

MANUAL EDITS TO PRINT - 2021

¶420 COMMITTEES OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

1. Study Teams

The board of administration shall establish study teams in advance of a general conference session. These study teams will be authorized to study ministry and administrative needs of the Canadian church and present working papers and recommendations to the general conference for its consideration. The teams shall serve from their appointment to the close of the general conference session. The number of teams and their specific areas of study shall be defined by the board of administration. The members of these study teams shall be nominated by the nominating committee and appointed by the board of administration.

2. Standing Board and Committees

The general conference shall elect, according to the principles outlined in ¶420.2.6, the following standing board and committees that will serve from the end of the session until the end of the next regular session. No person may serve on more than one standing board or committee. These leaders in the conference shall meet the leadership qualifications of ¶630.3.3

2.1 Board of Administration

The general conference shall elect a board of administration of 10 members. Membership should include equal ministerial and lay representation; **Ministerial representation can include Commissioned Ministers up to a maximum one-third of the ministerial members.** Recognizing the importance of diversity, we will pursue a balanced board that reflects the age, gender, geography, race and ethnicity of the FMCIC. The functions and authority of the board of administration are defined in ¶425.2.

2.2 Ministerial Education Guidance and Placement (MEGaP) Committee

The general conference shall elect a MEGaP committee of up to 34 members, with equal ministerial and lay representation. **Ministerial representation can include Commissioned Ministers up to a maximum one-third of the ministerial members.** The committee shall be composed of two or more sub-committees to serve in the various geographical areas of the Canadian church. The members shall be persons of spiritual depth and wisdom competent to work with all candidates for the ministry. The functions and authority of MEGaP are defined in ¶430.2.

2.3 Nominating Committee

2.3.1 Election of the Nominating Committee:

The general conference shall elect a nominating committee of no fewer than eight members, who are not members of another standing board/committee of the conference. The committee shall have, to the extent possible, equal lay and ministerial representation and balanced representation from the various geographical areas of the general conference. Ministerial representation can include Commissioned Ministers up to a maximum one-third of the ministerial members. The number of persons on the general conference nominating committee to be elected for each region will be set by the board of administration. A national leadership team member will be an ex officio member of the committee.

The network leaders will meet apart from the national leadership team and develop a slate of nominees to the nominating committee from the various regions of the church to present to the general conference. The network leaders will consult in advance with local pastors regarding gifted and credible candidates.

Opportunity will be given for nominations from the floor of general conference after the nominations from the network leaders are presented.

2.3.2 Authority and Functions:

The committee will be responsible for providing nominations for:

- study teams for the general conference
- the secretary of the general conference
- members of the board of administration and committees listed in ¶420 (except the nominating committee)
- any board of administration or committee position which becomes vacant during the interim between sessions of the general conference.

2.3.3 Process:

In order to ensure that the standing board and committees are made up of gifted and credible Christian leaders, the general conference nominating committee will solicit input from local churches, network leaders and national leaders.

If the nominating committee is not able to identify an ordained or commissioned minister from a geographic region to serve on the board of administration or on a general conference committee, it may nominate a ministerial candidate. If no ministerial candidate is available from that geographic region, the nominating committee is authorized to set aside the principle of regional representation in this case and nominate an ordained or commissioned minister from another region.

2.4 Study Commission on Doctrine

The general conference shall elect a study commission on doctrine made up of nine members consisting of both lay and ministerial members. Ministerial representation can include Commissioned Ministers up to a maximum one-third of the ministerial members. The commission shall provide a forum for the debate and discussion of issues related to doctrine, membership and ritual and serve as the editorial board for *The Manual of The*

Free Methodist Church in Canada. It may also undertake additional duties as assigned by the board of administration. The commission shall report to the general conference and to the board of administration in the interim between general conference sessions.

2.5 Delegate(s) - Free Methodist World Conference

In accordance with the delegate formula of the constitution of the Free Methodist World Conference, the Canadian General Conference is represented at the World Conference by a ministerial and a lay delegate. The bishop shall serve as the ministerial delegate and the chair of the board of administration as the lay delegate. Reserve delegates shall be elected by the board of administration from among its members.

2.6 Term of Office

- The term of all board or committee members shall begin at the end of the general conference session at which the member is elected and continue until the end of the next regular session.
- The members of any board or committee of the general conference may serve for a maximum of three consecutive terms of office.
- If nominated, members may serve for more than three consecutive terms if elected by a two-thirds majority vote.
- The nominating committee shall ensure that at least one-third of the members of the board and standing committees are retired and replaced at each general conference session.

¶425 BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

1. Membership

The membership of the board of administration shall consist of 10 members as defined in ¶420.2.1. The bishop shall receive notification of all board of administration meetings and minutes, and shall be entitled to be present and participate fully without vote in all meetings except for those held in executive session of the board.

2. Authority and Functions

- 2.1 The board shall have general organizational, promotional and supervisory powers over all activities of the church during the interim between general conference sessions. It shall meet regularly, at times to be determined by the board, but no less than once in each 12-month period. A majority of the members elected shall constitute a quorum.
- 2.2 The board shall constitute the members of the corporation of The Free Methodist Church in Canada.
- 2.3 If the office of bishop becomes vacant for any reason, a new bishop shall be elected, except for vacancies occurring in the last six months preceding a general conference. The election shall be conducted according to the procedures outlined in ¶860.
- 2.4 The board shall have the responsibility to determine the number of senior staff (national leadership team members) to be employed by the corporation, and to define the general duties and responsibilities of these positions in consultation with the bishop. The bishop will create a hiring task force, which must include at least one member of the board and one

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Revised 05/22/2017

member of MEGaP. This task force will be responsible for the process from job posting to recommendation of a candidate to the board for approval.

- 2.5 The board shall publish annually an audited financial statement outlining the assets, liabilities, and financial standing of the corporation of The Free Methodist Church in Canada.
- 2.6 The board shall have the power to accept resignations, fill vacancies and remove for cause any of its members or any denominational executive (not including the bishop) during the interim between general conference sessions, subject to other sections of *The Manual*.
- 2.7 The board shall have the power to declare that a local society ceases to exist if the society does not have the personnel and financial resources needed to carry out an effective ministry plan, or is unable to elect an official board and trustees. The board shall also have the authority to declare any local or national church property surplus. It may authorize the management committee to take control of the title to the real and personal surplus properties and to transfer the title to the Corporation. It may direct the management committee to sell or otherwise dispose of such property. The proceeds of such sale may be used as directed by the board, provided they are first applied to clearing any remaining debts of the former society.
- 2.8 The board shall be involved in the discipline of lay and ministerial members and congregations as provided for in chapter nine of this *Manual*.
- 2.9 The board may approve Letters of Agreement with the board of administration of The Free Methodist Church of North America and the Department of World Missions as needed to advance the ministries of The Free Methodist Church in Canada. As the Corporation of The Free Methodist Church in Canada, the board may approve any legal agreements with other organizations or affiliated Free Methodist organizations as necessary to further the interests of the church.

3. Officers of the Corporation (Board of Administration)

At its first meeting following its election by the general conference, the board of administration shall:

- elect a chair from among its lay members.
- elect the following officers of the corporation from among its members: vice-chair, secretary, treasurer.

When employees of the corporation participate in meetings of the board of administration, they do so without a vote.

4. Committees

At its first meeting following its election by the general conference, the board shall organize its members into such committees as the board shall deem to be necessary to organize and administer the ministry programs of The Free Methodist Church in Canada. Among these committees shall be the audit, management and personnel committees.

To establish a link between the board of administration and the North American Commission on Missions, the Canadian representative to the North American Commission on Missions shall be appointed by the board of administration from among its members sitting on the committee responsible for overseas missions.

4.1 Audit Committee

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Revised 11/01/08

The management committee shall nominate three persons who are members of a local society or of the Canadian General Conference for election by the board of administration as the audit committee for the term between general conferences. The audit committee will meet independently with the external auditor to receive and review the auditor's report. The nomination and election is to take place at the first meeting of the board of administration following general conference. The members of the audit committee may not be members of the board of administration.

4.2 **Management Committee**

The management committee of the board of administration shall consist of four members appointed by the board of administration from among its members, one of whom is **clergy ministerial**. The committee shall meet in conjunction with board of administration meetings and at such other times as it deems necessary. It shall report to and be amenable to the direction of the board of administration in the interim between general conference sessions. The committee shall:

- 4.2.1 have general oversight of the financial resources of the Corporation of The Free Methodist Church in Canada;
- 4.2.2 prepare annual budgets for Core Ministries for approval by the board of administration;
- 4.2.3 act as administrators of the Ministers' Pension Plan;
- 4.2.4 manage the Ministers' and Employees' Benefit Program (Life, LTD and Medical/Dental Insurance);
- 4.2.5 develop and manage a salary plan for denominational executives and staff;
- 4.2.6 serve as the Trustees of the Corporation of The Free Methodist Church in Canada. As the national trustees, the committee shall have the authority, subject to the general directions of the board of administration to provide local church trustees with the conference consent required to mortgage, lease or sell local church property (See ¶350.1.3);
- 4.2.7 provide local churches with general guidelines regarding pastoral salary and employment policies.

No member of the committee shall benefit directly or indirectly from the funds under the care of the committee. It shall follow conservative investment practices with due regard for the preservation of capital.

4.3 **Personnel ~~Committee~~ Team**

A Personnel Team shall be appointed by the board of administration at its first meeting following general conference to assist the bishop, national leadership team and supervisory staff with the annual review of all employees' performance appraisals and compensation packages for the term between general conferences. It shall comprise of four or five persons including the following: the bishop, a lay member of the board of administration (BOA), a member of the MEGaP committee, and one or two members of the Free Methodist Church in Canada or of the conference, who are not on the board of administration. The latter can be nominated by the bishop, but appointed by the BOA. At least half of the team shall be lay members, and at least one member, other than the bishop, shall be ordained.

¶430 Ministerial Education Guidance and Placement (MEGaP) Committee

1. Membership

The general conference shall elect a MEGaP committee of up to 34 members, as defined in ¶420.2.2. The bishop and the director of leadership development and church health shall receive notification of all MEGaP meetings and minutes, and shall be entitled to be present and participate fully without vote in all meetings.

2. Authority and Function

- 2.1 The committee shall assist the director of leadership development and church health in the recruiting, interviewing, screening and evaluation of ministerial candidates. It shall recommend lay ministers for ministerial candidacy and ministerial candidates for commissioned ministry, or ordination and membership in the conference when they are deemed ready. It shall be available to counsel ministers in personal growth and professional advancement. The committee shall consider the character and performance of each minister, including located ministers **and commissioned ministers**, and report to each session of the general conference.
- 2.2 The committee shall appoint ministers to their various ministries, in consultation with the bishop, director of leadership development and church health and pastoral leadership task forces. The process for changes of appointments is described in the “*Transitions Handbook for Churches*.” The MEGaP committee shall have the authority to make changes in appointments without the request of the local society when this is deemed to be in the best interest of the local church or pastor.
- 2.3 A minister may be appointed to a church without being given charge of that church. In such cases, the church shall be listed “under the bishop” who shall assume responsibility for its administration.
- 2.4 Any minister who refuses to serve when appointed shall not be appointed by another conference without the approval of the MEGaP committee.
- 2.5 The MEGaP committee may grant a leave of absence to any ordained minister. If not restored to active ministry after a two-year leave of absence, the minister’s membership shall be located to a local church (see ¶845). Located ministers may be restored to active ministry by the MEGaP committee. Leave of Absence appointments shall designate the reason for a leave of absence.
- 2.6 Located Ministers have the place of their membership determined by the MEGaP committee. In the process, the minister and official board of the church involved shall be consulted.
- 2.7 The MEGaP committee shall rule on divorce cases related to persons preparing for or involved in ordained ministry. (See ¶816) The bishop shall appoint a Divorce Review Committee of four MEGaP members to assist with the preparation of recommendations related to divorce cases.

¶440 FUNDING

1. The finances for operating the ministries of the Canadian General Conference shall be provided for through two programs known as Core Ministry and Giving Streams. Policies related to these programs are found in ¶375.3.

2. Core Ministry

2.1 The Core Ministry funding program shall provide for the financing of the general operating needs of the general conference and the Corporation of The Free Methodist Church in Canada.

2.2 Each local society in The Free Methodist Church in Canada shall contribute a tithe (10%) of its general operating income to the support of the Core Ministry program. For this purpose (only) the general operating income is defined to include all donations to the local society, LESS funds raised for:

- Giving Streams.
- Special short-term fund raising programs for local church projects (such as campaigns for building programs or debt reduction).
- Funds raised for special ministry programs outside of the local church (such as funds raised for the World Relief, and funds transferred to other Christian organizations).
- Bequests.

3. Giving Streams

3.1 The Giving Streams funding model shall provide for the support of the ministries of The Free Methodist Church in Canada in the following areas:

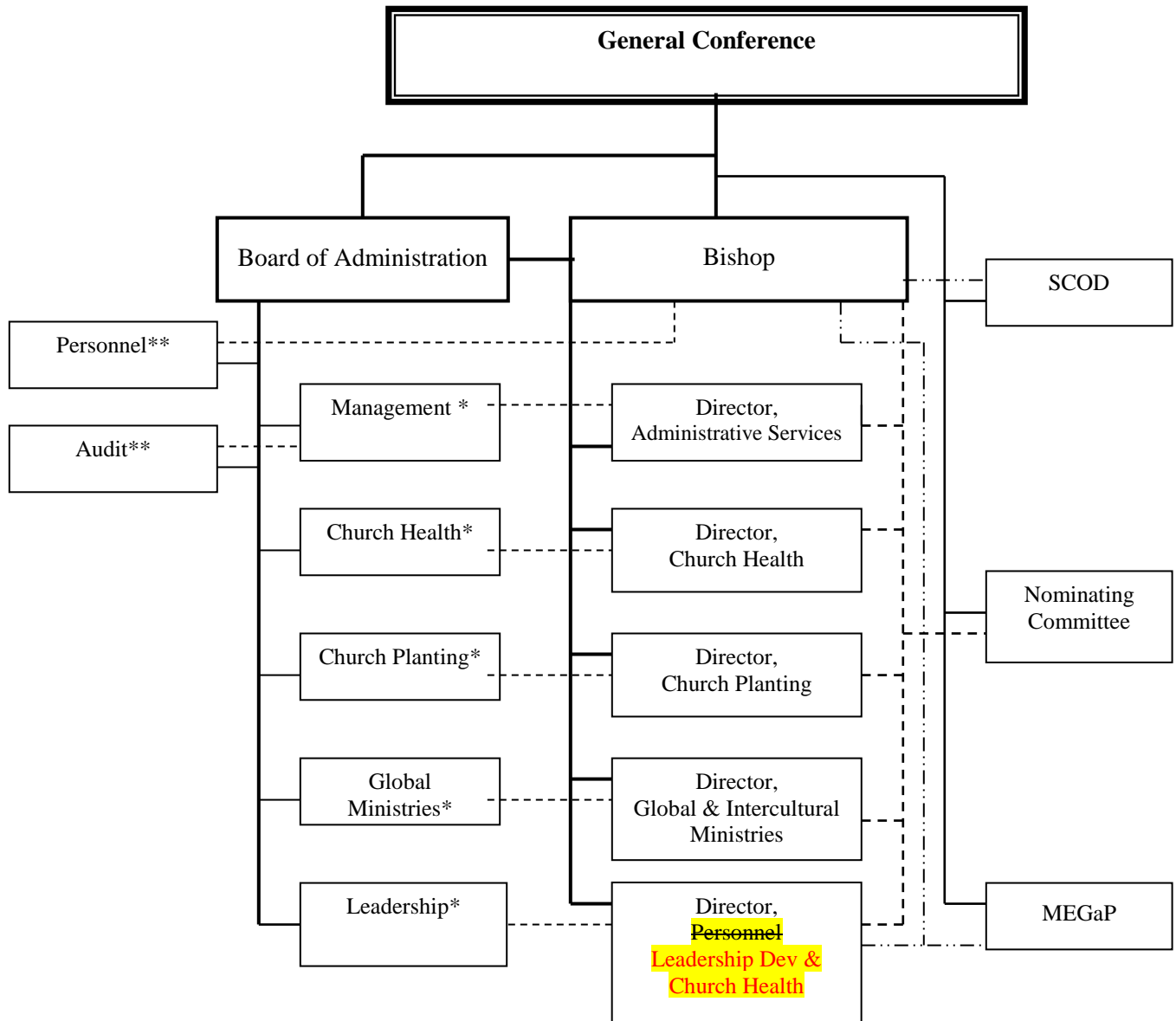
- Global Ministries: Support for global ministries proceeding from Canadian church involvements.
- Church Planting: Ongoing development of new Free Methodist churches in Canada, related financial assistance, and related leadership training and development.
- Leadership Development: Financial support for the Leadership Scholarship Program Plan, internships, foundational courses and ministers' conferences.

3.2 Financial support for Giving Streams shall be raised through voluntary free-will donations made by the individual members and adherents of local churches in Canada.

3.3 The Giving Stream model will be promoted through the communications department.

¶460 A ORGANIZATION CHARTS

The Free Methodist Church in Canada Organization Chart

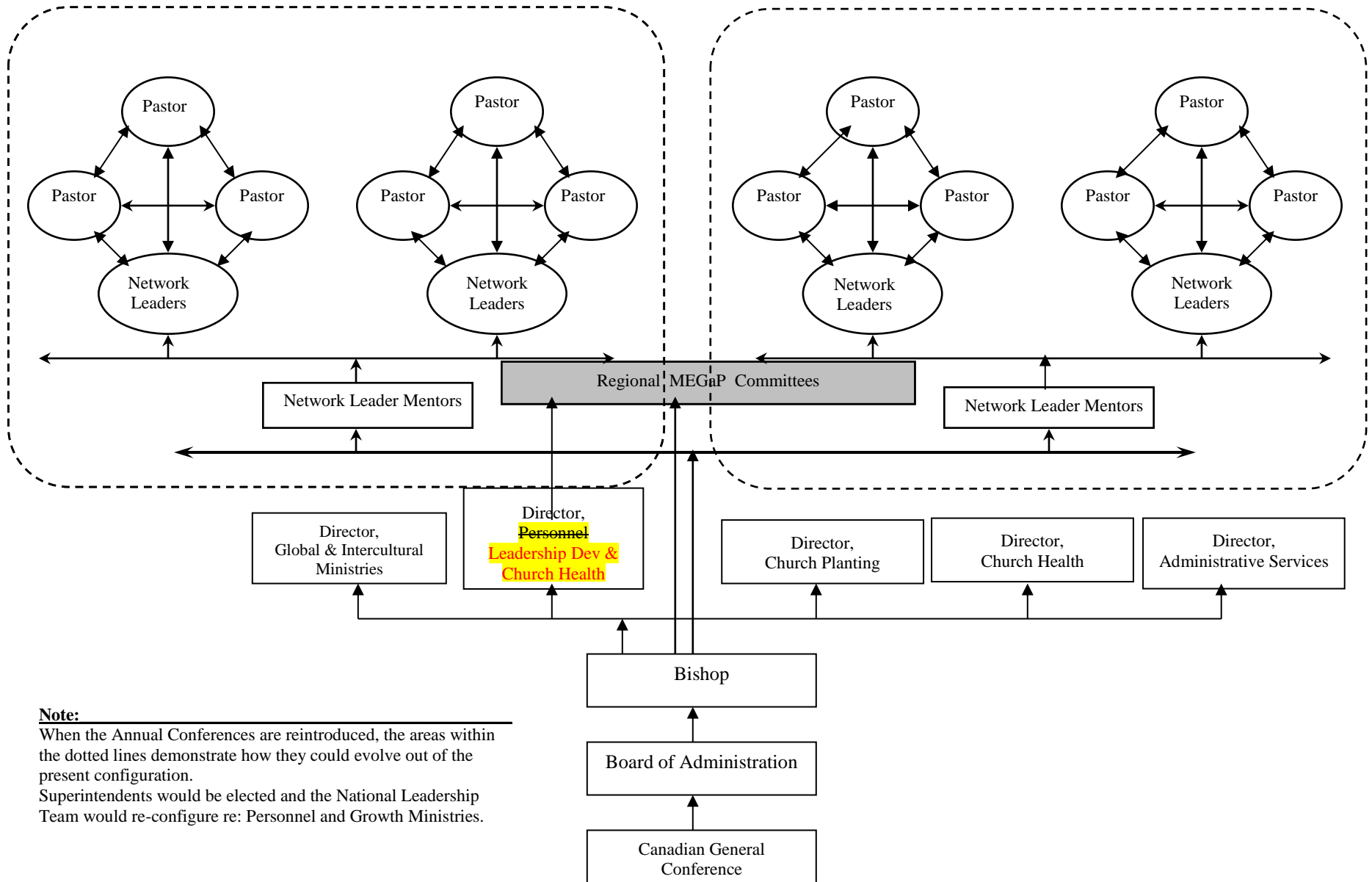


* Number & role defined by Board
 **Include members from outside the Board

----- Bishop chairs SCOD
 -.-.-.- Bishop & director of leadership development and church health chair MEGaP
 NLT members resource BOA subcommittees and Nominating Committee

460 B ORGANIZATION CHART: NETWORKS AND NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM CHART

**THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA
NETWORKS AND NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM CHART**



Note:
When the Annual Conferences are reintroduced, the areas within the dotted lines demonstrate how they could evolve out of the present configuration. Superintendents would be elected and the National Leadership Team would re-configure re: Personnel and Growth Ministries.

CHAPTER 8: THE MINISTRY

¶800 PREAMBLE

It is biblical for the church to set apart particular persons for special tasks of leadership. Such persons bear witness to an inward call of the Holy Spirit and a confirmation of that call by the church. They are set apart by a public commissioning service, or by ordination, including with the laying on of hands after the pattern of the early church.

It is the long-held conviction of the Free Methodist Church that both men and women are eligible to hold any office of the church, including membership on the Official Board of a local church, or to be ordained to any of the church's ministries, or to be elected to the office of Bishop.

Both gifts and graces characterize men and women the church commissions or ordains. Gifts are special endowments of ability. Graces are special qualities of character. Both have their source in the enabling Holy Spirit. Although the church must discern who have such endowments, commissioning or ordination is always first and foremost an act of God's calling and appointment.

Commissioned Ministers are called by God to provide specialized ministry leadership and do not feel called to provide pastoral leadership to an entire church.

Ordained Free Methodist Ministers are called by God to provide overall general pastoral leadership in the church and Kingdom. They may carry out their task under appointment to a particular congregation, or they may be given other assignments. In either case, their work will include preaching and teaching the Word of God, intercessory prayer, the administration of the sacraments, pastoral care, and other ministerial activities. Central to the task of the minister is the proclamation of the saving gospel and the winning of people of all ages to Christ. Because vital worship, Christian nurture, evangelistic outreach and social concern characterize a healthy church, ordained ministers commit themselves to equipping the whole body of believers to these ends.

The commissioned and ordained ministry is are both a calling and a profession. It is a calling in that it is a response to a divine summons. It is a profession in that this service is worked out under the direction of the church that sets ministers apart as leaders and requires accountability.

Free Methodist ministers are called to be leaders of God's people. Leadership requires vision, a willingness to dare, an ability to move people to action and the readiness to live with the turbulence change brings. For the person called to leadership, all this is rooted in a deep love for Christ and his compassion for human need. God's resources are abundantly available for all that embrace this task courageously and in radical obedience.

There are three stages to becoming a minister in The Free Methodist Church in Canada. The person feeling the call of God to the ministry is first licensed as a lay minister. The call is tested by service in the local church where initial training begins. Step two involves acceptance by the conference as a ministerial candidate. During this period the candidate prepares for the third step, conference membership as a commissioned minister (honorary) or an ordained minister (full).

Before detailed requirements are given for each stage in becoming a commissioned or ordained minister, in a long Methodist tradition, the following advice is given to all ministers.

¶810 LAY MINISTERS (TRACKING AND LOCAL)

A lay minister is a member of a Free Methodist Church who has been granted a license by the official board. For some lay ministers (tracking), this will be an entry point into the tracking system that ultimately leads to being credentialed either as a commissioned minister or an ordained minister. Other lay ministers (local) will opt to serve only at the local church level.

Local Lay Minister: a person who is gifted and called by God to provide a level of ministry leadership beyond what is expected of a member within the local church (i.e. gifted in teaching or visitation). This call is affirmed by the local church who responds to the person's ministry and leadership, and the board who recognize gifts and affirm this call and level of leadership responsibility. While there may be an element of pastoral leadership in this person's ministry leadership, they do not feel called to pastoral leadership. The person is granted the Lay Minister license (see Ch 3 par 381a) by the board, renewable annually (see par 381b), and is accountable to the board and lead pastor (or designate).

Tracking Lay Minister – a person who is called by God to provide pastoral leadership in the church. This call is affirmed by the local church and the board who see the gifts and graces evident for pastoral leadership and are encouraging the person towards preparing for pastoral leadership through the credentialing process. This is very much a preparation and formation stage where the person will work to gain experience and understanding in general pastoral ministry as well as begin to meet the requirements to fully enter the credentialing process. The person is granted the Lay Minister license (see Ch 3 par 381a) by the board, renewable annually (see par 381b), and is accountable to the board and lead pastor (or designate).

In either case, before a license is granted, the candidate shall be a member of the church long enough to give evidence of gifts and graces suited to Christian ministry. A hunger for God, a blameless life and a motive to serve are desirable attributes. A lay minister shall be amenable to instruction, supervision, and related discipline to assure growth in grace, knowledge, and usefulness.

The lay minister retains membership in the local church, but the MEGaP committee and the credentialing coordinator shall be notified immediately if a license has been issued to either a tracking or local lay minister. The license must be renewed annually by the official board.

To qualify as a lay minister, the person must meet the following requirements (alternate process available for church planters through the Church Planting department):

- be a member of the Free Methodist Church;
- be available for ministry under supervision of the lead pastor;
- be recommended by the pastor or pastor's cabinet to the official board;
- have completed Bases 1,2,3,4 (or their equivalent);
- The candidate shall be interviewed by the official board to determine the person's call to lay ministry, and quality of spiritual life, and shall be asked questions such as:
 - When and how did you come to know Christ as Lord and Saviour?
 - Do you experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit in your life? Are you open to the call of God to lay ministry
 - What preparations and plans are you making in order to follow God's will for your life?
 - To what type of ministry and witness do you believe you are called?
 - What is your understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith?
 - What is your understanding of the doctrine of sanctification?

For local lay ministers, the person must also meet these additional requirements:

- take and successfully complete the Heart of Canadian Free Methodism foundational course
- demonstrate life-long learning
- actively participate in a small group
- submit a police clearance certificate

The official board may issue a lay minister's license (see Ch 3 par 381a) and assign responsibility for counsel and guidance to the pastor and/or the pastor's cabinet. It shall be their responsibility to provide opportunities for lay ministers to develop their gifts in such ways as:

- preaching or teaching the Gospel;
- assisting the pastor in visitation;
- assisting in public worship services;
- participating in a program of witnessing to the unsaved, winning them to Christ, and nurturing them in Christian living.

Lay ministers shall be given regular duties with clear accountability structures.

Though lay ministers maintain their memberships in a local church, they are not eligible to continue to be voting members of an official board once they have been issued a lay minister's license. If they are board members when they become lay ministers, they may complete their terms on official boards, but they may not be re-elected as board members.

Lay ministers are honorary members of the official board. At the discretion of the lead pastor tracking lay ministers, as part of their training for credentialed ministry, may participate in official board meetings except when the board is dealing with delicate matters related to the life and ministry of the lead pastor or other pastoral staff.

When it is evident to the official board that a lay minister (who desires to enter the tracking system toward ministerial credentials) possesses gifts and graces and a call of God to ~~full-time~~ **credentialed** ministry, the official board may recommend to the MEGaP committee that this person be interviewed with a view to becoming a ministerial candidate in the conference. Official Boards must exercise careful discernment before approving a tracking lay minister. The question to be kept in mind is whether this person would have the gifts and graces to eventually be accepted as a pastor in his/her home church. Prior to this MEGaP interview, the lay minister must have established an accountability partner relationship as per ¶801.1.

It is the responsibility of the lead pastor to annually submit to the credentialing coordinator the names of all tracking and local lay ministers in the local church. They shall be listed in the records of the credentialing coordinator.

The official board shall review each lay minister's license annually for renewal (see Ch 3 par 381b). For each annual renewal, tracking lay ministers are expected to have completed a 3-credit hour course or equivalent. Local lay ministers are expected to demonstrate evidence of their commitment to life-long learning. When not completed, renewal shall be postponed. The pastor shall keep the records and report the list annually to the credentialing coordinator.

The following 3-credit hour courses shall be taken by tracking lay ministers:

- Heart of Canadian Free Methodism (history and polity)

- Introduction to Bible
- Introduction to Christian Doctrine
- Wesleyan Theology

The Heart of Canadian Free Methodism course is the only course that must be taken through foundational courses provided by The Free Methodist Church in Canada. Equivalencies for the other three courses must be taken at an accredited Bible college or seminary, either in person or by distance education. (Wesleyan Theology may also be taken through a foundational course offered from time to time by The Free Methodist Church in Canada.)

Further annual renewals shall be on the basis of the official board's assessment of effective ministry. Approval for courses for subsequent renewals is available through the credentialing coordinator.

The pastor's cabinet, personnel committee or equivalent shall do the annual review and the official board shall grant the renewal, upon their recommendation. The official board may revoke a lay minister's license for violation of its conditions.

A lay minister's license is not normally transferable to another church. In exceptional cases, a lay minister may have charge of a society under the supervision of an assigned ordained minister. In that case, the lay minister will hold membership in the church served.

¶815 MINISTERIAL CANDIDATES

A ministerial candidate is a member of a Free Methodist Church who is seriously pursuing entrance into ~~full-time~~ **credentialed** ministry, has been granted the status of an honorary member of the conference (with voice but not vote) and is under conference supervision in studies and service.

In order to become a ministerial candidate, a lay minister must:

Demonstrate a serious desire to pursue God's call to ministry within the FMCIC by submitting the following to the credentialing coordinator:

- a copy of the lay minister's licence (see ¶381a or ¶381a-CP);
- a resume (Candidates are encouraged to attach personality/ministry aptitude inventory results.);
- required educational transcripts;
- required personal references;
- a ministerial candidate's Statement of Affirmation (see ¶871);
- a police clearance certificate
- written confirmation that an accountability partner relationship has been established
- a reflection paper on his/her call to ministry
- completed Family of Origin assignment
- completed SHAPE profile
- completed Myers-Briggs Type Indicator© inventory

Receive the church's confirmations of suitability for ministry by being:

- a lay minister in good standing;
- able to demonstrate leadership ability by establishing a small group;
- endorsed by his/her pastor's personal letter of recommendation. The pastor will assist in the development of an educational and ministry experience plan that will be submitted to MEGaP;
- recommended to MEGaP for ministerial candidacy by the official board (see ¶383B); (board should only recommend a lay minister for ministerial candidacy if the board anticipates a recommendation for his/her appointment at its local church once s/he is approved by the conference as a ministerial candidate);
- (if married) spouse and lay minister together meeting with a MEGaP subcommittee for spousal support interview
- cleared by MEGaP if there is a history of divorce (see ¶816);
- interviewed and recommended by the MEGaP committee to the conference;
- approved by the conference and admitted as a non-voting member.

Demonstrate critical thinking and communication competencies by having:

- a high school diploma;
- successfully completed 30 semester credits in an accredited liberal arts or bible college or mature applicants may demonstrate these competencies through life-learning/experience evaluations.

Receive basic orientation for ministry in the FMCIC by:

- successfully completing the following courses:
 - Heart of Canadian Free Methodism (history and polity);
 - Introduction to the Bible; (or an equivalent)
 - Introduction to Christian Doctrine; (or an equivalent)

- Wesleyan Theology; (or an equivalent)
- successfully completing Bases 1,2,3,4 (or their equivalent)

If a Lay Minister disagrees with a recommendation from MEGaP after his/her interview, s/he may appeal that decision by sending a letter in writing to the bishop and the director of leadership development and church health outlining the reasons for the appeal. The bishop will review the MEGaP notes, the recommendation and the appeal from the candidate and decide whether or not the recommendation should be reconsidered.

When the candidate is presented to the board of administration or conference, it will be reported that the candidate has affirmed the following in a signed ministerial candidate's Statement of Affirmation (see form in ¶871).

1. Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour and offer yourself in service to Him as a ministerial candidate in the Canadian General Conference of the Free Methodist Church?
2. a) Will you further equip yourself spiritually, morally, and intellectually for the Christian ministry?
b) For what type of ministry are you preparing yourself – ordained or commissioned? If commissioned minister, what will your specialty be?
3. Having studied *The Manual of The Free Methodist Church in Canada* carefully, do you believe the Articles of Religion and accept the moral vision as articulated in Chapter 6 and do you embrace the purpose, vision, mission, and core values of The Free Methodist Church in Canada? Will you abide by the *Manual's* instructions?
4. Will you submit to the guidance of the conference through the MEGaP committee?

Ministerial Candidates maintain their memberships in the local church, and as such they have both a voice and a vote. Ministerial Candidates should abstain from voting on budget/financial, employed personnel or other issues that would directly impact or involve the Ministerial Candidate and would be considered a conflict of interest.

Though ministerial candidates maintain their memberships in a local church, they are not eligible to serve as delegates to the conference once they have been received into the conference as ministerial candidates. ~~If they are delegates when they become ministerial candidates, they may complete their term as delegates, but they may not be reelected as delegates. When ministerial candidates receive appointments to a local church by the MEGaP committee of the conference, they must resign as delegates.~~

Ministerial candidates continue as honorary members of the official board and at the discretion of the lead pastor may participate in all official board meetings except when the board is dealing with delicate matters related to the life and ministry of the lead pastor or other pastoral staff.

A ministerial candidate or a person recommended to the conference to be received as a ministerial candidate may not serve on the MEGaP committee.

Ministerial candidates maintain their standing in the conference by an annual recommendation of the MEGaP committee.

Ministerial candidates must be appointed by the conference in order to track toward being ordained or commissioned minister. Once appointed, they may solemnize marriages and administer the sacraments. If a ministerial candidate's appointment is discontinued, the ministerial candidate

credential is automatically withdrawn and the tracking process becomes 'inactive'. If another appointment request is sent to the director of leadership development and church health, MEGaP will vote on both the reinstatement of the ministerial candidate credential and the appointment request. If both are approved, the ministerial candidate can resume the tracking process.

A ministerial candidate may be appointed as a church planter upon recommendation to MEGaP from the director of church planting.

¶820 COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Commissioned Ministers are persons called by God to provide specialized ministry leadership (examples include but not limited to: Children and Family Pastor, Youth, Community Development Missionary, Social Media, etc.). They do not feel called to provide pastoral leadership to the entire church. ~~are persons set apart and credentialed by the conference to serve the people of God and, as Stephen did, on occasion preach God's Word.~~ They may, under special circumstances, be appointed under one of the categories under Special Appointment (see ¶852), but it is assumed that they will normally work as specialized associate pastors under an ordained minister's leadership.

Commissioned Ministers are eligible to be nominated as ministerial members in some of the larger administrative and leadership roles of the denomination (see Ch 4).

The training and experience candidates receive will include both formation in their area of specialization as well as ministry leadership. Commissioned Ministers are accountable to the local church and lead pastor (or equivalent) for the specific day to day living out of that call through their employment and/or job description. They are also accountable to the denomination who has credentialed them as being prepared to live out the ministry leadership aspect of that call, through their conference appointment.

In order to become a commissioned minister, a ministerial candidate must:

Demonstrate a serious desire to pursue God's call to commissioned ministry within The Free Methodist Church in Canada by:

- submitting a copy of required academic transcripts to the credentialing coordinator;
- completing 3 years of full-time ministry experience under (conference) supervision as a ministerial candidate. Ministry experience equivalency credits may be accumulated on a part-time basis under supervision and granted by the MEGaP committee. Once a lay minister has been approved as a ministerial candidate and has been appointed at a local church, retroactive ministry experience equivalency credits may be granted by the director of leadership development and church health on an individual case-by-case basis, upon written request.
- submitting a minister's statement of affirmation (See ¶ 872).

Receive the church's confirmation of suitability for commissioned ministry by being:

- a ministerial candidate in good standing;
- (if married after becoming a ministerial candidate) spouse and ministerial candidate together meeting with a MEGaP subcommittee for spousal support interview
- interviewed and recommended by the MEGaP committee for commissioned ministry;
- approved by the general conference or its board of administration for honorary membership in the conference and the commissioned ministry;
- commissioned by the bishop or the bishop's appointee.

Receive basic academic preparation for ministry in the FMCIC by:

- in addition to the courses required for ministerial candidacy, successfully completing, as a minimum, the following prescribed core courses within an accredited and approved (by MEGaP) seminary, college, or directed study program:
 - Systematic theology (3 credits)
 - Elective courses related to the specific commission specialty (e.g. administration, children, pastoral care, youth, worship, etc.) (9 credits)

- Personal and Church Stewardship foundational course (3 credits)
- Culture and the Missional Church foundational course (3 credits)
- being certified by the credentialing coordinator

If a Ministerial Candidate disagrees with a recommendation from MEGaP after his/her interview, s/he may appeal that decision by sending a letter in writing to the bishop and the director of leadership development and church health outlining the reasons for the appeal. The bishop will review the MEGaP notes, the recommendation and the appeal from the candidate and decide whether or not the recommendation should be reconsidered.

They **remain** ~~are~~ members of local churches and honorary members of the conference. When a commissioned minister transfers his/her **local church** membership to a different Free Methodist congregation, **the commissioned minister is listed as in “transition” (as per ¶852)** ~~an appointment to ministry in that congregation does not occur~~ until the receiving church makes a recommendation for an appointment **to ministry in that congregation**. When a commissioned minister is in transition **or retires**, they retain honorary membership in the conference.

Since Commissioned ministers maintain membership in the local church, they have both a voice and a vote at the local church. Commissioned ministers also continue as honorary members of the official board and, at the discretion of the lead pastor, may participate in all official board meetings except when the board is dealing with delicate matters related to the life and ministry of the lead pastor or other pastoral staff. The Commissioned ministers also need to declare a conflict of interest with any board or society vote on budget/financial, employed personnel or other issues that would directly impact or involve them. Commissioned ministers cannot serve as a delegate at the local church, since they are honorary members of conference.

Walking in a manner worthy of their call is expected, along with attendance at denominational events such as General Conferences, Regional Gatherings, Minister’s Conferences and Network meetings (except retirees).

Commissioned ministers **[except retirees]** **must continue with ongoing development in both their area of specialization as well as in ministry leadership and** must annually file a continuing education unit (CEU) report with the credentialing coordinator as a condition of maintaining good standing in the conference.

¶852 SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS

In order to nourish a healthy connection with the denomination, all ordained ministers and commissioned ministers ~~(except retirees)~~ serving in special appointments are required to attend ministers' conferences, general conferences and regional gatherings and to submit annual continuing education reports as a condition of retaining their ordination credentials. **Attendance at minister's conferences and regional gatherings, as well as reporting CEUs, is optional for retirees.**

They are also encouraged to be part of network meetings and to attend a local FM church (if there is one within fifty kilometres.)

The director of leadership development and church health shall connect with all ministers serving under special appointment, except supply pastors and transition pastors, at least once between General Conferences.

ATTENDING SCHOOL

Ministers may be granted special appointments to further their studies. Such appointments shall name the institution of further education.

CHAPLAINS

Chaplains provide ministry to persons in special situations beyond the local church, such as in the armed forces, prisons, care-giving institutions, and law enforcement agencies. The national MEGaP committee establishes endorsement procedures for chaplaincy. The Free Methodist Church in Canada recognizes the Association of Chaplains, the Free Methodist Chaplains Association of North America, together with its constitution and duly elected officers. Canadian chaplains may hold membership in this association.

CHURCH PLANTERS

Ministers who are planting churches may be granted special appointments to the setting (neighbourhood, village, town) where they are working to establish a church plant.

DENOMINATIONAL MINISTRY

Ministers may be granted special appointments to ministries of the church at large; such as bishop, conference personnel, teachers or administrators in higher education, missionary service or supply relationship in another conference.

~~GENERAL EVANGELISTS~~

~~Evangelists are persons called of God to promote revival and to spread the Gospel of Christ, but not necessarily to serve pastoral charges or to govern in the church. General evangelists, devoting full or part time to their ministry, are approved by the general conference or its board of administration to which they are amenable. Evangelists shall be supported from their fields of labour. A local church is responsible to pay evangelists called for special meetings. Generous support of this holy calling is encouraged.~~

INTERIM PASTOR [no change - just moved here to be alphabetical]
Interim pastors provide basic pastoral functions during a transition time (preaching, visiting, etc.)

NETWORK MENTOR

A Network Mentor is an ordained minister who is trained and resourced by the bishop and national leadership team and is responsible to help the network leader create a “discipleship experience” for their network of pastors. A Network Mentor is appointed by the Bishop after consultation with MEGaP. A detailed job description is found in ¶881 and a description of the Networks is found in ¶855.

RELEASED FOR SERVICE BEYOND THE DENOMINATION

Ministers may be granted special appointments to serve in ministries beyond the denomination. Their place of service shall be listed in their appointment.

RETIRED

Ministers may retire upon reaching age 65. In exceptional situations, ministers listed as retired may be appointed. The MEGaP committee shall review cases of those seeking early retirement.

SUPPLY PASTORS

Ministerial candidates who are not yet ordained, commissioned ministers and ministers who are ordained with other denominations may be appointed as pastors of our churches. Because they are not yet members of the conference, they shall be appointed as supply pastors.

TRANSITION PASTOR

Transition pastors have special training, skills and authority to help a church refocus during a transition.

INTERIM PASTOR

~~Interim pastors provide basic pastoral functions during a transition time (preaching, visiting, etc.)~~

¶873 SERVICE FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF MINISTERS

Presentation of Candidate

~~[The secretary shall present to the bishop those who are to be commissioned, saying: "Bishop _____, I present to you _____ (reading their names aloud) to be set apart as Commissioned Ministers in the Free Methodist Church." Then the bishop shall say to the people:]~~

~~_____ Dear Friends in Christ: We intend, God willing, to set apart as Commissioned Ministers these who stand before you. We have examined them and we find them to be called by God to this ministry and suited for the same. If anyone knows any reason to the contrary, come forward now and make your objection known.~~

~~[The MEGaP representative (or Regional Coach or board chair/delegate) will present the candidate to the NLT member (or designate) saying the following:]~~

~~(Name of NLT), on behalf of the Ministerial Education Guidance and Placement committee of The Free Methodist Church in Canada it is my privilege to present to you (name of candidate) to be set apart as a Commissioned Minister in the FMCIC.~~

~~[The NLT person will say:]~~

~~Friends, this is a big day. We are here to recognize and respond to somebody stepping into God's call on his/her life. We are here as a church and a movement to commission him/her into leadership in the church and in God's Kingdom. (Name of candidate) is being set apart today as a Commissioned Minister of the FMCIC. That means s/he is responding to God's specific ministry and leadership call on his/her life. You have supported him/her in pursuing this call as a church. We have walked alongside him/her as the FMCIC. And together today we say s/he is ready to be set apart. Not that this is the end, just a moment in a journey as s/he continues to embrace all that God has for him/her.~~

~~[MEGaP rep will say:]~~

~~As a denomination, we have examined (name of candidate) and find him/her to be called by God and shaped by God to this Commissioned Ministry.~~

The Collect

~~_____ Almighty God, who appointed various orders of ministers in Your church, look with mercy upon these, Your servants, whom You have called. May they be replenished with your truth and adorned with holiness of life, so that both by word and good example, they may serve You faithfully. So may Your name be glorified and Your church built up, through the merits of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.~~

~~[NLT will say:] Please bow with me in prayer:~~

~~Almighty God, we recognize that you call all of your children to a life of ministry and service in your kingdom. But in these moments we recognize that you set some apart for specific leadership and ministry roles, and you have done that with (name of candidate). We ask that you would continue to be with him/her, just as you have been up to this point. Continue to mold and shape him/her for the ministry you have given him/her. Continue to supply him/her with all they need to do the things you have called him/her to do. May s/he never doubt your presence with him/her and your love for him/her. Help him/her to minister and live out of those certainties, so that Your name will be glorified and Your Church will be built up. We ask all of this in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and Your Holy Spirit now and forever. Amen~~

The Old Testament - Jeremiah 1:4-10

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying,

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak for I am only a youth.” But the Lord said to me,

“Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’;
for to all to whom I send you, you shall go,
and whatever I command you, you shall speak.
Be not afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.”

Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me,

“Behold, I put my words in your mouth.
See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms,
to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant.”

The Epistle - I Peter 4:10-11

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

The Gospel - Luke 4:14-19

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and every one praised Him. He went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day He went into the synagogue, as was His custom. And He stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. Unrolling it, He found the place where it is written:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me;
therefore He has anointed me to preach
good news to the poor.

He sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.

Questions for Commissioned Ministers

[NLT shall say:]

All of these Scripture verses speak to this idea of God forming and calling people into specific ministry roles, and then equipping them. We believe that call is tested and affirmed by the church – both local and national - and then we arrive at these moments. In order that (name of candidate) can fully step into God’s specific call for him/her, we ask the following questions.

1. Do you believe you are inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to be set apart as a commissioned minister in the church of Christ, to serve God, promoting His glory and edifying His people?

Answer: I so believe.

2. Do you sincerely believe all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

Answer: I believe them all.

3. Will you diligently read, teach and expound the same, as opportunity is given?

Answer: I will.

4. It belongs to the office of a commissioned minister to serve the people of God in a specialized ministry under the leadership of an ordained minister. Will you do this gladly and willingly?

Answer: I will do so by the help of God.

5. Will you diligently regulate and pattern your life (and that of your family) according to the model and teaching of Christ and make (both) yourself (and them), as far as you are able, (a) wholesome example(s) to the flock of Christ?

Answer: I will do so, the Lord being my helper.

6. Will you respectfully obey those who are called to serve as leaders and overseers, following with glad mind and will their godly admonitions?

Answer: I will endeavour so to do, the Lord being my helper

[The candidates shall kneel, and the bishop, laying hands upon the head of each of them in turn, shall say:]

— Send Your Holy Spirit upon Your servant (name) for the office and work of a commissioned minister in Your church.

[The bishop shall deliver the Bible to each of the newly Commissioned Ministers in turn, saying:]

— Let the Scriptures guide the authority given you this day to set forth God’s Word to His people and to serve them in His name.

[Then the following collects shall be prayed:]

— Almighty God, giver of all good things, who by Your divine providence has guided these, Your servants, to be set apart to serve Your church; make them, we pray, modest, humble, and constant in their serving and grant to them a ready will to observe all spiritual discipline; that they may always have the testimony of a good conscience and may continue ever stable and strong in Your Son, Christ Jesus. Grant them wisdom for work, patience in ministry and fill them with the

holy joy that will give them strength. These petitions we offer in the name of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honour, now and ever. Amen.

Assist us, O Lord, in all that we do with Your most gracious favour and continual help, that in all our works begun, continued and ended in You, we may glorify Your holy name and finally, by Your mercy obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[They shall stand and face congregation, as it stands]

[The bishop shall say:]

Let the Church, represented by those present here as ordained ministers and the congregation, support you as you participate in the opportunities it provides for you to continue to grow and develop as a minister of the gospel.

[The candidate will then turn and face the congregation.]

[NLT will introduce the lead pastor (if applicable), the delegate or board chair, the MEGaP representative and/or Regional Coach, and ask all of them to stand and join the NLT and the candidate.]

[NLT will say:]

These leaders represent the coming together of call, from the local church and the national church, for this setting apart of (name of candidate) as a Commissioned Minister.

[All leaders present will place hands on the candidates shoulders for prayer. The NLT member, with hands on the candidate shoulder, will pray:]

Heavenly Father, send Your Holy Spirit upon Your servant (name of candidate) for the office and work of a Commissioned Minister in Your church. Let the Scriptures guide the authority given (name of candidate) this day to set forth God's Word to His people and to serve them in His name.

Continue to work in him/her and through him/her for your Kingdom sake. Make him/her, we pray, more and more like you each day. Continue to build his/her servant's heart. Help him/her continue to deepen his/her relationship with you through observing all spiritual disciplines and partaking in your means of Grace. Help him/her live and minister in a way that brings honor and glory to you at all times. Help him/her stand strong and with a clear conscience. Grant him/her wisdom for work, patience in ministry and fill him/her with the holy joy that will give him/her strength. These petitions we offer in the name of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honour, now and ever. Amen.

[NLT will say to the congregation:]

Please stand.

[Church rep will say:]

(Name of candidate) – We, as the Church, represented by those standing before you, commit to pray for you and support you as you participate in the opportunities at this church to continue your growth and development.

[Presentation of credential and congratulations.]

Benediction

[NLT will pray:]

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.