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Pastor's Salary Guidelines for 2005

Background & Tips

These Salary Guidelines come to you after consultation with and within the area conferences of Mennonite Church Canada. They are intended to provide some uniformity across the denomination while allowing for adjustments based on the local cost of living. Following a major revision in 2000, these Guidelines undergo minor annual revisions based on feedback received from pastors, congregations, and area conferences. The salary scale figures are adjusted annually on the basis of the Consumer Price Index.

A national guideline has limitations, and does not work equally well across the country. We publish a national guideline because we believe that we should strive for common understandings and equitable compensation for all pastors in Mennonite Church Canada. At the same time, we encourage pastors and congregations to adapt it to particular circumstances. We are aware that not all congregations are able to pay this much and that others believe their pastor(s) warrant(s) a higher salary. Likewise, some pastors may have personal or family needs that are greater while others are willing to accept less than the suggested guidelines, in light of a congregation's financial circumstances. Congregations should be aware that when a pastor chooses to accept less than the suggested guidelines, this can complicate salary negotiations with subsequent pastors who may not be able or willing to do the same.

Where a congregation is unable to afford a salary based on the guidelines, and the pastor finds the congregation's offer inadequate, it will often be possible to use these guidelines to define an appropriate full-time salary and then release the pastor to supplement the congregation's offer with other employment up to the equivalent of a full-time salary.

A few tips regarding pastor's salary negotiations:

- Recognize the covenant relationship that exists between a congregation and its pastor(s), which makes it more than an employer/employee relationship.
- Salary negotiations should take place in private conversation with two or three persons designated by the congregation rather than in a public setting. Keep the discussion clear, open and confidential.
- It is appropriate for a pastor to be accompanied by an advocate in salary discussions.
- Salary discussions are not related to the decision about continuing a call, nor should they be tied into the evaluative process in any way.
- Remember that the family of the pastor is deeply affected by both the process and outcome of salary negotiations and often feels vulnerable during these times as well as when the salary is publicly reported or discussed.

Please note that all of this information is available at www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/leadership/salary.

If you need additional information or clarification about the salary guidelines, please call your area conference minister or contact Kirsten Schroeder, Director, Human Resources at MC Canada.

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