



Professional Supervision

A GUIDE FOR CLERGY
AND LAY MINISTERS

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1. Introduction

Ministry, in its varied forms, can be filled with delights and joys, as well as frustrations and sorrows. There is the immense privilege of walking side by side with people in all kinds of situations, offering support, guidance and spiritual insight. There is also the awareness that the need is always going to be greater than any individual or even community will be able to meet.

Statistics, as well as our own experience, show the high rate of burnout amongst clergy, as well as the realisation that many struggle on, often battling with feelings of discouragement, exhaustion and isolation. Many members of the clergy feel alone and that they have no one they can talk openly and honestly with.

Being called into ministry, therefore, also means being called to a certain level of self-care – to protect and preserve our own well-being as clergy and lay ministers, as well as the well-being of those to whom we minister. We are called to keep watch over ourselves (Acts 20:28¹) and to watch our lives as well as our doctrine (1 Timothy 4:16²) – this leads to holistic well-being, for ourselves and those we serve.



SCRIPTURE

¹ “Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son.” (NRSV)

² “Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers.” (NRSV)

One such avenue of self-care is professional supervision. More and more churches are becoming aware of the need for and benefits of professional supervision for those engaged in ministry: benefits for those called to ministry, for those who are being ministered to, and for the wider spiritual community. When a clergyperson or lay minister receives the appropriate support and encouragement, not only is the clergyperson or lay minister more effective and compassionate, but the whole body of Christ is supported and encouraged.

You may have come across supervision before and may have experienced it in some form or other, but might not be entirely sure of what it is meant to look like in your present context. This guidebook will answer some of the questions or clarify concerns you may have about what it is, how it works specifically in your ministry context and how it will be of benefit to you and your community.

This guidebook will explore questions and topics such as:

- What is professional supervision?
- What are the benefits of professional supervision?
- What should I look for in a good supervisor?
- What are my responsibilities as a good supervisee?
- How do I prepare for supervision?
- What can I expect in a supervision session?
- How can I get the most out of supervision?
- What kind of agreement is there between the supervisor and supervisee?
- What is good practice in supervision?
- Other matters to consider
- Related documents, references, resources & acknowledgements

BENEFITS

Professional supervision benefits:

- ✓ Those called to minister.
- ✓ Those who are being ministered to.
- ✓ The wider spiritual community.

2. What is professional supervision?

Professional supervision is an intentional, regular conversation between a professional supervisor and a practitioner (clergy person or lay minister, etc) to focus on the ministry of the practitioner and any issues arising from that ministry. It provides a safe space for the clergy person or lay minister to explore such issues, as well as giving opportunity to reflect on aims, vocation and future development. Good supervision will also have a strong emphasis on the well-being of the clergy person or lay minister and the way that ministry is conducted faithfully and compassionately.

It is intentional, in that it is a contractual agreement with a specific focus: the ministry of the supervisee. It is regular, in that it usually takes place every four to six weeks in order to provide ongoing, consistent support. It is conversational, in that both parties mutually engage, question and reflect openly and honestly.

You may have experienced supervision before, either as a student/ordinand (where the supervision was part of your training and development) or as an employee (where the supervision was part of line-management procedures).

Professional supervision in the ministry context, however, will probably look quite different and the purpose and process may be quite different.

PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

- ✓ Intentional, regular conversation.
- ✓ Every four to six weeks.
- ✓ Safe space to explore ministry issues.

HOW IS IT DIFFERENT TO OTHER ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS?

There are a number of one-to-one supportive relationships that contribute to the well-being of those in ministry, such as coaching, mentoring, spiritual direction and counselling. Each of these has a role to play and is significantly different to the role of professional supervision.

Coaching

Focuses on identifying and achieving goals, as well as developing leadership skills.

Mentoring

Involves the sharing of wisdom and experience, usually from an older and more experienced person, so that the person being mentored can grow and develop. This is often a more informal relationship.

Spiritual Direction

Is primarily about the movement of God in someone's life and the development and deepening of that person's awareness of and connection to God.

Counselling

Generally focusses on the emotional and psychological issues in a person's life that hinder growth and development, enabling them to resolve these issues or to learn to live more healthily with these limitations.

A further definition of professional supervision from The Australasian Association of Supervision (AAOS) defines it as a process that is:

“ ...contractual, relational, and collaborative...which facilitates the ethical and professional practice of the supervisee. ”

“ ...an opportunity for the supervisee to reflect on their practice to gain a broader perspective, opening up a space in which to discover possibilities for personal and professional growth. The supervisor provides a space to ensure the supervisee is accountable to the personal and professional standards of their profession.³ ”

In the context of ministry, professional supervision can provide a supportive and educational space and facilitate the professional development of the clergyperson or lay minister, enabling the supervisee to continue to serve faithfully and effectively, even in the most trying circumstances.

Examples of times that issues or concerns might be raised and explored in professional supervision are when:

- You felt uncomfortable in a situation.
- Other people are unhappy with you or an outcome of an issue you were involved in.
- You have been involved in a critical incident.
- You have been involved in a conflict.
- You are avoiding an issue or a task.
- You need to make a difficult decision.⁴

³ from <https://www.supervision.org.au/what-is-supervision/> (retrieved 11.10.19)

⁴ *Growing and developing as a supervisee: A resource for Uniting Church in Australia ministers.* Published by the Uniting Church Queensland Supervision Working Group, 2014, p. 4

Further examples are available in 'Appendix 2 – Preparing for supervision', and 'Appendix 3 – Possible topics to explore in supervision'.

During supervision, you will be encouraged to look at incidents or experiences in your day-to-day work, and to ask questions like:

- Why did I respond in the way I did?
- How am I feeling about this situation? What are these feelings telling me?
- Was this the most appropriate response in this situation?
- How would I act the same/differently given a similar circumstance?
- Are there skills that I need to develop to assist me in this situation?
- What have I learnt from this experience?
- Are there implications for me in the way I carry out my ministry?⁵

A BRIEF THEOLOGY OF SUPERVISION

In many ways, the best biblical example of supervision is the Road to Emmaus narrative in the gospel of Luke, where two disciples head out from Jerusalem following the death (and resurrection) of Jesus. The disciples are caught in grief and unable to recognise the risen Christ in their midst.

It is often the case in our professional ministry that we are unable to recognise Christ in our midst because of the daily minutia, as well as the major challenges that ministry can present. The role of supervision allows us to find perspective and to process the daily minutia and the major challenges. This ultimately leads to a ministry in which we can recognise the Spirit's leading and the presence of Christ.

⁵ *Growing and developing as a supervisee: A resource for Uniting Church in Australia ministers.* Published by the Uniting Church Queensland Supervision Working Group, 2014, p. 4

⁶ *Luke 24:13-33*

Antiochian Orthodox priest David Alexander has written a helpful journal article on the theology of supervision titled, 'Co-Pilgrimage and Presence: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective for Pastoral Supervision'⁷. The following is a reflection on the theology for pastoral supervision, inspired by Fr Alexander's work.

Undertaking pastoral supervision is like undertaking a pilgrimage. There is a clear focus in mind and the hope of being transformed in the process. Companionship is integral to this supervision pilgrimage. Inspired by Christ in the story on the Road to Emmaus, professional supervision is companionship on the road, intentionally 'going with' others, and being surprised by those people we encounter or moments experienced along the way.

Trust is essential on pilgrimage. As we would trust a guide on a pilgrimage to a 'holy' place, so we build a trusting relationship in the art and discipline of pastoral supervision. Not seeing the supervisor as someone keeping score of inabilities or failures, but someone who is qualified and experienced in holding space, listening, supporting, and helping to direct us toward the goals we seek.

This trust is not only between supervisor and supervisee, but also trust in the process of supervision. This requires an openness to the fact that the destination may change along the way, and that the process for getting to the destination may require a radical shift in direction. Consider again the disciples on the Road to Emmaus. Jesus journeys with the travellers most of the day, listening, being and reflecting with them, and then at the end of the day encouraging them to change direction – to head back to Jerusalem.

The disciples walked together in grief and confusion, longing for transformation. Their encounter with Christ led to this transformation. But their own willingness also played a role in the process. The disciples allowed Christ to walk with them

⁷Alexander, D. 'Co-Pilgrimage and Presence: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective for Pastoral Supervision.' *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry*, 2013, pp. 169-180

(while not even knowing he was Christ) – they gathered and listened, and then followed the direction. The supervision process makes space for Christ. We often use the metaphor of the three chairs in the room. One for the supervisor, one for the supervisee and one for Christ. Supervision allows us to make space in our ministry and in our lives for discerning where Christ is.

In supervision, we enter into an intentional relationship to reflect on our ministry practice, so that we are able to draw out and discover what God is calling us to do and be.

3. What are the benefits of professional supervision?

Professional supervision will benefit you, as supervisee, as well as providing benefits to those in your ministry environment and the wider Church community.

Professional supervision:

- Can enhance well-being by offering a supportive, non-judgemental listening relationship and the space to be honest and authentic about ministry experiences.
- Provides space to reflect on ministry issues to enable growth and development and to improve ministerial effectiveness.
- Provides an opportunity to gain clarity and a broader perspective on work-related issues.
- Can alleviate some of the stresses and frustrations of ministry and reduce the possibility of burnout.

- Can assist the clergyperson or lay minister to recover a sense of vision and the original calling into ministry when these may have been lost in the stresses of day-to-day business.
- Provides a safe environment for learning and flourishing.
- Affirms the strengths of the supervisee and can help the supervisee to become more aware and more accepting of imperfections or areas for growth.

If the clergyperson or lay minister is learning and flourishing and feeling supported and encouraged, thus becoming more effective in ministry, then the whole parish and spiritual community will feel supported and encouraged, and will thus flourish.⁸

One model of supervision, known as the three-legged stool model, is based on the following three functions:



These three functions benefit supervisees by:

- Supporting and listening to them, and helping them to reconnect with their vision and sense of calling – this can help with recharging.
- Helping them to grow, which may sometimes involve new insights, knowledge or resources.
- Addressing ethical, managerial and boundary issues.

⁸Inskipp and Proctor, in Leach, J. and Patterson, M. *Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook. 2nd Ed*, London, SCM Press, 2015, pp. 20-22

4. What should I look for in a good supervisor?

Two aspects which greatly determine the effectiveness of the supervision process are the personal qualities of the supervisor and the quality of the relationship which develops. It is, therefore, helpful to look at both the supervisor's personal qualities and the responsibilities of the supervisor.

A good supervisor will be able to:

- Listen well and be truly present with the supervisee.
- Show warmth and empathy.
- Be non-judgemental and non-critical.
- Have an understanding of and respect for the vocation and ministry of the supervisee.
- Be willing to learn about the supervisee's ministry context.

Responsibilities of the supervisor include:

- Providing a place of safety, trust and mutual respect.
- Offering hospitality (i.e. a comfortable and undisturbed place for conversation).
- Being supportive.
- Helping the supervisee become more present to themselves and their feelings, especially those that may not be readily visible.
- Working with the supervisee to create an agenda for each session.
- Being able to respectfully challenge the supervisee when necessary.
- Offering new insights and knowledge where appropriate.
- Creating a working alliance with the supervisee.

- Being professional – that is, punctual, reliable and knowing and maintaining professional boundaries.
- Establishing a supervision agreement/covenant between the supervisor and the supervisee (an example of an agreement/covenant is provided in Appendix 1, although your supervisor may have their own template).
- Recognising when the supervisee may need to be referred for counselling or other professional support.
- Adhering to their own ethical guidelines.
- An awareness of the code of conduct for a supervisee, and any professional expectations.
- Being committed to their own self-care.
- Confidentiality*.

* Confidentiality is an essential part of the supervision process, as it builds trust and openness. There are, however, some limitations to this confidentiality. These include:

- gross professional misconduct
- reportable offences
- situations where there may be harm to self or others.

A good supervisor is one who is professionally trained and qualified and who has some experience in this field. It is a requirement of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland that you use a supervisor who is a member of a professional organisation (such as the Australasian Association of Supervision).

5.

What are my responsibilities as a good supervisee?

A supervisory relationship is a collaboration between supervisor and supervisee, where each person is aware of and committed to being faithful to their particular responsibilities.

As a supervisee, your responsibilities include:

- Commitment to the process of supervision and understanding the purpose and focus of it. Preparing well for each session. Developing a good working relationship with the supervisor.
- Working with the supervisor to create an agenda at the beginning of the session. Having a desire to learn and grow.
- Being willing to reflect, be challenged and actively participate.
- Being aware of and adhering to your code of conduct and ethical practice obligations.
- A willingness to share openly and honestly.
- A commitment to reliability and punctuality.
- Taking notes and putting into practice what you have learned or discovered in supervision.
- Giving feedback to your supervisor.

SKILLS

As a clergy person or lay minister, you would already have many of the skills required for effective supervision, such as:

- ✓ The ability to listen well and reflect on your ministry.
- ✓ An openness and responsiveness to the movement of the Holy Spirit within you and your ministry.
- ✓ Good communication skills.
- ✓ The ability to plan and prepare well.
- ✓ Willingness to receive feedback and make changes where appropriate.

6. How do I prepare for supervision?

FINDING A SUPERVISOR

The Anglican Church Southern Queensland lists the professional organisations from which supervisors may be sought. These organisations list supervisors. You may also like to ask colleagues and friends about their own experiences with supervision and for recommendations. A supervisor cannot be a person who is a close friend or colleague.

INITIAL CONVERSATION

Your first conversation with a supervisor should be an obligation-free conversation to explore expectations and to see if there is a good connection between you.

Some things to discuss when you first meet with your supervisor:

- What you are looking for in supervision.
- Finding out about the experience, qualifications and preferred supervision mode of the supervisor.
- Your hopes for supervision and any concerns you may have about supervision.
- Your expectations and the expectations of the supervisor.
- The supervision agreement/covenant.

PREPARING

Once you have found a suitable supervisor and have committed to the process of supervision, you may want to think about how to prepare yourself for a session.

Spend some time beforehand looking back over the last couple of weeks and think about the following:

- What scenes or conversations have been replaying in your head?
- Has anything disturbed you or distressed you in the past week or so?
- Has anything been keeping you awake at night?
- When have you overreacted to a situation or comment?
- Pay attention to your body: are you feeling tightness in your back or shoulders or suffering from stomach upsets? Could any of these be signs of stress?
- Is there anything else that the Holy Spirit may be bringing to your attention?

For further guidance, see 'Appendix 2 – Preparing for supervision', and 'Appendix 3 – Possible topics to explore in supervision'.

Approach your supervision session prayerfully and with an openness to the movement of the Spirit. Give yourself time to arrive without feeling rushed and, where possible, avoid having to rush off to another appointment immediately. Doing so will help provide you with the inner space and quietness for reflection, both before and following your supervision.

While professional supervision primarily focusses on the ministry of the supervisee, it is important to acknowledge that we are spiritual, emotional, physical and relational beings involved in ministry and the different aspects of our lives are all entwined and impact on every other aspect. A holistic approach is helpful, while acknowledging that there are times when further medical or psychological professional support, or spiritual support, may be needed.

7. What can I expect in a supervision session?

Supervision usually takes place every four to six weeks, for a duration of about an hour.

There are various models of supervision, and most will have a form similar to this:

- arrival, welcome, settling
- discerning what needs to be talked about
- describing the incident or issue
- exploring and discovering
- coming to some kind of resolution
- reviewing
- closing.

At the beginning of the session the supervisee and supervisor work together to discern what the agenda (or focus) of the session will be for that day. This may include:

- Recent events or conversations that have disturbed you.
- Ongoing issues that don't seem to get resolved.

One model of supervision is known as the 'seven-eyed model' where seven different areas of focus are identified. These include:

1. the people you work with
2. the way you work
3. the relationships you develop
4. you – what is going on inside you, your reactions, etc
5. the relationship between you and your supervisor

6. the supervisor

7. the wider context – impacts on your ministry, ethical boundaries, etc.⁹

Any of these areas of focus can be brought to supervision, and it is helpful to make sure that all of these areas are covered over time.

NEXT PHASE

The next phase of the process will focus on describing the incident or issue, and then with the support of the supervisor, exploring and discovering more about the issue and your response to it. Most of the supervision session will be spent in this phase. During this time the supervisor will work with you to come to some sort of resolution, awareness or insight about the issue. This may involve you doing some sort of follow-up.

Finishing a session well is important. A good supervisor will invite you to look back at the focal issue and give you opportunity to reflect on any new insight you may have gained and to consider what practical steps you would like to take to follow through with your learnings. There should also be an opportunity to reflect on the overall supervision session and to give feedback to the supervisor.

Your supervisor may or may not conclude with prayer. If this is something you would like, you may need to let your supervisor know.

As you conclude a session, it is also a good opportunity to arrange the next session. Payment of fees would also happen at this point.

⁹Hawkins. P. and Shohet, R. *Supervision in the Helping Professions*. Buckingham, Open University Press, 2012

8.

How can I get the most out of supervision?

Supervision involves some kind of cost in terms of time and engagement and building a relationship of trust and respect, as well as financial costs. To get the most out of your supervision, it is helpful to reflect on the process and to consider the following:

- Do I fully understand the purpose, focus and process of supervision?
- Do I have a good working relationship with my supervisor?
- Is my supervisor appropriately skilled, competent and ethical?
- Is the way my supervisor works the best way for me? (Note: it may take time to find a supervisor that fits well with you and your learning method)
- What changes might need to be made to make supervision more effective for me and my ministry (e.g. setting the agenda, how time is managed, etc)?
- Do I approach my supervision prayerfully, with a receptive spirit?
- Do I plan and prepare for supervision?
- Am I participating fully and freely in the process?
- Are the practical factors working well for me (e.g. environment, timing, technology if used, etc)?
- Does the supervision agreement/covenant need any adjustment?
- Is my supervision positively impacting my practice as a clergyperson or lay minister?

For this reflection to be most helpful, it is important for both supervisor and supervisee to be able to give and receive honest feedback about these considerations.

The quality of “fearless compassion” is an important quality in the supervision relationship. This is “the courage both to speak the truth and yet do so with respect and compassion for the other”.¹⁰ Being able to do this will help you more deeply reflect on the process and be able to share this with your supervisor. This, in turn, will deepen your understanding of supervision and enhance how much you get out of it.

Reflection can occur before, during or after a supervision session, and should cover all aspects of the supervision process and relationship.

As the specified time of the supervision agreement/covenant draws to an end, it is helpful for both parties to review how the supervision has been working and to negotiate any changes that may be helpful. At this stage, a new agreement should be drawn up.

9.

What kind of agreement is there between the supervisor and supervisee?

It is important to have a clear written agreement between you and your supervisor to govern the process of supervision. A good covenant/agreement

¹⁰Hawkins. P. and Shohet, R. Supervision in the Helping Professions. Buckingham, Open University Press, 2012, p. 254

enables both parties to be clear about the purpose and process of supervision, the boundaries and the responsibilities of each party.

Issues which should be clarified in a good agreement include:

- practical issues
- boundaries and confidentiality
- the roles and responsibilities (of supervisor and supervisee, as outlined above).

Practical issues include place, time and frequency of sessions, dealing with cancellations and payment. The agreement will usually acknowledge the term of the supervision agreement (e.g. 12 months), the expected number of sessions and a suggested date for review. The format of the sessions may also be discussed and clarified (although not necessarily written down).

Boundaries need to be acknowledged in order to recognise what belongs in supervision (the focus is on work-related issues) and what may need to be referred to other supporting professionals.

Confidentiality – while confidentiality is an integral part of building a relationship of trust, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this confidentiality. Such limitations include where there has been gross professional misconduct, reportable offences, or any dangers of self-harm or harm to others. The supervisor will also need to acknowledge that from time to time, the supervisor may refer to material discussed by you in supervision as part of your supervisor's own supervision – this will be done with respect and maintaining your anonymity.

See Appendix 1 for a sample agreement.

10. What is good practice in supervision?

A good supervision agreement/covenant will govern the boundaries of the supervision relationship and should serve to ensure that things do not go wrong.

Good practice will take into consideration:

1. The ethical practice of the supervisor. Professional supervisors will have a code of practice they adhere to (e.g. the AAOS code of practice, professional conduct procedure), as well as a code of practice for any other organisation they belong to (e.g. counsellors, a Church, etc).
2. You, as supervisee, will be familiar with your own Code of Conduct and Practice and, as in all aspects of your practice as a clergy person or lay minister, will seek to follow these guidelines. It may be helpful to provide your supervisor with a copy of this code of practice.

See: Faithfulness in Service: A national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers

3. Sometimes the supervisory relationship does not go to plan. Indications of concern may include:
 - any signs of co-dependency
 - inappropriate contact between sessions
 - too-regular or not-regular-enough meetings
 - overstepping the boundaries of supervision (such as counselling, spiritual direction, etc).
 - lack of trust in the supervisor.

When this happens there may be a need for mediation, or to consider how to terminate the relationship. A supervision relationship might work well for a certain time, but then you may feel you would like to move on and find a new supervisor for the next phase of your life or ministry.

11. Other matters to consider

WHAT DO I DO IF THERE IS NO PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISOR IN MY AREA?

Many professional supervisors are willing to use technology (such as Skype, Zoom, etc) to enable supervision to take place long distance. This is preferable to using only a phone, although if that is the only option, it can be made to work effectively. Most lists of supervisors will have an indication of those who are willing to provide this form of supervision.

WHAT ABOUT GROUP SUPERVISION?

Group supervision is another way of receiving supervision and can be very effective. There are benefits in both group and one-on-one supervision.

WHAT ARE THE OFFICIAL EXPECTATIONS AND REPORTING PROCEDURE?

Supervisees in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland will be required to register their professional supervision arrangement, and any changes to the arrangement, with the Parishes and Other Mission Agencies Commission. Twice per year, supervisees will be required to submit information certifying the total hours of professional supervision undertaken for the given reporting period, with details of, and confirmation from, their supervisor.

WHAT IF I HAVE DIFFICULTY WORKING WITH MY SUPERVISOR?

Engaging honestly and openly in the reflective and feedback process will help to determine where the difficulty lies. If this is unable to be resolved, the supervision agreement may need to be terminated. As mentioned above, there are numerous reasons why it may be necessary to change supervisors.

WHO COVERS THE COST?

Clergy with an Active Licence and Stipendiary Lay Ministers are responsible for meeting the cost of their own supervision.

Parishes with PTO clergy are required to pay 50% of the supervision costs for PTO clergy, up to \$300 per person, per year. The Anglican Church Southern Queensland will pay the remaining 50% of the supervision costs for PTO clergy, up to \$300 per person, per year.

Alternative arrangements for payment of professional supervision costs may be negotiated or arranged in special circumstances.

12. Related documents, references, resources & acknowledgements

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Professional Supervision Policy, Anglican Church Southern Queensland
- *Mandatory Training and Professional Supervision Canon*, Anglican Church Southern Queensland
- Faithfulness in Service: A national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers

REFERENCES

- *Getting the most out of professional supervision: A resource for Uniting Church in Australia Ministry Agents*. Published by the Uniting Church Queensland Synod Supervision Working Group, 2014
- *Growing and developing as a supervisee: A resource for Uniting Church in Australia ministers*. Published by the Uniting Church Queensland Synod Supervision Working Group, 2014
- *Professional Supervision: A Process of Reflection on Ministry Experience*. Published by the Uniting Church Assembly's Ministerial Education Committee, 2011
- Ministry Commission. *Professional supervision for clergy and lay ministers: A resource from the ministry commission for the 2017 general synod*. Prepared by The Rev'd Canon Richard Trist, Dean of the Anglican Institute, Ridley College, Melbourne

RESOURCES

- Hawkins, P. and Shohet, R. *Supervision in the Helping Professions*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 2012. (This book provides more information about the 'seven-eyed model' and how it can support the supervision process.)
- Leach, J. and Patterson, M. *Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook (Second Edition)*. London, SCM Press, 2015.
- The Australasian Association of Supervision website: <https://www.supervision.org.au/> (This website offers a list of accredited supervisors and explains what supervision is, as well as offering other resources. You can also access the AAOS Code of Practice for supervisors on this website)

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Appendix 1

EXAMPLE SUPERVISION COVENANT/ AGREEMENT

The supervisor and supervisee should each retain a copy of the document.

This Covenant/Agreement is between

[Supervisee name]
[Supervisee address]
[Supervisee phone number]
[Supervisee email address]

and

[Supervisor name]
[Supervisor address]
[Supervisor phone number]
[Supervisor email address]

Supervision Arrangements

This Covenant/Agreement is for Professional Supervision sessions beginning on [insert date] and concluding on [insert date].

We have agreed to meet every [insert interval e.g. four weeks, six weeks etc], with the first session starting on [insert date] at a fee of [insert fee details e.g. amount in \$, N/A, or waived].

Confidentiality and Disclosure Information

The Supervisor is bound by the ethical standards policies of his/her professional organisations. Supervisee confidentiality is maintained, except where the information shared relates to a matter subject to mandatory reporting, or in situations where there are reasonable grounds to believe that some risk to a person or persons is involved. On such occasions, the supervisee will be advised of the action required by the supervisor.

Signed

Supervisee..... Date.....
Supervisor..... Date.....

Appendix 2

PREPARING FOR SUPERVISION

As people in ministry we are responsible for what we prayerfully prepare and present in supervision and for identifying what makes it important enough to spend time on and for what we choose not to share. Anything is appropriate that arises from actual experiences and can affect, or is affecting, the quality of our ministry. For instance, our role in a particular situation, priorities, time management, insights, people, committees or institutions, changes, pressures, needs.

Any one of the following may be useful in deciding what to focus on for the supervisory process:

- The most significant event in my ministry work since my last supervision is...
- This incident/concern keeps pushing itself back into my mind...
- I am aware of very strong feelings about something that has happened...
- When [this] happened it seemed to be a pattern repeating itself...
- I am so [tired, miserable, elated, inspired, challenged, worried]...
- I want to clarify where I stand on a particular issue...
- I want to know how this reflects my thinking about the nature of God...
- I want to stop something like [this] happening again...
- I want to get something like [this] to happen more often...
- I seem to keep avoiding/putting off...
- It is time to establish or review or evaluate my Supervision Covenant...

When we commence a supervision session, we need to be able to say:

- In ministry at the moment, I feel...
- This is my question or challenge...
- This specific pastoral incident occurred...
- This is what I want as an outcome...

Supervision works best if:

- We are open and honest.
- Trust and confidentiality are guaranteed.
- We report our behaviour, observations, reactions and feelings accurately.
- We accept feedback.
- We monitor our feelings and responses (including our need to justify, explain).
- We remember that what happens in supervision is our responsibility.
- We discern God's presence and purpose.
- We remember that the purpose of the whole undertaking is to enhance the ministry we offer.
- We integrate our practice into our faith stance or our ministry with our theology.¹¹

¹¹Hawkins, P. and Shohet, R. *Supervision in the Helping Professions*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 2012

Appendix 3

POSSIBLE TOPICS TO EXPLORE IN SUPERVISION

Accountability	Financial matters	Self-awareness
Baggage	Ghost of ministers past	Self-care (stress, burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, time off, managing the pendulum of life and work)
Boundaries	Goal setting	Sexual matters
Call	Identifying strengths and “areas for growth”	Singleness and ministry
Changing placement	Identity	Spiritual growth
Child safety	Internet issues	Supervision of student ministers/ministry colleagues
Church discipline	Issues (e.g. suicide, substance abuse, alcoholism, death and dying, ageing, grief and loss, power, bullying)	Synod matters
Community engagement and involvement	Learning and reflection	Team matters
Competency for ministry tasks	Loneliness	Technology
Compliance matters	Ministers in association	Theological reflection
Confidentiality	Networking	Time management
Conflict	Parish councils, committees and groups	Vulnerability
Consultations and reviews	Parish leadership	Wider church involvement
Critical incidents	Pastoral situations	Work load (time management, prioritising)
Cross-cultural issues	Placement location issues	Working with people (individuals, groups, teams) ¹²
Dealing with difference	Planning and visioning	
Dealing with difficult people	Referral	
Deanery matters	Reflection	
Debriefing	Relationships	
Developing projects and programs	Resources for ministry	
Discerning direction	Retirement	
Family matters	Reviewing ministry	
Faith crisis		
Faithfulness in Service		

¹²*Growing and developing as a supervisee: A resource for Uniting Church in Australia ministers.* Published by the Uniting Church Queensland Supervision Working Group, 2014, p. 12