

Title: Diaconal Minister to be named as member at large to Education and Students committees.

Originating Body: Conference Ministry, Personnel and Education Committee on behalf of the Coordinating Committee of Diakonia of United Church of Canada (currently based) in Maritime Conference.

Maritime Conference Action: Transmit with concurrence

Financial Implications: The costs of accommodation and travel for an additional person to attend the Education and Students interview meetings.

Staffing Implications: N/A

Proposal:

That Maritime Conference proposes that General Council amend the Manual of The United Church of Canada and Ministry and Employment Policies and Services documents affecting candidacy processes to include diaconal ministry representation on Education and Students Committees.

Theological Reference:

“The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and some teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.” (Ephesians 4: 11 – 13, NRSV)

Background:

The United Church of Canada recognizes that diaconal ministers are included in ordered ministry, as noted in the Article of Faith XVII, Of The Ministry.

Section 462 a, 3 of the United Church Manual notes that “every effort should be made to include a Diaconal Minister on the interview team.”

Students of diaconal ministry in the Maritime Conference candidacy process report spending a large portion of their interview explaining diaconal ministry in the Education and Students (E and S) interviews. Having to explain diaconal ministry takes away valuable time from the interview process.

The hope for the Education and Students interview is to examine the student’s preparation for ministry, not to inform or educate the interviewing committee. Diaconal representation on this committee will provide a source of information for the Education and Students Committee as it prepares to focus on the student’s preparation for ministry. In addition, the diaconal representative will be available to participate in interviews (Manual, Section 462 a,3).

Currently, the Education and Students Committee of Maritime Conference consists of Chairs of Presbytery Education and Students committees. There are no diaconal ministers on the present committee.