



PROTOCOLS, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR PLACEMENTS COMMITTEE

6: Miscellaneous Guidelines



INDEX

Document No	Title	Page	Date approved	Date amended Or revised
6. MISCELLANEOUS GUIDELINES				
6.1	'Private Arrangements'	2		Nov-07
6.2	Extension of a Placement beyond ten years	3	9-Nov-07	
6.2A	Extension of a Presbytery Minister Placement beyond ten years	5	14-Aug-15	
6.3	Guidelines for proposing Lay Marriage Celebrants	6	24-Jan-03	Nov-07
6.4	Guidelines for the remuneration of a Presbytery Chairperson	8	16-Oct-18	
6.5	Vitality of Call and Placement	15	14-Nov-14	

The documents in this folder are in the public domain, and may be copied for use in presbyteries.

Members of the Placements Committee are reminded that the agenda papers and minutes of the Placements Committee and the discussions within the Placements Committee are strictly confidential.

[Back to Index](#)

6.1 Private Arrangements: The Presbytery Role in Ministry Appointments

The creation by a congregation or group of congregations of any ministry position which includes a significant pastoral, liturgical or educational component requires the approval of the presbytery.

Therefore, because the presbytery is involved as well as one or more Church Councils the language of “private arrangement” is never appropriate, and denies the UCA polity of government by inter-related councils. It is important that in exercising oversight of the life and the mission of the Church the presbytery ensures that there is appropriate care, oversight and accountability of all ministries.

Any position whether full-time or part-time which is designed primarily for a Minister of the Word, Deacon, Pastor, Youth Worker or Lay Pastor, should be recognised as a placement by the presbytery and the Placements Committee, and a JNC will be appointed. The normal placements processes then apply.

It should be noted that a position is understood to be designed primarily for a Minister of the Word, Deacon, Pastor, Youth Worker or Lay Pastor when that position includes significant pastoral, teaching, preaching and/or liturgical duties. If the ministry position is not designed primarily for a Minister of the Word, Deacon, Pastor, Youth Worker or Lay Pastor the presbytery will use its discretion to determine if the presbytery is to be represented in the selection processes.

When a position other than an Approved Placement is advertised, and a Minister of the Word, Deacon, Pastor, Youth Worker or Lay Pastor applies or expresses interest, the presbytery must be consulted immediately. (This will normally be done through the presbytery’s appointee/s to the selection committee, the Presbytery Minister or the Chairperson of PRC.) If the presbytery is not already involved in the selection process it must be from that point.

If after interviews, the preferred candidate is a Minister of the Word, Deacon, Pastor, Youth Worker or Lay Pastor there should be discussion with the candidate, the appointing body and the PRC to cover such issues as –

- Whether the position should be recognised as a placement;
- Lines of accountability to the presbytery and the Church Council;
- Membership of presbytery;
- Classification of the Minister;
- Implications for the Minister’s long service leave entitlements;
- The Minister’s membership of the Beneficiary Fund;
- Presbytery involvement in any liturgical event marking the commencement of the ministry.

These issues should be satisfactorily negotiated prior to the appointment being formally offered and accepted. The outcome of negotiating these issues should be reported in writing to the PRC. If the Minister is available for placement, the Placements Committee will be advised of the appointment.

Whilst these guidelines address appointments in congregations it is expected that the same principles will apply to appointments made by other councils of the church.

Latest Amendment Nov 07

6.2 Procedure for Extension of a Placement Beyond Ten Years

The Uniting Church recognises that most ministers and congregations benefit from a change in placement, and that few ministers can maintain an effective ministry in the one placement for more than ten years. However, in providing a procedure for extension the Uniting Church also recognises that in some situations the life and work of the church will be enhanced by a minister remaining in a placement for more than ten years.

When a Presbytery is considering a request from a congregation and/or minister to extend a placement beyond the tenth year the Presbytery is required by the Regulations (see below) to consult at three levels BEFORE the decision is made.

- 2.6.8 (d)** When considering requests for extension the Presbytery shall:
- (i) consult with the **Congregation**, and give consideration to the continued growth in the mission and development of the congregation;
 - (ii) consult with the **Minister**, and give consideration to the welfare and vocational growth of the Minister;
 - (iii) seek advice from the **Placements Committee**.

At each level the concern is for the ongoing health and wellbeing of BOTH the minister and the congregation/s. In addition to the present placement the Presbytery should be mindful of BOTH the needs of the wider church and the needs of the minister's ongoing vocational development.

Questions that are helpfully considered in this determination include: WHY is the extension being sought in the first instance? WHO is initiating the proposal to extend – minister, congregation/s, or Presbytery?

Both minister and congregation/s should be made aware that the minister remains free to be approached and accept a call at any point during the period of the extension.

Therefore the presbytery needs to exercise keen discernment in its approach to the matter of extension of placements beyond ten years. As part of the exercise of its role of pastoral and administrative oversight of the life and mission of the church within its area the presbytery needs to be involved in the process of discernment from the time that the minister and congregation begin to consider a possible extension. None of the presbytery, congregation, Placements Committee or minister should be presented with a fait accompli, but should each take heed of each other in discerning the matter and seeking agreement.

There are four parties to the discernment:

- the minister, who has both personal and vocational needs;
- the congregation which, true to its calling will be continually examining and developing its ministry and mission;
- the wider church (as represented by the Placements Committee) and
- the presbytery which needs to balance the needs of the minister, congregation and wider church.

Congregations are encouraged to regularly review their ministry profile and mission plan, but a formal request for extension beyond ten years cannot be made before the ninth year. It is recommended that when any minister has completed eight years in a placement (whether or not an extension is being contemplated) a Presbytery Minister or some other person appointed by PRC should have an intentional discussion with each of the ministers and the Chairperson of the Church Council or the Congregation concerning their respective future ministry. The purpose of the conversation with the Chairperson would be to ascertain the view of key lay leaders in the congregation and to brief the Chairperson on the requirements of the regulations. If there is a desire to explore extension beyond the ten years there should be a thorough thinking-through of

[Back to Index](#)

the consequences by all parties.

If discussions between the Chairperson and the presbytery representative lead to a decision to explore an extension the Church Council should invite the presbytery to share in a mission study, consultation or other process. No proposal should be taken to the Church Council until completion of such mission study. When (and not before) the report of this process is available to the Church Council the Council shall commence its process of discernment of the appropriateness of an extension, taking due note of the result of the mission study.

At the same time as the presbytery is involved in this process with the congregation, the presbytery, perhaps through a Presbytery Minister, will join with the minister in discerning the appropriate timing of the conclusion of the present placement and/or availability for a new placement. Important to this discernment will be the spiritual health and missional energy of the minister and the personal and professional goals the minister has set for the next 3-5 years, including a vision for further ministry in the present placement. The results of this discernment need to be shared with the Church Council and the presbytery's PRC.

Concurrent with these consultations the Placements Committee should be made aware of the possibility of an extension being offered and advice sought [Reg 2.6.8 (d) (iii)]. The purpose of this consultation is to receive from the Placements Committee comment on how the needs of the wider church may be affected by an extension.

In its formal response the Church Council is required to vote by secret ballot. If the Church Council is satisfied that the matter has sufficient support the Church Council will present a recommendation to the congregation. Voting figures in both Church Council and congregational meetings shall be recorded and advised to the presbytery.

Following these decisions the matter will be considered by the presbytery in council. Prior to the presbytery meeting at which a decision on the matter is scheduled, the PRC will consider what advice it wishes to offer to the presbytery.

PRC should support an extension only when satisfied that the extension is in the interests of all parties. It needs to be noted that even if there is strong support for extension from both the Church Council and the congregation, the PRC may recommend that an extension be denied. PRC must give reasons for its recommendation, be it for denial or agreement. An extension should be supported only when the PRC deems that the proposed extension will assist the development and/or growth of the congregation's life and mission directions and also assist the minister's personal and vocational growth.

At the meeting of presbytery when the matter is to be determined the congregation will present the proposal for an extension, and the PRC will give its advice based on the presbytery's and congregation's mission plan and comment from the Placements Committee. The presbytery makes its decision by secret ballot.

There is a variety of circumstances in which an extension may be desirable, provided that the extension comes from careful discernment of the congregation, the minister and the presbytery, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and for the building up of Christ's church.

*Adopted 9 November
2007 Regulations updated
February 2014*

6.2A Procedure for Extension of a Presbytery Minister Placement Beyond the Tenth Year

This suggested process builds on Reg 2.6.8 as well as the way that Presbytery Placements are resourced with 2 members of the JNC appointed by the Placements Committee. The principle is that, just as a congregation seeks comment and discernment from the wider church (in its case, the presbytery), so a presbytery would seek a wider perspective. This process is to work in conjunction with Document 6.2 of the Placements Committee protocols.

A Presbytery Minister placement may be extended by the Presbytery beyond the tenth year by agreement of the Presbytery Minister and Presbytery.

Any extension shall require a two-thirds majority by written ballot of those present in each of the meetings of the Presbytery Committee with which the minister has prime connection (the Pastoral Relations Committee in the case of a Presbytery Minister – Pastoral Care, the Mission and Education Committee in the case of a Presbytery Minister – Mission and Education and the relevant committee for the Presbytery Minister – Administration); the Presbytery Standing Committee; and the Presbytery.

Extensions may be for periods of up to five years at a time.

A decision to extend a placement may be made at any time during the ninth and tenth year of a placement, or, in the case of any subsequent extension, at any time during the last two years of the current extension.

When considering requests for extension the Presbytery shall request the Placements Committee to appoint two people, other than from the Presbytery in question, to guide the process. No more than one person should be a serving Presbytery Minister and neither should be a direct colleague.

Their role is to:

- i. consult with the relevant Presbytery Committees, the Presbytery Standing Committee, and the Presbytery Ministry team and give consideration to the continued growth in the mission and development of the Presbytery;
- ii. consult with the Presbytery Minister, and give consideration to the welfare and vocational growth of the minister;
- iii. seek advice from the Placements Committee; and
- iv. report their findings to the Presbytery Standing Committee and to the Presbytery meeting.

Adopted 14 August 2015

6.3 Guidelines for proposing Lay Marriage Celebrants

Rationale

The Uniting Church needs to be able to propose the names of lay people to be authorised to celebrate marriages according to the rites of the Uniting Church among communities where an ordained Minister is not normally available.

While it is normal for an ordained Minister to preside at marriage services, this is no part of the meaning of ordination. There is no theological objection to any Christian of good standing in the Church conducting a service of Christian marriage, just as any Christian can conduct a Christian funeral. This is different from the issue of Lay Presidency at the Sacraments.

Communities have always celebrated marriage, and will continue to do so with or without the Church. However a Christian marriage service is one where the couple, with their families and their community, celebrate their marriage and take their marriage vows in the context of hearing the Gospel.

The Legal Context

The Nominating Authority in each state proposes people to be registered as Lay Marriage Celebrants, if asked by the Synod Placements Committee at the request of a presbytery. This is no guarantee that the person proposed will be accepted by the Federal Government. In the past the Government has been unwilling to register anyone who is less than half-time stipended, but a case can be made when a stipended minister is not readily available.

The Process of approval

Before asking that the Uniting Church propose a person to be authorised as a Lay Marriage Celebrant, the Presbytery needs to satisfy itself that:

1. there is a clear need for the Uniting Church to authorise someone to celebrate marriages in that local congregation or setting;
2. there is no ordained Minister readily available to minister in that community, or there is a special case to justify nominating an additional person;
3. the person proposed is a member in good standing of the Uniting Church; and
4. the person proposed offers respected Christian leadership in that congregation and community, acceptable to the congregation and the presbytery.

The Presbytery then proposes the person to the Placements Committee, which determines whether to seek registration with the Federal Government. The Placements Committee forwards the name to the Uniting Church Nominating Authority for Victoria or Tasmania as appropriate, who lodges the application.

If accepted, the Presbytery ensures that:

1. the celebrant receives training on issues of marriage preparation, legal requirements, meaning and conduct of the liturgy; and
2. the person uses Prepare or other suitable resources for the preparation of marriage.

The Presbytery reviews annually whether this authorisation is still required.

Christian marriage services

The liturgy in Uniting in Worship (Leaders Book, p.379ff) allows for sufficient variation to cover most circumstances. It expresses the style and standard of marriage service which the Church expects. The celebrant has freedom to vary this service, however a Christian marriage service must include:

- a declaration about the meaning of marriage, like that on p.381;
- at least one reading from the Scriptures about the meaning of marriage;
- a brief sermon, so those present hear the Word of God;
- a declaration of intent by the couple, as on p.384;
- the vows by the couple to each other, as on p.386ff;
- the proclamation that they are now “husband and wife” as on p.390f; and
- prayer for God's blessing on the couple, and on others.

Where couples wish to include a meaningful poem or statement in the service, this should be done in a way that does not put the statement on a level with the Scripture readings.

Where couples wish to write or suggest their own vows, the celebrant must be especially careful that they do not dilute the commitment of the vows “forsaking all others” and “as long as we both shall live”. Conditional vows are not acceptable. If in doubt, the marriage celebrant should seek advice from the General Secretary of Synod.

Weddings in other places

While the person is proposed because of the needs of a particular place and community, the person is authorised to celebrate marriages on behalf of the Uniting Church anywhere in Australia. However, s/he must respect the church's ministry in other places.

If the Celebrant is asked to conduct a marriage service elsewhere, s/he will refer the couple to the Minister or Lay Celebrant in that area. The Celebrant will only agree to conduct the wedding if the local Minister or Lay Celebrant invites them. It is unethical to agree to conduct a marriage without an invitation from those in ministry in that place. (This is the Church's expectation of ordained Ministers when they are asked to conduct marriages in other places.)

*Adopted 24 January
2003 Latest amendment
Nov 2007*

6.4 Guidelines for the remuneration of a Presbytery Chairperson

BACKGROUND

UCA Regulation 3.6.2 states, in part:

Officers of the Presbytery may be appointed on an honorary basis or, subject to the approval of the Synod, on a full or part time stipendiary basis.

Chairperson

(a) A chairperson of the Presbytery shall be elected at a meeting of the Presbytery by a vote taken in such a manner as the Presbytery may determine. The Chairperson shall be a confirmed member of the Church.

(b) The Chairperson shall be elected for such a term up to five years as the Presbytery may determine.

Elections are normally by written ballot. The typical threshold for significant leadership roles in the church is 66% in favour.

The 2017 Synod meeting resolved (S 17.4.9 C (a)):

to grant approval to Presbyteries within the Synod to appoint officers, including the Chairperson, with remuneration based on a full or part time stipend.

Consequently the role of Presbytery Chairperson may be designated as a placement, resulting from a Presbytery's and the Placements Committee discernment.

INTRODUCTION

There are five arrangements available to Presbyteries regarding the role of Presbytery Chairperson: **Voluntary; Honorarium; Remunerated by Secondment; Remunerated as a Placement; Remunerated by direct payment.** Prior to calling for nominations for the role, the Presbytery should determine the length of term, and resolve whether the position will be voluntary, receive an honorarium, or be remunerated on a stipendiary basis. If the latter, the Presbytery must resolve what time fraction is expected of the role, ensure that they have the necessary funds, and resolve which approach to take should a Minister in Placement be elected to the role: either to negotiate a secondment from their current Placement, or for the role to be a new Placement. Further details are below.

A. Voluntary

The office of Presbytery Chairperson may be a voluntary role, with reimbursement provided for agreed expenses.

B. Honorarium

A Presbytery may decide to offer a small honorarium, in recognition of the time and expenses of the chairperson, along with reimbursement for agreed expenses.

C. Remuneration by Secondment

If the Presbytery resolves that the position could be remunerated by Secondment, any nominee who is a Minister in Congregational Placement should discuss the possibility with their church council prior to the election being held to obtain in-principle agreement. If elected, the Presbytery would negotiate with the Congregational Placement to pay that Placement for the Minister's time. The Placement may then use those funds for supply ministry to make up for the Minister's absence.

[Back to Index](#)

D. Remuneration as a Placement

The following steps are to be taken if the Presbytery resolves that the position be remunerated as a Placement.

1. Submit a Profile to the Placements Committee, with an attached completed Terms of Placement form, for approval. The attached *Position Description: Chairperson of Presbytery Document* may be used as the model for the development of the Presbytery Chairperson Ministry Profile. Approval from the Placements Committee must be obtained before calling for nominations.
2. Appoint a Nominating Committee (NC) with membership approved by the Presbytery.
3. The Presbytery will need to:
 - (a) Decide if the NC is to accept applications or whether it will consider only nominations received from others.
 - (b) Decide whether nominations of or applications from people outside the Presbytery bounds will be accepted.
 - (c) Decide how and where the call for nominations/applications will be published.
 - (d) Decide if the NC is to bring one or several names to the Presbytery for consideration.
 - (e) Communicate all decisions clearly to all Presbytery members prior to calling for nominations.
4. The Presbytery's usual process calling for nominations, varied if necessary as a result of decisions as noted in point 3, for Presbytery Chairperson is followed. The placement is open to both lay and ordained people. (NOTE: If a layperson is called to the role, the Presbytery Chairperson could be commissioned as a Pastor, or remunerated by direct payment as per option E below).
5. Nominations shall be received by the NC, which will:
 - (a) Check with the Placements Committee Secretary regarding the availability of any Ministers who are nominated.
 - (b) Discern whether those persons nominated meet the criteria (of gifts and skills laid out in the Presbytery Chairperson profile) of what is expected of a Presbytery Chairperson.
 - (c) Present nominees for election in accordance with the decisions at point 3.
6. If a Minister is elected, a letter of call is issued. The letter of call will reflect the model for such letters as outlined in the Placements Handbook:

<https://victas.uca.org.au/ministry-mission/placements>

The NC Convenor shall inform the Placements Committee of the call being issued and accepted by the Minister being called to the role of Presbytery Chairperson. This will ensure the usual administrative matters associated with new placements are attended to. In the case of a layperson being elected, the Presbytery may proceed towards calling the person to a placement as a Pastor, given the appropriate competencies, or remunerate the person directly as per option E.

E. Remuneration by direct payment

If the Presbytery resolves that the position is to be remunerated on a stipendiary basis, a lay person (or a retired Minister) may be paid directly. The Presbytery should check their arrangements with the HR office of the Synod.

For further information regarding these guidelines, please contact

Rev. Sue Withers
Placements Committee Secretary
placements.secretary@victas.uca.org.au

*Approved by Placements Committee: 16 October 2018
Guidelines to be reviewed June 2019*

[Back to Index](#)

POSITION DESCRIPTION: CHAIRPERSON OF PRESBYTERY (Guideline Document)

The Purpose and Role of the Presbytery

“Christ is the Good Shepherd who loves, knows, leads, protects, cares for and guides his flock. This is the loving oversight that God in Christ offers all creation, and calls the church to embody. In seeking to embody this oversight the church does so not for the church’s own sake, but for the sake of all God’s people.

Presbyteries are one means by which we as church discharge the ministry of oversight entrusted to us as followers of Christ at mission in the world. *The Basis of Union* (Paragraph 15, 1992 edition) describes the **Presbytery’s** function as the district council to:

*...perform all the acts of **oversight** necessary to the life and mission of the Church in the area for which it is responsible, except for those agencies which are directly responsible to the Synod or Assembly. It will in particular exercise oversight over the congregations within its bounds, encouraging them to strengthen one another’s faith, to bear one another’s burdens and exhorting them to fulfil their high calling in Christ Jesus. It will promote those wider aspects of the work of the Church committed to it by the Synod or Assembly.”*

Presbytery Transition Team Report, 2017, Section D1, pg D1.4

The core responsibilities of presbyteries are laid out in the *Constitution and Regulations* 3.1.3, and fall into three key areas: Pastoral, Mission/Education and Administration.

When Presbyteries are functioning well, they contribute to the building up of the whole Body of Christ³:

- Congregations, agencies, faith communities and chaplaincies are supported and their life enriched;
- Congregations, agencies, faith communities and chaplaincies are helped in identifying and building their missional and ecumenical possibilities;
- Links between schools, agencies, faith communities, congregations and the wider church are forged and strengthened;
- People in ministry roles are encouraged, equipped and supported;
- Educational possibilities for congregations and those in ministry are facilitated;
- Intercultural relationships thrive;
- The relationship with Congress is strengthened; and
- Communication with the various parts of the Synod is clear, building up strong relationships between all councils of the Church.

The Basis of Union, paragraph 16 states; “the Uniting Church recognizes the responsibility and freedom which belong to councils to acknowledge gifts among members for the fulfilment of particular functions”. The role of Chairperson of Presbytery is one such position. The Chairperson represents the Presbytery, a council of the Church, in many ways and contexts over and above their specific role of chairing that council’s meetings, including certain disciplinary functions.

³ Adapted from Yarra Yarra PM Profiles, 2012

Synod 2017 resolved that, under the provisions of Regulation 3.6.2, to grant approval to Presbyteries within the Synod to appoint officers, including the Chairperson, with remuneration based on a full or part-time stipend; to encourage Presbyteries in their discernment of team models to exercise the regulation (2.11.3) which requires the designation of a team leader in ministry teams, and to request presbyteries to work together in developing a model position description for Presbytery Chairperson. This document has been compiled in line with these resolutions.

Presbytery

Chairperson/Staff Key

Relationships

Presbytery Chairperson/Minister/staff have a key role in facilitating collaboration between congregations, Presbytery and Synod. As a Church we have shared Vision, Mission Principles and Strategic Priorities (see Appendix) which outline our shared priorities in discipleship together. Presbytery appointed staff work collaboratively within the Presbytery and in relationship with the wider Synod in line with the Vision and Mission Principles. In particular, Presbytery appointed staff will work collaboratively in a coordinated way with

- the **eLM unit** (equipping Leadership for Mission) and;
- the **Mission Resourcing unit**

to foster cooperation between Synod and Presbytery, so as to enhance our worship, witness and service across the Synod.

Presbytery Context

Description of the geographic and demographic area of the Presbytery

Description of the Uniting Church in ()**

Presbytery Staffing

Organisational Structure

PURPOSE of CHAIRPERSON POSITION

To exercise the responsibilities of the Presbytery Chairperson's role as outlined in the Regulations (3.6.2 & 5.4.1), being pastoral, administrative and financial oversight of the Presbytery. To exercise these responsibilities in collaboration with relevant Presbytery staff, committees and other members as appropriate. To provide leadership for the presbytery in a basic role of oversight of the life and mission of the Church within its bounds by stimulating and encouraging congregations, ministers and lay people in their life and witness (Sec 26 Constitution).

Specifically the tasks include:

Preparing for, constituting, presiding over and directing the business of the meetings of the presbytery according to the Manual for Meetings;

ensuring the UCA regulations are adhered to within the life and work of the

Presbytery; issuing regular key communications within and beyond the Presbytery

where appropriate;

responding to requests from Presbytery staff and members of presbytery and congregations in a timely manner, and delegate responsibilities appropriately.

presiding at services of ordination and induction of ministers, commissioning of pastors, admission of ministers etc. (Reg 2.4.5; 3.5 (d) (ii); 3.6.3.2 (j); 5.4.1; 5.4.3

exercising pastoral oversight (Regulation 3.6.2);

consulting with congregations and other places of ministry according to need, and in particular stress or conflict, which may include calling a special meeting of a congregation;

consulting with the Moderator about the (j)

clause; receiving or referring a complaint about

a minister;

liaising with Synod and Assembly in matters of general business and management;

being aware of responsibilities and potential liabilities in relation to finances and

solvency; monitoring insurance coverage, and other matters of legal compliance.

ensuring financial statements are regularly submitted, thorough and

clear assessing and managing risk responsibly;

maintaining

confidentiality; TEAM

LEADER

The Chairperson will be able to work effectively in a team context with other Presbytery office bearers (Secretary and Treasurer), and Presbytery staff (called and placed). In particular, the Chairperson of Presbytery will exercise the role of Team Leader (in relation to the Presbytery Minister/Staff in the Presbytery ministry team) – Regulation 2.11.3 (b).

COMMITTEES

The Chairperson of the Presbytery is also Chairperson of the Presbytery Standing Committee, and is a member of the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee.

GIFTS and SKILLS

required: confirmed

member of the UCA;

passion for the Gospel;

[Back to Index](#)

PROTOCOLS, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR PLACEMENTS COMMITTEE

The documents in this folder are in the public domain, and may be copied for use in presbyteries

Page 13

creative and missional heart;
theological governance and administration;
pastoral sensitivity;
honesty, transparency and
integrity; ability to priorities and
delegate;
capacity to lead in a time of transition and anxiety in the church.

SUPPORT OF CHAIRPERSON

The Standing Committee of Presbytery will be responsible for developing a support plan for the Presbytery Chairperson in consultation with their placement (if relevant)

Appendix

In June 2016 the Synod adopted a strategy that supports a coordinated, intentional focus on mission – mission that encompasses the very nature of the Christian life in all its liturgical, communal, institutional, spiritual and service dimensions. The Synod is seeking to lighten burdens and to encourage proactive spiritual discernment in our councils and committees so we may be freer to join in God's mission.

At the core of this new strategy is the Strategic framework made up of the Vision and Mission Principles with a focus on three priority areas:

Vision

- Following Christ,
- Walking together as First and Second Peoples,
- Seeking community, compassion and justice for all creation

Mission Principles

God in Christ is at mission in the world and sends the Church in the Spirit to:

1. Share the Good News of Jesus Christ
2. Nurture followers of Christ in life-giving communities of reconciliation
3. Respond in compassion to human need
4. Live justly and seek justice for all
5. Care for creation
6. Listen to each generation and culture so as to live out the Gospel in fresh ways
7. Pursue God's mission in partnership

Strategic Priorities

- Ministries which foster diverse gathered communities of renewal, Christian practice and mission
- Culturally diverse mission and ministry
- Mission and ministry with children, youth, their families and young people.

[Back to Index](#)

6.5 Vitality of Call and Placement

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING CALL VITALITY

These guidelines are to be used by Ministers and the Placements Committee when assessing the ongoing vitality of a call to ordained ministry, the appropriateness of placement for the mission of the Church and the appropriate designation as per Regulations 2.6.1.

1. WHEN TO USE THIS PROCEDURE?

When a minister is seeking a new placement and is not finding conversations available or leading to a call, or annually if a minister is awaiting placement. The aim is to help ministers in their evaluation of their own availability for ministry; and to help the presbytery and Placements Committee in their consideration of the designation for ministry.

2. WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE CONSULTATION?

The consultation is a Placements Committee initiative aimed at assisting the Minister, and to help the Placements Committee and the Presbytery to ascertain the will of God for the continuing ministry and future placement of the Minister.

The Consultation team should include -

- At least 2 of the Placement Committee Executive
- At least 2 members appointed by the PRC from the minister's Presbytery, including at least 1 Placements Committee representative
- the Minister, and a support person of the minister's choosing.

3. THE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED

(a) Before the meeting

The Placements Secretary writes to the Minister to invite them to a consultation, to advise them of preparations, and to set a date.

Before the Consultation the Minister updates his/her profile.

(b) The Meeting

Possible themes and questions are found in Appendix A.

(c) After the Meeting

The Consultation Team prepares a confidential report for the Placements Committee and the PRC. The particular focus of the report is on perceptions regarding the "vitality of the call" and appropriate designation of the Minister. The minister and the presbytery PRC should receive a copy of the report for discussion and correction.

If a person has been awaiting placement for more than 2 years then the Vitality of Call Consultation Team should make a recommendation to the Presbytery PRC and the Placements Committee regarding the continuation of the designation of awaiting placement as per Regulation 2.10.3 (b).

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS/ISSUES FOR THE MINISTER (Sample questions only)

What strengths do you have and how are you building on them? Have you been able to use your gifts as hoped?

In what ways have your gifts grown over time?

What ways are you finding to express your call at present?

What are your hopes and visions for ministry? How does that match with how you see the context of church and society?

Do you perceive your call to ministry still has vitality?

What would be helpful for the 'energizing' of your future ministry? Share your plans for Continuing Education.

What form/s of supervision are you currently engaged in?

QUESTIONS/ISSUES FOR THE PRESBYTERY REPRESENTATIVES (Sample questions only)

How does the Presbytery perceive the minister's vitality of call? What does the presbytery think is the appropriate designation?

Possible outcomes include:

Continuing as Awaiting Placement

- Re-do profile
- Coaching/mentoring
- Nourishing own

faith? Retirement

Withdrawal of Recognition

November 2014

[Back to Index](#)