# Position Description Template

**Position Title: Position Profile:** 🞏Full-time 🞏 Part-time

If part-time, hours per week

🞏Solo 🞏Team ministry

If team, describe full ministry complement

**Position Summary:** (2–4 sentences that summarize the position)

**Autonomy in Decision-Making:** What decisions will the ministry personnel make independently (without consulting others), and what types of decisions will require consultation, and with whom. This list does not need to be exhaustive, but it should indicate what types and amounts of expenditures can be authorized by the ministry personnel, as well as relationships among other paid staff (e.g., Who has a decision-making role in music?).

## Principal Areas of Responsibility and Associated Duties

General Instructions:

1. Use your living faith story to guide how you complete this section, and/or use the categories below, which can be ordered by priorities and the amount of time, energy, and skill required to fulfill them.
2. For each “principal area,” define the duties that are associated with the area. As much as possible, indicate the frequency of the duties (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, occasionally, or yearly if applicable). BE HONEST. Don’t say something is “as needed” when you really mean “daily.”
3. Start by being specific and include everything. Then go back and delete the things that don’t really belong. The position description, in most cases, will be three to five pages.
4. Involvement in the denomination (i.e., regional council or General Council) is not optional, but rather a key component of each ministry personnel’s vocation. A community of faith cannot choose to eliminate this expectation.

You may use the following categories, based on the “Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for Ministry Personnel” (available on [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca/)), which provides clarity on the definition and focus of each category.

*Administration*

If you have specific duties associated with administration, for which you do not have administrative support, list them here: for example, creating the bulletin, scheduling, and reception. If there is administrative support, list that, and specify whether it is paid or volunteer.

*Community Outreach and Social Justice*

Different ministries use different words to describe this category. Some refer to it as “activities that reach beyond our doors.” Others may describe it more specifically: environmental justice activities, poverty and justice activities, global justice, food sustainability, and so on. If you have specific activities related to this “principal area,” make sure you include them here: for example, if you expect the ministry personnel to be a member of a local organization’s board as part of your outreach, name this expectation here.

*Continuing Education*

It is not necessary to list specific ways that ministry personnel further their education. You could use this wording: “Pursues personal, vocational, and professional goals for continuing education in consultation with the M&P Committee.”

*Denomination and Communities*

Ministry personnel have responsibilities as members of The United Church of Canada to the denomination, the wider church, their communities, and the world. There should be two subsections in this category. The first section is mandatory and is United Church policy. You could use: “Is actively involved in the life of the regional council and/or General Council.”

The second section is optional, and it is a place for your community of faith to identify community partnerships that you expect your ministry personnel to engage in: for example, there may be health and social service agencies with which your local ministry collaborates, tenants in your building, or outreach ministry collaborations. This category should identify these partnerships and the type of participation that you expect (e.g., attending meetings or leading an inter-agency partnership).

*Faith Formation and Christian Education*

Different ministries use different words—discipleship, Christian education for children and youth, adult education, small group ministry, faith formation, spiritual practices—to describe this category. Be clear about the age groups involved and expectations about specific activities (e.g., March Break camps for school-aged children).

*Leadership*

List specific duties associated with leadership. For example, specify if the ministry personnel will provide “supervision” to any other staff person, “coordinate” the work of multiple staff members, speak publicly on behalf of the community of faith, or train/mentor a Lay Pastoral Care Team. You may also comment on the style of leadership that your community of faith needs. Remember that no one leader can be all things. Below are just a few examples: think carefully and honestly about the type of leader that best suits the personality and needs of your community of faith:

* Provides strong, charismatic leadership and direction to others.
* Leads “from behind”—motivates, encourages, and supports others to share their own gifts for ministry.
* Highly personable approach to leadership, e.g., builds relationship and consensus, delegates and shares leadership appropriately.”
* Leader not afraid to take risks, to try new things and learn through both successes and mistakes.

*Pastoral Care*

Use this category to describe your expectations for visiting and supporting people spiritually. Describe who this care is provided to—just members and adherents, or other members of the community who seek it? Are there specific skills that the person in this ministry position requires? For example, must they have credentials for counselling (not only “pastoral care”), a certain number of Clinical Pastoral Education units, or special skills in addictions, mental health, palliative/end-of-life care, or children’s counselling.

*Self-care*

Often ministry personnel know the best specific ways for them to engage in self-care. It isn’t necessary to list specific ways that they should take care of themselves. You can use: “Sets goals for ongoing self-care by maintaining a healthy balance of one’s own physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being to include rest, recreation, and professional development. Collaborates with the M&P Committee to meet goals.”

*Worship*

Describe your expectations for worship. In your community of faith, worship may take several forms; be clear on the expectations for each worship opportunity you offer. Or, if your goal is to develop a number of worship alternatives beyond your existing worship locations and times, clarify the expected worship sites for this position description (including frequency, location, duration, and “tone”). For example, spell out that the ministry personnel is expected to lead a traditional Sunday morning worship service in two congregations at two different sites, as well as develop, implement, and lead a contemporary mid-week service aimed primarily at young families.

## Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

This section identifies the absolute requirements of the position (not the “nice to haves”). Include expected level of education; certifications required; any areas of specialization; computer and technological expertise (if needed); and so on.

## Other Preferred Assets

If you wish, you can indicate skills, credentials, or abilities that aren’t required but are “preferred.” These may be areas that you help the ministry personnel to develop over time, e.g., if this ministry position includes maintenance of a website, then website maintenance may be a “preferred” skill, or if it involves working in a shelter or other type of outreach ministry, perhaps a preferred skill is “experience in scheduling volunteers.” On the other hand, you may have no “preferred” assets or skills for the ministry personnel.