

THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Calendar & Important Dates 2026-2027	3
Faculty and Staff, 2026-2027	5
Student Responsibilities	6
Orientation session	6
College Retreat	6
Pot Luck Suppers	7
PC Student Society	7
Course Registration	7
Tuition and Fees	8
Withdrawals and Fee Refunds	8
Overdue Accounts	9
Authorizations for Photograph and Information Release	9
Bursary Assistance	9
Mandatory International Student Health Insurance.	9
Ministry Seminars	10
The Integrative Paper	10
Transition to the In-Ministry Year	10
Presbyterian Church requirements for ordination	12
Guidance Conference	12
Certification	13
Police Checks	13
Ministry Experience and Mentoring	13
Leading with Care Policy	13
Anti-Harassment Policy	13
Complaints Policy	13
Library	14
College lounge	14
College Parking	14
Student residence	14
Cafeteria	14

2026-2027 STUDENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to The Presbyterian College for the 2026-2027 academic year. We look forward to an exciting year of theological education together in our community of faith and learning. A number of you are joining us for the first time and we especially welcome you. Others will be returning after the summer break or after having been away for a year. We look forward to seeing everyone in late August or early September. The information in this handbook is provided in addition to the material students will receive from McGill University School of Religious Studies and In Ministry Year students receive from the Montreal School of Theology.

CALENDAR & IMPORTANT DATES

Please take note of the following important dates, along with the information you receive directly from the McGill University School of Religious Studies and the Montreal School of Theology:

Fall 2026

August 31	McGill Classes Begin
September 2	College Lunch at 12:00 p.m.
September 2	MDiv 3 (IMY) Orientation
September 7	Labour Day – College Closed
September 8	MDiv 3 (IMY) Classes Begin
September 9	First Chapel and Community Lunch (11:35 a.m.)
September 15	BTh ADD/DROP deadline
September 18-19	College Retreat at CAMMAC
September 18	College Bursary applications due
September 22	BTh course or university withdrawal (with refund) deadline
September 25	Fall Potluck – College Community and Friends
September 30	Practical Theology Program – Leading Worship
October 2	Deadline - Fall Tuition Fees to The Presbyterian College
October 12	Thanksgiving — College Closed
October 9-14	Fall McGill Break Days
October 27	Course or University Drop deadline (NO refund)
November 4	Shared Worship with Dio (Anglican)
December 2	Final Chapel and Community Lunch of the Year
December 4	Last day of courses
December 4	Christmas Potluck – College Community and Friends
December 7 – 22	Examination Period
December 22	Student Christmas Break begins

Winter 2027

January 5	McGill Winter Classes begin
January 6	First Chapel and Community Lunch
January 19	BTh Course ADD/DROP deadline
January 22	Bursary Applications Due - College
January 26	BTh Course or University withdrawal (with refund)
January 29	Winter Potluck – College Community and Friends
January 29	Winter tuition fees payable to The Presbyterian College
February 3	Shared Worship with Dio (PC Hosting)
March 1-5	Reading Week/Study Break
March 10	Shared Worship with Dio (United Church worship)
March 3-7	Reading Week/Study Break
March 26	Good Friday — College closed
March 29	Easter Monday — College closed
April 7	Final Chapel of the Year
April 9	End of Year Potluck – College Community and Friends
April 14	Last day of classes, McGill
April 16 – 30	McGill Examination Period
May 6, 2026	Annual Convocation

For all important dates associated with McGill University, please consult their website: <http://www.mcgill.ca/importantdates/key-dates>

FACULTY AND STAFF

Principal (to December 2026)	Rev. Dr. Roland De Vries
Professor of Pastoral Leadership	Rev. Dr. Karen Petersen
Chaplain, Scholar in Residence	Rev. Dr. Lucille Marr
Director of Programs	Dr. Adrian Langdon
Adjunct Faculty member	Dr. Gerbern Oegema
Director of MTS Program	Rev. Dr. Glenn Smith
Administrative Coordinator	Ms. Maya Dieratany
Library Coordinator	Ms. Edythe Arnott
Building Superintendent	Mr. Mario Elvé
Dean of Residence	Mr. Romulus Rhoad
Worship Leader	Mr. Henry Cobb

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Those who are accepted as students of The Presbyterian College—whether enrolled in programs of the college or enrolled in programs at McGill University—accept the following obligations in relation to The Presbyterian College:

- Pay all tuition costs through the College.
- Participate in community life and worship at the College, including the fall retreat.
- Be part of a local congregation, engaged in some form of ministry.
- Participate in occasional programs at the college, as invited, in areas pertinent to their academic work.
- Participate in the activities of the Student Association
- Be aware of all policies of the college, which are found on the website here:

ORIENTATION SESSIONS

All students are expected to attend college orientations respectively for BTh students and for IMY students. Details for the McGill B.Th. orientation session for new B.Th. students will be announced as soon as they are decided by the School of Religious Studies. All students who are new to the B.Th. or the combined B.Th./M.Div. program are required to attend.

COLLEGE RETREAT

The annual fall retreat will take place in person, the weekend of September 5-7 at CAMMAC in the Laurentians. <https://cammac.ca/en/> **Attendance is expected for all students and faculty.** Further information will be made available through the College Chaplain, Rev. Dr. Lucille Marr. The retreat will be led by The Presbyterian College faculty and Student Society and provides an opportunity for students and faculty to become acquainted and build a sense of community at the beginning of a new academic year. This retreat provides an opportunity to meet your fellow students as well as faculty as we launch a new academic year.

CHAPEL

Wednesday Worship Services: The faculty, students, and staff will gather in our chapel every Wednesday at 11:35 a.m. **It is expected that all faculty and students attend.** The services are conducted by faculty members, students, and guest preachers (a schedule will be posted by the mailboxes in the College office area).

MST Worship Services: Presbyterian College students, faculty and staff will join students of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College, as well as faculty from the McGill University School of Religious Studies, for a shared chapel service several times each academic year. The colleges take turns hosting the event.

Chapel Committee: The Chapel program will be coordinated under the leadership of the Chaplain, Rev. Dr. Lucille Marr who will work with our worship leader, students and faculty.

POT LUCK SUPPERS

We will hold two potluck suppers per semester, for the college community and friends. A time for our students and faculty and wider community to gather for good food, conversation, and sharing.

PC STUDENT SOCIETY

Students are encouraged to participate fully in the Student Society. In addition to the work of the Student Society executive, student representatives serve on the College Faculty, Board of Governors, and the Academic Committee of the PC Board, the Board of the Montreal School of Theology. You are encouraged to participate and contribute to the community life of the College through the Student Society.

COURSE REGISTRATION

All students in combined McGill/Presbyterian College programs may register for courses at McGill as follows:

- All students in the B.Th. (as a first degree) or the combined B.Th./M.Div. program must have their courses approved by the Principal of The Presbyterian College and by the Chair of the B.Th. Committee at McGill (Professor Patricia Kirkpatrick). All courses must be approved using the *B.Th. Audit Sheet* which may be found on the website of the School of Religious Studies. Approval must be sought before the Drop/Add deadline.

Please note that all B.Th. students will receive information directly from McGill Enrollment Services - Service Point (3415 McTavish St. 514 398 7878) concerning course registration, fees and billing, required legal documentation, and student ID cards. It is your responsibility (not the College's) to see that all requirements for your registration at McGill University are fulfilled. Please see the website for course requirements.

- Students in the third year of the M.Div. (sometimes referred to as the In-Ministry Year) will attend the August M.Div. 3 orientation, and will choose courses in consultation with the Professor of Pastoral Leadership (Rev. Dr. Karen Petersen Finch). In most cases, M.Div. 3 students all take the same classes, as a cohort.
- Students registered in the S.T.M. or Ph.D. program at McGill, through The Presbyterian College, will consult with their McGill advisor for all elements of their program. The Principal of The Presbyterian College is available to consult with all such students informally concerning courses and program requirements.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all of the requirements of their registration at McGill University and The Presbyterian College are fulfilled. Please speak with the Principal if you are uncertain about any question.

TUITION AND FEES

New tuition and fee structures for each program can be found on our website for the current year. Students should note that as of there has been a new fee for “College Retreat. This does not cover the total cost of the retreat, but is a mandatory student contribution.

You will receive a personal statement of account showing the tuition and fees payable to the College in your physical mailbox in the office area at the College. Note that while students pay tuition and fees to The Presbyterian College, there are some McGill fees also billed directly by McGill University in M.Div. 1 and 2.

Fall Tuition Fees are payable to The Presbyterian College by October 2, 2026.

Winter Tuition Fees are payable to The Presbyterian College by January 29, 2027.

Visa, MasterCard, debit card, personal cheque etransfer or cash are all accepted. Please note that there is a \$5 fee per credit card transaction. Please make your payment in person at the reception/office or call with a credit card number: 514-288-5256 ext. 200, or mail your cheque made out to *The Presbyterian College*, to the attention of the accountant of the College.

WITHDRAWALS AND FEE REFUNDS

For students in the Bachelor of Theology (as a first degree), the Master of Divinity (Years 1 and 2), and the Master of Sacred Theology: The withdrawal and refund policy of The Presbyterian College will follow the withdrawal and refund policy of McGill University, found here: <https://www.mcgill.ca/student-accounts/your-account/withdrawals>

For students in the Master of Divinity (Year 3), the Certificate in Theology, or the Master of Theological Studies: In the case of students registered for courses as of September 1st (Fall Term) or January 1st (Winter Term), the withdrawal and refund policy of each college is as follows. Up to and including September 22nd (Fall Term) and January 26th (Winter Term), students may withdraw from The Presbyterian College with a full refund (less a registration cancellation fee of \$200) and with no record of withdrawal on their transcript.

After September 22nd (Fall Term) and January 26th (Winter Term) there is no refund of tuition or fees. In the case of withdrawal from the college or from a specific course after these dates, a grade of “W” will be entered for the course on the student’s transcript.

Students who stop attending classes without indicating (to the college) their intention to withdraw from courses will be liable for all tuition and other fees.

International students should be aware that withdrawal from one or more courses may affect their immigration status within Canada. Both international and Canadian students should also be aware that withdrawal may affect their eligibility for scholarships or bursaries. Students should carefully attend to all such matters when taking decisions about withdrawal from courses.

Any student request to withdraw after the dates indicated above, for special reasons, must be submitted in writing to the Faculty of the college.

OVERDUE ACCOUNTS

The Presbyterian College seeks to help every student graduate successfully. If students are encountering financial difficulties, they must indicate so to the Principal as soon as possible. The College will work with students to find a payment plan that can work for them. Students who do not have an agreed upon payment plan with the College and who do not indicate financial difficulty will not be able to register for the next semester until such a plan is devised and accepted or the tuition has been paid in full.

AUTHORIZATIONS FOR PHOTOGRAPH AND INFORMATION RELEASE

A form in which you agree (or not) to the publication of your picture in College newsletters, brochures, website etc., and to the release of your personal address/email/phone number needs to be on file for each student. Those of you who have not submitted the form last year, and new students will be asked to complete one at the beginning of the school year. A copy of the form will be available for you in your physical mailbox at the College (in the office area).

BURSARY ASSISTANCE

Students seeking bursary assistance must submit an application to the Bursary Committee. Forms are available on our [website](#) and should be submitted according to the following timelines:

Fall Semester — by September 18, 2026

Winter Semester — by January 22, 2027

While it is the goal of the College to provide bursaries that help cover tuition fees, students will need to pay for their tuition *before* bursaries are available since all of these bursaries come after the payment date for the College tuition and fees. Students not studying for ministry within the PCC may be eligible for College bursaries but should also consult their own denominations for bursary assistance.

MANDATORY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE.

McGill University requires that all International Students, and their accompanying dependents, have health insurance. For students of The Presbyterian College who are also registered students at McGill University, this enrollment in a health insurance policy is administered through McGill.

The Presbyterian College also requires that all International Students, and their accompanying dependents, have health insurance – this applies specifically to students enrolled at the College who are not also registered in a McGill program (for example, students in M.Div. 3, the In-Ministry Year). The Presbyterian College does not administer its own health insurance

policy for students. As a result, international students are responsible to arrange and purchase their own health insurance, and must provide proof of enrollment in a health insurance policy by September 15th of the Academic year (or January 15th, in the case of Winter entry to a program).

MINISTRY SEMINARS

All students of the college are required to attend four Ministry Seminars in the course of their studies at the College (MDiv students must attend these in Years 1 and 2). Seminars are typically held on Friday mornings, beginning with Morning Prayer, and with a light breakfast served: 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.

THE INTEGRATIVE PAPER

For many years now, those preparing for ordained ministry at The Presbyterian College, as well as students within the wider Montreal School of Theology (that is, MDiv and Diploma in Ministry students), have been required to complete a significant project called the Integrative Paper. It consists of three major sections:

- I. My Journey of Faith
- II. My Understanding of what the Church Believes
- III. My Theology of Ministry

Although the length is not fixed, it is expected that you will devote at least 6-8 pages double-spaced to each section. As with other papers you complete within the B.Th/M/Div. program, a thorough piece of work – carefully and concisely written – is expected.

The purpose of the Integrative Paper is to give you an opportunity (i) to think through and share your own journey of faith, (ii) to express your understanding of the faith convictions of the church, and (iii) to describe or define the theology of ministry that shapes who you are and what you will do in ministry.

In other words, the Integrative Paper will act as a major tool by which you can bring together your life, your faith, your theological understanding, your place in the church and your hopes for ministry, and then discover how they relate to one another. This will help you to assess the person you are and the ministry you would offer in service to Christ, the community of his people, and the mission that defines the church. It will also help in the formation of the habit of thinking theologically about your life, your faith commitments, and your ministry.

Timeline for Completion

The Integrative Paper is not like a regular academic assignment, which is submitted and graded at one moment; nor is it a primarily intellectual exercise. Rather, it is about your life, your experiences, your learning, your growth, and your theology. This means that preparation for this assignment is going on throughout your years at the College. The following schedule will apply:

1. The first section of the paper (My Journey of Faith) is to be submitted to the Professor of Pastoral Leadership. With this section, as with any of the three sections, you may be asked to rethink some part of the paper and/or to revise and rewrite.
2. The second section of the paper (My Understanding of what the Church believes) will be submitted to the Professor of Pastoral Leadership at the end of B.Th. year 2, prior to entering the In-Ministry Year. During the IMY, this section may be revised and resubmitted, in light of the Reformed Confessions courses and others.
3. The third and final section of the Integrative Paper will be written during the In-Ministry Year and will be presented to the Professor of Pastoral Leadership, and possibly to fellow students, as the year moves along. (Assessment is the responsibility of the Professor of Pastoral Leadership.)

TRANSITION TO THE IN-MINISTRY YEAR (MDiv 3)”

“The purpose of the Master of Divinity degree is to prepare women and men for ordained ministry and for general pastoral and religious leadership responsibilities in congregations and other settings” (Association of Theological Schools). Accordingly, the learning outcomes of the MDiv focus on the following areas:

1. Integrate biblical and theological scholarship with personal faith and ministry practice.
2. Use tools and strategies to help faith communities understand their context, navigate change, and build their capacity for contextual mission that is rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. Demonstrate sustainable practices of lifelong personal, professional, and spiritual growth.
4. Demonstrate pastoral leadership that nurtures spiritual wellbeing in others and empowers them to live out their ministry as the church in the world.

Within the Montreal School of Theology and The Presbyterian College, the first two years of the M.Div. program focus mainly on biblical and theological scholarship, while the third year focuses building competencies for leadership, nurturing personal spiritual practices, and building the capacity to nurture the spiritual wellbeing of others.

This change in focus in the third year of the program corresponds to a change in educational culture, also. The In-Ministry Year is less focused on intellectual and critical engagement with texts and theological traditions and more focused on a student’s formation in pastoral identity and on the development of professional competencies. As a result, there is also less concern with intellectual argumentation between students, or related critical exploration, and greater focus on respectful attention to the mature theological positions of colleagues and their particular formation for ministry. Evaluation in the In-Ministry Year is on a Pass/Fail basis (corresponding to the preoccupation with competencies for ministry) and there is also a greater focus on narrative evaluation, related to personal and pastoral formation.

Another dimension of the M.Div. program that should be highlighted is its orientation toward questions of *call* to ministry. In most cases this means a call to pastoral ministry, though other types of call may also be explored here. That is, the M.Div. is a degree oriented toward the student’s ongoing discernment of his or her call to ministry.

Given the unique educational culture of the In-Ministry Year (M.Div. 3), the college faculty determines the readiness of each student for this final year of the program. In some cases, this readiness is determined by way of a transition interview.

Transition Interview

The purpose of this interview is for the college to highlight, with students, the programmatic and cultural questions indicated above. Further, its purpose is to explore with students how their sense of call has developed over the first years of the program. Finally, an additional goal of the interview is to help students discern growth areas that might become areas of focus (might become specific learning goals for the student) in the In-Ministry Year. Questions commonly explored at the interview include:

1. Has the student fulfilled all requirements of M.Div. 1 and 2?
2. What has the student found most beneficial in the first years of the program?
3. How has the student's sense of call been shaped over the first years of the program?
4. How has the student's understanding of ministry developed through academic studies?
5. What does the student perceive as a particular growth area moving forward?
6. Does the student have any questions about the IMY?

Note that the purpose of this interview is not for the college to take any decision concerning the admission of the student to the In-Ministry Year, since he or she is already admitted to the M.Div. program. However, there may be some instances in which this interview and transition process leads an individual student to reconsider his or her continuance in the program. Or, this process may result in a suggestion from the college that a student reconsider whether this is the best path of education and formation for him or her to pursue. Final decisions on these questions of discernment are left with the student, in the case of those who have fulfilled all programmatic requirements leading to the In-Ministry Year.

In the case of a transition interview, it is usually conducted by two faculty members – usually, the Professor of Pastoral Leadership and the Principal. Following the interview, the student will receive a letter confirming the content of the conversation with particular attention to his or her particular path through the M.Div. program.

Students are encouraged to approach this transition period with confidence and grace, trusting that God is at work in their lives, and that God is faithful in providing direction and wisdom, by his Spirit.

PORTFOLIO

Master of Divinity Students at the Montreal School of Theology are required to maintain a personal portfolio that provides a window into their developing competency and maturity in ministry. The portfolio consists mostly of assignments generated in the In-Ministry Year, with a few exceptions. It provides a concrete means to

- Retain concrete evidence of the student's growth throughout the M.Div. program.
- Help the Montreal School of Theology to assess the overall learning effectiveness of the M.Div.

We ask students to retain these assignments for program evaluation purposes and we store them in a secure area or in a secure electronic file. With the permission of the student, college personnel will have access to these files and the student work contained in them. Although some documents within the portfolio are more broadly circulated, we restrict access to the portfolio itself to the student, their principal, and their Director of Studies. The files may be made available to members of accreditation visiting teams authorized by the Commission on Accrediting, for on-site review only.

Although parts of this portfolio may be useful to the student for more public demonstration of their competency and professional skills/experience, this is not the primary purpose of the portfolio at Montreal School of Theology. The portfolio is not a tool for evaluation of individual students.

You will be provided with more information concerning the Portfolio in the orientation to the In-Ministry Year (MDiv 3).

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH REQUIREMENTS FOR ORDINATION

Students should consult the Candidacy Process of Preparation and Discernment document available on both our [website](#) and that of the [Presbyterian Church in Canada](#). Students can also consult with Dr. De Vries about the candidacy process.

Psychological Testing

All candidates for the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada are to complete psychological testing under the supervision of the College. Please consult with the Principal to make the relevant arrangements. This requirement must be fulfilled prior to the In-Ministry Year, preferably at the end of your first year of studies

Guidance Conference

All candidates for the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada are required to attend a Guidance Conference under the supervision of Ministry and Church Vocations of the General Assembly. Application forms may be obtained from 50 Wynford Drive. The Guidance Conferences are normally held in early May and late August and must be completed prior to the In Ministry Year. Please see the Principal for additional information.

Certification

All candidates for the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada must be certified by a presbytery on a yearly basis. Please be in touch with your presbytery to make sure that your certification is up-to-date and that the College has been notified in writing.

Workshop on Sexual Abuse and Harassment

All candidates for ministry must complete, by the third year of the M.Div. a workshop on the Sexual Abuse and Harassment policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

POLICE CHECKS

All students engaged in church placements are required to have up-to-date police checks on record. This is a requirement of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's "Leading with Care" policy. Please consult the Professor of Pastoral Leadership for further information if necessary.

MINISTRY EXPERIENCE AND MENTORING

During your three years of theological study, you are expected to be involved in the life of a local congregation. For students certified by a Presbytery, the local congregation must be a Presbyterian congregation—students of other traditions or denominations should seek out a appropriate congregation. During the first term of the first year, students should worship in the congregation of their choice. By the beginning of the second term, students should seek to volunteer in a congregation for some form of ministry. Please consult with the Chaplain to confirm your involvement with a local congregation.

LEADING WITH CARE POLICY

The Presbyterian College follows the *Leading With Care* policy of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. A copy of this policy is available on the college website.

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Work in process, with an interim Policy on Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment presently posted on the college website.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

The complaints policy is on the website of the College, under "About".

LIBRARY

The collection of the McGill Library system is available to many students in McGill-affiliated programs, during their studies. The collection of the Joseph C. McLelland Library at The Presbyterian College is available for use by all students and is also open to the general public.

When not officially open, the library may be accessed by the College's students and staff via a keypad lock, but remember that the library coordinator will not be on duty and books may not be charged out. This code should not be shared with those outside of the college community. Note that Biblical commentaries and reference works are on reserve, for use only in the library's reading room. A coffee machine is available. Happy reading!

COLLEGE LOUNGE

The lounge and kitchen on the 2nd floor is generally available as a meeting place for students, faculty and staff during the week. Students also use it as a place to rest and study. An adjacent small kitchen allows for the preparation of coffee and dry snacks. *The stove may only be used for warming of foods, and not for cooking meals, unless otherwise authorized through the Administrative Coordinator of the College.* Students using the kitchen are required to keep the kitchen clean out of respect for other students and the tenants of the college.

COLLEGE PARKING

The Presbyterian College has a small parking lot with an entrance on Milton Street. **Short term parking is not available.** Please email reception@pcmtl.ca for any details on parking.

STUDENT RESIDENCE

Students wishing to live in our student residence should contact our administrative coordinator at reception@pcmtl.ca for details and availabilities. More information can be found on the residence webpage: www.prezrez.ca