

A Proposal for “Accompaniment”
Conference Program Staff Working with Congregations

Rationale

To work towards:

- a) refocusing ministry in response to a perceived restlessness within the congregations and/or ministry personnel; a longing for ‘something more’.
- a) a clear sense of direction and an increase in levels of commitment.

Strategy

STEP 1:

The establishment of a steering committee.

The work would be carried out with and through a committee drawn from the Pastoral Charge and the Presbytery, if the Presbytery so wishes. The role of the committee would be to act as an advisory board and to assist in the process.

STEP 2

- a) A time of intensive work, gathering data through
 - Meeting with congregational members and/or focus groups
 - Attending meetings of the congregation, UCW, Official Board, Youth Choir, Sunday School, etc.
 - Attending worship, at least once a month
 - Being ‘out and about’ in the community to hear the community’s evaluation of the congregation
- b) Writing of a report to the Congregation/Pastoral Charge and Presbytery
 - Formulation of recommendations, alternatives and possibilities, with their conceivable outcome.

STEP 3

The format for this time of accompaniment depends largely on the recommendations and the congregational response. The purpose is to help implement the recommendations of Step 2. This would be done in a variety of ways, including:

- Attendance at congregational, Official Board, or committee meetings
- Formation of small groups for study and/or action
- Provision of resources (print, audio, etc.)
- Facilitating connections to training events, resource people, etc.

Steps 2 & 3 include interim reporting on what has been done and learnt and communicating this to the congregation, in part during Sunday morning worship.

Costing:

In today's society work is valued according to the monetary value placed on it and congregations will make changes only if they have made a significant financial investment in the process.

Because this model of working will limit staff's ongoing availability to other congregations and other areas of the Conference which are paying staff salaries, the congregations using large amounts of staff time would reimburse the Conference at the time when they are using the services of the Staff time intensively. Reimbursement of the Conference would reflect the nature of the work to be done and would be at approximately 50% of the rate charged by an independent consultant. [The typical cost has been \$5000.00.] This would be negotiated by the Executive Secretary taking into consideration the Congregation/Pastoral Charge budget and any other pertinent factors. The contract would be ratified by the chairs of the Division of Finance and Administration and the Staff Support Committee.

Contract:

That this should be an intentional process, with clearly outlined objectives and responsibilities is of primary importance. To ensure this, a contract would be negotiated and signed by representatives of the Congregation/ Pastoral Charge and Conference.

The contract would be simple, paragraph statements which outlined the agreement between the Conference and the Pastoral Charge/Congregation for the work of Conference Staff person for a specified length of time. Areas which might be touched upon in the contract would include:

Goals [*expectations, hopes, intentions*]
Staff commitment [*work plan, time commitment*]
Congregational commitment
Time line [*length of process, beginning and ending dates*]
Financial arrangements

For further information contact:

London Conference
759 Hyde Park Rd., Suite 252
London, ON N6H 3S2

Phone: [519] 672-1930