

Title: Delay Implementing the Manual (2007), Sections 343 and 345 so as to incorporate major United Church studies.

Originating Body:	Halifax Presbytery
Maritime Conference Action:	Transmit with concurrence
Financial Implications:	N/A
Staffing Implications:	N/A

Proposal:

Halifax Presbytery proposes, through Maritime Conference that The 40th General Council (2009):

1. Direct that the current interpretation and implementation of Sections 343 and 345 of the Manual(2007) (DLM and CDM processes, procedures and educational systems) be withdrawn;
2. Identify, complete and distribute for reaction, significant current studies, and policy work being done on Ministry within the UCC prior to GC 41 (2012); and, Incorporate the results of these major studies into a comprehensive policy on Ministry within the UCC for consideration by GC 41 (2012).

Background:

1. There are several concurrent, significant studies and policy work that have a significant impact on the formation, training and the practice of paid accountable ministry. These have not been shared, comprehensively understood, integrated and made congruent with United Church policy or used to create new policy that would move paid accountable ministry forward in a way that serves the needs of our church effectively and faithfully.

These include (but are not restricted to):

- a. "The Meaning of Ministry" – 2008 – present
- b. Recruitment Gathering – November 10, 2007 – results have not been shared.
- c. Development of Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for Ministry Personnel (2006-2008)
- d. Development of a separate Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry (but without clearly defined norms for discerning or training youth ministers) 2005-2008
- e. Ongoing current review of internship programs and of norms and expectations for supervised learning (2008-present).
- f. Development of Learning/Leadership Outcomes Framework (LOF), without consultation with E&S networks. There is a lack of clarity about who will implement the LOF and how (2006-present).
- g. Ongoing work on compensation models (2007-present).

2. The Manual Sections 343 and 345 were declared to be fully in effect on February 1, 2009, together with a new “Handbook for Designated Lay Ministry and Congregational Designated Ministry”. This handbook makes sweeping changes to discernment for lay ministry which cannot possibly take the ongoing studies into account, thus contributing further to the fragmented approach to ministry in the United Church of Canada.
3. The Report, “*Ministry Together: A Report on Ministry for the 21st Century*” which was received by the 37th General Council. (ROP pg. 633), identifies as a challenge that “*there are tensions between Ordained Ministers and Lay Pastoral Ministers; Lay Pastoral Ministers get the same privileges and money without the same education. Why then should one seek ordination?*” (ROP pg. 583) and also states, “*This report affirms that there is a place for designated lay ministry alongside ordered ministry. Given the demands of ministry today, the church needs to be confident that the spiritual, theological, interpersonal, and educational competencies meet the needs of the church. This would be consistent with the United Church commitment to an educated ministry.*” (ROP pg. 614)
4. The new designations, DLM and CDM, claim to be based significantly on the report, “*Ministry Together.*” But by setting new categories and procedures for Lay Ministers before we have finished discerning a comprehensive and cohesive vision for the needs of ministry in the 21st Century, tensions are being perpetuated and entrenched, before we have fully identified what competencies we are requiring from all ministers in the United Church of Canada.
5. The current interpretations and implementations of Sections 343 and 345 of the Manual are confusing, overly complex, and provide an unreasonable amount of work for the relevant committees of pastoral charges, presbyteries and conferences.