

**ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES - NOVEMBER 16, 2023**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Attendance Record.....	2
Meeting Minutes.....	3
Finance Committee Meeting Notes - November 7, 2023.....	5
Financial Update as of October 31, 2023.....	7
Chair Report - November 16, 2023.....	8
Pastor's Report - October, 2023.....	9
Scholarship Committee - November 12, 2023.....	13
Personnel Policy Handbook Revised.....	14

Attendance Record

Date: November 16, 2023	Location: St. Mark's Church
Time Started: 19:04	Time Ended: 20:19

Invited	May 25	June 28	Sept 7	Oct 26	Nov 16							
Nathan Cook	P	P	P	P	E							
Signe Jewett (C)	P	P	E	P	P							
Lynda Joyal (T)	E	P	P	P	P							
Tom Lewis	P	E	E	E	P							
Jodi Pappel-Reider	P	P	P	P	P							
Cole Parsons (VC)	P	P	Acting Chair	P	P							
Inga Skundberg (S)	P	P	P	P	P							
Kris Wegert	P	P	E	P	E							
VACANT												
Pastor Zsófi (exofficio)	P	P	P	P	P							
Guests												
Brian Lorch	P											
Jennifer Moroz		P										

Meeting Minutes

- 1) Opening Devotions
- 2) Approval of Agenda
MSC CC-2023-65 That the Agenda be approved.
- 3) Approval of Minutes
MSC CC-2023-66 That the Minutes of Council Meeting dated October 26, 2023 be approved.
- 4) Finance / Budget - Reviewed
MSC CC-2023-67 That a special congregational meeting be held on Sunday, December 10, 2023, following the regular Sunday worship service for the purpose of:
(a) approval of the proposed 2024 budget; and,
(b) appointments to the Audit Committee.

MSC CC-2023-68 That the 2024 Budget as presented be recommended to the Congregation for approval.

MSC CC-2023-69 That the Finance Committee be authorized to make remittances to the MNO Synod and Lutheran Urban Ministry prior to the 2023 Year End provided such remittances will:
(a) not result in an operating deficit in excess of \$39,000; and,
(b) not exceed the amounts allocated to each organization in the 2023 budget.
- 5) Continuing Business
 - a) HR Resolution
The Congregational Council went In Camera, and subsequently returned to Open Session.
 - b) Administrative Assistant job description and interview / hiring process.
It was determined a committee consisting of Brenda Catchpole, Pastor Zsófi and Inga Skundberg conduct interviews, such a process likely to commence mid December or January.
 - c) Insulation / Property Update
Council was advised the project is closer to completion. Ceiling insulation has been installed; however, there is still some outstanding electrical work.
 - d) Land Acknowledgement Policy - Laid over to January 25, 2024

- 6) Reports
 - a) Chair - Reviewed
 - b) Pastor - Reviewed

During discussion of the report, it was requested that Council Members assigned to liaise with the various Program Committees request from them a monthly report to Council sharing their progress.

Pastor Zsófi advised annual staff reviews are coming up, and that she is away on holidays from December 25, 2023 - January 6, 2024.
- 7) Committees
 - a) Property - See Section 5c) of Continuing Business
 - b) Sunday School Pageant - No report
 - c) Youth - Council was advised that a favourable meeting was held November 15, 2023 regarding the Youth, Confirmation and Young Adults.
- 8) New Business
 - a) Scholarship Committee Report - Reviewed

MSC CC-2023-70 That Wei-An Lau be awarded the Houston Scholarship for \$300 for 2023.
 - b) Personnel Policy Handbook

MSC CC-2023-71 That the amendments to the Personnel Policy Handbook be approved as presented.
 - c) Letter from Synod regarding visit to a future Council meeting.

It was suggested February 25, 2024 be the date proposed to the MNO Synod for a Synod Council or a Synod staff member to attend.
 - d) Christmas Office Hours, Staff Gifts, Council Christmas Social Celebration

MSC CC-2023-72 That the church office be closed December 25-29, 2023, January 1-5, 2024, and reopen on January 8, 2024.
 - e) Congregational Budget Meeting: Hybrid of In Person and ZOOM to be sure we hit quorum.
 - f) Nominating Committee Appointments

MSC CC-2023-73 That the Executive Committee be authorized to appoint the Nominating Committee.

Adjournment

St. Mark's Lutheran Church Finance Committee

Meeting Notes – November 7, 2023

Present: Lynda Joyal, Cole Parsons, Brian Lorch, Signe Jewett

1. Business Arising from Previous Meeting Notes

Offering Envelope Order – Quotes received for orders of 1,000 and 2,000 envelopes. Respectively, costs per envelope including shipping and tax are 14.7 cents vs. 11.3 cents. Agreed that we place an order for 2,000 envelopes.

VISA limit on Pastor's card – request to increase limit is in progress. Lynda to follow up.

In-Kind Transfer of Mutual Funds – the transfer has been completed and two funds we own have been changed to a series that does not have a trailing fee.

Misdirected securities donation – the shares received have been returned and no longer appear in our list of holdings. No costs were incurred to have the transaction reversed.

2. Review of Financial Statements

Statements for October are now available. A small net operating profit of about \$250 was realized in October. Giving was up by about \$1,000 from previous year but still below the five-year average for October. Brian to prepare a summary for council and upload balance sheet and P&L to G-Drive.

Lynda will review bank reconciliation report and consult with bookkeeper if anomalies are noted.

3. Distribution of Giving Reports

Unclaimed reports were placed in the mail today. Approximately one-third (51) were not picked up in-person.

4. Termination of Office Administrator

Signe reported that our final offer has been accepted. We are waiting on details from our lawyer on how the payout in lieu of notice will be structured. Because basic office duties have been fulfilled by a volunteer, the net-cost to the congregation should be zero.

5. Budget 2024

Revisions to Draft 1 were reviewed. Previous errors in the spreadsheet about GSI health and life insurance benefits are now corrected and premium rates for 2024 have been incorporated. Other decisions were:

- Maintain expectation of 5% increases in gas and hydro rates. If rates are lower and consumption decreases, decisions on how to allocate a potential year-end operating surplus can be made in December 2024.
- Maintain the children's ministry coordinator position but reduce overall compensation package to 36 weeks @ 8 hours per week.

- To balance the budget, Synod remittance goal was further reduced \$20,000. Goal for distribution to LUM is set at \$1,000.

Brian to prepare documents for council's consideration on November 16.

5. Enabling Motion

Council will be asked to empower finance committee to issue cheques to mission partners close to year-end subject to availability of funds. See proposed motion below.

6. Next Meeting

December 28, 2023 at 7:30 PM by Zoom.

ENABLING MOTION

That the Finance Committee be authorized to make remittances to the MNO Synod and Lutheran Urban Ministry prior to the 2023 Year End provided such remittances will (a) not result in an operating deficit in excess of \$39,000; (b) not exceed the amounts allocated to each organization in the 2023 budget.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Financial Update as of October 31, 2023

NB Balance sheet and P&L (or Income) statement are posted on G-Drive for those interested in viewing the actual statements. Go to Council / Finance Documents / Financial Statements

Highlights

- Compared to October 2022, general offerings for October 2023 were up \$1,100
- Despite this increase, October offerings fell short of the average received in this month over the past four years by \$1,163.
- Rental income for the year now stands at \$5,937. We will not hit our goal of \$8,000 largely due to the loss of rental income from Sister's of the Holy Rock.
- Total expenses for October were \$23,564. Major items included:
 - Benevolence Remittance to Synod (\$3500)
 - Synod Convention fee (\$722)
 - Personnel related expenses (\$14,255)
 - Double billing of insurance to make up for no payment in September (\$2,293)
- Net operating profit for month was \$267.
- YTD operating deficit stands at \$31,835 so we are closing in on our budgeted goal of just under a \$39K deficit.
- Unencumbered cash reserves as of October 31 stand at \$89,534 down from \$119,941 as of December 31, 2022.

ITEMS OF NOTE

- YTD remittances to Synod are \$18,500 vs annual budget of \$40,000.
- No remittances have been made to LUM out of the \$1,700 allocated in the 2023 budget.
- Significant expenses looming on the horizon include:
 - Balance of insurance claim deductible (\$5,000)
 - HR settlement including our legal fees (\$8,500 - \$9,000)
 - Betterments not covered by insurance claim (\$10-\$15K)
 - HVAC system repairs (\$10K and up?)

CHAIR REPORT NOVEMBER 16,2023

I am very relieved that we have finally reached a conclusion to the HR settlement. Well almost, it is just a matter of deposit account details to come. Thank you to Brian for taking the lead on correspondence in this matter. Council will now work with Pastor to ensure that proper procedures and actions are taken with performance appraisals to prevent this scenario from happening again.

Gratitude to Brian and the Finance Committee for the deliberations that they have had to lead us to the budget proposal in front of us this month. That was a lot of detailed examination of line items and decision making upon consultation with committees and stake holders.

Coming up to the budget meeting, Advent season and Christmas things will be very busy. I hope that we can keep you all on notice if we need some things done. Brenda has taken the lead on getting a job description drawn for the Admin position that we are soon going to be advertising for. We will need to form a small team for interviewers. Hopefully we can get things on the go by early December but that may be adjusted if activity gets too hectic to introduce training in the midst of this busyness. Perhaps it is more realistic to have a new person in place for the New Year. I know that Pastor Z will be very happy to have another presence in the office to allow for her own work to run without interruption for a portion of the day. Thanks be to Rhonda for her continued assistance with admin work as she can from home while recovering from illness. May we be so blessed to find someone just as capable.

The Personnel Policy Handbook was reviewed and updated by Rhonda (from HR experience) and Pastor Z, then Governance took a view through it and we have this latest version to present to Council for approval.

ACTIONS TAKEN

Meeting with Cole Oct 27

Group phone call Lynda and TD bank re: credit cards

Meeting with Finance Committee Nov 7

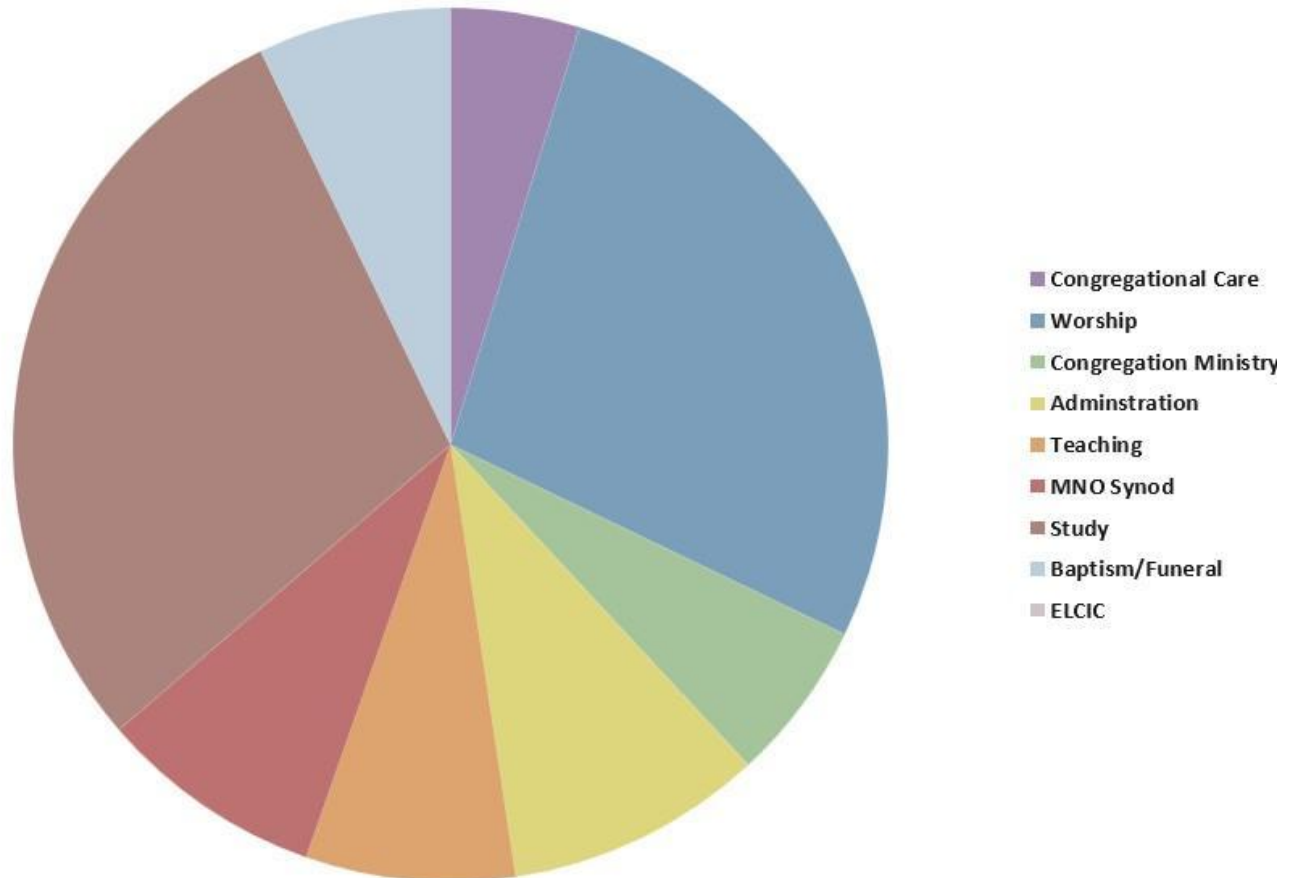
Meeting with Pastor Zsofi Nov 10

Pastor's Report – October 2023 Schmiedge

Rev. Zsófi

TLDR; [Too Long, Didn't Read] version: October was a busy month with programming and with Study Leave for me. Pastoral 1:1 Care was a little quieter, but this is likely because I was away for a week in the middle of the month. Meeting with the four confirmands a few times before Confirmation Sunday was a joy in seeing how faith is expressed and lived by the young folk in our congregation. Also giving thanks for all the ways ministry at St Marks is expressed faithfully, joyfully, and full of promise!

OCTOBER



STATISTICS

HR Reporting

SYNOD GUIDELINES		CURRENT PERIOD (Guidelines)	YEAR TO DATE (Guidelines)
Days of the Year	365	31	304
Workdays (5-day work week)	260	16 (22)	186 (215)
Days Off	94	06 (08)	66 (80)
Statutory Holidays	011	01 (01)	08 (09)
Vacation Days (includes days off)	028	--	19
Study Days (includes days off)	014	07	14
Sick Leave	023	01	12

Congregational Reporting

Baptism – 01

REIDER, Meadow [Oct 29 2023]

Reception by Transfer,

Confirmation/Affirmation – 04

REIDER, Meadow [Oct 29 2023]
HARRINGTON, Henry [Oct 29 2023]
WEGERT, Erik [Oct 29 2023]
KRISTENSON, Siri [Oct 29 2023]

Death – n/a

Pastoral Acts (year to date)

Baptisms	03	Confirmation s	05
Weddings	01	Funerals	03

Congregation Activities (year to date)

Worship Services	05 (48)	Communion Services	04 (38)
Baptismal Counselling	01 (05)	Wedding Counselling	01 (05)
Visitation/Family Prayer	02 (36)	Council Meetings	01 (08)
Meetings	02 (27)	"Home" Communion	01 (06)
Confirmation Classes	05 (15)	Other Events	02 (18)
Hospital Visits	-- (09)	Staff Meetings	-- (08)

Wider Church Responsibilities (year to date)

MNO Meetings/Events	05 (20)	Mentorship & Collegiality	01 (22)
Other Meetings/Events	02 (06)	MNO Synod Leadership Conference	☺

Where've We Been

Pastoral Care – There was a general decrease in pastoral 1:1 visits this month – although some of that is related to my Study Leave and to my being sick at the end of the month. I continue to visit with members by phone, text, and email as this is the bulk of my interactions with members outside of Sunday mornings.

Ministries of St Marks – The Children's Education Committee had its first meeting – discussing budget and ministry plans for the year. It is exciting to me that this group of people are keen to support faith formation from birth to confirmation age young persons. There is a hope, prayer, and plan for each and every young person who is tied to St Marks. Haiden is doing well at supporting all Children's Ministry at St Marks and has moved beyond coordinating Sunday School in recognizing that there are a number of young people who cannot make it to Sunday worship but who would like to be actively connected. Plans will be taking shape for a handful of non-Sunday events for families, and plans for the Christmas Pageant (Dec 17th) are well underway.

Personally – The beginning of October had me co-leading Boundaries Training for ELCIC rostered leaders across Canada. I am grateful for the support in facilitating this necessary training for our church leaders. Our hope is to eventually bring similar training opportunities to non-rostered church leaders like staff and council members. The middle of October afforded me the opportunity to reconnect with my deeply treasured and invaluable spiritual practices. It has been almost 4 years since I have applied a paintbrush to a canvas in prayer. I cannot convey how meaningful it was to be able to dedicate myself to this study time. The end of October was a rush of church confirmation activity and preparing our home for Paul's parents who visited over my birthday weekend. It had been over a year since they had both come to stay and we were all so happy to have them.

Where We Are

Ministries of St Marks – Many of the ministry leaders I have spoken with this month are carrying some anxieties about budget, engagement, and purpose. I am encouraged that people are open to conversation, prayer, and an approach of hope to their areas of ministry. St Marks has so much to offer through its Vision, Mission, and Values. I know that God is moving among us and working something in us that does not look like things done before. I am grateful for the courage these leaders have in opening their hearts to hear what God is speaking.

The Property Committee has been working so hard to ensure that the issues we had last year with the roof are taken care of and I feel that they are nearly there, November should see the end in sight. This month saw some quick action to deal with the snow on the roof when all of it began to melt in earnest. I would also share my thanks for Ed and Bonnie tackling the hardened roof snow then on the walkway and stairs. It is appreciated by many, but especially by those who need those spaces to move freely.

Office Management & Staff – I have scheduled a staff meeting in November to prepare for Annual Reviews and to share Council's proposed budget with program staff ahead of the Budget Meeting. We will also discuss a small Christmas party for the staff as we do not often all get together at the same time. I will be meeting with all necessary people in order to assist Council in the hiring process of a new, and much needed, Office Admin. Rhonda, Melissa, and I are in regular contact to see who can take care of which tasks weekly. As Rhonda heals, I have assumed responsibility for some more of the in-person office tasks.

Where We're Going

Pastoral Care – In November I will be writing a letter to the congregation in preparation for Advent but also in order to do some theological groundwork on the financial realities and their potential impact on ministries at St Marks. I would appreciate your prayers for the Holy Spirit to guide my words.

Ministries of St Marks – The Youth & Young Adult Committee will have its first member meeting in November. The CCCO Committee is busy planning the Coffeehouse. Melissa, Sarah, and I will be meeting to finalize plans for Advent and Christmas in mid-November. The Social Ministry Committee is on the precipice of announcing its Christmas initiatives. The Adult Education Group will begin a 5-week daytime series on some of the Hebrew Scriptures in November. I anticipate consistent and regular attendance. Ministry is alive and well at St Marks – I would like to encourage our committees to be a little bolder in the proclamation of their activities and the ways they experience God in what they are doing.

Wider Church – November holds an invitation for us to join with Messiah for a mid-week Advent worship; to join in Sharing Circles at LUM; and to attend Indigenous worship at Epiphany Indigenous. I believe that this is an opportune time for our congregation to broaden its ministry possibilities through shared ministry. I look forward to hearing from St Marks members about these experiences.

Personally – I was recently invited to join a mothers' group and I am taking the time to get to know the members of the group and make some friends outside of church. As conversations were had, I received a request about the church space availability to host the annual cookie exchange for this group. It is a wonderful gift to be able to connect neighbours with our space and I hope that it will plant a seed. I will be meeting with the priest of St Peters and the minister from Westworth United in early November. We are interested in looking for opportunities to work together and have a shared desire for a regular River Heights Ministerial (an opportunity for Christian ministry leaders in River Heights to get together). We are all relatively new to our calls and haven't heard that this group already exists.

Report to St Mark's Lutheran Church Congregational Council

From

Scholarship Committee

November 12, 2023

Funds able to be disbursed, Houston Scholarship	\$300
Funds able to be disbursed, Hagglund Scholarship	\$1104 (at Oct 31, 2023)

Only one application was received this year from Wei-An Lau.

Wei-An applied for both scholarships and the Committee found her application worthy of receiving a scholarship.

The Scholarship Committee recommends that Wei-An be awarded the Houston Scholarship for \$300.

As there are ten students from St Mark's graduating from high school in 2024, we anticipate that there will be a greater number of applications for next year's scholarships. The Committee recommends not disbursing from the Hagglund fund this year so that a larger dollar amount will be available to allocate next year.

Thank you,

Allen Harrington, Rhonda Lorch
St Mark's Lutheran Church Scholarship Committee

Personnel Policy Handbook

St. Marks' Lutheran Church

Approved by Congregational Council

CC – 2018 - 44

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Acknowledgement	
1.2 Your Personnel Policy Handbook	
1.3 Administrative Directives	
1.4 Complaint Procedure	
SECTION 2: EMPLOYMENT	6
2.1 Employment categories	
2.2 Personnel Files	
2.3 Fair Employment Opportunities	
2.4 Reference Checks	
2.5 Job Descriptions	
2.6 Offer of Employment	
2.7 Limited Term Contracts	
2.8 Probationary Period	
2.9 Staff Meetings	
2.10 Termination	
2.11 Human Rights	
2.12 Responsibility and Authority Related to Human Rights	
2.13 Procedures Related to Human Rights Complaints	
2.14 Filing a Complaint	
2.15 Investigation Report	

SECTION 3: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	14
3.1 Performance Appraisal	
3.2 Discipline	
3.3 Immediate Dismissal	
SECTION 4: COMPENSATION	16
4.1 Salary	
4.2 Salary Reviews	
4.3 Pay Days	
4.4 Overtime	
SECTION 5: ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE	18
5.1 Working Hours	
5.2 Daily Breaks	
5.3 Leaves of Absence	
5.4 Bereavement Leave	
165.5 Pregnancy and Parental Leave	
5.6 Personal Leave Without Pay	
5.7 Jury Duty	
SECTION 6: BENEFITS	20
6.1 Benefit Plan	
6.2 Benefit Plan Eligibility	
6.3 Holiday Observances	
6.4 Vacation entitlement	
6.5 Vacation Deferral	
6.6 Vacation Scheduling	

6.7 Termination Allowance in lieu of Vacation

6.8 Sick Leave

6.9 Health and Safety

6.10 Work Alone

SECTION 7: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

25

7.1 Professional Development Support

SECTION 8: COPYRIGHTS AND USE OF EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

26

8.1 Copyright Compliance

8.2 Ownership

8.3 Software Copyrights and License Agreements

8.4 Use of Email and Internet Access

8.5 Telephone usage

St Mark's Lutheran Church

Personnel Policy Handbook

Section 1: Introduction

St Mark's Lutheran Church ~~wishes to~~ affirms the importance of your welfare and security in your employment with the congregation. Mutual understanding of employment arrangements, respective rights, requirements, and working conditions promote confidence, respect, and security for the staff and the congregation.

This document sets out the personnel policies of St Mark's Lutheran Church for the guidance of ~~staff and~~ the Congregational Council and the staff. The purpose of the policies is to ensure that there is a coherent and equitable approach to the personnel matters of St Mark's. The personnel policies are meant also to ensure that the work of St Mark's is carried out in a way that is beneficial to both the church and its staff.

~~St. Mark's Mission is to strive for a world where Christ's unconditional love is felt by all of creation. It is our vision to be Christ's hands and feet in this world.~~

~~We pursue our mission by:~~ St Mark's operates from under the direction of our mission, vision and value statements.

Mission statement: To be Christ's hands and feet in this world.

Vision statement: A world where Christ's unconditional love is felt by all of creation.

We pursue our mission by:

- Celebrating God's love through worship and music;
- Caring for all of God's creation through service to one another and stewardship of our natural environment;
- Nurturing children and youth through providing education and opportunities to play a meaningful role in the life of our church.

St. Mark's core values are:

Generosity: We value the abundant sharing of our love, time and talents.

Inclusiveness: ~~We believe that differences enrich our community and that all are welcome.~~ We believe that differences enrich our community and our common ground is our loving Creator. We are called to love and support each other following Christ's

example. All people, including people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, race, beliefs, faiths and abilities are welcome to be who they are in this community.

Nurturing: We value the relationships we have in our community by nurturing and supporting each other in times of struggle, respecting differences of opinion, and dealing with conflicts in an open manner.

Justice: We value working towards peace and justice in the world around us through collaboration with other organizations and faith groups.

Please review the following policies carefully. Questions or concerns about the policies, or their impact on your employment should be directed to your supervisor ~~the Pastor~~. Once you are satisfied that you understand the policies, and that you agree to abide by them during your employment with St Mark's Lutheran Church, please sign the attached acknowledgement and return it to your supervisor ~~the Pastor~~ who will add it to your personnel file of other related employment documents (see Section 2.2).

~~Welcome to St Mark's Lutheran Church.~~

1.1 Acknowledgement

I have received a copy of the St Mark's Lutheran Church Personnel Policy Handbook and understand that I am responsible to be aware of and understand its contents.

I understand that the policies, procedures, and benefits in the handbook may be changed and that the handbook is provided to me on an advisory basis.

I further understand that the Personnel Policy Handbook is not a legal contract.

Employee Name

Employee Signature

Date

1.2 Your Personnel Policy Handbook

This Personnel Policy Handbook provides information about current personnel policies, benefits, and procedures for employees of St Mark's Lutheran Church. This resource is not intended to be inclusive. Employees should contact their supervisor ~~the Pastor~~ if further information is required.

Personnel policies, procedures, and benefits are continually being reviewed and may be changed. If policies or benefits are changed, St Mark's Lutheran Church will notify you with three (3) months written notice of the change. Employees will be provided with written updates for inclusion in the handbook.

The handbook does not constitute a contract and does not guarantee employment security or specific benefits. An employee may terminate employment upon giving proper notice, and employment may be terminated by St Mark's Lutheran Church within the limits of the Personnel Policies.

The policies and benefits outlined in this handbook are intended to conform to provincial and federal legislation. If governmental legislation conflicts with a policy stated in this handbook, legislation shall prevail and St Mark's Lutheran Church reserves the right to alter the policy to conform to legislation without three (3) months' notice.

For rostered staff members, MNO Synod approved salary and benefit guidelines and the terms and conditions outlined in the Pastor's Employment Agreement Letter shall take precedence over provisions in this policy handbook.

1.3 Administrative Directives

The Pastor is entitled to issue directives which amplify or provide detailed administrative direction (procedures) for any of these policies, always expecting that such directives do not contravene the letter or spirit of the personnel policies of St Mark's Lutheran Church.

1.4 Complaint Procedure

It is recognized that an employee may have reason to feel that some condition under which she/he is called upon to work violates these policies or is a condition which justifiably evokes complaint. In such events the employee will approach the Pastor with the concern.

A complaint shall be described in writing and shall be accompanied by a statement of the redress requested. The complaint shall be signed by the employee. The complaint shall be presented to the Pastor within twenty (20) working days after the date on which the employee first became aware of the action or circumstances giving rise to the complaint.

Complaints are to be submitted in writing for the following reasons:

- A written complaint clearly defines the issues while eliminating unrelated matters
- There is less chance of evasion or misunderstanding at a later stage.
- It serves as a basis for discussion where the issue is not buried in a flow of social amenities that could derail the discussion.

The Pastor will discuss the complaint with the employee and the employee's representative should one be identified by the employee. A decision regarding the resolution of the complaint shall be issued in writing by the Pastor within ten (10) working days of receipt of the complaint.

If the complaint cannot be resolved with the Pastor's intervention, or if the complaint involves the Pastor, the matter will be presented to the Chair of the Mutual Ministry Committee who will consult with the Congregational Council. The Council will discuss the issue with input from the Mutual Ministry Committee and decide on a course of action using processes outlined in the Pastor's Letter of Employment and the bylaws of the congregation. The Mutual Ministry Committee will communicate the decision to the parties involved in writing and in a timely manner. The Council's decision about complaint resolution shall be final and binding.

~~Complaints are to be submitted in writing for the following reasons:~~

- ~~A written complaint clearly defines the issues while eliminating unrelated matters~~
- ~~There is less chance of evasion or misunderstanding at a later stage.~~
- ~~It serves as a basis for discussion where the issue is not buried in a flow of social amenities that could derail the discussion.~~

Section 2: Employment

2.1 Employment / Engagement categories

The following categories of employee may be employed by the St Mark's Lutheran Church.

Permanent Full-time: An employee who works a regular forty (40) hour work week and maintains continuous regular employment. Permanent full-time employees are paid a salary and vacation time is accrued.

Permanent Part-time: An employee who works less than forty (40) hours per week but 15 or more hours per week and maintains a regular schedule throughout the year. A permanent part-time employee is paid an hourly rate and vacation time is accrued.

Limited Term: An employee who works either full-time or part-time under contract for a specific term. Vacation time will not be accrued. It will be paid out for each pay period.

Casual: An employee who, in consultation with his or her supervisor, establishes a flexible work schedule or works less than 15 hours per week. Vacation time will not be accrued. It will be paid out for each pay period.

Contractor: An individual may be engaged to perform specific duties or functions on a contract basis. This contractor is not an employee and statutory withholdings will not be deducted on the contractor's behalf. Contractors must invoice the St Mark's Lutheran Church for professional services rendered as per the terms of the contract agreement.

2.2 Personnel Files

St Mark's Lutheran Church maintains a personnel file for each employee.

St Mark's Lutheran Church limits the collection of personal information to that which is required to fulfill the obligations of employment.

An employee may review his or her personnel files in the presence of the Pastor. No material is to be removed from the file. Copies may be requested in writing from the Pastor. During a pastoral vacancy, the ~~Mutual Ministry~~ Council Chair shall assume all duties of the Pastor in regards to personnel files.

The Pastor and the Council Chair will have access to personnel files as required in the day to day management of human resources. The information in personnel files may not be shared with other parties without the express written consent of the employee. The files will be stored in a secure manner that only allows authorized persons' access.

Personnel files will be retained for the entire period of employment and for seven (7) years after an employee ceases to be employed by St Mark's Lutheran Church.

2.3 Fair Employment Opportunities

St Mark's Lutheran church affords equal opportunity for employment. Hiring decisions are based on assessment of the skills, abilities, experience, maturity, ~~and~~ health required to fulfill the task and the ability to accommodate a disability. Decisions will be made without regard to race, colour, age, gender, national origin, ancestry, marital status, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, or other factors as prohibited by the human rights legislation of Manitoba.

2.4 Reference Checks

Reference checks are not conducted until after the written authorization of the applicant is obtained. An offer of employment can only be made after the reference checks prove favourable.

2.5 Job Descriptions

Each position will be described with a job description that informs the employer and employee of the responsibilities, accountabilities, skills, knowledge and experience required as well as reporting relationships, where work takes place, and the number of hours to be worked per pay period. ~~in each position,~~.

2.6 Offer of Employment

Employees will sign an offer of employment which outlines the terms of employment. Once a verbal offer of employment has been made and accepted, a written offer of employment is prepared which includes the position title and description, salary, vacation entitlement, starting date, hours of work, probationary period and any other specific conditions which may apply.

The signed offer of employment will be retained in the employee personnel file as an indication of the acceptance of the terms of employment.

2.7 Limited Term Contracts

Limited term employees and contractors will sign a contract which outlines the terms of the limited period of employment. The contract will include the position title and description, rate of pay, starting and ending date of the term, hours or work, probationary period and any other specific conditions which may apply.

2.8 Probationary Period

An employee will be on probation for the first ninety (90) days of employment. During the probation period, there will be regular consultation between the Pastor and the employee to assess work performance.

Permanent appointment as an employee is conditional upon satisfactory performance during the probation period. At the discretion of the Pastor in consultation with the Congregational Council, the probationary period may be extended to a period not to exceed one hundred and eighty (180) days in total. Notice of the extension will be given to the employee in writing outlining the reason(s) for the extension.

During the probationary period, employees are entitled to all rights and privileges except with respect to discharge. If a decision is made to dismiss an employee in the first thirty (30) days of probation, no notice is required. If a decision is made to dismiss an employee after thirty (30) days of probation but still within the probation period, one (1) weeks' notice will be given. If an employee decides to resign during the probationary period, notice is not required to be given during the first thirty (30) days of probation, but one (1) weeks' notice must be given after 30 days of employment.

2.9 Staff Meetings

Normally, staff meetings will be held during normal office hours. When staff meetings are scheduled outside of a staff person's normal work hours, staff will be compensated with time off in lieu of pay for the expected duration of the meeting at the rate of 1 hour off per each hour of meeting time. Eg. If the meeting is expected to be 2 hours long, and is finished in 1 hour, the employee shall earn lieu time of 2 hours. Should the meeting extend beyond 2 hours, the employee shall earn lieu time equal to the actual length of the meeting.

2.10 Termination

Should there be sufficient cause to terminate an employee, the decision to terminate shall be based on cumulative data from written performance reviews that have been shared with the employee. The exception will be if the employee has committed a transgression as outlined in Section 3.3, in which case no notice will be given.

~~In compliance with the Employment Standards of Manitoba, St Mark's Lutheran Church will give the following written notice of termination:~~

<u>Period of Employment</u>	<u>Notice Period</u>
Less than one (1) year	one (1) week
At least one (1) year and less than three (3)	two (2) weeks
At least three (3) years and less than five (5)	four (4) weeks
At least five (5) years and less than ten (10)	six (6) weeks
At least ten (10) years	eight (8) weeks

~~If it is determined that the employee is to leave immediately, salary equal to the notice period shall be paid in lieu.~~

Resignation

Termination due to employee resignation will require a written notice by the employee of at least two (2) weeks. It is expected that the employee will provide reasonable notice so that the completion and transfer of tasks will be achieved.

Confidentiality

Employees may be exposed to confidential information about members or other employees of St Mark's Lutheran Church. Employees will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and careless discussion of ~~such~~ confidential information is subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

2.11 Human Rights

St Mark's Lutheran Church is committed to demonstrating respect for the human rights of all of its employees.

All employees have the right to be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect by supervisors, peers, and subordinates. In particular, the following will be diligently defended:

Right to Equality

St Mark's Lutheran Church is committed to equality of all persons. All St Mark's Lutheran Church employees and volunteers will be considered equal and have the right to be free from discrimination.

Discrimination is defined as the differential treatment of any person based on generalizations about a group to which they belong or are perceived to belong. Some characteristics on which discrimination may occur include, but are not limited to the following: ancestry, perceived race, colour, religious views or affiliation, age, gender, marital status, nationality, ethnic origin, family status, ability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, place of residence, or health status.

St Mark's Lutheran Church will not tolerate discrimination, interference, restriction, or coercion exercised or practised with respect to any employee in the matter of hiring, salary levels, training, upgrading, transfer, layoff, recall, discipline, discharge, or otherwise.

Right to Personal Protection

St Mark's Lutheran Church is committed to ensuring the safety of and respect for all of its employees. All employees will sign an anti-harassment agreement.

Harassment is unsolicited and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct by any other person including an employee, minister, volunteer, member and others which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment for an employee. There shall be no form of harassment allowed in the St Mark's Lutheran Church workplace. The employer shall take appropriate action, and support those adversely affected by the harassment.

This policy is consistent with the term harassment as defined by the Human Rights Code of Manitoba, including:

- a) A course of abusive and unwelcome conduct or comment undertaken or made on the basis of any characteristic referred to in the Human Rights Code of Manitoba (See Section 2.14); or
- b) A series of objectionable and unwelcome sexual solicitations or advances; or
- c) A sexual solicitation or advance made by a person who is in a position to confer any benefit on, or deny any benefit to, the recipient of the solicitation or advance, if the person making the solicitation or advance knows or ought to reasonably know that it is unwelcome; or
- d) A reprisal or threat of reprisal for rejecting a sexual solicitation or advance.

Although “bullying” is not covered by The Code, if the bullying behaviour is based on one of the protected grounds such as religion, sex, disability, ethnic background, or sexual orientation, a human rights complaint may be filed under harassment.

Right to Reasonable Accommodation of Needs

St Mark’s Lutheran Church is committed to reasonably accommodate the special needs of individuals where these needs stem from the group factors mentioned under discrimination.

St Mark’s Lutheran Church will consult with the person or group requiring extra consideration when considering ways to accommodate their needs. Failure to reasonably accommodate special needs is a form of discrimination.

Job accommodation can be implemented in a variety of ways such as environmental accommodation, physical accommodation, modification of employment procedures, job restructuring, provision of support services, and rearrangement of hours of work.

2.12 Responsibility and Authority Related to Human Rights

The ~~management and~~ Congregational Council of St Mark’s Lutheran Church ~~are~~ is responsible to provide a work environment that is free of all forms of discrimination and harassment for all employees. In addition, St Mark’s Lutheran Church will investigate all complaints in an expeditious manner (see Section 2.13).

It is the responsibility of every employee to respect the rights of individuals in the St Mark’s Lutheran Church workplace, and to maintain a work environment that is free from any actions, either deliberate or unintentional, that may be interpreted as harassment.

2.13 Procedures Related to Human Rights Complaints

Individuals who wish to lodge a complaint under this policy will use the following procedures:

1. Whenever it is possible to do, immediately make their disapproval and/or unease known to the person responsible for the action, letting them know that the conduct/comment(s) are unacceptable/unwanted and should be stopped.
2. In situations where it is not reasonable for an employee to address the harasser and the harassment continues the employee should forward a written complaint regarding the incident to the Pastor. The complaint shall be marked 'Personal and Confidential'.
3. The Pastor shall endeavour to resolve the matter in an expeditious and confidential manner within the realm of a fact-finding investigation.
4. The alleged offender will be entitled to notice of the complaint and will be given the opportunity to respond.
5. If the Pastor is responsible for the alleged inappropriate conduct, it should be reported to the Chair of the Congregational Council.
6. This procedure does not preclude the right of an employee to pursue the matter through the Human Rights Commission.

The Pastor ~~and/or~~ in collaboration with the Congregational Council will take the following steps:

1. Interview both/all parties involved in the incidents.
2. Interview any witnesses.
3. Document the situation accurately and completely.
4. Render a decision as soon as possible and advise the parties of any corrective action to be taken.
5. Ensure information concerning the incident is kept confidential. Investigation reports will be kept separate from the personnel files and will be sealed other than when the alleged offender has been found in the wrong and the documents are required to support dismissal.
6. The ~~Pastor~~ Council, after investigating the complaint will have the authority to:
 - a) Dismiss the complaint; or
 - b) Determine the appropriate discipline; and/or
 - c) Take action which may be necessary (referral to counselling, discipline, monitoring etc.)

2.14 Filing a Complaint

Instructions for filing a complaint are found in Section 1.4 of this handbook.

2.15 Investigation Report

On completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) will prepare a written report. The confidential report is a record of the findings of the investigator(s).

The report will include the recommendation of the investigator(s). The recommendations may include, but are not limited to one, or a combination, of the following:

- Order the alleged perpetrator to cease and desist the offensive behaviour;
- Take further action to ensure harassment does not reoccur in the workplace that can include:
 - Rearranging or changing duties and/or responsibilities
 - Recommending appropriate training programs, or counselling for employees
 - Taking appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal

Section 3: Employee Performance

3.1 Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisals will be completed to evaluate the employee's performance relative to the duties and responsibilities of the position and to outline any areas requiring improvement or development. Appraisals will be conducted in February with a followup in August and a verbal check-in every 3 months. The appraisal will be conducted in writing and will consist of a self-evaluation and an evaluation by the Pastor as well as an interview with the employee. Appraisals will be scheduled to occur at the end of the probationary period and approximately one (1) month prior to the employment anniversary date thereafter.

Two (2) copies of the completed appraisal, including the Pastor's supervisor's comments and signature, are presented to the employee for comments and signature. On completion, the signed form is retained in the employee's personnel file. The second copy is for the employee's records.

3.2 Discipline

It is the intention of St Mark's Lutheran Church that the purpose of discipline should be a positive attempt to correct conduct which interferes with proper efficient operations.

Employees will perform their assignments within the specifics of the position description.

Verbal warning: Employees who consistently fail to conform to the specifics of the position description, are unable to fulfill the accountabilities outlined, or exhibit inappropriate behaviour or poor performance shall be required to meet with the Pastor. The meeting will identify problems, attempt to find ways to improve the situation and suggest adequate solutions. A recommended course of action and an appropriate time frame in which the employee will be expected to improve to the satisfaction of the Pastor will be articulated. The first warning will not become a part of the employee's file and therefore, the matter is closed when the constructive two-way discussion has been completed.

An anecdotal note will be placed in the file to support subsequent verbal warnings. Details of subsequent warnings will be documented, signed by all parties as a correct representation of points discussed and retained in the employee's personnel file.

Letter of reprimand: When a continued or serious infraction occurs, the Pastor will write a letter to be shared with the employee stating the infraction and warning against further infractions. The letter will document the infraction, the expected performance improvement plan ~~course of corrective action~~ and the consequences for not correcting the behaviour, be signed by all parties as a correct representation of the points discussed and retained in the employee's personnel file.

Post Disciplinary Review: One month after a letter of reprimand has been given, the Pastor will review the case. If it is found that the employee has shown positive signs of improvement, the Pastor will so advise the employee in writing with a copy placed in his/her personnel file. This action does not erase the seriousness of the infraction committed, but indicates recognition that the employee has taken steps to improve behaviour and performance.

Discharge: If the employee's inappropriate behaviour or poor performance persists, the employee may be terminated as per the Termination policy (Section 2.10). ~~The employee will normally receive a final warning for repeated infractions outlined in a previous letter of reprimand except for the infractions listed in the Immediate Dismissal policy (Section 3.3).~~

3.3 Immediate Dismissal

Employment may be terminated immediately upon witness of ~~for~~ the following:

- Gross misconduct or insubordination
- Willful misconduct, disobedience or neglect of duties
- Sexual harassment
- Reporting for work while under the influence of alcohol, cannabis or illegal substances a substance which impairs the employee's abilities
- Theft or dishonesty
- Misappropriation of funds
- Abuse of equipment or materials
- Breach of confidentiality
- Illegal, violent or unsafe actions
- Abusive treatment of co-workers or members of the congregation or the public
- ~~Inability or~~ Refusal to perform work to the standards of St Mark's Lutheran Church
- ~~Chronic or excessive lateness or absenteeism~~

- ~~Failure or inability to act as an effective team member who cooperates with others and regards his/her own interests as secondary to those of the team~~
- ~~Failure or inability to project a positive image of St Mark's Lutheran Church~~

Section 4: Compensation

4.1 Salary

Each position shall have a salary or hourly wage rate range that reflects the responsibilities, skills and growth potential of the position.

4.2 Salary Reviews

~~Concurrent with the annual review of job descriptions,~~ The Congregational Council will review the salary ranges associated with the job descriptions annually. ~~as deemed necessary.~~

4.3 Pay Days

Employees will submit a record of the number of hours worked and sick or vacation days taken to their supervisor on a schedule provided by their supervisor.

Employees are paid on the 15th and the last day of the month. Should a payday fall on a weekend day or holiday, pay will be received the last previous working day. A statement of gross pay and deductions will be provided on each payday and on termination through the payroll administrator.

St Mark's Lutheran Church does not approve salary advances.

4.4 Overtime

~~Unless a budget has been established for overtime hours for specified staff positions, overtime will be compensated as time off in lieu of pay.~~

Employees must receive express written authorization from the Pastor to work excess hours prior to the hours being worked.

Hours worked beyond the employee's stated number of hours per week will receive compensating time at the rate of one times the excess hours worked for hours worked

within eight (8) hours per day or forty (40) hours per week. For hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours a day or forty (40) hours per week, compensating time will be at the rate of one and a half (1.5) times the excess hours worked under that condition. Compensating time owed for overtime shall not normally accumulate beyond thirty (30) hours at any given time.

Scheduling of compensating time off will be by mutual agreement with the Pastor and will be taken within three (3) months of being earned.

Section 5: Attendance and Leave

5.1 Working Hours

The regular working hours of the employee shall be defined in the employee's Offer of Employment Letter. Any changes to what is prescribed in the Offer of Employment must be approved by the Congregational Council.

5.2 Daily Breaks

Employees will have a thirty (30) minute unpaid meal break for every five (5) hours worked.

5.3 Leaves of Absence

The Employment Standards of Manitoba provides a number of leaves of absence to allow employees to deal with certain events in their lives without risking the loss of their job.

As outlined in the Employment Standards of Manitoba there are ~~twelve (12) leaves a number of leaves~~ employees may take without fear of losing their job.

St Mark's Lutheran Church will comply with the legislation related to each of these leaves. In the case of leave for bereavement, St Mark's Lutheran Church will consider the needs of the employee related to the bereavement per Section 5.4, Bereavement Leave.

5.4 Bereavement Leave

An employee will be granted up to five (5) days leave without loss of pay and three (3) days unpaid leave in the case of the death of a member of the immediate family. The members of the immediate family include: father, mother, brother, sister, spouse, child or step child, parent-in-law or grandchild, son or daughter-in-law, grandparents.

An employee will be granted up to three (3) days unpaid leave for family members other than immediate family members, including aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and those who are not related but are considered a family member.

Employees may be asked to provide reasonable verification that leave is required. Reasonable verification can include an obituary or death certificate.

5.5 Pregnancy and Parental Leave

St Mark's Lutheran Church will comply with legislation as enacted in the Employment Insurance Act and the Employment Standards Act regarding the provision of leave to staff for the purposes of pregnancy and parental leave. ~~Employees enrolled in the GSI Benefits Plan may be eligible for parental leave benefits in excess of those specified by the Employment Standards Act. Please refer to the ELCIC GSI Group Services website for more information.~~

An employee applying for pregnancy or parental leave must do so in writing at least one (1) month before the leave is to commence. An employee is entitled to change the date that the leave will commence by providing at least two (2) weeks written notice of the new date. This notice period will be waived if dictated by medical necessity.

An employee returning from pregnancy or parental leave is entitled to return to a position at the same level as the position held at the commencement of the leave including normal hours worked and any cost of living increases that would normally have been provided during the term of the leave.

An employee intending to return to employment is required to provide at least one (1) month written notice of the date that the leave is to end if they plan to return at a different time than their initial intention.

5.6 Personal Leave Without Pay

An employee may be granted a leave of absence without pay for legitimate personal reasons upon the approval of the Pastor and the Congregational Council. Leaves of absence are to be provided in writing to the Pastor and will offer sufficient notice, preferably four (4) weeks.

~~St. Mark's does not normally continue an employee's enrolment in the GSI benefit plan during a personal leave without pay.~~

5.7 Jury Duty

An employee who is called for Jury Duty or who is subpoenaed as a witness in a court proceeding, other than a court proceeding occasioned by the employee's private affairs shall be granted a leave of absence with pay for the required period of the absence. The employee will be required to work during those scheduled working hours that he or she is not required to attend the court proceedings. The employee is required to furnish a copy of the document that requires him or her to appear in court before leave is granted. The copy will be retained in the employee's personnel file.

All witness fees received by the employee shall be remitted to St Mark's Lutheran Church, except for payments made with respect to proceedings which occur outside the employee's regular scheduled hours of work.

Section 6: Benefits

6.1 Benefit Plan

St. Mark's Lutheran Church enrolls all eligible employees in the ELCIC Group Services Incorporated pension plan and benefits plan. More information about these GSI plans can be found on the Group Services website (<http://www.elcicgsi.ca/>).

6.2 Benefit Plan Eligibility

Benefit plan eligibility is outlined on the ELCIC Group Services website at <https://elcicgsi.ca/>.

6.3 Holiday Observances

The following holidays are normally observed by St Mark's Lutheran Church. Other holidays are observed as proclaimed:

- New Year's Day* – January 1st
- Louis Riel Day* – third Monday in February
- Good Friday* – as proclaimed
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day* – last Monday in May preceding May 25
- Canada Day* – ~~as proclaimed~~ July 1
- Civic Holiday – first Monday in August
- Labour Day* – first Monday in September

- Thanksgiving Day* – second Monday in October
- Remembrance Day – November 11th
- Christmas Day* – December 25th
- Boxing Day – December 26th

Note: Those holidays marked with an asterisk (*) are General Holidays as defined by the law of the Province of Manitoba and must be observed in compliance with the law.

Remembrance Day will be observed only on November 11th.

St Mark's Lutheran Church respects the right of all employees to observe their religious holidays and will make reasonable accommodation upon timely, written request for such observances.

Normally employees will not be scheduled to work on observed holidays. Permanent full time or permanent part-time employees scheduled to work on observed holidays shall be compensated by time off in lieu at the rate of 1.5 hours for each hour worked.

6.4 Vacation entitlement

Employees are normally granted the following paid vacation entitlement:

- Prior to completing two years of employment: two (2) weeks paid vacation
- Completed two (2) years of employment three (3) weeks paid vacation
- Completed five (5) years of employment: four (4) weeks paid vacation

A vacation week is based on the same number of days and hours as a normal working week.

In any given year, paid vacation days shall not be taken before they are earned.

The calendar year shall be used as the basis for calculating vacation entitlement.

Employees will be compensated for earned vacation time according to criteria set out in Section 2.1.

6.5 Vacation Deferral

Normally, vacation time may not be deferred from one year to another nor may it be waived by an employee in favour of vacation allowance drawn in addition to salary.

The supervisor may grant permission to an employee to carry forward earned vacation time into the next calendar year but any such carryover must be used within the first ninety (90) days of that year.

6.6 Vacation Scheduling

Employee vacation time, whether paid or unpaid, is requested in writing to the Pastor and scheduled in consultation with the Pastor.

The church office will remain open during regular work days that fall between Christmas and New Year's. Days taken off during this period will be considered vacation days.

While every effort will be made to ensure that employees may have vacation time at the time they wish, the Pastor reserves the right to deny or vary the choice of vacation by reason of the operating requirements.

6.7 Termination Allowance in lieu of Vacation

If, on termination, an employee has not taken the vacation due or vacation benefits have not been paid out, the employee will be paid two (2) % of the wages earned in that year for each week of vacation entitlement.

6.8 Sick Leave

Paid sick leave is provided for those employees enrolled in the GSI benefit plan.

Sick leave means the period of time any employee is absent from work, with full pay, by virtue of being sick or with a medical reason.

Employees entitled to sick leave benefits under the GSI Plan should refer to the GSI website for more detailed information (<http://www.elcicgsi.ca/>).

Each full time employee shall be allowed to request working time for medical, dental and/or psychological appointments at the discretion of the Pastor; however, employees are expected to schedule appointments in hours outside of work hours if at all possible.

An employee is required to produce a certificate from a medical practitioner for any illness resulting in the use of three (3) or more days of sick leave.

6.9 Health and Safety

St Mark's Lutheran Church undertakes to make all reasonable provisions for the occupational health and safety of employees as determined by the provisions of the workplace health and safety legislation of the Province of Manitoba and the Criminal Code of Canada.

If an employee is involved in an accident or is injured while on the job, the matter shall be reported to the Pastor immediately.

6.10 Work Alone

The health and safety of St Mark's Lutheran Church employees is the congregation's priority but can only be guaranteed with adherence to the following:

Hours of Access to the Building

The St Mark's Lutheran Church is normally open to staff Monday to Friday from 7:00am to 9:00pm. Employees can come in to the office during these time periods without notice or ensuring another employee is present.

Employees must notify their supervisor or another designated person when they will be accessing the building at other times during the day.

If staff are required to be in the building beyond 9:00pm, employees must ensure that another person leaves the building with them to ensure they have left safely. When circumstances make it impractical to have a second person present at the time the building is vacated, the employee must make contact with someone offsite either by voice or electronic means notifying that person that the building is being vacated and the approximate time the employee will reach his or her destination.

The church/office may occasionally be open on a Saturday to accommodate special events or member business. All working alone policies will apply to these occasions.

Working Alone During Normal Office Hours

If an employee is first to arrive, the doors will be locked after entry until another employee has arrived. If all other employees have left, an employee working alone will ensure the doors are locked.

Whenever an employee is alone in the office, the employee will only open an external door for persons known to the employee.

The last employee to leave will follow proper lock up procedures including checking all doors and windows and ensuring the alarm is in working order. If leaving alone, the employee shall notify someone offsite of his or her departure and the time to expect them at their destination.

Section 7: Professional Development

7.1 Professional Development Support

Attendance at workshops, seminars or conferences may be supported financially and with time away from work by St Mark's Lutheran Church on approval by the Congregational Council in collaboration with the Pastor. Requests for reimbursement and time away will be individually considered based on the applicability of the course and its merits to the work of St Mark's Lutheran Church. Such requests must be submitted to and approved by council in advance of enrolment in and / or payment of any fees associated with professional development activities.

Section 8: Copyrights and Use of Equipment and Technology

8.1 Copyright Compliance

Employees are required to honour all copyright requirements. Failure to do so is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

8.2 Ownership

St Mark's Lutheran Church retains ownership of all materials written, produced or prepared by an employee as part of their employment.

Passwords to all St Mark's email addresses, software applications, electronic files, remote file storage, etc., will be disclosed to the supervisor.

8.3 Software Copyrights and License Agreements

St Mark's Lutheran Church Inc is committed to ethical and legal practices in using software. Unless placed in the public domain, software is protected by copyright law and may not be duplicated or distributed for any reason without the permission of the copyright owner. Unauthorized duplication or sharing of software is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

8.4 Use of Email and Internet Access

Email and internet access are tools for business and administrative communication and are not intended for personal or non-business uses.

Employees are reminded that any form of personal communication on corporate computers may be accessed, retained and/or deleted by the employer without notice. Messages that are created, sent or received using the employer's system as well as any items or programs downloaded from the internet are the property of the employer.

8.5 Telephone usage

Employees are to keep personal telephone calls to a minimum so that telephone lines remain open for business use. Long distance personal calls are not permitted except with a personal calling card.