

# **Processes for the appointment and oversight of Pastors within the Presbytery of Port Phillip East (October 2011)**

## ***1. Introduction***

The Specified Ministry of Pastor within the UCA has been developed to assist the church to respond with flexibility and agility to the contemporary diverse ministry and mission context. The Presbytery of Port Phillip East (PPE) will support congregations within its bounds in the discernment, development, and oversight of positions that are appropriate for the Ministry of Pastor. PPE will also provide support in the appointment, care, and ongoing competency development of Pastors.

PPE has established a Pastor Task Group (Pastor tg) that has been delegated responsibility for all Presbytery-related matters concerning the Specified Ministry of Pastor. The contact person for the PPE Pastor tg is the Presbytery Minister: Pastoral Care (Rev. Dr. Mark Lawrence: contact details are at the conclusion of this document).

An intention of the Ministry of Pastor is to have shared discernment, appointment, and care for all people in these appointments. This will be assisted greatly if congregations contact the Pastor tg as soon as possible in relation to any discernment that may be occurring in relation to appointing a pastor.

The UCA Regulations below provide a helpful understanding of the purpose and breadth of the Ministry of Pastor:

**2.14.1** Pastor is a specified lay ministry of the Church and means a layperson commissioned by a Presbytery ... to minister within a Congregation, community or Church based organisation for the purpose of undertaking one or more of the tasks outlined in Regulation 2.14.2.

**2.14.2** The ministry of Pastor includes:

- a) teaching the beliefs and practices of the Church; and / or
- b) pastoral oversight of members and / or groups operating under the auspices of the Uniting Church; and / or
- c) leadership of worship in congregations or faith communities of the Church; and / or
- d) evangelism or service beyond a gathered congregation but which is exercised under the auspices of the Uniting Church.

**2.14.3** No appointment of a person to a remunerated position, which involves the exercise of the responsibilities outlined in Regulation 2.14.2, shall be made without prior consultation with the Presbytery...

The following comments related to appointing and caring for pastors within congregations, and need to be read within the framework of the current *UCA Regulations* that relate to the Specified Ministry of Pastor (See 2.14), and the Pastor check list – attached to this document.

## ***2. Determining if an appointment is appropriate to be designated for a pastor (Reg. 2.14.5)***

A ministry location within PPE which may be an appropriate appointment for a Pastor will be determined by the Pastor tg with reference to the proposed position including one or more of the tasks noted in Reg 2.14.2, or if through consideration of the Presbytery PRC and the Placements

Committee a lay person is appointed to fill an approved placement.

If a congregation begins to discern the need to appoint a pastor, the Pastor tg should be contacted as early as possible in this process for the shared discernment of this development to commence as early as possible.

### ***3. The development of a Pastor position description (Reg. 2.14.3)***

A position description shall be developed by the employing body (congregation) in consultation with the Pastor tg, and will be submitted to the Pastor tg for approval prior to the position being advertised. (The Pastor tg has examples of position descriptions that may be of help to congregations.)

### ***4. Remuneration for Pastors***

All remunerated ministry-related positions within PPE will normally be based on the current stipend including allowances (pro-rata where appropriate) or will be paid at the appropriate award rate. The remuneration package, as part of the position description, is to be approved by the Pastor tg. (The Synod Human Resources Unit is available to provide advice to congregations directly regarding award rates.)

### ***5. Recruitment of a Pastor for a specific position (Regs: 2.14.6; 2.14.7; 2.14.9; 2.14.10)***

All pastor positions need to be advertised in a medium that is appropriate to the role, and with the agreement of the Pastor tg. Discernment of an appointment will be undertaken on behalf of the congregation by an interview panel (of up to 5 people), appointed by the Church Council (the convenor of the interview panel, included in this number, will be appointed by the Church Council). The Pastor tg shall appoint a PPE representative to participate on the interview panel. All interviews of candidates shall include the PPE representative.

An appointment will be made by the Church Council – subject to a consensus discernment of the interview panel to recommend the appointment. In making the appointment, the Church Council will correspond with the successful applicant formally indicating that the appointment has been made.

The appointment of a pastor will be reported to the Presbytery (via the Presbytery secretary) by the Church Council.

All appointments will be probationary for the three (3) months and will only be formalised, with the pastor commissioned, upon the completion of Pastor Core Competency requirements (see sections 6 and 8 below).

### ***6. Supervision of a Pastor (Reg: 2.14.13)***

The Pastor tg will arrange for a supervisor to monitor the pastor's ongoing competency development – including the development of core competencies during the probationary period. Supervision time will be included as part of the workload of the pastor.

The supervisor will be encouraged to make use of the core competency (*Basis of Union* and *Code of Ethics* awareness) development resources that are provided by the UCA Assembly, which may be

ordered at: <http://assembly.uca.org.au/images/ads/mopflyer.pdf> Any costs related to purchasing these resources will be covered by the employing congregation.

### **7. Accountability of a Pastor (Reg: 2.4.14; 2.4.15)**

Day to day accountability for the pastor will be undertaken as the position description indicates.

As with all UCA specified ministries, the Pastor will be accountable to PPE in matters of faith and discipline. Pastors are expected to participate in all requirements for ministers in relation to Code of Ethics training, and the like. Pastors will also be invited to participate in PPE ministers' retreats, quiet days, etc.

### **8. Recognition and Commissioning of a Pastor (Regs: 2.14.11; 2.14.12; 2.4.17)**

In the second month of the pastor's appointment the Pastor tg will correspond with the employing body requesting comment regarding the work patterns and capacities of the pastor in relation to the key work areas outlined in the position description. The employing body will be requested to forward comments to the Pastor tg soon after the probationary employment period is completed (three months after the appointment commences).

Subject to a positive response to the key work areas being undertaken by the pastor during the probation period, and demonstration of the core competencies (*Basis of Union* and *Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice*) for the pastor as reported by the supervisor, the Pastor tg shall recommend recognition of the pastor for the duration of the appointment to the PPE Standing Committee.

Following Standing Committee's approval of recognition:

- The Pastor tg's representative on the interview panel shall consult with the PPE Chairperson (or nominee) and congregation regarding arrangements for the pastor's commissioning service.
- The interview panel will be responsible for arranging the commissioning service for the Pastor.
- The Pastor tg will inform the Placements Committee that the pastor appointment has been made and the date of the commissioning service.

### **9. Concerns or appeals regarding the work of the Pastor tg**

Concerns or appeals from a congregation, a pastor, or another party, relating to the work of the Pastor tg, or its representatives, shall be addressed to the PPE Standing Committee through the PPE Chairperson.

### **10. PPE Presbytery Minister: Pastoral Care (contact details)**

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*Approved by the Presbytery of Port Phillip East Standing Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011.*

## Specified Ministry of Pastor – Check Lists

### 1. For the Congregation / Appointing Body (Relevant Regulations are noted in brackets)

- ☐ Decide that a Ministry position is required and prepare a Position Description
- ☐ Consult with the Presbytery about the position and the Position Description (2.14.3) and terms of appointment (2.14.9)
- ☐ Receive advice from the Presbytery on whether the position will be a Pastor appointment (2.14.5(b))
- ☐ Advertise the position making clear that the person will have to comply with the Pastor Regulations
- ☐ Interview the applicants (2.14.7)
- ☐ If required, seek Presbytery permission to appoint prior to demonstration of Core Competencies (2.14.9(b))
- ☐ Arrange for the supply of relevant equipment and for salary to be paid, working with children checks" if appropriate, establish a personnel file including a record of competencies demonstrated (Core and General), arrange an orientation to the position, etc
- ☐ Liaise with the Presbytery to conduct a Commissioning Service when all requirements have been met (2.14.11)

### 2. For Presbyteries (Relevant Regulations are noted in brackets)

- ☐ Review Position Descriptions from Congregations and Agencies and determine whether the ministry is appropriate for designation as a Pastor appointment (2.14.5)
- ☐ Approve the Position Description and terms and conditions of appointment (If needed seek HR advice from the Synod) (2.14.3, 2.14.9)
- ☐ Participate in the appointment process (3.4.4(k))
- ☐ Assess for Core Competencies (2.14.9(a))
- ☐ Receive and address any requests for a probation period during which time the Core Competencies must be demonstrated (2.14.9(b))
- ☐ Check that the employing body is following the HR advice provided by the Synod
- ☐ Conduct a Commissioning Service when all the requirements have been met (2.14.11)
- ☐ Advise the Placements Committee of the Commissioning of a Pastor and the nature of the ministry being exercised (2.14.11)
- ☐ Arrange for the assessment of General Competencies that are relevant for the ministry to which the person has been appointed. (2.14.13)
- ☐ Develop a learning agreement with the Pastor to address the development of the required competencies
- ☐ Monitor the progress of the Pastor's learning agreement
- ☐ Advise the Synod Ministerial Education Board, annually, of the Pastor's learning agreement and progress and provide feedback concerning the assessment and supervision of the Pastor