

**Title: Prioritizing of Campus Ministry**

**Originating Body:** Halifax Presbytery on behalf of Dalhousie Campus Ministry Committee

**Maritime Conference Action:** Transmit with concurrence

**Financial Implications:** N/A

**Staffing Implications:** N/A

**Proposal:**

Halifax Presbytery, on behalf of the Dalhousie Campus Ministry Committee, proposes, through Maritime Conference, that:

1. The 40<sup>th</sup> General Council recognize campus chaplaincies and ministries as a key element in the implementation of its commitment to Youth and Young Adult Ministry.
2. The Secretary of the General Council facilitate a national review of campus ministries to determine their strengths, needs, and role in youth and young adult ministries.
3. That the 40<sup>th</sup> General Council re-establish National Funding for Campus Ministry.

**Background:**

For 70 years, until the mid-1990s, the United Church of Canada (UCC) campus ministries were supported by a national resource of funding and guidance.

In the 1990s, a restructuring process ‘downloaded’ the funding and governance of campus ministries to be more local, immediate and contextual. As part of the downloading, there was a ‘grandparenting’ period for some of the funding, in order to allow for the transition. As a result of this downloading, campus ministry competes for Mission Support Grants along with presbytery funding.

In 1997, the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Vision, as accepted by the 36<sup>th</sup> General Council, stated that: “We have a vision of a church that... provides a Christian environment where youth and young adults are welcome, heard, valued, nurtured, and supported both personally and as equals in local congregations, church camps, courts and campuses.” (Item II)

In May 2007, the General Council Executive adopted a motion which affirmed the “Call to Purpose” and affirmed that planning for the period 2008-2010 give priority to that which:

1. Deepens our experience of intentional and authentic communities; stretches us beyond the familiar expressions and concerns of our church; with particular concern for our commitment to youth and young adult ministry, becoming an intercultural church; and living with respect in creation.

In May 2008, approximately 20 of the UCC-supported Campus Ministers and Chaplains from across the country gathered at the University of Toronto to share their experience, their hopes and challenges and to provide collegial pastoral support.

While we appreciate the high level of support that Halifax Presbytery offers the Dalhousie Campus Ministry Committee, as well as the Mission Support funding from Maritime Conference, this is not the situation across the country. A common understanding has been emerging among these ministers over a number of years that campus ministries receive little recognition or support from most presbyteries, conferences, or General Councils. In addition, it is the experience of many Campus Ministers that a large percentage of the few United Church young adults who feel a vocational call to ministry developed and discerned that call in part through their engagement with a campus ministry.

The Campus Ministers agreed that campus ministries across the country are in a strategic position to help realize the current programmatic priorities as stated by the General Council Executive in May 2007. The Campus Ministers further agreed that it was important for the entire church to take ownership of campus ministry and its potential to minister to youth and young adults *and* to contribute to raising a new generation of United Church leadership.

The UCC-supported Campus Ministers across the country understand their call as offering a number of gifts to the United Church of Canada, including:

- Representing God's mission through the United Church of Canada to campuses across the country and serving thousands of students.
- Leadership development.
- Discernment, support and identification of inquirers and candidates for ministry.
- Support of the United Church's intention to foster and develop an intercultural church.
- Supporting the United Church's commitment to youth and young adult ministry.