

St. John's Pastoral Charge
Inverness Guysborough Presbytery



Mabou Coal Mines Beach

JNAC Report
February 2010

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Profile #1 St. John's Pastoral Charge

St. John's Pastoral Charge
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As a person crosses the Canso Causeway from mainland Nova Scotia, they will see a sign on the bridge reading "Welcome to Cape Breton". Follow the Ceilidh Trail (Route 19) to central Inverness County, home of the Gaelic language, music, dance, and traditions of the Scottish pioneers. Here is St. John's Pastoral Charge which includes the following churches:

St. Matthew's United	Inverness
St. John's United	Strathlorne
St. Stephen's United	Port Hood
Jubilee United	Port Hood Island (1 summer service per year)

Although the Scottish descendants are most prevalent, there are Acadian, Irish, English, Dutch and Mi'kmaq First Nations families in surrounding communities. The area is predominately Roman Catholic and there is a good ecumenical spirit and cooperation among the various faiths. Some members have spouses of this faith who are actively involved in the Roman Catholic community. Their clergy are located in the parishes of Inverness, Mabou and Port Hood. Each of these communities is special in its own way but have much in common. A new vista awaits one at every turn, from quiet harbours to rolling hills, from bald eagles flying overhead to pilot whales breaking through the ocean surf.

Culture

There are activities for all seasons. For the nature lover, the warm waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the west coast of Cape Breton create beaches for swimming. There are trails for hiking, including the Trans Canada Trails, which run from one end of the Charge to the other, and the well known Cape Mabou Trails. Winter brings hockey, curling, skiing and snowmobiling. There is also an indoor public swimming pool located in Port Hawkesbury (about one hour away). There is easy access to the Cape Breton Highlands National Park and the Cabot Trail. Museums such as the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site, Baddeck, Fortress of Louisbourg, and The Nova Scotia Highland Village, Iona are all within a day trip from the Pastoral Charge. Smaller community museums share their history and "come to life" with their stories at the Chestico Museum, Port Hood; An Drochaid, Mabou;

Inverness Miner's Museum, Inverness; MacDonald House, East Lake Ainslie and the Margaree Salmon Museum.

Festivals, concerts, dances and ceilidhs (kitchen parties) make for more vacation time fun. The area boasts numerous talented musicians, writers, quilters, weavers and artists. The Annual Broad Cove Scottish Concert is now in its 54th year. People enjoy world famous performances at Strathspey Place located in Mabou at Dalbrae Academy, the Inverness Centre for the Arts, Inverness, and the Civic Centre, Port Hawksbury. A multicultural festival is held there annually to celebrate the diversity that co-exists locally. A day's events include workshops, food and entertainment from many cultures including Acadian, Mi'kmaq, African and Celtic.

Cape Breton Island is known as a hotbed for Celtic music, especially Inverness County. The original settlers from Scotland brought over their fiddles, bagpipes, dance and music. Irish, Acadian and Mi'kmaq cultures also enriched the area with their musical talents. As the Island was not connected to mainland Nova Scotia until 1955, residents were not influenced by outside forces to the extent that most people were. This resulted in the Scottish music being an important component of the culture. This is particularly true of the step-dancing which is being revived by Cape Breton dancers teaching the traditional steps to modern day Scots. Cape Breton musicians travel the world as the demand for this "old" music and dance is so great. This is the reason for the popularity of the Celtic Colours International Festival. Every October for ten days, thousands of people travel to our island to participate and enjoy over forty concerts and workshops.

Volunteerism is important to the communities in the charge. To recognize their contributions, the County Council requests volunteer organizations in the County to nominate a "Volunteer of the Year". These volunteers are invited to attend a special Appreciation Awards Night in Port Hood. There are many local opportunities for volunteering within the communities: L'Arche, choirs (the Inverness County Singers, Gaelic choirs), cultural centers, River Hill Players drama group, youth sports teams, annual summer festivals, Celtic Colours International Festival, fire/ first responder departments, Royal Canadian Legion, Development Associations, to name a few.

The County Council also produces a newsletter "The Participaper" which promotes culture, recreation and genealogy. This paper is published five times yearly free of charge to all homes in the county and is a great resource. It is the only culture and recreation publication in the Province. The Oran is a local newspaper published weekly in Inverness with a reputation for excellent reading and coverage of local news. Provincial and national newspapers such as The Chronicle Herald and The Globe and Mail are available in print and online. A mobile unit offers library services bimonthly. Several radio stations provide local and national coverage.

Education

Once a week preschool programs are offered at St. Stephen's Church hall and Inverness Family Place Resource Centre. Presently most child care is home based until school begins at grade primary. Recently an Early Years Action Group has been formed and four public forums have been held in the area to promote the implementation of early childhood education programs and family support groups. The purpose is to supplement quality child care and provide education in the formative years of a child's life. It would also be a

supportive gathering place for young families and caregivers.

Within the last ten years school consolidation has taken place. A P-12 school is located in Inverness. Dalbrae Academy (grades 9-12) located in Mabou serves the educational needs of students from surrounding communities. Port Hood has a P-8 school. Gaelic language is taught in some schools. For families seeking a bilingual education for their children, a French Immersion program is offered to students from grade primary. Students are bussed from our area to nearby Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre at Terre Noire.

Cape Breton University (Sydney) and St. Francis Xavier University (Antigonish) are located less than two hours away. The Nova Scotia Community College campuses are located in Port Hawkesbury and Sydney.

Health Care

Health care is provided at the Inverness Consolidated Memorial Hospital (ICMH), an active treatment facility which is currently being expanded and upgraded. It offers services from physicians, surgeons, and support staff, including nurse practitioner, physical, occupational and respiratory therapists, dietitian, radiology, hematology, social worker, and public and mental health.

Specialists from regional hospitals (St. Martha's Hospital in Antigonish, Cape Breton Regional Hospital in Sydney) hold regular clinics at Inverness Consolidated Memorial Hospital. Some of the services provided include Ophthalmology, Rheumatology, Orthopedics, Oncology, Pediatrics, Renal, Cardiology, Geriatrics, and Endocrinology. There is an active Palliative Care group associated with the Hospital. A team of community members volunteer under the leadership of a well respected Registered Nurse and medical staff.

A new sixty bed long term care facility (Inverary Manor) located in Inverness is currently being rebuilt as part of the Hospital expansion. A Meals-on-Wheels service is provided once a week from these facilities to local residents.

Senior citizens housing is available in Inverness, Mabou and Port Hood. Group homes are available for persons with special needs at MacDonald Hall, Inverness and L'Arche (a world wide organization of faith based communities for persons who have developmental disabilities). There are three residential L'Arche homes with day programs at nearby communities of Mabou, Iron Mines and Orangedale. There are four small options group homes between Port Hood, Mabou and Inverness that also provide excellent residential care. Within the communities of Inverness County, services are available from the agencies of Home Support, Public Health and Home Care. Home Support Services is a private agency funded by the province. It provides care in the home anywhere in the county. Continuing Care Assistants offer services such as light housekeeping, personal care, meal prep, respite, etc. Provincial Home Care Services operate from Inverness and Cheticamp hospitals and provide registered nursing care by referral. Public Health is also a provincial government jurisdiction offering care at clinics and home nursing visits.

Drug addiction programs offering assistance are needed and available in our area by Addiction Services. A community health worker who is a recovering addict, works one to one or with gender specific groups. She meets with clients (physician or self referred) two days per week at an office in Inverness. Detox primary care units are located at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital in Sydney and Strait Richmond Hospital, Port Hawkesbury. Alcoholic's Anonymous groups meet nightly six evenings a week in one of the neighbouring

communities. A new women's A.A. group has recently been established in Inverness. Gambler's Anonymous also offers support in Port Hawkesbury with weekly meetings.

Leeside Transition House in Port Hawkesbury is a distress centre offering shelter for women and children.

Mental Health services provide a team approach to care for patients and family members. The Cape Breton District Health Authority offers extensive programs. There are forty inpatient beds in Sydney with staff psychiatrists and nurses. Locally the ICMH has emergency and full time outpatient services with a team of social workers, psychologists and psychiatrist to meet the needs of children and adults. In the nearby community of Cheticamp, there is a mental health awareness group called HOPE that meets bimonthly. They have guest speakers and give support to individuals in the area.

Industry

Traditional industries have been agriculture, fishing, mining, and forestry. Today, products from these primary industries remain important to the local economy with the exception of coal mining. Currently, the Hospital, the Inverary Manor and schools are the largest employers in the area. Many of our residents travel daily to work in Port Hawkesbury and surrounding areas in the offices and industries such as pulp mill and gypsum plants. Port Hawkesbury offers many shopping services, government offices and a new Civic Centre. Tourism now plays a larger role. A recent report by the National Geographic Traveler Magazine names Cape Breton Island as the second best island travel destination in the world. Cape Breton has also been named as one of the top ten cycling destinations in the world, by the publishers of Lonely Planet magazine. All communities have the services of a dedicated Volunteer Fire Department. Access to funeral home services are available in Inverness, Port Hawkesbury, Port Hood. A new community owned funeral home is being constructed in Port Hood at this time. There are sixteen local volunteer Development Associations in Inverness County. This speaks highly of the effort that citizens of this area make to improve the quality of their communities. Three of these, The Inverness Development Association, The Mabou Development Association and the Port Hood Development Commission are located in St. John's Pastoral Charge. In recent years they have assisted with the establishment of businesses such as Halifax Biomedical in Mabou, the RV Park in Port Hood and the Cabot Links golf course in Inverness, which is now under construction.

Assets and Challenges

We feel our biggest asset is our people. Rural life gives us a sense of family and community. If a member of our community is in need, financial pressures due to catastrophic illness or a sudden loss such as fire in their home, everyone, regardless of religious beliefs, is willing to help in any way they can (fund raising, small donations of money or goods).

One of St. John's Pastoral Charge's main strengths is its determination to continue and each church takes pride in its own space. Fund-raising is an important aspect of the charge.

Volunteer Lay leadership when needed is an integral part of all the church families. There is a love of music with a small faithful choir and organist in each congregation. Times of fellowship are enjoyed by all once a month after the church service in Port Hood, and on the fifth Sunday when all congregations share a combined service.

During the years 2004 to 2007 there was a time of interim ministry in our charge to help with a period of struggle. Outmigration, lower church attendance and reduced finances left fewer people to do the work of the church. This resulted in more stress and a need for guidance and support from an interim minister to adapt to changing circumstances.

In 2005 Mabou/Hillsborough Church closed. Most people moved on with their spiritual lives. Some joined St. Stephen's Church in Port Hood and others attend St. John's Church in Strathlorne. There has been a time of ongoing healing since then. It would be beneficial to have a minister experienced in helping congregations that have dealt with polarization within their charge. Adapting to change is always a struggle. We are no different here.

Because there are fewer people attending services, we do have some financial problems. We must supplement donations to the Church with fund raising events during the year. We need help to bring the youth of our community into the Church. Sometimes the distance from the southern point of the Charge to the northern point (approximately 40 km.) can be a problem in the winter months. One of the major problems in Inverness County is the declining school population because of the outmigration of many families seeking employment elsewhere. The aging population is certainly a concern, as it is in many Churches across the country. It is our intention to continue as a strong 3 point charge.

We are looking for a spiritual leader who will live amongst us and enjoy their experiences on the "Sunset Side of Cape Breton"!

For further information on the area the following web-sites are available:

St. John's Pastoral Charge	www.cbchoices.com/sjpc.html
The Municipality of the County of Inverness	www.invernesscounty.ca
Cape Breton Island	www.capebretonisland.com
CB Choices	www.cbchoices.com
Inverness County Centre for the Arts	www.invernessarts.ca
Strathspey Place	www.strathspeyplace.com
The Town of Port Hawkesbury	www.townofporthawkesbury.ca
Saint Francis Xavier University, Antigonish	www.stfx.ca
Cape Breton University, Sydney	cbu.ca
Nova Scotia Community College	nsc.ca

Profile #2 Church Communities

St. Matthew's United Church

Inverness, Nova Scotia



It is our Mission to be a welcoming family of God striving to meet the spiritual needs of all who gather and to practice fellowship while working together with all faith communities reaching out to the less fortunate in our communities and the world.

St. Matthew's Church is located in Inverness, the largest community in the Pastoral Charge (population 1800). The congregation is basically middle aged and senior citizens with a small number of young families.

The church building erected in 1908 as St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church is a large well-maintained building. The hall with kitchen facilities is located under the same roof. The interior layout of this Church is very unusual, in that the sanctuary is laid out diagonally with the pews arranged in a curved pattern, making for an intimate and dramatic setting for services and also for musical performances. Another unique feature is the stained glass windows, placed in memory of members of the congregation who were lost during World War II. Three of these windows bear the names of young Jewish men. The members of St. Matthew's are proud of the inclusion shown by our predecessors over fifty years ago.

Presently services are alternating each week with St. John's Church in Strathlorne.

Average Sunday attendance is 25 members. Sunday School is conducted during the morning worship service whenever children are present. A small but active U.C.W. is also an integral part of the congregation. Fund raising events include a lobster dinner, strawberry festival, turkey supper and several concerts. During the Celtic Colours International Festival, St. Matthew's hosts a concert.

Inverness is built on a hillside overlooking the Northumberland Strait. The Inverness Development Association helped secure a boardwalk for the area which leads to the coast with its mile long beach.. A multi purpose trail is being upgraded using the track bed of the former railway. The catches of lobster, ground fish, crab and tuna are processed at a local fish plant. The row of company houses on Central Avenue is history of the bygone era of coal mining in the area. The Inverness Raceway is well known provincially for its horse racing. Inverness has a Credit Union, Royal Bank, grocery store, arena, pharmacy, flower/gift shop, restaurants, motels, and an RCMP detachment. The community supports the Inverness Cottage Workshop, a sheltered workshop which operates a bakery.

Manse



The Manse is adjacent to the Church, which is located in the heart of Inverness within close walking distance to the hospital and manor. It is an older home with a ten minute walk to the beach. There are three large bedrooms, one bathroom and a small room upstairs; kitchen, laundry, dining room, living room, half bath downstairs. The large room downstairs facing the street was used as the Charge office and would now make a suitable study for the minister. In February 2010, the office was moved into St.Matthew's Church.

St. John's United Church

Strathlorne, Nova Scotia

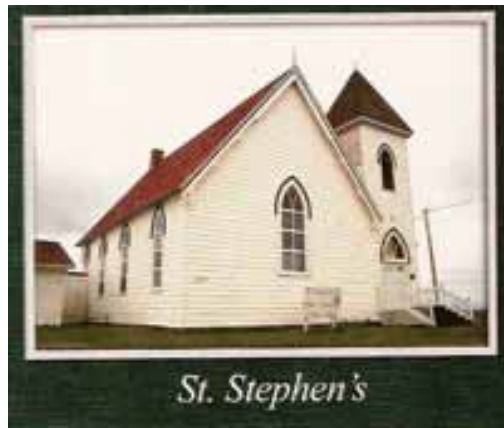


It is our mission to be a welcoming, friendly, caring, worshiping community encouraging spiritual growth and supporting one another locally and worldwide.

St. John's United Church, located about seven kilometers south of Inverness on Route 19, is nestled in a quiet rural setting surrounded by the Strathlorne Cemetery where the early pioneers and their descendants are and continue to be laid to rest. Begun in 1831 as a Presbyterian congregation, the church continues to minister to the people of the area. In 1895 the present church was erected on the site of the previous two. In 1925 St. John's congregation chose to enter the United Church of Canada under the conditions of Church Union. It has a rich history of transition from Presbyterianism to United Church. St. John's congregation is composed of middle aged to senior members. Average Sunday Service has an attendance of 15-25 members. We worship on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month and attend St. Matthew's on the 1st and 3rd Sunday. A charge wide service is held on the 5th Sunday of the month alternating among the three churches. There is an active women's group. The church building is well maintained.

St. Stephen's United Church

Port Hood, Nova Scotia



Our Mission is to be a welcoming, caring, supportive Christian community promoting love and respect by living joyfully and giving generously to all people and to explore ways to affirm and strengthen our faith and spirituality.

Port Hood, the county seat of Inverness County and home of the Municipal/County Court House is also the home of St. Stephen's United Church. St. Stephen's is located at the southern point of St. John's Pastoral Charge. The Port Hood congregation is the oldest surviving congregation in the Presbyterian tradition in Cape Breton, having been established in 1821. The current church was built in 1885. It is located in the center of the village. St. Stephen's congregation is made up of mainly middle aged and seniors, with a few younger families. Average Sunday attendance is 25-40 persons. An active Sunday School group meet weekly. The UCW is a busy group contributing to church life. Renovations in the past few years include a new basement, windows, doors and roof. A hall with a modern equipped kitchen is attached to the church. Several community groups use the hall facilities during the week.

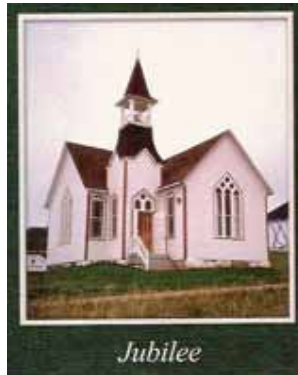
Port Hood is a village with a population of approximately 1000 persons. Lobster in the spring and tuna in the fall provide employment for the local fishermen. The Al MacInnis Sportsplex boasts a modern well equipped hockey arena. Nine hundred meters of boardwalk and trails with access to the beaches wind along the shoreline. A beach below the Court House is equipped with lifeguards during the summer months. Tennis courts and the Day Park are as popular with the local residents as with the tourists. The area is becoming a center for outdoor and sporting enthusiasts with a marina, RV Park and new outdoor pool.

Services available in the village are Fisherman's Co-op, Credit Union, library/cap site, Co-op grocery store, post office, restaurants, cottages, inns and bed and breakfast accommodations.

Port Hood is well known for its annual Chestico Days' Festival which is held the first weekend of August, with several days of fun and entertainment.

Jubilee United Church

Port Hood Island, Nova Scotia



On Port Hood Island, a kilometer from the mainland, Jubilee United Church was built as a Methodist church in 1904. There is history here, from old shipwrecks to the French soldiers quarrying the stone for the famous Fortress Louisburg in the eighteenth century. It was once a thriving fishing port with a large population but now it is a peaceful summer getaway for many landowners.

In 2004 Jubilee Church was designated a Municipal Heritage Property and given a Canadian Heritage Designation in 2009. Recently it was decided to amalgamate the churches of St. Stephen's United, Port Hood and Jubilee United, Port Hood Island. Presently this proposal is before Presbytery and legal work is being completed.

There will be one anniversary service held at the island church each summer.

Profile #3 Financial Resources

Part time ministry of 20 hours per week is being provided to the Charge at present. At this time St. John's Pastoral Charge has some financial pressures but we are currently meeting our commitments. As of January 2010 all 2009 allocations have been met (helped by the recent reduction in ministerial hours.) Our Charge has always been a good supporter of M&S. We have met or exceeded our projections in 19 of the past 20 years. Our income is received from plate offerings, gifts from individuals and financial investments. We rely on fund-raising team efforts from all churches to carry us through the fiscal year. One of the churches continues to struggle with finances. We do know that we have to be flexible and continue with ongoing fund raising events. All three churches have had a new roof installed in 2009. Renovations in St. Matthew's Church for the new Charge office are ongoing. We do not see any major building expenses in the near future.

Numbers are declining, incomes are reduced as people retire, and there is outmigration of our younger people. We do not have a five-year plan in place as there is no accurate way to project our income with the changing demographics of the Charge. We may not have the ability to provide full time ministry after the next five years, but that may be said about many Canadian congregations. At this time with our present budget we feel we can afford a full time minister.

St. John's Pastoral Charge Financial Statement is available on request to prospective ministerial candidates by contacting;

Telephone (902) 258-2323
Email sjpc@ns.sympatico.ca

Profile #4 Ministry Personnel Job Description

- One full time (forty hours per week) Ministry Personnel recognized by the United Church of Canada
- Pastoral care including hospital and home visitation
- Promote youth involvement
- Responsibility of the Minister to honour the Pastoral Covenant through active participation in the life of St. John's Pastoral Charge
- Comfortable working ecumenically (mainly Roman Catholic communities)
- Willingness to be present at community functions and other events
- Ability to encourage Lay participation

Worship

- Two services per Sunday
- One Anniversary service on Port Hood Island per year

- Communion services a minimum of four times per year
- Baptism and Marriages when approved
- Funerals
- Other services may include:
 - One mid-week service each week throughout Lent
 - Two Good Friday services
 - Easter Sunrise service
 - Christmas Eve services

Other Services in the Community

- Blessing of the Fleet : This is an ecumenical service held at the wharves in the fishing ports of Inverness and Port Hood at the start of the lobster season.
- High School Graduation Ceremonies: An ecumenical service is alternated between St. Matthew's and Stella Maris Churches in Inverness each year. A similar ceremony is held with the families at Dalbrae Academy in Mabou.
- Remembrance Day: There will be ecumenical services in Inverness, Mabou and Port Hood. The Minister is actively involved in all three services. Remembrance Day is very important to the residents of the Charge, as it is to everyone in Cape Breton. It remains a provincial holiday in Nova Scotia.
- Inverary Manor (home for the aged): One service is held here approximately every 4 weeks in sequence with other lay and ordered people in the area.

Worship Committee

- Uses team approach to worship planning
- Meets four times a year

Pastoral Care

- Hospital and home visitation
- Manor and senior units visitation as needed
- Home communion as needed
- Contact in person or by telephone as appropriate to church family members

Christian Education

Work with committees and individuals. Planning may include:

- Church School
- Youth Vacation Bible School (1 week in summer – inactive at this time)
- Bible Study - Lenten Bible Study

- Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage preparation
- Youth Group (not currently active)

Administration

- Maintain church records
- Attend and help plan for board and committee meetings of the Pastoral Charge
- Follow the organizational model of the Unified Board structure (see page 16)

Presbytery

- Minister is expected to attend Presbytery meetings and be an active participant
- To be supportive of the Lay delegates

Conference

- To be involved in and support the work of the Maritime Conference of The United Church of Canada

Accountability

- To the Inverness/Guysborough Presbytery
- To the Ministry and Personnel Committee
- To the Pastoral Charge

Profile #5 Ministerial Skills

- Understanding the nature of rural ministry and willingness to learn Cape Breton culture
- An empathetic listener
- Understanding of grief process
- Ability to be a peacemaker
- Preaching skills relevant to everyday living
- Enthusiasm and a sense of humour
- Administration and organizational skills

Profile #6 Terms of Employment

- Terms of call are in accordance with the United Church salary and allowance guidelines. This Pastoral Charge is willing to pay a salary up to category F
- Adequate secretarial support by volunteer and/or professional personnel
- Travel and moving allowances as per United Church requirements
- An annual book and study allowance of \$1,250
- High speed internet service
- An obligation for pension and group insurance, and payroll in compliance with government program
- Manse as per guidelines: Minister pays the first \$500 towards heating bills. Personal long distance calls to be paid by the Minister. All other utilities to be paid by the Charge

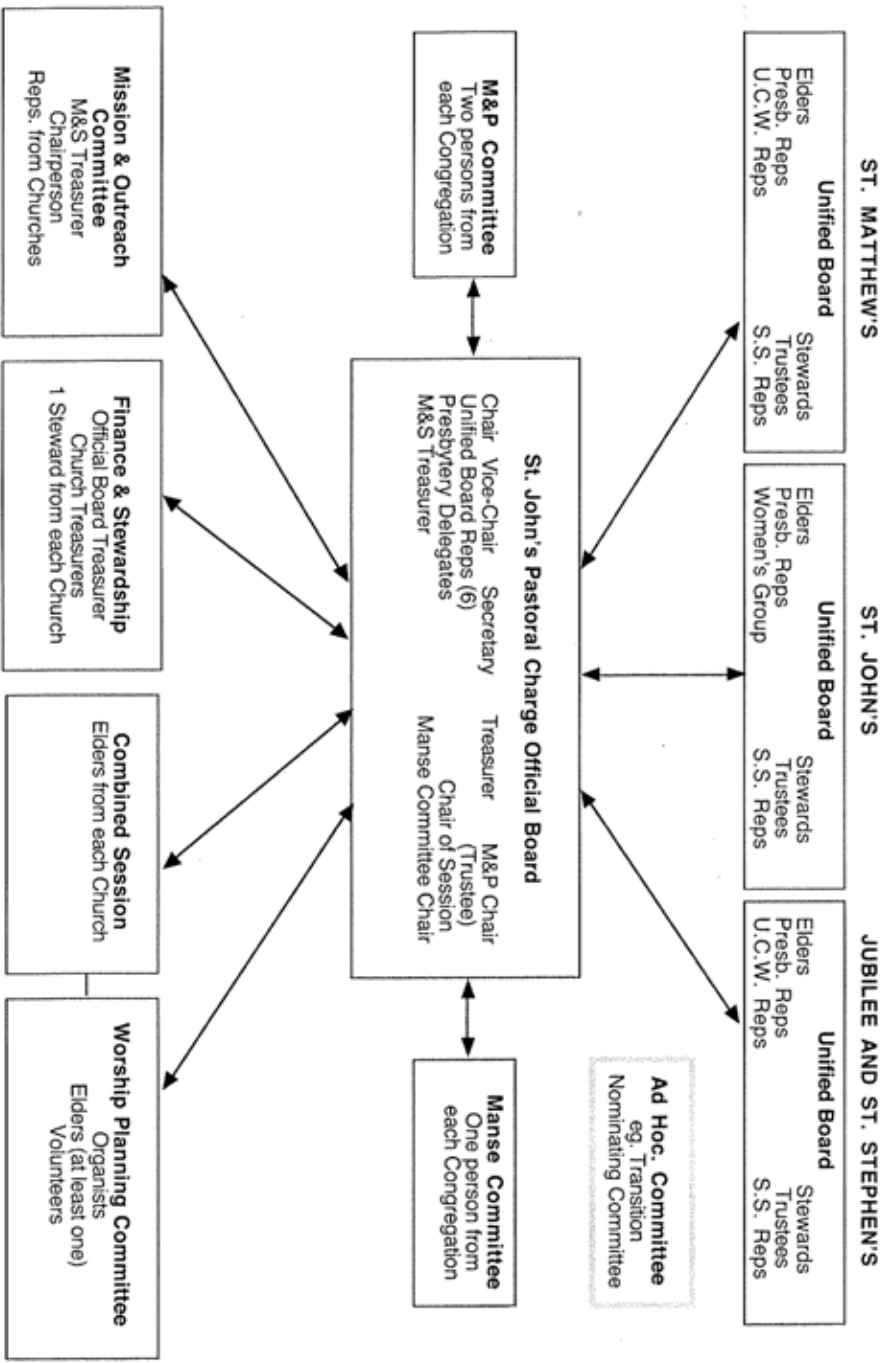
Holidays

- Four (4) weeks per year in consultation with the Ministry & Personnel Committee, and approval of the Official Board.

Continuing Education

- Three (3) weeks per year to be arranged in consultation with the Ministry & Personnel Committee, with the approval of the Official Board.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF ST. JOHN'S PASTORAL CHARGE





Cape Breton Island