

Gilmore Park United Church

POLICY 400M – PASTORAL CARE TEAM¹

Date: MARCH, 2006. Modified:

A. Ministry

The Mission and Ministry of Gilmore Park United Church is defined in Council's Policy 100 as follows. Bold print indicates the sections of the Policy which are particularly applicable to the Pastoral Care Team ("PCT")

Global Ministry Policy 100 (Our Mission)

Gilmore Park United Church exists so that:

- People at every stage of their lives will experience the transforming love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and will commit to a life of discipleship
1. "A Life of Discipleship" means:
 - a. Daily prayer
 - i. Committed to listening to God, and to discerning God's direction for us as a people
 - b. Study of Scripture
 - c. Weekly worship
 - i. Worship will be culturally relevant, innovative and meaningful while honoring the traditions of the United Church of Canada.
 - ii. Living out the sabbath will be encouraged.
 - d. Proportional Giving
 - e. Service
 - i. Committed to serving others (the hungry, sick, homeless, victimized, marginalized)
 - ii. Committed to working for social justice
 - iii. Committed to world peace
 - f. Spiritual Friendships
 - i. Growing in our faith
 - ii. Communicating who we are, as a United Church, to others
 2. **The CONGREGATION will be an intentional community centred in God's mission that models the kingdom of God.**
 - a. **A diversity of ages, races, sexual orientations, economic conditions, abilities and theological perspectives will be embraced, respected and celebrated**
 - b. **People's gifts will be discerned, affirmed, encouraged and equipped for a variety of ministries.**
 - c. **People will experience tangible loving care, acceptance and help with living.**

¹ Words in capital letters are defined in the GILMORE PARK UNITED CHURCH Governance Document.

d. The truth will be told in love

B. Theological Premise

“Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” ...Matthew 25: 34-40

All ministry begins and is sustained by God in Christ Jesus, who calls us together as his living body, the church, to do ministry in Christ’s name and to share the Gospel (Good News) of new life in Christ with the world.

The Gospel is shared both in word (worship/preaching/teaching, sharing faith with others) and in action (working for peace and justice, acts of charity for the poor and helpless)

God-in-Christ equips the church with every necessary gift for this ministry, through the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in their lives and in the life of the church as a whole.

C. Specific Ministry to be achieved by the Pastoral Care Team

1. The purpose of the Pastoral Care Team is to provide help and support to the MINISTER in carrying out COUNCIL Ministry Policy 100-2, especially point (c)- to ensure that the people experience “tangible loving care, acceptance and help with living”.
2. Normally the care of those persons who do not participate in small groups will be divided among the members of the PCT in any manner the team deems best.
 - i. People of all ages will be included in the PCT’s ministry.
 - a. The Minister of Congregational Life (all ages) will normally be responsible for the pastoral care of children and youth.
 - b. The PCT’s specific ministry will therefore normally be to those who are:
 - a. elderly
 - b. sick
 - c. shut-in
 - d. bereaved.
3. The PCT is not expected to solve problems. The primary emphasis will be:
 - a. A ministry of *compassion* which means, literally, “suffer with”; hence the Team’s is mainly a ministry of “being there”

- b. Prayer – both for and with others
 - c. Addressing isolation – (Examples of this would be telephone calls, home visits and encouraging and enabling trips out of the home)
 - d. Providing help and good cheer – (Examples of this would be cards, food, transportation, home visits.)
 - e. Empathic listening
 - f. Providing resources for physical, emotional and spiritual help in the form of information and referrals.
 - g. This includes informing people of the help available to them from the MINISTER – counseling, prayer support & instruction, spiritual help, home communion.
 - h. Community information and referrals may also be provided.
 - i. Persons requesting general information about the church may be directed to the Ministry Group.
4. People whose absence in worship is inexplicable will be followed-up with a phone call or visit.
- a. The reason for the person's absence in worship, along with their name, will be provided, in writing, at a Team meeting.
 - b. The PCT will keep this information strictly confidential
 - c. People with concerns about any other person or group will be strongly encouraged to speak to them directly.
 - d. If unwilling to speak directly to another person or group, they will be encouraged to write their concern on a blue "concerns" sheet, and submit them to the box in the narthex where they will be dealt with by the Ministry Group. The PCT member may offer to do this for the person.
 - e. The PCT, either gathered officially or unofficially, is not a platform for discussing the *content* of peoples' concerns.
 - f. At all times the emphasis will be solely on *caring for the people*, rather than attempting to address the concerns themselves.
5. The PCT shall provide for the continuing education of its members in the area of pastoral care, at least annually.
6. The PCT members shall inform themselves about the church's various ministries and governance.

D. Linkage to MINISTER and COUNCIL

- 1. The PCT is directly accountable to the MINISTER for achieving the provisions of this document's "Ministry Policies" (as in A-C, above). The Team is also accountable to the MINISTER for adhering to provisions of the Executive Limitations policies (as in "E", below).

- i. The PCT will be directed by the MINISTER *only* through written policies which describe the Ministry to be achieved and the Executive Limitations to actions.
- ii. As long as the PCT uses *any reasonable interpretation* of Ministry and Executive Limitations policies, the PCT is automatically authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, appoint all committees or subcommittees, and develop all activities.
- iii. The MINISTER may change his or her Ministry and Executive Limitation policies, thereby shifting the boundary between the PCT and MINISTER domains.
- iv. The PCT may appeal any decision of the MINISTER to COUNCIL (in writing).
- v. The MINISTER is accountable to the COUNCIL, and must consult with the FINANCE TEAM on all matters pertaining to financial management, disbursement of funds, and budgeting.
- vi. Lines of accountability and authority are outlined in the attached organizational chart.

E. Executive Limitations

1. The PCT shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is either unlawful, imprudent, contrary to the requirements of the Manual of the United Church of Canada, or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics.
2. With respect to the pastoral care of the CONGREGATION, the PCT shall not allow any conditions, procedures or decisions that are:
 - unsafe
 - disrespectful
 - unnecessarily intrusive, or
 - inhospitable
3. The PCT shall not fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy
 - a. Breaches in confidentiality will not be tolerated – Team members breaching confidentiality will be referred to the COUNCIL for disciplinary action
 - b. Team members will not discuss the personal details of the pastoral care of persons, *even with one another*, outside of Team meetings.
 - c. The exceptions to the rule of confidentiality are as follows:
 - i. Team members are free to discuss matters of pastoral care of persons at PCT meetings, sharing only those details necessary to receive help, support and advice from other team members.

- ii. Team members may seek help or advice from the Team Leader or MINISTER at any time.
 - iii. PCT members will immediately share with the MINISTER and/or Team Leader details of any person's conversation which leads that Team member to believe that the person may bring harm to him/herself or another.
 - iv. Any evidence of a minor child being harmed must be immediately shared with the Team Leader and/or MINISTER who will in turn report it to the authorities.
- 4. The PCT will not entertain discussion of matters not pertaining to the work of the PCT at its meetings.
- 5. The PCT shall not exceed the congregation's annual budget allotted in the area of pastoral care without written authorization from the Finance Team.
 - a. Requests for funding in excess of the budget will be made to the Finance Team in writing.
- 6. The PCT shall not fail to ensure that each member who volunteers with the elderly, disabled or children, submits to the MINISTER a current and valid criminal records check.
- 7. The PCT shall not fail to inform the MINISTER in a timely manner if they are at anytime non-compliant with the aforementioned policies.

F. Relationships

- 1. The PCT works together in a collegial manner with the MINISTER, Minister of Congregational Life, and other paid staff.
 - i. Members of the MINISTRY TEAM are not required to take instruction from the PCT.
 - ii. MINISTRY TEAM MEMBERS are ultimately accountable only to the M&P committee for the content and quality of their work.
- 2. Any conflicts or grievances arising will be dealt with following the congregation's Conflict Resolution Policy procedures (attached).

G. Reporting

- a. The PCT will keep clear and detailed minutes of its meetings (respecting confidentiality limitations), and submit them to the MINISTER for inclusion in his or her COUNCIL reporting.
 - i. Minutes will normally be given to the Team Leader and MINISTER for review before distributing to the Team members.

- ii. Minutes will not normally be made public.
- b. The PCT will submit a report to the quarterly newsletter, and to the annual report outlining its various activities and decisions.
- c. Annually, by September 30th of each year, the PCT will submit a report to the MINISTER summarizing *only* its compliance with the policies outlined in this document.

H. Membership

- a. Voting privileges will be given to new PCT members after they have attended two consecutive meetings.
- b. Members are required to complete a Spiritual Gifts Inventory, and go through a Gifts Discernment process with both the MINISTER and their peers. Once the person is satisfied that serving on the PCT is the best use of their gifts, then they are free to do so.
 - i. The PCT is open to any member or adherent of the congregation, however the MINISTER and PCT leader may jointly and confidentially encourage those persons clearly unsuitable for pastoral care to use their gifts elsewhere in the ministry of Christ's church.
- c. The MINISTER is a member of the PCT, as per the Manual, Section 122.

I. Other

- a. The Leader of the PCT will be appointed by the MINISTER based on clear gifts for Pastoral Care and Small Group Ministry, in consultation with the nominations committee of COUNCIL and the other members of the PCT.