

REPORT OF THE LEADERSHIP STUDY COMMITTEE

**Prepared for the 1996 General Conference of
The Free Methodist Church in Canada
October 25-28, 1996**

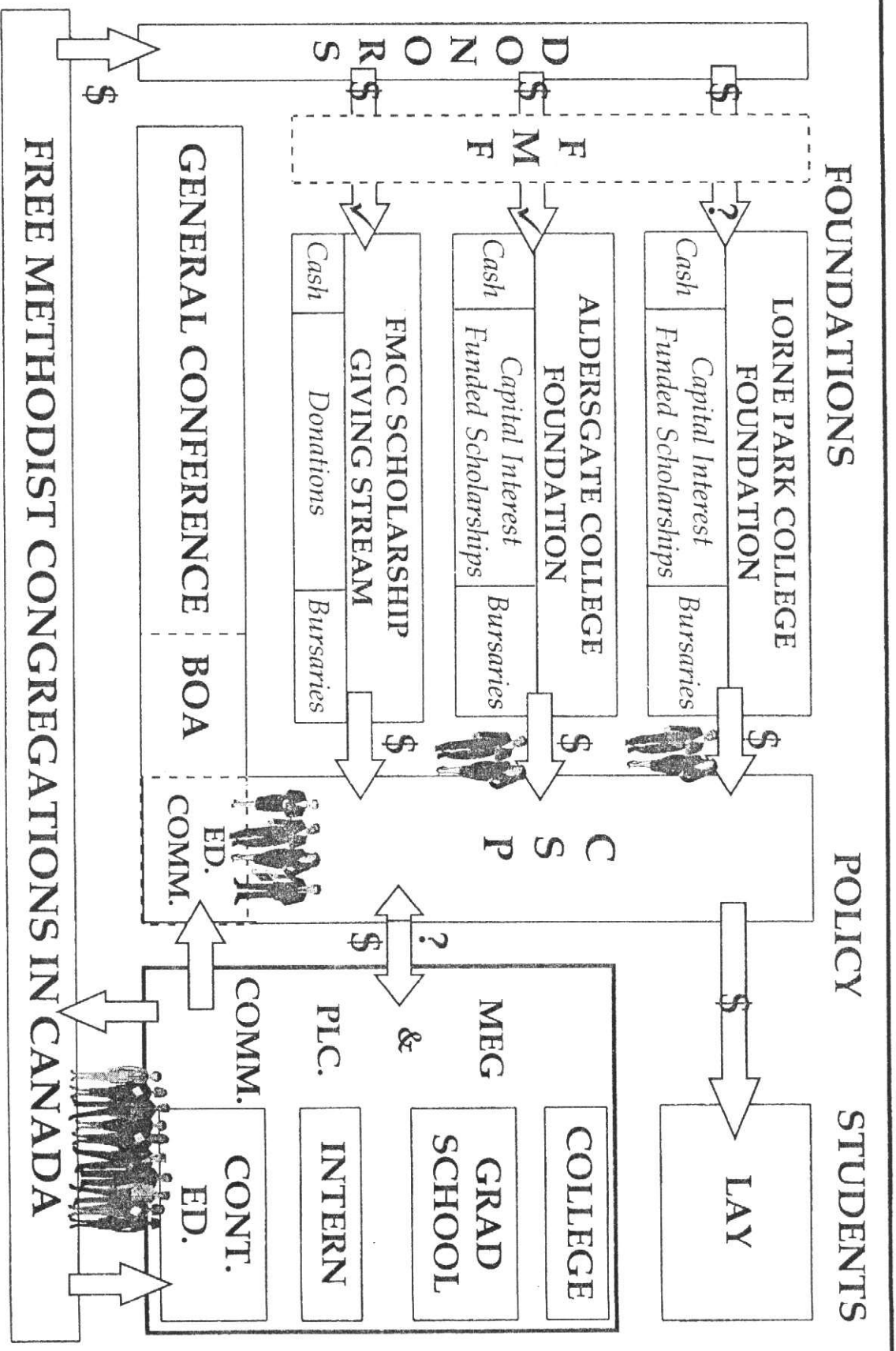
Note: Draft report subject to revision.



Study Team:

Carl Bull
Keith Elford
Lloyd Eyre
Mark Greenshields
Alvin Hill
Lynne Phipps

Leadership Report



DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA

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INTRODUCTION

The Free Methodist Church in Canada is in a time of transition. Transitions can be accompanied by anxiety and unsettledness. These tensions however can be transformed into productive energy if they are used to motivate us to **be sure** that we have brought enduring values from the past into the present paradigms. It's time now to review and refine the work that has been done on directions that were outlined at the December 1994 General Conference.

Transitions are also opportunities for creativity and pro-activity. We must continue to assess what **new challenges** are calling for **new approaches** to this ministry of developing leaders for Canada's Free Methodist churches. The General Conference provides a time to give direction to the National Church's executives and Board of Administration as to what new initiatives and approaches need to be researched and implemented. This paper then, seeks to discuss the issues identified in the analysis of the surveys received and to conclude with a list of recommendations for the General Conference to consider, debate, amend and refer to our national church leaders to implement.

1. WHAT WE HEARD YOU SAY ABOUT LEADERSHIP

The summary analysis of survey responses prepared by Clarus Consulting informs us that within the Leadership category several distinct issues emerged. These ranged from leadership at the denominational level to pastoral leadership and lay leadership. 17% of respondents indicated that leadership issues are a first priority for the denomination, with an additional 27% rating them as second priority. The issues divide into two major categories: a) Leadership Development and Training and b) the Pastoral Appointment System. The following is what the Clarus Report told us.

Leadership Development and Training Issues (Clarus Report).

The training and development of our leaders is a primary concern of the churches across Canada as it relates to lay leaders, ministerial candidates, and pastors. Concerns regarding this issue include:

- training and empowering lay people to enable them to take leadership within the local church.
- the education and training of potential pastors/ministerial candidates
- concern regarding educational institutions/seminaries not preparing pastors sufficiently
- concern regarding pastors coming from other denominations with no Free Methodist background
- continuing education for pastors especially in the area of leadership
- supporting/empowering/shepherding the local pastor

Pastoral Appointment System Issues (Clarus Report)

Respondents indicated a strong concern regarding the current pastoral appointment system. Concerns focused primarily on the transitioning of churches and pastors:

- where will our pastors come from?
- the need for assistance in the transitioning process for both the local church and the pastor.
- the need for a support system for pastors and their families in transition.

2. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

2.1. Six Core Values:

Six Core Values were outlined in **The Strategic Planing Presentation** (Dec. 1994) to guide the denomination as it resources congregations to individual health and vitality. This discussion of leadership development policies and strategies must keep these in mind.

2.1.1. Persons

- All persons are made in the image of God and possess intrinsic worth.
- All persons have a need to know Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
- All persons can be saved to the uttermost.
- All persons have unique gifts to contribute to the Kingdom of God.

2.1.2. Church

- The church is the foundation for the growth of the Kingdom of God on earth.
- The church is the primary context for developing believers.
- The church is called to minister in Jesus' name to all peoples.
- The church is to worship and serve God.

2.1.3. Growth

- The Scriptural mandate is for every church to grow qualitatively and quantitatively.
- The Scriptural mandate calls for evangelization of the un-reached. The Scriptural mandate calls for every Christian to grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- The Scripture supports sacrificial giving in support of Christian ministry efforts.

2.1.4. Team

- The team approach presupposes the diversity of spiritual gifts and personal competencies within the church.
- Teamwork is built on our theology of ministry.
- Teamwork maximizes the leadership resources of the church.

2.1.5. Learning

- Learning can lead to excellence.
- Learning can lead to innovation.
- Learning can increase skill.
- Learning can develop effective leaders.

2.1.6. Integrity

- Integrity for the people of God finds its basis in the character of God.
- Integrity establishes a framework for all relationships.
- Integrity establishes the character and quality of the organization.
- Integrity establishes a guiding force for all strategies, actions and programs.
- Integrity establishes the appropriate use of time, money, and energy.

2.2. Training and Empowering Lay Leadership in the Local Church

The FMCC assumes the following as undergirding principles as it develops its strategy for training and empowering local church leadership.

2.2.1. Principles of Local Church Leadership Development.

- **Ministry Plan:** The 1993 Book of Discipline (par. 425) directs the Local Church to develop its own ministry plans. A good ministry plan includes a memorable Vision Statement, Goals and ministry strategies. This calls for local church leaders to come to grips with what God wants them to be and do in their community. The ministry plan is priority one. Written guidance is available from the FMCC Office of Church Services to assist local churches with this task. Samples of actual ministry plans are also being collected by the FMCC to give local church leaders ideas as they work at this important task.
- **Local Church Initiative:** In light of its Ministry Plan, the local church must take the initiative to identify specific **strength areas** that need to be further developed and **weaker areas** that need to be revitalized or discontinued. Once identified, local church leaders need to be encouraged to be proactive in seeking out help to assist them.

- **Resource Pools:** The church (national and local) needs to use all technologies that are reasonably available to collect resource pools of ideas, strategies, programs, etc. As these form, they can be accessed through e-mail, faxes, letters, phone calls, personal visits by leaders seeking solutions.
- **Networking:** Interactive coaching which includes dialogue and accountability are proving to be crucial to leadership development. As those seeking help are networked with and, if possible, coached by those experiencing success, the possibility of discovering solutions and achieving breakthrough in a local church ministry-challenge increases.

2.2.2. The National Church's Role in Resourcing Local Church Leaders

Possibilities of how we can get help to one another:

- **The Strategic Planning Network (SPN)** being developed by Ron Bonar networks churches of similar circumstances into planning/accountability relationships.
- **The Director of Church Services** personally refers those seeking answers to those who have successfully discovered solutions.
- **The Teaching Church Network (TCN)** is a resource that the FMCC is joining to gain access to a mentoring network of churches all across North America.
- **An Internet Web Site** is being established for use by FM churches. (Those without access need to find someone who has Internet access and ask for assistance.)
- **A list of the more common "Free Methodist specific" leadership needs** is being assembled. The FMCC is working to develop a library of videos (with work books) to address these needs. (e.g. How to develop a ministry plan.)
- **Pastors** must take greater responsibility to focus on Leadership Development for themselves and local church leaders. Monthly they must set goals and evaluate themselves as to what leadership development area they are currently addressing for themselves and for the local church.

2.3. The Education and Training of Present and Potential Pastors

2.3.1. Components of Preparation

The evaluation, education and training of potential pastors growing up within the denomination and the assessment of pastors transferring in from other FM conferences or from other denominations requires ongoing refinement to ensure that the best possible quality of pastoral leadership is being brought into our pastoral leadership pool.

At present the following components exist:

- **Evaluation.** Local churches are expected to be thorough in processing applications for Lay Ministers' licences. Multi-day Ministerial Education and Guidance retreats have been implemented in 1996. (See Appendix one for a retreat outline). These retreats, led by trained M.E.G. Committee members are times of inspiration, instruction, interaction, evaluation and screening for Lay Ministers, Transfers, Ministerial Candidates, Deacons and Elders who are pursuing membership in the Canada Conference and ordination.
- **A Ministerial Education and Guidance (M.E.G.) Policy Manual:** (See Appendix two for its Table of Contents) A copy of this manual which guides the candidates for ministry is available from the FMCC.
- **Academic Preparation:** The FMC has a list of approved Institutions for the academic training of pastors. These are:
 - Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore KY
 - Azusa Pacific University, Azusa CA
 - Azusa Pacific University Graduate School of Theology, Azusa CA
 - Bethany Bible College, Sussex NB
 - Canadian Bible College, Regina SK
 - Canadian Nazarene College, Calgary AB
 - Canadian Theological Seminary, Regina SK
 - Central College, McPherson KS
 - Emmanuel Bible College, Kitchener ON
 - Greenville College, Greenville IL
 - Ontario Bible College, Toronto ON
 - Ontario Theological Seminary, Toronto ON
 - Regent College, Vancouver BC
 - Roberts Wesleyan College, Rochester NY
 - Rocky Mountain Bible college, Calgary AB
 - Seattle Pacific University, Seattle WA
 - Spring Arbor College, Spring Arbor MI
 - Trinity Western University, Langley BC
 - Wesley Biblical Seminary, Jackson MS
 - Western Evangelical Seminary, Portland OR
 - Wycliffe College, Toronto ON
- January and May term courses are also available for those needing required "denomination-specific" courses unavailable in their academic preparation. (See Appendix three for 1996's folder).
- **Internships** have been occurring where ministerial candidates have taken initiative to arrange them. Those who have interned have benefited from the experiences that they were able to observe and participate in.

2.3.2. National Church's role in the Education and Training of Potential and Present Pastors.

- **The National M.E.G. Committee** elected by the General Conference will have the responsibility of reviewing and refining the components presently in place and developing new components as the need for them is identified. This will include making recommendations to the Education Commission regarding the institutions (colleges, seminaries) approved for the training of ministers. See recommendation 4.
- **Internships:** As pastoral ministry becomes increasingly complex, the value of internships must be realised. The present approach of ministerial candidates arranging their own internships needs to be replaced with a more intentional approach. This includes:
 - a) identifying “teaching pastors/churches”
 - b) developing a way of assessing what type of internship a candidate needs, and
 - c) finding a way that would make internships financially viable for both interns and interning churches.
- **Continuing Education for Pastors:** There is presently no formal plan for the continuing education of pastors. This has been left to the individual pastor's own initiative. It may be that as the national M.E.G. Committee identifies the essential components of formation in a pastor's life that a formal structure for guiding pastors to continue to develop each of these components will emerge. A growing number of institutions are offering courses “On line” through the Internet. This option makes theological instruction available beyond classroom settings and ought to be evaluated along with other types of extension programs.

It must be recognized that financial resources from both the national and local church will need to be available in order for this to be a meaningful expectation. The Ministers’ Salaries and Benefits manual available from the FMCC gives guidance to both local churches and pastors on this matter.
- **Regional Ministers' Retreats:** The meeting of pastors together at the time of the General Conference is necessary for building a sense of team and connectedness across the nation. In 1995, regional ministers' conferences were held to bring pastors together for inspiration and instruction. This is a strategy that ought to continue in the years that the Canada Conference does not meet.
- **The Canadian Scholarship Plan:** There are presently 3 sources of revenue for the Canadian Scholarship Plan: The National Church's Scholarship Giving Stream, the Lorne Park College Foundation (LPCF) and the Aldersgate College Foundation (AC). As costs of education and training increase, the National Church will need to ensure that scholarship funds available to the church for the training of leaders are managed wisely and distributed judiciously. The National M.E.G. Committee will need to identify the

crucial areas where scholarship/grants are needed and make recommendations to the Canadian Scholarship Plan that will target resources to meet those needs. The present Board of Administration (BOA) has requested that the philosophy of the scholarship funding and the structure and size of the Canadian Scholarship Plan Committee be evaluated by representatives of the BOA, LPCF and AC.

2.3.3. The National Church's Present Strategy for Pastoring the local pastor.

- **Accountability Partners:** Pastors will continue to have accountability partners with whom they will meet regularly.
- **Pastoral Teams:** Pastors will continue to meet in Pastoral teams for mutual encouragement. National church leaders will ensure that the teams are resourced by providing discussion materials, by attending team meetings occasionally, by training the team leader and by responding to an individual pastor when it is identified by the team leader that special attention is needed.
- **The Official Board:** Official Boards are expected to be supportive of their pastors, taking care to respond to them as persons who require encouragement, affirmation, and guidance through mature dialogue. The National Church will seek to resource Official Boards by making them aware of Professional Enrichment opportunities for their pastors, by assisting in Policy formation, and by being available for consultation.

3. THE PASTORAL APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

The Free Methodist Church in Canada continues to staff its congregations from three sources:

- people from within Canadian Free Methodist congregations who respond to God's call to ministry.
- people who hold credentials within other Free Methodist Conferences who transfer into the Canada Conference.
- People who transfer into the Conference from other denominations.

The adjustments to the Pastoral Appointments system that were contained in "The Strategic Planning Presentation" (Dec. 1994) and approved by the Canadian General Conference continue to be refined as they are implemented across the nation when pastoral transitions become necessary. The process is now more congregation-driven as local church leaders assume more responsibility for prayerfully seeking for a new pastor.

The Director Church Services has developed a guide entitled **“Here is Help for Your Search Committee”** for use by a pastoral search committee. It outlines the process and procedures to follow and provides guidance in the following areas:

- How a “transition” begins.
- Developing a Local Church Profile (to be read by prospective pastors.)
- Developing a Profile of the “Ideal” Pastor.
- Developing a List of Potential Candidates.
- Making Contact with Potential Candidates including a simple letter of introduction, a guideline for checking references, suggestions as to how to conduct a thorough interview of a candidate, and how to prepare a recommendation to the Ministerial Appointments Committee once a candidate has been selected. (A copy of this manual is attached as Appendix 4 and will be placed before the Conference for approval (in principle) as a working document. See Recommendation 5.)

3.1. Pastoral Appointments Issues facing the National Church

3.1.1. Should movement in and out of the pool of pastors be regulated by the National Church?

It is recognized that within the pool of pastors at any given time, there are a variety of levels of competency. (Competency refers to a combination of factors including maturity, spiritual formation, experience, natural leadership ability, academic preparation, skill training, etc.)

At the same time, it is possible that one or several churches may be ready for transition at a time when a pastor with the desired competencies is not available. As in the past, the National Church presently does not insist that a local church choose only from among those that are available. Rather it assists with searches within and beyond the Canadian Free Methodist Church. As time passes, this may result in a situation where at any given time, several pastors are available but not "appointable" to churches that are in transition because they do not have the required competencies to fit the particular church's personality. The more recent approach to appointments provides more opportunity for local church leaders to decide when it has found the best available pastor for their church.

This no doubt causes frustration among pastors and may even result in some movement out of the Conference. On the other hand, the alternative is to force pastors on churches with the possibility of unsatisfactory results ensuing both ways.

3.1.2. What responsibility does the National Church have to Pastors in transition?

Under the previous system of appointments, pastors left without an appointment were responsible to make provision for themselves (and their families) until an appointment within or beyond the conference became available and they re-entered active pastoral ministry or they asked to be located at a local church and they pursued other full time employment. Conference

Superintendents attempted to maintain contact with these pastors until they were appointed or located, offering encouragement, counsel, and pastoral support.

The present system does not have regionally available paid superintendents. It is beyond the time and energy capacities of the present executive team (i.e. Bishop and Director of Church Services) to provide all the needed attention and so the FMCC is depending on Area Team Leaders / Members to be supportive of colleagues in transition.

This need to give attention to pastors in transition is recognized. Researching the support systems of other denominations that have pastors in transition and designing a system that is appropriate to the Free Methodist Church in Canada is a project that is under way. A first draft of a “Pastors in Transition” working document is attached as Appendix 5 and will be placed before the Conference for approval (in principle) as a working document.

3.1.3. How will a pastor's change in status be processed between General Conferences?

Because appointments under the present system may occur at any time in a given year, the system of announcing a change in a pastor's has changed. Previously this was normally done annually by the Ministerial Appointments Committee and reported by the Bishop at the time of the reading of the Appointments at the conclusion of an Annual Conference. In continuity with this previous practice, this granting of a status change has been assigned to the National M.E.G. Committee to oversee. The day to day administration of this work now rests with the Bishop and Director of Church Services who are responsible to ensure that each Ministerial member of the Canada Conference status reflects accurately their life situation. The following are the categories of relationship with the Canada Conference:

- Appointed to a church.
- In transition - available for pastoral appointment.
- Denominational Ministry.
- Released for Service beyond the denomination
- Leave of Absence.
- Retired
- Suspended
- Discontinued from ministerial candidacy.
- Transfer completed.
- Withdrawn from the Conference and denomination.
- Deceased

Policies related to the terms of each of the above relationships with the Canada Conference will be outlined in the Canadian Book of Discipline. The official status (at the time of printing) of each ministerial member of the Canada Conference will be listed in the Canadian Yearbook.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE 1996 GENERAL CONFERENCE

It is recognized that leadership development has been and will be a constant challenge for the church. There will always be new challenges to face as God's people minister in a changing world. Each General Conference will discover weaknesses in its present system of developing leaders and will also have new opportunities to explore. All the eventualities of the future cannot be anticipated, as desirable as that may seem. Those issues that are seen clearly must be addressed. The following are recommendations that seek to address issues that are before this General Conference.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE 1996 GENERAL CONFERENCE

- 4.1 That the 1996 General Conference reaffirm its commitment to the **Six Core Values** outlined in **The Strategic Planing Presentation** of December 1994 as values that will guide leadership development strategies of the denomination. (See pages 4,5)

LEADERSHIP BALLOT 4.1

I vote to approve this recommendation.
--

<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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- 4.2 That the 1996 General Conference adopt the four Principles of Local Church Leadership Development (2.2.1).
- The necessity of a local church having a Ministry Plan
 - The responsibility of the local church to take initiative to seek assistance to accomplish the goals of its ministry plan.
 - The responsibility of the National Church to facilitate the development of "resource pools" that can be accessed by local church leaders.
 - The responsibility of the National Church to facilitate networking among the Canadian churches to team churches together to help one another break through ministry challenges.

LEADERSHIP BALLOT 4.2

I vote to approve this recommendation.

☐ YES ☐ NO

- 4.3 That the National Church Leadership Team be asked to continue to research each of the possibilities for **Resourcing Local Church Leaders** outlined in section 2.2.2 in the beige paper on Leadership and implement those which are feasible.

LEADERSHIP BALLOT 4.3

I vote to approve this recommendation.

☐ YES ☐ NO

- 4.4 That the National Ministerial Education and Guidance Committee review the topics raised in Sections 2.3 and 3 of this “Beige Paper on Leadership” (**The Education and Training of Present and Potential Pastors** and the **Pastoral Appointment System**) with a view to refining present policies and strategies and to developing new approaches.

LEADERSHIP BALLOT 4.4

I vote to approve this recommendation.

☐ YES ☐ NO

- 4.5 That the 1996 General Conference approve the “Here is Help for your Search Committee” paper as a working document.

LEADERSHIP BALLOT 4.5

I vote to approve this recommendation.

☐ YES ☐ NO

- 4.6 That the 1996 General Conference approve the “Pastors in Transition” paper as a working document.

LEADERSHIP BALLOT 4.6

I vote to approve this recommendation.

☐ YES ☐ NO

LEADERSHIP PAPER ADDITIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.7 That the M.E.G. & P Committee develop policy related to Interim pastors.
- 4.8 That the SCOD develop guidance related to character requirements for local church leaders giving attention to principles provided in the New Testament.
- 4.9 That the Management Committee consider increasing the \$750 moving expense allowance for retiring ministers. (See page 8, "*Pastors in Transition*" working document)

MODIFICATIONS TO WORKING DOCUMENTS

- 1. "*Here's Help for Your Search Committee*" document
 - 1.1 p.2 6. ... list of potential candidates. The list of candidates will be compiled from resumes provided by the Director of Church Services as well as other FMCC pastors. (See *Pastors in Transition* document P.5) During this process...
 - 1.2 p.2 Add: 9. When a local church initiates the transition, it is expected to give at least 60 days notice to the pastor unless modified by mutual agreement with the pastor.
 - 1.3 p.20 last paragraph: Once you have prayerfully completed...
- 2. "*Pastors in Transition*" document
 - 2.1 p.3 Add to final paragraph: When a local church initiates the transition, it is expected to give at least 60 days notice to the pastor unless modified by mutual agreement with the pastor.
 - 2.2 p.5 Under 2nd heading, 1st paragraph: ...prepare an attractive resume. After forwarding it to the Director of Church Services, you should also take...

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE RETREAT SCHEDULE — 1996

DATES AND LOCATIONS:

April 19-21, 1996	Arlington Beach
April 26-28, 1996	Wesley Acres
May 3-5, 1996	Maple Grove
June 7-9, 1996	Wesley Acres

WEEK-END SCHEDULE:

FRIDAY:		
12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m.	Orientation	- MEG members and Resource persons
4:00 p.m.	Registration	- Room and Group Assignments
5:30 p.m.	Dinner	- Get acquainted in the groups
7:00 p.m.	Assembly	- Welcome and Overview of purpose and agenda - Introduction of individuals (Group by group) - Worship and Prayer
7:30 p.m.	Module 1	- A Message from Bishop Walsh
9:00 p.m.	Refreshments	- Informal interaction - Time for individual and/or group assignments
9:30 p.m.	Debriefing	- MEG and Resource persons

(over)

SATURDAY:

8:00 a.m.	Breakfast	- In groups with assigned discussion question
9:30 a.m.	Module 2	- Personality and Ministry Indicators
10:30 a.m.	Refreshments	
11:00 a.m.	Module 3	- Administration / In Basket
12:15 p.m.	Lunch	
1:30 p.m.	Module 4	- Co-op Game
3:00 p.m.	Free Time	
3:30 p.m.	Module 5	- Spiritual Maturity
5:30 p.m.	Dinner	- Assigned discussion question
7:00 p.m.	Module 6	- Designing the Ideal General Conference
9:00 p.m.	Refreshments	- Informal Interactions
		- Individual and/or group Assignments
9:30 p.m.	Debriefing	- MEG and Resource persons

SUNDAY:

8:00 a.m.	Breakfast	- Assigned discussion topic
9:00 a.m.	Module 7	- Video "Designing Worship"
11:00 a.m.	Worship and Communion	
12:00 noon	Lunch	(End of events for candidates)
1:00 p.m.	Debriefing and Recommendations	(For Committee Members only)

**MINISTERIAL EDUCATION
AND
GUIDANCE COMMITTEE**

**POLICY
MANUAL**

FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA

C O N T E N T S

A.	CHECKLIST FOR MINISTERIAL EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE COMMITTEES	1
B.	PROGRESS SUMMARY (Candidate's Material)	1-2
	* Computer Print Out	3
C.	LICENSED LAY MINISTER	
	* Policy For Processing	1
D.	GET ACQUAINTED INTERVIEW EVALUATION FORM	1
E.	APPLICATION FOR MINISTERS (Candidate's Material)	1-3
F.	MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE	
	* Policy For Processing	1
	* Personal Data Sheet (Candidate's Material)	2-3
	* Evaluation Form	4-5
G.	DEACON	
	* Policy For Processing	1
	* Personal Data Sheet	2-4
	* Evaluation Form	5-6
H.	ELDER	
	* Policy For Processing	1-2
	* Personal Data Sheet (Candidate's Material)	3-6
	* Evaluation Form	7-9
I.	CONSENT TO DISCLOSURE	1

CREDENTIALS OF COURSE INSTRUCTORS

Rev. John Vlainic is a graduate of Roberts Wesleyan College (B.A.), Asbury Theological Seminary (M.Div.) and Wycliffe College in the University of Toronto (Th.M.). He has worked in sales and management (in the insurance industry), taught (at Roberts Wesleyan College and for Aldersgate College) and pastored three churches. He has served on regional, national and international leadership bodies in the church. He is Senior Pastor of Kingsview Free Methodist Church in Toronto. He and his wife Ruth have a four year old son, Jason.

APPLICATION FORM

Dr. Robert Buchanan is a graduate of Asbury Theological Seminary (M.Div., D.Min.) and Princeton Theological Seminary (Th.M.). He has pastored Free Methodist churches in Whitby, Smith Falls and Toronto. For 13 years he served as superintendent of Canada East Conference. He has lectured at Ontario Theological Seminary and at several J-terms sponsored by Aldersgate College. Robert's hobbies include collecting antique farm equipment.

COURSE OFFERINGS

History and Polity of The Free Methodist Church

with Rev. John Vlainic



Wesleyan Theology

with Dr. Robert Buchanan

The Free Methodist Church in Canada
4315 Village Centre Court
Mississauga, Ontario L4Z 1S2

(905) 848-2600 Fax: (905) 848-2603

DATES AND LOCATION

January Term **Jan 8-12, 1996**

1. History and Polity of The Free Methodist Church
with *Rev. John Vlaminic*

Calgary Free Methodist Church
Site 9, SS 3
Calgary, AB T3C 3L8
Tel: (403) 249-2838

2. Wesleyan Theology
with *Dr. Robert Buchanan*

Wesley Chapel Free Methodist Church
2385 Warden Avenue
Scarborough, ON M1W 2L6
Tel: (416) 497-7120

May Term **May 6-10, 1996**

1. History and Polity of The Free Methodist Church
with *Rev. John Vlaminic*

Kingsview Free Methodist Church
15 Kingsview Blvd.
Etobicoke, ON M9R 1T5
Tel: (416) 248-5000

2. Wesleyan Theology
with *Dr. Robert Buchanan*

Calgary Free Methodist Church
Site 9, SS 3
Calgary, AB T3C 3L8
Tel: (403) 249-2838

DESIGNED FOR

- ♦ Ministers transferring into the Free Methodist Church in Canada
- ♦ Ministerial candidates *
- ♦ Enrichment courses for pastors or lay persons

** Ministerial candidates are encouraged to enroll in a full semester course in Wesleyan Theology when possible.*

COST

- ♦ Basic cost \$75
- ♦ For CTS Credit - \$385
- ♦ The Canadian Scholarship Plan will contribute \$140 to those receiving CTS credits. (3-credit courses)

Costs of travel and accommodation are not included in the above.

You are responsible for your own arrangements.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE

January Term - January 3, 1996
May Term - April 30, 1996

APPLICATION FORM

To: The Free Methodist Church in Canada
4315 Village Centre Court
Mississauga, ON L4Z 1S2
(905) 848-2600 Fax: (905) 848-2603

Name: _____

Address: _____

Church: _____

Tel: (H) _____ (W) _____

Please enroll me to the following course(s):

January Term **Jan 8-12, 1996**

1. History and Polity of
The Free Methodist Church ☐

2. Wesleyan Theology ☐

May Term **May 6-10, 1996**

1. History and Polity of
The Free Methodist Church ☐

2. Wesleyan Theology ☐

I am applying for CTS credits ☐

I am applying for CSP assistance ☐

Enclosed: Payment in full \$ _____

Signature _____

Date _____

HERE IS HELP
FOR YOUR
SEARCH COMMITTEE

*For Use in Local Churches
of*



The Free Methodist Church in Canada

September 1996

Your local church has been declared "in transition" and you have been elected to a committee that has the responsibility of searching for the person who will give pastoral leadership to the next stage of the church's development. This is a big responsibility and it will likely involve hours of dedicated committee work, prayer, communication and interviewing. At the end of the process you will have a recommendation to give to the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee and/or Bishop in order that an appointment can be made.

This manual is designed to help in the process ahead of you. During this process it is important that you work in co-operation with the Director of Church Services and the Bishop.

An overall view of the transitional process follows.

OVERVIEW

POLICIES FOR PASTORAL TRANSITIONS in THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA

1. The Bishop will declare a church "in transition" when:
 - a pastor indicates to the Bishop or Director of Church Services that he/she intends to leave the present appointment and seek a new appointment or relationship with the Conference*
 - a pastoral vote according to paragraph 445.6 of the *Book of Discipline* indicates the need for pastoral transition.
 - disciplinary action of the Bishop and Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee necessitates a transition in leadership.

** A pastor does not resign to the congregation but indicates to the Conference his/her intention to move into "transition." In turn, the Conference, through the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee and /or the Bishop's Office may authorize a pastor to announce to the congregation his or her plans for transition.*

2. Once a church has been declared "in transition":
 - the local board will be instructed by the Director of Church Services to establish a Pastoral Search Committee of at least four persons who:
 - are full members of the society
 - fairly represent the makeup of the congregation
 - are committed to an intense involvement that may last several months

- are willing to work in co-operation with the Bishop, Director of Church Services and the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee.
3. An elder will be assigned to assist the committee in following the guidelines of the Pastoral Search Committee Handbook.
 4. The first tasks of the Pastoral Search Committee include:
 - a self study of the pastoral charge and the development of a profile of the local church for presentation to prospective pastors
 - an assessment of the present and future needs of the congregation in order to develop a profile of an ideal incoming pastor
 - the preparation of other proposals for pastoral leadership with supporting rationale. For example, a church may need to face the reality that they can only invite a bi-vocational pastor to give leadership at this time.
 5. In consultation with the Bishop, Director of Church Services and/or Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee, a list of potential candidates will be developed by the Pastoral Search Committee. Only candidates approved by the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee for ministry in the Free Methodist Church in Canada will be eligible for consideration. (If a potential candidate presently resides in a conference other than the Canadian Conference, the Superintendent or the Bishop of that conference will be notified.)
 6. The Pastoral Search Committee will limit its consideration of candidates to the mutually agreed upon list of potential candidates. During this process there needs to be clear and current communication with the person(s) supervising the transition.
 7. When a recommendation from the Pastoral Search Committee has been approved the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee, the Bishop will announce the new appointment, thus completing the process. The local church Pastoral Search Committee, which has served as a task force, will disband.
 8. The receiving church will be responsible for the expenses incurred in the recruitment and moving of a new pastor.

FIRST STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1. Dealing with the emotional feelings of the congregation.

When a minister announces an intention to leave a current appointment, some members of a congregation may feel betrayed or deserted. Others may feel sorrow, guilt and self-doubt. Some think the church will fall apart. A few will feel relief that a change is about to happen. These are normal feelings that accompany this kind of transition.

It is right to understand and expect feelings that are similar to those experienced during periods of loss and grief. These include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and finally acceptance. It is important that while many in the congregation will go through these various stages, they will not necessarily happen at the same time and patience and understanding will be required. Some members of the congregation will require extra care. The Pastoral Search Committee can help the process by providing opportunity for these feelings to be expressed.

Since the pastor and family may also struggle with feelings of loss it would be helpful for the Pastoral Search Committee to invite the departing minister to meet with them for an "exit interview," to share thoughts, concerns, and hopes for the local church. This could provide a healing moment that helps the minister "let go" and express feelings about leaving.

Pastoral transitions require a fresh start. It is, therefore, wise not to invite the previous minister back to do weddings, baptisms, or funerals.

2. Meeting pastoral needs in an interim period. (While the search is underway.)

The process of searching for a new pastor will likely extend beyond the time when the previous pastor has moved. This can be a difficult time in the life of the church. It may also be a time when lay leaders feel free to come forward to exercise spiritual gifts for the benefit of the whole congregation.

It is important that the Official Board makes provision for the ongoing ministry during this time. Care must be taken not to fall for the temptation to "coast" until the new pastor is engaged.

Who will do the work of the minister during this time?

Here are some possibilities:

- Lay persons from within the Local Church could do pastoral visitation, lead worship, or coordinate the small group or Christian Education program. Some could occasionally preach.
- There may be a number of ordained persons who could supply the pulpit. They may be retired ministers without regular Sunday responsibilities, or Ministerial Candidates who are able to help out once or twice.
- One person might become a regular pulpit supply. This may be a student, a retiree, a professor in a Christian college or a minister who is in special relationship with the conference. There are a number of persons who have expressed an interest in this type of work within a given distance from their home.
- A part-time minister may be available. This person would likely arrange to serve the congregation for a few days a week and commute to the local church. This person's time will be limited, but people will know that a minister is available when needed.
- A full-time interim minister may be available. Again, there are a limited number of persons who may be willing to serve in this way.

- A minister in a neighbouring church may be willing to help out for crisis pastoral care, weddings, funerals, and the administration of the sacraments.
-

IS THIS THE TIME FOR AN INTERIM MINISTER?

An interim minister is a member of the conference (or a supply) who is appointed to a local church for a period of time while the search process is active. This appointment is not intended to provide a temporary stand-in but to serve a particular need in the church during a transitional period. An interim minister would have clearly defined goals to accomplish.

There are times when the possibility of an interim minister should be considered:

- When there has been long term pastoral relationship (10 - 12 years)
- When the community of the local church has undergone drastic changes and the conference needs to assess the changing role of the local church in the community.
- When a minister has died while serving the local church
- When the last minister has had an authoritarian style of leadership and the congregation wants to build greater lay participation in the church's ministry
- When there has been conflict in the local church, the congregation is polarized, the minister was asked to leave, and there needs to be healing in the congregation
- When the process is taking longer than anticipated and it would be wise to wait for up to a year before appointing the next minister.

Interim ministers bring special gifts to the task. They may assist the local congregation:

- to develop a vision for ministry
- to deal with conflict
- to heal rifts
- to provide new models for ministry and mission
- to make the transition to new leadership

If you feel that a Interim Minister would be useful in your situation please discuss this with the Director of Church Services.

WHERE CAN WE RECRUIT FROM?

- A list of Pastors (supplied by Director of Church Services) who have indicated that they wish to be in transition.
- A list of Pastors (supplied by Director of Church Services) who are presently without appointment.

- Initial contact (after discussion with the Bishop or Director of Church Services) may be made with pastors who are presently appointed to see if they would be interested in pursuing an appointment with your church.
- NOTE: Any candidate must first have been approved by the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee.)

SELF STUDY

The following document is designed to help you in the process of self study. The benefits of this self study are two-fold:

- **You can more clearly understand your leadership needs.** The local church's mission statement, goals for ministry and mission, the needs of the congregation and community will determine the kind of leadership you require.
- **You can more clearly communicate the makeup of your church and community to prospective candidates.** A candidate needs to understand the history of a local church along with its current needs and expectations.

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

(Complete this form the best you can. Estimate statistical information that is not readily available.)

Date: _____

Name of Church: _____

Location Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Phone: _____

Contact Person: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Phone: _____

1. PEOPLE INFORMATION

Membership:

Total Membership: (Full, Preparatory, Junior)	_____
Number of new members in the past five years	_____
Number of families in your Church Directory/mailling list	_____

Average Attendance:

Morning Worship	_____
Sunday School	_____
Mid-week programs (include small groups)	_____
Sunday Evening	_____

Age Distribution of Members and Adherents:

Children (birth-12)	_____
Youth (13-17)	_____
College and Career Singles (18-25)	_____
Young Adults (18-30)	_____
Middle Adults (31-45)	_____
Older Adults (46-60)	_____
Senior Adults (over 60)	_____

Occupation of Primary Income Provider (active or retired):*(Please indicate the number of persons in each category.)*

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clerical | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown |

Education of Adult Members and Adherents:

- ☐ Public School
- ☐ High School
- ☐ Some University/College
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Doctorate

2. INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS AND MORALE (This section would not necessarily be included in the packet given to a candidate, though it is important to address these issues.)

Are there problems or tensions?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please explain: _____

3. FACILITIES INFORMATION

CHURCH BUILDING

Type of Construction:

☐ Frame ☐ Masonry ☐ Brick Veneer ☐ Other

Age _____ years

State of Repair _____

Insured Value \$ _____

Mortgage?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Value of Mortgage \$ _____

Seating Capacity of:

Sanctuary _____

Fellowship Hall _____

Number of SS rooms _____

Do the facilities include?

☐ Recreational Facilities Type (if yes) _____

☐ Business Office

☐ Pastor's Study

☐ Other Offices Please list _____

☐ Library

Any plans for expansion or relocation?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Please explain _____

Is the parsonage provided?

(If so, please provide a description) _____

Are there other facilities maintained by the congregation?

(If so, please provide a description) _____

4. COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Population of city, town or ministry area of the church: _____

Growth Expectations:

☐

Declining

☐

Stable

☐

Growing

Principal Employers:

Type of Business:

Educational Institutions:

☐ University ☐ College ☐ Trade School

Please describe the neighbourhood where the church is located: (Circle all that apply.)

- Old / New / Both
- Residential / Commercial / Both
- Owned homes / Rentals
- Apartments / Single Family / Both
- Multicultural _____ Yes _____ No

Are the church people involved in community life?

☐ Yes ☐ No

List organizations and activities that are supported by the church people.

5. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE INFORMATION

Is the membership list current?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Has the church adopted a current Ministry Plan?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are there scheduled written reports of expenses and income?

Name of Board Chair _____

Are there published annual reports to the congregation?

Is the Pastor's Cabinet active and effective?

6. PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY THE CHURCH

Please list all full time and part time paid (or appointed) staff:

NAME	POSITION	P/V	FT	PT
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7. PASTORAL RELATIONS

How long have previous Senior Pastors served?

1. Name _____ No. of years _____

2. Name _____ No. of years _____

3. Name _____ No. of years _____

Under what conditions did they leave?

(Please explain the feelings. Use additional paper, if necessary.)

Has the church been divided over pastoral leadership in recent years?

(Please explain. Use additional paper, if necessary.)

8. PASTORAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT (Current annual amounts.)

Base salary	\$ _____
Housing Allowance	\$ _____
Life/Dental/LTD Package	\$ _____
Automobile Allowance	\$ _____
Other Allowances	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Allowed days away: (Annually)	
Vacation Days	# _____
Family Camp	# _____
Ministry/Mission Days (Ministry in other churches)	# _____
Bereavement Days (State policy)	# _____
Conference/Seminar Days	# _____

9. PASTORAL LEADERSHIP INTERESTS (Check the three most important.)

Biblical Preaching	Youth Ministry	Christian Education
Community Outreach	Senior Adult Ministry	Evangelism
Administration	Leadership	Stewardship Emphasis
Prayer Leadership	Visitation	Singles Ministry
Membership Growth	Counselling	Missions
Other		

10. CONGREGATIONAL PRIORITIES

The 80 words and phrases listed below help define a congregation's ministry. PLEASE CIRCLE THE 20 WORDS OR PHRASES WHICH MOST CLEARLY IDENTIFY YOUR CONGREGATION'S PRIORITIES. (It is important that you do not circle more than 20 words or phrases. You will have to make some choices.)

Altar services	Athletic teams	Bible studies	Advertise Services
Cantatas	Conventions	College Scholarship	Altar in Sanctuary
Attendance	Budget of expenses	Celebrations	Family Activities
Campaigns	Ministry Plan	Communion	Sense of belonging
Conferences	Baptismal services	Ministry team (Worship)	Choir music
Fellowship dinners	Discipleship training	Evangelistic preaching	Clerical staff
Christmas specials	Friendships	Good records	Easter programs
Group retreats	Expository preaching	Faith promise	Faithful tithers
Hymn singing	Small groups	Social ministry	Hymnals
Memorials	Inspired preaching	Telephone visits	Pastor's classes
Public praise	Pastoral care	Prayer meetings	Friend Day
Public prayer	Pot luck dinners	Guest Groups	Missions Convention
Piano/organ	Sanctuary drama	Sense of community	Memory verses
Personal evangelism	Parsonage	Scripture music	Hospital visiting
Training seminars	Stewardship plan	Special music	Social activities
Spiritual nurture	Prison ministry	SS teachers	Testimonies
SS picnics	SS classes	Radio/TV program	Faithful ushers
Worship	Visiting shut-ins	Bible doctrine	Rescue missions
Volunteers	Team ministry	Seeker sensitive	Seeker targeted
VBS in summer	Work teams (missions)	Christian camping	Relationships

11. WORSHIP STYLE

Check the word that best describes the preferred worship style of the congregation.

- ☐ Contemporary
- ☐ Traditional Free Methodist
- ☐ Informal
- ☐ Charismatic
- ☐ Liturgical
- ☐ Other

Briefly define your use of the above term(s).

12. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

** Please enclose copies of the Annual Reports from the last three years.*

PLEASE COMPLETE AND FORWARD A COPY TO:

**CHURCH SERVICES
CANADIAN MINISTRIES CENTRE
THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA
4315 VILLAGE CENTRE COURT
MISSISSAUGA, ON L4Z 1S2**

PROFILE OF THE "IDEAL PASTOR"

Once you have completed a self study it is good to determine, in general terms at least, the profile of the pastoral leader who would best meet the needs of the congregation at this time. For example, you might determine that the church would prosper with a recent seminary or college graduate who has lots of ideas and energy for creative ministries. Or, on the other hand, you may determine that the needs of the congregation require the expertise of a pastor who has a proven track record of conflict resolution, church re-development or some other skill.

Be creative in the description of the "ideal pastor" and communicate your ideas to the Canadian Ministries Centre, Mississauga, in order to assist in preparing a "prospect list" for your church.

POTENTIAL CANDIDATES

In communication with your Bishop, Director of Church Services and/or Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee Chair, a list of potential names will be approved for a process of contacting, interviewing and recommendation. Your Committee may want to suggest names of persons that you would like to have included on the list. **It is important that you do not make contact with any potential candidate until that person is included on the approved prospect list.** At the conclusion of the process of this stage of the search there will be a "short list" of persons who are approved for your Committee to contact and interview.

The Director of Church Services will supply a pastoral profile for each potential candidate.

MAKING CONTACT

Before making contact with the persons on the prospect list, the Pastoral Search Committee needs to develop an information packet which can be shared with the ministers the Committee is interested in interviewing. A variety of information about the church and community can be included in this packet. Some suggestions include:

- a church bulletin
- the Church Profile from the self study (Do not necessarily include all parts.)
- a copy of the current Ministry Plan
- a history of the church
- information about local school systems
- community information such as shopping, entertainment, etc.
- pictures of the church, church activities, community
- a special edition of the church newsletter
- any material that the local church uses in welcoming visitors

Since these packets probably will not be returned, several should be made.

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The Pastoral Search Committee will prepare a letter of introduction to be sent to the ministers the Committee wishes to interview. That letter should introduce the congregation to the ministry, indicate that the church would like to consider that pastor, among others, as a potential candidate for the ministry, and suggest a date when the Pastoral Search Committee would prefer to have a response to the letter of introduction. Indicate that if a response to the letter is not forthcoming by the date suggested, the Chair will make contact by telephone.

Here is a sample letter:

Dear Reverend Smith:

The Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee of the Free Methodist Church in Canada has sent us your resumé and profile as a potential candidate for our church. Upon review of the profile, our Search Committee would like to consider you, among others, as a potential candidate for the position of Senior Pastor at the (Name) Free Methodist Church.

I have enclosed an information packet about the church which should be helpful as you consider your request. If you have questions about the information provided, please feel free to contact me.

In order that our process may proceed in a timely manner, may I request that you respond to this inquiry by March 21. If I have not heard from you by that date, I will contact you by phone to learn of your response.

Sincerely yours,

George Jones
Search Committee Chair

GJ/cl

Encl.

You can make use of the time during which you are awaiting a response by exploring references given by the candidate. **It is always wise to check the reference of a previous immediate supervisor.**

Here is a guideline for checking references by telephone:

CHECK CANDIDATE REFERENCES

1. Explain your reason for calling, who suggested his/her name as a reference, and ask for help in making a good choice.
2. It is important to particularly check the reference of the most recent immediate supervisor (Superintendent and/or Bishop).
3. In a telephone conversation you may wish to use some or all of the following questions:
 - How well do you know _____? (In what relationship?)
 - In what areas of ministry does the candidate work best?
 - How well does _____ do the things you didn't mention?
 - Name one or two areas you would like to see developed or improved?
 - What does _____ tend to emphasize in ministry?
 - What do you think would be an ideal congregation for ministry for _____?
 - Is there anything else you think we should know about _____?
4. After the telephone conversation it is good to reflect on the conversation with these questions:
 - How much weight do you give this person's assessment?
 _____ a lot _____ some _____ not much
 - What was the level of enthusiasm in support of this candidate?
 _____ high _____ moderate _____ low
 - Did anything in the conversation surprise you, make you wonder, or arouse some reason of caution in you?
 _____ yes _____ no
 If yes, what? _____

 - Was there anything you require in a minister in your congregation which was mentioned with reservation or not at all?

(You may want to double-check these items with other references.)

INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

When a minister responds favourably to the church's letter of introduction, the Pastoral Search Committee will make arrangements to meet the candidate at the church or other mutually-agreed-upon place for an interview. This interview should involve only members of the Pastoral Search Committee and the candidate. *While it may be tempting to do so, it is too early in the process to invite the candidate to appear in a public forum.*

The interview needs to be carefully arranged with members of the Pastoral Search Committee prepared to meet the candidate at the designated place. If it is an evening meeting it would be a good idea for part of the Committee to entertain the candidate at dinner. Consider the needs of the candidate's family if they have accompanied him/her on the visit. If the meeting is in the church, it would be a good idea to first give the candidate a tour of the building.

The entire Pastoral Search Committee should be present for the interview. Throughout the interview the Pastoral Search Committee members must keep in mind that they are comparing the interviewee with the requirements for ministerial leadership identified in the church profile. A Pastoral Search Committee may want to prepare itself for the interview by role-playing the event before a candidate arrives.

The best way to make sure the interview delivers as much relevant data as possible is to structure it by including a list of questions which **must** be asked before the interview is over. Do not interrupt a natural flow of conversation by following a list of questions. The Chair is responsible to see that all the prescribed questions are asked before the interview is concluded.

Important areas to explore are:

1. What the candidate does best and enjoys most.
2. What the candidate considers most important in the ministry and wants to do most.
3. The kind of person the candidate is, with what particular strengths and what possible weaknesses.
4. What knowledge, experience and conviction does the candidate bring to the ministry at this point in life?

Here are some guideline questions that may help you in the interview:

AN INTERVIEW OUTLINE

1. Please tell us about the ministry you are in right now.
2. As you look back, what has happened that you feel best about?
3. What, in your present situation, is disappointing to you?
4. If you were to stay there another five years, what would you like to see happen?
5. From what you have seen about our church, is there anything which seems particularly challenging?
6. How would you describe your style of leadership?
7. What, in the ministry, do you consider to be your specialty?
8. How did you come to choose the ministry as a vocation?
9. As you look back over your life, where do you see yourself making critical choices?
10. How have your own faith and your theological views changed since you entered college? Since you entered the ministry?
11. What are your views on _____? (Choose any theological or social issues which are important to your congregation.)
12. Describe the process you go through when you are preparing a sermon.
13. What is your preferred practice with regard to pastoral calling? What is your objective? What do you do? What makes you decide to make a call?
14. What emphasis do you place on pastoral counselling? Please describe your training and experience in this area.
15. What role does your family play in your practice of ministry?
16. What issues do you see as the most important ones facing our denomination now?
17. How do you understand the role of the ministry in church administration?
18. What approaches to a congregation's financial stewardship do you prefer?
19. If you were to become the pastor of this church, what are some of the things you would try to do during your first year here?
20. How do you maintain your own spiritual, emotional and physical health?
21. *
22. *
23. *

* Add questions from your Committee.

MAKING A RECOMMENDATION

Once you have completed the process of interviewing and assessing the candidates it is time to communicate your recommendation to the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee. The responsibility of the Committee is to ensure that proper procedures have been followed so that a solid appointment can be announced. The Bishop, as Chair of the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee will prepare an announcement regarding the new appointment to your church.

Pastors in Transition

for use by Ministerial Members

of



The Free Methodist Church in Canada

(FIRST DRAFT)

September 1996

INTRODUCTION

The Free Methodist Church in Canada through the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee appoints pastors to local churches. While the appointment of pastors by the conference is a historical distinctive of Methodism, the process of making appointments has been modified from time to time to meet the changing needs and expectations of pastors and local churches throughout the history of the denomination.

In keeping with the expressed Core Values of the Free Methodist Church in Canada and the commitment to empower the local church, the process of appointment has been further modified to involve the local church in a greater and more responsible manner.

The purpose of this manual is to describe more fully the design of the process as it is presently practiced in the Free Methodist Church in Canada and to provide information for the benefit of pastors and churches.

Here is an overview of the process in general terms:

1. The Bishop will declare a church "in transition" when:
 - a pastor indicates to the Bishop or Director of Church Services that he/she intends to leave the present appointment and seek a new appointment or relationship with the Conference.*
 - a pastoral vote according to paragraph 445.6 of the *Book of Discipline* indicates the need for pastoral transition.
 - disciplinary action of the Bishop and Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee necessitates a transition in leadership.

** A pastor does not resign to the congregation but indicates to the Conference where membership is registered his/her intention to move into "transition." In turn, the Conference, through the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee and /or the Bishop's Office may authorize a pastor to announce to the congregation his or her plans for transition.*
2. Once a church has been declared "in transition":
 - the local board will be instructed by the Director of Church Services to establish a Pastoral Search Committee of at least four persons who:

- are full members of the society.
 - fairly represent the makeup of the congregation.
 - are committed to an intense involvement that may last several months.
 - are willing to work in co-operation with the Bishop, Director of Church Services, and the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee.
3. An elder will be assigned to assist the committee in following the guidelines of the Pastoral Search Committee Handbook.
 4. The first tasks of the Pastoral Search Committee include:
 - a self study of the pastoral charge and the development of a profile of the local church for presentation to prospective pastors.
 - an assessment of the present and future needs of the congregation in order to develop a profile of an ideal incoming pastor.
 - the preparation of other proposals for pastoral leadership with supporting rationale. For example, a church may need to face the reality that they can only invite a bi-vocational pastor to give leadership at this time.
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 8. The receiving church will be responsible for the expenses incurred in the recruitment and moving of a new pastor.

GUIDELINES

•How do I initiate a transition?

Pastoral transitions are most often started when a pastor responds to a self awareness that it is time to move to a new ministry or employment opportunity. (Of course, retirement or medical disability may also prompt an action for change.)

Most common indicators that pastors use to evaluate the need for transition are:

- ability to cast a new vision for the present ministry.
- length of present tenure.
- ability to lead in the design and implementation of a suitable Ministry Plan.
- family needs.
- educational goals.
- results of the annual self-study or pastoral vote.
- an inner sense of completion of present ministry .

It is wise to seek counsel from your Spiritual Director and other trusted persons as you wrestle with this issue.

•When do I need to inform the Board of my intentions?

There are no easy answers to this question. It is hard to have the best of both worlds! Some pastors feel very comfortable to inform the Board early and to invite their prayers for the unfolding of God's will. Others need the protection of a more private approach.

You are free to respond to inquiries from Pastoral Search Committees without an obligation to share this information with your Board or Cabinet. You are also free to initiate an inquiry with a Pastoral Search Committee without the obligation of disclosure. There is, however, a point of integrity when you need to inform your Board of your intentions. And, because there are implications to the timing of this disclosure you need to assume the responsibility of those implications. Pray for the gift of wisdom in this matter.

However, you are expected to give 60 days notice to the church (present appointment) unless modified by mutual agreement with the church.

•Am I free to talk to Pastoral Search Committees before I announce my intention to seek a transition?

Yes. If you are contacted by a Pastoral Search Committee you may test your interest and explore the potential, keeping in mind the implications to your present ministry as noted above. Be aware that you may unconsciously give off “signals” during this time that will be detected by persons in your congregation.

•What financial provisions am I guaranteed during a transitional time?

You may be eligible for UIC benefits.

Group Benefits (excluding Long Term Disability) may be continued for up to four months from the last pay period of the appointment that is now completed. The Free Methodist Church in Canada will pay the “Church’s Share” during this period. Please be in contact with the Director of Administrative Services regarding these arrangements.

•Once announced, how can I best minister during the transition period?

While you are not able to lead the congregation into new endeavours of ministry, you do have an opportunity to prepare the church for the next pastoral leader. This is a time to be gracious and sensitive to the emotional feelings of your people. Do all that you can to build unity in the body during this time.

•What involvement should I have in the “next steps” of the church I’m leaving?

The short answer is, “None.”

Likewise the congregation or board should not expect you to give leadership or counsel in this area.

•What is my relationship to the Canadian Ministries Centre and Director of Church Services during times of transition?

You have access to the Leadership Team of the Canadian Ministries Centre as you seek another appointment within the Conference. They will become advisors who will help guide you during this period of time.

The Director of Church Services will submit your name or make your resume available to Pastoral Search Committees which are active.

You will work with the Director of Administrative Services on matters pertaining to the continuance of the Group Insurance Plan during a transition period.

•How do I find a new appointment?

The first step is to prepare an attractive resume. You may forward it to the Director of Church Services but you should also take the initiative to submit it to churches that you know to be in the search process.

A list of churches currently available can be obtained from the Director of Church Services at any given time.

It is ethically inappropriate to use the resources of the local church (phone, travel expense, etc.) for the personal process of seeking a new appointment.

•What if I am without an appointment?

In this model, as in the previous, it is not necessarily guaranteed that you would be appointed to a church. In reality you appoint yourself through the reputation you establish in your ministry and relationship with people.

There are a number of options that describe your relationship to the conference during this time:

- In transition - available for pastoral appointment.
- Denominational ministries
- Released for service beyond the denomination.
- Leave of Absence
- Located Deacon or Elder (Membership in a local Free Methodist Church.)

The Director of Church Services, after consulting with you, will designate which relationship best describes your situation, will update your file at the Canadian Ministries Centre, and will have this information available for the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee.

•How does a local church indicate the need for pastoral change?

There are three ways for a local church board or society to express their opinion that a change of pastoral leadership would be beneficial for the church. While this kind of indication may be painful for someone and often disruptive to the congregation, the pain is lessened when the proper procedures are followed.

1) The annual self study:

Yearly, the pastor and the Official Board shall conduct a guided self study to review the mission, expectations, goals and performance of the church and pastor. At the time of the self study the written understanding between the church and the pastor should be updated and renewed.

This is the time for objective evaluation of the performance of lay and ministerial leaders in relation to the adopted Ministry Plan. It is assumed that the pastor would give leadership to a team of persons (volunteer and staff) to accomplish the mission of the church.

Two basic questions that a church board must ask are:

- Are we accomplishing our mission?
- Do we have the right leadership?

The time of the self study with the renewal of agreement between pastor and board is a good time to responsibly ask the leadership question.

2) The pastoral vote:

Every third (3rd) year of a pastor's tenure there will be a routine congregational vote on the continuance of the pastor. At the same time the pastor will submit to the Director of Church Services a statement of preference regarding continuation. The vote of the membership will be mailed to the Office of the Director of Church Services who, without delay, will report objectively to the pastor and Official Board.

Reference to a congregational vote is understood to mean a vote of members who are in full relationship with the Society. If it is important to extend this expression to the larger congregation you must design a way to clearly indicate those who are full members of the society with the understanding that decisions relating to transition would be based only on the vote of full members.

The question on the ballot shall be:

“Do you favour your pastor’s continuance?” and will be answered “Yes” or “No”.

The secretary will place the ballots in an envelope in the presence of the Society, seal and mail them immediately to the Director of Church Services.

3) Exceptional situations:

If circumstances warrant, the Official Board and/or the pastor could request of the Director of Church Services that a congregational vote be taken before the end of a three year interval, subject to the approval of the Bishop.

This clause is included to help deal with the unusual situation where:

- a pastor needs a formal indication of the level of support.
- a division in the congregation is challenging the leadership of the pastor
- the health of the congregation could be served by an expression of confidence in leadership.
- the pastor/parish relationship has seriously deteriorated.

If there is a discrepancy between the vote and the pastor’s preference, normally the vote of the members will take precedence and the Bishop will declare the church in transition. Under unusual circumstances, the Bishop has the responsibility, in conjunction with the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee, to reappoint a pastor for a one year term.

•What about transition to retirement?

- An interview to assist in preparation for retirement will be conducted by the Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee.
- An official retirement ceremony will be conducted to express appreciation for the years of faithful service.
- The normal retirement age is sixty-five, however, there may be an earlier date according to years of service and pension accrued.

- The retiree may choose to continue membership with the Canadian General Conference *or* be located to a local church upon mutual agreement of the retiree, Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement Committee and the local church.
- Where a pastor is leaving active ministry and taking retirement status and incurs moving expenses to locate to a place of retirement residency, the Canadian General Conference will assist with such moving expenses to a maximum of \$750.00.
- Benefits may continue on reduced basis with premiums paid by the retiree (See Salaries & Benefits Manual from C.M.C.)
- The retiree is encouraged to serve in a local church under the appointed pastor's direction, without membership on the Official Board.
- Area Team meetings are not intended for retirees as they are designed for the leadership development of appointed pastors.
- The retiree will continue to be informed by receiving communications from the C.M.C.

•*What about reading resources?*

- Oswald, Roy, "The Pastor As Newcomer" - Alban Institute, Washington, D.C. 1977
- Oswald, Roy, "Running Through the Thistles: Terminating A Ministerial Relationship With A Parish" - Alban Institute, Washington, D.C. 1978
- Phillips, Wm. Bud., "Pastoral Transitions: From Endings To Beginnings" - Alban Institute, Washington, D.C. 1988
- Garlow, Jim, Article, "The Ten Commandments For Pastoral Transition" (see end of Handbook)
- Leadership Journal, "Pastoral Transitions", Fall 1983