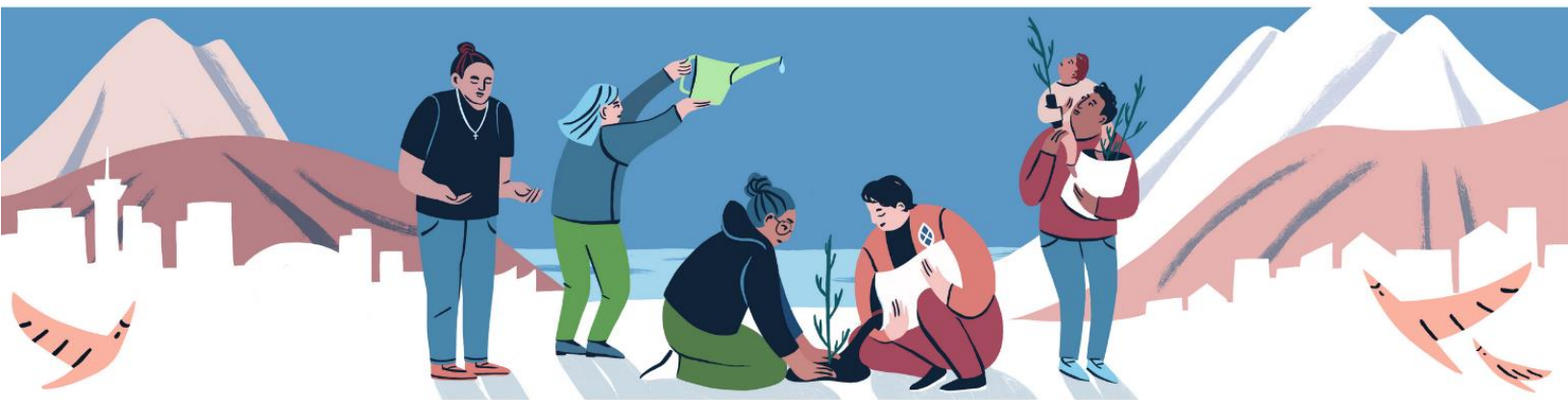




Sacraments Elders Policy, Practice and Procedure

Lay Leadership Support Committee

July 2021



PACIFICMOUNTAIN.CA

The contents of this document do not replace, but are meant to complement, the policies for Sacraments Elders as outlined in The Manual (2019) and Sacraments Elders (2020)¹

¹ https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/handbook_sacraments-elders.pdf

PACIFIC MOUNTAIN REGIONAL COUNCIL STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Governance of Sacraments Elders

Oversight

The Lay Leadership Support Committee, as part of the Pastoral Relations Council of Pacific Mountain Region, is responsible for the support and oversight of Sacraments Elders. The Executive of Pacific Mountain Regional Council is responsible for granting a license for the sacraments.

Accountability

A Sacraments Elder serves under the direction of the Lay Leadership Support Committee. In addition, the pastoral charge supervisor of the community of faith has responsibility for ensuring that the sacraments are administered according to the theology and practice of The United Church of Canada.

Requirements

The Pacific Mountain Regional Council may license a person as a Sacraments Elder with the following requirements:

- The person must be a member of a community of faith in Pacific Mountain Regional Council.
- The person must be willing to become a member of the governing body of the Community of Faith once licensed.
- The sacraments license must be for a maximum 12-month term, which may be renewed.
- A sacraments license is granted only to lay members of a Community of Faith without called or appointed ministry personnel. The license automatically ends with the call or appointment of ministry personnel to the Community of Faith.

Preparation and Licensing

The policy and process for licensing is set out in the UCC Sacraments Elders Handbook, restated here for easy reference, with additional requirements specific to Pacific Mountain Regional Council:

Discerning Need

The Regional Minister for Pastoral Relations and Community of Faith Support identifies, or the pastoral charge self-identifies, to the region, the need for a Sacraments Elder.

Pastoral Charge Supervisor

The Regional Minister for Pastoral Relations and Community of Faith Support confirms that the pastoral charge has a pastoral charge supervisor, or appoints a pastoral charge supervisor, who is responsible for ensuring that the sacraments are administered.

Community of Faith Recommendation

The pastoral charge recommends a layperson who would be suitable for licensing as a Sacraments Elder. The recommendation is to be made in writing to the Lay Leadership Support Committee.

Application and Assessment

Upon receiving the recommendation of their community of faith, and before beginning a course of study, the layperson will complete an application and assessment for submission to the Lay Leadership Support Committee.²

Course of Study

Pacific Mountain Regional Council is responsible for authorizing the course of study based on the requirements of the United Church of Canada. The designated course of study is the UCC Sacramental Elders Handbook material, completed with the guidance and support of a mentor.

A suitable mentor for the completion of the course material is one who has studied sacramental theology and is able to help the lay leader reflect theologically on the readings and discussion questions. The applicant will submit the name of the mentor they have chosen to the Lay Leadership Support Committee for approval. If the applicant is unable to find a suitable mentor, assistance may be provided by the Lay Leadership Support Committee.

The course of study can be completed in three to five meetings but may be completed over a longer period. The Lay Leadership Support Committee, at its discretion may require additional meetings. Any other course of study may be undertaken only with the prior written consent of the Lay Leadership Support Committee.

² <https://form.iotform.com/PMR-UCC/Sacraments-Elders-Application>

Mentor Recommendation

Upon completion of the course material, the mentor who facilitated the course of study must submit a written recommendation to the Lay Leadership Support Committee.³

Reassessment Interview

After the course of study is completed and the mentor recommendation is received, the Lay Leadership Support Committee will schedule an interview to reassess the applicant.⁴

Police Records Check and Annual Declaration

Pacific Mountain Regional Council shall exercise due diligence by requesting a Police Record Check (Vulnerable Sector) issued within the past six months before granting a sacraments license to a Sacraments Elder. Before a Sacraments Elders license renewal, an annual declaration certifying the preceding year has been free of criminal charges must be submitted. Annual declarations are submitted to the Lay Leadership Support Committee between June 1 and June 30 of each year.⁵

Racial Justice and Boundaries Training

Pacific Mountain Regional Council requires the completion of Racial Justice Training and Boundaries Training before granting or renewing a sacraments license to a Sacraments Elder. Racial Justice Training and Boundaries Training may be completed through United in Learning⁶. Boundaries Training must be refreshed every five years.

Licensing

The Lay Leadership Support Committee, ensuring all requirements have been met, is responsible for recommending to the Executive Minister of Pacific Mountain Regional Council that a sacraments license be granted to the applicant to function as a Sacraments Elder in the community of faith (including multiple points).

The Sacraments Elder may not offer sacraments in any other community of faith, regional council, or denomination. Sacraments may be offered in other locations or contexts such as family homes, care homes or institutions, provided there is a direct affiliation with the community of faith.

The license is valid for a maximum of 1 year (until June 30th). While requests may be received by the Lay Leadership Support Committee throughout the year, all licenses will end on June 30th of each year for ease of administration.

³ <https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/SE-Mentor-Recommendation>

⁴ <https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/SE-Reassessment-Interview>

⁵ <https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/AnnualDeclarationPRC>

⁶ <https://www.united-in-learning.com/>

A Sacraments Elder's license automatically ends with the appointment or call of a member of the order of ministry or the appointment of a designated lay minister to the pastoral charge.

Participation in the Governing Body

The Sacraments Elder becomes a member of the governing body of the pastoral charge. It is the role of the governing body of the community of faith to determine when and how the sacraments are administered.

Annual Evaluation License Renewal

The Sacraments Elders license may be renewed at the request of the governing body of the community of faith, provided there is no called or appointed ministry personnel in place. The governing body of the community of faith will provide a letter to the Lay Leadership Support Committee affirming membership in good standing and the Sacraments Elders' suitability for their continued role celebrating the sacraments.

The Lay Leadership Support Committee will complete an annual evaluation including, but not limited to, requiring the Sacraments Elder to submit a complete list of the dates and locations of all sacraments celebrated in the preceding year, and a list of any continuing education events, practices and engagement undertaken.⁷

License Renewal

Once the annual evaluation is completed the Lay Leadership Support Committee will request the layperson to apply for renewal of the License to Administer the Sacraments.⁸

Support and Practices

Liturgy of Recognition

A liturgy and covenant officially recognizing the new Sacraments Elder in a community of faith may be celebrated. The liturgy should be incorporated into a regular worship service and include the pastoral charge supervisor or a regional representative. The liturgy is found in the UCC Sacraments Elders handbook.

Duty of Care

Sacraments Elders are required to review, on a regular basis, the United Church of Canada *Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy and Procedures*⁹ and the

⁷ <https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/Sacraments-Elders-Annual-Evaluation>

⁸ <https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/SacramentLicenseApplication>

⁹ <https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/2021-01/sexual-misconduct-prevention-response-2020.pdf>

*Workplace Discrimination, Harassment and Violence Prevention and Response Policy.*¹⁰

Sacraments Elders should also be aware of the *UCC Conflict of Interest Policy.*¹¹

Remuneration

The role of Sacraments Elder is voluntary – there is no remuneration expected. In addition, Sacraments Elders are not expected to lead the whole worship service, although they may participate in other parts if they wish.

Representing the Regional Council

A Sacraments Elder may not represent the Regional Council at their local community of faith meeting, by virtue of their role. The representative of the Regional Council at a governing body meeting shall be the duly appointed pastoral charge supervisor.

A Sacraments Elder is not, by virtue of the role, permitted to serve as pastoral charge supervisor for their own community of faith. Neither are they permitted to apply to or fill pastoral vacancies.

Representing one's own Community of Faith

A Sacraments Elder may be duly elected by their community of faith to represent that community of faith at Regional Council meetings as the lay representative.

Affiliation with other Religious Organizations

A lay person, who is recognized as ordained or accredited by any organization or denomination is not eligible to become a Sacraments Elder.

Vestments and Titles

Sacraments Elders will not wear stoles, clerical collars, albs, or gowns, nor use "the Reverend" or "Pastor" or any title that designates professional, paid, accountable ministry in the United Church of Canada.

Liability

For liability insurance purposes, a Sacraments Elder is covered by their congregation's policy, for presiding at celebrations of sacraments only.

¹⁰ <https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/2020-10/harassment-policy-2020.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/conflict-of-interest-policy.pdf>

Appendix A Forms

Application and Assessment Form

<https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/Sacraments-Elders-Application>

Mentor Recommendation

<https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/SE-Mentor-Recommendation>

Reassessment Interview

<https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/SE-Reassessment-Interview>

Annual Evaluation Form

<https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/Sacraments-Elders-Annual-Evaluation>

Annual Declaration

<https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/AnnualDeclarationPRC>

Application for License to Administer the Sacraments

<https://form.jotform.com/PMR-UCC/SacramentLicenseApplication>