

Local Shared Ministry Handbook



**Methodist Church of New Zealand
Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa**

Local Shared Ministry Guidelines

in the Methodist Church of New Zealand – Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa

The Local Shared Ministry Model: A Summary

Local Shared Ministry is an exciting way to renew congregational life and live out our calling to proclaim the good news of Christ.

The local church community takes responsibility for establishing mission and ministry by:

- Identifying the mission of the congregation
- Identifying the ministries that will support the congregation and its mission
- Affirming the gifts of all the baptised
- Calling together a Ministry Support Team to support the mission and ministry of the congregation

The mission and ministry of the Local Shared Ministry Unit is supported and resourced by an Enabler who acts as mentor, teacher and spiritual companion.

Definitions agreed in 2006 by Methodist Church of New Zealand and Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa New Zealand:

- **Local Shared Ministry** is a ministry of the whole congregation.
- **The Local Shared Ministry Unit** is the congregation/s. A “Unit” may be a whole Parish, or one congregation within a Parish. There may also be several Units within a Parish.
- **The Ministry Support Team** will support the ministry of the whole Unit (or congregation/s).
- **The Enabler** resources the Ministry Support Team, but is not a member of the Parish.

Other Terms

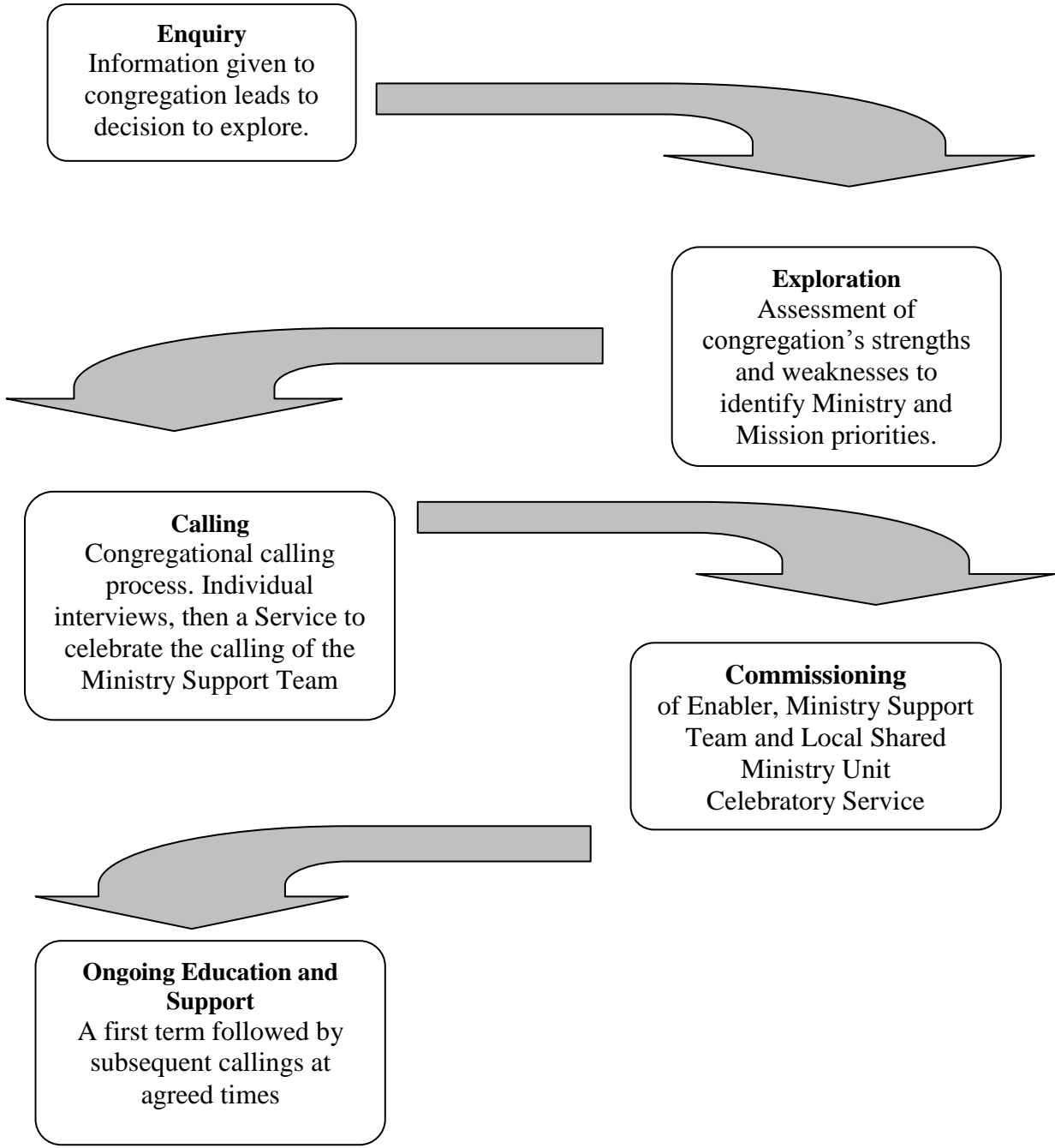
- **Discernment** – includes consideration of gender balance, age range, and ability to work on a team, known personality clashes, more than one member of a family on the Ministry Support Team.
- **Calling** – is not an appointment process, or an election, or a volunteer process. It is members of the congregation identifying those in the congregation with the gifts and skills to lead the congregation in its mission and ministry.

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Introduction and a Typical Journey into Local Shared Ministry

Conference 2006 approved the draft Discussion Document on Local Shared Ministry. Conference 2008 affirmed the model. These revised guidelines provide the basis for Local Shared Ministry in the Methodist context.



A Vision and Theology of Local Shared Ministry

Central to the ethos of Local Shared Ministry is that congregations are called to live out the mission of Christ in the world, and to proclaim and model the Christian faith. Each Local Shared Ministry Unit identifies its purpose as a worshipping congregation and as a congregation involved in mission.

The vision for Local Shared Ministry is based on the belief that each congregation has within it the gifts and graces to provide opportunities for worship and witness, service and outreach. It is a vision of a ministering community of faith, which recognizes the ministry of all the baptized.

The responsibility for ministry and mission belongs to the people of God by virtue of their baptism and their God-given gifts. In baptism we are received into the household of God, to love and serve God in the world. (1 Peter 2:4-5, 9 priesthood of all believers). As members of the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12ff) the baptized “rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.” (Romans 12:15)

In calling a leadership team the congregation prayerfully considers its life and mission in the community, and prays for guidance in discerning the gifts people have for ministry. This is the pattern laid down as a model for Moses’ ministry (Exodus 18: 13ff) and the early Church (Acts 1: 21-25 the calling of Matthias to replace Judas; Acts 6:1-6 calling the first deacons.)

The pattern remains: prayer...guidance of the Spirit....discernment....calling.
This would be followed by equipping for the task (as Jesus did for his disciples).

Jesus’ model of choosing leaders from amongst his followers, mentoring them, sending them out, expecting them to show vision and initiative is well documented in the Gospels (e.g. Luke 10 the mission of the seventy). The Ministry Support Team operates on just such a basis. An Enabler mentors members of the Ministry Support Team, who in turn mentor a group in their given area of ministry or mission.

The Ministry Support Team members are called to particular ministries but they also function as a team – supporting and encouraging one another, and working together to offer vision, enthusiasm and direction to the Local Shared Ministry Unit.

Sacramental ministry is central to the worshipping life of the congregation. The focus is always on the Risen Christ, not on the elements; on the worship of the people, not on the one leading. We have but one priest, Christ our Lord. In a Local Shared Ministry Unit the calling of one of the congregation to preside at baptism and communion is done with the same prayerful consideration as for the other callings. The congregation is led by the Spirit to identify the people in that congregation who have the gifts necessary. Appropriate training is given once the call is accepted, as for other areas of ministry and mission.

Ultimately the theological foundation for Local Shared Ministry is embedded in the relationships present in the life of God as creator, redeemer and life-giver: a relationship which supports and makes space for others within the life of God. The team concept reflects the community of faith’s lived response to God’s love – an invitation to mutual recognition and mutual respect.

“Ultimately Christian ministry.....must be acknowledged as God’s mystery, never fully understood or disclosed. It is both a human profession and a gift of God; it is both cultural and transcendent. It is rooted in this time and place, yet belongs to no time or place. It is a divine calling to communicate through one’s own life the redemptive love of Christ for all humanity....No single title, metaphor or concept can ever fully illustrate or illuminate the fullness and mystery of Christ’s ministry.” (Donald Messer *Contemporary Images of Christian Ministry*)

The Methodist Church of New Zealand believes that the ministry of Jesus Christ in, to, and for the world is one ministry; that Christ continues this ministry through the Church; that all those who are “in Christ” by virtue of their baptism, and seek a deeper relationship with God, share in this

ministry. Within this ministry of all who are baptized, there are specific ministries and responsibilities.

The Methodist Church authorizes these particular ministries through the ordained ministries of presbyter and deacon, and through team ministries and specific lay ministries.

“Towards a Vision and Theology of Local Shared Ministry” extract from Local Shared Ministry Report to Conference 2007

What a Ministry Support Team might look like

Once it has identified its mission, the congregation calls members to particular ministry tasks which reflect the mission and ministry of the congregation. Typically each Ministry Support Team would need an Administrator, a Worship Convenor, and a Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. However, the model is flexible and the mission of a particular congregation might also require an Outreach Co-ordinator, or a Youth Worker, a Hospitality Convenor, or a Music Convenor to be in the Ministry Support Team.

Examples:-

- A Parish with two congregations might call two Community and Outreach team members – one to work with each congregation.
- Another Parish with two congregations might call a Pastoral team member for each congregation, or a worship team member for each congregation
- The Ministry Support Team might take collective responsibility for education rather than calling a person to the specific role of Education Convenor. Another Parish might decide that they can work this way in pastoral care
- Your Parish might call a small Ministry Support Team. For example three Ministry Support Team members each working with a team of five or more Parish members at their given task.
- A Parish with two or three congregations might decide to operate with separate Ministry Support Teams or a combined team.

1. The Calling Process

During the exploration process, the congregation identifies the tasks of ministry that are important in its life and mission. Role descriptions are formulated. There are discussions around the gifts and skills needed for the ministry tasks. The congregation is invited to pray for guidance in discerning the gifts and persons appropriate for each ministry task.

During a service of worship the ministry and mission of the local congregation is celebrated. Papers are distributed to members of the congregation, naming the ministries for which a calling is to be made. Members of the congregation are invited to put a name beside each category.

NOTE: Only Parish members can participate, therefore the Parish roll will need to be kept up to date.

After the service, the Synod Superintendent, Enabler/ Facilitator, plus a third person who has some knowledge of the congregation, will collate the names on the papers. In this collation they will exercise discernment with regard to gender balance, age range, ability to work in a team and other relevant or contextual factors. (See Glossary of Terms for full description.) They will then meet with the people who have been named, and advise them that they have been called to this position on the Ministry Support Team. In some cases the person may not have felt that call from God and may decline. The interviewing team will then go to the second name on the list and the process is repeated. If there is no clarity it is better that the position is left vacant.

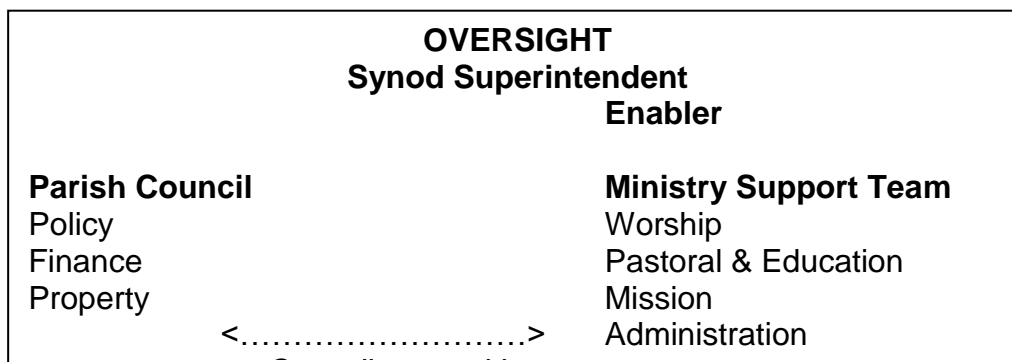
When the membership of the Ministry Support Team has been confirmed the names are presented to the congregation, normally the next Sunday. A Commissioning Service will be arranged.

In establishing a new Local Shared Ministry Unit it is helpful to identify early in the process those who might train to be lay sacramental ministers, wedding celebrants and funeral celebrants.

2. Team Building

Team building is an important and on-going task. Each Ministry Support Team member is responsible for gathering together a number of people to help with the task for which they have been given responsibility. For example, pastoral care may be covered by a team of four to six people co-ordinated by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. There may be a number of worship leaders who will meet for training and planning under the leadership of the Enabler.

3. Oversight



The Role of the Enabler in relation to the Local Shared Ministry Unit

Working with the Local Shared Ministry Unit is an Enabler whose functions are to build the Ministry Support Team members into a supportive and committed team, resourcing each team member for their ministry, and to support the congregation through change and development of its new Mission and Ministry directions. The Enabler's role is absolutely vital, and the Local Shared Ministry Unit will always have an Enabler. As far as possible, the Enabler will arrange for all resourcing and training to be done in the Parish, where it is available to the whole congregation. It is envisaged that an Enabler could work up to twelve to sixteen hours a week (or 1/4 to 1/3 time) and receive 1/4 or a 1/3 stipend plus allowances and travelling expenses. Travel is reimbursed at current connexional rate.

The Enabler's role is as mentor, teacher and spiritual companion to:

1. Assist the Unit to continue to clearly identify its mission.
2. Foster relationships between the Unit and the Synod.
3. Provide ongoing encouragement through the process of change from one style of ministry to another.
4. Oversee the education and development of the Ministry Support Team.
5. To maintain contact with the congregation and to model effective worship leadership by leading worship on an occasional basis.
6. Attend Parish Council meetings as regularly as required to assist the leadership functions, and communication between the Parish Council and the Ministry Support Team.
7. Facilitate congregational/Parish Council planning days to move the Unit into a forward and outward looking way of being church in that community.
8. Meet monthly with the Ministry Support Team for training, encouragement, and planning.
9. Provide a supervisory function for the Ministry Support Team through group and individual meetings
10. Liaise closely with the Parish Council Chairperson and Parish Superintendent.
11. Maintain an overview of how the Unit is developing and remind the Parish of their new form of ministry.
12. Encourage links with other Local Shared Ministry Units.

The Enabler and the wider Church.

1. The Enabler's role is a specific, recognised ministry role within the life of the Methodist Church for the purposes of Local Shared Ministry.
2. The Synod through its Superintendent, in consultation with the appropriate Tauwi Mission Resourcing Director, will identify and appoint Enablers.
3. Training for Enablers is provided by the Local Shared Ministry Workgroup.
4. There will be a Ministry Covenant with the Enabler, the Parish and the Synod. The Enabler will sign the *Ethical Standards for Ministry*, and will be expected to work within the discipline of the Methodist Church. There may also be an Employment Agreement in some circumstances.
5. The Enabler would be accountable to the Synod for his/her work. Any issues that cannot be resolved in the normal course of events between the Unit and the Enabler, should be taken to the Synod.
6. The term of appointment of an Enabler to a Local Shared Ministry Unit is flexible, depending on the needs of the Ministry Unit, but would normally be for three years.
7. The Enabler is required to have ministry supervision, with costs met by the Ministry Units the Enabler is engaged with.
8. The Synod Superintendent will facilitate a review of the Enabler and the Ministry Unit after 12 months of commissioning the Ministry Support Team. A three-yearly ministry review of the Unit will be facilitated by the Synod Superintendent, prior to the three-yearly calling.

Further information is to be found in the Enabler's Handbook.

How Local Shared Ministry relates to the Methodist Church of New Zealand and fits within Methodist structures.

1. Parish

Parishes or Units:

- Work with Synods to identify the most appropriate forms of ministry.
- Work with an Enabler to identify the best shape for Local Shared Ministry for that Unit
- Participate fully in the life of the Synod
- Would be eligible to have the Enabler and one Parish representative at Synod.
- The Synod Superintendent will consult with the Parish on the appointment of an Enabler.
- Ministry Support Teams and Local Shared Ministry Units will operate within the discipline of the Methodist Church and the Law Book.
- In the case of Co-operating ventures, where the Methodist Church is the Co-ordinating Partner, the Participating Partners will be involved at the time of setting up Local Shared Ministry.

The Ministry Support Team has representation on the Parish Council. The form of this should be decided as the Local Shared Ministry Unit is set up and then reviewed as part of the normal Parish review process.

The Enabler may attend Parish Council.

2. Synod:

- Works with Parishes that are looking at their ministry needs, noting that Local Shared Ministry should be investigated along with other forms of ministry e.g. as part of the process of helping with the Parish profile, or strategy development, or as a result of a Parish Review. The Church's national Local Shared Ministry Workgroup members are available to help Synods with this if needed.
- Appoints a Facilitator to lead the discernment and calling process.
- Identifies and approves suitable candidates for Enabler training.
- Appoints Enablers to Local Shared Ministry Units.
- Supports Enablers, and ensures that appropriate training and supervision is in place.
- Establishes Parish Superintendency in a manner that maintains accountability and the relationship of Enabler and Parish to Synod and Conference.

- Ensures, in consultation with Mission Resourcing, a Covenant is in place between
 - a. the Ministry Support Team, the Parish and the Synod
 - b. the Enabler, the Parish and the Synod

3. Conference

Representation at Conference shall be one member from each Local Shared Ministry Unit.

The Enabler may attend Conference as an Observer if not in Full Connexion.

The Enabler is not listed on the Stationing Sheet, but will be listed in the “List of Stations” in the Year Book – as will the Administrator of the Local Shared Ministry Unit who will be the contact person for the Unit. The Stationing Sheet and the “List of Stations” will identify the Parish or congregation as a Local Shared Ministry Unit.

4. Mission Resourcing and Trinity Methodist Theological College

- a. The Mission Resourcing Directors in consultation with the Synod Superintendent shall identify for the purposes of Stationing which congregations are engaging in Local Shared Ministry
- b. Mission Resourcing, through the Local Shared Ministry Workgroup, will work with Trinity Theological College to oversee resourcing and training standards.
 - The Workgroup will provide a biennial four-hour workshop on Local Shared Ministry to ministry students at Trinity Theological College.
 - A specified range of educational and training opportunities for Local Shared Ministry teams (e.g. EIDTS, “Lead Worship”, “Effective Leaders”)
 - Access to study programmes at Trinity Theological College for Enablers and Ministry Team members. Trinity Theological College staff members continue to contribute to Enabler Training events, overseen by the Local Shared Ministry Workgroup and in consultation with Synods.

Guidelines for moving towards Local Shared Ministry in MCNZ

1. Parish Council fully discusses future ministry needs with the Synod Superintendent or their representative. This discussion encompasses the strengths and weaknesses of the congregation, their mission goals, who is active in ministry and mission in the Parish, and who the church is “neighbour to” in the local community. Local Shared Ministry is explained along with other ministry possibilities. Parish Council agrees on the options to be presented to the whole congregation.
2. A full congregational meeting is held to further discuss the options and allow people to clarify concerns and hopes. The Synod Superintendent or his/her representative will be present at this meeting. This meeting may best be facilitated by someone outside the Parish. It may also be useful to include someone from outside the Parish who can confidently present the concept of Local Shared Ministry.
3. Parish Council will meet again to take time to reflect on the views of the congregation and make a decision about a way forward. If Local Shared Ministry is the chosen option, the Parish Council will advise the Synod Superintendent in writing and request that they move into a period of exploration. This period of exploration may take up to twelve months.
4. The Synod Superintendent will appoint a Facilitator (who may be an Enabler) to work with the congregation. The task during this time will be to flesh out what Local Shared Ministry means in this context. This will be done through further congregational meetings, preaching and leading worship that highlights the new style of ministry, as well as workshops that prepare the congregation for the basic ministry and mission functions they will be taking over. Gift and ministry discernment programmes would also be part of this exploration.
5. During this exploratory period the Parish Council, in consultation with the Synod Superintendent, will ensure that there is regular worship and pastoral oversight in the Parish. It may not be helpful to place a Supply Minister in a Parish that is in an exploratory phase.

6. Towards the end of the exploration period there will be a final congregational meeting to decide whether or not to proceed with Local Shared Ministry. This should be done with a sufficient majority expressing agreement. The Synod must also be satisfied that the Parish is ready to proceed with this model. *(At this point it may be decided by the Parish or by the Facilitator that this model of ministry is not sustainable in this Parish and other options would again be investigated.)*
7. If the decision is to proceed with Local Shared Ministry, the Facilitator will initiate a "Calling process" to call parishioners to the Ministry Support Team. The first part of the "Calling process" will be a workshop to determine the roles of the Ministry Support Team members. There are several models currently being used for how these teams may be shaped. Following the workshop, there is a discernment process and Calling within the context of worship. *(See "What a Ministry Support Team might look like" on page 5 for further detail on the Calling process)*
8. Following the Calling, a celebratory Commissioning Service is held to recognise the formation of the Ministry Support Team and to recognise the ministry of the Enabler. The Ministry Support Team and the Enabler are commissioned for a set period of time (normally three years). The Enabler appointed by the Synod to work with the Parish may be a different person from the Facilitator.
9. There will be a review of the new ministry after twelve months.
10. If the decision is not to proceed, other models of ministry should be investigated.

Other Aspects of Local Shared Ministry

1. Where this model of ministry might be appropriate

- For congregations who have made a deliberate choice to enhance the gifts of ministry within the congregation, Local Shared Ministry provides a working model. For some this is not a decision based on availability of finances.
- Congregations that can no longer afford a stipend for ordained Ministry, but are realistic about the financial costs involved in Local Shared Ministry
- Urban congregations and rural congregations.
- Large congregations and small, active congregations.

2. Parish Council

- Parish Council sets policy and oversees the finances of the Parish.
- The Ministry Support Team takes responsibility for carrying out the day-to-day tasks of ministry and mission of the congregation. The Ministry Support Team will be represented on the Parish Council by at least one member.

3. Finance

- Costs will be unique to each Local Shared Ministry Unit, dependent on such things as skill-base within the congregation, level of understanding of the principles of Local Shared Ministry, isolation of the Parish, geographical size of the Parish etc.
- A guideline for the cost of Enabler might be 1/4 to 1/3 stipend plus allowances and travel expenses.
- The Parish budget would allocate funds for education events for the Ministry Support Team, and some reimbursement of their costs. Administration costs would continue.

4. A Multi-congregational Parish

A number of congregations within a multi-congregational Parish may choose to embrace Local Shared Ministry. But it is not necessary for all congregations within the Parish to do so. This may have implications for ministry to the whole Parish.

5. Weddings.

In a Methodist model of Local Shared Ministry the congregation may call a Parish member to be responsible for conducting weddings. Application would be made for this person to be on the Methodist list of celebrants. Further specific training would be provided for this person.

6. Funerals

In a Methodist model of Local Shared Ministry the congregation may call a Parish member to be responsible for conducting funerals. Further specific training would be provided for this person.

7. Training for Enabler, Ministry Support Team and Congregations

On-going training for both Enabler and Ministry Support Team is a core aspect of this model of ministry. This can often be done in conjunction Synod educational events. The Enabler will provide, and/or help the Ministry Support Team access appropriate resources and training for the development of the congregation's ministry and mission.

8. Covenants and Employment Agreements

A Ministry Covenant is made between the Ministry Support Team, the Parish and the Synod Superintendent, and is co-signed by the appropriate Taiwi Mission Resourcing Director. (Each member of the Ministry Support Team would sign the *Ethical Standards for Ministry*)

If the Enabler is in Full Connexion, a Ministry Covenant is made between the Enabler, the Parish and the Synod Superintendent and is co-signed by the Taiwi Mission Resourcing Director. (The Enabler would sign the *Ethical Standards for Ministry*).

If the Enabler is not in Full Connexion, an Employment Agreement is put in place with the Synod.

9. Subsequent Callings

During the Ministry Support Team's term, each team member is responsible for gathering together and training a number of people to help with the task for which the team member has been given responsibility. This fosters and encourages the gifts of the congregation. Towards the end of the three year term, a review process would identify changes in the make-up of the Ministry Support Team:

- Some members may want to come off the Ministry Support Team and can indicate this to the congregation prior to the Calling.
- The congregation may identify an area of their life that requires another person on the Ministry Support Team.

A Calling is made for the whole Ministry Support Team for the next term. Some members may be called again to their original tasks; new members may be called onto the team.

If, within the Ministry Support Team's term, a member of the team is unable to continue in that role, a Calling is made to bring a replacement person onto the team for the remainder of the life of the team.

10. Reshaping

In small or elderly congregations where the energy is low, and Local Shared Ministry has been functioning successfully for some time, there may be a need to rationalise meetings and committees in a different way. For example, merging the Ministry Support Team and Parish Council into one group.

11. Sacramental Ministry

In the Methodist Church *where there is not an ordained Presbyter available to celebrate communion with the congregation* our current practice is to authorise a lay person to preside. Where necessary this authorisation is renewed annually by Conference.

In Local Shared Ministry, lay presiding at the sacraments would be as a called ministry rather than as a stop-gap measure. Lay authorisation can be given as an integral part of the ministry, renewed

annually, for the duration of that appointment. Specific training is given to those called to this ministry.

In a Local Shared Ministry Unit, there may be the need for more than one sacramental minister. This takes into account that lay celebrants are not always available due to work commitments or personal circumstances. Where there is a retired Presbyterian willing to take up this task, the same applies – they are not always available and there is the need for more than one person to be trained and authorised.

12. Co-operating Ventures and Local Shared Ministry

The Procedures for Co-operating Ventures was approved by UCANZ in 2012. (see Appendix)

- The Co-ordinating Partner (previously known as the Church of Oversight) has responsibility for appointing the Enabler, who may come from any of the partner churches.
- The Co-ordinating Partner has responsibility for the Enabler's job description
- Supervision of the Enabler is the responsibility of the Co-ordinating Partner through its judiciary (e.g. Bishop, Synod Superintendent, Presbytery)
- Changes in denomination of oversight shall not change the model or personnel of Local Shared Ministry in a Co-operating Venture.
- Each member of the Ministry Support Team shall be subject to the discipline of his/her own partner denomination, or may agree to be subject to the discipline of the Co-ordinating Partner. This is to be stated in writing prior to authorisation of the Ministry Support Team.
- Each member of the Ministry Support Team shall personally sign the Code of Ethics adopted and approved by UCANZ or the Ethical Standards of their own denomination.
- Where matters of collective discipline are concerned, the Ministry Support Team as a whole is subject to the discipline of the Co-ordinating Partner.
- Services of authorisation, induction, or ordination shall be ecumenical services, in the local setting, and shall include all parties and partners in the Co-operating Venture.

Conclusion

Local Shared Ministry offers a significant opportunity for parishes to consider a different model of engaging in mission and ministry in their communities, and of involving all people in the congregation in the ministry offered.

If you have further questions, please contact directly:

The Local Shared Ministry Workgroup 2013

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UCANZ PROCEDURES FOR LOCAL SHARED MINISTRY FOR CO-OPERATIVE VENTURES 2012

Local Shared Ministry is an inclusive term that allows for the roles of ministry to be fulfilled by members of the local church. Local Shared Ministry is distinct from Lay Ministry and Lay Ministry Teams, whose provisions are laid out in Section 5. There are a variety of models and this section provides a broad understanding of what may be understood as Local Shared Ministry.

- 6.1 A local church may seek to explore the options of Local Shared Ministry for theological, missional or economic reasons. Such exploration may be led by the Coordinating Partner, but should include the Participating Partner(s) (including any Regional Forum representatives).
- 6.2 When the form of Local Shared Ministry is clarified, it should be approved by the Local Church Partners and a copy sent to the UCANZ office.
- 6.3 An enabler can be Lay or Ordained. A covenant (for ordained ministry) or employment agreement (for lay ministry) will be required where an enabler is paid. Assistance with employment agreements and covenants is available from regional or national church offices.”
- 6.4 An Enabler (or other form of ministry oversight) is appointed by the Coordinating Partner for a defined term, with the approval of the Participating Partner(s). Any review of that position should also include all of the local church partners. The payment of an Enabler is the responsibility of the local church.
- 6.5 The Enabler oversees the approved process of selection, discernment, confirmation, training and authorisation of the Local Shared Ministry team.
- 6.6 It is essential that any ordination of Local Shared Ministry team members be approved by the Local Church Partners and the validity recognised.
- 6.7 Each member of a Local Shared Ministry team must sign a Code of Ethics.
- 6.8 Members of the Local Shared Ministry team are under the discipline of the partner churches – in the first instance the Coordinating Partner takes a lead.
- 6.9 Any complaints of illegal activities should be notified to the Coordinating Partner authorities and to the police.
- 6.10 Complaints about sexual impropriety, financial irregularities, inappropriate behaviour, breaches of church discipline or ethical standards, or failures of ministry, should be notified to the Coordinating Partner authorities. This is especially important if there are possible implications for liability insurance.
- 6.11 The model of Local Shared Ministry should be reviewed by the local church partners every three years – the Coordinating Partner to convene the meeting.