

TERMS OF REFERENCE

BOARD OF ELDERS

Purpose

The Board of Elders acts as the governing body of Metropolitan United Church, is accountable to the congregation, and carries out a number of responsibilities as required by the United Church of Canada ([The Manual 2013](#), section B7 and all of section G).

Membership

To be eligible to serve as an Elder, an individual must be a full member of Metropolitan United Church. The Board of Elders consists of nine (9) voting members elected by the congregation and three (3) automatic members. Of the nine elders, three (3) serve on the Ministries Team, three (3) serve on the Management Team, and three (3) serve on the Leadership Development Team (*see Board Teams, page 2*). All three automatic members – the Senior Minister, the Chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee and the Chair of the Finance Committee – have voting privileges ([The Manual 2013](#), section A.7.1, page 49).

Term of Service

Beginning with the 2008 annual congregational meeting, Elders are elected to a term of three years. The goal is to have one-third of the Elders replaced each year to provide for continuity and renewal.

Confidentiality

In accordance with requirements stated in the Risk Management Policy (section 3.0), an Elder must sign a Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix E of the Risk Management Policy).

Interim Replacement of Elders

In the event that an Elder resigns prior to completion of his/her term, or is no longer a member of Metropolitan United Church prior to completion of his/her term, then the Board of Elders may appoint a new Elder by simple majority vote. This interim appointment is to be confirmed by the congregation at the next congregational meeting.

Removal of an Elder

The Board of Elders may remove an Elder for cause or inability to serve with six of the Elders voting in favour of removal.

Meetings

Any two Elders may call for a meeting of the Board of Elders. The remaining Elders must receive two days' notice of the meeting. The Elders may waive notice of the meeting. Notice of a meeting is made by e-mail. Normally a notice of a meeting appears in the weekly bulletin/order of service.

Quorum

To constitute an official meeting, a majority of the Elders in office must be present, to a maximum of five (5).

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings are monthly from September through June each year, as needed during July and August each year, and when called by the Chair of the Board of Elders and the Senior Minister.

Appointment of Secretary

The Elders may appoint a non-voting Secretary to take notes of each meeting and prepare a summary of each meeting.

Record of the Meeting

The Elders must ensure that a summary of each of their meetings is recorded and retained. The meeting summary is available for viewing through the church office. Each meeting summary is reviewed and approved at the next meeting of the Board of Elders.

“In-Camera” Discussions

The Elders may declare a meeting to be “in camera” to deal with issues that require additional sensitivity, respect of privacy and confidentiality. A motion to go “in camera” must be seconded and then pass with a simple majority vote.

Decision Making

Decisions are made by simple majority vote after a motion is made and seconded.

Board Teams

Leadership Development Team*

- Develop leaders from the congregation
- Succession planning for group leaders
- Nomination process for new Elders

Ministries Team*

- Maintain current ministries
- Approve new ministries
- Visitation

Management Team*

- Finance – Sunday counters, Stewardship, Property Team
- Physical plant
- Technical Team for church equipment – responsible for maintenance, replacement, acquisition, training, scheduling

* Plus other duties as they arise

Leader Selection

All three Board Teams select their leaders from amongst themselves at the first meeting of the Board of Elders following Metropolitan’s Annual General Meeting each February.

Leadership Development

Leaders of teams are expected to attend a leadership development workshop which is offered from time to time.

Regular and Annual Reporting of Activities

All three Board Teams are expected to submit a brief update on their activities at each meeting of the Board of Elders, and to submit an annual report to the Chair of the Board of Elders prior to the annual congregational meeting. The Board Chair reports annually to the congregation at Metropolitan's Annual General Meeting each February.

Related Metropolitan Policies

The Board of Elders must be familiar with all policies and terms of reference.

Related Documents/External Resources

- [United Church of Canada Manual](#), sections A, B7 and G in particular
- United Church of Canada's [Models of Board Governance](#)

BOARD OF ELDERS: NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCESS

1. The Nominating Team is comprised of the Leadership Development Team from the Board of Elders and two additional members from the congregation. The purpose of the Nominating Team is to:
 - a. Solicit nominations from the congregation
 - b. Vet nominees on behalf of the congregation
 - c. Present a slate of nominees for election or appointment by the congregation, and
 - d. Conduct an election if necessary at the annual meeting of the congregation.
2. Nominations of potential Elders are open from November 1 until December 31.
 - a. A nominee must be a member of Metropolitan United Church and have three other members of the congregation vouch for their nomination.
 - b. A nominee must agree to serve for a term of three years.
3. Vetting by the Nominating Team
 - a. The Nominating Team vets nominees to ensure a mix of potential Elders who have strengths and backgrounds suitable to the three functions of the Board of Elders (Management, Ministries and Leadership Development). A nominee may be asked to make a written or verbal presentation to the Nominating Team in order to ascertain the nominee's ability to perform the functions of an Elder. A nominee is expected to demonstrate leadership qualities and capability.
4. Election
 - a. The Nominating Team presents a slate of potential Elders to the congregation to be elected to a three-year term. If there are more nominees than open positions, a secret ballot is conducted by the Nominating Team. The nominees with the largest amount of votes are elected as Elders. If the number of nominees equals the number of open Elder positions, the Nominating Team asks the congregation to approve the appointment of the nominees at the annual meeting of the congregation.

BOARD OF ELDERS: NOMINATION FORM

Nominations are open until December 31 in the current year. The office staff forward all completed nomination forms to the Nominating Team for review and vetting.

I nominate _____ to be considered as a candidate for election
(please print)
or appointment to the Board of Elders.

Nominated by: _____

Phone number: _____

Signature: _____

Three additional members of the congregation who support this nomination:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____

Acceptance by the nominee:

I agree to be nominated to become an Elder.

Signature

Date

BOARD OF ELDERS	
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