

**CANADA WEST DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE  
WRITTEN UNDERSTANDINGS**

(Insert Church Name) Church of the Nazarene and  
Pastor (Insert Name of Pastor)

In accordance with beliefs, practices, operations, organization, and rules of the Church of the Nazarene as set out in the current *Manual of the Church of the Nazarene* and specifically within the guidelines of *Manual* Par. 115 through 124.1, 400 to 423.1, 426 to 435.8 and 500 to 515.6.

Date of this Document:

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**I. Our Hopes and Dreams for the Future:**

**Statement of Vision or Mission**

*What we are about and to be doing as a Church in this community.*

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**Statement of Leadership Philosophy**

*How we perceive the leadership function of the pastor to be  
in relationship to and with the Church Board and the church.*

The Pastor's philosophy of leadership:

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The Church Board's Philosophy of Leadership:

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**Agreed upon Statement of Leadership Philosophy**

*This is often worked on by the Pastor and ratified by the Church board.*

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**Good Things Worth Keeping**

*What is going well with us -- things we want to keep going.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**New Ministry Priorities, Projects, Problems**

*Things we want to accomplish during the next two years. Depending on the situation, this section may be completed at this time or after the new pastor begins active ministry, or following the alignment interview 6 months into the new Pastor/Church arrangement.*

*Recognizing that the congregation will be most effective in focusing on a few goals, from the list of five, choose **two** that have the most potential to fulfill the congregation's God-given mission.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Working Guidelines and Expectations:

**Summary Statement:** “It is expected that the Pastor of \_\_\_\_\_ Church of the Nazarene would provide a model for Spiritual discipline through a commitment to a daily private devotional habit. The focus of his/her ministry will be to bring to fulfillment the Mission Statement of \_\_\_\_\_ Church of the Nazarene through soul winning, Christian training, the sanctification of believers, and care giving to those in need.”

While the Pastor may have employment in addition to his/her position as the Pastor of this local church, the Pastor recognizes that his or her primary obligation is to the Local Church and agrees not to permit the pursuit of other interests or employment intrude upon the fulfillment of his or her duties in this position. The Pastor shall not undertake other employment or business activities without the advance written approval of the Church board.

### 1.0 PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND WORKING CONDITIONS

1.1 It is expected that the pastor will speak, on average, in 36 Sunday morning services. This allows for vacation, special speaking assignments and/or conferences on the average of once per quarter and one misc. special per quarter (i.e. musicals, etc.) Evening services allow for missionary services, youth, music specials and services with other local participation. The pastor is permitted to accept two week-long preaching assignments outside his local responsibilities each fiscal year with the approval of the Church Board, and providing adequate time has been given for supply arrangements to be made. Additional preaching opportunities that may not interfere with other duties can be undertaken at the pastor’s discretion.

All the above are to be communicated to the Church Board at least one month in advance, unless extenuating circumstances make it impossible to do so.

1.2 It is expected that the pastor would be available to speak at, or arrange for a speaker, (nursing home, etc).

1.3 In the normal course, the pastor shall work five days each week including Sunday, and shall take two days off work each week.

1.5 We accept the District request that the local pastor be allowed to work one week in the summer camp program and encourage the pastor to attend the Annual Family Camp. This will not be considered holiday time.

1.6 The church would allow the pastor to take one weekday each month (or 3 days together on a semi annual basis) for personal retreat.

1.7 The pastor will be entitled to vacation according to the following guideline:

Up to 10 years of service	3 weeks
10-19 years of service	4 weeks
20 or more years of service	5 weeks

It is recommended the pastor take all the vacation time he or she is entitled to within the Church year that the vacation is earned. Unused vacation will not be paid out and can only be carried forward to a maximum of one week into the next year. The pastor must take vacation in increments of no less than one week.

- 1.8 It is expected that there will be a membership emphasis at least once a year ... that prospects be provided with a copy of the Church Constitution, Covenant of Christian Conduct and Character, and any other necessary information. It is expected that membership training and interviews be provided for all prospective members. All potential members are to have the approval of the Church Board.
- 1.9 The pastor will preach at least two messages annually on the importance of financial stewardship.
- 1.10 The pastor will endeavor to ensure the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered at least once every 3 months (Manual 413.11).
- 1.11 The pastor will monitor church membership records and keep a record of transfers to and from church rolls to issue a current and accurate membership list is presented at the Annual Meeting. Names are not to be removed from the membership list unless a written request has been made ... or by action of the Church Board and in accordance with Church Manual procedure.
- 1.12 The pastor will coordinate prayer ministries with a goal of providing a special prayer emphasis at least quarterly.
- 1.13 For the protection of the reputation and ministry of the Pastor, discretion needs to be shown in the relating to members of the opposite sex. It is an understood policy of the church that ministry staff do not transport members of the opposite sex unless a careful documentation of time can be provided or accompanied by an individual of the same gender. Meetings with members of the opposite sex should be limited to the office area during office hours and/or a public place. It is expected that the Pastor would abide by the guidelines of the *District Safeguarding Policy*.

## 2.0 VISITATION MINISTRY

- 2.1 It is expected that the pastor will coordinate the visitation ministry.

- 2.2 It is a goal that every regular member and attendee of the church would receive a visit \_\_\_\_\_. This would be accomplished by pastoral staff and / or by delegated responsible lay members of the church.
- 2.3 Priority for the pastor visitation or phone call will be: Times of crisis or urgency as determined by the Pastor, new attendees, and those who no longer attend, and also to delegate to and monitor lay persons who provide visitation ministry.

### **3.0 ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES**

- 3.1 In accordance with *Manual* 413.23 the Pastor will serve as the Chairman of the Church Board and will be in attendance at all meetings except when circumstances do not allow. The Board will meet monthly except for one month in the summer.

The Pastor's role will be to provide leadership through the planning, development and implementation of new ideas, programs and direction. In this he will utilize the Church Board and auxiliary organizations to provide assistance in shaping and developing these, to make them the most successful they can be.

The Pastor and the Church Board will meet together in a weekend retreat setting at least once a year, for planning, evaluation, and information. Suggested time would be following the Annual election of new officers. They will also review, quarterly, the results and actions from the Annual Board retreat.

The Pastor will keep the Church Board informed by reports at the regular monthly meetings of any new changes or programs being considered.

- 3.2 It is expected that the Pastor will coordinate a meeting with Leaders as needed (committee heads, Youth, Singles, SDMI, NMI., Women's Ministries, Men's Fellowship, etc.) It is suggested that this be done as a group for the purpose of time table scheduling and long term planning. This is not a decision making body.
- 3.3 The Pastor's attendance at committee meetings is not required except on request from committee leaders.
- 3.4 The Pastor is expected to work in consultation with the SDMI chair person re: the placement of teachers and the operation of the Sunday School.
- 3.5 We are a mission minded church, so it is expected that the Pastor would actively support the mission work of the local church and the church international. The Pastor will be active in the promotion and monitoring of

the progress of money raised for the purpose of paying the World Evangelism Fund and other Mission related funds (e.g. Alabaster, and special projects).

- 3.6 Youth are a very important part of our church, so it is expected that the pastor will actively support the youth program by arranging for individuals to assume leadership for the youth program and to be available for periodic interaction with youth.
- 3.7 The Pastor will assume responsibility for making sure that all monthly and annual reports are completed and submitted.
- 3.8 It is expected that the Pastor's annual report to the church would include statistics from the past year; high lights from the year past; an evaluation of the spiritual condition and the well-being of the church in general; and projects for the future. This report will be provided in writing at the Annual Meeting.
- 3.9 It is understood that associates are hired as a part of the call of the Pastor, and they will work in direct consultation with the Pastor. It is expected that the Pastor would meet and consult with ministry staff at least twice a month, and an average of ½ day per week be committed to administration of ministry staff. Hiring of staff would be in accordance with Manual requirements and with the cooperation of both Pastor and Church Board. Staff will not be hired without the agreement of both parties and approval by the District Superintendent. It is understood that all Ministry staff positions are to be submitted to the District Superintendent for approval on an annual basis.
- 3.10 It is expected that the Pastor would work in harmony with other local Nazarene Churches to support joint functions such as the Annual Good Friday Rally, and, when possible, attending Mission Area Pastor's meetings.
- 3.11 It is expected that the Pastor would work in harmony with the District and General Church Leadership and programs, and will attend the annual Clergy Couple Retreat, District Assembly and Conventions and the Annual Pastor's Prayer retreat.
- 3.12 It is understood that the Pastor would have permission to serve on District or Community assignments upon request with the provision that it would require, on average, no more than 1 day per month from regular ministry duties.

### III.

**Pastor's Compensation.**

Based on Canada West Pastor's Compensation Guide and the Churches Financial Capacity this position will be considered:

- Full Time
- 85 %
- 75 % (Bi-voc.)
- 60 %
- 50% (Part-time)
- 30%
- \_\_\_\_\_ %
- Tentmaking

a. Salary (gross salary)

Cash Per Week \_\_\_\_\_ x 52 = per Year \$ \_\_\_\_\_

b. Benefits

Cash value of benefits paid by local church including:

Provincial Health Care Ins. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Church of the Nazarene Group Ins. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subtotal \$ \_\_\_\_\_

c. Parsonage arrangements if provided by church:

Utilities \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fair rental value \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subtotal \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*The fair rental value of the parsonage is calculated on the rental costs of similar dwellings in the community. This figure will also be used for the Income Tax T4 slip and reported in Box 14 as part of the total employment income. It is specified in Box 30.*

d. Cash Housing Allowance if the pastor is providing his or her own housing.

Per month \_\_\_\_\_ x 12 = Per Year \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subtotal \$ \_\_\_\_\_\*

e. National Board Group RRSP (\*Min. 5% of this total)\$ \_\_\_\_\_

*(Note: if the church is supplying a parsonage, this figure is to be 7% of the total).*

**TOTAL PASTOR'S COMPENSATION \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

## **IV. Pastoral Care Arrangements**

### **A. District Policies**

#### **1. Employment Calculations:**

In order to avoid confusion, all staff benefits, sick and LTD policies, and etc. will be calculated on the church calendar year, i.e. May 1 to April 30. Adjustments will be made in the first year of employment. For example since vacation is taken in the church year following employment, the employee will be granted vacation in accordance with the number of weeks or months employed in the first year. That means if an employee began September first of any given year, that person will earn 8/12th of their vacation with pay. In subsequent years, the employee will earn 12/12th of their vacation with pay. Upon termination vacation pay due will be calculated for the time worked between May first of the current church year and the date of termination.

#### **2. Sick leave and Long Term disability.**

##### **Sick Day Policy**

The pastor will be allowed 2 days\* off with pay each month for illness. These days may be “banked” and carried over from year to year up to a maximum of 28 days. Sick days taken for illness for more than 7 days in one month, require a doctor’s note and advice regarding the possibility of it becoming a Long Term Disability. Any expense associated with obtaining the note will be the church’s expense. The Secretary of the Board will convey this information to the District Office. The pastor will be paid only for the number of sick days he has earned. No salary will be granted at the time of resignation for unused sick days. \*In all cases, “days” refer to calendar days.

##### **Short Term Disability**

In the event of an illness that lasts more than 28 days but is not considered to be a Long Term Disability, the pastor may be put on medical leave and collect EI benefits or the church will continue to pay 2/3 of the Pastors salary and benefits up to 119 days. At such time the Pastor may be eligible for Long Term disability.

##### **Long Term Disability (LTD)**

If the Pastor’s illness is considered to be one that will render him or her incapable of performing his or her duties for a longer term than 28 days, procedure will be followed that may provide eligibility for long term disability (contact the District Office for guidance). It is the responsibility of the pastor and Secretary of the Church Board to ensure appropriate steps for LTD eligibility are taken.

Further, if in the opinion of the Church Board and in consultation with the District Superintendent, the illness may qualify the pastor for LTD, the District Superintendent and Church Board shall have the right to appoint a Supply Pastor to undertake such performance on such terms as they may determine. When the illness

may qualify the pastor for LTD, the Pastor may be put on medical leave and receive EI benefits or may continue to receive 2/3 his/her salary and benefits for up to 119 days for any one illness providing the Pastor is not receiving income from another source. Thereafter the Pastor shall be placed on an unpaid medical leave of absence until he or she is medically certified as being able to return to his or her duties. If the Pastor is placed on an unpaid leave of absence, he or she may be eligible to apply for long-term disability insurance benefits pursuant to the long-term disability plan then in effect. (Please Note: It is the responsibility of the pastor and Secretary of the Church Board to ensure appropriate steps for LTD eligibility are taken; ALSO NOTE: the present LTD insurance coverage requires 119 days waiting period from the time the insurance company is first notified of the illness.)

If the Pastor is on a leave of absence or medical leave for six months, and at the conclusion of that six-month period, the pastor should not be able to return to full-time ministry, by signing this agreement, he or she agrees, that in consultation with the District Superintendent and Secretary of the Church board, to voluntarily resign his or her position as Pastor in accordance with the above Paragraph and in harmony with Manual paragraphs 119, 119.1. Further, he or she will release the Church from all and any obligation toward himself and his family including all salary and benefits, expense account, LTD responsibility and/or any other benefits he may have received as Pastor of this Church, and will expect or request no further compensation of any kind.

*Note: EI insurance is available for up to 119 days.*

### **3. Health Insurance During Pastoral Transition**

During the transition of clergy from one assignment in the Church of the Nazarene Canada to another assignment in the Church of the Nazarene Canada, it is the receiving employer's responsibility to ensure that Health and Long term disability insurances do not lapse during the period between the clergy person leaving the present assignment and starting the new assignment. Since our insurance provider requires that all persons insured are actively employed for 30 hours or more a week, they will allow only a thirty-day transition period between congregations. If paid vacation is taken between assignments, the previous employer is responsible to provide insurance coverage to the end of the vacation period; the receiving church should confirm this is being done.

It is the responsibility of the Secretary of the Board to make the above arrangements. Please contact the plan administrator at the District Office for assistance.

### **4. RRSP**

Because we believe preparation for retirement is a joint responsibility of the Church (the employer) and the individual (the employee), the Canada West District sets forth the following RRSP policy:

1. Involvement in the plan. Because this is the only retirement plan provided for by the Church of the Nazarene in Canada, all eligible pastors and district staff

- persons (that is full time and being paid to work at least 30 hours per week) will be enrolled in the National Church of the Nazarene RRSP plan.
- a. Involvement in the National Church of the Nazarene RRSP plan for all clergy employed as Senior Pastor or as part of the pastoral staff is mandatory.
  - b. Other paid employees who are not employed as a pastor may be involved in the RRSP program at any level they wish to be. It is not mandatory on the part of either the employee or the church.
  - c. Since the RRSP program is the only retirement program we have, Churches should give careful consideration to providing an adequate retirement plan for non-pastoral employees who are the only or major wage earner of their family.
2. that in alignment with the current recommendation from the National church, the RRSP percent be increased to a minimum of 10%, the church contributing 5% and the employee contributing 5%,
  3. and that contributions be submitted to the National office on a monthly basis,
  4. and that after careful consultation with the District Superintendent and approval by the District Advisory Board, pastors and staff persons be allowed to opt out of their contribution to the plan providing they demonstrate adequate involvement with another retirement plan and/or investment in another RRSP. The pastor/staff person will provide a waiver form supplied by Canada West District and the National Board signed by both the employee and spouse,
  5. and that the local church or district will not be allowed to opt out of their contribution and will invest that amount in the National Church of the Nazarene RRSP plan,
  6. and that the District Superintendent or his designate ensure the RRSP is subscribed to with each new pastor and local church and district staff,
  7. and that the District Superintendent or his designate monitor the contributions and contact those who are not making contributions in order to ensure adequate retirement funds will be accumulated,
  8. and that this agreement does not apply to temporary employees such as the Interim or Supply Pastor unless specific arrangements are made.
  9. and that statements indicating the RRSP policy be included in The Written Understandings document,
    - a. in **Pastoral Care** section of the Written Understandings document, statements numbers 1 through 8 be included in the **District Policy** section
    - b. and in the **Local Church Policy** section a statement indicating RRSP agreement and procedure be included. Such a statement could be as follows:

The church will contribute 5% of the pastor's salary calculated on cash salary, applicable benefits\* and parsonage value or housing allowance to the pastor's RRSP on a monthly basis. Pastor Smith will contribute at least 5% of the same. Either the pastor or church or both may exceed the 5% contribution. Upon verification of the pastor's contribution, this amount will be deducted from the

Pastor's pay cheque and along with the church's portion, submitted to the National Office on a monthly basis.

When the church supplies the parsonage rather than a housing allowance, the church will contribute an additional 2% above the pastor's contribution as their portion of the RRSP.

*\*See the section "Pastor's Compensation" of the Written Understandings document for the calculation of the RRSP.*

In the event the pastor opts out of the RRSP a statement similar to the following will be included:

*After careful consultation and consideration Pastor Smith and spouse have decided not to enroll in the National RRSP plan. The appropriate waver is attached to this agreement and will be reconsidered each year when the Written Understandings are reviewed. It is the responsibility of the pastor to inform the District Superintendent each year how adequate arrangements for retirement are being made.*

All pastors are encouraged to contribute to the RRSP plan.

#### **5. Clergy Safeguard Policy.**

It is the policy of Canada West District that each pastor adopts as a minimum safeguard practice, the practices outlined in the Clergy Safeguard Policy available from the district office. By signing this document the pastor and church board are indicating they have read the policy, are in agreement with it and covenant to support each other in its practices. If the pastor and/or church board have other practices they also wish to implement, those practices will be written and attached to the Written Understandings document.

#### **6. Yearly Planning Session.**

Every year, the pastor and church board shall conduct a planning session to renew the expectations and goals of the church. The Written Understandings agreement, goals, plans, and objectives between the church and the pastor shall be updated. At least each year, the pastor's compensation shall be reviewed. (Manual 121, 129.4, 129.8.) It is the responsibility of the Secretary of the Board in cooperation with the Pastor to ensure these planning sessions take place, and report the results to the District Office.

#### **7. Sabbatical Policy**

A sabbatical will be granted in accordance with Canada West District sabbatical policy and *Manual* paragraph 129.10. For further explanation of the sabbatical, please refer to district policy available through the district office.

Sabbaticals shall not be accumulated and must be taken within the prescribed time guidelines of the Manual. Unused Sabbatical time cannot be claimed as a part of income owed to the Clergy person upon the end of their position.

**8. Employment Paragraph.**

It is understood that the call to a pastor is subject to the current edition of the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene. These agreements are outlined particularly in paragraphs 115 to 124.1, 400 to 423.1, 426 to 435.8 and 500 to 515.6 in the 2005-2009 edition of the Manual. It is further agreed that in the event of an unfavorable church vote following either a regular or special review (121 - 123) the termination process outlined in paragraphs 122 and 123 will be considered to be adequate and no further compensation will be sought.

By signing this document the pastor and church board are indicating they have read the above paragraphs and have read and understood the Manual and are agreeing to abide by and work in harmony with the Manual.

**Termination for Just Cause:** The board, in consultation with the District Superintendent and the District Advisory Board, may terminate the tenure of the Pastor without notice at any time for **just cause**. In the event of such termination for just cause, the Local Church will pay the Pastor any salary owing to him or her up to and including the date of termination of tenure, together with accumulated vacation pay to which he or she is entitled.

Termination for just cause includes, but is not limited to, non-renewal of the Pastor’s District license or, in the case of an ordained elder, the surrender of credentials for behavior unbecoming a member of the clergy.

**Termination without Just Cause:** The church board, in consultation with the District Superintendent and District Advisory Board, on the basis of Manual Par. 124-124.1; 208.3, may terminate the tenure of the Pastor without just cause on the provision of advance notice or salary in lieu of notice determined as follows:

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Weeks of Notice</b>
3 months to 2 years	4 weeks notice
More than 2 up to 5 years	6 weeks notice
More than 5 up to 12 years	8 weeks notice
More than 12 years	10 weeks notice

For the purpose of determining “years of service” for the above table, only service as a pastor of the Local Church will be included. Any prior service to other congregations of the Church of the Nazarene will not be taken into account when determining the Pastor’s notice of salary in lieu of notice entitlement pursuant to this section.

The provision of advance notice of termination of tenure or payment in lieu of advance notice of termination by the Local Church to the Pastor in accordance with this part of the Agreement shall fulfill and exhaust all obligations at common law.

**9. Exit Interview.**

Because an exit interview is a vital part of a healthy transition for the congregation and the departing pastor, Canada West District has made the Exit Interview part of our operating policy when a pastor resigns from the congregation. An explanation of the exit interview is available from the district office.

**10. Confidentiality**

I recognize and acknowledge that during my employment with the Church I will have access to certain confidential and proprietary information, the disclosure of which could be harmful to the interests of the Church. This includes information about current and former personnel associated with the Church, including the District Superintendent and other clergy, employees, parishioners and volunteers. I acknowledge and agree that I have taken and will in future take appropriate precautions to safeguard the confidential information of the Church.

**B. Local Church Policies**

**1. Automobile Expense Plan:**

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**2. Hospitality Expense Plan:**

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**3. Pastor's day/days off:**

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**4. Vacation Plan:**

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**5. Emergency and Crisis Arrangements:**

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Pastor's and Secretary's initials: \_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_

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**6. RRSP Arrangements**

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**7. Away Preaching/teaching Arrangements:**

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**8. Professional Development: Continuing education, Book Allowance, Training, etc.**

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**9. The Pastoral tenure starting date is: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Note: "The remuneration of the pastor shall commence on the Monday preceding the first official Sunday of service to the local church." Manual paragraph 115.5.*

**Note:** The following benefit and compensation information may be obtained from the District Office upon request:

- i) Developing ministry and implementation plans.
- ii) National Board Insurance Plan.
- iii) Employment Calculations Procedure.
- iv) Sick leave and Long Term disability.
- v) Health insurance during transition.
- vi) Employment Paragraph.
- vii) Safeguard Policy.
- viii) Sabbatical Policy.
- ix) Compensation development suggestions.

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**COVENANT AGREEMENT**

To be signed by the Pastor and Church Board Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Church Board Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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*Pastor's and Secretary's initials: \_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_*