

## APPENDIX 3.1

### **THE MODEL OF MULTIPLE STAFF MINISTRY**

The M&P Committee has been asked by Council to develop a useful model for our multiple staff ministry here at Grace United. The M&P Committee, after consultation with the ministers and Bev Robinson, developed the model shown and discussed on pages 4 to 6 of this presentation. We recommend that Council consider adopting this model as part of our Constitution.

Accountability is a key issue when discussing how a multiple ministerial staff should function within Grace United Church. To help Council understand how this model fits within the United Church of Canada (UCC) and Grace United Church (GUC) structures we have abstracted two pages from the United Church of Canada Congregation Organization Handbook (2006) and inserted them in this presentation.

The first page (our page 2) shows the “conciliar” nature of the UCC structure. Conciliar is a word that we use in the model and we felt that this abstract gives a necessary and full explanation of what it means. In addition, within this nested accountability structure it is important to note the following points about Ministry Personnel accountability:

- Conference ordains and commissions candidates for the Order of Ministry, and deploys and supports ministry personnel (Cong. Org. Hdbk. p.33)
- Presbytery is a court of ministry personnel and representatives of local churches...[and] oversees all ministry personnel within its bounds (Cong. Org. Hdbk. p.31)

The second page (our page 3) shows an example of a typical Council structure such as the one we have at GUC. Again it is important to note the following points about Ministry Personnel accountability:

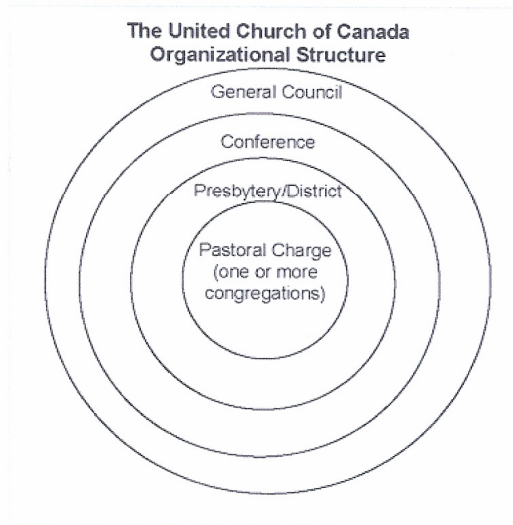
- The membership of the Church Council shall consist of...(b) all Ministry Personnel who have been settled in or appointed to the Pastoral Charge (Manual 219(b))
- All Ministry Personnel settled in or appointed to a Pastoral Charge shall be ex officio members of all Committees of the Pastoral Charge except for ... (a) the Joint Needs Assessment Committee...(b) the Joint Search Committee...(c) the Ministry and Personnel Committee...[and] (d) the Nominations Committee...(Manual 122(c))
- Ministry Personnel may serve as resource person(s) for the various committees (Cong. Org. Hdbk. p.14)

In summary, we believe that it is important to realize that our ministers' responsibilities and accountabilities span the different structures (Conference – Presbytery – Pastoral Charge, Council – committees) within the UCC and GUC. We feel that the Shared Leadership Model as presented incorporates all of these accountabilities while respecting the conciliar nature of our denomination. We also request that future covenanting services conducted by Presbytery at Grace United honour and reflect this model of multiple staff ministry.

The United Church has a conciliar structure, which means that each court is made up of representatives from the next smallest court. Therefore,

- presbytery/district is made up of ministry personnel and representatives from congregations/pastoral charges
- Conference is made up of representatives from presbyteries/districts
- General Council is made up of commissioners, who are representatives of the Conferences

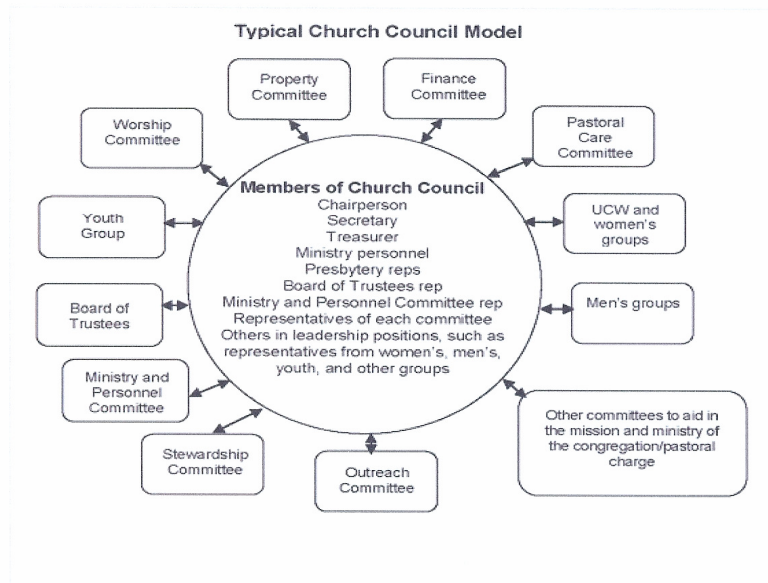
Each court of the church thus has representatives from the pastoral charges, the most basic, local mission unit and court of the United Church. Another feature of our conciliar structure has to do with the importance of spiritual discernment. Since we believe that the Holy Spirit speaks to us in and through our discussions and meetings, each court and its members must be open to hearing what the Spirit may be saying to them during the course of a meeting. So, we do not expect representatives to be bound by the wishes or opinions of those they represent. They are wise to consider such opinions and wisdom when voting, but are always free to vote according to their prayerful reflection and conscience. In this way, a presbytery cannot bind its Conference representatives to vote a certain way on any given matter. Doing so would deny those representatives from hearing God's Spirit active in the life of the court of which they are members.



**C. The Church Council Model (*The Manual 215–228*)**

The Church Council model emphasizes the responsibility of all members of the congregation or pastoral charge to be engaged in ministry. The congregation elects committees, each of which chooses a member (often the chairperson) to represent their committee or ministry on a Church Council. These Council members become the elders of the congregation. The ordered minister may serve as a resource person for the various committees. A larger percentage of the congregation can participate in ministry and mission activities by reducing the number of people needed for decision making. See the diagram below. The Church Council acts as a coordinating body, as a forum for some decisions, and as a place for sharing committee plans and actions.

As is the case in the other models, the Ministry and Personnel Committee and Trustees are required. Other committees will multiply as the ministries of the congregation grow. The committees, however, tend to be oriented around specific tasks rather than general categories of work. Representatives of various groups also represent their constituency on the Church Council. The Church Council continues to develop policy and make plans, which are implemented by the various committees and groups of the congregation.



## BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS ON SHARED LEADERSHIP MODEL OF MINISTRY

What is the biblical support for shared leadership? There are many examples of shared leadership within the biblical texts. Although several of the Old Testament stories appear to hold up an autocratic hierarchical model with one primary “leader,” as we delve into these stories we realize that many of them also embody a commitment to shared leadership.

In the story of the Exodus there is a chosen leader, Moses, but he is not comfortable speaking so depends upon Aaron for this part of the leadership (Ex. 4:14), and upon his sister Miriam to inspire the people and lead in the celebration upon their victory (Exodus 15:20). Added to this, the entire exodus would have been impossible without the leadership of the Hebrew people who worked together to secure emancipation with God’s guidance and power.

In the New Testament there are several examples of shared leadership. The Book of Acts states that the group of believers “were one in mind and heart” (Acts 4:32). It goes on to describe how they shared their financial resources as well as the responsibility of spreading the gospel (Acts 4:33). In First Corinthians Paul provides a body metaphor for the way the church should operate reminding his readers that every part of the body is essential in order for it to function effectively (1 Cor. 12:12-27).

Practical examples of shared leadership are demonstrated throughout the New Testament. Although Paul was central to spreading the gospel throughout the Roman world, where would he be without Phoebe who delivered his letters to the churches (Rom. 16:1), or to folks like Teritus who wrote the letters (Rom. 16:22), or to those who worked alongside of Paul like Barnabas (1 Cor. 9:6) and Timothy (Heb 13:23), and people like Lydia (Acts 16:15) who started churches in their own homes? What would have happened to the Christian church if Paul had not been supported and blessed by Peter (Acts 15:6-14) and encouraged to join in sharing leadership with himself and the other apostles who were working to establish the early church?

There are many hierarchical models in scripture most of them coming from the Old Testament such as the Judges, the Kings, the Priests, the Pharisees. Although there is some support for Paul and Peter serving an Episcopal function in the early church, there is more evidence for communities functioning on their own looking to Peter and Paul and the other apostles for guidance and support.

These stories, and many others, illustrate that shared leadership is foundational to our faith as grounded in the biblical tradition.

SHARED LEADERSHIP  
MODEL OF PASTORAL TEAM MINISTRY

**How do congregations delegate leadership and authority?** Models range from highly diffused among all participants (“leaderless”) to highly concentrated in one individual (“autocratic”). In between are models of “shared leadership.”



How is The United Church of Canada organized? “The United Church has a conciliar structure, which means that each court is made up of representatives from the next smaller court” (Congregational Handbook 2006 p.8). We have a “hierarchy” with higher (General Council) and lower (congregations) courts. However, each court within the hierarchy is “conciliar” – designed around a council with shared leadership. For example, we have presbyteries instead of bishops. Decision making is shared among equals (presbyters) rather than concentrated with an authority figure (bishop). Ministry personnel and lay people are not accountable to a bishop; rather, we are equally accountable to one another. This conciliar, shared leadership model reflects our theological belief in the “priesthood of all believers.”

How is Grace United Church organized? Grace United Church has adopted the Church Council Model (as outlined in the Congregational Handbook 2006 p. 14 as well as our constitution) where “The Church Council model emphasizes the responsibility of all members of the congregation or pastoral charge to be engaged in ministry” Like other levels of the church, our congregation reflects the conciliar model. We have a Council and committees where membership includes ministry personnel and lay people. The congregation as a whole is our highest decision making body, reflecting our theological belief in ministry belonging to “the whole people of God.”

How is the current Pastoral Team organized? The current ministerial team – Brad, Pat and Sue – have organized themselves by the shared leadership model. They believe that this model reflects the conciliar, shared leadership model of our congregation and denomination. In the Handbook for Ministry & Personnel Committees (2003) shared leadership is encouraged and supported as that which best fits our denominational philosophy of ministry as stated in this section of the Handbook (p. 18): “Issues of equity are important in multiple Staff situations. No Ministry Personnel may be subordinate and answerable to another (i.e. there can be no “senior” or “junior/association” minister relationships)”.

Over the past year they have functioned within this model and have found that it not only supports the ethos of The United Church of Canada but fits within the Grace United Church ethos – specifically, Grace’s organizational structure. The following principles and practices are fundamental to the practical application of this model:

- 1) Tasks of ministry belong to the Pastoral Team as a whole, although there may be defined areas of responsibility for members of the team.
- 2) There is communication among all Pastoral Team members about the whole ministry, although individual members may initiate different areas of work.
- 3) Leadership is shared so that the Pastoral Team is envisioned as a team of equals.
- 4) The Pastoral Team will have clearly defined goals, established in collaboration with the Council and appropriate committees, to which the entire team is committed.
- 5) As often as possible decisions are made by the Pastoral Team regarding who will take the lead in areas of shared responsibility or tasks or projects.
- 6) Pastoral Team members may work in particular areas of ministry and will consult with one another whenever possible. Some decisions will be made by individuals in an area of responsibility that he or she is overseeing.