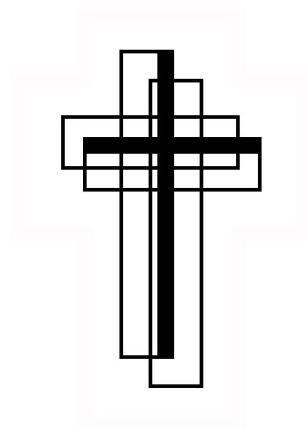


# Ministry Board Policy Manual



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**Revised ~ February 21, 2010**

# Northwood United Church

## Ministry Board Policy Manual

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### **Introduction**

This Manual is a work in progress. It is intended to guide the members, adherents and staff of Northwood as they undertake their varied ministries within the congregation.

The development of this Manual has been assisted by many different Congregations in Canada and the United States, the British Columbia Conference and the General Council of The United Church of Canada. As this Manual has been compiled from many different resources there are some inconsistencies in the manner in which the policies are written. This however, does not affect the intent of the policy. As revisions are undertaken by the Ministry Board there will be intentionality in bringing a consistent writing style to the document.

Any suggested or recommended changes can be made to the Ministry Board in writing at any time. If you would like to see additional policies developed for a specific topic you may also make a written request through the Ministry Board.

Copies of the Manual are available to members and adherents at no charge. This Manual can also be viewed on the internet at:

**<http://www.northwood-united.org/policy.pdf>**

As this is a public document copies may be requested in accordance with Policy 920 Protection of Information for a fee. To obtain a copy contact the church office.

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### 000 Introduction

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date: February 21, 2010

*“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ and individually we are members one of another.” (Romans 12: 4-5)*

### 001 Governance

The organizational model of the Congregation shall be the Ministry Board as outlined and expressed in this document. This is in accordance with the Manual Section 279.

### 002 Theological Statement:

We are a united and uniting church with an open, accepting and caring attitude.

We believe in Jesus Christ as the most graphic and visible, but not the only, revelation of God. The Bible is an account of human encounters with the divine cast in language and customs of the cultures in which the words were written.

We believe that all people are loved by God whether we are comfortable with their life's selections or not. We seek to grow in our own understanding and acceptance of all humans.

Our aim is to accept, assist, teach, and empower people to more meaningful avenues in which they can practice their faith, service and fellowship.

We chose to be Christian, followers of Jesus and to be a Congregation within the broad fellowship of The United Church of Canada.

We are all invited on this journey.

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### **003 How the Ministry Board Works**

The Congregation entrusts the Ministry Board to carry out the mission, vision, and goals of the Congregation. If the Congregation does not achieve its anticipated goals then ultimately the Ministry Board is responsible. It is recognized that a group that only meets for two hours bi-monthly cannot possibly do all the work that is required. The Ministry Board, therefore, divides the work into two basic components: “Ends” (The actual ministry of the Congregation, known as “Ministry” and “Means” (the particular way the Ministry’s Vision and Goals will be achieved).

Work on Ends (“Ministry”) is kept solely in the Ministry Board hands. This is the work of ensuring that all the members and interested persons in the Congregation are heard, and that God is listened to and addressed through prayer and the study of Scripture. This is in order to determine what direction the Congregation should be going, what its needs, hopes, dreams, worries, and visions are. Based on that hearing process, the Ministry Board then lays out clearly and in written form what direction and goals it will pursue. It starts doing this broadly, based on the Congregation’s Mission Statement and Core Values, then narrows down to be more specific. The Ministry Board will be disciplined in not saying how it will achieve these things but only what it wants achieved.

The Ministry Board then takes a look at the Means (“how do we actually do this?”) This “how to” work is assigned, along with a budget, to the Small Groups (formerly committees) with written policies outlining the expectations for what the work will accomplish. These policies include a list of the values the work shall follow, as well as the standards for work in such areas as personnel, budgeting, the protection of assets, and treatment of Beneficiaries.

Before even starting to undertake work, the expectations of the Ministry Board are known. These policies are monitored regularly by the Ministry Board to ensure they are being followed. Within the limitations imposed by the Ministry Board and directed by Policy, the Small Groups are free to use their gifts to accomplish what has been asked.

### **004 Compliance with the United Church Manual**

This structure is in compliance with the Manual of The United Church of Canada, (“Manual”), either in actual provisions, or in the spirit in which the Manual was developed and written, and is striving for the same ends as the Manual provides.

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### **005 Congregational Requirements**

1. The Congregation shall meet at least annually, in accordance with the requirements of the Manual.
2. The Congregation shall be constituted according to the requirements of the Manual sections 104 and 113-116.
3. The Congregation will elect a Ministry Board as its spiritual leaders according to the requirements of the Manual sections 130-136. Nominees will be duly screened and interviewed by the Ministry Board.
4. Every year two Ministry Board members will be elected for a 3-year term.
5. All of the authority of the Congregation between annual meetings is delegated to the Ministry Board apart from the exceptions noted in this document.
  - a. Amendments to Ministry Board Policies may be made between annual meetings of the Congregation, and acted upon, subject to approval at the next annual meeting.
6. The Congregation has the right to appeal any decision of the Ministry Board to the Presbytery. Such appeal must be made in writing.
7. The Congregation will approve the following annually:
  - a. All new and modified Ministry Board Policies
  - b. All Annual Financial Statements
  - c. An annual budget.
8. The Congregation will elect Trustees and Presbytery Representatives according to the requirements of the Manual.
  - a. If the Congregation is unable to fulfill this duty, it shall fall to the Ministry Board to appoint individuals as Trustees or Presbytery Representatives.

### **006 Approval by the Congregation:**

At a special Congregational meeting of October 22, 2006, it was moved, seconded and carried that the Congregation approves and adopts the Ministry Board model as recommended by the Church Council and presented at the Special Congregational meeting

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### **050 Definitions**

#### *Beneficiaries means*

The Congregation along with those persons who are recipients of the outreach, social justice and other ministries of the Congregation. Beneficiaries also includes all of creation, human and other, to whom the Congregation is called to proclaim and enact the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### *Church means*

Northwood United Church, a Congregation of The United Church of Canada.

#### *Congregation means*

The members and adherents of, and occasional worship visitors to Northwood United Church, along with the Staff. (“Members” and “Adherents” are defined in the Manual section 001.)

#### *Minister means*

The members of the Ordered Ministry settled in the Congregation of Northwood United Church.

#### *Manual means*

The current Manual of The United Church of Canada.

#### *Ministry Board means*

The group of people called and duly elected as board members of Northwood United Church, along with the Minister(S) plus those appointed by virtue of their office within the Congregation. In accordance with the Manual Section 130:

Board members are those persons of the Congregation who are chosen by the Congregation for their wisdom, caring, spiritual discernment, and other gifts of the Spirit, and to whom the responsibility of leadership amongst the whole people is entrusted as appropriate by and within a particular community of faith.”

#### *Ownership means*

1. The Congregation who are called by God in Christ into ministry in the world, the members of which appoint and elect the Ministry Board
2. The United Church of Canada and its courts with whom the Congregation are partners in ministry.

#### *Small Groups means*



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Groups formed for study, prayer, support and specific tasks under the accountability of the Ministry Board to carry out some of the various ministries of the Ministry Board.

### *Staff means*

The paid accountable ministry personnel team, consisting of the members of the Ordered Ministry and those persons entrusted with the Ministry of Administration, and any other paid accountable ministry personnel as may be added.

### *Task Groups means*

Groups formed for the purpose of carrying out specific tasks (not under the Small Group Ministry model) under the accountability of the Ministry Board to carry out some of the various ministry tasks.

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### 100 Mission Statement, Values and Goals

#### **110 Mission Statement**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

Embracing our community with the love of Christ

#### **120 Core Values**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date: January 10, 2007

“Values define common commitments with respect to how we live together. A statement of values becomes a guide to the development of positive, healthy attitudes and behaviours and, when necessary, a benchmark against which our behaviours and attitudes can be held accountable. A public statement of values ... represents a common commitment to a way of life. This is who we are; this is how we live.” (Power Surge, p. 118)

This statement of values refers both to individuals and to our Congregation, and thereby to the dynamic interplay that occurs when connections are made between them. This dynamic occurs around questions about what is significant for daily living.

This is how we are committed to live;

We care about people. We are committed to being a welcoming and accepting community of faith. We respect one another as equal members of the body of Christ, each with different skills and abilities, and different but equal contributions. We celebrate hospitality in our community, through which people may continue their search and deepen their sense of the Spirit.

We honour contributions to the shared mission of God and to the life of the world. We are committed to affirming the gifts of every person. The ministries of our church will be carried out by each person according to their spiritual gifts. We celebrate that everything we have is a gift from God. In gratitude we generously give from our abundance.

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We respond to the call of God toward the world's well-being. We are committed to being a servant community. We have a desire to make a difference; this is rooted in a faithful foundation with God and in God's mission in and for the world. We accept responsibility to foster, renew, participate, and celebrate this partnership with the divine.

We are all learners and teachers. We are committed to be a safe and supportive place to question and explore faith. We embrace the sense of belonging and share our experiences along our human journey. We proclaim to be followers of Christ, who gather together to experience the sacred through gospel based teachings and a refreshing fountain of spiritual nourishment.

### **130 Goals**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

- To reach out to welcome and integrate newcomers into our community of faith.
- To use a variety of approaches that address the spirituality of contemporary Christians in our worship, Christian development, fellowship and pastoral care for all ages.
- To support and enhance a music program that varies from the traditional to the modern.
- To serve the community through building use and counseling, as well as providing programs of support for the poor and the hungry.
- To continue to build community in Northwood United Church.

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### **200 Ministry Board**

### **210 Accountability**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

#### **A. The Ministry Board will *listen* to the Ownership:**

1. It will use traditional and innovative means to listen to the voice of God as revealed in Jesus Christ (Bible study, prayer, theological reflection)
2. It will identify groups and individuals within the Ownership and without through whom the voice of Christ may be heard, and arrange appropriate methods to hear those voices.

#### **B. The Ministry Board will be *accountable* to the Ownership:**

1. The Ministry Board will report to the Congregation at the annual general meeting.
2. Ministry Board will regularly inform the Congregation of its work through formal channels and informal communications.
3. The Ministry Board will report on its own work only, which is not to be confused with the work of the Minister.
4. Ministry Board will conduct itself in accordance with the requirements of the Manual and The United Church of Canada.
5. Ministry Board will consider all written appeals of any decision of the Minister.

### **220 Calling**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

Ministry Board's prayerfully considered call is to represent the Ownership in discerning, monitoring and ensuring that the Mission, Vision and Values of the Ownership are embodied, enabled and lived out in all of the life and work of the Congregation.

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Accordingly,

1. The Ministry Board will produce written governing policies that, at the broadest levels, address each category of organizational decision.
  - a. Ministry: discerns the ends (results) to be achieved, for whom and at what cost.
  - c. LIMITATIONS: places constraints on the authority of the Small Groups, establishing the boundaries within which all activities and decisions must take place.
  - d. GOVERNANCE PROCESS: specification of how the Ministry Board conceives, carries out and monitors its own task.

### **230 Small Groups and Task Groups**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date: February 21, 2010

1. The Ministry Board will establish and appoint a Ministry and Personnel Task Group (“M&P Committee”) according to the Manual Section 244.
  - a) M&P exists to help the Ministry Board do its job and reach its decisions. M&P members are appointed by and accountable to the Ministry Board – they cannot make decisions on their own – they bring their analyses and insights to the Ministry Board.
  - b) The M&P committee shall not act independently of the Ministry Board’s explicit written policy, instruction, and directives.
2. The Ministry Board will establish a Communications Committee which will be accountable directly to the Ministry Board.
3. The Ministry Board will establish a Stewardship Committee which will be accountable directly to the Ministry Board. The Stewardship Committee will function under the terms of reference according to the Manual Section 245.
4. The Ministry Board will establish and appoint various Small Groups and/or Task Groups to carry out the work of the Congregation in reaching the Vision and Goals of the Ministry Board.

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### 240 Disciplines

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

**The Ministry Board will practice the disciplines necessary to govern with excellence.**

1. Ministry Board meets as a duly constituted court of The United Church of Canada. Rules of Order as outlined in the Manual will be followed.
2. Ministry Board members will educate themselves about the Ownership, appropriate “Ministry”, adopted Ministry Board policies and good governance practice.
3. Ministry Board members will prepare for each meeting and will follow through on work commitments made at each meeting.
4. Ministry Board meetings are for the primary purpose of getting the Ministry Board’s work done in an efficient, effective and faithful manner.
  - a. meetings will normally be held bi-monthly in January, March, May, July, September and November.
  - b. the Chair may call a special meeting of the Ministry Board to meet emergent needs.
  - c. a quorum for meetings will be 6 members (3 elected members and 3 appointed members), and one of the Minister(s) (as required in the Manual section 123.).
  - d. agendas, appropriate correspondence, and supporting documentation will normally be distributed for receipt and consideration by all members at least one week in advance of the meeting.
  - e. Minutes of Board meetings will be reviewed by the Ministry Board chairperson and distributed to the members of the Ministry Board within two weeks of the date of the meeting.
  - f. all members will be shown respect at all meetings.
  - g. members will together monitor their adherence to the Ministry Board’s policies and practices.
  - h. a member absent from three consecutive Ministry Board meetings will be removed from the Ministry Board, and the nomination and election process will immediately begin except in cases of illness or bereavement.
  - i. Ministry Board will permit anyone to observe a Ministry Board meeting, but will not normally give corresponding privileges to anyone.
  - j. Ministry Board reserves the right to meet *in camera* (Ministry Board members only) at any time.

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5. All decisions made by the Ministry Board will be by motion duly made and seconded and carried with a simple majority.
- a. members will voice their opinions on issues to ensure the diversity of the ownership is heard.
  - b. the Chair will determine the appropriate time in a conversation that a motion will be made.

### **250 Selection Process**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date: February 21, 2010

Ministry Board Selection Process:

- a. In December of each year the Congregation will be asked to nominate individuals for consideration to fill vacancies arising on Ministry Board.
- b. The Ministry Board will strike a Nominations Task Group of the three Ministry Board members ending their third year of rotation, plus the Minister.
- c. The committee proceeds with discernment, review of talents and measuring against the pre-established criteria for short-listing and interview purposes. Recommendations will be made to the Congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting including identification of Treasurer and Chair.
- d. Criteria for Board Membership. Ministry Board members are expected to commit to a minimum two-year term in office and to adhere to seven covenants:
  1. Be committed to the Mission, Vision and Values approved by the Congregation
  2. Engage in one's own personal spiritual journey through "Spiritual Pathways or related personal study and increase in Biblical literacy
  3. Attend church regularly when in town
  4. Commit to daily prayer and devotional life
  5. Be actively involved in the ongoing life of, and have a "call" to serve Northwood
  6. Regular, proportionate financial contributions in support of the Mission of the Congregation
  7. Be vigilant in attendance of Ministry Board meetings.

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e. Ministry Board members will normally be elected for a three year term. Ministry Board members whose three year term of office is completed will be eligible to be considered for a second term of three years. The maximum term in office will be six years

f. Ministry Board will have discretion to appoint a replacement to complete the term of office of a member who for whatever reason fails to complete his/her term. The process used will be identical to the annual process except that no separate appointment will be made if the vacancy falls within three months prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting at which time it will remain vacant and processed at the same time as for members retiring through rotation. The person so appointed to the irregular vacancy will be appointed for a period to complete that part of the year term only, so that the rotation of other Ministry Board members will not be affected.

### **251 Presiding Officer**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

**The presiding officer (Chair) assures the integrity and fulfillment of the Ministry Board's process and, secondarily, occasionally represents the Ministry Board to outside parties.**

1. The job result of the Chair is that the Ministry Board behaves consistently with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the Congregation.
  - a. Meeting discussion content will be only issues that, according to Ministry Board policy, clearly belong to the Ministry Board, not the Minister.
  - b. Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough but also timely, orderly, and to the point.



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2. The authority of the chairperson consists in making decisions that fall within topics covered by Ministry Board policies on Governance Process and Ministry Board Minister Linkage, except where the Ministry Board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others. The Chair is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in these policies.
  - a. The Chair is empowered to chair Ministry Board meetings with all the commonly accepted power of that position (for example, ruling, recognizing).
  - b. The Chair plans and proposes the Ministry Board agenda in consultation with the Minister.
  - c. The Chair holds only a casting vote.
  - d. The Chair has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the Ministry Board within Ministry and Minister limitation policy areas.
  - e. The Chair may represent the Ministry Board to outside parties in announcing board-stated positions and in stating chair decisions and interpretations within the area delegated to her or him.
  - f. The Chair may delegate this authority but remains accountable for its use.
  - g. The Chair appoints Ministry Liaisons, Nominating Committee Members and ad hoc Ministry Board Committees as required.
3. The Chair does not supervise or direct the Minister or Staff, or vice-versa
4. In the absence of the chairperson from any meeting the Ministry Board team leaders will be responsible for the duties of the chair, on a rotational basis.

### **260 Governing Style**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

#### **The Ministry Board will govern with an emphasis on**

- a) theological reflection
- b) outward vision rather than internal preoccupation
- c) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints
- d) future, rather than past or present
- e) pro-activity rather than reactivity.
- f) democracy as a means of decision-making
- g) good leadership, rather than administrative detail. Accordingly,
  1. The Ministry Board as a group will assume responsibility for excellence in governance.
  2. The Ministry Board will maintain its major focus on the intended long-term effects among the Beneficiaries, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.

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3. The Ministry Board will direct, oversee and inspire the work of the Congregation by establishing written policies expressing the Ministry to be achieved and the means to be avoided. These policies will reflect values and priorities discerned by listening to the Ownership.
4. The Ministry Board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility where the gifts and expertise of individuals enhance the ability of the Ministry Board as a body to govern with excellence.
5. The Ministry Board will exercise whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Emphasis will be placed upon continual educational development, including new member orientation and self-monitoring of the governance process.

### **270 Members' Code of Conduct**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

**The Ministry Board commits itself to ethical, respectful and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Ministry Board members.**

Accordingly,

1. Members shall represent unconflicted loyalty to the interests of the Ownership. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to other church courts, advocacy or interest groups, or membership on other boards, committees or staffs. It also supersedes the personal interest of any member acting as a BENEFIICIARY.
2. Members must avoid conflict of interest.
  - a. there must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private or personal services between any Ministry Board member and the Church except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity and equal access to information.
  - b. when the Ministry Board is to decide upon an issue about which a member has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that member shall declare the conflict and the Ministry Board will decide if it will be necessary to ask the member to absent herself or himself without comment from both the deliberation and the vote.
  - c. members shall not use their position to obtain employment within the Church. Should a member desire employment, he or she must first resign from the Ministry Board.

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3. Members will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive or personal nature. Members will not disclose personal information without the consent of those persons except when mandated or allowed to do so by law.
4. Members will use the following approach to conflict resolution:
  - a. We will initiate actions needed to preserve unity and peace. (*Ephesians 4:1-3*)
  - b. We will honour differences by taking the time to listen in order to understand, and by speaking in considerate ways. (*Ephesians 4:11-13*)
  - c. We will respect one another, speaking opinions in love and maintaining solidarity – especially in the presence of differences. (*Ephesians 4:15-16*)
  - d. If at any time we have a constructive criticism or complaint against another member, we will safeguard the spiritual unity of the Ministry Board by taking the steps prescribed in Matthew 18:15-17. (*First, go to the person alone; second, if necessary, go to him or her with two or more witnesses; third, if necessary, bring the matter before the whole group.*)
  - e. If another person brings to us any criticism or complaint against any other member of the Ministry Board, we will direct that person to take the steps prescribed in Matthew 18: 15-17. If the situation requires, we will be willing to go with that person as a witness. We will not entertain any kind of criticism or complaint against any other member, except in the presence of the one against whom the criticism or complaint is made. (*Matthew 18:15-17, Ephesians 4:31-32*)
  - f. We will pray for grace to become aware of our own part in any rift between us, for the grace of God’s nurturing presence with others, and for the grace of healing for each broken relationship or threatened relationship. (*Ephesians 3:16-20, 4:32-5:2*)

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### **280 Diversity and One Voice**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

**The Ministry Board will govern with a proactive regard for diversity of views and opinions among its membership while recognizing that its authority is corporate, represented by “speaking with one voice”.**

1. Ministry Board discussion will encourage diverse points of view to be expressed.
2. The Ministry Board will speak with “one voice” taking care not to present conflicting messages regarding its decisions to its Ownership or Beneficiaries.
  - a. Ministry Board decisions will be stated as clearly as possible in written form.
  - b. Only written Ministry Board policies will direct the work of the Minister.
  - c. Ministry Board members as individuals will exercise discipline by not directing the Staff.
  - d. Ministry Board members will exercise discipline by not misrepresenting the decisions of the Ministry Board to the Ownership or Beneficiaries and the general public.

### **290 Policy Review Schedule**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

1. All Ministry Board policies shall be reviewed on a regular basis. The schedule will be reviewed each September .
2. The goal of the review is not monitoring (ensuring the policy is being carried out) but to ensure that the policy adequately addresses the area of concern and clearly represents the current mind of the Ministry Board.

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### **300 Worship and Pastoral Care**

#### **310 Baptism**

Adoption Date: May 16, 2007

Modification Date:

##### **Preamble:**

Baptism is a symbolic action that signifies the new life God gives us as we join the church community.

Baptism uses water as a symbolic cleansing that signifies the acceptance of new life within the church family. The sacrament of baptism is the single rite of initiation into the Christian community, the church.

The United Church offers baptism to all ages. We believe the gift of God's love doesn't depend on our ability to understand it, so we baptize people as infants right up through adulthood.

With children, instruction is given to parents or sponsors to equip them for the child's Christian nurture. During the ceremony, everyone in the Congregation pledges support for the child and his or her parents.

Baptism is not a requirement for God's love. We believe people who die without baptism are in no way condemned, lost, or damned.

Baptism in the United Church is recognized by all denominations of the Christian church that practise infant baptism. Similarly, if people have already been baptized in another church, the United Church recognizes their baptism and welcomes them as Christians.

##### **The Process:**

1) At first contact a family will be invited to come to church and get a sense of our church family. People not living in our immediate area would be encouraged to seek Baptism in a nearby church where they will be raising their children.

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- 2) The church will hold a session with the minister and a Congregational member for the parents of those being baptized about ten days before the service.
  - a) These sessions will be designed to give participant families an opportunity to begin to form community , to talk about the meaning of Baptism, review the vows and to introduce parents to the church and its various ministries.
  - b) At least one parent should be comfortable with the vows and be themselves baptized. It is desirable that one or both parents be or become confirmed active members of Northwood.
- 3) The sacrament of baptism will be conducted during regularly scheduled worship services on one Sunday each month. There will be no more than three families participating in each baptism. Private baptism is not our policy except in very unusual circumstances.
- 4) The use of photographic equipment during the sacrament is prohibited. Participants will be provided an opportunity for photographs with the family and minister following the worship service.
- 5) As a member of the worldwide Church of Jesus Christ (Holy Catholic Church) a child's baptism should be recognized by all Christian churches believing in infant baptism.
- 6) We do not "qualify" whom we baptize, but we do expect parents and Congregational members to take seriously the vows that are made. We expect that parents will bring their child to church and Sunday School/Children's Church and will attend worship themselves so that they may keep the vow to bring up their child in the Christian faith.
- 7) The Congregation will provide opportunities for parents and children in spiritual development, worship, pastoral care and mission in the church and the world.

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### **315 Marriage and Life Partnership**

Preamble:

It is the role of the Ministry Board, who are responsible for the worship life of the Congregation, to set marriage policy.

The 39<sup>th</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada encouraged Congregations to continue the development of marriage policies. The Council has further asked its staff to determine ways in which same-sex marriage could be provided to ensure accessibility to marriage for all members and adherents of the United Church.

In June 2005 the Federal Government passed Bill C-38 that made it legal for same-sex marriages to be offered in all regions of the country. It is the policy of The United Church of Canada that each Congregation is responsible for its worshipping life and we believe the service of the celebration of marriage to be a service of worship. The policy of The United Church of Canada is that responsibility to set marriage policies rests with the Congregation's board..

#### **315.1 Marriage: Acknowledgements and Affirmations**

Adoption Date: May 16, 2007

Modification Date: February 25, 2008

The Ministry Board of Northwood United Church affirm that:

- marriage is a gift of God through which Christians make a covenant with one another and with God. In marriage we offer one another the promise of lifelong companionship, rich expression of human affections and sexuality, and nurture for the children.
- marriage as an institution can undergird each relationship and provide stability for society.
- the value of marriage and that the church must work both to redeem and care for the institution and to support those entering into a covenant relationship with each other.
- this unity is a creation of God and is greater than the two individuals. It creates holy ground on which the two, and all others, must walk carefully and gently, yet forthrightly and with courage. It has boundaries, between them, and with others, that may not be trespassed. It takes precedence over other relationships. It calls for that caring which heals hurt and tends growth.
- our acceptance of all human beings as persons made in the image of God regardless of their sexual orientation.
- and therefore, couples, regardless of their sexual orientation, desirous of entering into a covenanted relationship that is mutual, just and loving, may be married at Northwood.

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Adoption Date: May 16, 2007

Modification Date:

### **315.2.1 A Church Wedding:**

A church wedding is both a legal ceremony and a service of worship. It includes prayers for a sense of God's presence and asks for God's blessing on the couple being married that Christian love may be a part of their lives. Regardless of the size of the wedding this spiritual dimension is essential for a church wedding.

A booklet outlining the guidelines for weddings will be given to each couple considering a marriage service at Northwood. Participants will be expected to adhere to these guidelines.

### **315.2.2 Right to Refuse To Marry**

Adoption Date: May 16, 2007

Modification Date: February 24, 2008

The minister reserves the right to refuse to marry any couple for reasons of professional ethics, failure to complete legal requirements, serious incompatibility of the couple, or failure of the couple to agree to the guidelines established in this policy. The minister also has the right to require couples to take part in a pre-marriage counseling course.

The law also requires that the officiating minister refuse to marry a couple when there is suspicion of intoxication by way of alcohol and/or other drugs.

The minister may refuse to marry a couple for reasons of conscience or principle.

### **315.2.3 Officiating Minister**

Adoption Date: May 16, 2007

Modification Date: February 24, 2008

The minister shall be responsible for all weddings. In a case where a conflict in schedules arises the minister will arrange for a substitute in his/her absence

The church recognizes that participants may have a clergy person that has had a special influence in their life. On approval of the officiating clergy that person may be included in the service. However, the decision to invite the guest clergy must first be cleared with the officiating minister.



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### **315.2.4 Marriage Preparation**

Adoption Date: May 16, 2007

Modification Date:

Participant couples are required to meet with the minister to go over the church's wedding policy and to discuss information regarding pre-marital counseling opportunities.

We require participation in an interdenominational marriage preparation program available through The Marriage Project. In some cases other preparation requirements may be suggested. Other resources for increasing communication skills will also be given to participants.

Participant couples will be urged to attend church services, if possible, as part of their wedding preparation.. Feeling at home in the church and sharing spiritual lives with one another adds to the comfort and ease on the wedding day.

The Northwood Congregation wants to get to know you and support couples as they prepare to be married.

### **315.2.5 Wedding Service Music**

Adoption Date: May 16, 2007

Modification Date:

The staff organist shall have the first right of refusal for all weddings. If the organist on staff is unavailable to play at a wedding then she/he is responsible to arrange a substitute.

When a participant requests their own musician approval will be given at the discretion of the staff organist. In such cases the church will require a damage deposit.

All music selections are to be coordinated with the officiating minister and the organist on staff.

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### **600 Ministry Activity and Programming**

#### **Preamble:**

The policies contained in this section are for the guidance and direction of all of the activities undertaken by the four areas of ministry identified in the Policy Manual:

- Spiritual Development Ministry
- Worship and Pastoral Care Ministry
- Church Management Ministry
- Community and Global Development Ministry

### **610 Small Groups and Task Groups**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

1. The Ministry Board will establish and appoint a Ministry and Personnel Task Group (“M&P Committee”) according to the Manual Section 244.
  - a) M&P exists to help the Ministry Board do its job and reach its decisions. M&P members are appointed by and accountable to the Ministry Board – they cannot make decisions on their own – they bring their analyses and insights to the Ministry Board.
  - b) The M&P committee shall not act independently of the Ministry Board’s explicit written policy, instruction, and directives.
2. The Ministry Board will establish and appoint various Small Groups and/or Task Groups to carry out the work of the Congregation in reaching the Vision and Goals of the Ministry Board.

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### **615 Gambling and the Use of Gambling Funds**

Adoption date: May 16, 2007

Modification date:

#### **Preamble:**

A committee was formed in the fall of 1996 to prepare a recommendation on gambling on the Church property. The original policy was adopted at the 1997 Annual Meeting. The original policy acknowledged that, “each of our actions must be part of a greater whole”.

The Ministry Board policy concerning gambling activities in any form may not be conducted on the premises or be part of any ministry program of the church.

This policy “includes but is not restricted to a raffle, bingo, 50/50 draw.”

The Ministry Board supports the General Council position on gambling.

“The General Council has opposed expansion of gambling – either for the benefit of the state, for commercial operators, or for charities – for many years. It has also asked church members and church-related bodies to refrain from using lotteries and gambling as a way of raising revenues. That means that General Council and other courts of the church, such as presbyteries or Conferences, do not seek government grants that would draw on gambling-generated revenues.”

“The Executive of General Council urge formally constituted groups of The United Church of Canada to avoid applying for or using funds generated from lotteries, casinos, or other activities in the gaming industry.”

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### **650 Alcoholic Beverages**

Adoption date: March 21, 2007

Modification date:

#### **Preamble**

A committee was formed in the fall of 1996 to prepare a recommendation on the use of alcohol on the Church property. The original policy was adopted at the 1997 Annual Meeting. The original policy acknowledged that, “each of our actions must be part of a greater whole”.

The Ministry Board policy concerning the consumption or other use of alcoholic beverages and the use of alcoholic beverages in any type of fund raising activity is not permitted in the Church buildings or grounds.

### **655 Smoke Free Environment**

Adoption date: May 16, 2007

Modification date:

#### **Preamble**

To provide a safe and healthy environment for staff, worshippers, students, visitors and those community groups using our facilities. We believe it is essential to reduce exposure to the known toxic substances such as tobacco smoke.

#### **Facilities and Areas Affected**

1. Smoking is prohibited inside all facilities owned or operated by Northwood United Church, including (but not limited to) such space as classrooms, halls, offices, restrooms, entrances and common areas.
2. Smoking is also prohibited in the house and storage buildings located on the property.
3. Smoking is also prohibited on all church property outside of the buildings with the exception of the designated “smoking area” which is defined as the north-west corner of the main parking lot.

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### **The Use of Church Facilities by Outside Parties**

All contracts and agreements will include a clause that states that Northwood United Church facilities are a smoke-free environment and, as such, prohibits smoking for all events including (but not limited to) conferences, meetings, seminars, concerts, receptions, parties and community groups with the exception of the designated smoking area.

### **Sales of Tobacco Related Products**

Products related to the smoking of any tobacco product will not be sold at any facility including (but not limited to) the Thrift Shop and the annual church Celebration Fair .

### **Adherence To the Policy**

1. While responsibility for the implementation and effectiveness of the policy lies with all users of the facility ultimate administrative responsibility to achieve compliance rests with the Ministry Board.
2. To effect adherence, members of the church community must be willing to directly and politely inform those unaware of the policy, or remind those in disregard of it. If this approach and effort is unsuccessful, the group in violation of this policy will be brought to the attention of the Ministry Board

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### **660 Communication**

#### **Preamble:**

Since the beginning of time, the need to communicate emerges from a set of universal questions: Who am I? Who needs to know? Why do they need to know? How will they find out? How do I want them to respond? Individuals, communities, and organizations express their individuality through their identity. On the continuum from the cave paintings at Lascaux to digital messages transmitted via satellite, humanity continues to create an infinite sensory palette of visual and verbal expression.

#### **660.1 Bulletin Boards**

Adoption Date: May 16, 2007

Modification Date:

This policy is to provide guidance for the use and installation of bulletin boards throughout the facility. Bulletin boards will be of similar construction and size to those already in existence at the time this policy was written, namely:

- Six bulletin boards in the Gathering Place
- Three bulletin boards in the classroom hallway
- One Illuminated exterior sign board
- One literature rack in the gathering Place

The church recognizes the importance of using every possibly avenue to communicate information about programs and events to as wide an audience as possible. To that end the church encourages the use of bulletin boards under the following guidelines:

1. Bulletin boards will be assigned and installed as needed by the Church Management Ministry through the Property Group.
2. Maintenance of the bulletin boards will be the responsibility of the group to which they have been assigned.
3. All postings shall be approved and posted by a person designated by the ministry area involved.
4. Bulletin notices older than three weeks shall be removed and discarded.
5. When a bulletin board is crowded, designated staff /volunteers are encouraged to select notices for events with the widest appeal.
6. The church does not assume responsibility for materials damaged or stolen.
7. Posting of material by user groups does not imply the church's endorsement of a group, organization or event, its policies or beliefs.

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8. Personal messages may not be posted on any bulletin boards.
9. Commercial messages advertising products or services may not be posted.
10. Notices posted or left on tables without authorization will be removed and discarded.
11. Oversized posters may be rejected because of space limitations

### **660.2 Literature Rack**

Adoption Date: May 16, 2007

Modification Date:

A literature rack will be provided in the Gathering Place for church use under the following guidelines:

1. Maintenance of the literature rack will be the responsibility of the church staff in consultation with the four ministry areas.
2. All literature shall be approved by a person designated by the ministry area involved.
3. When the literature rack is crowded, designated staff /volunteers are encouraged to select information with the widest appeal.
4. Commercial literature advertising products or services may not be posted unless they are for an approved fund raising endeavour.

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### **700 Church Management Ministry**

#### **Preamble:**

Church Management involves the “temporal matters” of Congregational life. These are the transitory, secular or “day-to-day” responsibilities of running the church institution. Traditionally, in The United Church of Canada, this responsibility was assigned to the Committee of Stewards. In the Ministry Board model these responsibilities are assigned to Small Groups for finance, property and stewardship.

The most important aspect of Church Management is to maintain and deploy the assets of the Congregation, fulfilling the mission of the Congregation to the highest standards of excellence possible.

### **705 Signing Authorities**

#### **705.1 Church Financial Institution Accounts**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date: February 24, 2008

Bank accounts in the name of the Northwood Congregation of The United Church of Canada (Northwood United Church) will be established with a financial institution named for that purpose from time to time by the Ministry Board.

Signing authorities for all bank accounts in the name of Northwood United Church shall be the treasurer/bookkeeper plus elected trustees as follows:

The treasurer/bookkeeper plus any one of the elected trustees of the Congregation or any two of the elected trustees of the Congregation. Staff members who are also trustees shall be excluded from the list of authorized signatories.

When making a change of signing authorities the Congregation will provide a letter of instruction to the financial institution, signed by two trustees, outlining the following:

1. Effective date of change(s)
2. Name of person(s) to be removed
3. Name of person(s) to be added.



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For security reasons all new signing officers will be required to visit the branch in the company of an existing signing officer and prove the following information:

1. Two pieces of picture identification
2. Signatures on the financial institutions documentation
3. Address and phone number
4. Date of birth
5. Occupation.

### **705.2 Small Group/Committee Financial Institution Accounts**

Adoption Date: May 16, 2008

Modification Date:

Small Groups/committees receiving or disbursing funds should maintain their funds in the general accounts of the church. In instances where there is sufficient reason to have these funds more readily available the small group/committee may arrange an account with the financial institution of their choice following consent of the Ministry Board. The account must have two signing authorities from the group. Accounts should be in the name of (small group/committee) of Northwood United Church. In such cases a small group/committee shall, at the end of each calendar year, prepare summary of their activities accompanied by a financial statement for the annual report of the church.

### **705.3 Purchase and Services Payment Approval**

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Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

All accounts payable items shall be recorded on a Payment Request Form approved by the small group/committee leader responsible for the applicable budget category.

For accounts which exceed their budget limitation, in any year, the Payment Request Form must be approved by the appropriate ministry area team leader before submitting them for payment.

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### **710 Financial Management**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date: February 21, 2010

The Ministry Board shall vest the responsibility for day to day financial management to the Finance Groups ministry which shall be composed of the chairperson/treasurer appointed by the Congregation, the Church Management Ministry team leader or appointee, the supervisor of offering counters and the person responsible for recording donations. Others with an interest in the financial health of the Congregation may join this group by invitation of the group.

*Limitations:*

The Finance Group will not:

1. Allow the expenditure of funds by the end of the fiscal year to exceed anticipated unencumbered revenue for the same period of time.
2. Allow funds to unduly accumulate without being used for the purposes for which they were established.
3. Borrow money for the operations of the Congregation without the consent of the Ministry Board, the Congregation and the Presbytery.
4. Fail to pay all liabilities for payroll, suppliers, and taxes as due.
5. Allow expenditures to deviate significantly from established priorities.
6. Allow any significant budget variance to remain unreported nor unexplained.
7. Fail to address when revenues from offerings fall significantly below the same level of revenue at the same time the previous year.
8. Fail to seek sound financial advice, on an ongoing basis, from financial experts.
  - a. The financial records and records of proceedings of the Finance Groups may be called upon by the Ministry Board at any time to monitor performance.
  - b. Such SMALL GROUP monitoring may only be against established Ministry Board policies.
9. Fail to act on any concerns raised by the external financial review.
10. Fail to provide complete monthly financial statements to the Ministry Board in a timely manner.

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### **720 Designated Funds**

#### **Preamble**

A number of special funds currently exist as a result of special gifts and bequests to the Congregation. Many of these are designated for specific purposes. This policy outlines the purpose of these funds and the procedure for applying for grants from the funds. The funds are managed by the Finance Group.

### **720.1 Investment In People Fund**

#### **Preamble**

This fund was previously known as the Christian Development Fund and has been available through the former Christian Development Ministry since 2004.

Adoption Date: February 25, 2007

Modification Date: November 21, 2007

#### **Purpose:**

The funds are to be an investment in children, youth and adults in the Congregation to encourage them to participate in Christian training activities including but not limited to the following:

- Worship and liturgy
- Biblical studies
- Spirituality
- Social justice concerns
- Youth ministry
- Ministry with children
- Ministry with families
- Ministry with seniors
- Pastoral care
- Marriage enrichment
- Christian feminism
- Men and the Christian faith
- Creation theology
- Stewardship of resources
- The mission of the church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

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- Faith and the arts: music, drama, sacred dance, graphic arts, fabric arts, etc.
- Studies in diversity: multi-faith, multi-denominational, multi-cultural, cross cultural
- Sexual orientation studies
- Leadership development
- Group facilitation
- Conflict resolution

### **Location of Training Events**

Activities might be held at United Church facilities such as Naramata, church camps, or other training centres, such as the Vancouver School of Theology and the Chalmers Institute. Activities at other Christian centres may also be funded, as well as national, conference, presbytery and Congregational events.

### **Disbursement of Funds**

A selection committee including one person from the ministry group plus two others at-large appointed by the Ministry GROUP will:

- Publicize the existence of the bursary fund
- Review applications to the fund
- Make decisions regarding the awarding of funds to successful applicants.

## **720.2 Fred and Jean Carter Bursary for Children and Youth**

### **Preamble**

Fred and Jean were long-time members of this Congregation. They demonstrated an active interest in the faith formation of children and youth throughout their lives. This fund was started with a memorial gift of five thousand dollars in memory of Fred Carter.

Adoption Date: November 21, 2007

Modification Date:

### **Purpose:**

These funds are to be used to further Christian education of the young people of the Northwood Congregation. It is the vision of the family to encourage ongoing donations to the bursary fund by Congregational members, or other interested people, to be able to continue top support the faith formation and development of children and youth.

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### **Examples of Training Events**

- Programs such as Children and Youth at Conference and General Council, Naramata Centre programs, summer camps, and youth retreats.
- Sunday School/Children's Church teacher and Youth Group leader training.
- To bring workshops to Northwood United Church to assist Sunday School/Children's Church teachers and other leaders in their training.
- In the broader context, at the discretion of a staff member, to assist a family who could not afford, for example, a uniform or other items particular to a church related program.

### **Disbursement of Funds**

Requests for funds may originate with a children or youth leader, the Spiritual Development leader on the Ministry Board or the related staff person. A written application is preferable outlining the event and the costs related to it.

### **Termination of the Fund**

The bursary shall remain in effect until the funds are depleted.

## **730 Treasurer**

Adoption Date: February 25, 2007

Modification Date:

### **Role of the Treasurer**

While the Church has staff positions and volunteers to handle bookkeeping, payroll, donation records, preparation of deposits, and other clerical tasks the treasurer is the fiduciary representative of the Congregation. It is the treasurer's responsibility, as an officer of the Congregation, for the interpretation and accuracy of the record keeping, and to report in summary fashion to the Ministry Board and the Congregation the financial condition of the Church, including investments and special sources of income. The Treasurer will be the liaison with the external audit/review and will also act as the lead person (chairperson) of any finance group appointed to assist in this task.

### **Skills Required**

The Treasurer exercises skills specific to the office:

- Ability to verify the accuracy of the financial reports and the accounting records of the Church.

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- Ability to explain, in person and in writing, the income transactions, expense transactions and the balance sheet.
- Capability to participate in the annual financial review of the Church books and financial records.

### **Appointment Process**

The treasurer will be a member of the Church. The election or appointment will take place at the annual meeting of the Congregation. The term of appointment will be two years, renewable for a second term of two years for a maximum of four years in office.

### **740 Protection of Assets**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

The Board of Trustees function under the Trusts of Model Deed, Manual Schedule B, Appendix 11 and sections 250 – 262.

#### *Limitations:*

The Board of Trustees shall not:

1. Fail to insure assets against loss by fire and theft less than 100% of replacement cost, and by earthquake less than 90% of replacement cost.
2. Place any bank account with an institution which is not insured by the Canadian Deposit Insurance Corporation or Credit Union Deposit Insurance Corporation.
3. Invest or hold capital in insecure instruments.
4. Exclude any asset or group of assets over \$1,000 from a register of assets.
5. Receive, process or disburse funds under controls which are insufficient to meet the Ministry Board appointed auditor's accepted standards.
6. Jeopardize the intellectual property, information and files through loss, theft, significant damage or unauthorized duplication.
7. Jeopardize the charitable tax receipt status of the Church.
8. Acquire, encumber or dispose of real property.
9. Unnecessarily expose the Ministry Board to claims of liability.
10. Endanger the Church's public image or credibility, particularly in ways that would hinder the accomplishment of its mission.
11. Fail to comply with the terms of the insurance policies that protect the assets of the Church.

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### **750 Commercial Relations**

Adoption Date: November 22, 2006

Modification Date:

*Limitations:*

The Small Groups and Task Groups, in dealing with commercial enterprises, shall not:

1. Enter a commercial relationship or transaction which clearly contradicts the Ministry Board's policies.
2. In relations with commercial relationships or transactions who are not excluded by the above, the Small Groups and Task Groups shall not:
  - a. make any purchase from a vendor which does not represent best value.
  - b. treat any commercial relationship or transaction in an unfair or inequitable manner, nor give any preference based on any criterion other than the delivery of best value ("value" to include consideration of achieving ministry ends).
  - c. violate the terms of the purchase or contract agreement.
3. There shall be no conflict of interest in awarding purchases, contracts or in making other decisions related to commercial transactions.
4. The Ministry Board shall not fail to maintain and follow a rental policy that promotes Ministry ends within reasonable revenue and expense limitations.

### **790 Use of Facilities**

Adoption Date:

Modification Date:

**Preamble:**

It is the stated goal of this Church to "serve the community through building use." This rental policy is written to assist the various groups within the Congregation to work through the issues and risks involved in opening the facility for the benefit of the public and to further our goals and objectives. This policy will provide the degree of control that is desirable for the rental of the Church facilities.

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### **Prioritizing of Facilities Use**

The facilities of Northwood United Church will be assigned in the following priority:

1. All events and activities that are under the full authority, control and supervision of church staff or church volunteers
2. All activities of the The United Church of Canada and its related organizations. For example: Fraser Presbytery, British Columbia Conference and departments of the General Council.
3. Other charitable groups with goals in support of the mission and goals of the Church, especially those supported by the Congregation.
4. Not-for-profit organizations that by word and deed support and endorse the mission and goals of the Church.
5. All activities on the property will be activities that do not undermine the mission and goals of the Church.
6. Neutral activities such as family gatherings, birthday parties and family celebrations that are not activities that can be categorized as being church events will be considered only for families who are members or adherents of the Church.
7. Government activities such as a polling station or workshops that do not undermine the mission and goals of the Church.

### **General**

1. Extreme sports activities must be limited to property outside the buildings and disclosed before any rental agreement is signed. Then the appropriate insurance coverage must be obtained and submitted.
2. The kitchen facilities must be used in accordance with BC Food Safe regulations. Outside rental groups must have specific permission in their rental contract before using any kitchen equipment..
3. A designated security supervisor must be present at all times or satisfactory arrangements for security made with the Church ahead of time.
4. All electronic equipment owned by the Church must be operated by the Church's qualified technician. That technician will be supplied for you at the posted rate per hours. In some circumstances, with permission from the Church's Technicians Group, approval may be granted to allow a user group to provide its own operators.
5. No equipment or property may be removed from the church without the approval of the church's Technicians Group and/or the Kitchen Kops Group permission and approval.
6. Each user group and renter is responsible for the behavior of their own guests and participants. Any damage done to the facilities or property by guests and participants will be the responsibility of the renter.
7. All renters will arrange for their own food and beverages (no alcohol).



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8. All rental users will be required to arrange for and provide proof of their own insurance to use this facility.
9. Children must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.
10. As the facility is located in a residential area no activity is allowed beyond 10:00 pm daily.
11. Alcoholic beverages and gambling are not permitted on the property.

### **Facility and Equipment Use**

1. Kitchen must be supervised by a person with a Food Safe certificate.
2. All damage or broken items must be reported to the church office.
3. The standard of cleanliness is to be returned to the condition you found it in or better.
4. All garbage must be removed and put into the appropriate bins.
5. All linens (tablecloths, dish towels, hand towels) are to be laundered and returned by the end of the next business day. The security deposit will not be returned until all linens are returned, cleaned and pressed as needed.
6. No food and beverages may be served in areas not arranged for ahead of time.
7. All tables and chairs must be cleaned up and put away after the event.
8. Church owned sports equipment may only be used if arranged and approved and then returned to there appropriate storage places.
9. Moving of any accessories, plants, electrical equipment of furnishings must be declared and approved prior to the event.
10. Candles are not permitted unless a person in attendance is qualified to operate a fire extinguisher. Permission must be obtained in advance to use any candles or open flame for any purpose.

### **Disclaimers**

1. Rental by any group does not mean that the Church endorses the beliefs and practices of the rental group.
2. If information provided in the rental agreement is found to be inaccurate, the event may be cancelled without notice or while in progress with no refund.
3. The insurance policy of the Church does not cover liability for rental groups, their guests or participants.
4. Any personal information obtained in this rental agreement will be subject to Policy 920.

### **Fee Structure**

A fee structure will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary by the Rental Group and approved by the Ministry Board as Regulation R750 attached to this policy.

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### **900 Legal**

#### **910 Sexual Abuse Policy**

Adoption Date: February 25, 2007

Modification Date:

##### **Preamble:**

The 36<sup>th</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada, August 1997, adopted a revised policy on Sexual Abuse (Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Pastoral Sexual Misconduct and Child Abuses).

The full text of this policy and related procedures is available on the internet at <http://www.united-church.ca/pastoralrelations/pdf/sexualabuse.pdf>

The Ministry Board policy concerning Sexual Abuse shall be the policy of the General Council of The United Church of Canada, adopted at the 36<sup>th</sup> General Council, August 1997 and revised by the General Council Executive, April 2000.

#### **920 Protection of Personal Information**

Adoption Date: February 25, 2007

Modification Date:

##### **Preamble**

The Northwood Pastoral Charge (Church) understands that personal privacy is a critical issue for our beneficiaries, donors, and employees. This privacy policy outlines our principles and procedures regarding the confidentiality and security of personal information given to us by beneficiaries, donors and employees.

This privacy policy outlines the principles this Church applies when protecting the personal privacy of beneficiaries, donors and employees. We believe that ensuring the accuracy, confidentiality, and security of the personal information we hold is both a legal and ethical obligation.

This privacy policy is based on the B.C. Provincial Personal Information Privacy Act (PIPA) (Bill 2003 – 38). Based on this we have prepared our own ten privacy principles to meet the specific needs of both the Church, and the beneficiaries, donors and employees of this Conference.

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### **920.1 Scope**

This policy applies to Northwood Pastoral Charge, a Congregation within the Fraser Presbytery of the BC Conference of The United Church of Canada. It outlines the principles and commitments we make to our beneficiaries, donors and employees, to protect personal information.

### **920.2 Definitions**

“Church” is the Northwood Pastoral Charge within the Fraser Presbytery of the BC Conference of The United Church of Canada.

“Collection” is the act of gathering, acquiring, or obtaining personal information from any source, by any means.

“Consent” involves voluntary agreement with what is being done or proposed. Consent may be expressed in writing, or verbally, or tacitly. Implied consent exists when the church can reasonably infer consent based upon the action of the beneficiary, donor or employee.

“Beneficiary”, means any person who makes use of the services, programs and activities of the church.

“Donor” means anyone who contributes their financial resources to the work of the church.

“Employee” means anyone who is employed by the Church on a permanent or contract basis.

“Disclosure” is the act of making personal information available to others.

“Use” is the treatment and handling of personal information by and within the church.

“Personal Information” is information about an identifiable individual that is recorded in any form, excluding the person’s name, business title, business address and business phone number.

“Third-Party” is an individual or organization other than the church, and its beneficiaries, donors and employees.

### **920.3: The Accountability of the Church**

The church is accountable for the protection of the private information of beneficiaries, donors and employees.

920.3.1 The overall responsibility of the protection of personal information, and compliance with this Privacy Policy rests with the Ministry Board.

920.3.2 This Conference is committed to ensuring that appropriate security measures are used in the transfer of sensitive private information. When using email or wireless communication, we advise beneficiaries, donors and employees that complete confidentiality and security are not assured.

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920.3.3 The Church is not accountable for any damages suffered when a beneficiary, donor or employee transmits personal information through email or wireless communication, or when the Church transmits such information at the request of the member.

920.3.4 The Church has developed policies and procedures to: protect personal information; receive and respond to complaints and inquiries; train staff regarding the policies and procedures; and communicate the policies and procedures to our beneficiaries, donors and employees.

### **920.4 Identifying the Purposes of Personal Information**

The Church will communicate the purposes for which information is being collected, either orally or in writing.

920.4.1 The Church collects personal information for the following reasons only:

- The administration of matters related to the employment of permanent or contract staff.
- The administration of matters related to purchasing goods and services.
- To maintain donor records and issue charitable tax and other receipts.
- To provide services that will meet the spiritual, educational and human needs of our beneficiaries, donors and employees.
- To provide information for Conference programs and services.
- To maintain adequate stewardship or care for our human and financial resources.
- To adequately promote the mission and outreach services of the Conference, its Presbyteries and the General Council of The United Church Church of Canada.
- To verify the identity of a beneficiary, donor or employee.
- To provide for the transfer of appropriate records to our Conference and national Archives for archival and research purposes.

### **920.5 Consent from Beneficiaries, Donors and Employees**

The Church will obtain consent from beneficiaries, donors and employees for the collection, use or disclosure of any personal information except where detailed in this Privacy Policy. We will make reasonable efforts to ensure that beneficiaries, donors and employees will understand how their personal information will be used and disclosed.

920.5.1 The consent of a beneficiary, donor or employee can be written, spoken, or tacit. A beneficiary can withdraw consent at any time, but such withdrawal may also inconvenience the beneficiary, donor or employee (i.e. charitable tax receipts, or employee pension or earnings statements). If such information is required by law, the Church may decline to deal with a beneficiary, donor or employee who has withdrawn consent to the required information.

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920.5.2 The Church may collect, use or disclose personal information without the beneficiary, donor or employee's knowledge or consent in exceptional circumstances:

- When such collection, use or disclosure is permitted or required by law.
- When the use of such information is required in an emergency that threatens an individual's life, health, or personal security.
- When certain information is publicly available.
- When requiring legal advice from a lawyer.
- When needing to collect a debt from a beneficiary, donor or employee.
- When needing to deal with an anticipated breach of law.

920.5.3 Consent may be given orally, in writing, or electronically. For example, depending on the sensitivity of the information, consent can be expressed over the telephone, though this is only for the most minimally sensitive level of personal information. In other cases, where a form is needed to be filled in, one might consent by means of a check-off box. In some cases donors may wish to fill in an electronic form indicating consent. It may also be that beneficiaries or donors are asked for permission to have their home addresses or phone numbers on a list of members or participants in a program.

### **920.6 Limits for Collecting Personal Information**

The Church will only collect personal information for the purposes identified. We will use methods that are lawful, and will not collect information indiscriminately.

### **920.7 Limits for Using, Disclosing and Keeping Personal Information**

920.7.1 Personal information will only be used or disclosed for the purposes for which it was collected. If such information is used for additional purposes we will seek new consent to do so.

920.7.2 The Church will not sell beneficiary, member or donor lists to Third-Parties.

920.7.3 The Church may occasionally use beneficiary, member or donor lists to conduct surveys in order to provide better programs and services, or to do research for future planning.

920.7.4 The Church may send beneficiary, member and donor lists to other offices of The United Church of Canada in order that they may provide information for "Every Member Plan" United Church Observer subscriptions, or in order that our General Council and Conference offices may send out information on issues of stewardship, outreach and other concerns of our national church.

920.7.5 The Church will transfer records to the B.C. Conference Archives, in order that the long-term legal and business purposes of the Church, and its archival and research purposes can be continued with appropriate care. The majority of personal information is not preserved at the archives, but some records are archival in their nature and will be preserved.

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### **920.8 Accuracy**

The Church will make reasonable efforts to ensure that any personal information collected is accurate, complete and current. In most cases, we rely on the beneficiaries, donors and employees to keep certain information current, complete and accurate.

920.8.1 Beneficiaries, donors and employees may request amendments to the records at the Church in order to ensure the accuracy and completeness of their personal information. If the amendment request pertains to information that remains in dispute, the Conference will note the person's opinion in the file.

### **920.9 Safeguarding Personal Information**

The Church is committed to the safeguarding of the personal information of beneficiaries, donors and employees in order to prevent its loss, theft, unauthorized access, disclosure, duplication, use or modification.

920.9.1 Depending on the sensitivity of the personal information, the Church will employ appropriate security measures to protect the information. The measures may include, for example, the physical security of offices, locked filing cabinets, and electronic security measures such as computer passwords.

920.9.2 The Church will use appropriate security measures when disposing of personal information, computers no longer in use, and other storage devices. This will, for example, involve the shredding of paper records containing personal information, and the reformatting of computers and storage systems no longer in use.

### **920.10 Availability of Policies and Procedures**

The Church is transparent about the policies and procedures it uses to protect the personal information of beneficiaries, donors and employees. Information about these policies and procedures will be made available in written format in plain language. However, to ensure the integrity of our security procedures, we may refuse to publicly disclose certain information.

920.10.1 The Church will make the following information available:

- The name, title, and address of the Privacy Officer who can respond to requests for information on personal information policies and procedures, and to whom complaints or inquiries can be forwarded;
- A description of the type of personal information held by the Church, including a general account of its use;
- A copy of any brochures or other information that explain the policies and procedures; and
- An explanation of what personal information is made available to related organizations within The United Church of Canada.

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### **920.11 Providing Access to Personal Information**

Beneficiaries, donors and employees have a right to have access to their personal information held by The Church. Upon request, the Church will, within a reasonable time period, tell the beneficiary, donor or employee what personal information it has, what it is being used for, and to whom it has been disclosed, if applicable, and within the time period for which records are available.

920.11.1 Beneficiaries, donors or employees may be asked to be specific about the information they would like to have access to, and to submit their request in writing to Church Ministry Board.

920.11.2 Beneficiaries, and donors will be required to provide personal information to identify themselves to enable The Church to provide an account of the existence, use and disclosure of personal information.

920.11.3 The Church will make the information available within 30 days, or provide written notice of extension where additional time is required to fulfill the request. The notice of extension note will advise of the new time limit, the reasons for extending the time, and of the right of the beneficiary, donor, or employee to make a complaint to the B.C. Privacy Commissioner regarding the extension.

920.11.4 The information will be made available at a cost that will vary with the type and amount of information requested. If the information is extensive, the Conference will inform the member of the cost, and request further direction from the individual as to whether or not the Conference should proceed with the request.

920.11.5 If a request for information is refused, the Conference will notify the individual in writing, documenting the reasons for refusal and resources for redress available to the beneficiary, donor or employee. These reasons may include:

- the information is unreasonably costly to provide;
- the information could threaten the security of another individual;
- the information was generated in a formal dispute resolution process;
- the information contains references to other individuals;
- the information cannot be disclosed for legal or security reasons;
- the information is subject to solicitor-client or litigation privilege.

920.11.6 If the information is demonstrated to be inaccurate or incomplete, The Church will amend the information as required.

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### **920.12. Compliance and Complaints**

Beneficiaries, donors or employees are to direct any complaints, concerns or questions regarding this privacy policy in writing to the Ministry and Personnel Committee of the Church. If the Ministry and Personnel Committee is unable to address the individual's concerns, the issue can be referred to the MINISTRY BOARD. If any members of the Ministry Board are in conflict regarding the individual making the complaint, they should be excused from participation in the appeal process. It may be that a member from another Pastoral Charge can be brought in to help with the deliberations. If this appeal process does not prove satisfactory, the complainant is always invited to write to the Provincial Privacy Commissioner's office.