

18-4: Mission Exposure Program (MEP)**1. Responsibility Centre:** Worship and Christian Education (W/CE) Committee**2. Purpose Statement**

This policy provides the process for overseeing the MEP of Bells Corners United Church (BCUC) which provides a process and financial support to active members and/or adherents of BCUC participating in short-term mission projects/trips (less than 2 months) undertaken either by Bells Corners United Church or by any other group that is part of the United Church of Canada. The MEP is focused on youth/young adult participation in Mission Exposure Projects/Trips; however, the process and funds CAN also be used to support other adults who are escorting youth/young adults in these projects/trips.

3. Background for MEP

In 2004 the Bells Corners United Church Council endorsed and supported a youth initiative for a Mission and Service trip to Cuba to take place in 2005. A Planning Group was created and had oversight of fund raising, scheduling and programming for the project. It was determined that IF the trip did not materialize for any reason, any monies raised or donated would be held in a youth directed fund for future exposure trips.

In September 2004 it was decided to broaden this decision to encompass other ventures under the term "Mission Exposure" and to facilitate that a fund titled the "Mission Exposure Fund" was created.

In 2014 a group from BCUC organized a Mission Exposure Trip to Nicaragua and used the Mission Exposure Fund as the vehicle for collecting and disbursing funds. While a policy related to the fund had been drafted, it had not been completed which resulted in a number of questions and challenges related to the process and funding. It was determined that a comprehensive policy must be put in place prior to any further BCUC mission exposure projects or trips.

4. Policy Statement

BCUC has established a program related to Mission Exposure Projects/Trips which includes a formal application process. BCUC has also established a Committee Directed (CD) Christian Education (CE) – Mission Exposure fund to receive all funds from donations or fundraising activities in support of CE Mission Exposure projects/trips.

5. Scope

This policy applies to all Mission Exposure Projects/Trips organized by BCUC and/or with participants from BCUC who wish to use the Mission Exposure Fund for trips organized by others.

4. Procedures/Processes**a. Pre Approval**

A Planning Group would be established with those interested in participating in the project/trip. The group would determine a Team Leader and Team Treasurer (could be the same person) who would accept the responsibilities attendant with that role. The Team Leader responsibilities would include being the main contact person for BCUC Church Council and for overall responsibility for all volunteers participating. The Planning Group would review the policy and procedures for Mission projects/trips and would prepare the application for approval. (See Appendix 2 - BCUC Guidance for Short Term Mission Projects/Trips Leaders)

b. Approval Process

All short-term mission projects/trips organized by BCUC OR support to members of BCUC participating in short-term mission projects/trips organized by any other United Church of Canada group must be approved by the Worship/Christian Education Committee prior to the commencement of any fundraising at BCUC.

A proposal for short-term mission projects/trips organized by BCUC or for participation in short-term mission projects/trips organized by any other United Church of Canada group must be submitted to the Worship/Christian Education Committee and must include:

- an overview of the mission as well as the goals and activities to be carried out
- the project start and end date
- the location of the project and responsible contact person at project location
- the estimated number of participants (individual applications would be submitted following approval of the project/trip)
- the estimated total budget for the project/trip or for individuals participating in a project/trip organized by others
- an outline of fundraising plans including those that would impact BCUC
- the names of the BCUC Trip Leader and the Trip Treasurer (can be the same person) or the name of the Responsible Contact for the other sponsoring UCC group.

Proposals will be considered in the context of the BCUC's overall mission and outreach strategy and must be integrated as part of the BCUC annual activity planning cycle.

c. Fundraising

All participants will be required to assist in raising funds for the project/trip. All fundraising methods/activities impacting BCUC must be approved in advance by the BCUC Worship/CE Committee and be coordinated through the project/trip team leader.

d. Tax Receipts

All donations by individuals, including those participating in the project/trip, to the MEF are eligible for tax receipts that can be used for income tax purposes. It is; however, important that all participants understand that donations they make can have no specific connection to the individual(s) participating in the project/trip nor can personal contributions be a requirement of participating in the project/trip. If an individual ends up not participating in the project/trip all funds donated by the individual (or their family or friends) remain in the MEF.

Any amounts paid by the individual(s) participating in the project/trip for expenses such as passports, travel immunizations, personal expenses before or during the trip are to be paid by the individual(s) and are NOT eligible for reimbursement or tax receipts.

e. Payments/Costs

All costs/expenses related to trips organized by BCUC MUST go through the MEF. This includes payments to any other organization involved including those related to travel. Where possible, payments should be made directly to the organization responsible (eg travel agency, etc.) If there are situations where payments that are part of the project/trip approved budget must be made by the team leader or individual participant, then that can be reimbursed following the BCUC process for expense reimbursement.

**f. Canada Revenue Agency –
Non-Qualified Donnees/Intermediary**

In some instances, particularly those that are out of country Mission Trips, the project is coordinated by another organization who is paid a set amount by the charity (in our case BCUC) for the service. This service would generally include accommodation, meals, cost of activities including, translation, etc. Where this organization is what the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) refers to as a “Non-Qualified Donnee” or an “Intermediary” (e.g. Companeros, for the Nicaragua Trip) which are NOT Canadian registered charities, there is recommended additional requirements outlined by the CRA which include written agreements and oversight by the charity of all expenditures (see [CRA CG002](#)). This requirement was essentially put in place to ensure that a Canadian charity is not funnelling money to an organization without having in place

processes to ensure that all of the financial support gifted by the Canadian Charity is used for qualified charitable work.

In cases where a Canadian charity is working with a “Non-Qualified Donnee/Intermediary” on a Mission Trip approved by the charity, and where the charity is sending volunteers representing their charity who will be carrying out the project, in this situation the volunteers are seen as the charity’s representatives ensuring that the project is carrying out qualified charitable work of the charity. In order to be prudent; however, it is recommended that a written agreement between the Canadian Charity and the organization be put in place that outlines details including:

- the description of the Mission Exposure Project/Trip
- an acknowledgement that funds provided are to be used for the purpose of the Mission Exposure activity
- a Description of the activity of the volunteers
- an indication that the charity’s Team Leader for the trip is responsible for monitoring the activities of all volunteers

g. Participant Requirements/Application Review

Each person participating in a short-term mission trip must complete an application form which will include (see Appendix 1 - BCUC Volunteer Application – Mission Exposure Project/Trip):

- personal and emergency contact information
- references
- a list of experience and skills
- expectations of Short-term Missions Trip Participants
- physician medical note and background checking consent
- consent from parents or guardians, if under the age of majority

An interview will also be required by either the BCUC team leader or representative of the Worship/CE Committee. All applications will be reviewed by a review panel or 2-3 members under the direction of the Worship and Christian Education Committee.

h. Team Orientation and Training

Effective trips require preparation, both spiritually and in practical terms. All team leaders are expected to organize team gatherings providing orientation, information and training to participants. Team members are expected to attend all sessions – the team leader will determine if any team member should not participate in the trip based on their attendance and/or participation in the preparation journey.

i. Cancellation of the project/trip

Should a planned project/trip be cancelled for any reason, all funds donated and/or raised in support of the project/trip shall be held in the CD CE – Mission Exposure fund and can be used for any future project/trip.

j. Reporting and Debriefing

The mission project/trip team leader is required to complete a written report to the Worship/CE Committee on the project/trip within one month of returning home. Log books and receipts to support expenditures must also be submitted to the Worship/Christian Education Committee within one month of the end of the project/trip.

The team leader will also coordinate a report/presentation to the congregation with contributions by all participants following the conclusion of the project/trip.

6. Roles/Responsibilities

- The Worship/Christian Education Committee is responsible for the maintenance and review of this policy
- The fund is under the Christian Education Directed Givings.
- The Financial Management Committee is responsible for maintaining the CE Directed Fund.
- Church Board is responsible to oversee the application of the policy by the Worship/Christian Education Committee.

7. Definitions.

Mission Exposure –The initiative must meet the policies and practices of the United Church of Canada and be coordinated with and supported by Christian community representatives in the locale of the planned initiative. The initiative must involve a project that benefits the people and community in the area of the planned initiative.

8. References

- a) BCUC Policy Manual - Financial Management Committee: Directed Funds Policy
- b) BCUC Handbook, Terms of Reference for the Christian Education Committee
“The Committee...plans, organizes, coordinates and promotes the education program of the Congregation, including that of the Sunday School, Confirmation groups, mid-week groups, Youth work, Family Life and Adult Education. These activities may take place on or off BCUC property.”
- c) BCUC Handbook, Terms of Reference for the Financial Management Committee:
“The Committee:
 - organizes the ways and means to receive, record, safeguard and account for all revenue received by the Church, including the PAR and contribution envelopes programs
 - disburses funds authorized by areas of responsibility, and accounts in full for all transactions made”

9. Approval authority: Church Board

10. Drafted: W/CE Committee: December 8, 2015

Approved: Church Board: December 16, 2015

Replaces: New

See Appendices:

1 - BCUC Volunteer Application – Mission Exposure Project/Trip (attached)

2 – BCUC Guidance for Short Term Mission Projects/Trips Leaders (in process)

Appendix 1:

**Bells Corners United Church
Volunteer Application - Mission Exposure Project/Trip**

Before completing the form please read the Bells Corners United Church Policy on the Mission Exposure Program (MEP). The Team Leader or a representative of the Worship/CE Committee will contact the applicant to organize a convenient time for a brief interview prior to approving the application.

PROJECT/TRIP

Which project/trip(s) are you applying for: _____

Which organization is organizing this trip: _____

PERSONAL DATA

Name (exactly as it appears on your passport)

Last: _____ Given Names: _____

Passport number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Please ensure that your passport is valid 6 months after your anticipated departure date. If it isn't, let us know and send us the new information as soon as you have it. Do not wait to send your application in until you have a new passport.

Place of issue: _____ Nationality: _____

Birth date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____ Sex: _____ Age: _____

Current Street Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: Home () _____ Cell() _____

Email: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Contact person in Canada, while you are on the trip:

Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (w) _____ (h) _____ (c) _____

E-mail: _____

Alternate contact, if first contact is unavailable:

Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (w) _____ (h) _____ (c) _____

E-mail: _____

PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Blood Type (if known): _____

Please list any dietary restrictions or food allergies:

Please list any medical condition(s) such as allergies, asthma, diabetes, hyperactivity, depression, seizures, injuries, or preexisting conditions that are necessary for us to be aware of:

Do you require prescription medication on a regular basis for the above medical conditions or to function effectively? NO ____ YES ____

If "yes" please list the name(s) and reason(s) for taking said medications:

Medication	Reason

Do any of the medication(s) that you take require refrigeration? NO ____ YES ____

Please specify: _____

Please bring duplicate prescriptions of any medications you will be taking on this trip and keep all medications in their original containers.

Personal physician: _____ Telephone: _____

How would you rate your overall physical health (5 being extremely good): 1 2 3 4 5

Ability to walk on uneven surfaces (5 being not a problem at all): 1 2 3 4 5

Ability to endure long car rides on bumpy roads (5 being that you love long bumpy rides): 1 2 3 4 5

NOTE: A letter may be required from your family physician stating that you are in good health to do the activities planned.**LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS****The following questions are designed so that BCUC can know a little more about why you would like to be a Mission Project/Trip volunteer.**

(Answer on a separate sheet with a short paragraph for each question.)

- (a) Tell us a little about yourself? (Your background, interests, etc.)
- (b) Why do you want to participate in a mission experience? Why are you interested in this/these trip(s)?
- (c) Tell us about your faith journey and what it means to you at this point in your life?

- (d) What strengths or skills can you offer to this project/trip?
- (e) What strengths or skills do you hope to gain from this project/trip?
- (f) What challenges might you face on this mission experience?
- (g) Please list any volunteer and/or travel experience you have.
- (h) Please list anything else that you think we should know about you?

REFERENCES

As part of the application process we request that you provide us with **TWO** reference letters to support your application. These reference letters are to be filled out by the people listed below and include the requested information. Please ask your references to email or send the letter to the address below. Please do not include it with your application.

All references must not be related to you and must meet one of the following criteria:

- a. Must be an ordained or diaconal Minister
- b. someone in leadership at the Church, Presbytery or UCC.
- c. a teacher, youth worker, or person with whom you have worked with in other volunteer experiences.

All letters should include the following information where applicable:

- a. Applicant's name and the project/trip they are applying for.
- b. Contact information of the reference.
- c. How long and in what capacity the reference knows the applicant.
- d. What gifts and skills that the reference feels the applicant possess that will benefit them on this experience?
- e. The faith journey and maturity of the applicant.
- f. Situations in which the reference has personally seen the applicant grow and adapt to new situations.
- g. Any other information that the reference feels we should know in discerning whether this applicant is a suitable candidate for a Youth in Mission trip.

FUNDRAISING

All participants will be expected to contribute to fund raising activities for the Mission Exposure Project/Trip through participation in specific projects and/or soliciting/providing financial donations to the MEF. This is time intensive - particularly in the 6-12 months prior to the project/trip.

Do you anticipate any problems in working to raise these funds? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, explain the circumstances in your long answer submissions and consideration will be given to determining if your application can be approved.

Please submit your application to:

BCUC Worship/CE Committee
Bells Corners United Church
3955 Old Richmond Rd
Nepean, ON K2H 5C5

Or email to the BCUC Office at:

office@bcuc.org

**Please ensure to include in the subject line that this is an application to BCUC Worship/CE Committee's Mission Exposure Project/Trip*