work, work with the larger church, community involvement, etc.
3. How are ministry personnel accountable to the congregation? To the M&P Committee?

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4. How do you, as the M&P Committee, provide support and encouragement to the minister(s)? To other staff?
  5. Describe the working relationship between the minister(s) and other staff.
  6. Describe the present relationship between the minister(s) and the pastoral charge.
  7. Describe the present relationship between ministry personnel and the M&P Committee.
  8. Describe the process for annual work reviews for all staff.
  9. What concerns have you addressed as a committee in the past few years?
  10. Has each ministry personnel obtained a Level Two Police Records Check and shown it to the M&P Committee within the past 6 years?
  11. Are all staff who are working at least 14 hours per week enrolled in the pension and group insurance plan?

### **Questions for Other Persons, Groups and Committees**

In visiting some pastoral charges, it may be helpful to interview key lay leaders and/or groups/ committees. Generally speaking and given the limited time available for most visits, these interviews would be the exception rather than the norm. If such interviews are deemed appropriate or are requested, then the format will need to be determined by the particular visiting team. General questions would likely include:

1. Describe your role in the on-going ministry of the pastoral charge.
2. Describe your working relationship with
  - a. the minister(s);
  - b. the governing body of the pastoral charge;
  - c. other groups and committees within the church.
3. For what reasons do you think it important that the visiting team spend time with you or this particular group/committee?

### **Questions for the Official Board/Council**

*This interview presents a real opportunity to sit heart-to-heart with the congregation and create a sacred time. The questions should evoke a conversation that nurtures vital and faithful congregations which embody God's love and justice in Jesus Christ.*

1. What would you like us to know about the pastoral charge for our sacred time together?
2. If the Board/Council was a truck driver on the road, what's your fuel level, what load are you carrying and what do you see on the road in front of you?

3. If the pastoral charge disappeared today, what would be lost to the community?
4. What is the single most important thought you wish to evoke in the minds of those outside the pastoral charge by the mere mention of your charge's name?
5. What are the assets or strengths of the church around which the future of the pastoral charge will be built?
6. What are the challenges or impediments that face the pastoral charge today?
7. What are the opportunities for ministry that excite the pastoral charge?
8. Do you have a mission or vision statement? What is it and how is it perceived by the pastoral charge? Is it a song in the heart that produces energy for the congregation? Is it shared and celebrated?
9. How much Board/Council time is spent on managing the day-to-day life of the pastoral charge and how much time is devoted to thinking about how to live into a vision or mission? How does change happen in this pastoral charge?
10. What is the number of people serving on boards, council or committees? How many are in worship each Sunday? Is it easy or difficult to fill boards or committees? Is there any sense of burn-out by church leaders?
11. How do you feel about church finances and stewardship?
12. How can Presbytery better support you in your mission or vision? How do you feel about Presbytery, Conference and The United Church of Canada at this time?
13. How do you perceive God calling the pastoral charge in the coming months and years?

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## ***Records To Be Checked***

The United Church Manual requires that the records of a church be inspected regularly. The visiting team is therefore asked to check records and assist the congregation in keeping neat, accurate, and up-to-date records in the required forms. **(Note: When visiting a Shared Ministry, please review the guidelines in the *Regulations Concerning Shared Ministries* included in this manual.)**

### **Historic Roll**

- All people who have been members of the congregation are to be recorded in the Historic Roll. No name is to be deleted from this record. When a member dies, moves away, or ceases to be a member, a notation to that effect is made in the record.
- A congregation may also have, for its own use, mailing lists or other records that contain the names of members and adherents. The Historic Roll is for members only (i.e. those who have made a profession of faith in this church or have done so in another church and been duly transferred).

### **Baptismal Record**

- Sufficient information, including family information in the case of infant or child baptism, should be recorded for each person or child baptized.

### **Funeral Records**

- Sufficient information, including disposition of the remains (name of cemetery, etc.) should be recorded.

### **Wedding Records**

- Sufficient information, including family information, should be recorded for each couple married. Marriage License number must be shown.

### **Minutes of the Official Board and of Congregational Meetings**

- (Annual meetings and special meetings)
- Minutes should be dated, show all motions and their disposal, and be signed (upon approval) by the chairperson and secretary.
- Requirements are specified in the *United Church Manual*, Sections 90-91 (Also see Appendix, page A14)

### **Police Record Checks**

- The team will check with the Ministry and Personnel committee to ensure that a Police Records Check has been obtained from each Ministry Personnel within the last six years.
- The fulfillment or non-fulfillment of this requirement is to be recorded in the Visitation Report.

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## ***A Format for an Open Session with Board/Council and Congregation Members***

### **1. Introduction**

Introduce the team and review the purpose and procedures of the visit.

### **2. Reading And Meditation**

Led by the local presbytery delegate or visiting team member.

### **3. Setting the Mood**

We are here to celebrate as well as to evaluate ourselves, to be honest and open, to be involved and to be positive.

Share a few positive discoveries of the afternoon.

### **4. Discussions - Small Groupings**

a) Recall, list and discuss your most satisfying memories or impressions of this pastoral charge's life in the past two years. **Share** these with the whole group

b) Recall list and discuss your most frustrating or disturbing memory or impression of this pastoral charge in the last two years. **Share** these with the whole group

c) List and discuss what you think are the major growing points or challenges of the next two, five or ten years. **Share** these with the whole group.

### **5. Congregation's Viewpoint**

*[Minister(s) and partner(s) are asked to leave at this point, with a team member offering to accompany them. Remember that during a visit, the minister is the one who feels most vulnerable. The purpose of the visit is not to evaluate the minister but to consider the ministry of the whole congregation.]*

- How would you describe the relationship between your Ministry personnel and the congregation?
- How would you describe the working relationship between the Minister(s) and the persons and committees with whom they work?
- What do you perceive to be the Minister's priorities and aims and how do you feel about them?
- How does the pastoral charge encourage and support its Ministers?
- How do you see the role of this church in serving its congregation, the community and the world?
- How does this congregation support the larger church (Presbytery, Conference, etc.)?
- How does the larger church support you?
- How do you feel about the future of this congregation? Do you know where you go from here?

At the end of this segment, consider inviting clergy and spouse back to hear some general feedback from the congregational session, before moving to the prayers and benediction.

## 6. Closing

(Minister[s] and spouse[s] return)

Prayers for the congregation, Hymn & Benediction

## *Writing the Report*

Complete your written report as soon as possible after your visit (before vital information or the tone of the visit is forgotten) – **within two weeks**. It is helpful when there is some consistency between the reports we receive from different pastoral charges so we suggest a reporting form that is included in the Appendix on page A7.

Try to keep your report as positive as possible while yet remaining honest and saying what needs to be said.

Be careful how you word any recommendations or suggestions (recommendations are stronger than suggestions). Be truthful but sensitive. An offended congregation is not very open to hearing feedback or making changes. A long list of recommendations may imply failure. You may not have any recommendations but a few brief, clear ones can be helpful. Please make sure that recommendations for action by either the presbytery or the pastoral charge are specific enough that it is clear who needs to do what to fulfill them. Vague recommendations can cause as much harm as good.

There may be sensitive or confidential information that the Pastoral Visitation Committee should know about but which would not be helpful to include it in the report to the congregation. Attach a separate sheet with the copy of the report to the Committee and include any suggestions that Presbytery may need to follow up on.

**Please note:** Opinions should be stated as such, not as facts. A few examples may be included if they are factual and representative. Some information you receive may be better referred to the congregation's M&P Committee than put in the report

**Please remind the church board/council to complete the evaluation form and send it to the Presbytery Convener of Pastoral Oversight Visits.**

Copies of the report should go to each of the following people (Presbytery contacts and addresses are on page A14):

1. each ministry personnel;
2. the Official Board/Council of the Pastoral Charge (include a copy of the evaluation form);
3. the Presbytery Convener of Pastoral Oversight Visits;
4. the Conference Minister.

After writing the report, prepare a one page summary (see Appendix page A11) to help the Pastoral Relationships Team be in touch with the state of the congregation. Avoid confidential information in this summary.

The Pastoral Oversight Visits Committee is authorized at their discretion, and if asked, to disclose information to:

- the Presbytery representative,
- to a local Joint Needs Assessment or Search Committee, or
- future visiting teams.

With the submission of the report, the team's task is normally finished. If there are recommendations that the Presbytery needs to act upon, the Pastoral Oversight Visits Committee will ensure that tasks are communicated to the appropriate persons or working units.

The visiting team is welcome to consult with the Conference Minister as to any issue that might arise in the course of an Oversight Visit.

The Presbytery is grateful for the work you have done. It is important and valuable.

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## ***Handling Difficult or Sensitive Situations***

Occasionally you may find yourself in a setting where there is conflict or strong criticism. Usually your team would have some advance warning of this but not always. Here are some tips for handling these situations.

1. Stay calm. It's not your problem and you can be more helpful if you don't take on the congregation's problem as your own. Your "non-anxious presence" will help the congregation to reduce their own anxiety as well.
2. Be curious. Show openness to hear every viewpoint, slowing down the process if necessary to let everyone be heard. Paraphrase to show the person that you have understood.
3. If a person voices an opinion in a hostile way, there may still be some helpful information hidden in the message. A cantankerous person will often say things that others are feeling but are too "nice" to say. To show interest in what the person is saying and to reframe it in a more acceptable way may disarm the emotional charge.
4. Regardless of #3 above, if persons persist in aggressive, hostile, disrespectful or abusive behaviour, they should be confronted with that and offered a more acceptable way to express their viewpoint.
5. If things get too heated, a break for prayer can often change the climate quickly. If you know that conflict is likely, a statement requesting that opinions and feelings be voiced respectfully, accompanied by a prayer will often set a positive tone.
6. If criticism is voiced, particularly of the ministry personnel when they are out of the room, it may be useful to get a show of hands to indicate how many others agree with each statement. You may even seek more specific information by asking how many (1) Strongly agree, (2) Partly agree, (3) Have no opinion, (4) Partly disagree, (5) Strongly disagree. This is very helpful information to put the criticism in context and to avoid giving too much power to a vocal minority. It also helps those who may be so taken aback by the criticism that they are silent, wishing later they had spoken up.
7. Remember that in any visit, the ministry personnel are the ones who feel the most vulnerable. Work hard to be open, transparent and fair with them. Avoid surprises as much as possible. After the open session with the ministry personnel absent, debrief with them afterward to let them know the gist of what you heard. This way they're not wondering for two weeks if "the shoe is going to drop" in the form of the written report.
8. If there is bad news for the ministry personnel in the report (or any other key individual) make sure that person receives a copy of the report before anyone else does. Provide or arrange for some pastoral support if you think it wise. (Perhaps the Conference Minister can be helpful here.)

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## **Regulations Concerning Shared Ministries** (Adopted June 2004)

There are within the southern interior region of British Columbia several Shared Ministries whose circumstances, form, and history of development vary. The United and Anglican Churches desire to continue with, and support the development of "Shared Ministry" which has benefited both the local and the wider church communities since the 1960s. These regulations form the basis of the cooperative work of the Diocese of Kootenay and the United Church Kamloops-Okanagan and Kootenay Presbyteries for the governance and functioning of Shared Ministries within their bounds.

The term "Shared Ministry" is understood to mean a sharing by the Anglican and United Churches to provide ordained ministry within a Pastoral Charge/Parish, whose members may also include other than Anglican and United Church members.

### **A: Providing for Both Traditions**

The faith and practice of both traditions, in worship and in governance, will be maintained, honoured and, where appropriate, integrated. In other words individuals will be afforded the opportunity to grow and be nurtured in the traditions of their own church, and have the opportunity to appreciate a wider ecumenical experience. Parishes/Pastoral Charges will be encouraged to continue developing healthy, harmonious relationships among members and with the wider communities of both denominations.

In order to provide ongoing support and oversight, each Shared Ministry will be officially linked to both the Diocese of Kootenay and the appropriate Presbytery through existing denominational structures. The responsibility for maintaining this linkage will be shared between the incumbent priest/minister, the Bishop (or his/her representative) and the Presbytery (through its representative), and will be assisted by the Clergy and Laity in other Shared Ministries. All Shared Ministries will be visited regularly by representatives of the Diocese and the Presbytery.

### **B: Appointments**

In order to provide for both traditions the normal pattern is to alternate clergy from the two denominations, aiming at a reasonable balance of time served by each denomination. Both denominations are to be involved in the appointment process. The process followed will be that of the denomination whose turn it is to supply the ordained person, in consultation with the other denomination. No appointment to a Shared Ministry or renewal of a term appointment will be made without the prior approval of both Presbytery and the Bishop.

Prior to the position being advertised, a decision will be made by the Presbytery and the Bishop, after consultation with the parish/pastoral charge, regarding the term of the appointment. The decision may be amended with the approval of the Bishop and Presbytery.

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Clergy appointed to Shared Ministries must be open to and in sympathy with the basic concept of Shared Ministries as outlined in this document. Ordained candidates of other denominations acceptable to both the Bishop and Presbytery may also be considered, for example, ordained clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Since Lutheran clergy are now fully recognized in the Anglican church, it is possible that a Lutheran clergy person might be appointed to a Shared Ministry. As no agreement exists currently between the United and Lutheran churches, such a person would be considered Anglican for the purposes of these regulations.

It is desirable for Clergy appointed to a Shared Ministry to have had at least two years experience of pastoral responsibility in their own denomination.

The incumbent shall be compensated according to his/her denominational standard (Anglican or United).

All incumbents will be licensed and/or given permission to officiate within the limits of the other denomination's standards. They will relate to both denominations according to the policy requirements of both Presbytery and Diocese.

### **C: Training**

Clergy serving a Shared Ministry for the first time should (a) be linked with an experienced Shared Ministry mentor of the other denomination prior to starting their appointment, and (b) have an internship of at least ten days, including two Sundays, in a congregation of the other denomination within the first two months of their appointment. The Diocese and Presbytery working together, will assist in the provision of a mentor and the setting up of the internship. The Congregation, with agreed upon support from both denominations, will be responsible for remuneration and accommodation costs during the internship training.

Ongoing educational programs will be encouraged by the Diocese and Presbytery to assist clergy and laity involved in Shared Ministries, including assistance with accessing appropriate resources.

Shared Ministry consultations/conferences for clergy and laity will be organized from time to time and supported by the Diocese and Presbytery in consultation with the Shared Ministry Parishes/Pastoral Charges.

### **D: Oversight**

Each denomination will ensure, through its respective channels of authority, the effective exercise of responsibility for the oversight of Shared Ministries. Accountability and discipline of clergy will be exercised according to the regulations of their denomination. To provide for the direction, support, guidance, and nurture of Shared Ministries and their Incumbents, each denomination will:

1. identify a liaison person between the Parish/Pastoral Charge and the Presbytery/Diocese and ensure that the congregation knows who this is, and how this will work with and for them;

2. take responsibility to consult upon and co-ordinate the process of appointment when there is a vacancy, including:
  - a. arranging for the production of a “hand-over” document by the outgoing incumbent containing essential information for the next incumbent;
  - b. arranging for an exit interview with the outgoing incumbent;
3. see that adequate orientation and training opportunities are available for both clergy and laity in Shared Ministry;
4. be available for consultation on liturgical practice, organizational structure, mission/outreach, statistical recording, lay employment standards and other denominational matters and policies.

The Presbytery Oversight Visitations, which are required by the *United Church Manual*, will include lay and clergy visitors from each denomination on the visiting teams. A written report of such visitations will be sent to the bishop as well as to the usual persons and bodies named in the Presbytery visitation policy.

#### **E: Records and Reporting**

Record keeping is more complex in a Shared Ministry due to the different denominational requirements. Each denomination will attempt to simplify requirements, integrate record keeping and, where possible, provide a year end statistical form acceptable to both. The following records are to be maintained according to denominational standards:

1. Minutes of all Church Committee/Board and Congregational meetings.
2. Audited or independently reviewed financial records.
3. United Church Membership Roll.
4. List of Anglican communicants and current list of electors.
5. Current list of households indicating their denominational affiliation, or as unaffiliated.
6. Baptismal, Confirmation, Marriage and Burial records;
7. Vestry Book in which all services are recorded.

If financial records are kept jointly, all year end reports to each denomination will report congregational totals with a note that it is a Shared Ministry; or alternatively, be broken down on a percentage basis, reflecting the number of identifiable givers in each denomination. The number of identifiable givers who are not self-identified by denomination will be divided evenly between the denominations.

The Church Committee/Board will decide which joint records will be sent to which denomination’s archives, and in each case, a notice sent to the other denomination’s archives.

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**F: Local Organization**

Each Shared Ministry will develop a written agreement describing its particular form of local governance which honours and, where possible, integrates the polity of each denomination. This agreement will be subject to the approval of both the Bishop and the Presbytery and will be reviewed from time to time. The agreement will reflect the following principles:

1. The offices of Trustees, Elders, Presbytery Delegates, Synod Delegates and Wardens shall be maintained in accordance with denominational regulations.
2. Wardens will be elected and/or appointed in accordance with Anglican canons. A Ministry and Personnel Committee will be appointed in accordance with *The United Church Manual*. The relationship between the Wardens and the Ministry and Personnel Committee will be specified in the local agreement.
3. Where there are separate Church Committee and Board/Session, each will be set up to meet the requirements of that denomination. Where such a situation exists there shall be a joint meeting at least quarterly, or a quarterly meeting of a central committee.
4. Where there is a single governing body, the various responsibilities of each office will be maintained, including finance, stewardship, buildings, membership, worship, Christian formation, and staff relations.

**G: Worship and Doctrine**

Congregations are encouraged to worship as one body. In planning worship, one regular service monthly should follow the tradition of each denomination. An Anglican Eucharist shall be celebrated at least once a month and a United Church Holy Communion at least quarterly.

Baptism and Confirmation must be administered according to the rites and traditions of the member's denomination.

The Incumbent, in consultation with Church Committee/Board, shall establish a liturgical or worship committee including representation from each denomination, to assist in the planning and evaluation of worship.

**H: Marriage**

Anglican and United Church ministers will respect their own consciences and the requirements of their respective denominational authority with regard to conducting marriages.

United Church ministers in Shared Ministries will be supportive of the Marriage Canon of the Anglican Church of Canada, and will use the Diocesan Marriage Commission, where appropriate, when dealing with Anglican people.

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**I: Property and Finances**

Where property is owned by individual denominations, it will continue to be held according to the policy of that denomination.

Where property is jointly owned, the terms of agreement to hold such property will be drawn up to cover the specific situation. All such agreements shall be submitted to the Presbytery and Diocese for approval. Existing agreements shall serve as models.

Provision shall be made at the local level to supervise and maintain all property and buildings, and to consult about property and buildings with the denominational authority concerning denominational policy.

Where ongoing budget support is needed, such support should be granted where possible in equitable amounts from Anglican and United Church sources, independent of the denomination of the incumbent. Information on the application for funding will show the total amount of financial support and the portion being applied for from the respective denomination.

All Mission and Service Fund contributions, Primate's World Relief and Development Fund contributions, Presbytery assessments and Diocesan Family Budget assessments will be forwarded regularly.

**J: Strengthening Shared Ministries**

A Standing Committee on Shared Ministry will meet as required for the purpose of:

- planning periodic Shared Ministries consultations;
- preparing recommendations regarding implementation or revision of these regulations;
- preparing recommendations on other matters referred to it by the Bishop, the Presbyteries or individual Shared Ministries.

The membership of the standing committee shall be comprised as follows, giving due consideration to lay/clergy and gender balance:

- the Bishop or his/her designate and two other Anglican members appointed by the Bishop;
- one United Church member appointed by each Presbytery;
- the Conference Minister.

### **Sample Pre-Visit Letter**

To the Minister(s) and Official Board/Council of \_\_\_\_\_ United Church:

Re: Visitation by members of Kootenay Presbytery to your Pastoral Charge.

This will confirm arrangements for our visit to your Pastoral Charge. The time will be the afternoon and evening of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_. We will meet at the church beginning at \_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. We would appreciate it if one of the meetings could be over supper and that a brief time may be shared with the minister(s) and one or two members of the Ministry and Personnel Committee at the end of the visit.

The United Church Manual requires that visits to congregations be made every three years. We would like to emphasize that the primary purpose of this visit is for *support, encouragement and counsel* [*The Manual* Section 332] .

Our team will consist of the following: (list members of the team) and me.

#### **Time Guidelines for Individual/Group Meetings**

Minister(s)	1 hour
Minister(s) and spouse(s)	30 min. to 1 hour
Other paid or key volunteer staff	20-30 min. each

#### **Secretary                      Organist/Choir director**

Caretaker	Others	
Ministry and Personnel Committee		
Official Board/Council and/or its chairperson		
Other committees and/or their chairperson		
Congregation		2 hours

We believe it is important to involve the whole congregation in the self-evaluation/celebration process so, in preparation for our visit, we suggest the following:

- f) Announce the visit, including the purpose, in your bulletin prior to the date. Some discussion around the manual for Presbytery Oversight Visitation Teams will give the congregation an understanding of the purpose and the process of the visit.
- g) Schedule visits with the people listed and have the necessary congregational records available: Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals, Membership Roll, Minutes of Session, Board or Council.

We look forward to spending this time together as the congregation celebrates and reflects upon its life and work. The written report of the Visitation Committee will be sent to you shortly after the visit with a copy forwarded to Presbytery as noted in the Visitation Manual.

Yours,

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Team Leader

### **Sample Bulletin Insert**

The following is a sample bulletin insert that can be adapted and sent to the pastoral charge. It is designed to fit on half of an 8½ by 11 sheet.

## ***Presbytery Visit Coming***

On \_\_\_\_\_ we will receive a visit by members of Kootenay Presbytery. Every pastoral charge receives such a visit every three years.

This is an important time in the life and work of our congregation. We will be hosting our visitors with a pot luck supper at \_\_\_\_\_ pm followed by a time for all of us to meet with them at \_\_\_\_\_ pm. Please plan to attend both the supper and the evening meeting if you can.

The purpose of the visit is:

- a) to affirm and celebrate the good things which have been happening in our pastoral charge.
- b) to provide an opportunity for us to do some self-evaluation.
- c) to explore how lay people and paid ministers share the ministry of the church
- d) to help identify difficulties or potential problems and to make suggestions
- e) to enhance awareness of the larger church beyond the pastoral charge
- f) to review our pastoral charge records.

## **Pre-Visitation Data Sheet**

**Pastoral Charge** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

In order to begin the process and to save time at the actual visit, the pastoral charge is requested to answer the following questions and return this form to the leader of the visiting team. Please answer or comment in the space under the question or attach a separate sheet.

1. Does the congregation provide a  manse or  a housing allowance?
2. If a manse, what provision is made for upkeep, repairs and required furnishings?

What responsibility does the minister's family assume for the care of the manse?

What are the long range plans for the manse?

3. If a housing allowance, what is the amount? \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month

When was the housing allowance last reviewed to ensure it is in accordance with that required by The Manual (i.e. fair market value for the local area including appliances, drapes and rugs) ?

4. How are the salary and allowances paid to your minister(s) determined?

Do you have a policy on salary (e.g. a percentage above required minimum), and if so, what is that policy?

What amount of allowance does your minister receive for books and continuing education?

5. Has a Police Record Check, Level Two, been obtained by each Ministry Personnel in the Pastoral Charge and shown to someone on the Ministry and Personnel Committee? Is there a record of that in the Personnel File (form MPE 460)? Note that the new policy requires a new records check every six years as well as prior to any new call or appointment.
6. Does the pastoral charge provide secretarial help for the minister(s) and church?  
If so, is it \_\_\_\_\_ volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_ honorarium basis? \_\_\_\_\_ paid?  
If paid, how does it compare with wages paid in the community?

7. Are there office expenses for which the minister is not reimbursed? (e.g. telephone, postage supplies, secretarial help, internet connection)
8. Are salaries, grants, honoraria paid to other staff? (*Note that honoraria totaling over \$500 for the year must be reported to the Canada Revenue Agency [CRA] at year-end on a T4A supplementary form. For more information see CRA website, [www.cra-arc.gc.ca](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca)*)

How do they compare with wages in the community?

Are all employees who work at least 14 hours per week on a permanent basis enrolled in the United Church Pension Plan and Group Insurance Plan as required?

9. Has the treasurer a fixed date to issue salary cheques?

Are they delivered on time?

10. By what means does the pastoral charge handle financial matters? (check as many as apply):

- Committee of Stewards
- Finance Committee
- Envelopes
- Annual Pledges
- Every Household Visitation Program
- Consecration Sunday / Celebrate Stewardship Program
- Other

Are the financial needs of the pastoral charge adequately met?

11. Are all the names and addresses of the trustees of the pastoral charge known?  
 Yes    No

Are they all active, resident members or adherents of the congregation?

- Yes    No

Are a majority of the trustees full members?

- Yes    No

12. The Duplicate Certificate of Title (i.e. the "deed") for the church property should be in the Land Titles Office. Is the location of the Duplicate Certificate of Title known?

13. What education about and support for the Mission and Service Fund is provided in your congregation?

Are M&S contributions forwarded monthly to the national treasurer?

14. What is the amount of insurance carried on the buildings, possessions and property of the pastoral charge? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

How does this compare with the replacement value?

What is the amount of Public Liability Insurance carried by the pastoral charge in case of injury to another party while at the church, or while participating in an event organized by a church group? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Do you carry Directors and Officers Liability Insurance, as recommended? What amount? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

15. How are lay delegates to Presbytery and Conference chosen?

16. What is the length of each term? \_\_\_\_\_ (Note: Presbytery recommends a three year term.)

17. How do your delegates report to the Official Board/Council and to the congregation?

18. Briefly describe the governance structure of the pastoral charge. (e.g. Elders and Stewards; Official Board; Council; Policy Governance (Carver) model; other).

19. What has changed since the last oversight visit?

20. Were recommendations from the prior oversight visit report implemented? If not, why not?

21. Please provide any documents you have containing the mission statement, vision statement, and/or core values of the congregation when submitting this pre-visitation sheet.

22. Please add any other information or comments you would like the visitation team to know before the visit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Person completing this data sheet

\_\_\_\_\_  
Position

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### **Tips for Interviews and Questions**

1. Ground yourself in prayer and meditation before the visit and the interviews.
2. Take time to establish rapport with the person being interviewed.
3. Be genuine and sincere.
4. Make sure the person knows why you are there. Ask and clarify to make sure.
5. Avoid theatre style seating if possible. A circle usually works best if possible.
6. Consider the interview a meeting of equals.
7. Use the questions provided in the guidelines as just that, *guidelines*. It is not necessary to ask all questions. It's more important that the interview flow as a conversation and that the major areas be covered.
8. Statements and invitations are less threatening than questions.
9. Use open-ended questions that invite elaboration and reflection (not "yes" or "no" answers). For example: "Can you tell me about ....?" "How would you describe ...?"
10. Avoid "why" questions, for they often lead to defensiveness.
11. Promise confidentiality but only to the extent that you can.
12. Encourage openness. Be non-judgmental.
13. Consider having one person take notes while the others concentrate on the conversation/interview and listening.

**Report of Pastoral Oversight Visit to**  
**\_\_\_\_\_ Pastoral Charge**

***(Please complete and submit report within two weeks of visit)***

Date of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, the minister(s)

and \_\_\_\_\_, Chair of Official  
Board/Council

From visiting team members:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:** General comments (appreciations, names of key participants, outline of visit, format used etc.)

**Life of the Pastoral Charge** (particularly as it relates to the Mission Statement of Kootenay Presbytery: ***“Gifted by the Spirit, Kootenay Presbytery is called to nurture vital and faithful congregations which embody God's love and justice in Jesus Christ.”***)

## **Role and Support of Your Minister(s)**

## **Role and Support of the Laity**

## **Stewardship**

## **Relation to the Larger Church**

**Other Comments**

**Recommendations**

Signature of Writer \_\_\_\_\_

Copy to: Presbytery Convener, *Pastoral Oversight Visits Committee*

***Summary Report to  
Pastoral Oversight Visits Committee***

PASTORAL CHARGE: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Please prepare a brief summary, one page or less, of the major findings of your visit. Focus on those things that the Pastoral Oversight Visits Committee needs to know in order to be in touch with the state of the Presbytery and its pastoral charges. Please consider the health of the congregation and of the pastoral relationship. Include strengths and potential challenges along with any recommendations you have made for either congregational action or Presbytery action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Report Writer

Date

Send to: Presbytery Convener, *Pastoral Oversight Visits*



- 
5. What feedback do you have for the visiting team regarding what was helpful and unhelpful?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  6. Do you have any recommendations for future visiting teams?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  7. How might Presbytery be more helpful to your congregation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  8. Please add other comments.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this completed form to the Presbytery Convener of Pastoral Oversight Visits:

*Gerda Mann*  
829 – 309 Avenue  
Kimberley, BC V1A 3J3  
Fax: 250-427-5077  
[gngmann@shaw.ca](mailto:gngmann@shaw.ca)

**Current Contact Information**  
**As of October, 2009**

The following are the current names with contact information of Kootenay Presbytery persons who are involved with Oversight Visits:

**Chair of Pastoral Relationships Ministry Team**

The Rev. Jeffrey Seaton  
Kimberley United Church  
10 Boundary Street  
Kimberley BC V1A 3C8  
Office Phone/Fax: (250) 427-2428  
Email: [jeff@kimberleyunited.ca](mailto:jeff@kimberleyunited.ca)

**Convener of Pastoral Oversight Visits**

Gerda Mann  
829 – 309 Avenue  
Kimberley BC V1A 3J3  
Home: (250) 427-5057  
Fax: (250) 427-5077  
Email: [gngmann@shaw.ca](mailto:gngmann@shaw.ca)

**Conference Minister**

The Rev. George Meier  
P. O. Box 452  
New Denver BC V0G 1S0  
Telephone: (250) 358-7904  
Email: [meier@heartsrest.com](mailto:meier@heartsrest.com) or  
[revrevbc@netidea.com](mailto:revrevbc@netidea.com)

**Standards for the Keeping of Minutes**  
**Requirements for Board or Council Minutes**  
*from "The Manual"*

092 Instructions to Secretaries. The Fourth General Council (1930) issued the following instructions to Secretaries of the various Courts of the United Church in regard to the writing and keeping of the minutes of the meetings of their respective Courts:

- (a) the Secretary shall keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of all meetings;
- (b) the minutes shall be written in ink in a legible hand, or typewritten, or printed;

- (c) if the minutes be written by hand, they shall be written in a bound book provided for that purpose. If the minutes be produced by other means, one (1) signed original set of minutes shall be bound at suitable intervals in accordance with the methods specified by the General Council Committee on Archives and History. This information may be found in *Guidelines for Record Keeping in The United Church of Canada*, which is available from the Conference Archives Committee or the Central Archives;
- (d) the pages shall be numbered, and the number of each page written or printed at the top of the page;
- (e) every page shall be signed or initialled by the Secretary;
- (f) the record of each meeting of the Court shall be signed by the Presiding Officer and the Secretary;
- (g) the time and place of each meeting shall be fully stated in words, and the date of the meeting shall be indicated on the margin at the top of each page;
- (h) the minutes shall state by whose or what authority the meeting is held, "at the call of the Chairperson," "according to adjournment," or as the case may be; and that a quorum was present;
- (i) the opening of the meeting with prayer and closing of the meeting with prayer and/or the benediction, shall be recorded in the minutes;
- (j) the name of the Presiding Officer shall be recorded, and, in the minutes of Sessions, Official Boards or Church Boards or Church Councils, and Presbyteries, the names of the members present. The minutes of the Conference shall include the roll of the Conference;
- (k) the items of business shall be briefly indicated by paragraph headings or marginal notes, for ready reference;
- (l) care shall be taken that all numbers are distinctly written;
- (m) Committee reports and other documents necessary for the understanding of the records shall be embodied in the minutes or added in an appendix. If the latter, the number of the page on which they will be found shall be given in the minutes;
- (n) the minutes shall record all the proceedings of the Court and shall state clearly what disposal is made of all motions, Resolutions, reports, Petitions, etc.;
- (o) extraneous and irrelevant matter shall be rigidly excluded from the minutes;
- (p) all erasures, cancellings, interlineations, or other changes shall be initialled in the margin by the Secretary;
- (q) no erasures or alterations may be made after the record has been confirmed, except by Resolution of the Court or by order of a higher Court, and then suitable annotations shall be made;
- (r) no unnecessary vacant space shall be left between the minutes of successive meetings. If any such vacant space be left it shall be ruled in plain lines from the writing to the bottom of the page;
- (s) the use of initials for organizations and other abbreviations should be carefully avoided.