

The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada

## **RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

**of the**

## **42ND GENERAL COUNCIL 2015**

August 8–14, 2015  
Corner Brook, Newfoundland



*Issued by*

The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada  
3250 Bloor St. West, Suite 300  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M8X 2Y4

## The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada

Constituted June 10, 1925, by the union of the Methodist Church, Canada, Newfoundland, Bermuda, the Presbyterian Church in Canada,\* the Congregational Union of Canada and the 2nd Council of Local Union Churches. The Canada Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church entered The United Church of Canada on January 1, 1968.

### OFFICERS OF THE INAUGURAL GENERAL COUNCIL, TORONTO, JUNE 10–19, 1925

Denomination	Chairperson	Secretaries
Methodist	Rev. Samuel Dwight Chown, D.D., LL.D.	Rev. Thomas Albert Moore, D.D.
Presbyterian	Rev. George Campbell Pidgeon, B.A., B.D.,D.D.	Rev. William George Wallace, M.A., D.D.
Congregational	Rev. William Henry Warriner, M.A., D.D.	Rev. William Thomas Gunn, M.A.BD.,D.D.

### SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Year	Place	Moderator	Secretary
1925	Toronto, ON	Rev. George C. Pidgeon, B.A.,B.D.,D.D.	Rev. T. Albert Moore, D.D.
1926	Montreal, PQ	Rev. James Endicott, B.A.,D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. T. Albert Moore, D.D.
1928	Winnipeg, MB	Rev. William T. Gunn, M.A.,B.D.,D.D.	Rev. T. Albert Moore, D.D.
1930	London, ON	Rev. Edmund H. Oliver, M.A., Ph.D.,D.D., LL.D.,F.R.S.C.	Rev. T. Albert Moore, D.D.
1932	Hamilton, ON	Rev. T. Albert Moore, D.D.,S.T.D.,LL.D.	Rev. T. Albert Moore, D.D.,S.T.D.,LL.D.
1934	Kingston, ON	Rev. Richard Roberts, D.D.,D.Litt.	Rev. T. Albert Moore, D.D., S.T.D.,LL.D.
1936	Ottawa, ON	Rev. Peter Bryce, D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. T. Albert Moore, D.D.,S.T.D.,LL.D.
1938	Toronto, ON	Rev. John W. Woodside, M.A.,D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Gordon A. Sisco, M.A.,D.D.
1940	Winnipeg, MB	Rev. Aubrey S. Tuttle, M.A.,D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Gordon A. Sisco, M.A.,D.D.
1942	Belleville, ON	Rev. John P. Sclater, M.A.,D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Gordon A. Sisco, M.A.,D.D.
1944	London, ON	Rev. Jesse H. Arnup, B.A.,D.D.	Rev. Gordon A. Sisco, M.A.,D.D.
1946	Montreal, PQ	Rev. Thomas W. Jones, M.A.,B.D.,D.D.	Rev. Gordon A. Sisco, M.A.,D.D.
1948	Vancouver, BC	Rev. Willard E. Brewing, B.D.,D.D.	Rev. Gordon A. Sisco, M.A.,D.D.
1950	Toronto, ON	Rev. Clarence M. Nicholson, B.A.,D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Gordon A. Sisco, M.A.,D.D.
1952	Hamilton, ON	Rev. Alexander A. Scott, M.A.,B.D., B.Paed.,D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Gordon A. Sisco, M.A.,D.D.
1954	Sackville, NB	Rev. George Dorey, B.A.,D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Ernest E. Long, B.A.,B.D.,D.D.
1956	Windsor, ON	Rev. James S. Thomson, M.A.,D.D., LL.D.,F.R.S.C.	Rev. Ernest E. Long, B.A.,B.D.,D.D.
1958	Ottawa, ON	Rev. Angus J. MacQueen, B.A.,B.D., D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Ernest E. Long, B.A.,B.D.,D.D.
1960	Edmonton, AB	Rev. Hugh A. McLeod, M.A.,B.D.,D.D., LL.D.,S.T.D.	Rev. Ernest E. Long, B.A.,B.D.,D.D.
1962	London, ON	Rev. James R. Mutchmor, M.A.,B.D., D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Ernest E. Long, B.A.,B.D.,D.D., LL.D.
1964	St. John's, NF	Rev. Ernest M. Howse, B.A.,B.D.,S.T.M., Ph.D.,D.D.,D.Litt	Rev. Ernest E. Long, B.A.,B.D.,D.D., LL.D.
1966	Waterloo, ON	Rev. Wilfred C. Lockhart, M.A.,Ph.D.,D.D., LL.D.,D.C.L.	Rev. Ernest E. Long, B.A.,B.D.,D.D., LL.D.
1968	Kingston, ON	Dr. Robert B. McClure, M.D.,F.R.C.S., F.I.C.S.,D.D.,LL.D.,D.Litt.	Rev. Ernest E. Long, B.A.,B.D.,D.D., LL.D.
1971	Niagara Falls, ON	Rev. Arthur B. B. Moore, O.C.,B.A.,B.D., D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Ernest E. Long, B.A.,B.D.,D.D., LL.D.
1972	Saskatoon, SK	Rev. N. Bruce McLeod, M.A.,B.D.,Th.D., LL.D.,D.D.	Rev. George Morrison. B.Comm.,B.D., D.D.,F.C.A.
1974	Guelph, ON	Rev. Wilbur K. Howard, B.A.,B.D.,D.D., LL.D.,D.de Un.	Rev. George Morrison, B. Comm.,B.D., D.D.,F.C.A.
1977	Calgary, AB	Rev. George M. Tuttle, B.A.,B.D.,Th.D., D.D.,LL.D.	Rev. Donald G. Ray, D.F.C.,B.A.,D.D.

Year	Place	Moderator	Secretary
1980	Halifax, NS	Rev. Lois M. Wilson, O.C., B.A., M.Div., D.D., D.C.L., D.Hum.L., LL.D.	Rev. Donald G. Ray, D.F.C., B.A., D.D.
1982	Montreal, PQ	Rev. W. Clarke MacDonald, B.A., M.Div., D.D.	Rev. Donald G. Ray, D.R.C., B.A., D.D.
1984	Morden, MB	Rev. Robert F. Smith, B.A., B.D., Th.D., D.D.	Rev. Philip A. Cline, B.Th., Th.M., D.D.
1986	Sudbury, ON	Dr. Anne M. Squire, B.A., M.A., D.D., LL.D.	Irene Evans Parker (acting)
1988	Victoria, BC	Rev. Sang Chul Lee, B.D., Th.M., S.T.M., D.D., LL.D.	Rev. Howard M. Mills, B.A., M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D., D.D.
1990	London, ON	Rev. Walter H. Farquharson, B.A., M.Div., D.D.	Rev. Howard M. Mills, B.A., M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D., D.D.
1992	Fredericton, NB	Rev. Stanley J. McKay, B.A., B.D.	Rev. Howard M. Mills, B.A., M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D., D.D.
1994	Fergus, ON	Dr. Marion S. Best, D.D.	Rev. Randolph L. Naylor, B.A., B.D., B.D. Hon (acting)
1997	Camrose, AB	Rev. William F. Phipps, B.A., B.D., L.L.B.	K. Virginia Coleman
2000	Toronto, ON	Rev. Marion Parry, M.A., D.Min., L.L.B.	K. Virginia Coleman
2003	Wolfville, NS	Rev. Peter B. Short, B.A., M.Div.	Rev. James H. Sinclair, B.A., M.Div., D.D.
2006	Thunder Bay, ON	Rev. David Giuliano, Th.M., B.A., M.Div., M.Sc., C.S.D.	Rev. James H. Sinclair, B.A., M.Div., D.D.
2009	Kelowna, BC	Mardi Tindal	Nora Sanders
2012	Ottawa, ON	Rev. Gary Paterson, B.A., M.A., M.Div.	Nora Sanders
2015	Corner Brook, NL	Rev. Jordan Cantwell	Nora Sanders

Designation: Present Ordained Moderator: “The Right Reverend”;

Past Ordained Moderators: “The Very Reverend”;

Lay Moderators: designated by personal title and as they wish.

In fulfilment of its mandate of 1925 to be a “uniting” as well as a united church, The United Church of Canada has been enriched by several unions.

The Fourth General Council of The United Church of Canada (1930) approved the union of the Synod of The Wesleyan Methodist Church of Bermuda with The United Church of Canada on the condition that the Synod shall function as a Presbytery of the Maritime Conference without interference with the rights and powers conferred by the Legislature of Bermuda in The Wesleyan Methodist Church Act, 1930.

The 22nd General Council of The United Church of Canada (1966) approved the Plan of Union whereby the Canada Conference of The Evangelical United Brethren Church became part of The United Church of Canada, effective January 1, 1968.

At various times, congregations of other Christian communions have become congregations of The United Church of Canada, including the following:

American Presbyterian Church (1925) Montreal, Que.; Central Street Christian Church (1928) Oshawa, Ont.; St. John’s Reformed Episcopal Church (1928) Sussex Corner, N.B.; Brougham Christian Church (1930) Brougham, Ont.; Welsh Presbyterian Congregation (1932) Bangor, Sask.; Welsh Presbyterian Congregation (1932) Llewelyn, Sask.; Augsburg Lutheran Congregation (1949) Hagensburg, B.C.; St. John’s Evangelical and Reformed Church (1956) Snyder, Ont.; Ebenezer Congregation of the Reformed Church of America (1958) Edmonton, Alta.; German Evangelical Congregation (1961) Toronto, Ont.; Salem Evangelical and Reformed Church (1961) Vegreville, Alta.; Armenian Evangelical Church (1964) Montreal, Que.; Mewassin Evangelical and Reformed Church (1964) Duffield, Alta.; The Church of the Brethren (1968) Arrowwood, Alta.; The Church of the Brethren (1968) Irricana, Alta.; Taiwanese Christian Church (1983) Toronto, Ont.; St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church (2004) Lachine, Quebec

\* Part of the Presbyterian Church in Canada dissented from the union and continues under the former designation.

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## In Memoriam

**(April 1, 2012, to November 13, 2015)**

The following is a list of members of the order of ministry and designated lay pastoral ministers in active service who have died since the rise of the 41st General Council.

“They rest from their labours and their works do follow them.” *Rev. 14:13*

Name	Date of Birth	Year Entering Ministry	Date of Death
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador Conference</b>			
Baker, Wallace James	Jun. 25, 1922	1954	Aug. 8, 2013
Bowering, William Robert Bladen	Jun. 4, 1931	1959	Oct. 16, 2015
Harris, Harvey George	Aug. 4, 1931	1965	Feb. 5, 2014
Harris, Mary Aileen	Apr. 13, 1946	2002	Nov. 15, 2014
Logan, Daryl Leroy	Jul. 5, 1933	1960	Jan. 1, 2013
Mercer, Elizabeth Jemima	May 31, 1948	2002	Oct. 16, 2013
Newbury, Ambrose Erastus	Feb. 10, 1930	1967	Nov. 2, 2012
Reynolds, William Thomas	Nov. 1, 1928	1958	Mar. 18, 2014
<b>Maritime Conference</b>			
Atkinson, Ronald Bruce	Aug. 2, 1927	1957	Jan. 17, 2014
Burrill, Fred Chester	Mar. 3, 1927	1952	Apr. 21, 2012
Cameron, Ranald MacDonald	Mar. 3, 1926	1953	Feb. 27, 2015
Crooks, Robert Alexander (Bob)	Mar. 7, 1931	1958	Apr. 5, 2015
Dempsey, Ronald Wesley	Mar. 19, 1928	1957	Mar. 14, 2013
Favier, Cyrus Charles Murray	Jun. 17, 1926	1955	Mar. 1, 2015
Feltmate, Ronald Ellsworth	Mar. 9, 1936	1960	Dec. 14, 2013
Fullerton, Eric Grenfell	Jul. 26, 1927	1955	Feb. 19, 2015
Gosbee, Francis (Frank) Russell	Jun. 15, 1917	1966	May 3, 2013
Griffin, Allan Edward	Jun. 30, 1938	1990	Aug. 20, 2014
Griffin-Allwood, Philip George Allister	Jan. 1, 1954	2005	Nov. 1, 2012
Hamilton, Rosborough Brydone (Ross)	May 25, 1924	1952	Nov. 7, 2014
Humby, Richard Fry	Jan. 24, 1917	1950	Sep. 24, 2014
Jones, Bryer Robert	May 15, 1927	1960	Mar. 27, 2013
Kempton, Leonard Avery	Sep. 4, 1937	1961	Aug. 15, 2014
Kingston, Harold David	Mar. 21, 1927	1954	Oct. 30, 2013
Kitson, Frederick Fenton	Mar. 31, 1931	1969	Jul. 1, 2012
Leslie, Earle George	Nov. 25, 1926	1956	Jan. 17, 2014
MacDonald, James Allistar	Apr. 17, 1932	1956	Apr. 25, 2015
MacDonald, John Charles (Jackie)	Oct. 19, 1930	1970	Jul. 1, 2015
MacDonald, John Fraser	Oct. 30, 1931	1966	Mar. 12, 2015
MacDonald, William Grant	Jan. 4, 1914	1938	Dec. 6, 2013
MacDougall, Norman Dewar	Jun. 19, 1932	1965	Mar. 6, 2015

MacIntosh, James Henry	Sep. 23, 1930	1958	Aug. 26, 2012
MacLean, George Henderson	Nov. 22, 1925	1948	Jul. 19, 2015
Martin, Boyce Manuel	Jul. 19, 1940	1977	Oct. 25, 2014
McLennan, Donald Ross	Apr. 5, 1926	1955	Jun. 22, 2012
Moase, William Roy Ewen	Oct. 19, 1966	1990	Mar. 8, 2015
Moriarty, Eugene Victor (Vic)	Jul. 23, 1916	1943	Aug. 22, 2015
Patterson, John	Jun. 20, 1943	1978	May 25, 2015
Reid, Linda Elizabeth	Jan. 10, 1946	2000	Jul. 30, 2014
Shaw, Robert Malcolm	Oct. 21, 1914	1961	Sep. 20, 2013
Shields, Samuel Patterson	May 13, 1920	1948	Mar. 16, 2015
Stuart, Kimly Ruth	Oct. 20, 1927	1948	Jan. 28, 2015
Sutherland, Donald Roderick	Apr. 30, 1930	1957	May 8, 2012
Watson, Thomas	May 17, 1948	2010	Aug. 15, 2012

### **Montreal and Ottawa Conference**

Babstock, Lester Roy	Feb. 14, 1935	1966	Jun. 13, 2014
Burns, Donald McFarlane	Jan. 18, 1914	1938	Mar. 18, 2013
Christie, George Howard	Sep. 18, 1919	1946	Nov. 16, 2012
Frost, Stanley Brice	Feb. 17, 1913	1939	Jul. 25, 2013
Gilmore, Frank Pettes	Jul. 10, 1927	1952	Jun. 12, 2014
Lokhorst, Geerlof	Oct. 4, 1923	1956	Dec. 22, 2014
MacDonald, Angus John	Jul. 24, 1924	1952	Oct. 22, 2015
Newman, Melvin Chown	Jun. 15, 1922	1951	Jul. 12, 2015
Praamsma, Peter	Aug. 25, 1939	1967	Nov. 5, 2014
Walker, William Glassford	Dec. 22, 1936	1983	Dec. 29, 2013

### **Bay of Quinte Conference**

Ashford, Hugh Raymond (Ray)	Jul. 22, 1926	1950	Oct. 5, 2014
Barkley, Jean Elizabeth	Feb. 26, 1950	1975	Jan. 29, 2015
Batstone, Herbert Albert “Bert”	Oct. 12, 1922	1953	Sep. 16, 2014
Buchanan, William Charles	Sep. 11, 1925	1976	Jun. 16, 2012
Burn, Frederick James	Sep. 14, 1931	1956	May 16, 2014
Catto, Charles Robert	Jun. 7, 1929	1954	May 9, 2014
Cox, Wilbert Clarence	Apr. 23, 1940	1965	May 10, 2015
Crichton, Douglas Alvin	Aug. 20, 1924	1952	Sep. 28, 2013
Davidson, David Donald	Dec. 13, 1922	1953	Jan. 13, 2015
Dequetteville, Clifford William	Dec. 1, 1937	1968	Jan. 16, 2015
Evans, Clifford	Sep. 13, 1922	1961	Jul. 29, 2015
Ficko, Gordon Frederick	Jul. 19, 1919	1947	Mar. 8, 2013
Irvine, Hazel Margaret Sankey	Aug. 23, 1931	1989	May 3, 2015
Jewell, Willet Fred	Nov. 1, 1927	1962	Jun. 17, 2014
Lamb, John William Thornton	Nov. 8, 1930	1956	Jun. 10, 2013
McAvoy, Hubert James Warnock	May 19, 1920	1946	Sep. 16, 2012
McLeod, Donald Campbell	May 16, 1930	1970	Jul. 8, 2012
Merkley, Gordon Herbert	Jun. 3, 1926	1962	May 15, 2012
Parsons, Abel Pittman	Aug. 22, 1918	1951	May 6, 2013



Richardson, Grant Gordon	Apr. 5, 1932	1971	Aug. 3, 2012
Robinson, Alfred	Jun. 8, 1918	1951	Sep. 10, 2012
Spencley, John (Jack) Bradshaw	Dec. 15, 1912	1944	Jul. 20, 2013
Stockton, James Ross	Oct. 11, 1924	1962	Apr. 11, 2012
Storring, Laurie Ann	Apr. 28, 1956	2000	Mar. 28, 2015
Teskey, George Franklin	Oct. 13, 1920	1949	Oct. 18, 2013
Tuck, Alan David	Sep. 8, 1953	1984	Jan. 13, 2015
West, Colin Lorne	Nov. 22, 1927	1951	Apr. 22, 2013

**Toronto Conference**

Alfano, Vincent Domenic	Aug. 10, 1947	1973	Jan. 27, 2015
Allan, David Ralph	Jan. 12, 1937	1961	Feb. 4, 2014
Armill, Murray Cecil	Mar. 5, 1931	1966	Apr. 14, 2014
Bowers, George Bruce	Dec. 6, 1921	1962	Jan. 26, 2013
Brown, Douglas Hilton	Aug. 11, 1924	1961	Jul. 19, 2012
Burgess, Gordon Earl	Dec. 14, 1926	1951	Aug. 10, 2015
Bushell, James Francis	Oct. 13, 1940	1970	Feb. 4, 2015
Coles, Alexander Clydes	Dec. 27, 1928	1956	Oct. 12, 2015
Current, Marion Elizabeth May	Sep. 21, 1932	1958	Nov. 18, 2013
Day, Jean Marilyn	Aug. 4, 1935	1964	Dec. 23, 2013
Denholm, Andrew Thomas	Jan. 15, 1924	1949	May 20, 2012
Denning, Harry Melville	Apr. 16, 1923	1953	Jan. 31, 2013
Doney, George Ross	Aug. 25, 1936	1961	Oct. 28, 2012
Fisher, Melbourne (Mel) Thomas	Aug. 14, 1925	1960	Jul. 20, 2014
Franklin-Hearne, Walter Jesse	Aug. 16, 1921	1982	Nov. 20, 2012
Frost, Winnifred Margaret	Aug. 16, 1920	1979	Jan. 2, 2014
Hamilton, Sylvia Gertrude	May 25, 1928	1979	Mar. 7, 2015
Hutson, Vernon Sylvester	Apr. 15, 1926	1963	Feb. 25, 2013
Julian, William Geoffrey	Dec. 24, 1919	1947	Jul. 8, 2012
McCalmont, Robert Desmond (Des)	Dec. 27, 1928	1957	Nov. 5, 2014
McLean, Donald Earl Cameron	Feb. 19, 1923	1951	Mar. 18, 2013
Morrison, Lillian Grace	Aug. 3, 1929	1986	Apr. 15, 2015
Morrow, Henry McFarlane	Nov. 22, 1915	1940	Aug. 17, 2013
Rickard, Daisy Rosalin	Jan. 21, 1925	1973	Sep. 25, 2015
Roberts, Bruce Douglas	Feb. 21, 1931	1961	Dec. 19, 2012
Roth, Wolfgang Max Wilhelm	Oct. 1, 1930	1958	Nov. 25, 2013
Skibinski, Michael George	Oct. 21, 1930	1958	Sep. 1, 2012
Stanford, William Ernest	Jul. 12, 1922	1951	Mar. 18, 2013
Trimble, Robert George	Dec. 30, 1927	1953	Mar. 29, 2014
White, Peter Gordon	Nov. 23, 1919	1946	Mar. 12, 2013

**Hamilton Conference**

Asumang-Birikorang, Martin	Sep. 8, 1947	1974	May 31, 2013
Bell, Edith Frances	Aug. 9, 1927	1980	Jan. 5, 2014
Brox, Howard Lewis	Sep. 3, 1922	1951	Aug. 22, 2012
Carson, William McMillin (Mac)	Apr. 30, 1934	1959	Sep. 27, 2014

Clark, Diane Lynne	Dec. 5, 1945	1996	Sep. 28, 2014
Edmonds, Leslie C.	Jan. 21, 1928	1959	Oct. 27, 2015
Evans, Alvin Lloyd	Aug. 25, 1920	1953	Jul. 6, 2012
Gibson, James Brooks	May 30, 1929	1962	Feb. 7, 2015
Hannah, Marjorie Lois	May 2, 1923	1957	Jul. 18, 2015
Hongisto, Helge Olavi	Feb. 6, 1921	1947	Mar. 19, 2013
Horning, Enid Mae	Nov. 19, 1927	1954	Sep. 22, 2015
Huether, John William Lloyd	Sep. 5, 1922	1964	Aug. 12, 2014
Jones, Norma Alice	Aug. 26, 1919	1966	Dec. 30, 2013
King, Walter Arthur	Aug. 30, 1920	1966	Jul. 27, 2012
Lindsey, Robert George Wesley (Bob)	Jun. 22, 1926	1956	Dec. 17, 2014
McLachlin, Alan McPherson	Mar. 4, 1926	1952	Jan. 29, 2013
Mills, Jacqueline Elizabeth	Dec. 28, 1922	1949	May 7, 2014
Mittler, Walter Peter	Dec. 27, 1922	1977	Aug. 15, 2014
Moore, Earl Douglas	Aug. 1, 1928	1971	Apr. 18, 2015
Nichols, John Thornton Palmer	Aug. 12, 1912	1938	Aug. 31, 2014
Nix, James Ernest	Aug. 10, 1920	1947	Jan. 21, 2013
Perry, Norman Albert	Jun. 10, 1937	1965	May 14, 2012
Pfaff, Geraldene Lindsay	Oct. 23, 1945	1992	Mar. 27, 2013
Pizzolante, Joseph Joel	May 22, 1934	1975	Oct. 7, 2012
Proud, William Arnold	Oct. 7, 1929	1963	Mar. 18, 2014
Scrutton, Paul Norman	Feb. 13, 1927	1955	Apr. 12, 2014
Smeaton, Ronald Colquhoun (Ron)	Jul. 12, 1935	1963	Aug. 3, 2015
Smith, Donald Ivor MacGregor	Nov. 26, 1928	1997	Jun. 12, 2014
St. Jean, Earl Kenneth	Mar. 28, 1916	1972	Mar. 6, 2014
Starkey, Fred	Jul. 2, 1914	1948	Sep. 8, 2012
Steed, Harold Tilney Hill	Nov. 24, 1918	1947	Sep. 8, 2012
Stokes, Robert Kenneth	Jan. 29, 1928	1955	Nov. 19, 2012
Strome, Glen R.	Oct. 24, 1928	1955	Sep. 3, 2015
Walker, David	Jul. 31, 1925	1977	Aug. 6, 2013
Willis, Douglas Edgar	Jan. 12, 1926	1953	Oct. 5, 2012

**London Conference**

Boulger, Michael Darcy	Jul. 22, 1935	1963	Feb. 22, 2015
Camman, Jurrien	May 20, 1934	1963	Apr. 13, 2012
Carver, Arthur Lloyd	Dec. 13, 1920	1971	Feb. 17, 2014
Clarke, Morley Grant	Jun. 20, 1921	1948	Apr. 27, 2012
Darke, Robert Frederick (Fred)	Sep. 24, 1945	2007	Jan. 17, 2014
Garrett, Kent Douglas James	Mar. 31, 1937	1999	Jan. 3, 2015
Hardy, Leslie Joseph	Sep. 4, 1911	1953	Oct. 20, 2012
Hargreaves, Roston (Ross) Edwin	Jun. 7, 1921		Aug. 10, 2015
Irvine, David	Mar. 28, 1914	1959	Aug. 20, 2012
Lindsay, John Miles	Oct. 13, 1947	1983	Mar. 20, 2015
McCosh, William Ernest	Sep. 4, 1924	1954	Jan. 6, 2015
McKellar, Peter Malcolm	Jul. 13, 1937	1964	Oct. 27, 2014
Moore, Harley Jack	Aug. 18, 1923	1966	Sep. 29, 2015

Perry, Robert Cecil	Apr. 16, 1931		Aug. 14, 2013
Sayers, Larry Ernest	Dec. 19, 1942	2007	Jan. 8, 2014
Seed, Charles Sydney Frederick	Oct. 5, 1934	1982	May 19, 2012
Shuttleworth, Gary Thomas	Feb. 19, 1947	1990	Apr. 19, 2013
Snyder, Austin Francis	Oct. 29, 1928	1954	Nov. 9, 2013
Spencer, Donald Roland “Don”	Jun. 19, 1929	1959	May 28, 2015
Tucker, Gwyn	Aug. 7, 1943	1978	May 26, 2012
Wonfor, Herbert (Herb) Wallace	Nov. 6, 1924	1952	Sep. 3, 2015

### **Manitou Conference**

Bould, David Pawson	Sep. 1, 1930	1956	Dec. 16, 2012
Bould, Geraldine Gladys	Mar. 1, 1928	1956	Sep. 16, 2014
Broughton, William Paul “Bill”	Mar. 31, 1938	1995	Jul. 23, 2013
Constant, Ruggles Camlin	Dec. 15, 1932	1965	May 2, 2014
McCrea, Robert John	Jun. 11, 1918	1959	Oct. 29, 2012
Purdy, Margaret Ethel (Meg)	Jul. 1, 1936	1985	Dec. 16, 2014
Tucker, Peter David Cecil	Feb. 3, 1934	1967	Dec. 31, 2012
Vanderstoel, Nico	Jun. 4, 1938	1982	Mar. 22, 2015

### **Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference**

Boughton, Keith Donald	Oct. 19, 1927	1958	Jul. 25, 2014
Clark, Ralph E.	Jul. 6, 1928	1952	Dec. 29, 2014
Cowan, Walter Rennie	Sep. 28, 1932	1957	May 4, 2012
Davis, William Henry	Feb. 3, 1918	1942	Jun. 1, 2012
Flook, Doris	Jan. 31, 1922	1968	Oct. 20, 2012
Joyce, Geoffrey P.	Oct. 30, 1916	1944	Mar. 22, 2013
McKinnon, Rainie Price	Aug. 11, 1923	1972	Feb. 4, 2014
Perry, James M.	May 27, 1926	1951	Jun. 8, 2012
Rutley, Horace Trevor (Ted)	May 5, 1926	1965	Nov. 2, 2013
Sampson, Jannette May	Jun. 29, 1942	1992	Aug. 23, 2012
Thompson, Glen William	Jun. 16, 1927	1951	Jul. 15, 2014
Vialard, Joseph Gastón	Feb. 13, 1927	1963	Feb. 17, 2014

### **Saskatchewan Conference**

Bater, Donald (Don) William	May 1, 1934	1970	Jan. 10, 2015
Benjamin, Harold (Howie) George	Sep. 7, 1931	1969	Aug. 3, 2015
Castledine, Muriel Ann	Aug. 1, 1950	2010	Jul. 25, 2013
Chapman, William Alvin	May 6, 1927	1957	May 22, 2015
Clarkson, Kenneth Bernard	Dec. 22, 1923	1956	Jun. 26, 2014
Cox, Elinor Grace	Mar. 25, 1929	1958	Jan. 21, 2013
Hodge, Oliver Rankine	Nov. 27, 1926	1958	Aug. 19, 2013
Iwai, Hiraku	Jun. 16, 1931	1959	Oct. 27, 2014
Leitch, Donald Serviss	Mar. 27, 1933	1959	May 27, 2015
Manning, Susan “Sue” Marilyn	Apr. 8, 1947	1988	Jul. 5, 2015
Oglesby, Jack	Feb. 6, 1923	1967	Feb. 10, 2014
Rees, William J. Phillips	Nov. 3, 1923	1947	Aug. 26, 2015

Russell, Alexander George	Sep. 12, 1921	1967	Aug. 17, 2013
Ward, George Everett	Oct. 11, 1917	1946	Nov. 27, 2013

**Alberta and Northwest Conference**

Beairsto, Russel Gilbert	Jan. 29, 1923	1948	Oct. 6, 2014
Becking, Hugh Angus	Nov. 24, 1927	1955	Dec. 15, 2012
Burgess, William Edward (Bill)	Oct. 24, 1922	1948	Aug. 18, 2015
Dixon, William (Bill) John	Nov. 24, 1928	1953	Mar. 24, 2015
Edworthy, Aubrey Gordon Silvanus	Apr. 22, 1919	1944	Dec. 22, 2013
Frey, Wilbert Edward	Jan. 3, 1920	1958	Apr. 14, 2012
Godley, Trevor “Barry”	Apr. 30, 1942	1968	Aug. 21, 2015
Henning, James Leonard	Jul. 18, 1931	1960	Jan. 31, 2015
Hetherington, Robert Eade	Aug. 6, 1943	1967	May 24, 2015
Hutchinson, Gerald Middleton	Mar. 23, 1914	1943	Apr. 14, 2015
Hutchinson, Laura Jean	May 15, 1948	2004	May 13, 2012
Ireland, Douglas Richard	Jun. 20, 1953	1980	Sep. 4, 2013
Irwin, Alice Veda	Nov. 4, 1923	1947	Apr. 18, 2013
Jeffrey, Ronald Everett	Jun. 25, 1952	1980	Apr. 7, 2015
Kane, Velma Ann	Aug. 3, 1937	1984	Jul. 15, 2014
Kayes, Robert Arnold	Apr. 28, 1935	1969	Mar. 30, 2015
Kett, Roger Albert	Jun. 11, 1968	1994	Jul. 7, 2012
MacAulay, Roderick Alexander	Jul. 17, 1924	1950	Jan. 29, 2013
MacMahon, Donald Carleton	Jul. 28, 1926	1952	Jul. 7, 2013
Marshall, John Ralph	Sep. 23, 1930	1957	Jan. 12, 2014
McHutchison, Sheila	Apr. 4, 1941		Oct. 10, 2014
McLaughlin, Charles Thomas	Mar. 20, 1942	1982	Apr. 21, 2014
Morris, Kenneth William	Aug. 28, 1932	1960	May 10, 2014
Parkes, Clifford Horace	Jan. 23, 1921	1961	Apr. 2, 2014
Peterson, Foley Cyril	Sep. 25, 1927	1965	Oct. 25, 2013
Read, Eric Alexander	Mar. 4, 1930	1955	Oct. 19, 2013
Roberts, James (Jim) William	Mar. 12, 1920	1955	May 1, 2015
Smith, Wilbur Robert (Bob) Charles	Apr. 13, 1933	1970	Aug. 1, 2013
Spicer, Nellie Mae	Jun. 1, 1939	2000	Nov. 11, 2014
Towers, John (Jack) James	May 12, 1925	1951	Aug. 13, 2013
Waite, William Douglas	Jun. 28, 1924	1954	Jun. 1, 2014

**British Columbia Conference**

Angus, Jean Petrona	Feb. 22, 1923	1977	Apr. 23, 2013
Barnum, Ronald Douglas	Sep. 7, 1936	1962	Jun. 12, 2014
Black, Joanne	Apr. 28, 1931	1987	Jun. 5, 2015
Booth, Rodney Maynard	Aug. 1, 1933	1957	Jul. 10, 2014
Bragan, James (Jim) Harris	Feb. 5, 1940	1972	Jan. 2, 2014
Burnett, Bonnie Lee Leslie	Sep. 23, 1944	1978	Nov. 5, 2012
Connal, Ross Gillespie	Jul. 12, 1926	1951	Sep. 19, 2014
Cook, Ivan Harley	Feb. 1, 1929	1968	Oct. 4, 2012
Darling, Frances Marr	Aug. 2, 1951	2008	Mar. 30, 2013

Davis, George Robert Paul	Jan. 17, 1948	1975	Dec. 5, 2014
Dickie, Ernest Graham	Feb. 10, 1939	1971	Feb. 22, 2014
Easson, William George	Jul. 21, 1925	1964	Sep. 14, 2012
Edmunds, Kathleen Ann	Jun. 7, 1962	2010	May 31, 2012
Erb, Colleen Margaret	Jan. 19, 1928	1980	Feb. 3, 2013
Evans, Elizabeth (Betty) Pearl	Oct. 9, 1929	1979	Jan. 8, 2014
Ferguson, Eleanor	Apr. 19, 1932	1963	Sep. 13, 2012
Ferguson, George Edward	Aug. 13, 1936	1964	Jun. 29, 2014
Horricks, John Thomas (Jack)	Jan. 18, 1921	1946	Dec. 19, 2013
Hutton, Leslie (Les) Wilbert	Apr. 9, 1926	1970	Jul. 1, 2014
Jackson, Donald Barney	Aug. 17, 1920	1966	Apr. 23, 2015
Jackson, Glenn Clifford	Apr. 7, 1940	1965	Apr. 29, 2015
Johnson, Frank	May 3, 1918	1945	Nov. 21, 2012
Keating, Arvon Argyle	Feb. 21, 1924	1965	Mar. 17, 2013
Kropp, Frederick (Ted) V.	Aug. 4, 1932	1966	Apr. 23, 2013
Lucy, Arthur Russell	Nov. 19, 1929	1963	Jul. 4, 2012
Macdonald, Margaret Jean	Apr. 5, 1917	1950	Jul. 4, 2012
MacKay, Harold Lindsay	Jan. 26, 1932	1957	Oct. 18, 2015
Manson, Alexander Macleod	May 13, 1920	1946	Sep. 16, 2015
McLachlan, John Alexander	Sep. 28, 1928	1959	Dec. 25, 2013
Moir, Frances Ann	Aug. 3, 1930	1986	Jan. 18, 2013
Moorhouse, Clayton Herbert	Apr. 3, 1929	1984	Jun. 25, 2013
Pollock, Robert Allen	Oct. 4, 1957	1999	Jan. 6, 2013
Pudwell, Linda Elaine	Apr. 27, 1952	2010	Jun. 12, 2014
Simonson, Helen Doreen	Mar. 24, 1930	1985	Dec. 1, 2012
Sly, Douglas Montague	Jan. 4, 1931	1960	Aug. 9, 2015
Stewart, John Thomas	Aug. 30, 1922	1947	May 29, 2014
Thomson, Robert (Bob) Talbot	Dec. 15, 1930	1963	Feb. 4, 2015
Travis, John Probyn	Aug. 27, 1923	1950	Mar. 24, 2013
Tuttle, George Milledge	Oct. 4, 1915	1941	May 26, 2012
Waddell, Wilfred (Wilf) Cunningham	Jul. 4, 1923	1953	Oct. 3, 2014
Watt, David Dewar	Feb. 15, 1935	1976	May 24, 2014
Wilson, Reginand Alistair	Apr. 10, 1917	1943	Mar. 1, 2015
Wong, Daniel Daw Yee	Dec. 25, 1935	1968	Nov. 28, 2014
<b>All Native Circle Conference</b>			
Crate, John Vernon	Aug. 13, 1936	1977	Mar. 25, 2014
Joyea, Maria	May 30, 1935	2001	Feb. 4, 2013
McDonald, Ernest John	Sep. 1, 1955	2003	May 27, 2014

## Attendees at the 42nd General Council 2015

### MODERATORS AT THE 42ND GENERAL COUNCIL 2015

	<b>Years Served</b>	<b>General Council</b>
The Very Rev. Lois M. Wilson	1980–1982	Halifax, NS
The Very Rev. Stanley J. McKay	1992–1994	Fredericton, NB
Dr. Marion S. Best	1994–1997	Fergus, ON
The Very Rev. William F. Phipps	1997–2000	Camrose, AB
The Very Rev. Marion Parfy	2000–2003	Toronto, ON
The Very Rev. Peter B. Short	2003–2006	Wolfville, NS
The Very Rev. David W. Giuliano	2006–2009	Thunder Bay, ON
Mardi Tindal	2009–2012	Kelowna, BC

### GUESTS AT THE 42ND GENERAL COUNCIL

#### Western Region Vice Chief, Kevin Barnes



Kevin Barnes was born in Frenchman’s Cove, a small fishing village on the south shore of the Bay of Islands. He has three brothers and has lived in Benoit’s Cove, Humber Arm South, for the past 30 years.

Kevin is married to Sharon White from Halfway Point, Humber Arm South, and they have a daughter and a son. Sharon is a retired nurse. He works with Parks Canada in Gros Morne National Park as a Park Interpreter, where he takes visitors on guided hikes throughout the Park.

Kevin has been a member of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians for approximately 10 years, and the thing he enjoyed most about his work was the reward of teaching children about Aboriginal culture and beliefs. He also enjoyed working with the different members of the nine Bands as they have all contributed something unique to the work and yet they all had the same commitment to help the Mi’kmaq people.

Kevin is looking forward to the future now that the Qalipu Mi’Kmaq First Nation Band has been formed and thinks that “the ghost of Confederation will finally be laid to rest.” He believes it has been a long road with many bumps but states that “thanks to the Creator, we made it.”

### ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

#### Perry Bellegarde, National Chief

The Assembly of First Nations is a national advocacy organization representing First Nation citizens in Canada, which includes more than 900,000 people living in 634 First Nation communities and in cities and towns across the country.

**About Perry Bellegarde, National Chief**

Perry Bellegarde was named Assembly of First Nations National Chief on December 10, 2014.



He has spent his entire adult life putting into practice his strong beliefs in the laws and traditions instilled in him by the many Chiefs and Elders he has known over the years. Passionate about making measureable progress on the issues that matter most to First Nations people, National Chief Bellegarde is a strong advocate for the implementation of Inherent Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

National Chief Bellegarde is from the Little Black Bear First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory. He served as Chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Saskatchewan Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations. He has also served as the Tribal Chair of the Touchwood-File Hills-Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, Councillor for the Little Black Bear First Nation and Chief of Little

Black Bear First Nation.

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, USA**

**Geoffrey A. Black, General Minister and President, the United Church of Christ**



The Rev. Geoffrey A. Black was elected General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ in June 2009.

During his career he has served as assistant chaplain at Brown University, associate minister at St. Albans (NY) Congregational UCC, pastor of Congregational UCC of Hempstead, NY, lecturer in the Field Education Department of Union Theological Seminary in New York and protestant chaplain at Adelphi University.

Ecumenical commitment, concern for equal justice, African-American empowerment and community improvement have shaped Black's ministry in the church and the communities in which he has lived. Black earned a B.A. degree from Lincoln University in 1969 and an M.A.R. degree from Yale Divinity School in 1972.

Black will end his tenure as UCC General Minister and President in June 2015 at the conclusion of General Synod 30.

**MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA**

**Willard Metzger**

The first Mennonites came to Canada in 1786 from Pennsylvania. This was followed by three waves of settlement from Europe (1822, 1870s, 1920s). Mennonite Church Canada was formed in 2000, integrating two North American church bodies—the Mennonite Church (MC) and General Conference Mennonite Church (GC). In 2008, Mennonite Church Canada's 221 congregations and 32,000 members represented a cross-section of Canadians—brothers and sisters from all parts of the globe and the Indigenous people of Canada. In addition to English

and German, 45 Canadian congregations worship in 14 additional languages. The church states as Identity and Purpose: *God calls, equips and sends the church to engage the world with the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are a community of disciples of Jesus, a part of the Body of Christ, covenanted together as congregations, area churches, and a national church body. Gratefully responding to God's initiatives and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves and our resources to calling, equipping and sending the church to engage the world with the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ.*

### **About Willard Metzger**

The Rev. Dr. Willard Metzger has been in his current role as Executive Director of Mennonite Church Canada since 2010. He previously served in pastoral/parish leadership for 18 years with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC), and on the General Board of Mennonite Church Canada for 9 years. Most recently he served as National Director of Church Relations for World Vision Canada, (2005–2010). He has travelled to over 50 countries, and had extensive experience speaking to Canadian churches across a wide diversity of Christian expression. He recently co-authored a book entitled *Going Missional* (with Karen Stiller). Willard welcomes opportunities to share his passion for the church through preaching, teaching and workshops. In May 2015 Willard was elected as a Vice President of the Canadian Council of Churches.



### **Marie Wilson, Commissioner, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada**



Dr. Marie Wilson brings to her role as Commissioner more than 30 years of experience as an award-winning journalist, trainer, and senior executive manager.

She has also been a university lecturer, a high school teacher in Africa, a senior executive manager in both federal and territorial Crown Corporations, and an independent consultant in journalism, program evaluation, and project management.

As a journalist, Dr. Wilson worked in print, radio and television as a regional and national reporter. She was the first host of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation flagship television program, Focus North, and the corporation's senior manager for northern Quebec and the northern Territories. As a Regional Director for the CBC, she launched the first daily television news service for northern Canada, and developed the Arctic Winter Games and True North Concert series.

She delivered training through the South African Broadcasting Corporation during that country's transition to democracy, and served as an associate board member of what became the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, APTN. Dr. Wilson is the recipient of many awards including an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from St. Thomas University in Fredericton, NB.



She speaks English and French. Dr. Wilson and her husband Stephen Kakfwi have three children and four grandchildren.

## **THE MUSLIM ASSOCIATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**

### **Mumtaz Cheema**

The Muslim Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (MANAL) was formed in 1982. The association successfully opened Newfoundland's first and only mosque, Masjid an-Noor, in 1990 at St. John's, Newfoundland. MANAL Mission Statement: The Muslim Association of Newfoundland and Labrador endeavours to establish a Muslim community adhering to Islamic values and is committed to the general welfare of its members so that they may contribute to the well-being of the community at large.

The first documented presence of Muslims in Newfoundland and Labrador goes back to 1964, when Dr. Muhammad Irfan joined Memorial University of Newfoundland as a faculty member in the Department of Physics. Today the Muslim community in Newfoundland is comprised of over 600 families, in addition to many undergraduate and graduate students studying at the Memorial University of Newfoundland.

### **About Mumtaz Cheema**

Dr. Mumtaz Cheema is currently working as Associate Professor of Agronomy at Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland. He graduated in agronomy from the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan in 1989 and obtained his PhD from the same University in 1999. He started his career as an agronomist in a local seed company before he joined the faculty at the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan. Later he went to Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa, for a post-doctoral fellowship, and worked as visiting scientist at Nova Scotia Agriculture College, Truro. He has authored four book chapters/monographs and published more than 90 research articles.

## **GLOBAL AND ECUMENICAL PARTNERS**

### **GLOBAL ECUMENICAL DELEGATION: Latin America and Caribbean**

#### **EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH**

**El Salvador, Rev. Miguel Tomás Castro**



For Emmanuel Baptist Church, the mission of the church is to be a voice that calls for the justice of God. Founded in the years following Archbishop Oscar Romero's assassination in 1980 and deeply influenced by his witness, IBE accompanies impoverished and oppressed communities in their struggle for personal and social transformation. With a membership of only 200, it is a church that is having a remarkable impact on the lives of some of El Salvador's poorest people. The United Church of Canada has been partnered with IBE since 1985.

### **About Miguel Tomás Castro**

Rev. Miguel Tomás Castro was exiled to Canada during the El Salvador Civil War, but returned in the late 80s with a determination to witness profound change. He is currently the Senior Pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church and recently served as Vice President on the Life and Peace Institute's International Board of Directors. Rev Castro is a member of The Partner Council of The United Church of Canada.

### **KOINONIA**

#### **Brazil, Marilia Schüller**



Founded in 1994, Koinonia is an organization of people from different social, cultural, political and religious backgrounds who have come together to provide services to marginalized groups who are in the process of social and political emancipation. With a special focus on youth and gender equality, Koinonia works with organized black populations in urban and rural areas, rural agricultural workers and people living with HIV or AIDS. Koinonia is also a member of the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance working group on HIV and AIDS.

#### **About Marilia Schüller**

Marilia is an Afro-Brazilian woman born in the South of Brazil and member of the Methodist Church in Brazil. In October 2007, after her return to her home country from 15 years of service in the Program to Combat Racism of the World Council of Churches (1992–2006), she was commissioned a missionary of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church in the USA. Her assignment and present position is to serve KOINONIA Ecumenical Presence and Service, in Rio de Janeiro. Ms. Schuller is a member of The Partner Council of The United Church of Canada.

### **METHODIST CHURCH IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THE AMERICAS, METHODIST CHURCH OF HAITI**

The Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas is the regional expression of the Methodist tradition. The United Church of Canada continues to explore a special relationship with the MCCA, recognizing we share with the global church a mutual responsibility to participate in God's Mission in the world in local contexts as well as a shared history of mutual recognition and partnership. Part of the MCCA family The Methodist Church of Haiti, established in 1817, continues to work with the people of Haiti restoring communities and lives after the earthquake. Rev Gesner Paul, President of the Methodist Church of Haiti says "After the earthquake, life continues."

Members of the Methodist Church of Haiti (EMH) remain intimately involved with the reconstruction of Haitian society. The church has identified six priorities as part of a plan for lasting change:

1. Education: to get schools up and functioning again
2. Reconstruction of permanent buildings
3. Sustainable Development

4. Health
5. Evangelization: “understanding that we are not just citizens of heaven but of this earth”
6. Christian education: rebuilding learning networks



#### **About Bishop Gesner Paul**

Rev. Gesner Paul was elected as the president of the Methodist Church of Haiti in 2009 (known by its French acronym as ÉMH). Coming to that position a year before the earthquake that devastated Haiti much of his leadership has been about reconstruction. His priorities include: strengthening the church’s financial capacity so as to reduce external dependence, and preparations for the church’s 200th anniversary in 2017. ÉMH has 160 congregations—including one in Montreal that is becoming an associate member of the United Church’s Consistoire Laurentien. EMH operates about 100 schools in Haiti.

### **GLOBAL ECUMENICAL DELEGATION: Africa**

#### **PROGRAM FOR CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS IN AFRICA (PROCMURA)**

##### **Kenya, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah**



Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, the Program for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) is a pan-African Christian organisation founded in 1959 with the objective of building good relations between Christians and Muslims in Africa. PROCMURA sees its role as faithful and responsible Christian witness to the Gospel in an interfaith environment of Christians and Muslims. It promotes Christian constructive engagement with Muslims for peace and peaceful coexistence.

##### **About Johnson Mbillah**

The Rev. Dr. Johnson A. Mbillah is the General Advisor for Program for Christian Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA). Ordained as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Dr. Mbillah has studied in Ghana and the United Kingdom. He has been active in interfaith relations for many years and published extensively on issues of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa. Mbillah grew up in Northern Ghana where Muslims, Christians, and those who practise traditional African religions lived alongside each other without incident. That has led to a passionate commitment to fostering Christian-Muslim relations and understanding, a significant challenge in the current context. His work includes peacemaking in areas of tension, especially in northern Africa. Says Mbillah “Don’t buy into extremism, don’t retaliate. We are all interdependent. We need our civilizations to co-exist. This is crucial for the health of humankind.” Dr Mbillah is a member of The Partner Council of The United Church of Canada.

#### **THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA**

##### **Zambia, Rev. Peggy Mulambya-Kabonde**

Founded in 1965, the United Church of Zambia is a united and uniting church formed by a union of four denominations established by missionaries in the late 1800s and early 1900s. UCZ is Zambia’s largest Protestant church. The United Church of Zambia has been at the forefront of

ministry, including providing quality education; theological training for its leadership; providing health services in rural Zambia; training in agriculture; and development programs for the people across the country. The United Church of Canada has been partnered with UCZ since it first began.

### **About Peggy Mulambya-Kabonde**



Peggy Kabonde is the first woman to be appointed General Secretary of the United Church of Zambia. Formerly Chaplain to the University of Zambia and an executive member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Peggy is the United Church of Zambia's first woman theology graduate, and is currently working on her doctorate on Female Ordination. She has been a member of the Circle of African Women Theologians since its inception in 1989 and has in the past worked to coordinate gender justice issues with the Council for World Mission (CWM) Africa region. Rev Mulambya-Kabonde is a member of The Partner Council of The United Church of Canada.

## **GLOBAL ECUMENICAL DELEGATION: Global Ecumenical**

### **KAIROS Canada**

#### **Toronto, Jennifer Henry**

KAIROS Canada unites eleven Canadian Christian churches and religious organizations in a faithful ecumenical response to the call to “*do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God*” (Micah 6:8). We deliberate on issues of common concern, advocate for social justice and join with people of faith and goodwill in action for social transformation.



#### **About Jennifer Henry**

Jennifer Henry currently serves as the Executive Director of KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, giving leadership to ecumenical commitments to human rights and ecological justice with KAIROS' 11 churches and religious organizations. She has worked in ecumenical social justice in Canada for over 20 years, beginning in 1993 when she joined the Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice (ECEJ) as a popular education coordinator. Primary areas of focus have included international human rights, Indigenous rights, gender and economic justice, and theological and biblical reflection on justice issues. She currently serves as a member of the Primate's Commission on the Doctrine of Discovery, Reconciliation, and Justice of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Good Jobs Roundtable, spearheaded by Unifor, and the Board of the Centre and Library for the Bible and Social Justice.

## **PEACE FOR LIFE**

**Kenya, Esha Faki**

### **A people's movement for global justice and peace**



Peace for Life is a global faith-based movement global faith-based movement that mobilizes the power of the power of spirituality to resist militarised globalisation and creating life-enhancing alternatives.” The interfaith network traces its roots to the International Ecumenical Conference on Terrorism in a Globalised World held in Manila in September 2002 (sponsored by the World Council of Churches, the Christian Conference of Asia, and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines). This unique network’s mission is to challenge militarized globalization and to work for a new world nurtured by peoples upholding human dignity and human rights and supporting life-enhancing alternatives.

### **About Esha Faki**

Esha is a Muslim scholar from Kisumu, Kenya. She is a faculty member of the College of Arts and Social Sciences, Department of Religion and Philosophy of Maseno University in Maseno, Kenya. Her particular areas of interest and research are in Islam and Human Rights, Women and Gender Issues in Islam, Early Islam, Islamic Contemporary Studies, Religion and Politics and Religious Studies, Comparative Religion, Interfaith Dialogue and Peace and Conflict Studies. Dr Faki is a member of The Partner Council of The United Church of Canada.

## **WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES**

**Based in Hanover, Germany, Rev. Chris Ferguson**



The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) is a communion of Presbyterian, United and Uniting, Reformed, Congregational, and Waldensian churches that have been called together in Christ to promote the renewal and the unity of the church and participate in God’s transformation of the world. Believing that Christian faith is based on responding to both the spiritual needs and the economic and social rights of all people, WCRC has identified three core callings: to promote justice in the economy, the earth, and all of God’s creation, and to work for peace and reconciliation in the world; to renew a passion among Reformed Christians for God’s mission in a spirit of partnership and unity; and to promote the full participation of women and youth in all aspects of the church’s life.

### **About Chris Ferguson**

Chris Ferguson was ordained as a minister of The United Church of Canada in Vancouver in 1978. He has worked at McGill University, the United Theological College in Montreal, and as UCC General Council Staff for 14 years. Chris served as a UCC Global Mission Personnel for a total of 11 years alongside global partners in Costa Rica, Jerusalem, New York, and Colombia. In September 2014, Chris Ferguson was elected General Secretary for the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

## **GLOBAL ECUMENICAL DELEGATION: Canadian and US Ecumenical**

### **CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

#### **Alyson Barnett Cowan**

Founded in 1944 The Canadian Council of Churches is the largest ecumenical body in Canada, now including 25 churches of Anglican, Evangelical, Catholic, Historic Reform, Free Church, and Eastern and Oriental Orthodox traditions. It is one of the most inclusive ecumenical bodies in the world, representing more than 85% of the Christians in Canada.

The Council works together to embody ecumenical, Christian “unity in diversity” through dialogue, witness and work in common action. In unity and in celebration of the richness of diversity, CCC members work together on the challenge of faithful living in the 21st century.

The United Church of Canada is a founding member of the CCC, with members active in many aspects of the Council’s work.

#### **About Alyson Barnett-Cowan**



The Rev. Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan was elected President of the Canadian Council of Churches in May 2015. Until the end of January 2015 she was the Director for Unity Faith and Order for the Anglican Communion, based in London, England. In this capacity she staffed the Inter-Anglican Commission for Unity, Faith and Order, and was the lead staff for the ecumenical dialogues of the Anglican Communion. During the first months of 2015 Alyson is serving as Interim Secretary General of the Anglican Communion until a permanent

appointment is made. Before her appointment to the Anglican Communion Office, Alyson was the Director of the Faith, Worship, and Ministry Department of the Anglican Church of Canada, where she staffed its theological and ecumenical work. Alyson is a canon of the Diocese of Brandon.

### **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, USA**

#### **Karen Georgia Thompson**

#### **Campbell Lovett**

The United Church of Christ (UCC), USA is a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church to join faith and action. With over 5,000 churches and nearly one million members across the U.S., the United Church of Christ serves God in the co-creation of a just and sustainable world. The UCC is a church of extravagant welcome, and a church where “...they may all be one” (John 17:21).

Under one collective identity, The United Church of Christ, USA is a welcoming, justice-minded Christian community raising their VOICES for an alternate vision:

- Where God is all-loving and inclusive
- Where the Church of Jesus Christ welcomes and accepts everyone as they are
- Where your mind is nourished as much as your soul

- Where Jesus the healer meets Jesus the revolutionary
- Where together we grow a just and peaceful world



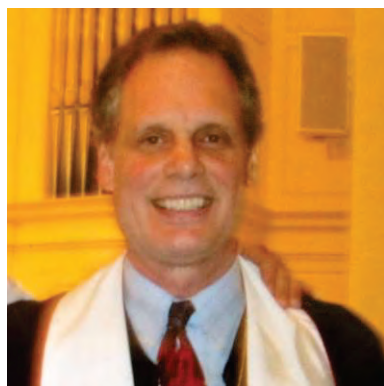
**About Karen Georgia Thompson**

Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson serves as Minister for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations in the National setting of the United Church of Christ. Before taking up that role Karen Georgia served in the national setting as Minister for Racial Justice with Justice and Witness Ministries. She provided key leadership in the national initiative “Sacred Conversations on Race.”

Before joining the national staff, Karen served in the Florida Conference United Church of Christ as a Pastor and on the Conference staff as Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery following the devastating 2004 and 2005.

Ordained in 1999, Karen Georgia has a broad range of professional experiences throughout the settings of the United Church of Christ, USA. She has been a key participant in the dialogue on full communion between The United Church of Christ, USA and The United Church of Canada.

**About Campbell Lovett**



Rev. Campbell Lovett serves as the Conference Minister for the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ, USA. Before taking up the position as Conference Minister, Rev. Lovett served as Senior Minister in a congregation in Rhode Island where he was active in many community justice initiatives.

When introduced to the Michigan Conference as the new Conference Minister in 2012 the chair of the search committee described Rev. Lovett as “a person of deep and abiding faith, and an articulate, compassionate and skilled leader. He...is driven by a vision for the church of the future...he engenders trust with those with whom he works and shares ministry.”

**ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Bishop Michael Oulton**

As a partner in the worldwide Anglican Communion, The Anglican Church of Canada values a heritage of biblical faith, reason, liturgy, tradition, bishops and synods, and the rich variety of life in community. Since February of 2003 representatives of the Anglican and United Churches in Canada have been engaged in a dialogue to understand each other better; to encourage and strengthen shared ministry and mission, and to foster other circles of dialogue, regionally and locally, between the two churches. At present the dialogue is exploring what steps can be taken toward mutual exchange of ministries between our two churches.



**About Bishop Michael Oulton**

The Rt. Rev. Michael Oulton was installed as the twelfth Bishop of Ontario on September 11, 2011. He has served parishes in Alberton/O’Leary Prince Edward Island in the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island as well as Ontario, where he served St. Peters, Collins Bay and Christ Church Belleville. Bishop Oulton cites a passion for the Churches’ engagement with the world in mission, quoting theologian Thomas Buechner who wrote that our vocation as disciples of Jesus Christ is found where “your greatest passion meets the world’s greatest need.” Bishop Oulton is a member of the Anglican–United Church Dialogue.

**CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS**

**Most Rev Peter Hundt**

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops is the national assembly of the Bishops of Canada. Through the work of its members, the Conference is involved in such areas as ecumenism and interfaith dialogue, theology, social justice, liturgy, and Christian education. The CCCB appoints members to the Roman Catholic–United Church of Canada Dialogue, which has been meeting since 1975. The dialogue seeks to increase understanding and appreciation between the Roman Catholic Church and the United Church of Canada. It explores pastoral, theological and ethical issues, including those that may divide our churches. The dialogue is

currently discussing theologies of creation, ecology and the environment, and preparing to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the dialogue this fall.



**About Most Rev. Peter Hundt**

Bishop Peter Hundt was born on August 26, 1956 in Hanover, Ontario. He attended St. Peter’s Seminary in London, Ontario and was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Hamilton on May 8, 1982. He was appointed an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Toronto by Pope Benedict XVI on February 11, 2006 and ordained a Bishop on April 25, 2006. On March 1, 2011 he was appointed Bishop of Corner Brook and Labrador by Pope Benedict XVI and he was officially installed on April 13, 2011.



## **GLOBAL ECUMENICAL DELEGATION: Asia**

### **NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES**

#### **The Philippines, Fr. Rex Reyes**

**Vision: “Life in all its fullness (John 10:10)—a just, egalitarian, self-reliant and sustainable society**



The National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) is a fellowship of 10 non-Roman Catholic churches and nine associate members working for unity in witness and service. The NCCP finds its theological bases on the incarnation (John 1:14), the ministry of Jesus Christ (Luke 4:17–21) and the unifying and redeeming love of God (John 17:23). The NCCP journeys primarily with the suffering, the marginalized and the vulnerable with a vibrant hope for just and inclusive communities.

A strong voice for human rights in the Philippines, the NCCP unites and mobilizes the churches and partners to engage in humanitarian work, the struggle for justice and peace, the defense of human rights and civil liberties and the preservation of posterity and the integrity of creation. In this prophetic task for the transformation of church and society, the NCCP constituency has not been without its share of repression, extrajudicial killings, harassments, arrests and enforced disappearances.

#### **About Rex Reyes**

Father Rex Reyes is the 7th General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines and the first indigenous person to lead the Council. An Igorot from the Mountain Province in northern Philippines he is the first indigenous person to lead the council. He has served as Program Secretary of the NCCP’s Program on Ecumenical Relations and with the Episcopal Church in the Philippines. Until April 2015 Fr Rex was the President of the Christian Conference of Asia. An ordained Anglican minister, he also serves as a Canon at the National Cathedral of St. Mary and St. John of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines. Fr Rex is a member of The Partner Council of The United Church of Canada.

### **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

#### **Republic of South Korea, Rev Tae Jin Bae**

**“A prophetic voice for democratization, human rights and reunification.”**

Prior to the foreign intervention of the United States and then the Soviet Union in 1945 the people of Korea lived as one people. When hostilities ended in 1953, three million people had been killed and the peninsula divided. Tensions remain acute today as the northern socialist regime faces the capitalist southern republic across the 38th parallel. For the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK), reunification and peace-building remain its most important priorities.



The PROK upholds the spiritual importance of dialogue, engagement, diversity and reconciliation. Seeking to go beyond the narrow, traditional concept of mission, the PROK reaches out to the “Minjung,” those who are oppressed, exploited and despised—homeless teenagers, sex workers, orphans, the elderly, the disabled and the unemployed—through a series of mission houses, associations and centres. PROK sponsors peace-building and conflict transformation workshops, maintains an ecology center to address the growing threat to God’s created world and its inhabitants, and supports dozens of migrant worker centres which offer temporary housing, medical help and legal services to South Korea’s 700,000 migrant workers.

The PROK has an enduring commitment to ecumenism with strong partnerships with churches around the world. The United Church and PROK work together closely in mission priorities related to justice, peace and life.

**About Rev Tae Jin Bae**

Currently serving as the General Secretary of The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) Rev Bae has also served as senior pastor to churches in Kangjineup and Canaan Presbyterian Churches in the Republic of Korea and as Executive Secretary of the Department of Mission and Society for the PROK. An active participant in ecumenical activities Rev Bae is currently a board member for The Christian Literature Society of Korea.

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES**

**Philippines, Bishop Reuel Marigza**

**“A transformed church and society towards an abundant and meaningful life for all”**



The United Church of Christ in the Philippines has been a model of bold, prophetic witness. It believes the church exists for mission. As a Church institution, UCCP cannot live unmindful of the realities of the outside world. UCCP equips its members to engage in active ministry with the whole community, with a particular focus on human rights, democracy, just and lasting peace, economic and ecological justice. Because of these works, many courageous church workers and members have lost their lives resisting evil and seeking justice. The UCCP is a Protestant mainline group with around 1,000,000 members and 2,218 pastors in 3,112 congregations.

The United Church of Canada and United Church of Christ in the Philippines have a long history of joint projects, exchanges, study exposures, and internship programs. The United Church has worked with the UCCP and other partners in the Philippines for an end to human rights violations, including political killings through international political advocacy, formal reports and petitions, and personal accompaniment with pastoral visits, overseas personnel, and fact-finding missions.

### **About Bishop Marigza**

Bishop Reuel Norman O. Marigza is the General Secretary of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP). Bp. Marigza serves in various capacities as Bishop, Church Administrator and as beloved Pastor among pastors. His ministry has had a life-long impact on young people many of whom became pastors, church-workers, and dedicated their lives in the service of those pushed to the margins of Philippine society.

Living out the prophetic calling in his defense of human rights and civil liberties, Bp. Marigza initiated the process of filing court cases against former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, high ranking officials, and the military holding them accountable for extrajudicial killings and other human rights violations against members of his church. Under Bp. Marigza's leadership, the UCCP formally filed six cases of human rights violations committed against UCCP members. Prior to his election as General Secretary of UCCP, Bp. Marigza taught at the Divinity School of Silliman University.

### **GLOBAL ECUMENICAL DELEGATION: Interfaith**

#### **Hindu Community, Dr. Veeresh Gadag**



For some time now, The United Church of Canada has been involved with studies of its engagement with interfaith partners. In fall 2014 the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee released the document *Honouring the Divine in Each Other*, which invites people across the United Church into process of exploration of the relationship of The United Church of Canada to Hinduism in the Canadian context.

Acknowledging the significant contribution of Hindus to Canada's pluralistic society, the study reviews the history of Hindu practice; the arrival of Hindus in Canada and patterns of Hindu life in this setting; and opportunities to work with and learn from Hindu neighbours. The study encourages us to grow in understanding Hindus as they would wish to be understood and to search for new ways of theologically understanding Hinduism and its relationship with Christianity.

#### **About Veeresh Gadag**

Veeresh Gadag earned his Ph.D. from the University of Poona, Pune, India and was teaching at the University of Poona before moving to Canada some 26 years ago. He has been a faculty in the Division of Community Health and Humanities in the School of Medicine, Memorial University and is past Director of the Health Research Unit. In addition to his day job, he is deeply involved with issues related to religion, spirituality, social justice and seniors. He has been a practicing member of the Samarpan Meditation and is a past Director of its Canadian Chapter – Shree Shivkrupananda Swami Foundation, Canada. He is currently a member of the Board of Directors of the Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador which deals with issues related to poverty; and Seniors Resource Centre of Newfoundland and Labrador. He is also a member of the group involved in Affordable Housing and Faith. He is a

past President of the Hindu Temple Association, St. John's and has been organizing over the past decade, annual Multi-Faith Symposia on Spirituality at the Hindu Temple, St. John's. He is a member of the Pastoral Care Department at Eastern Health, and a member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Spiritual Pastoral Care Network.

## GENERAL COUNCIL YOUTH FORUM PILGRIMS

### **Katie Vardy**

#### **Newfoundland and Labrador Conference**

My name is Katie Vardy! I'm 18 years old, living in St. John's, Newfoundland, and I'll be representing the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference at GC42. I'm a pretty silly individual who loves the presence of others and going on adventures. I can normally be found, at any given point, reading, knitting, hanging with my puppies (my puppies are cuddled into me as I write this), or singing. I've been an active member of my church now, for a very long time. My home church is St. James United Church, and for those of you that are familiar with The GO Project, the St. John's GO takes place at my home church. I was baptized at Topsail United Church, which is just outside town. And I was confirmed at the age of 13 at St. James. Since becoming confirmed, I've been very active in my church. I enjoy helping out with Sunday school, participating in youth group, planning and partaking in Sunday worship when able to, and I just overall love my congregation and the atmosphere of my church. I have also participated in four GO Projects; St. John's, Toronto, Halifax, and Stratford. Needless to say, church is a huge part of my life, and I'm blessed to say that I don't have to go every week to feel God's presence (I usually work on Sundays). I am so looking forward to the pilgrimage, exploring Canada with other amazing individuals, experiencing GC42, and of course, sharing my journey with everyone.

### **Max Martin**

#### **Maritime Conference**

My name is Max Martin and I am representing Maritime Conference! I'm 18 years old and I was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and raised just outside in Lower Sackville! I've played competitive football for 13 years and have been involved in church all my life. I have been a member of Knox United Church since I was baptized there as a child and grew up in Sunday school programs as well as in my teenage years being an active member of my youth group. In the summer of 2014 I participated in the Halifax GO Project mission site and had a truly life-changing experience over those 10 days. During my time throughout church I have come to realize that my dream is to become an Ordained Minister in the United Church and will be starting university next fall on my path to ordination! I feel so blessed and excited to embark on this journey.

### **Sam Chambre**

#### **Montreal and Ottawa Conference**

I am a confirmed member of St. Andrew's United Church, Williamstown. Like other clergy kids, I have sort of grown up at Montreal and Ottawa Conference, attending since preschool. I have been part of the YAYA program here since I was 11 years old. At 16 years old, I'm still very happy to still be coming here, and I am currently one of the Seaway Valley Presbytery reps to the Montreal and Ottawa Conference YAYA committee. In 2009, I flew with other presbytery representatives to Kelowna, BC, to attend the Children's program at General Council 40. That was an awesome experience! At the time I thought it was perfect because I got to do a ton of fun stuff and I didn't have to sit through all of the "boring meetings." Six years later, I'm much more involved in the church and interested in knowing what's going on and voicing my opinion.

Over the past year, I have enjoyed attending Youth Forums across Quebec, and I'm looking forward to another week at Quebec-Sherbrook Presbytery Camp, where this year I will be a camp counsellor. I went to Rendez-vous last summer and had a blast. I also attended a General Council Youth Forum at Five Oaks this past winter, where I met a bunch of cool new people from across Canada and will be going on a pilgrimage with 14 of them.

I'm super pumped for my pilgrimage this summer, where I will spend five weeks travelling across the county before ending up in Corner Brook, NL, for GC42!

**Amy McClelland**  
**Bay of Quinte**

My name is Amy McClelland. I am 18 years old and am the representative from Bay of Quinte Conference. I am very involved in my home congregation of St. Paul's United Church in Bowmanville, Ontario. I have been attending there since I was in grade 2, and I love participating in youth events, volunteering at Sunday school, and singing in the worship band. My interests include yoga, animal rights, playing ukulele/guitar, dancing, social justice, and most of all singing (I love to sing). Next year I will be attending Waterloo University for a degree in Therapeutic Recreation, and I hope to someday work with kids with disabilities. I am so honoured to be going on the pilgrimage and am so excited to learn more about what this AMAZING church is doing and what we can do to help it out. I feel truly blessed and can't wait to share this amazing journey with all of you!

**Alex VanCaeyzeele**  
**Toronto Conference**

My name is Alex VanCaeyzeele and I am representing Toronto Conference! I am 17 years old and call a town called Keswick home, and my life revolves mostly around a blue police telephone box and some treble and bass clefs. I have moved around a lot during my 17 years on this earth but spent most of my time living in a small town called Holland Landing. For as long as I can remember I have been attending church with my grandmother, and this tiny church in Holland Landing where there were more bums in the choir than there were in the pews some Sundays was the church that I grew up in. I was baptized in that church and cried my little eyes out when we closed it down. I soon found a new church community in which I felt the same sort of love and welcomeness. I have been a member of Sharon-Hope United Church for over five years now. I was confirmed here when I was 13 years old and attend church regularly with my grandma still. I have also been a part of the Cooperative Church Camp that is held each summer, as a leader and as the organizer for it.

I am a grade 11 music and leadership student at Keswick High School. Music has always been a very big part of my life—I grew up singing in my church choir, and now I play a multitude of instruments with my school. I am currently playing tuba, but I also play flute, saxophone, trombone, and I am currently learning the piano! I am a part of the Concert band, Jazz band, and Music council at my school and help plan most of the events that involve music at my school. I am so very excited to start my journey this summer with all of these amazing people! I know I will miss home a lot, but I look forward to bringing home all of my experiences and new learnings to my friends and family and home and in my church community!

**Cassidy Deveau****Hamilton Conference**

Hi everyone! I'm Cassidy Deveau. I'm 16 years old and I am representing Hamilton Conference this summer. I also live in Hamilton and have all my life. I have been a member of the United Church for about three years now. I started going to church by myself when I was 13 in what I believe to be a calling of the Holy Spirit on my life to seek God. One day I just walked up to Pioneer Memorial United Church and I knew it was the community for me. I was confirmed at Pioneer a year ago. I have had an amazing faith journey thus far, and I am so looking forward to continuing it this summer with the pilgrims, the leaders, and all the other folks involved with General Council and this journey. I love all the aspects of a Christian lifestyle, such as going to church, youth group, and having quiet time with God. I also love watching *Trailer Park Boys*, spending time with my family and friends, and watching movies. I'm a pretty average 16-year-old girl, to say the least.

**Katelyn Cody****London Conference**

Hello! I'm Katelyn Cody, representing London Conference on the pilgrimage. I'm from Ailsa Craig, small town proud. I will be 18 next week, and am currently in grade 12. In September I will be attending the University of Ottawa. I have been actively involved in my hometown church for as long as I can remember, helping at dinners, teaching Sunday school, and volunteering whenever needed. I attended the 41st General Council in Ottawa three years ago. Since then I have loved attending London Conference youth forum each year, Worshiplude in Ottawa, as well as Rendez-vous 2014 in Winnipeg.

In my spare time I enjoy creative writing, music (especially singing), drama, and travelling. Most of my time, however, is filled with working, volunteering, and spending time with friends and family. This summer I am most looking forward to seeing, firsthand, our church across the country, and what makes each Conference special. I intend to truly become God's hands and feet in everything we do along the pilgrimage and after.

**Aidan Legault****Manitou Conference**

My name is Aidan Legault, and I'll be representing Manitou Conference on the Pilgrimage. I'm 17 years old, and I've been a member of The United Church of Canada since I was born. I've been attending St. Peter's United Church in Sudbury, Ontario, for the past eight years. I started participating in youth events when I was 14, and I haven't stopped since! Some of my favourite events that I've attended include Worshipludes in Ottawa, Youth Forums for my Conference, and Rendez-vous 2014 in Winnipeg. I've also worked as a Counsellor at Camp Lorrain, a United Church Camp in northern Ontario. My interests include drama and musical theatre, improv (my team just got back from Canadian Nationals; SO MUCH FUN), *Reach for the Top*, martial arts, and social justice work and volunteering. This fall, I'll be attending Mount Allison University to study Political Science. My ultimate dream is to represent Canadians as a Member of Parliament. It is such a profound honour to have the opportunity to represent my Conference alongside so many incredible people from around Canada, and I cannot wait for the trip to begin!

**Ayla Hamilton****Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario**

I am a confirmed member of Silverton Knox United Church, and I attend both Silverton and Russell services. The church I have grown up in has brought me up to be the person I am today; they have encouraged me to express and pursue my ideas and passions. At Silverton United Church I am Sunday school teacher and I sing in the choir. In Russell United Church I am a member and help conduct the family choir. I take part in both services as often as I can. Our family often has Sundays that are spent 9:00–10:00 at a Silverton service then 10:30–11:30 at a Russell service! I also take part in events we host, like being a leader at Vacation Bible School, or participating in the Famine as well as potluck lunches and church garage sales and so much more.

Since grade 7 I have attended every ALF and zebu. I go to Rock Lake United Church Bible Camp. I am the only youth that has attended our annual meeting the last three years in a row. I attended Rendez-vous this summer and am on my churches' YAAY committee. With each event I go to I bring reports back to my churches. I lead a very busy life, but God has always been at the centre of that busy life.

I believe that the youth pilgrimage will be that opportunity to gather the real and collective voice of United Church youth.

I'm thankful for the hard work and foundation the generations before me have done. They motivate me too. They didn't give up when things got a little complicated; they had patience and carried on. They faced hard questions that made them stretch because that's what it means to follow Jesus. He didn't promise this was easy! He promised he would be present every step of the way. In our change, we need to respect what the previous generations have built. That tradition is an important part of who we are. These people have met and changed and grown for 100 years in places across Canada in little villages like Silverton and big cities like Toronto. They trusted where Jesus was leading them and changed, even when that change was scary.

I'm so excited to be a part of our church in this way and help form our church. I can't wait and think that it is such an honour to be in this position. The pilgrimage is going to be an amazing and humbling experience. I'm shocked that such an opportunity has presented itself to me. I can't wait.

**Sheldon Dugas****Saskatchewan Conference**

Hello. My name is Sheldon Dugas. I am 18 years old and a member of the Saskatchewan Conference. I have been going to The United Church of Canada my entire life. I was baptized in Terrace Bay, Ontario, and confirmed in Kapuskasing, Ontario. I have been living in the small town of Delisle, Saskatchewan, for the last five years and participated regularly at my local church, Delisle-Vanscoy United Church. When I'm not doing anything church-related, I like to spend my time reading books, playing video games, watching movies and TV, and focusing on school. I hope to go to the U of S and become a teacher after I graduate from high school in June. I am looking forward, and feel blessed, to be a part of this journey with so many youth and young adults who are people that I can call friends.



**Julia Heesing****Alberta and Northwest Conference**

Hey everybody! My name is Julia Heesing and I will be representing Alberta and Northwest Conference on this summer's pilgrimage! I am 17 years old and very excited to celebrate my 18th birthday in June, on my last day ever of high school! I live just outside Edmonton, Alberta, with my mom and dad (and sometimes my two older brothers, who are currently living elsewhere for postsecondary!).

I attend my hometown church, Fort Saskatchewan First United, and have all of my life. I was baptized and confirmed there in May of 2012. I have since then become more involved with the wider church, including attending General Council 41 in Ottawa. At my church, I enjoy being with all the people that I have come to know and love over the years and am so excited to meet many of you in that same way this summer!

Outside of church I am kept busy by a lot of things; at the top of that list is school, especially since I am in my graduating year, along with the senior girls' soccer team I play for. When I'm not doing one of those things, I'm usually reading, being outside, with my family, or baking!

I'm currently reading a book entitled *Jesus Feminist* by Sarah Bessey, and in closing I want to share my favourite quote from that book with you...one that fills me with hope of what everything this summer will be: "We are among the disciples who are simply going outside, to freedom, together, intent on following Jesus; we love him so. We're finding each other out here, and it's beautiful and crazy and churchy and holy. We are simply getting on with it, with the work of justice and mercy, the glorious labour of reconciliation and redemption, the mess of friendship and community, the guts of walking on the water and the big sky dreaming of the kingdom of God."

**Maia Walker****British Columbia Conference**

I'm Maia Walker and I will be representing BC Conference on our pilgrimage. I am 18 years old and come from Kamloops, BC, where I have lived my whole life. I have been a part of the United Church since I was about four years old when my mom decided to move us from the Lutheran Church, and I've been hooked ever since. Since then the church has slowly grown to touch almost every aspect of my life. I have had the opportunity to participate in camp both as a camper and a leader, I went to youth group for years, and eventually to confirmation classes. Shortly after I was confirmed (almost five years ago now) I joined our presbytery's youth council, which allowed me to help plan youth events, attend presbytery and Conference, and connect and bond with different groups of people in ways that are extraordinary. I have yet to experience something as incredible as United Church life and culture; there is absolutely nothing like it, and I thank God every single day that I found it. I am so excited to be a part of the journey that the church is starting this summer. There is change coming, whether we like it or not, so I figure it's pretty great that I can be there and meet some pretty awesome people and do some pretty awesome things while it's all happening. Other than doing church things I love reading, playing rugby, arting, and most anything that gets me called a nerd. There are very few things

that I love more than books, tackling things, new paint brushes, and a good Doctor Who reference. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible this summer.

**Nicky McKay**

**All Native Circle**

My name is Nicky McKay. I'm from Berens River, MB, and I go to school in Winnipeg, MB. I'm in grade 12/11, I'm 16 years old, and my hobbies are sports, mainly volleyball and ice hockey.

**Pilgrimage Leaders:**

**James Aitchison**

James has grown up in the United Church, the son of a minister. A self-styled “adventurous contemplative,” he has an equal passion for travel and stillness. Having thoroughly enjoyed living in the GO Project Intentional Community, he is excited to be taking part in the cross-country pilgrimage with youth en route to the 42nd General Council.

**Alana Martin**

Alana grew up in Halifax and currently lives in Toronto, working with various church groups and organizations. She graduated from Dalhousie University with Spanish and International Development Studies and is very much interested in global mission and outreach as well as The GO Project and local ministries exposing all ages to the needs in our society. Alana is a candidate for Diaconal Ministry within Maritime Conference. Having worked with The GO Project for five summers, Alana is thrilled to continue working with youth and our church in creative and innovative ways with the GC42 Pilgrimage!

## Commissioners to the 42nd General Council 2015

### **Ex Officio**

Paterson, Gary  
Tindal, Mardi  
Sanders, Nora

*Ex Officio Total: 3*

### **Alberta & Northwest**

#### ***Ex Officio***

Brodrick, Susan  
Williams, Donalee  
Douglas Walfall, Paul

#### ***Ministry Personnel***

Brazier, Beverly  
Gallant, Mervin  
Hall, Adam  
Kimmett, Julia  
Langejans, Jope  
McPhee, Vicki  
Parker, Greg  
Pollard, Dave  
Ravenscroft, James  
Reed, Helen  
Stevenson, Jan  
Tufts, Curtis  
Walls, Janice

#### ***Lay***

Baerends, Esther  
Bardock, Edison  
Buckingham, Allan  
Davison, Barbara  
Green, Beverley  
Hall, Margaret-Anne  
Heesing, Julia  
Johnson, Hugh  
Middleton, Eden  
Moore, Katharine  
Mueller, Amy  
Porter, Evelyn  
Weaver, Melanie

*Conference Total: 29*

### **All Native Circle**

#### ***Ex Officio***

Hart, Nelson  
Lightning, Marlene  
Saulteaux, Bernice

#### ***Ministry Personnel***

Beaver, Susan  
Broadfoot, Evelyn  
Budd, Connie – \*  
Little, Donald  
Schuyler, Phil – X  
Sigurdson, Janet

#### ***Lay***

Dieter, Logan  
Ironstar, Terri – X  
McKay, Nicky  
Snow, John  
Standingready, Lorna  
Whiteye, Tarance

*Conference Total: 15*

### **Bay of Quinte**

#### ***Ex Officio***

Evenden, Judith  
Thompson, Norma  
Stiles, Don

#### ***Ministry Personnel***

Brotherton, Michelle  
Doyle, Lawrence  
Gradante, Cathy  
Hobbs, Phil – X  
Hollingsworth, Richard  
King, G. David  
McAuslan, Bill  
McNally, Ryan  
Petro, Takouhi D.  
Smith-Merkley, Rodney  
Stride, Wanda  
Wardell, Russell  
Young, John H.

### ***Lay***

Cunday, Carol  
Enns, Janet  
Grant, Catherine  
Ingersoll, Chris  
Marsellus, Mynt  
McClelland, Amy  
Pancer, Chyvonne  
Reed, Daniel  
Reid, Maxine  
Sheaves, William  
Smart, Tom  
Smiley, Mary  
Stenson, Linda

*Conference Total: 29*

### **British Columbia**

#### ***Ex Officio***

Brownmiller, Graham  
Macdonald, Jean  
Copeman-Haynes, Caroline

#### ***Ministry Personnel***

Bowman, Debra  
Cryder, Catherine  
Gear, Janet  
Green, Mark  
Hannah, Jim  
Hershey, Stephen  
Horwood, Kim  
Meyer, Teri  
Olson, Jay  
Simmonds, Keith  
Slater, Michelle

#### ***Lay***

Boyle, Christine  
Curtis, Angela  
Davies, Kathie  
Fillier, Rebecca  
Green, Robyn  
Johnson, Kathy  
Matson, Michelle  
McLaren, Linda

Rogers, Maggie  
Walker, Maia  
White, James  
*Conference Total: 25*

**Hamilton**

***Ex Officio***

Reaburn, Tim  
Wilson, Sybil  
Leffler, Heather

***Ministry Personnel***

Ball, James (Jim)  
Clarkson, Gail  
Dunbar, Gord  
Hanley, Adam  
Jagger, Dave  
Maich, John  
Schmidt, Ralph  
Skinner, Dale  
Smith, Carolyn  
Smith, Ted  
Smith-Young, Greg  
Thomas, William (Bill)  
White, C. Gregory  
Wilkie, Robin  
Wood-Thomas, Cheryl

***Lay***

Bethune, Jean  
Blewett, Margaret  
Buchner, Phyllis  
Coffman, D. Lewis  
Deveau, Cassidy  
Hayman, Ralph  
Hennigar, Carol  
Hurst, John  
Lapierre-Thomas, Liam  
Leffler, Sarah  
MacDonald, Stephen  
Pedoniquotte, Martha  
Pettigrew, Ken  
Stewart-Savage, Catherine  
Wright, Yvonne

*Conference Total: 33*

**London**

***Ex Officio***

Brown, Wendy  
Wright, Douglas  
Marui, Kenji

***Ministry Personnel***

Browning, Paul  
Browning, Susan  
Collins Barker, Catherine  
Crawford, Kate  
Dillon, Mary  
Down, Michelle  
Kilner, Adam  
Larmond, Cathy  
Macgregor, Sheila  
Park, Eun Joo  
Stevens, R. Matthew  
Wagner, Carey  
Willis-Whitwell, Sharon

***Lay***

Cody, Katelyn  
Exley, David  
Kell, Scott  
MacDonald, Hillary  
MacGregor, Sarah  
McMillan, Charles  
Moffat, Robyn  
Payne, Joyce  
Silverthorn, Mary Anne  
Simpson, Greg  
Spence, Vanessa  
Swance, Jessica  
Walker, Alex  
Whiting, David  
Wohlers, Brie

*Conference Total: 31*

**Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario**

***Ex Officio***

DeLisle, Kenneth  
Stewart, Anna  
Kelly, Betty

***Ministry Personnel***

Bates, Suzanna  
Crouch, Tim  
Holmes, Hewitt  
Manley-Tannis, Shelly  
McIntyre Garrick, Erin  
Millar, Bill  
Miller, Barbara A.  
Sandilands, Heather  
Saunders, Leith  
Thomas, Ken

***Lay***

Bott, Joy  
Brand, Brenda  
Buchanan, Linda  
Dearborn, Joey  
Denton, Ruth  
Hamilton, Ayla  
Melnychuk, Teresa  
Price, Cynthia  
Wedge, Iris  
Woodbeck, Patrick

*Conference Total: 23*

**Manitou**

***Ex Officio***

Brownlee, Janice  
Todd, Erin  
Walker, Stewart

***Ministry Personnel***

Dahmer, Kathy  
Desilets, Cindy  
Frame, Janice  
Harrison, Theodore (Ted)  
Kim, Jong Bok  
Wyatt, S. Peter

***Lay***

Barbeiro, Bella  
Cunningham Closs, Martha  
Legault, Aidan  
MacGillivray, Joan  
Mailloux, Jeff  
Smith, Kathleen

*Conference Total: 15*

**Maritime**

***Ex Officio***

Handcock, Sean  
 Stuart, Catherine  
 Walker, Pauline – X

***Ministry Personnel***

Bartlett, Ross  
 Berube, Steve  
 Brown-Hewitt, Robyn  
 Burke, Kelly  
 Churchill, Gloria  
 Clark, Gary  
 Doull, Jane  
 Duggan, Emily  
 Etter, Alison  
 Fillier, Matthew  
 Johnson, Jane  
 Kingsbury, Valerie  
 Maguire MacKnight,  
 Charlene  
 Redden-Smith, Sheila  
 Reppert, Wade  
 Richardson, Andrew  
 Smith, Wayne  
 Wagner, Barbara  
 Walls, Alicia

***Lay***

Baisley, Georgina  
 Beasley, Lorraine  
 Clarke, Shirley  
 Donnelly, Heather  
 Facey, Heather  
 Fraser, Paige  
 Hebb, Emma  
 King, Lauren  
 Logan, Jack  
 MacAskill, Alice  
 MacKay, Donald  
 Martin, Alana  
 Martin, Max  
 Moffat, Linda  
 Peters, Anna  
 Tabor, Krista  
 Vaughan, Grant  
 Wood, Garth

Wylie, Joyce

*Conference Total: 41*

**Montreal & Ottawa**

***Ex Officio***

Balson, Richard  
 Harrison, Andrea  
 Baldwin, Mead

***Ministry Personnel***

Bryce, Elizabeth  
 Donoso-Cruz, Rosa Elena  
 Fryday, Shaun E.  
 Hamilton, Cathy  
 Hayward, Daniel  
 Hogle, Lee Ann  
 Paterson, Blair  
 Sloan, Darla  
 Vidal, Kim

***Lay***

Allen, Jim  
 Barratt-Lamey, Georgia  
 Beaudry, Nicole  
 Borel-Christen, Claire  
 Braman, Frederick  
 Bryce, Ruth  
 Chambré, Sam  
 Lambie, Gordon  
 Scott-Sandy, Natalya  
 Strong, Hanna  
 Webber, Jamie

*Conference Total: 23*

**Newfoundland & Labrador**

***Ex Officio***

Brown, Jean  
 Gale, Paula  
 Rowsell, Hope

***Ministry Personnel***

Bowlby, Miriam  
 Gonese, Wilson  
 Madimbu, Erasmus  
 McClellan, Stephanie  
 Sheppard, Susan

Stuckless, Grant

Vardy, Myles

***Lay***

Angel, Ralph  
 Bennett, Robert  
 Hoddinott, Iris – X  
 Hudson, Neil  
 Johnson, Roy  
 Madimbu, Regina  
 Vardy, Katelyn

*Conference Total: 17*

**Saskatchewan**

***Ex Officio***

Fouhse, Laura  
 Wiebe, Victor  
 Sheremeta, Krystal

***Ministry Personnel***

Cantwell, Jordan  
 Emberley, Linda  
 Haas, John  
 Mitchell-Walker, Russell  
 Smith, Deborah  
 Taylor, Annette  
 Tenford, James  
 Wensley, E. Gayle  
 Woods, Daryl

***Lay***

Dornan, Dwaine  
 Dugas, Sheldon  
 Hecker, Andrew  
 Ivanochko, Sheila  
 Kanhai, Moses  
 Mohn, Mary  
 Sarauer, Kathryn  
 Sarauer, Nicholas  
 Thomson, Darlene

*Conference Total: 21*

**Toronto**

***Ex Officio***

McKibbin, James  
 Shewburg, Michael  
 Brown, Audrey

**Ministry Personnel**

Campbell, Sue  
Chapman, Sarah  
Cowan, Susan  
Coward, Basil  
Goodings, Brian  
Gutjahr, Catherine  
Harbridge, Anna  
Hilfman Millson, Karen  
Hodgson, Lauren  
Knox, Nancy  
Kooiman, Michael  
Lee, Hannah  
Phillips, Kathryn  
Ransom, Bryan  
ter Kuile, Martha

**Lay**

Aylsworth, Sharon  
Baker-Graf, Edna  
Bennett, Carole  
Cook, Paul  
Davies, Terry  
Jones, Janet  
Kowal, Karen  
MacLennan, Angus  
McDonough, Patrick  
Moase, Kathryn  
Squirrell, Penny  
Stevenson, Jessica  
Stott, Paul  
Van Caeyzeele, Alexandra  
Wood, Martha

*Conference Total: 33*

**Overseas Personnel**

Beer, Sarah

*Overseas Total: 1*

**Chairs of Permanent Committees**

Cleave, Shirley  
Cornelius, Brian  
Jones, Raymond  
Murton, Tracy  
Royal-Duczek, Mary

*Chairs Total: 5*

**Additional Executive Members**

Bigirimana, Felix  
Gunasingham, Vilvan  
Jung, Sungmin  
Kostichuk, Beverly  
Lamouche, Gabrielle  
Lewis, Lori – X  
Penhale, Caroline  
Richardson, Noah  
Steadman, William (Bill)  
West, Roy

*Additional Total: 10*

*Grand Total: 354*

X – Commissioners who were unable to attend and were not replaced by alternates

\* – Transferred Conferences, attended as an invited guest

## Letters and Commissioner Information

### MODERATOR’S AND GENERAL SECRETARY’S LETTER OF GREETING

“Behold, I make all things new.” These words from Revelation 21:5 are the theme for the 42nd General Council. They remind us that all creation is in a constant process of change; that the church is always being reformed, called into new ways of being; and that God is at the very heart of this transformation.

This theme was new, and yet not new, when the book of Revelation was written. It carries echoes of Isaiah 43:19: “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” We name this in a different way every time we say the words of A New Creed, affirming that we believe in a God “who has created and is creating.”

As we approach the 42nd General Council, we are all aware that the United Church is living in a time of change. God is at work in our world. We may struggle to see the new thing, to understand where it is all heading, but we are part of the change, just as God’s people throughout all time have found themselves living in a changing world.


This is a time of daunting possibility. In these changing times, we are called to lift up the things that are most central to our identity as the United Church. We look forward to experiencing the days of discernment and decision with you in Corner Brook in August.

For this General Council, we expect that the primary focus will be on the report and proposals offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group based on their consultations and deliberations over the past two-and-a-half years—new ways of being the church. And, at the same time, as always there will be business coming to the General Council from across the United Church, much of it reflecting our deep commitment to concerns of peace and justice, to God’s call to mend the world.

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a commissioner at this historic and special meeting of the General Council. There will be a lot to read (although we have tried to be strict about the length of reports!), but your role is more than the sum total of your knowledge. You have been called to this task because of your experience in and love for the United Church. Commissioners must prepare and be familiar with the material before General Council, and yet come to the council open to being moved by the wisdom and passions of others and the voice of the Holy Spirit encountered through prayer and worship.

We will all have work to do together in Corner Brook, and of course there will also be opportunities to enjoy the legendary hospitality of our hosts in Newfoundland and Labrador Conference. We pray that you will experience God’s blessings through the beauty of the location, the inspirational worship, the friendships formed and renewed, and the sense that your decision-making work is a real contribution to the future of our church.

Travelling mercies, and we’ll see you in Corner Brook in August.



Nora Sanders  
General Secretary, General Council



Gary Paterson  
Moderator

## **WELCOME FROM THE 42ND GENERAL COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIR**

It is my pleasure on behalf of the 42nd General Council Planning Committee to welcome everyone to our Triennial Meeting in Corner Brook. Canada is a large country and many of you have travelled a long way to be here. Equally we welcome our global and ecumenical partners and other invited guests. Some of you have traveled from outside Canada to be with us and you bring greetings from our partner churches. We thank you for your commitment to the work of our church at this time. The Planning Committee in partnership with the Local Arrangements Committee have worked hard to create a General Council program that meets the needs of The United Church of Canada and yourselves.

As many of you know General Council is hard work. We know you are up to the challenge. The Planning Committee has created a program which we believe will include uplifting worship and music, an efficient framework within which to carry out our business and elect the next moderator and time in which we can relax and have fellowship with each other. All these activities are important and each is a necessary part of the whole. Our planning would not have been possible without strong support from United Church staff both in the General Council and Conference offices.

This is only the second General Council to be held in Newfoundland and Labrador. The first was in 1964 in St. John's. So we go from coast to coast! There is great excitement and anticipation among the members of Newfoundland and Labrador Conference and their support as host province has been tremendous. The General Council knew this would be so when the meeting was awarded to Corner Brook and Newfoundland and Labrador Conference. The Planning Committee wishes to thank very sincerely everyone in the province who have contributed and will be welcoming everyone with Newfoundland and Labrador hospitality during General Council.

Once again, WELCOME EVERYBODY. May we collectively be guided by the spirit to make the tough decisions that are needed to move The United Church of Canada forward into the future. I would close this message by thanking everyone who has supported the Planning Committee and myself with your thoughts and prayers over the last three years. It has been a wonderful journey and a privilege to serve.

Blessings,

Roy West,  
Chair GC42 Planning Committee

### **The 42nd General Council Planning Committee:**

Andrew Aitchison (Music Coordinator)

Miriam Bowlby (Youth Forum Coordinator)

Kathy Brett (Co-Chair Local Arrangements)

Maya Landell (Worship and Music Coordinator)

Faith March-MacCuish (Conference Executive Secretary, Newfoundland & Labrador Conference)



Fred Monteith (Business Chair)

Gary Paterson (Moderator)

Nora Sanders (General Secretary)

Karen Smart (Lead Staff Resource)

Bill Steadman (Chair, Theology Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee)

Linda Stonehouse (Co-Chair Local Arrangements)

Shirley Welch (Staff Resource)

Roy West (Chair)

## **LETTER OF WELCOME FROM THE HOST CONFERENCE**

### **Welcome to Newfoundland and Labrador Conference from the Desk of the Executive Secretary, Faith March-MacCuish**

It seems like such a short time ago we were busy getting our proposal ready to submit to General Council Executive to host the 42nd meetings of the General Council in Corner Brook. Now, here I am welcoming you; not only to our Province, but also to your extended church family, here in Newfoundland and Labrador. Welcome! We have been expecting you and we have been preparing for your arrival. Welcome! We are so proud to show you this part of your roots in our family tree.

Welcome to the most easterly Conference in The United Church of Canada. It's a place with its own time zone; as a matter of fact we have a couple of time zones in our Conference. We have the Atlantic Time Zone in parts of Labrador and the Newfoundland Time Zone for the Island and other parts of Labrador. In Corner Brook, you are currently a half an hour later than Nova Scotia. So set your watches, or look at your phones, and enjoy your extra time here on "The Rock."

We do not have presbyteries like the other Conferences in The United Church; we have Districts. There are two Districts; the East and the West. The Conference has 87 Pastoral Charges and five District-recognized ministries in chaplaincy services. There are 200 congregations and they are located throughout the province, both urban and rural. The East District is comprised of the Northeast Avalon to the Town of Terra Nova. The West District begins at Glovertown and continues to Port-Aux-Basques and all places in between, as well as Labrador.

We are very proud to be part of The United Church of Canada and feel very blessed to live out our ministry in this unique place. We are elated to have you with us! We are aware that these are changing times and we are asked to make some very difficult decisions at these meetings, so we hope that you find peaceful places to rest your soul as you go about this hard work.

From the members and staff of the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference, Welcome Cousins! If there is anything we can do to make your time with us more enjoyable please do not hesitate to ask!

Faith March-MacCuish  
Executive Secretary

**WELCOME FROM THE 42ND GENERAL COUNCIL LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE**

Commissioners and Guests of the 42nd General Council:

Corner Brook and the 42nd General Council Local Arrangements Committee are looking forward to welcoming Commissioners and guests to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada to take place at Grenfell Campus, Memorial University and the Corner Brook Civic Centre.

Local congregations, as well as those from across the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, have been busy making the registration bags and gathering items to fill those bags, and there will be lots of cookies and tea buns baked in the time leading up to August 8th!

This is the first time in 50 years that Newfoundland and Labrador Conference has hosted a General Council, and we are all looking forward to the opportunity of having you all here at this historical time in the life of our church.

While there will be lots of work to be done during the meetings, we hope you will take the time to enjoy a bit of what western Newfoundland has to offer.

We look forward to meeting you all in August.

Blessings,

Linda Stonehouse and Kathy Brett  
Co-chairs, Local Arrangements Committee  
The 42nd General Council

## **GREETINGS FROM THE EAST DISTRICT CHAIR**

Greetings to each of you in the name of Jesus Christ the head of our church!

I am very pleased, and very excited to welcome you to the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference, to the meetings of the 42nd General Council, and to this very beautiful part of our vast and diverse country.

I have just returned from our Spring Meetings of District and Conference and I heard much about the preparations for your arrival. I learned of all that is underway to get ready for your visit. I heard about all that's being collected, created, assembled, and booked. There is great anticipation among all those who will greet you with a very special Newfoundland and Labrador welcome! Likewise I am quite sure that there is considerable anticipation for you as you make your plans for travel and delve into the package of materials to prepare yourself and as you contemplate what clothes to bring!!

Know that your anticipation and excitement are matched on this end of things, and as you journey toward the meetings and the business of GC42, both figuratively and literally, please know that you are held in prayer.

This is a fascinating and challenging time to be church, and through it all, we walk in the hope and the assurance that there are great things on the cusp. We indeed journey, knowing that our God walks with us, ever beside and ever before, and that although much is unknown, there is a tremendous imprint of those who have boldly gone before.

As we seek to be faithful to the work that God has called us to be about, may we endeavour to walk and serve following the example of Christ as we journey, trusting in the words from Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you...plans to give you hope and a future."

God's richest and deepest blessings be with you in your preparations and in your deliberations. It is truly a special gift to be in the company of such a great cloud of witnesses. Come and be open to all that God will enable in your time together and in your time here in this truly wonderful place.

Thanks be to God!

Sue White,  
East District Chair

## **WELCOME FROM THE WEST DISTRICT, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR CONFERENCE**

Welcome, welcome, welcome to our wonderful West District! We are very happy to be the host Conference and the host District for these General Council 42 meetings. We have been preparing for your arrival for the past two years, and it is hard to believe that you are finally here. It is exciting for us to be hosting you and we want, at this time, to offer a sincere and warm welcome to all of you commissioners from across this great land of ours; from sea to sea to sea.

We are glad you are here. Welcome also to the staff who will be helping the meeting run smoothly, and to the many, many volunteers who have pooled together their resources and skills to help make this meeting a memorable one. We welcome also in our midst, our special guests, students and the youth. All of us working together to discern God's spirit for The United Church and its ministry will indeed make us stronger. As someone who has moved to Newfoundland and Labrador from Africa, I have been learning a new language all its own. I will leave you with a couple of phrases:

Ow's she cutting?  
Best kind, b'y.

How are you?  
I am feeling great!

We hope your time with us is "best kind." If there is anything we can do to make your stay more enjoyable, please do not hesitate to speak to one of our many volunteers and we will do what we can to help.

I know many of you have signed up for the tours that will showcase some of our wonderful geography and our people! We hope you enjoy getting to know our West District. Blessings on the meetings and the wonderful work of God that we are about. My dear friends, I believe God is doing something new for our church, and the time is now!

Rev. Wilson Gonese  
Chair

**LETTER OF WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR OF CORNER BROOK**

It is my pleasure to bring greetings and extend a warm welcome to The United Church of Canada's 42nd General Council. We are delighted that you will be meeting at Grenfell Campus Memorial University in Corner Brook.

On behalf of my colleagues on City Council, I would especially like to welcome those who are visiting from across Canada along with global and ecumenical partners.

Corner Brook is a small city with a unique atmosphere where we are blessed with a most beautiful and rugged landscape. While you are here I encourage you to view the magnificent scenery, experience the warmth and hospitality of our people, and enjoy all the amenities our city and region have to offer.

For those of you who are from Corner Brook, I invite you to take this opportunity to rediscover your city through the eyes of our visitors, with whom you will be spending this week. As you show them your hospitality, I hope that you will also share your pride in our beautiful city.

Best wishes!

Sincerely,

Charles Pender  
Mayor

## **WELCOME FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT, GRENFELL CAMPUS**

Welcome to Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland! I am so pleased you have chosen to hold the National Conference of The United Church of Canada at our campus.

I understand that this is a particularly special year for your church, as you are celebrating the 90th anniversary of The United Church of Canada—we are honoured to be the venue for this auspicious occasion.

I'm confident you will be comfortable and happy here, because Grenfell Campus is a very special place. We pride ourselves on being a warm and intimate environment for our students, our faculty and staff, and of course, for the visitors from our communities. As does the United Church, Grenfell Campus believes that inclusiveness, multiculturalism and diversity are key to a healthy and rewarding life.

I'm especially pleased to learn that there is a significant representation of young people from your various Conferences. At Grenfell, we put students at the centre of everything we do. All our programs and services focus on students. There are so many aspects to student life—academics, leadership and teamwork, engagement, research, sports and recreation, and social responsibility. Our students experience many opportunities to develop in each of these areas. As the youth of your church make their way around campus, they will find information about our community and our programs and services, which I hope they will find helpful, and perhaps, inspiring! We welcome any questions about the programming we offer. We would be honoured to show students around campus and help them to understand why living and learning at Grenfell is so extraordinary.

It is our goal to provide you with an environment that is enriching and comfortable for your conference. Please make yourselves at home. If there is anything we can do to make your experience more comfortable, do not hesitate to let us know. All the best for a memorable and joyous celebration of your faith. I look forward to meeting many of you in the days ahead as I take part as a conference presenter.

God bless,

Dr. Mary Bluehardt Vice-President, Grenfell Campus

## AGENDA

	Sat. 8	Sun. 9	Mon. 10	Tues. 11	Wed. 12	Thurs. 13	Fri. 14	Sat. 15
7:00–8:15		Breakfast Swim 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	<b>Travel Day</b> Breakfast
8:30–12:00	Stewards Orientation at 11 a.m.	9 a.m. Sunday Morning Worship  <b>Commons 1</b> 10:00 a.m. Further introductions	<b>Commons 3</b>	Gather in Commons for Worship  <b>Commissions</b>	<b>Commons 6</b>	<b>Commons 7</b>  Election of Moderator	<b>Commons 9</b>	8:30 GCE  9:00 Staff Leaders
12:00–1:30	Lunch – Registration Starts – new Residence Building Foyer	12–2 Extended lunch  Alvin Dixon Memorial 5k run/2k walk	Lunch Learning Options	Lunch	Lunch Sabbath Time	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:30–6:00	11:00–12:00 Stewards Orientation  4:00 Table Group Facilitator Training  Early dinner 5:15–7:00 p.m.	<b>Commons 2</b> Reports  <i>5 p.m. Nominations for Moderator close</i>	<b>Commons 4</b>  Conference Gatherings	<b>Commissions</b>  <b>Commons 5</b>	OFF/Free Time – Optional Local Excursions	<b>Commons 8</b>  Election of Moderator  Conference Gatherings	<b>Commons 10</b>	
6:00–7:30	7 p.m. Opening of General Council	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner – on or off campus	Dinner	Dinner	
7:30–9:30	Worship, Welcome, Introductions Orientation	Celebrating 90 Years  Stoling the Moderator Nominees	Moderator Nominees Address Council & Youth Forum Worship	Gather in Commons 5 Theological Reflection  Pilgrimage to Spiritual Practices	OFF/Free Time  Optional Beer and Hymns  Swim 8 to 9 p.m.	Kitchen Party – Local High School	Closing Worship	

**Please note:** There will be no formal breaks. Please use the facilities and get snacks as you need them.

**Daily start times:** Most days the meeting starts at 8:30 a.m. (with gathering music at 8:15).

On Sunday, August 9, there will be a later 9:00 a.m. start (with gathering music at 8:45).

**Lunch time:** Will normally be 90 minutes. On Sunday, August 9, it will be two hours to allow for the 5k run/2k walk.



**COVENANT**

The words of the GC42 Covenant will help us set the foundation for how we will treat each other as we build a strong discerning community. May it be lived into throughout the meeting and beyond.

The start of the Covenant is based on the seven teachings shared and practised by many Indigenous people.

<b>English</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>Mi’kmaq</b>	<b>Mohawk</b>
Be Love	Amour	Gesaluet	Kanoronhkwáhtshera
Be Wise	Wisdom	Ne’tata’suaqan	Kanikonrowahnhátshera
Be Truth	Vérité	Gi’wajiaq	Orihwiiohónhwe
Be Respect	Respect	Gepmite’lmatl	Kakwenien’stáhtshera
Be Humble	Humilité	Wanqwajite’teken	Aionhnitènte
Be Honest	Honnêteté	Gegnuimatl	Ahkorihwahkwarihshióntshera
Be Brave	Courage	Melgita’t	Kanikonhrahtsanítshera

\* Wanqwajite’teken — Humility is to know yourself as a sacred part of Creation. In the Mi’kmaq language, this word can also mean “compassion.” You are equal to others, but you are not better. Some communities instead express this with Wantaqo’ti, which in addition to “peace” can also be translated as “calmness,” “meekness,” “gentility,” or “patience.”

## **INTERCULTURAL LENS TOOL**

***PLEASE USE THESE INTERCULTURAL LENS TOOL QUESTIONS***

***AS YOU REVIEW THE WORKBOOK  
AND IN OUR TABLE GROUP TIMES***

***IT IS HOPED THAT THE INTERCULTURAL CONVERSATION  
IS WOVEN THROUGHOUT THE MEETING***

### ***INTERCULTURAL LENS***

1. ***What*** is the context?

- What are my own biases, and how will I address them?
- What unspoken cultural norms, values or rules might be present?
- What perspectives might be missing?
- What issues of systemic injustice are named and unnamed?
- What assumptions might be being made about who and what matters?

2. ***Who*** will be affected?

- Are minority voices heard in the decision-making process?
- Who are the stakeholders?
- Whose voices are valued in the decision?
- Whose perspectives might be missing from this conversation?
- Who has been invited to participate?

3. ***How*** will this increase equity?

- How does it lift up the intercultural vision?
- How might power differentials be effectively addressed?
- How could we facilitate equitable conversations?
- How will assumptions be checked or verified?
- How will this enable the church to live into its commitments around interculturalism, racial justice, gender justice, covenanting for life in the midst of empire, and other aspects of being a justice-seeking/justice-living church? (Or, to challenge systemic injustice?)

## THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES, THEME, AND LOGO FOR THE 42ND GENERAL COUNCIL

### The Guiding Principles as approved by the Executive of the General Council, November 16–18, 2013

In all that we do, both before and at General Council, it will be in the spirit of making The United Church of Canada more faithful and stronger in its commitment.

We profess in *A New Creed*:

*We are not alone,  
we live in God's world.*

*We believe in God:*

*who has created and is creating.*

In this time of recreation, the work of the Comprehensive Review will be the primary piece of business before the 42nd General Council. The 41st General mandated this task group with the overall task “to examine the comprehensive vision and circumstances of The United Church of Canada and develop a report and recommendations for the 42nd General Council 2015 that will best enable the church to live faithfully in God’s world at this time in the church’s life.” The GC42 Planning Committee will work to find ways to manage the workflow coming to this General Council to ensure the time required is available to address the work of the Comprehensive Review.

The time has come to *make new*. Trusting in God:

We will allow for the grace and space to engage in faithful work:

- The agenda will allow space for the Holy to enter into our work
- The way to do the work of General Council will fully integrate business and worship, discernment and community building
- We will engage in the core questions facing The United Church of Canada at this time

This General Council is meeting together for the first time, and we will meet together in friendship and peace:

- We will begin with communication and education before people arrive at Corner Brook
- Our communication during General Council will be done with intention and care, to help people understand and fully engage in the process
- We will build community, by building a sense of connectivity within the General Council Circle and with other circles of The United Church of Canada

We will work in a spirit of abundance and thankfulness:

- We will recognize the gifts given to the church over the years
- We will recognize that we are surrounded by blessings
- We will be good stewards of funds, natural resources, and people’s time and energy, both before and during the General Council meeting

We will focus on the United Church’s sense of the future, tackling questions about our future with integrity and hope:

- The future belongs to many people, and we will strive to hear many voices in the work of the General Council
- We will look for the opportunity to grow as we face change
- We will strive to inspire leadership during and beyond the General Council
- We will trust others and encourage others to trust our process through transparency and open communication.

## THE THEME AND LOGO

**The Theme:** The theme for the 42nd General Council comes from the last few pages of the biblical story in Revelation 21:5. The text “Behold, I make all things new” reminds us that all creation is in a constant process of change; that the church is always being reformed, called into new ways of being; and that God is at the very heart of this transformation. We are not alone.

**The Logo:** The logo says pretty clearly that we’re meeting in Newfoundland, but let your imagination play with the symbols. Think of



God’s circle of love that holds us;  
of the currents and waves that carry us forward, through storm and in calm;  
and of the fish, Jesus Christ, who is in our midst, who is on the move,  
and who invites us to put down our nets into the deep,  
to fish on the other side;  
to follow him...even when it means stepping out of the boat!

## **MEDIA COVERAGE AT GENERAL COUNCIL**

The secular media's presence at General Council varies from year to year, depending on the degree of local interest and the relevance of the Council's agenda to the wider world.

It is customary for reporters to identify themselves as journalists whenever they are working. To help them do this, the General Council Newsroom asks that all media people who are attending General Council wear special nametags.

As a Commissioner or Youth Forum delegate, you may be approached by reporters wanting to interview you. All accredited media, including *The United Church Observer* and General Council Newsroom staff, will be wearing press/media/newsroom identification badges.

Also, as a Commissioner or Youth Forum Delegate, if you have been asked to report on the work of the 42nd General Council 2015 for your local newspaper, or other media outlet, please come to the newsroom for proper identification. Any participant at General Council who is also functioning as a journalist should be wearing a media nametag. This is particularly important if you intend to quote individuals who may not be aware that comments made in private conversation may also appear in a news report.

Please remember that while you are encouraged to cooperate with the media, it is usually best to assume that all conversations with reporters are on the record (that is, for publication). Some reporters may agree not to identify the source of their information, however, these terms must be agreed to in advance of the conversation with the reporter.

Remember also, that when you speak to a reporter, you are being asked for your personal views on matters being discussed by the General Council. This is true, unless of course, you have been named a designated spokesperson for a particular group.

While reporters are not permitted onto the floor during business sessions, photographers and camera crews are able to walk between tables for brief periods of time to shoot the film or video footage they need.

You can also expect that stewards may deliver messages from reporters who wish to meet with you. The message will indicate when and where you are to meet, and usually the subject matter to be discussed. We would ask that you indicate to the person delivering the message whether you are able to meet with the reporter or suggest an alternate time that would be more convenient.

Usually we suggest that reporters schedule interviews with Commissioners during breaks in order not to disturb your participation in Council. There are times, however, when reporters have an immediate deadline and need to speak to you as soon as possible. When this happens, the message you will be handed will ask that you slip away at your earliest convenience. Stewards may also hand you a message indicating that a reporter wishes to speak to you long distance. You are welcome to return these phone calls from the newsroom.

In addition to the secular media's coverage of General Council, the United Church's own reporters, including *The United Church Observer*, play a significant role in the life of General Council. *General Council News* staff and volunteers will be publishing regular news reports and video clips in French and English. These will be posted throughout General Council on the United Church's 42nd General Council website ([www.gc42.ca](http://www.gc42.ca)). There you will also find links to our Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and Instagram channels, as well as live streaming video of the Council's proceedings.

In keeping with the initiative to make the 42nd General Council as "green" a Council as possible, we will not be providing Commissioners with printed copies of General Council News. However, there will be a PDF version of each day's news posted on the 42nd General Council website for those who wish to print copies when they return home. We will also be providing each table group with a single printed copy of General Council News each day for table group members to share.

Again, if you are asked, I encourage you to cooperate with the media. Reporters are here to do an important and difficult job of reporting accurately and fairly what is happening at General Council. To do that job well, they need our help.

And finally, if you have any questions regarding the media's presence or coverage of General Council, please contact me on-site in the General Council Newsroom in the Press Box.

Mary-Frances Denis  
Program Coordinator  
Media and Public Relations  
May 2015

## ACRONYMS

We discourage the use of acronyms because they tend to exclude those who don't know them, but there are still some in this workbook. For that reason we include a glossary of what the acronyms stand for here.

ADR	Alternate Dispute Resolution
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AMC	Aboriginal Ministries Council
ANCC	All Native Circle Conference
ANW	Alberta and Northwest Conference
AOTS	As One That Serves (Men's Ministries)
ARCH	Archives
AVEL	Audio Visual Education Library
BC	British Columbia Conference
BQ	Bay of Quinte Conference
CAYT	Children and Young Teens Program at General Council
CCC	Canadian Council of Churches
CES/S	Conference Executive Secretary(ies)/Speaker
CIM	Communities in Mission/Communautés et ministères
COC	Community of Concern
CRTG	Comprehensive Review Task Group
DM	Diaconal Ministry
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EM	Ethnic Ministries Unit
ES	Emerging Spirit
FIN	Finance
GC	General Council
GC41PC	General Council 41 Planning Committee
GCE	Executive of the General Council
GCM	General Council Minister(s)
GCO	General Council Office
GCSE	General Council Sub-Executive
GP	Global Partner(s)
GS	General Secretary, General Council
HAM	Hamilton Conference
IJRS	Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools Committee
ITS	Information Technology Services Unit
LM	Lay Ministry
LON	London Conference
M&O	Montreal and Ottawa Conference
M&S	Mission and Service
MAC	Moderator's Advisory Committee
MAL	Member(s) at Large
MAR	Maritime Conference
ME	Ministry and Employment Unit
MECC	Middle East Council of Churches

MEPS	Ministry and Employment Policies and Services
MNWO	Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario
MOD	Moderator
MP	Ministry Personnel
MTU	Manitou Conference
MV	More Voices United
N&L/NL	Newfoundland and Labrador Conference
NWO	National Women's Organization
OM	Ordered Ministry
OMGS	The Offices of the Moderator and General Secretary
OMNI	Omnibus
PAR	Pre-Authorized Remittance
PC-FIN	Permanent Committee, Finance
PC-G&A	Permanent Committee, Governance and Agenda
PC-MEPS	Permanent Committee, Ministry and Employment Policies and Services
PC-PMM	Permanent Committee, Programs for Mission and Ministry
PMM	Programs for Mission and Ministry
ROP	Record of Proceedings
SK	Saskatchewan Conference
SPK	Speaker
TICIF	Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee
TOR	Toronto Conference
UCC	The United Church of Canada
UCW	United Church Women
UMiF	Unité de Ministères en Français / Ministries in French Unit
VU	Voices United
WCC	World Council of Churches
YF	Youth Forum Program at General Council



## LIVING WITH RESPECT IN CREATION AT GC42

**We are called to be the Church:  
to celebrate God’s presence,  
to live with respect in Creation**

—*A New Creed*

The 42nd General Council Planning Team for 2015 of The United Church of Canada affirms the commitment to planning and hosting a *greener* General Council.

**The Team has planned for better environmental stewardship with commitments to put a priority on being as “paperless” as possible and to working with our host site and our local arrangement team on greening and recycling. We are working on a GC42 “whole council” carbon offset response recognizing our travel impact is large.**

### **What Commissioners can do for better environmental stewardship...**

- Bring your own reusable water bottle and coffee/tea mug, and refrain from purchasing items on your journey that have excess or non-recyclable packaging. Coffee, tea, and water will be provided in the meeting spaces, but we will not be providing cups or glasses. Everyone is asked to bring your own and to keep them clean for themselves.
- Don’t print unnecessary documents; charging stations are provided for electronic use, and you will receive e-updates on your devices throughout the meeting.
- Pack and travel lightly, with proper footwear and clothing to spend time outdoors.
- Spend time intentionally each day outside, prayerful and intentional about our connections to the world and all of God’s creation.
- Calculate your carbon footprint to travel to Corner Brook at [www.carbonzero.ca](http://www.carbonzero.ca), and come prepared to give financially to the GC42 carbon offset response project.

**In order to love each other, we have to love the garden; in order to love the garden, we have to love each other.**

—*General Council’s Task Force on the Environment, 1977*

## MODERATOR NOMINEES

### REV. JIM BALL



#### **Nominating Body**

Hamilton Conference

#### **Biographical Sketch**

I was born on the Hamilton Mountain and raised by the shores of Lake Ontario. By the banks of the Etobicoke River, in fields and forests of play and learning, I enjoyed the best of childhoods. On nearby beaches I took off my shoes and pressed my toes deep into the cold, wet earth, standing fixed in delight and wonder. A child knows when she or he stands on holy ground.

The ability of nature to inspire was soon matched by the energy of my own inquisitiveness and wish to understand. I embraced the detached, measuring ways of a young biologist. It was a development that matched well the clear-thinking sensibilities of my Presbyterian home.

The rest of the story is exciting and routine. I played and sang my way through my teen years. I joined the United Church. My heart and mind were claimed by the open, inclusive, ecumenical idea of us. I pursued higher education in Canada and Europe, collecting three degrees at the University of Toronto (B.Sc., M.Div., M.Th.) and additional wisdom at the Ecumenical Institute in Switzerland. I became more intentionally a student of scripture and for a time served as a university T.A.

I have served in Toronto and Hamilton Conferences ever since my ordination in 1981. I have worked alongside the people of four wonderful faith communities in Richmond Hill, Caledon East, Halton Hills, and Guelph. There were urban, rural, team, and public dimensions to each one. Each was an example of healthy collaboration and mutual support. Each served a wider world. Each called out fresh creativity and growth in me. Some of the work was easy. Much of it was hard. I made mistakes. Together we were the church—worshipping, comforting, learning, feeding, sheltering. We even helped build the first key piece of Canada’s national trail. It was all gift and blessing.

I have served the wider church in many roles and tasks: in committee work at presbytery and Conference levels (Christian Formation and Education and Students), in representational roles and writing tasks for General Council and the former Division of World Outreach (Ecumenism, Interfaith, and Social Justice), and in policy work at Emmanuel College in the area of continuing education (chairperson). For a decade I served as our denomination’s principal voice and presence at table with other national churches in our collective conversation with the Canadian Jewish Congress. I eventually chaired that national consultation. My work and learning for the church has included travel to the Middle East, to India and Nepal, to Europe, to New York and California, and across Canada. I have also had the privilege of serving the General Council, both as a commissioner and as staff resource.

My adult life journey has been shared with Anne, who is my wife and best friend. Our children, Michael (a new graduate in law in Quebec and fully bilingual) and Sarah (a recent graduate in family studies in Guelph), are our deepest joy.

As I walked recently along the paths of the nearby forest, the ancient words again rose up: Holy, holy, holy. Some gifts never leave us. The Jesus I follow left us many, including the encouragement to live with respect in creation, to measure the fairness of life from the margins, and to trust always in our created capacity to serve.

### **Statement**

Those who know me know that I love stories. I love listening to them. Learning from them. Growing because of them. As we all prepare for the 42nd General Council meeting in Corner Brook, the important role of stories has been on my heart and mind.

We live in story. Whether we are eight-year-olds playing pond hockey or 80-year-olds pondering end-of-life decisions, we each have a narrative we tend to live into and out of. It is a tale that interprets the events and experiences of our lives, that guides our choices, steadies us in storms, and casts our vision forward. What is yours? And what is ours together?

When it all seems too much, and sometimes is—the struggle, the losses, the closings; when we have a hard time finding serenity to accept the things we cannot change; when decisions need to be made but the clarity and confidence we would like to have before making them elude us—I believe we are invited to breathe, listen, and remember who we are as ambassadors of relationship: To focus less on graph trends and thoughtful analysis and imaginative experimental models, important though all of these things are, and more on the issues of identity, culture, and spirit that make or break any venture of change and renewal. Goals are important to set and structures important to make nimble, but our habits, assumptions, and energy will be key factors that help or hinder us on the way. To get at these we need a special kind of listening.

As we face the shadow and light of an uncertain future, I believe we are invited to remember our shaping and sustaining story. It is a story of many stories, beginning with an ancient one. The old story affirms creation's goodness and adequacy, including our own; it invites us to begin all reflection with the question "How many loaves have we?" and not waste our time focusing on what we don't have or cannot do; it reminds us that life goes better when we act on need not want; that regular rest and debt relief help everyone (Sabbath), that many voices are better than one (diversity), that circles are better than pyramids (equity), that tents are better than towers (mobility), that it is easier to turn away from external trappings than to let go our internal hunger for them (Exodus), and that we should measure life from the margins and always stand with the weak. Its pages are filled with stories that ask nothing of us (blessing, gift, and comfort) and everything of us (discipleship, wilderness rehab, and truth and reconciliation). Its stories call us to a ministry of relationship. They send us out, as we are, to meet others as they are and where they are, to open ourselves with love and vulnerability to their hurt and struggle, and in that space share a meal and healing together. I believe that identity, balance, and direction are found for us in these old tales.

I believe we are called to remember the story of our families and communities of origin, the women and men who shaped us and influence us still. We are invited to listen to our lives speak, to do our own deep spiritual work and get clearer through the support of safe community. Spiritual practices, family of origin work, and more help us identify the assumptions and habits we have inherited, including the things that trigger us, that shut down or release our better angels. For me, this remembering includes my father, his experience as an orphan, and the damage that marked him that was never discussed but everywhere felt. That he found capacity to trust enough to build relationship and a life of purpose was inspiring, and set deep in me a desire to leave no one out or behind.

I believe we are called to remember the story of surrounding community—past, present, and emerging—beginning with the peoples of the First Nations with whom we walk. This is a moment for us to make better that relationship through lived apology and meaningful reparation. We remember also the others beyond the church, diverse and good, with whom we would work on the things that challenge us all. Most are not waiting for us to change, but they do welcome our humble accompaniment. When they express hurt or healing in their coffee shop conversations and radio songs we encounter sacred story, lifted up in the language of universal human experience. It is a language we should adopt. Our remembering also extends to people seeking fairness, including the young, who offer so many gifts in a new age and who are full partners in the work of building healthier connection.

I believe we are called to remember the story of the earth, to listen to it carefully enough to understand how so many of our theologies and practices still do not look all the way to the ground; and to recall the many ways the earth teaches interdependence, mutual respect, and the need for balance and rest.

Most of all I believe that this is a time to remember that we are remembered. From before our beginnings until after our endings, we are held. There is a world that needs to hear and feel this, and rest more deeply in it, so that anxious hearts might relax, and busy accumulation slow, and an exhausted and damaged earth find healing.

To live in remembrance is not to dwell in the past but to live in relationship—back, forward, around, down, and in. Relationship is our work, and remembrance our practice of it. Lives of risk, trust, vulnerability, fairness, forgiveness, and love, shared with humility and joy, reflect our identity. Our story. We don't need much in the way of money or structure to be living it. We can be this, and offer this, anywhere. As Christ's body in the world. God's Spirit being our helper.

**REV. DEBRA BOWMAN**



**Nominating Body**

Vancouver South, Cariboo, Vancouver-Burrard, and Fraser presbyteries (British Columbia) and BC Conference

**Biographical Sketch**

***Chair of Agenda and Planning Committee for 39th General Council***

I was responsible for planning, with the Moderator and the General Secretary, a meeting of 700 people in which we needed to discern the future direction of The United Church of Canada. This undertaking involved familiarity with discernment methodologies and large group facilitation, as well as strong leadership skills.

2000–2009 Member of General Council Executive, Chair of Business Committee of GCE for some of that time

2001–2002 Member of GCE Governance Project Team

2002–2006 Member of GCE Governance, Planning, and Budget Processes Committee

Attended the 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, and 40th meetings of the General Council

***Leadership with Congregations***

- Ryerson United Church: Coordinating Minister, 2006–present  
During the nine years I have been the Coordinating Minister of Ryerson United Church in Vancouver I have learned an enormous amount about the potential of the church as a partner in new work. Forging and leading partnerships involves work with the congregation, Vancouver City, nonprofits, developers, and architects to determine how our property resources and our sanctuary can undergird the ministry of Ryerson United in the 21st century. I am very committed to considering how our buildings both shape and reflect our mission and theology; this includes considering how we hold space for the sacred and the secular to encounter each other; how our buildings can serve as “commons space” or “piazza space.” I believe that the holy can be made known and experienced in beauty and am wondering how the church can be a space that allows, even encourages, this to happen.
- I have also served Wilson Heights and Capilano United Churches.

***Leadership with the Larger Church***

- President BC Conference 2011–2012
- Executive Secretary, BC Conference, February 2000–June 2003  
While Executive Secretary we implemented the changes brought about by the Conference’s decision to restructure. While the implications of such changes are often far-reaching such decisions can be implemented well.
- Facilitated workshops on leadership practices for several presbyteries; for the Emerging Spirit program; for the BC Sowing Promise, Growing Leaders Events; and for the Interim Ministry program. This work has three foci: (i) where we are in our development as an

organization, (ii) what leadership is required, and (iii) what kinds of relationships and personal behaviours are required.

- Served on the LeaderShift Advisory Resource group.
- Worked with groups in the Effective Leadership Pilot project. This initiative presents many of the same challenges that a move from presbyteries to regional councils might offer.

### ***Education***

- Following a Master's of Divinity degree (1995, Vancouver School of Theology) I have pursued a wide range of courses dealing with leadership during times of organizational change.
- Powers of Leadership: Meeting the Challenges of the New Commons
- The focus is on a framework of leadership for a time of adaptive challenge, extremely relevant to leadership in the church at this juncture in our history.

### **Statement**

Once in a long time there is a point when “hope and history rhyme” (*The Cure at Troy* by Seamus Heaney, [www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/29574.Seamus\\_Heaney](http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/29574.Seamus_Heaney)). A time when the caustic flow of cynicism is staunch and a collective call for justice is heard. We are at such a time in our history.

I grew up in Chilliwack, BC, in the late 1950s, when we had practices at elementary school about what to do when the atomic bomb fell. (Leave your rubber boots and lunch kit behind, and run home as fast as you could!)

I came to early maturity when the people I placed hope in were all assassinated—John F. Kennedy; Martin Luther King, Jr.; and Robert Kennedy among them.

I was living in Argentina during the time when that country's “dirty war” was an early rumour. I was confident that nothing like that could happen at home, until students were shot dead at Kent State University.

These life experiences, and my undergrad formation in political sociology, shaped in me despair for our future. The church seemed irrelevant to the crisis of the time, and I left.

And then, years later at the baptism prep for our son, when all we really wanted was to have him “done,” I fell in love. To quote Seamus Heaney, hope and history rhymed.

As I listened to the scripture and the hymns and the orientation to what the United Church was about, I recognized a vague memory about hope and possibilities and justice. I was converted from cynicism and despair.

That is the call to our church now—to find the capacity to offer hope to those who despair at this point in the world's history.

I think we are at a global tipping point. Capitalism run amok and the destruction of our environment are dividing our world along sharp lines.

The national church and all congregations need to align with those seeking righteousness. To become much more maladjusted and maladapted to the way things are going. To be a stick in the wheel to what feels like an inexorable rolling away from God's yearning for creation. To be one of the places where the sacred and the secular align for righteousness.

Some of my sabbatical was spent in Italy during Lent and Easter. I wanted to see what it looked like when religious celebrations are lived out on the streets. Instead I saw what community living looked like on the steps of the churches. The piazzas of every city and village offered common ground for people to gather. People of all ages, stages, economic classes, and abilities came together and talked, argued, laughed.

What if churches served as piazzas? What if we offered ourselves as open spaces, gracious, hospitable, and engaged in the world, where anyone can enter and rest a little, be received and welcomed and restored? Where we form partnerships and alliances with those we encounter and together continue our efforts to change the world? Our buildings and our spaces would be physical manifestations of our mission.

If we take this posture seriously, we stand at the most intimate level of developing community.

This kind of hospitality involves a lot more than a cup of coffee in the narthex. Many of us already offer meals for the isolated and beds for those in crisis. Much more life can be happening in our spaces. We have the room to partner with non-profits with similar commitments to quality of life so that our mutual care for others is housed affordably in our buildings. We can be a home for the resistance.

The United Church of Canada has no time to go to ground in preoccupation with structures. We need to determine one thing each community of faith can take on and then find partners who will strengthen our efforts. Some examples from my congregation, Ryerson United in Vancouver ([ryersonunited.ca](http://ryersonunited.ca)):

- co-sponsoring with EcoJustice to show *On the Line*, a movie about the proposed Enbridge pipeline
- the Can You Dig It learning disabilities organization building a community garden on Ryerson's land for members and neighbours
- partnering with the choral community to create space for beauty and for all the arts to be rehearsed, housed, and showcased in affordable space

Because I was gone from the church for so long, and because our sons are very involved in athletics, much of my time is spent in tension between the secular and the sacred worlds. In that place, it is easy to see a yearning for meaning in the secular world, and the same vague memories of possibilities for hope that I had.

There is an awakening afoot—and we can be part of it.

I chose to come back to church, touched by the commitments of the congregation, and because in faith I could see hope for our history. With that conviction I accepted the call to ordination so that I could offer witness to the source of my hope. And it is that same impetus and imperative, and love for this church, that moves me to be a candidate for Moderator. I believe I have the gifts, the heart, and the conviction to deliver the leadership we need.

It seems, at this moment, we in the United Church are standing with our noses pressed up against a window looking onto the rest of the world. We have so much to receive and so much to offer through our engagement with the community immediately outside our doors. I trust that with simplified structures, less desperation about finances, and a renewed connection to God's purpose, the glass will shatter and we will spill out into the streets, and people will come to live and Love in our piazzas, in our sacred spaces.

But this I call to mind,  
and therefore I have hope:  
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,  
[God's] mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.  
"The Lord is my portion," says my soul,  
"therefore I will hope in [God]."  
(Lamentations 3:21–24)



**REV. JORDAN CANTWELL****Nominating Body**

River Bend Presbytery (Saskatchewan Conference)

**Biographical Sketch**

I was born in New York, shortly after the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, to a Methodist mom and a Roman Catholic dad. Ecumenical dialogue and practice have been part of my life from the very beginning, and continue to shape who I am and what I believe God is calling the church to be. We moved to the Canadian prairies when I was in grade 2, and I've been a prairie girl ever since. I grew up mostly in the Anglican Church, but left the church in my early 20s (like so many others) to explore alternative spiritual paths.

My first connection with the United Church came in the late 80s as I became involved in social justice movements. In 1989, I was hired as the first staff person for the Alberta Youth Animation Project on Southern Africa—an ecumenically sponsored program addressing racism and apartheid in both Canada and Southern Africa. In 1993, the United Church sent me to be an international observer with the Ecumenical Monitoring Program in South Africa, through the World Council of Churches. By the late 90s I had joined the United Church, grateful to have found a spiritual home where my passion for social justice and my belief in a radically inclusive God were both welcome.

I started working at The Centre for Christian Studies when it first moved to Winnipeg. That is where I learned about diaconal ministry and its unique and important place in our church. It's also where I met the amazing woman who would later become my life partner. I also worked as a staff associate at Augustine United, a core neighbourhood church in Winnipeg. Eventually I was given responsibility for Augustine's Oak Table outreach ministry, which offers hospitality, support, and advocacy for folks who are living in poverty. The people at the Oak Table helped to form me in significant ways—as a person and as a minister. They taught me about community, about sharing, giving, and receiving, they taught me about human dignity and what it means to be created in God's image. I am so grateful for my many mentors at the Oak Table Ministry.

In 2006, my family moved to Saskatoon so that I could study for my MDiv at St. Andrew's College. I graduated in 2010 and was settled into my internship charge, Delisle-Vanscoy United Church, where I have now served for seven years. It has been an incredible blessing to serve in a congregation that is open to new ideas, interested in the wider church, and generous with my time. This has allowed me to serve for the past six years on the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee; participate in the Moderator's visit to Israel and Palestine (2011); attend the World Council of Churches Assembly in Busan, South Korea, as a delegate for the United Church; travel to Mexico on an education/exposure tour with a group of youth and young adults from Saskatchewan; serve as a home group leader at Rendez-vous 2014 and the winter gathering of Youth Forum 2015; and chair the Education and Students Committee of River Bend Presbytery for four years and the presbytery itself for the past year. Some of the other ways I

have been involved in wider church work include serving as the United Church co-chair to the local Roman Catholic–United Church dialogue, attending GC41 as a commissioner, providing worship leadership for Ministry Matters and Prairie Horizons, and serving on the leadership team of the Saskatchewan All My Relations Network (formerly the Living into Right Relations Network).

I am married to Laura Fohse, a diaconal minister who serves McClure United Church in Saskatoon, and we have an amazing daughter, Hope, who graduates from high school this year. I am so grateful for their encouragement and support to let my name stand as a nominee for Moderator.

### **Statement**

One of the great pieces of wisdom I have learned from friends who live with the daily reality of poverty is that the only faithful response to perceived scarcity is to become more generous and more community-focused. Like the hungry crowd that followed Jesus to a deserted place, we are being asked to reorganize ourselves so that our resources might be distributed in new ways that allow everyone to experience God’s abundance (Mark 6:30–44).

Much of the attention of the Comprehensive Review has been on how we will organize the United Church in the future to ensure that we remain faithful and sustainable. Sustaining the institution should never become an end in itself, only a means toward an end. The church doesn't exist for its own sake, but to be a community that embodies God’s justice, expresses God’s compassion, and works relentlessly for God’s vision of shalom. Getting the structure “right” means ensuring that how we organize the church reflects our mission and purpose. As we wrestle with what the United Church should do, be, and look like in the future, we know our structures must enable the voices of the marginalized to be heard and given priority; accountability to one another needs to exist at every level of governance; respect for creation should be evident in all aspects of our life together; and structural injustices must be transformed.

For many years we have been in a process of reflection and repentance for the colonial attitudes and practices that have shaped the United Church and marginalized Aboriginal people in this country. It is time to dismantle the structures that continue to privilege some at the expense of others. As we make significant structural changes, we will need courage, vision, and humility to ensure those changes, and the processes we use to implement them, reflect a new kind of relationship with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters.

We are still learning what it means to be an intercultural church. This will continue to be a priority for many years. By increasing support for and engagement with our ethnic, francophone, and Indigenous ministries we will all be strengthened and enriched. As our faith communities become more culturally diverse we will find wisdom and help from ecumenical partners, who have much experience in embracing the gifts and challenges of diversity.

I am excited about the leadership and deep faith I see among young people in our church. We need to strengthen our support for youth and young adult ministries and ensure that their voices, visions, and concerns are heard at every level of the church.

We need to muster all our courage because we are being called to fundamental change—not simply in our structures but also in how we relate to one another in the church, in this country, to the land, to all our relations. We need to embrace this change, not so that we survive institutionally but so that we truly embody the gospel by which we are called and named. Change is difficult. It is particularly stressful for those in leadership; we need good support in place for our leaders. Change also means there will be loss, and loss is always painful. We will need courage to walk through the pain to reach the abundant life that waits for us on the other side.

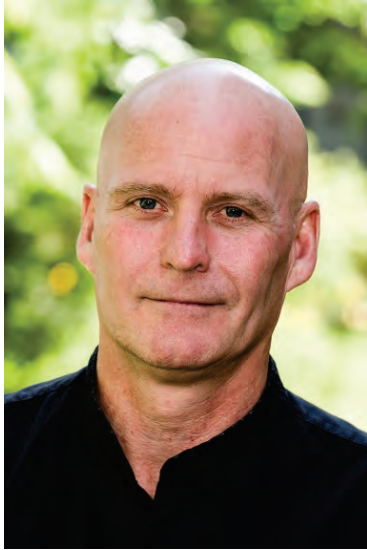
We will also need humility. Humility allows us to hear the wisdom that comes from outside of ourselves. My ministry with youth, Indigenous, LGBTQ, and core neighbourhood folks has given me a deep appreciation for the vision and insights of people who have been pushed to the margins—in both church and society—and shown me how essential it is that their voices be given priority. They are able to see and name critical truths that are invisible to those standing at the centre of power and privilege. As we move through this time of change, we must listen deeply to the voices at the edges and welcome perspectives that are different, even discomfoting.

We need to strengthen our global and ecumenical relationships as well. We need one another now more than ever before. Our ecumenical and overseas partners have wisdom and perspectives that will enhance our understanding of the gospel and help us to navigate faithfully through these waters of change. We also have insights and experiences from which they can benefit. As the Church throughout the world faces new challenges and opportunities, each of our churches will be stronger if we remain open to learning from and supporting one another.

How we make changes in our church is as important as the changes we make. As we begin to implement the decisions that the upcoming General Council will approve, we will need to make sure we keep asking ourselves key questions:

- Where do we see the Holy Spirit?
- How does this action reflect God’s justice, God’s economy, God’s grace?
- Does this direction embody the truth of Jesus Christ as we understand it?
- How does this strengthen our relationships with one another in the church, in this country, to the land, to all our relations?
- Who is being left out/silenced? Who needs to be heard/included?

Amidst the turmoil and insecurity that inevitably accompany times of transition, we are reminded that some things do not change—at our core, we are still about embodying God’s love and hope and good news in a world that needs them more than ever. This is something we know how to do. As we move into an uncharted future, we bring with us a rich tradition, deep wisdom, and profound stories that have the power to shape and reshape us. We will go forward carrying with us the best of what we have been and marrying it to the best of what we will be. These are rich, exciting, anxious, Spirit-filled times. With courage, humility, and hope we will follow the Spirit down old and new paths wherever it may lead.

**REV. BRIAN CORNELIUS****Nominating Body**

Ottawa Presbytery (Montreal & Ottawa Conference)

**Biographical Sketch**

I was born on the shores of Lake Victoria in Kenya, East Africa, and had the childhood joy of running barefoot on African soil. Though my spirit path has taken a different route, I cherish the Christian love demonstrated by my Canadian missionary parents.

At 15, I was transplanted from the land of my birth, a change I didn't choose and didn't like. I found a way forward by engaging with an intercultural church in suburban Toronto. Sensing a call to ministry and steeped in the tradition of my birth, I enrolled at Central Pentecostal College in Saskatoon before beginning ordained ministry in Ottawa.

The practice of ministry changed me, changed me radically and set me on another path. This transformation deepened at Saint Paul's University, where I revelled in feminist, liberation, process, narrative, and creation-centred theologies. During this theological conversion, I embraced and was embraced by the United Church.

After transferring from the Pentecostal tradition, I was appointed to Northwestern United. This congregation took risks, and we experienced growth. I grew theologically, embracing the scholarship of the Jesus Seminar and Rita Nakashima Brock. I also grew spiritually as walls of self-denial crumbled. I grappled with my sexual orientation. Through the pain and gain of an intentional process that kept the well-being of our children at the fore, my ex-wife and I moved forward to reorient our lives so that, while no longer married, we still keep our vows through ongoing care for each other.

Northwestern cared for us through this reorientation. I learned the depth of grace and was grateful for a supportive presbytery, where I was elected Presbytery Chair and served as Chair of Pastoral Care and Oversight.

After 10 years of pastoral ministry at Northwestern, I was appointed Acting Executive Secretary for Montreal & Ottawa Conference, where I engaged in financial management, stewardship development, the articulation of Conference mission, and oversight in legal matters as well as congregational and ministry personnel reviews.

However, pastoral ministry beckoned, and I was called to First United in Ottawa. First had welcomed me into the United Church, and in 2005 the congregation had proactively decided to strengthen its ongoing capacity for ministry by selling their building. I provided leadership during this transition and in our subsequent ecumenical partnership. I am celebrating 10 years with this Affirming faith community that values creative worship, contemporary theological engagement, healing ministries, and social and ecological justice, and grapples with understanding "Emergence Christianity."

I am also “graced” to be involved with United Church finances, keeping apprised of congregational finances, being Presbytery Treasurer and on Executive, sitting on the Conference Finance Committee, and serving on the Executive and Finance Committee of the General Council.

Beyond church, I have passion for physical activity such as swimming, curling, softball, running, and spending time at the gym. I parent two university-aged children, a daughter, Haley, and a son, Logan.

I am also fascinated with narrative therapy and its relation to narrative theology. For my 50th birthday, I embarked on a narrative sojourn to the land of my birth, backpacking, mountain climbing, revelling in the spirit wisdom and life energy of East Africa, and grounding myself in the spiritual writings of Richard Rohr and Joan Chittister.

### **Statement**

*If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.* This African proverb lodged in my heart after an ecumenical conference in Juba, South Sudan. For me, this proverb echoes the spirit birthed in our church that cried *unity not uniformity* and the spirit that lives when we declare *we are not alone* and speak about *all our relations*. This spirit understands we *go farther together*.

The Comprehensive Review grapples with rapid and profound cultural and technological shifts that Phyllis Tickle identifies as the “Great Emergence.” This shifting demands the difficult yet exciting work of navigating uncharted waters and traversing unknown terrains. Awareness of our “soul work” and intentionality in our “structural work” will help us go farther together.

### ***Our “Soul Work”***

When pondering the declining membership and finances in our church, I am captivated by Richard Rohr’s image of “falling upward.” This image is a paradox. Paradox informs the Christ story and the parables of Jesus.

I embrace “falling upward” as an alternative narrative, not in naive optimism but as a theological grounding to animate our lived paradox, where we proclaim an “upward” resurrection faith that quickens the soul while graphs and charts with “falling” lines wrench at the soul. Experiences of “falling” focus the heart.

Recently, I read the novel *The Orenda* by Joseph Boyden. “The Orenda” means “life-force”. I don’t pretend to understand the depth of experience reverberating through this novel. I simply keep rereading the novel in order to learn.

Lodging within my soul are the recurring references to “heart song” and “death song.” The heart song sings the life-force by recounting the beauty of creation, the intimacy of relationships, the accomplishments in life. The death song acknowledges the strength of the life-force, which is larger than one person yet in each person, a strength that sustains in suffering and endures across the generations.

These “songs” from another spirit tradition teach me. They reveal the soul of my own Christian story. And I hear wisdom for our United Church.

Consider the heart song. I joined the United Church because I heard a heart song in the poetics of A New Creed and the democratic processes that generated A Song of Faith. I appreciate the heart song of non-literalist approaches to scripture and doctrine. I am humbled by a heart song that apologizes, in particular to First Nations peoples for colonial attitudes and for our participation in residential schools. I revel in the heart song committed to right relations as well as social and ecological justice; that aspires to being intercultural; and that values ecumenical, interfaith, and non-religious partnerships. I celebrate a heart song that emphasizes inclusion and is open to change through a willingness to restate spirit practice and theology. The United Church’s heart song has strength and gift worth celebrating and cultivating.

Consider the death song. There are definite instances of death in our church, and we grieve a denominational past that no longer exists. Yet within these losses, dare we sing a death song that releases and even renews the life-force in our heart song? Can this death song invigorate birth happening in our church and at the edges of our church? Death and birth are paradoxically linked, a “falling upward.” The heart song informs the death song, which in turn unleashes life in the heart song.

I can’t predict our institutional future, but I have faith in the presence of an ever-rising Jesus who inspires our heart song and who walks with us. I have faith in our ability to adapt and change through a “falling” that compels us to focus on our “reason to be.” We have before and we can again. Moreover, I see in young and old alike an openness to embrace innovative ways of being and doing.

We are called to the soul work of falling upward so we can *go farther together*.

### ***Our “Structural Work”***

“Falling upward” guides our decision-making by focusing on the “upward” of mission and sustainability.

Structures hold us and connect us. We need structures, yet in the face of falling charts and graphs, we recognize our present structures are no longer sustainable and even hinder us. To *go farther together* requires proactive change for smaller yet effective governance, understanding that Jesus calls us *to serve and not to be served*. Structures serve mission. Mission is rooted in service, the service of being and acting for individual wholeness and healing as well as joining collective heart and voice to embody the gospel and vision of Christ Jesus for a compassionate and just society.

At Corner Brook and in the coming year, should remits be required, we are called to finalize our collective decisions, not begrudgingly but by allowing the Spirit to enliven us through the necessity for change. Whether we embrace directions offered through the Comprehensive Review or make other decisions, we are called to cooperatively honour our conciliar being and the whole people of God by

- welcoming insight from all communities of faith—vibrant, transitioning, dying, and emerging
- listening to voices at the edges of our communities of faith, especially those of youth
- embracing the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation and the wisdom of our Aboriginal Ministries Council
- attending to our francophone presence as well as our regional, cultural, and linguistic differences

Our “now” responsibility is to decide.

Once we collectively decide, we are called to deliver by

- holding spiritual vitality at our core
- being clear and caring
- nurturing innovative leadership and ministries
- integrating components of varying studies and pilot projects into a cohesive whole
- acknowledging gaps and developing timely processes for the whole church to respond

Our “now” responsibility is to deliver.

Personally, I appreciate the general directions in the Comprehensive Review and I particularly support a renewed model for funding the church. The Comprehensive Review compels us to hear our heart song so that in deciding and delivering, we do our soul work and our structural work with an awareness and intentionality that understands that we *go farther together*.

**REV. SHAUN E. FRYDAY****Nominating Body**

Montreal Presbytery (Montreal & Ottawa Conference)

**Biographical Sketch**

Shaun believes that The United Church of Canada is uniquely positioned to have a clear, unequivocal and distinctive voice on religious, justice, moral, and ethical issues within Canadian society and around the world. He believes the church has a strong and vibrant future. His forthright manner calls us to activism, and his passion and dedication propels us into action. Out of his extensive and diverse experience, he feels called to offer leadership as Moderator to The United Church of Canada.

Steeped in the traditions and ethos of the United Church from his childhood in St. Margaret's Bay in Nova Scotia, through his education at Mount Allison University and the Atlantic School of Theology, and throughout over 30 years of service across the country, Shaun's spiritual home has always been in The United Church of Canada. He has served congregations in Roblin, Manitoba; Burlington, Ontario; Montreal, Quebec; and, for the past 15 years, Beaconsfield, Quebec. He brings to pastoral ministry particular skills in church leadership, conflict management, mediation, congregational renewal, and mission strategies, including congregational visioning of a new way forward in the 21st century with the EDGE Network. He has experience at all levels of the church, having chaired Montreal Presbytery three times and having served on a number of committees at presbytery, Conference and General Council. Shaun's excellence in pastoral ministry has most recently been recognized by the Atlantic School of Theology, when he was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award at the 2014 convocation ceremonies.

With a deep understanding of the spirituality, history, traditions, and polity of the United Church, Shaun has encouraged and challenged the church to intentionally engage with current issues. Shaun is particularly sensitive to minority issues, egalitarian concerns, justice, dignity, and human rights. As part of his conviction that congregations embody their core values in ministry, he was instrumental in Beaconsfield United's unique formation of Montreal's West Island LGBTQ Youth Centre and expansion of its ministry to LGBTQ adults and the West Island Rainbow Seniors. Shaun's work with the LGBTQ community includes addressing homophobia and helping move others into healthier relationships. He has spoken at two international conferences on LGBTQ rights. For these and other initiatives, The United Theological College at their 2013 convocation conferred upon him the Craig Chaplin Award.

Shaun has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to environmental and justice issues. He has been a voice calling for regulation of Canadian mining practices abroad, and in 2012 led the Beaconsfield Initiative to the Philippines, which resulted in the presbytery, Conference, and General Council 41 passing motions for action. In his role as an advocate, he names human rights violations occurring in the Philippines and actively engages parliamentary committees and members. His particular interest in human rights advocacy in the Philippines has involved



travelling there on four separate occasions to meet with church leaders and address government officials. In May 2010, he served there as an international election observer.

Shaun does these things with compassion, hope, and humour. He is undaunted by the demands before the church and is able to speak to them faithfully and thoughtfully.

For more information please visit [www.Beaconsfieldunitedchurch.com](http://www.Beaconsfieldunitedchurch.com).

### **Statement**

A pickle jar full of water, hastily filled at a borrowed Anglican church hall (our church having no plumbing of any sort) was my official launch into The United Church of Canada. The little country church had been put up by the Methodists in the previous century and still had the communion rail that ran out of the table on either side and across the front of the church. Four of us gathered around what could be described as a candy dish on the table as the minister, Mr. Miller, poured the water from the pickle jar into the dish. We didn't stand on formality. He was dressed in a pink clerical shirt with black buttons, which was enormously controversial at the time. We loved Mr. Miller; he was kind and funny, could outsize the congregation, and looked in on us regularly after our father died at a very young age, leaving my mother to fend for a brood of six children. The four of us in the church that afternoon, my two sisters closest in age, Mr. Miller, and I had arrived in haste. About 20 minutes earlier and the day before our confirmation, he discovered that we had not been baptized as infants. My dad had come from several centuries of dissenters and saw no good reason to give his children over to a non-confessing mode of discipleship. He only believed in adult baptism, and we had reached the age of discretion—I was 15. When the reverend discovered the oversight during a conversation at the church supper we had been enjoying, he promptly filled the pickle jar from the kitchen tap, loaded us into his car, and took us to our church.

Without much ceremony, we knelt down and I watched the water refract in the early evening light as it went from the jar into the “font”—although that sounds like putting on the dog. The church was full of pews, not people. It was still, and there was a presence in the place. Standing up with water running down my forehead (Mr. Miller followed the injunction use your hand, use water, and use lots of it), there was an awkward silence between us as we blinked our eyes dry. I could not really detect any difference in my sisters, and no doubt them in me, as the newest disciples along the south coast of Nova Scotia. Perhaps that would come with confirmation the next morning, I thought to myself. So far it seemed to be what might be considered a “rushed job.” About 10 minutes later, we were returned to our ham and scalloped potatoes dinner that had been left waiting and cooling on the table.

Forty years have passed since that drenching and watching the baptismal water, prismatic in quality, broken and ordered, rain-bowed in hue and in hope, with promise and restoration that flowed down on me. I have long loved The United Church of Canada and have lived out of its brokenness and hope. The church has cradled and formed me; its colleges and schools have educated me; its history and witness give me courage to speak both to the church and on behalf of the church; and the church's people comfort, challenge, and encourage me.

In my heart, the vision I hold for the church is to be a place where hope and hurt meet and mingle and discover life-giving reconciliation, diversity, and wholeness. We no longer need carry the old taboos and false notions of nation-building. Our Aboriginal people, who have experienced such profound pain and harm, await our action with a full embrace of the TRC recommendations directed toward the churches. We will be joined by our global church partners, who will be listening to hear that their voices are heard and responded to with absolute solidarity. The youth of the world will lead us, and we need to follow them, be present to them as they call and clamour for a new way of being in the world. Even the climate is restless with us, demanding our attention. Those in the LGBTQ community in the country and in our global family will wonder about our authenticity in acknowledging the spiritual damage that has been caused by the church's attitudes and inaction.

We are financially endowed with billions of dollars of assets, unimagined at the time of union by the founders, that need to be reimagined for mission and ministry. Church governance structures that create difficulty in discerning power over from power with people need to be set aside. We have the capacity, opportunity, and desire to be remade into a more responsive, fearless, and faithful witness of the Creator by whom we are called.

In Corner Brook, at the 42nd General Council, the people will gather. From the tundra of the north, the cities of the south, the coastal communities of the east, the farms of the prairies, and the mountains of the west we come to be church. We are a creative people, a tenacious people, a Spirit people, and I am more than confident that we can meet the day with resourcefulness, energy, and hope.

My prayer is that we intentionally engage one another to feel and experience the richness and the abundance of our tradition. There are a myriad of creative ways the Spirit is speaking in the church, and when we come with our sacred stories let us not miss the occasion to hear them, lift them, and speak them. With open hearts, minds, bodies, and souls, let the One who gave us the promise "Behold I make all things new/Voici je fais toutes choses nouvelles," will live, transform, and move within us in our time and generation.

With a profound sense of gratitude I offer myself to the Office of Moderator of The United Church of Canada.

Faithfully,  
Shaun E. Fryday

P.S.: Thanks to the Anglican Church of Canada for their pickle jar and plumbing.

**REV. KAREN HILFMAN MILLSON****Nominating Body**

Living Waters Presbytery (Toronto Conference)

**Biographical Sketch**

I was raised by a mother with a passion for social justice and for inclusion of all people, and a father with a passion for meaningful conversations and a sense of bold vision. Their influence awakened a longing in me for community filled with respect, deep listening, authentic connections, and a capacity to see potential and possibilities.

The church played a peripheral role in my childhood. On the rare occasions we went to church I found it to be a place that excluded me and my perspectives and experiences. My most painful memory was when I was 10. I was told that my powerful sense of the light of God's love within me and in every person I met was wrong. I tried to shift to a second-hand set of beliefs, but letting go of a first-hand sense of knowing God left an aching emptiness, and I simply couldn't do it.

During university days for my degree in drama I realized I was living my life behind a facade of external expectations. At that time I rekindled connection to my authentic self. A decade later, during my internship in preparation for ministry, a spiritual director observed that most of us live our lives caught in external expectations, fear, and judgment, and the goal of the spiritual journey is to reconnect to who we are as a beloved child of God, to our true self that is the source of Wisdom and creativity within us. This familiar understanding has guided my life and ministry.

Throughout 25 years in congregational ministry in two pastoral charges (1988–2013), followed by two years as a Facilitator of Significant Conversations with congregations, I have focused on developing what I call *Circle Culture*—a safe place to explore questions, perspectives, and possibilities ([www.CircleCultureInstitute.com](http://www.CircleCultureInstitute.com)). Otto Scharmer's Theory U confirmed what I had discovered: that if we are going to effect change we need to get past the voices of fear and judgment within us and connect to our authentic selves. When we connect in community at this level of authenticity, we move beyond entitlement and turf-protection to creative future possibilities.

My work is to provide opportunities for communities to connect to the bold vision that is seeking to emerge amongst them. Space is created through intentional spiritual and community practices for people to recognize their gifts and capacities, to clear away the clutter that is limiting potential, to discover possibilities, and to identify next steps to develop and test their ideas.

I have shared my passion in large and small ways, including Chair of Presbytery (1990); Task Group on Structures that presented a Three-Council Model to General Council (1994); Leadership Team for Orientation to Rural Ministry; consultant when Toronto Conference shifted from nine presbyteries to four (2009); leadership at all levels of the church on Creating Circle Culture; Commissioner to General Council three previous times; coordination for small group circles at St Paul's in Orillia, with over 400 participants annually and for eight differently

focused pastoral care teams with 130 volunteers; worship leader for six Conference Annual Meetings; keynote speaker; Ignatian Spiritual Exercises; leader on partnership trip to Guatemala and pilgrimage to the Holy Land; participant in international gatherings developing vision and strategies for well-being and resilience in our global community and neighbourhoods.

I am continuously grateful for the loving support of my husband Alan of 35 years, two daughters, their husbands, and three delightful grandchildren. We all live in Orillia, Ontario, a place of creative energy and ancient healing.

### **Statement**

My vision for the church is rooted in my vision for the world. It is a dynamic vision of relationships grounded in trust and respect that animates the longing for wholeness and well-being that is stirring amongst us.

As we stand at the edge of the 10th decade of The United Church of Canada we find ourselves living in times of overwhelming disruption and amazing potential. In many ways, life as we've known it is ending. But are we dying, or might the pain and turmoil be connected to giving birth? In Isaiah's vision we are nudged by a question from God, "I am doing a new thing! Can you not see it?" We need to see the new thing God is doing. In these times when the familiar patterns and structures of our common life are radically shifting, it is critical that we as people of faith not be consumed by fear. Rather, let us see this as an opportunity for new possibilities to emerge.

In the midst of global turmoil there is also a global spiritual awakening. We see it in the blessed unrest that is gathering people together for meaningful conversations, in people seeking authentic connections and right relations, and in a longing for respectful sharing of resources that do not devastate the earth. We also see it in churches engaging new practices and perspectives.

As the church, we can more fully be part of this spiritual awakening, if we are willing. It will require us to be intentional about our inner work, clearing out attitudes that hold us in fear, despair, and limitation so that love, joy, and inspiration can guide us to a new vision. Through anticipation of new life we shift from focus on survival and fear of death of the church to focus on the new way God is calling us to. We are charged to be God's love-in-action and to see possibilities infused with hope, knowing that whatever we give energy to will grow.

Our diminishing financial and people resources provide a catalyst to reimagine how we will be church. The church of the future will likely look very different from what we are accustomed to. How exciting it is to imagine new ways of responding to the hopes and longings of the world through our message of love for everyone! The world is crying out for meaning and connection. We have the capacity to create safe places for the important conversations that need to happen in our neighbourhoods. Evolutionary efforts are being made in the world and in our churches. We need to partner with people and groups to support positive initiatives that align with our goals for community filled with deep gratitude, compassion, and wonder.

Throughout my years of ministry I have developed seven goals that reflect what I see the purpose of the church being in these times:

- 1) to engage in the awakening that is happening in the world that includes spiritual fulfillment, social justice, and environmental sustainability
- 2) to respond to the deep longing within our culture for meaningful conversations, ensuring that all voices are encouraged and safe
- 3) to intentionally respond to unmet life-needs so as to be relevant in the lives of people within and beyond our congregations
- 4) to develop gift-based ministry to enhance leadership capacity
- 5) to walk with people in times of struggle and change when they seek transformation in their lives
- 6) to help people learn to connect with their authentic self, the divine power within, and the guidance of Christ consciousness
- 7) to be radically inclusive

My repeated call in life has been to help communities tap into their own wisdom to find a way forward in times of transition. I have developed Circle Culture, which I have defined as an intentional way of being in which we

- listen deeply
- speak from our heart, mind, and experience
- trust that we have the wisdom we need within us and amongst us
- honour our own and one another's gifts
- commit to action to move toward change
- encourage, support, and be accountable to one another
- discover clarity and creativity emerging in our midst
- align with the intuitive flow of life

Circle Culture emerges as we connect to our core wisdom and creativity at the centre of our authentic selves. In my experience, the combination of all our voices speaking authentically allows the Spirit to guide us toward future possibilities we might never imagine on our own. My heart sings when I hear a radical new idea arising from an in-depth conversation where many diverse voices are represented.

I look to the future of the church with a sense of deep hope and excitement. I anticipate that out of the depth of our faith we will be led wisely to combine our resources so we can best respond to our call and purpose.

A central aspect of the work we will be doing in the coming years is developing relationships that profoundly shift the old way of interacting. We are already committed to this intention in our commitments to reconciliation with the First Peoples of Canada, to being an intercultural church, and to exploring new partnerships and networks as in the vision offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group report. Can we risk engaging in decision-making in new ways so that more voices will be heard through consensus-building? Can we enter into relationships without the constraints of grasping for the way we have always done things? Can we commit to seek to see the light of love in everyone?

A key role of the Moderator as spiritual leader over the coming three years will be to ensure that we remain enthusiastic and led by vision rather than fear, so we stay open to creative possibilities

and be willing to be led by Spirit. Our hope is rooted in the trust that we are being called, as “United in God’s Work” says, “to participate more energetically and faithfully in God’s new creation.”

**MS. ANN HARBRIDGE****Nominating Body**

Pending nomination by Commissioners at General Council\*

**Biographical Sketch**

I was born in Sarnia, Ontario, the eldest of six children. In 1973, I married my soulmate. We moved away from family because of Ross's work, living in Ottawa, London, and Gravenhurst, Ontario, before moving to Bradford, Ontario. Because we lived so far from family, both of us found family in other places, most importantly the church.

I have served at all levels of the church. My involvement at presbytery has included a term as chair, and membership on various committees and commissions, including a commission to establish the structure of our new presbytery when Toronto Conference went from nine presbyteries to four about five years ago. I currently serve on the Congregational Life Commission, working with congregations as they find themselves dealing with the challenges of decreasing membership and shrinking resources. I have served on the Toronto Conference Executive, most recently completing a two-year term as Conference President. I served on a General Council task group looking at Ministry and Personnel processes prior to the last General Council, and I attended the 40th and 41st General Councils as a commissioner.

I heard a lovely way of referring to those of us in my age category this weekend. I am on the higher end of middle age! Despite that I love to spend time with the youth and young adults in our church. Events like Rendez-vous, Worshiplude, and confirmation retreats all give me energy. The enthusiasm of our church's young people is contagious!

In 2014 I was privileged and challenged to attend the Truth and Reconciliation Commission event in Edmonton, and in June of this year I was present in Ottawa as the commissioners presented their report. We still have a long way to go toward reconciliation.

Prior to responding to my call to ministry, I spent 25 years working for Sherwin Williams Co., finishing my career with them by managing their Canadian distribution centre in Vaughan, Ontario. My management skills were honed in that role. It was a challenging and rewarding career for many years, but several things happened that caused me to rethink my work.

Following the death of my husband in July 2001 from cancer, the events of 9/11, and much soul-searching, I responded to God's call to ministry and left Sherwin Williams. That call took me to Trinity Centennial, a rural congregation about an hour north of Toronto. I was recognized as a Lay Pastoral Minister (DLM) by Toronto Conference in 2007. I have now served Trinity Centennial for 12 years, and together we have grown from a small, sleepy congregation to a medium-sized one full of new life.

I am a 50-year member of Girl Guides of Canada, including three years as their President. In that role, I led the organization as it transitioned through changes in its structure at both the national and provincial levels.

Apart from my church and volunteer work, I am a grandmother to seven wonderfully delightful grandchildren ranging in age from four to 20 years. I spend my free time playing with the grandkids, camping, gardening, sewing, and doing what needs to be done around the house. I have a passion for pastoral ministry; however, my gifts in organizational management and working through change, and my ability to be a calm presence in the midst of change, are what I humbly offer to the church at this time in our history.

### **Statement**

My favourite line in the Song of Faith refers to God as Holy Mystery. So much about God is a mystery. Sometimes I think I know less about God after 12 years in ministry than I knew before my training as a Lay Pastoral Minister. And I know I am not alone. Most of us have questions. We hear the stories of our faith, and we wonder how those stories, written so long ago, are relevant today. Who is God, and where is God in a world that has changed and continues to change in ways that our parents and grandparents couldn't have even imagined? Holy Mystery, indeed! But I love a good mystery, and so I am excited to continue exploring who God is and where we find God in a world where so many struggle to find God.

I am passionate about the church and the place we have in the lives of the people of our communities, whether they are in church every week or call upon us in times of crisis. It is because of that passion for the church that I feel called to allow my name to be put forward as a nominee for Moderator. We face challenging times, and I believe I have the gifts needed at this time in our history to help the church navigate the changing landscape we face. I have proven myself to be someone who can see the big picture. One of my greatest gifts is in leadership during times of chaos. This came out during my time as President of Girl Guides of Canada, and again in Toronto Conference as we restructured, going from nine presbyteries to four. I bring a calm presence and a compassionate heart to those who are anxious about change.

As I think about our church, I sometimes wonder how we continue to serve those who long for the old ways and days and at the same time be a place where the Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat crowd can find their way to God? There is a hymn in *More Voices* titled "Listen, God Is Calling." We need to listen as much as we speak. In fact, perhaps more—after all, we've been given two ears to hear and only one mouth to speak! The Spiritual but Not Religious crowd is crying out for a place where they can find that Holy Mystery that is God. Our traditional religious structures, liturgies, and hymns of days gone by are of no interest to those who identify as spiritual but not religious, and yet, I believe it is still God whom they yearn to know. How does this United Church of ours offer that place where God is found and where the gospel message of Jesus Christ can continue to be our path to God, at the same time opening our hearts and minds to others who might seek that Holy Mystery?

It would be easy to look at the statistics and give up. Certainly if the church was healthy in terms of people and resources, we wouldn't be dealing with the Comprehensive Review at this General Council. But we are dealing with it, and whatever is decided at this meeting will shape the



church in ways that are very different from what we are used to. It will shape the church in ways that are likely to be uncomfortable for many of us. In the months and years ahead, we will need to find a way to live into the changes that are approved at this 42nd meeting of the General Council. Will we have the courage to make the radical changes that will see our church able to move beyond our next decade and the celebration of our 100th anniversary and into our next century? I have that courage, and I believe that I can instill it in others.

Anxiety is high as we let go of some of the structures and processes we have come to know and trust. It will be high not only among clergy and lay people active and involved in the courts of the church but also especially high among staff who currently serve our General Council, our Conferences, and in some cases our presbyteries, who depend on those jobs to take care of their families. We are going to need patience and a calm presence to see us through. Regardless of the changes we face, one thing remains constant: we live in God's world; we are not alone. When we put our trust in God, we will find our way. We only have to look at the stories of our faith to know it is indeed possible. After all, remember the disciples, hidden away in the closed room, fearful and anxious. But they didn't remain there—if they had, the movement that became the Christian church would never have come to be. We can't remain in a place of fear and anxiety. We have a story to tell and a chance to make all things new!

As I ponder my involvement in this General Council meeting, I am particularly excited by the theme "Behold, I make all things new." We have a wonderful opportunity this August, as we gather with God, to birth something new, something even more exciting than the current church we are in Corner Brook to represent. Do you think the disciples had a clear idea of what it was that Jesus intended for them? I don't. I believe they carried the stories; they made mistakes; they certainly would have been fearful and perhaps even ready to give up as they gathered and walked and talked with one another. Despite all of that, we're here today, a part of that Christian story.

I am confident we will be here in the future in ways that are still to be revealed. It is part of the Holy Mystery I talked about earlier. None of us has all the answers, but I remain hopeful, and excited about the possibilities that lie ahead of us as we continue to be the church, led by Holy Mystery.

\*The General Secretary has received notice of intent that this nomination will be made at the 42nd General Council. To keep Commissioners well informed of the decisions that will be before them, information on this prospective nominee is included here and in the meeting materials.

**REV. DAVE JAGGER****Nominating Body**

Waterloo Presbytery (Hamilton Conference)

**Biographical Sketch**

I am thankful for my United Church roots. Being born and raised in Hamilton, Ontario, I attended Emmanuel United Church up on “the mountain” during the heydays of the late 1960s and 1970s. Taking the traditional route, I was confirmed in grade 8 and proceeded into the church youth group.

It was, though, at Silver Lake United Church Youth Camp that I realized that Christian faith is about more than just church involvement. At the same time as recommmitting myself to following Jesus, I surrendered to the call to ministry I had been desperately trying to avoid. My commitment to church camping has remained

strong to this day.

Of all the traditions, experiences, and learnings that have rooted me and nourished me, the most important is believing passionately that **in all things** God truly is at work for good and that **no-thing** can separate me from God’s love, as revealed in Jesus. The untimely death of a parent. My marriage to Deb 27 years ago. A couple of occurrences of cancer. The birth and subsequent parenting of our three sons: Josh, Benji, and Nathan. Deb going back to school and then to work outside our home. The normal routines of life. Bad, good, easy, hard, **in all things**, God truly is at work for good! (And sometimes we even get to see it!) Everything I do is rooted in that belief. In sharing it with others I have seen it bring hope, and I believe it will enable us to risk being the church that God is calling us to be.

Following my ordination in 1990 by Hamilton Conference, I have watched as new shoots have grown from those roots. My 25 years of congregational ministry have witnessed great change in Canadian culture and, therefore, in the United Church. Nothing is as it was or as I was trained to expect. As a result, in order to evolve, I have repeatedly had to learn and relearn how to do ministry by creatively synthesizing the old with the new.

- Typed sermons available to read became sermons online, first in text on Internet bulletin boards and recently in audio and video: [www.trinityunitedelmira.ca](http://www.trinityunitedelmira.ca).
- Flip charts becoming overheads, becoming data projectors and SMART Boards as worship becomes more EPIC (Experiential, Participatory, Image-Rich, and Connective).
- Helping congregations change from inward-looking Christendom churches into mission-centred faith communities engaging their wider context and experiencing transformation.
- Discovering that an online virtual community can be just as powerful as a face-to-face physical community as small groups and Bible studies move beyond local geography.

- Working with other Past Chairs of Waterloo Presbytery to create and implement a new presbytery structure, adapting to the new cultural realities while still focusing on presbytery’s mission “to support and encourage the vitality and mission of local and regional ministries of The United Church of Canada within our area.”
- Most importantly, always asking questions about what our VISION is for how we will live out our MISSION as followers of Jesus in the specific context in which we find ourselves.

### **Statement**

As nominees for Moderator, we were each given 1,000 words to sum up the challenges facing the United Church and what we see the church’s future to be. [*pause*] Is that giggling I hear?

Wouldn’t it be great if someone could do that? Lay out a nice three-point plan to get us from where we are to where we want to be? But we can’t. At least I can’t. Not because the batteries in my crystal ball are low. There are just too many unknowns. Too many variables. The culture we find ourselves immersed in is still changing, and radically; we cannot pretend that we are separate from it.

It is no longer new news that the United Church that I grew up in during the 1960s and 1970s is passing away. However we may feel about that news, the fact remains...it is a reality.

The first 90 years of the United Church’s life have been great. We have planted many deep roots of faith and practice.

However, no one can tell what’s coming, what struggles and issues we will face. No one can tell what the United Church will look like in 15, 20, and certainly not 90 years from now. Will we have congregations, and if so, what will they look like? Neighbourhood house churches? Online faith communities? How will all these local entities relate to each other? The decisions we will make at General Council 42 around the Comprehensive Review recommendations are just the beginning.

I can feel the anxiety level rising just thinking about all this. Before we throw up our hands and descend into hopelessness, though, giving in to a fatalistic “Meh!” I would remind us that this is not a problem.

After all, being the church isn’t about knowing all the answers and seeing the whole path laid out before us. For the last 90 years, and well before, being the church has always meant discerning the next step that Jesus wants us to take—Jesus, who says to us, “Follow me,” and then forms us into a Spirit-filled community called “church” for the purpose of mission.

Being the church requires us to continually ask the hard questions to keep us rooted in mission. What are we about? Why does Canada need the United Church? Why does our neighbourhood need our local church? What do we have to offer them? What is our identity? That’s a conversation that evokes passion and energy! That’s a conversation I believe our church needs to have. After all, if all we do for the next triennium is focus on how we are going to structure

ourselves, then we have missed the opportunity to have a parallel, and I believe more important, conversation about what we are going to do with that new structure.

Thankfully, we have these words from scripture to give us hope and accompany us as step by step we move into our future: *“In all things, God works for good”* (Romans 8:28a). Words that our own experience as the United Church has proven to be true.

*“In all things”*...like combining three and more Christian denominations into one United Church.

*“In all things”*...like the various positions on social justice issues we have taken that are unpopular or controversial: poverty work, climate change, Israel-Palestine, economic justice, human rights, etc.

*“In all things”*...like apologizing to First Nations for our part in colonialism and residential schools.

*“In all things”*...like participating in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to continue to work toward right relations.

*“In all things”*...like welcoming and insisting on full participation in the life of the church for all people, regardless of race, status, sexual orientation, or theological position. *“In all things, God works for good.”*

Repeatedly, we have put those words to the test, and repeatedly they have proven themselves to be true; God has proven them to be true. I believe it is safe to say we are rooted in those words. I know I am.

*“In all things, God works for good.”*

- Even in the pain of budget cuts and declining human resources, *“God works for good.”*
- Even as we grieve the closure of congregations and the ending of long-held ministries, *“God works for good.”*
- Even as we let go of structures that have served us well for a long time, *“God works for good.”*
- Even as we struggle to think of ourselves in new ways, *“God works for good.”*

*“In all things, God works for good.”*

- As we give permission to experiment in what it means to be church, *“God works for good.”*
- As a new generation rises, *“God works for good.”*
- As faith communities are transformed and renewed, engaging with their local communities, becoming hubs of faith development, *“God works for good.”*
- As different funding models and options emerge to sustain our mission, *“God works for good.”*

- As new ministry shoots begin, whether they are long-lasting or finite in life, “*God works for good.*”
- As partnerships are formed that we may never have imagined in order to work for justice and peace, “*God works for good.*”

As the Christian faith of individual people is deepened and as people are cared for, valued, and set free to do their own ministry, “*God works for good.*” As we discern and experiment and risk (and we must!) encouraging new shoots to develop from the roots of our past, taking us deeper into the mission we hear Jesus calling us to live (one step at a time), I know it is safe to say those words will do us well.

For a different way to picture these ideas, please see this presentation: “Nurturing our roots to discover new shoots.”

**REV. DR. ANDREW RICHARDSON****Nominating Body**

Prince Edward Island Presbytery (Maritime Conference)

**Biographical Sketch**

I am anchored in congregational ministry; it is in communities of faith that my gifts have been forged, honed, and affirmed over the past 27 years. I have served diverse communities: a small, struggling rural charge; a new church development; a program-sized church; and currently a large multi-staff congregation. Though these settings are all very different they share in common a deep desire to form meaningful community; a resonant faith, and a desire to serve God and humanity in meaningful mission. I have seen the malaise, sadness, and fear that come with the disenfranchisement of the church. But I have also seen boldness and the great initiatives and new ways of being church that come bubbling up among the faithful. My doctoral work at Columbia Theological Seminary (on Friendship as a model for church) was a direct response to the loneliness and alienation that many in my churches experienced in their lives. I remain passionate and excited about ministry and the church.

From the beginning of my ministry, I have been privileged to be involved in the wider work of our denomination. I have attended several General Councils; chaired national, regional, and presbytery committees; and have been part of many of the major conversations that we have had as a church. As Chair of the Working Group on Faith Formation for Ministry I was most recently involved in some challenging work meant to help the church re-examine and reshape how we do theological education.

One of my great passions is teaching. I have taught diverse groups and topics, from change management to M.Div. students to introducing Brahms' Requiem to seniors. In every setting I have discovered men, women, and children who want a profoundly resonant theology, who are not seeking easy answers, who want to be intellectually challenged, and who are innately curious in their spiritual quests. I am energized and encouraged by such groups.

I have strong skills in governance, having chaired many community organizations and boards. As the chair of the largest school district in New Brunswick I managed a large staff, hired a superintendent and principals, oversaw a multimillion-dollar budget, and led the board through a visioning process that resulted in clear, measureable goals. I led the City of Summerside in a community safety audit to help neighbours combat crime through collaborative, creative, and evidence-based approaches. I have experience in motivating groups, encouraging collaboration, building consensus, and managing change.

My wife and I are owners of a coffee stall at the farmers' market in Summerside. We sell fresh, organic, free-trade products and have welcomed the opportunity to share with primary producers in our area the task of promoting sustainable goods and services. This has provided us with an enjoyable way to engage and be present to our community.

I love to sail, am a film buff, am a voracious reader, and love good music and good company.

Finally, I have been fortunate to be supported in my ministry by my family. My wife Janet and children Alexander, Olivia, and Noah have all in one way or another shared and supported my ministry, been shaped by the church, and at the same time cultivated their own unique path of discipleship.

### **Statement**

For some time the United Church has been focused on how to adapt to shrinking resources and decline. At all levels much time and effort have been given to structures, methods, and solutions. We have streamlined, amalgamated, planned, studied, and speculated. Yet even in the midst of these activities, we are often despairing, exhausted, mistrustful, and angry. Responding to institutional needs simply doesn't energize us, doesn't convict us, and in the end doesn't really even provide much hope.

Whoever is the next Moderator will have to help the church come to terms with some immense structural changes. Institutional change is very much in the future for the church. However, it would be a mistake to equate institutional change with renewal.

I was reminded of this when our congregational board watched a TED talk by organizational guru Simon Sinek called "How Great Leaders Inspire Action." The talk pointed out that people are not inspired by *how*; they are inspired by *why*. This is a profoundly theological question and among the most important questions for us as a denomination because at the edges of the church people are asking, "Why Jesus? Why Christianity? Why church?"

As we continue to experience intense disruption, the church needs to shift our focus from how to why. Before we can even begin to engage the world with the gospel, we ourselves have to be convicted. Why do we continue to invoke the ancient story of Jesus of Nazareth? Why do we gather in community for worship Sunday after Sunday? Why do we have a church in the first place? Why are we compelled to act for justice, to reconcile with our neighbours, to care for all creation? Why Jesus? Why Christianity? Why church?

I would welcome a church-wide engagement with these questions and would hope to facilitate some deep theological conversation that would have the possibility to shape us, challenge us, engage us, and ultimately help us move into apologetics—the ability to clearly articulate the "why" to the curious, the bystanders, and the critics who are all around us. As Karl Barth said, "In the church of Jesus Christ there can and should be no non-theologians."

This conversation need not be centred on ancient confessions, rigid orthodoxies—liberal or conservative—or simple, stale theologies. In fact what we need is a conversation that is recombinant, brought together from various sources. As a church we need to cultivate ways for people to put the pieces of their own spiritual thinking and experience alongside the rich theological tradition of the church and in doing so create new sequences, potentially creating a new theology that can keep evolving as people's needs and the world that we inhabit change. Since commitment to Christ, and living the gospel, has many expressions based on diverse geographical and cultural contexts, such conversations must be intentionally intercultural,

involving those on the margins and those at the centre; those in the church and those outside it; those who are Christian and those of other or no faith; cradle Christians and emerging Christians; young and old; dominant and minority cultures. A conversation that is more like jazz than static classical forms, built upon a strong foundation and yet fluid and changing, improvised and polyrhythmic, spontaneous and surprising.

The possibilities of this kind of church-wide conversation give me hope for our collective future. It is important that we face forward into the theological and spiritual headwind of this burgeoning movement. If we do so, we may well repeat the feats of previous generations, who overcame other seemingly impossible crises in the church. The church has been considered on its deathbed many times in the past, and it has arisen renewed. We can, like our forbears, reframe the gospel in ways that again speak to the deepest human longings and needs.

In the new *Mad Max* movie the main character gives some well-meaning advice to his companion: “You know hope is a mistake, don’t you?” In the church it seems like we have taken this advice to heart. Often church life mirrors the world around us: cynical, despairing, and fearful. Where is the sense that even in the midst of rapid change and disruption we abide in Christ; that we belong to God; that in life, in death, in life beyond death we are not alone? The irony is that though we are stewards of a hopeful gospel, we despair. Though we are called to proclaim a life-giving, empowering Word, we are often afraid of the future before us. Though we are called to bold living, we often lack courage. This despite the promise of John 15:11: “I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.”

It is time for the church to lean into this joy—an abiding, loving, infectious joy. Yes, we need new structures and new ways of being the church. Yes, we have to live with our own disenfranchisement, with the end of Christendom, with the death of some cherished practices. But is lament the only response? Where in our church are the signs of joy, the surprise of resurrection? If joy is the echo of God’s great love for us, then I want to be surrounded by believers whose echo is resounding and overwhelmingly joyful. I want to be inspired by my church. Enough despair and hand-wringing. Enough with talk of exile and dislocation. Enough with not enough. Through God’s grace we have been given enough to be the church the world needs. Let’s preach justice like we are desperate for justice to roll down like an ever-flowing stream. Let’s follow Christ into the contested spaces of the world. Let’s heal the sick, strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, and hold fast to what is good. Let’s talk about love in a world consumed by hatred, forgive where retaliation is the norm, and announce Christ’s peace to a wartorn world. Let’s simply answer our calling to *be* the church, to practise resurrection, abiding in Christ, and filled with joy.



**MR. MICHAEL SHEWBURG****Nominating Body**

South West Presbytery (Toronto Conference); and Kent Presbytery (London Conference)

**Biographical Sketch**

No matter where life has taken me, my roots are in southern Ontario. It is where I began my formative years, growing up in Blenheim, and it is no surprise to me that I have settled back in the area living in Paris. I was always curious about the church—my grandmother tells a story of picking me up from Kenesserie Camp, and as we walked to the car, it is rumoured that I said, “One day I’m gonna run this place!”

It was a going home when God called me to serve as a Staff Associate in 2000 at the same camp I had called home for so many years. I served as the Director of Camping and Youth Ministry in Kent Presbytery for three years, with a break in 2003 to serve in South Africa and India on the Council for World Missions, Training in Mission Program. These years were formative to my understanding of the church’s role in community-building and faith formation.

In 2004 I moved to Toronto, and a year later was called to serve as the Minister to Youth at Islington United Church. Over the past 10 years, I have journeyed with the congregation and together we have grown the children, youth, and young adult programs. A significant part of my work has been the co-creation and development of The GO Project—a program that engages children, youth, and young adults in local mission and discernment: [www.thegoproject.ca](http://www.thegoproject.ca).

In 2012, The GO Project expanded enough for Islington to create a new position unique to the GO Project, and I continue to serve Islington in this capacity. GO has served over 675 children, youth, and young adults since 2007 at youth programs in Toronto, Halifax, Vancouver, St. John’s, Stratford, and Saskatoon; the Paris, Ontario, adult intentional community; and children’s programs across southern Ontario.

My ministry and life have been nourished by my ongoing studies—both formal and informal. I completed a diploma of Social Work through Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario, and a few years later began studies at the University of Toronto and Emmanuel College, focusing primarily on theological studies. In 2011 I was recognized as a Designated Lay Minister.

I have often been called a “church geek” and have served in many ways at all levels of our church. Notably and most recently, I have been privileged to be part of the Moderator’s Advisory Committee and to act as the Ordered Ministry representative on the Executive of the General Council for Toronto Conference. Through this role, I serve the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry. I served on the General Council Youth Forum Design Team from 2000 to 2006, which allowed me to attend General Councils in Camrose, Toronto, and Thunder Bay. In 2011 I served on the initial leadership team for Rendez-vous, and in 2012 I attended General Council in Ottawa as a commissioner.

Lastly, and most importantly, I live with my partner Ryan and our four-year-old son Marshall at our farm in Paris, where we grow veggies for a small, local, community shared agriculture endeavour.

### **Statement**

We all know that the church is in a time of great change. There are many ways we are being boldly called into the future—one of these calls comes to us through the Comprehensive Review process. The Comprehensive Review report stirs my imagination and sparks my excitement for a church that will help us live into our calling of discipleship. If the report is accepted, our church will need a Moderator who can help ignite this vision by fanning the flames of hope and quelling the fears that will inevitably come with a remit process. Through many years of discernment, I feel called to offer unique gifts of leadership to a changing church, inspiring hope, excitement, and care into what the CRTG report offers.

Recently my partner and I adopted a little boy. This major transformation in our lives has caused me to reimagine many things, but my love and passion for the church have remained consistent and have even strengthened since becoming Marshall's dad. Even more now than ever, I feel called to play a major role as we co-create a church that is vibrant and authentic, that will be around for him and future generations. Their church will look different from the church as we currently know it, and it is our call to make space for this church to take form. I know that I can offer this care and vision to the church while offering deep care and love to my family.

Recently Moderator Gary Paterson said, "It used to be that the Moderator spoke for the church, but now the need is for the Moderator to speak to the church." I believe that this is true for this time in the life of the church. The church needs to be unburdened from the shackles of polity and procedures that have mired it deep in a bog; our tires now spin in an effort to keep the truck moving. It is time to leave the truck in the mud, put our hip waders or wellies on, or even risk our bare feet and wade out into the wilds. In our effort to keep the truck going, we have often forgotten our true calling as disciples in the world. It is my prayer that the CRTG report is adopted by the church as a first step toward getting out of the truck. The CRTG report will by no means save the church, as it can only be saved by the discipleship of its many and varied members.

I have the privilege of dining most Wednesday evenings at The GO Project Intentional Community meal in Paris, which draws together guests from all walks of life. It is a gathering of regular church folk and those who have not stepped inside a church in years or ever—guests from the mainstream of community and from the margins. The meal is truly an example of the Eucharist without the hampering of rules and regulations. Some call it worship, some call it church, and others call it a free meal with fun people. I see it as bread being broken in a broken world; I see it as sharing bread among strangers who become community; I see it as bread being broken in order that our own brokenness can be restored. When I think of who might have gathered around the table with Jesus—the temple crowd and the outsider—this meal becomes a true glimpse into walking as Christ walked. At the heart of my vision for the church is the deep conviction that the church is at its best when we break bread together.

A few years ago, I had the privilege of walking with a teenager and her family through her journey with cancer. I found myself in places that no formal training could prepare me for. I trembled as she asked me to be the one to hold her feet in comfort as an MRI machine loudly scanned her body, I rejoiced in the car while singing “Bohemian Rhapsody” together at the top of our lungs, and I felt honoured to be called to late-night emergency-room pastoral care visits with tired parents. She taught me that Christian community is about deep prayer and trust in a Creator who yearns for each of us. The church is at its best when we care and are cared for by one another.

When I was a teenager, my home church gave me a key to the building because I was in leadership with youth people and was a visiting elder to the nursing home. I guess it made sense to them to give me a key. Little did they know that I was wrestling with my identity and trying to figure out who I was. In the sanctuary there is a beautiful stained-glass window of Jesus, holding a lantern and knocking at the door, that is backlit because it was covered over by an addition many years ago. On hard days I would go to the church at night, let myself in, turn on the light behind the window, and lie down in the darkness to look up at this window and pray to God. You can see every detail of the glasswork, and it is magnificent—I felt so safe in that place. The church is at its best when we create space to find safety and trust our young with its legacy.

I believe that it is time to give the keys of the church to our youth, to entrust our buildings, systems, and institution to the young prophets and seek to understand their wisdom. We need to practise listening before we speak, we need to trust much more before we judge, and we need to invest before reducing. These are the convictions and the hope that I bring to my nomination for Moderator.

**REV. BILL THOMAS****Nominating Body**

Niagara Presbytery (Hamilton)

**Biographical Sketch**

Who am I?

I am a husband, a father, a stepfather, a son, a brother, a minister, and much more. I am married to Cheryl Wood-Thomas (also a United Church minister). We are very proud and happy parents in a blended family that brings together seven children: Max, Zoe, Victoria, Rebecca, Liam, Rachael, and Fiona, ranging in age from 28 to 13.

I was born in Glasgow, Scotland. My family emigrated to Canada in 1964, arriving in Saint John, New Brunswick. My father was a ship's draughtsman, and so we moved from shipbuilding towns in New Brunswick to Quebec Ontario, finally settling in St. Catharines, Ontario, where I completed elementary, junior high, and high schools.

Upon graduating from high school I enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces, Maritime Division (the navy), where I served for three years, eight months, and 17 days. During that time I gained some important insights. First, I realized that military life was not for me. Second, we can encounter moments of grace in the most unlikely places and at the most uncertain times in our lives. It is while serving on board *HMCS Nipigon* that I first felt the nudge toward ministry, although it would be another decade before I would begin to answer.

Soon after leaving the navy, I began studying at Mount Saint Vincent University (Halifax). Upon completing my Bachelor of Arts (Religious Studies, Philosophy, and Women's Studies), I entered the MA program at Concordia University (Montreal) followed by an MDiv at the Atlantic School of Theology (Halifax).

I have served the church as a student, a lay person, and an ordained minister. My ministry has been in both rural and urban settings, and I have served in Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia (on the mainland and in Cape Breton). At present I am in team ministry at Silver Spire United Church ([www.silverspire.ca](http://www.silverspire.ca)), back in St. Catharines, Ontario, after a 30-year hiatus.

My introduction to the work of the wider church was through the Twinning program, matching United Church congregations and presbyteries with global partners. Since that early introduction in 1997, I have been involved in the global mission and outreach ministries of our church, starting in the Division of World Outreach and transitioning to the Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations Unit to Partners in Mission to Church in Mission and now to the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry. Through the years I have been able to work with great people, some of whom are also nominated for Moderator at this General Council.

I have also been blessed to represent our church on a World Council of Churches Solidarity Mission in the Philippines, the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, and the World

Communion of Reformed Churches, and as a member of the coordinating committee of The Caribbean and North American Area Council, where I have witnessed the expansive work of the body of Christ both in Canada and around the world. Within the context of that work I have been able to contribute to some of the empire work, including *Reviewing Partnership in the Context of Empire*. I also had a hand in *Gender Justice and Partnership Guidelines* and Ken Delisle's excellent resource, *Moving toward Full Inclusion: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in The United Church of Canada*, all documents with which I am proud to have my name associated.

### **Statement**

We are in the midst of change. Of course, that is always true. However, as commissioners, General Council staff, Youth Forum participants, and others journey toward Corner Brook in August, we do so knowing that the conversations we will have, the proposals we will consider, and the decisions we will make will result in significant changes in who we are and how we function as The United Church of Canada. It feels like there is an increased urgency to our discernments and a weight to our decisions brought about by the present context within which we are living, part of which is the fiscal realities facing the church that have been laid out in "United in God's Work."

The Comprehensive Review Task Group has done a great service to the church, committing countless hours to meetings, consultations, collating of results, reflection, and report writing, encouraging us at every level to engage with the information and recommendations being made. We owe a debt of gratitude to the CRTG for their efforts, and regardless of what you feel are the merits or the failings of "United in God's Work," the document and the proposals it offers have certainly sparked conversations across the church.

Last November, I was in Burlington, Ontario, attending Ministry in Motion. This year I have participated in varied gatherings of United Church types. Since January I have been in Victoria, BC, for Epiphany Explorations. I was then back in Burlington for Cruxifusion in April, followed by a quick trip to Halifax for an Alumni Dinner at the Atlantic School of Theology, (my alma mater). Finally, I was in Beausejour, Manitoba, at the Sandy-Saulteaux Centre for the Deepening Understanding of Intercultural Ministries education event offered by the Canadian Churches' Forum.

At first glance this might seem to be an odd array of events and gatherings. It might come as a surprise that there were times, sitting at table and sharing a meal with other participants, when I was struck that similar conversations on common themes were taking place at each event. Words like evangelism, discipleship, partnership, right relations, confession, and reconciliation (the list could go on) kept entering the dialogue. Concerns over theology, Christology, and ecclesiology were repeated over and over again.

At Epiphany Explorations, presenters talked about the need to own the gospel we proclaim, to be firm in our faith and fearless in our evangelism. We were challenged to offer the good news of Jesus Christ to the world, starting in our local communities. At Cruxifusion a number of participants identified themselves as Progressive Christians who stressed both "progressive" and "Christian." My participation in both Epiphany Explorations and Cruxifusion made the

experience at the Intercultural Ministries event that much more valuable. It is both blessing and bane for the United Church that we have such a large tent. In all of our congregations—large or small; rural or urban; east coast, west coast, or somewhere in between—we have a multitude of cultures represented. When I look at my own church, I am looking at youth culture, choir culture, Jamaican culture, Chinese culture, university student culture, choir culture, “old-time religion” culture, “no religion” culture...you get my drift. How do we engage interculturally, and what is the foundation upon which we build?

I am convinced that some of those divisions and barriers that we believe separate us are no longer real. The walls that once divided us, that laid boundaries not to be crossed, can be broken down, and have in many cases already been diminished or removed. There are points of intersection in these conversations where stories can be shared, hurts can be named, and reconciliation can begin to take shape.

When “United in God’s Work” entered the conversation, it was recognized as a starting point. The proposals concerning change to the structure of the church need to be looked at from the lens of gospel-living and gospel-sharing. When considering whether we have four courts, or three, or two...how does that decision allow for more effective and efficacious communication of the gospel? When seeking ways of Chasing (or embracing or welcoming or ...) the Spirit, how do those new ministries, and the church’s investment in them, enhance our ability to mentor and disciple people? How do these decisions empower the church to be the church and people who profess themselves to be Christians to live out that profession? In short, in the midst of change, how do we communicate the good news of Jesus Christ and continue to work toward the kingdom of God?

If we take this question seriously we will move beyond establishing “a process...to continue conversation with the Aboriginal ministries” to a place of standing in solidarity in the pursuit of justice for survivors of residential schools and the murdered and disappeared Aboriginal women across the country. We will recognize that our commitment to partnership demands of us that we include our partners in conversations around church structure, financial matters, and funding formulae as well as evangelism, advocacy, and peaceful protest. My experience has been that our partners possess a wealth of knowledge and are generous in their sharing.

There is much more to say as we journey toward Corner Brook, and I expect there will be other opportunities to speak to particularities. I end this short reflection (each of us was given 1,000 words) with an acknowledgement of the role of the Moderator. The Moderator is called to offer a vision to the whole church. My vision centres around the uplifting and the strengthening of people to live out their own ministries as members of the Body of Christ.

The Moderator is also called to be a pastoral presence to the church. This is particularly important in times of change and transition, and I take this role very seriously. As we discern our future, amid the concerns, questions, and anxieties, as well as the hopes, dreams, and belief that God is indeed still creating and doing a new thing, I hold all of us in prayer.

God bless!

**REV. DR. JOHN H. YOUNG****Nominating Bodies**

Kente Presbytery and Upper Valley Presbytery (Bay of Quinte Conference)

**Biographical Sketch**

John H. Young grew up in the village of Douglastown in northeastern New Brunswick. He received his BA (Honours, History) from Mount Allison University (Sackville, NB) and his MDiv from the Atlantic School of Theology (Halifax, NS). He then studied at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, where he completed a PhD in the History of Christianity. He is currently an assistant professor at the School of Religion, Queen's University, and he served from 2011 until earlier this year as the chair of its theology program. His teaching has been primarily in the areas of Church History and Practical Theology. He was ordained by the

Maritime Conference of the United Church in 1978. He served two United Church pastoral charges—Rawdon Pastoral Charge in Nova Scotia and Harrowsmith-Verona Pastoral Charge in Ontario—prior to joining the faculty of Queen's Theological College (now the School of Religion), Queen's University, in 1991. Teaching theology students has been, for him, ministry in another setting.

While in congregational ministry and in his current teaching ministry, John has served on, and been the chair of, a number of committees at both the presbytery and the Conference level. He is a past Chair of Kingston Presbytery. He was the President of Bay of Quinte Conference in 2008–2009. He is also a former member and a past chair of two national United Church committees: the Committee on Theology and Faith (1988–1994) and The Manual Committee (2000–2009). From 2007 to 2009 he served as chairperson of a national Task Group on the Number of Commissioners to General Council. He is currently completing his second three-year term as Bay of Quinte Conference's ministry personnel representative on the Executive of the General Council. He has been a member of the Supervisory Committee for the General Secretary, General Council, since 2009 and is currently its chairperson. He has long had a particular interest in the rural church and rural ministry, and he served two terms as President of the Rural Church Network of the United States and Canada.

He has published a number of articles in *Touchstone* related to various aspects of the current life and the history of the United Church. He is the author of several book chapters, including one in *The United Church of Canada: A History* that looks at the church from 1946 to 1960. He and the Rev. Dr. Catherine F. MacLean of St. Paul's United Church in Edmonton have recently co-authored a book on fresh ways to preach difficult doctrines that will be published this fall by United Church Publishing House.

**Statement**

Fifty to sixty years ago, new United Church buildings were being opened weekly, the equivalent of the M&S Fund increased 10 percent or more almost every year, Sunday schools suffered from overcrowding, and membership grew every year. Today, as we know, the reality is different.

Participation in a religious community has gone from being “the thing to do” to a thing hardly anyone does. Being involved these days in a church, or a synagogue, or a mosque makes you stand out as unusual in most communities. The major issues now facing the United Church all flow from an immense cultural shift that began in Canada in the late 1960s.

One issue with which we shall wrestle at the General Council meeting in Corner Brook is how to organize ourselves and use our resources. We are now much smaller than when we last did a major revision of our governance and operational structures about 45 years ago. This issue is a key one, and it has been a major, though by no means the only, focus of the Comprehensive Review Task Group’s work. The question is not whether we shall change but how we shall change.

A second and more important issue is the need to recognize the effect of that cultural shift on what it means to be the church. How do we learn, talk about, and live out our faith in a secular society increasingly ambivalent to the practice of any faith tradition? For instance, while we need to take stands and to develop clear, theologically grounded responses to current issues, we must also recognize that we now speak primarily to our own members and to like-minded constituencies. We no longer influence either government or society in any significant way by the announcements we make or the positions we take, though occasionally members of the wider society may “overhear” our statements and begin to think differently about a matter. These days, what influence we have comes mostly when our members write letters, or talk to others, or make intentional lifestyle choices as a result of their understanding of the faith, choices that lead family members or friends or neighbours to ask, “Why?”

Another part of being the church in our context is the need to give faith formation and teaching the faith tradition a more important place. Newcomers with no church background need, and many current members desire, a chance to deepen their knowledge of the faith tradition. People need to know the faith tradition if they are to live out of it.

Learning how to share our story in an increasingly secular culture is also part of this issue of how to be the church in our context. We cannot and must not engage in evangelism with a view of pulling people deeply committed to their denomination or their religious tradition to ours. At the same time, we need to learn how to do evangelism, or to share our story, when those around us who are “unchurched” want to know what we think, or wonder about the things we believe, or question why we act the way we do. Learning how to share our faith story in a Canada that is more secular, but also more religiously varied, was a concern the Emerging Spirit campaign of the previous decade tried to address. It is an area we still need to address.

A third issue is strengthening our congregations and the other non-congregational communities of faith that may arise from our congregations. If we do not have healthy congregations or communities of faith able to witness to their faith in word and in deed, neither our governance structures and procedures, nor our regional offices, nor our theological schools, nor anything else really matters. Those other entities are important, but they are important only insofar as their work is a resource to local communities of faith—congregational and non-congregational—and to those who make them up. The Comprehensive Review Task Group and other national committees over the years have had it right in seeing the strengthening of our communities of



faith as a critical issue. As we make decisions in Corner Brook about how to move forward, we need to use the lens “Will these decisions strengthen our communities of faith?”

Finally, we need to clarify who we are as The United Church of Canada. Our ancestors who dreamed about such a denomination in the early 20th century, and who brought it into being in 1925, had a very clear vision. They knew the purposes for which the denomination existed. Changes in Canada meant that shared vision had largely disappeared by the late 1960s. We have not found one to replace it. Yet, as one lay member put it recently when I was a guest at his church, “We need a vision if we are to have a future. Survival is not a vision.” He is right—on both counts. What are our non-negotiables or our key principles? What are those things essential to being the United Church, those things that make us who we are? I think some of these principles or “non-negotiables” are things that have been with us throughout our history, though they would look and function differently now from the way they did 50 or 75 or 90 years ago. We need to name those principles or “non-negotiables.” Doing so would begin to cultivate the ground so that a vision of who we are and who we want to be may again take root and grow

## Commission Membership

### **Bakeapple Commission Membership**

Ross Bartlett, Suzanna Bates, Susan Beaver, Robert Bennett, Claire Borel-Christen, Miriam Bowlby, Debra Bowman, Christine Boyle, Fred Braman, Evelyn Broadfoot, Paul Browning, Linda Buchanan, Phyllis Buchner, Allan Buckingham, Sue Campbell, Sarah Chapman, Gail Clarkson, Shirley Cleave, Cari Copeman-Haynes, Brian Cornelius, Kate Crawford, Kathy Dahmer, Kathy Davies, Ken DeLisle, Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro, Ruth Denton, Cindy Desilets, Cassidy Deveau, Dwaine Dornan, Larry Doyle, Linda Emberley, Janet Enns, Judith Evenden, Heather Facey, Paula Gale, Mervin Gallant, Catherine Grant, Beverley Green, Catherine Gutjahr, Jim Hannah, Ann Harbridge, Andrea Harrison, Ted Harrison, Emma Hebb, Hewitt Holmes, Neil Hudson, Dave Jagger, Raymond Jones, Scott Kell, Julia Kimmett, Valerie Kingsbury, Michael Kooiman, Karen Kowal, Gordon Lambie, Liam Lapierre-Thomas, Aidan Legault, Marlene Lightning, Alice MacAskill, Jean Macdonald, Donald R. MacKay, Regina Madimbu, Jeff Mailloux, Max Martin, Jim McKibbin, Linda McLaren, Teresa Melnychuk, Linda Moffat, Robyn Moffat, Mary Mohn, Katharine Moore, Chyvonne Pancer, Greg Parker, Blair Paterson, Martha Pedoniquotte, Kathi Phillips, Dave Pollard, Wade Reppert, Hope Rowsell, Kathryn Sarauer, Leith Saunders, William Sheaves, Janet Sigurdson, Mary Anne Silverthorn, Keith Simmonds, Greg Simpson, Dale Skinner, Darla Sloan, Deborah Smith, Wayne Smith, Greg Smith-Young, Linda Stenson, R. Matthew Stevens, Paul Stott, Wanda Stride, Hanna Strong, Catherine Stuart, Jessica Swance, Krista Tabor, Annette Taylor, Martha ter Kuile, Ken Thomas, Norma Thompson, Mardi Tindal, Erin Todd, Curtis Tufts, Myles Vardy, Kim Vidal, E. Gayle Wensley, Tarance Whiteye, Victor Wiebe, Robin Wilkie, Sharon Willis-Whitwell, Cheryl Wood-Thomas, Garth Wood, Yvonne Wright

### **Blueberry Commission Membership**

Sharon Aylsworth, Esther Baerends, Edna Baker-Graf, Richard Balson, Lorraine Beasley, Nicole Beaudry, Sarah Beer, Carole Bennett, Steve Berube, Brenda Brand, Jean Brown, Wendy Brown, Janice Brownlee, Graham Brownmiller, Kelly Burke, Sam Chambre, Katelyn Cody, Lewis Coffman, Catherine Collins-Barker, Sue Cowan, Tim Crouch, Martha Cunningham Closs, Angie Curtis, Terry Davies, Logan Deiter, Mary Dillon, Heather Donnelly, Rosa Elena Donoso-Cruz, Jane Doull, Gord Dunbar, Matthew Fillier, Laura Foughse, Paige Fraser, Janet Gear, Cathy Gradante, Robyn Green, Adam Hall, Cathy Hamilton, Nelson Hart, Ralph Hayman, Daniel Hayward, Andrew Hecker, Julia Heesing, Carol Hennigar, Karen Hilfman Millson, Lee Ann Hogle, Richard Hollingsworth, Kim Horwood, John Hurst, Chris Ingersoll, Hugh Johnson, Kathy Johnson, Roy Johnson, Moses Kanhai, Betty Kelly, Adam Kilner, Lauren King, Nancy Knox, Beverly Kostichuk, Cathy Larmond, Hannah Lee, Heather Leffler, Jack Logan, Sarah MacGregor, Sheila Macgregor, Angus MacLennan, Erasmus Madimbu, Charlene Maguire MacKnight, John Maich, Mynt Marsellus, Kenji Marui, Michelle Matson, Bill McAuslan, Stephanie McClellan, Patrick McDonough, Teri Meyer, Barbara Miller, Russell Mitchell-Walker, Kathryn Moase, Amy Mueller, Jay Olson, Ken Pettigrew, Bryan Ransom, James Ravenscroft, Tim Reaburn, Sheila Redden-Smith, Helen Reed, Maxine Reid, Andrew Richardson, Mary Royal-Duczek, Heather Sandilands, Nicholas Sarauer, Bernice Saulteaux, Natalya Scott-Sandy, Krystal Sheremeta, Tom Smart, Kathleen Smith, Rodney Smith-Merkley, Lorna Standingready, Bill Steadman, Jan Stevenson, Jessica Stevenson, Anna Stewart, Grant Stuckless, Bill Thomas, Grant Vaughan, Alex Walker, Stewart Walker, Alicia Walls, Melanie

Weaver, Jamie Webber, James White, Dave Whiting, Sybil Wilson, Daryl Woods, Doug Wright, Joyce Wylie, John H. Young

**Partridgeberry Commission Membership**

James Allen, Ralph Angel, Georgina Baisley, Mead Baldwin, James Ball, Isabella Barbeiro, Edison Bardock, Georgia Barratt-Lamey, Jean Bethune, Félix Bigirimana, Margaret E. Blewett, Joy Bott, Beverly C. Brazier, Susan Brodrick, Michelle Brotherton, Audrey Brown, Robyn Brown-Hewitt, Sue Browning, Elizabeth Bryce, Ruth Bryce, Jordan Cantwell, Gloria Churchill, Gary F. Clark, Shirley Clarke, Paul Cook, Basil Coward, Catherine Cryder, Carol Cunday, Barbara Davison, Joey Dearborn, Paul Douglas Walfall, Michelle Down, Sheldon Dugas, Emily Duggan, Alison Etter, David Exley, Rebecca Fillier, Janice Frame, Shaun Fryday, Wilson Gonese, Brian Goodings, Mark Green, Vilvan Gunasingham, John Haas, Margaret-Anne Hall, Ayla Hamilton, Sean Handcock, Adam Hanley, Stephen Hershey, Lauren Hodgson, Sheila Ivanochko, Jane Johnson, Janet Jones, Sungmin Jung, Jong Bok Kim, David King, Gabrielle Lamouche, Jope Langejans, Sarah Leffler, Donald Little, Hillary MacDonald, Stephen MacDonald, Joan MacGillivray, Shelly Manley-Tannis, Alana Martin, Amy Elizabeth McClelland, Erin McIntyre Garrick, Nicky McKay, Charles McMillan, Ryan McNally, Vicki McPhee, Eden Middleton, Bill Millar, Tracy Murton, Eun-Joo Park, Joyce Payne, Caroline Penhale, Anna Peters, Evelyn Porter, Cynthia Price, Daniel Reed, Noah Richardson, Maggie Rogers, Ralph Schmidt, Susan Sheppard, Michael Shewburg, Michelle Slater, Mary Smiley, Carolyn Smith, Ted Smith, John Snow, Vanessa Spence, Penny M. Squirrell, Catherine Stewart Savage, Don Stiles, Jim Tenford, Darlene Thomson, Alex VanCaeyzeele, Katie Vardy, Barbara Wagner, Carey Wagner, Maia Walker, Edna Janice Walls, Russell Wardell, Iris Wedge, Roy West, Greg White, Donalee Williams, Brie Wohlers, Martha Wood, Patrick Woodbeck, Peter Wyatt

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## **Minutes of the 42nd General Council, 2015**

### **Saturday August 8, 2015**

The 42nd General Council, 2015 of The United Church of Canada met from 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 8, 2015 to the close of the service of installation of the Moderator on Friday, August 14, 2015, at the Grenfell Campus of Memorial University, in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador. The Moderator, The Right Rev. Gary Paterson, presided.

The 42nd General Council began with a processional led by members of the All Native Circle Conference and Aboriginal Ministries in traditional dress. Youth; Global Partners; Gary Paterson, Moderator; Nora Sanders, General Secretary, General Council; Mayor Charles Pender; Western Region Vice-Chief, Kevin Barnes; Grenfell Vice-President, Dr. Mary Bluechardt; Ray Jones, chair, Aboriginal Ministries Council; members of the Business Table; and members of the Local Arrangements Committee followed.

#### **Constitution of the Court**

After prayer, the Moderator constituted the General Council with the following words:

“Au nom de Notre Seigneur, Jésus-Christ, seul chef souverain de l’Église, et par l’autorité qui m’a été conférée par le 41<sup>e</sup> Conseil general, je declare ouvert, par la présente, le 42<sup>e</sup> Consel general et ses travaux pour chercher à bâtir le Royaume de Dieu.”

In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ the only Sovereign head of the Church, and by the authority vested in me by the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council 2012, I hereby declare this meeting of the 42nd General Council 2015 to be in session for the work that may properly be brought before it to the glory of God.”

The Moderator welcomed all gathered in the room and those online. He reminded the General Council that they are meeting on the traditional lands of the Qalipu Mi’Kmaq First Nation.

The Western Region Vice-Chief, Kevin Barnes welcomed all to the lands of Qalipu Mi’kmaq First Nation and concluded with singing the hymn “Amazing Grace” in Mi’Kmaq.

Dr. Mary Bluechardt, Grenfell Vice-President, welcomed the 42nd General Council to Grenfell Campus, Memorial University.

Roy West, chair of the Planning Committee, along with co-chairs of the Local Arrangements Committee, Linda Stonehouse and Kathy Brett, welcomed Commissioners and thanked their committee.

Mayor Charles Pender brought a warm welcome from the city of Corner Brook, Newfoundland.

Table groups were invited to share time together meeting each other by answering the question “Name who you are and where you come from.”

Danielle Ayana James and Eric Hamlyn introduced the covenant for the 42nd General Council: “Be Love, Be Wise, Be Truth, Be Respect, Be Humble, Be Honest, Be Brave”. They invited table groups into a time of covenanting together which focused on the question: “How am I going to be?” Each table group was then invited to build community by adding their own words to the covenant.

Table groups were then asked to conclude their time reflecting on the following, “I wonder what you might need to add to the covenant so people at your table know your needs?”

### **Opening Worship**

The Moderator presided at Communion, assisted by the General Secretary.

The scripture reading was 1 Corinthians 16:13. Ian March-McCuish preached a sermon, “Welcome to the Rock – Be Brave”.

### **In Memoriam**

The 42nd General Council, 2015 remembered churches that have closed, people who have died in office, recognized First Nation People and the Beothuk people, fishermen and women who died at sea.

Table groups were invited to prepare for communion by reflecting on “something you are leaving behind for this journey.”

An offering of \$4,800 was received for the Mission and Service Fund, with \$250 allocated to individual congregations.

## **Sunday August 9, 2015**

Fred Monteith, the Business Coordinator, explained that each day will begin with a segment entitled “Today We Will...” to outline the agenda for the day. Table groups were then invited to check-in and review their Covenant.

### **Morning Worship**

The Moderator led morning worship. The scripture reading was Revelations 21:5.

Table groups were invited to wonder which of these six words “Behold I make all things new” is speaking to you?

### **GS 1 Procedural Motions**

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Ralph Schmidt**

**GC42 2015-001**

### ***Bounds of Council***

That the bounds of Commons for the 42nd General Council, 2015 be the arena 1 floor at the numbered tables at Grenfell Campus of Memorial University, Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador excluding the visitor seating and unnumbered tables.

The bounds of the court when the Commissions are in Session will be: Canada House, Meeting Location 2; Civic Centre Conference Room 2 and the arena 1 floor at the numbered tables at Grenfell Campus of Memorial University, Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador excluding the visitor seating and unnumbered tables;

### ***Corresponding Members***

That the following persons who are in attendance be corresponding members of the 42nd General Council, 2015 and as such, be entitled to speak but not to move motions or to vote:

- Moderators: The Very Rev. David Giuliano, Dr. Marion Best, The Very Rev. Lois Wilson, The Very Rev. Stanley McKay, The Very Rev. Marion Pardy, The Very Rev. William Phipps, The Very Rev. Peter Short;
- Global partner representatives, ecumenical, inter-faith and official guests of the Council
- The Youth Forum participants and leaders who are not Commissioners;
- Participants and leaders of the Children and Young Teens;
- Members of the Business Committee who are not Commissioners;
- General Council Officers, Executive Ministers, Executive Officers, and Conference Executive Secretaries and Speaker;
- Guests appointed by the Executive of the General Council.
- Connie Budd

### ***Resource People***

That the following persons and such other people as the General Secretary, General Council, may designate, be named as Resource People, who may be called upon to speak as needed to support the business of the Council: Kevin Barnes, Perry Bellegarde, Russel Burns, Adele Halliday, Adrian Jacobs, Jamie Scott, Marie Wilson, and Christine Greenaway.

### ***Business Committee Membership***

- Fred Monteith, chair
- Gary Paterson, Moderator
- Nora Sanders, General Secretary, General Council
- Shirley Cleave, chair of the Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda
- Karen Smart, Staff Resource to the Business Committee
- Cynthia Gunn, resource to the Business Committee and Parliamentarian
- David Allen, Parliamentarian
- Peter Hartmans – Conference Executive Secretary

### ***Parliamentarians***

That the parliamentarians for the 42nd General Council, 2015 be Cynthia Gunn and David Allen.

### ***Friends in Council***

That the Friends in Council of the 42nd General Council, 2015 be Roy West, Kathy Brett and Rosemary Lambie.

### ***Scrutineers***

That the Scrutineers for the 42nd General Council 2015 be:

- Norma Thompson (Chief Scrutineer)
- Robin Green
- Phyllis Buchner
- Charles McMillan
- Ted Harrison
- Annette Taylor
- Mead Baldwin

### ***Reference and Counsel***

That the Commons Reference and Counsel of the 42nd General Council, 2015 be Katharine Moore, Don Stiles and Nancy Knox.

### ***Business before the 42nd General Council, 2015***

That the reports and proposals printed in the workbooks, including online additions, along with any change pages, and any new business received by the deadline for new business, be received for consideration by the 42nd General Council, 2015.

### ***New Business***

All notices of new business will be presented, in writing, to the Business Committee. The Business Committee will from time to time report items of new business and recommendations for incorporation into the agenda, unless the court otherwise determines in the case of a specific item.

New business received, in writing by the Business Committee, prior to 9 a.m., Friday, August 14, 2015, will be incorporated into the approved agenda, unless the court determines otherwise.

Items of New Business will be ordered:

1. Not on a first come-first presented basis, but with preference to items that:
  - a. Arise unexpectedly in response to the meeting of the Council; and
  - b. Arise in response to global or national matters that occur during the meeting of the Council.

New Business not able to be dealt with due to time limitations will be dealt with by a motion to refer. Referral may be made to the General Secretary, General Council, or to the Executive of the General Council. The presenter of the proposal will be allowed to speak to the proposal.

### ***Business Procedures***

The Moderator will assume responsibility for chairing the meeting, making any rulings necessary and ensuring that there is full opportunity for discussion and decision-making. The Moderator will apply the Rules of Debate and Order (*The Manual Appendix*) and as approved herein in the Opening Resolutions for this 42nd General Council 2015. *Bourinot's Rules of Order* will be used as the authority should a question arise which is not answered by the Appendix.

Speakers will:

- speak from designated microphones in the court;

- be recognized by the Moderator prior to speaking;
- begin comments by identifying themselves by name, role, and Conference (or position as appropriate);
- only speak once to a given proposal except at the discretion of the Moderator;
- each new speaker should offer a new perspective or information;
- speak for no longer than 90 seconds except at the discretion of the Moderator;
- use the designated procedural floor microphone to raise a point of order, that is to raise a specific question of procedure with the Moderator;
- use the floor microphones to raise points of personal privilege, which will be understood to be limited to comments noting that the individual raising the point has been insulted or maligned in the current debate.

Note: Points of general privilege (inability to hear, temperature of the room, missing documentation) will be made to the Friends in Council, Roy West, Kathy Brett or Rosemary Lambie, who will determine how the concern will be addressed. Concerns for the well-being of individuals, celebrations of birthdays, etc. will be made to the Friends in Council who will coordinate these for “community moments”.

### ***Prioritizing Work***

The 42nd General Council, 2015 will prioritize its work in the following manner:

**1<sup>st</sup> Priority:** Proposals are those that deal directly with the Comprehensive Review Task Group report and recommendations and all related Proposals and Response forms. These will receive priority attention at the 42nd General Council, 2015. They will be referred to a Sessional Committee that will bring its recommendations to full court for decision.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Priority:** Proposals are those, other than those outlined in Category 1, which contemplate substantive changes to the Basis of Union that affect denominational identity and would require the 42nd General Council, 2015 to authorize a Category 3 Remit. They will be brought before the full court for decision.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Priority:** Proposals are those calling the church to take a time-bound stand on national or global issues and/or on an issue for which the church does not have an existing policy or statement. They will be referred to a Commission for decision.

**4<sup>th</sup> Priority:** Proposals are those, which contemplate changes to existing General Council policies and procedures, or those, which more properly fall within the purview of another court of the church. They will be referred to the Business Committee for prioritization and may be referred to the full court, a Commission, the General Council Executive, or to the court, which has responsibility, for decision.

**5<sup>th</sup> Priority:** Proposals are those calling the church to broader support for existing statements, policies, or procedures of the General Council. They will be referred to the General Council Executive for decision or the General Secretary General Council for action.

***Procedure for Withdrawing Proposals from an Omnibus or Consent Motion***

The 42nd General Council, 2015 adopt the following procedure in the event that a Commissioner desires that a Proposal be withdrawn from an omnibus or consent motion and/or that a Proposal be assigned to a body other than that recommended by the Business Committee:

1. The Commissioner making such a request will have one minute to make their request and provide their rationale for their request.
2. The Moderator or his designate will ask, having heard the request and rationale “Are there twenty Commissioners who support the request? Please indicate your support of this position by using your electronic voting device.
3. If there are not twenty Commissioners who support the request, then the request is denied.
4. If there are twenty Commissioners who support the request then the Moderator will direct the Business Committee to find a place for the work consistent with the request.

Although not required, advance notice to the Business Table would be helpful.

***Procedure for Addressing the Work of the Comprehensive Review***

1. The report and recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group and related Response Sheets and Proposals have been referred to a Sessional Committee of the 42nd General Council, 2015;
2. The role of the Sessional Committee is to consider said material with a view to bringing recommendations to the full court for consideration and decision.
3. Said Sessional Committee is comprised of one Commissioner from each Conference, two co-chairs named by The Business Committee, two Commissioners named by the Business Committee to ensure participant balance. In addition there is one Youth Forum Delegate who is a corresponding member. They are as follows:

Co-chairs: Larry Doyle and Jean Brown

Members: Sharon Aylsworth, Ross Bartlett, Nicole Beaudry, Katelyn Cody, Dwaine Dornan, Janet Gear, Hannah Lee, Regina Madimbu, Ryan McNally, Barb Miller, Greg Smith-Young, Erin Todd, Carey Wagner and Paul Douglas Walfall

Corresponding Member: Ethan Evans

***Election of Moderator***

That the following be approved as the process for nominations and election of the 42nd Moderator of The United Church of Canada:

1. Nominations may be made from the floor up to 5 pm on Sunday August 9. There must be a mover and a seconder, and the nominee must indicate willingness to stand. The Moderator will call for any further nominations just before 5 pm. Advance notice to the business table of any intended nominations is not essential but will be appreciated.
2. Nominations from the floor of the Council will be declared closed at 5 p.m., Sunday August 9, 2015.

3. The nominees will be introduced to the Council and presented with their nominee stoles after the supper break on Sunday August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
4. Candidates will address the Council, individually, on Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
5. Voting will be by ballot and take place on Thursday, August 13, 2015.
6. A candidate will be declared elected as the 42nd Moderator upon attaining 50% plus one of the votes cast.
7. If there are ten or more names on the ballot, four with the least number of votes cast in their favour will be released from the subsequent ballots; if there are seven or more and fewer than ten names on the ballot, three with the least number of votes cast in their favour will be released from the subsequent ballots; if there are more than four and fewer than eight names on the ballot, two with the lowest number of votes cast in their favour will be released from the subsequent ballots; with four or fewer names, the one with the lowest number of votes will be released from subsequent ballots.
8. When there are seven or more names on the ballot and there is a tie in the number of votes cast for the candidates with the least number of votes in their favour as set out in the preceding paragraph, the candidates who are tied will be released from subsequent ballots. This could mean that more than the specified number of candidates could be released from a ballot as set out in the preceding paragraph.
9. Announcements of the results of the ballots will take place at times determined by the Moderator with advice from the Business Committee.
10. Tallies of votes will not be announced.

### ***Minutes***

That the minutes of the 41st General Council, 2012 be approved.

### ***Minute Secretary***

That the Minute Secretary for the 42nd General Council, 2015 be Susan Fortner.

### ***Accountability Reports***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 accept the accountability report of the Executive of the General Council.

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 receive for information the following reports:

- Moderator's Accountability Report
- Moderator's Advisory Committee Report
- Accountability Report of the General Secretary, General Council
- A Journey to Full Communion
- Mission and Ministry with Migrant Churches
- Mutual Recognition of Ministries with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
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- Aboriginal Ministries Council Report
- Newfoundland and Labrador Conference Report
- Maritime Conference Report
- Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference
- Bay of Quinte Conference Report
- Toronto Conference Report

- Hamilton Conference Report
- London Conference Report
- Manitou Conference Report
- All Native Circle Conference Report
- Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Report
- Saskatchewan Conference Report
- Alberta and Northwest Conference Report
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- Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools Report
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- The United Church Foundation Report
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- The Comprehensive Review Task Group Report
- Rulings and Opinions of The General Secretary, General Council – July 2012 to June 2015
- Minutes of the Executive of the General Council – June 2012 to June 2015
- Actions of the Executive – Summary Report

### ***Establish Commissions***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 establish three Commissions to meet Tuesday, August 11, 2015, to complete the work assigned to them by the 42nd General Council, 2015.

### ***Voting Privileges in Commissions***

That the Commissioners of the General Council have voting privileges in the Commission to which their membership has been assigned; that Corresponding Members of General Council have privilege of voice but no vote, in Commissions; and that the Moderator and the General Secretary are ex-officio members of all Commissions.

### ***Business Assigned to Red – Partridgeberry Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 assign to Red – Partridgeberry Commission the items of business as reported in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the General Council.

### ***Membership of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 appoint the membership of Red – Partridgeberry Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

### ***Leadership of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission***

That Adam Hanley and Sue Broderick be the co-chairs and that Shirley Welch be the Minute Secretary of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission.



That the Reference and Counsel of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission be Don Stiles, Jean Bethune, Sean Handcock and Will Sparks.

***Business Assigned to Yellow – Bakeapple Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 assign to the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission the items of business as reported in the Workbook.

***Membership of Yellow – Bakeapple Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 appoint the membership of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission as assigned in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42nd General Council.

***Leadership of Yellow – Bakeapple Commission***

That Shirley Cleave and Paula Gale be the co-chairs and that Susan Whitehead is the Minute Secretary of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission be Katharine Moore, Kate Crawford, Dale Skinner, and Paul Stott.

***Business Assigned to the Blue – Blueberry Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 assign to the Blue – Blueberry Commission the items of business as reported in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42nd General Council.

***Membership of the Blue – Blueberry Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 appoint the membership of the Blue – Blueberry Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

***Leadership of the Blue – Blueberry Commission***

That Graham Brownmiller and Bev Kostichuk be the co-chairs and the Stefanie Uyesugi be the Minute Secretary of to the Blue – Blueberry Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Blue – Blueberry Commission be Nancy Knox, Matthew Fillier, Ralph Hayman and Betty Kelly.

***Agenda***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 accept as its agenda, the agenda as circulated and approved on the understanding that the agenda may be changed, as necessary, by the action of the General Council, on the recommendation of the Business Committee.

***Unfinished Business***

Unfinished business will be referred to the Executive of the General Council.

**Motion to Amend: Steve Berube/Emma Head**

To add the following to the Procedural Motions:

That Commissioners have the opportunity to be designated with respect to the work of a Commission to which they are not assigned and that they be granted speaking privileges similar to other Commissioners and that they be designated by a petition signed by at least 12 other Commissioners.

**Carried**

**Motion as Amended:**

***Bounds of Council***

That the bounds of Commons for the 42nd General Council, 2015 be the arena 1 floor at the numbered tables at Grenfell Campus of Memorial University, Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador excluding the visitor seating and unnumbered tables.

The bounds of the court when the Commissions are in Session will be: Canada House, Meeting Location 2; Civic Centre Conference Room 2 and the arena 1 floor at the numbered tables at Grenfell Campus of Memorial University, Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador excluding the visitor seating and unnumbered tables;

***Corresponding Members***

That the following persons who are in attendance be corresponding members of the 42nd General Council, 2015 and as such, be entitled to speak but not to move motions or to vote:

- Moderators: The Very Rev. David Giuliano, Dr. Marion Best, The Very Rev. Lois Wilson, The Very Rev. Stanley McKay, The Very Rev. Marion Parfy, The Very Rev. William Phipps, The Very Rev. Peter Short;
- Global partner representatives, ecumenical, inter-faith and official guests of the Council
- The Youth Forum participants and leaders who are not Commissioners;
- Participants and leaders of the Children and Young Teens;
- Members of the Business Committee who are not Commissioners;
- General Council Officers, Executive Ministers, Executive Officers, and Conference Executive Secretaries and Speaker;
- Guests appointed by the Executive of the General Council.
- Connie Budd

***Resource People***

That the following persons and such other people as the General Secretary, General Council, may designate, be named as Resource People, who may be called upon to speak as needed to support the business of the Council: Kevin Barnes, Perry Bellegarde, Russel Burns, Adele Halliday, Adrian Jacobs, Jamie Scott, Marie Wilson, and Christine Greenaway.

***Business Committee Membership***

- Fred Monteith, chair
- Gary Paterson, Moderator
- Nora Sanders, General Secretary, General Council
- Shirley Cleave, chair of the Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda
- Karen Smart, Staff Resource to the Business Committee
- Cynthia Gunn, resource to the Business Committee and Parliamentarian
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### ***Minute Secretary***

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### ***Accountability Reports***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 accept the accountability report of the Executive of the

## General Council.

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- Mission and Ministry with Migrant Churches
- Mutual Recognition of Ministries with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
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That Commissioners have the opportunity to be designated with respect to the work of a Commission to which they are not assigned and that they be granted speaking privileges similar to other Commissioners and that they be designated by a petition signed by at least 12 other Commissioners.

***Business Assigned to Red – Partridgeberry Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 assign to Red – Partridgeberry Commission the items of business as reported in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the General Council.

***Membership of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 appoint the membership of Red – Partridgeberry Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

***Leadership of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission***

That Adam Hanley and Sue Broderick be the co-chairs and that Shirley Welch be the Minute Secretary of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission be Don Stiles, Jean Bethune, Sean Handcock and Will Sparks.

***Business Assigned to Yellow – Bakeapple Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 assign to the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission the items of business as reported in the Workbook.

***Membership of Yellow – Bakeapple Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 appoint the membership of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission as assigned in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42nd General Council.

***Leadership of Yellow – Bakeapple Commission***

That Shirley Cleave and Paula Gale be the co-chairs and that Susan Whitehead is the Minute Secretary of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission be Katharine Moore, Kate Crawford, Dale Skinner, and Paul Stott.

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That the 42nd General Council, 2015 assign to the Blue – Blueberry Commission the items of



business as reported in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42nd General Council.

***Membership of the Blue – Blueberry Commission***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 appoint the membership of the Blue – Blueberry Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

***Leadership of the Blue – Blueberry Commission***

That Graham Brownmiller and Bev Kostichuk be the co-chairs and the Stefanie Uyesugi be the Minute Secretary of to the Blue – Blueberry Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Blue – Blueberry Commission be Nancy Knox, Matthew Fillier, Ralph Hayman and Betty Kelly.

***Agenda***

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 accept as its agenda, the agenda as circulated and approved on the understanding that the agenda may be changed, as necessary, by the action of the General Council, on the recommendation of the Business Committee.

***Unfinished Business***

Unfinished business will be referred to the Executive of the General Council.

**Carried**

**GS 2 Plenary Consent**

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Graham Brownmiller**

**GC42 2015-002**

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 approve the requests for action in the following proposals and direct the Executive of the General Council to ensure that such actions are taken as requested in the proposals:

- GS 5 Appeal – Calculation of Deadline to Initiate Appeal
- GS 6 Minutes of Court Meetings
- GS 7 Notice of Congregational Meetings re: Amalgamations and Disbanding
- GS 8 Members of the Order of Ministry Elected/Appointed to Public Office
- GS 11 French translation of *The Manual*
- GCE 2 – REF MEPS 9 – Police Records Check
- GCE 3 – REF MEPS 14 – Congregational Designated Ministry Policy
- GCE 4 – REF MEPS 13 – Licensed Lay Worship Leader Policy
- GCE 5 – REF - MEPS 19 Sabbaticals For Persons Involved in Interim Ministry (GC41 HAM 10)
- GCE 6 – REF MEPS 21 The Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Leave Policy
- GCE 7 – REF MEPS 18 –Conference Interviews For Interim Ministers (GC41 TOR 1)
- GCE 8 – REF MEPS 23 - Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships
- GCESE 1 Amending the Disability Provisions of the Manual
- NOM 1 Appointment of the Executive of the General Council
- NOM 2 Appointment to the Committees of the General Council
- TICIF 1 TICIF Accountability and Future Work

- BQ 7 Clarify Section C and D of *The Manual*

**Carried**

### **General Secretary's Accountability Report**

The General Secretary, Nora Sanders, reported on the work of the staff at the General Council Office and in the Conferences.

Nora acknowledged and thanked the Comprehensive Review Task Group, along with the Sessional Committee for their faithfulness to engage in this difficult undertaking of leading us into this deeper place of carrying out God's work within the church.

The church continues to explore new ways of being. While acknowledging our losses, we also celebrate new relationships with our sister churches and Partner's Council. She also noted our ongoing commitment to right relations and living into the apology.

In concluding her report, Nora spoke of not being afraid of change. This was a time to set priorities, to do things in partnership with others, and find new ways of being church.

### **GS 4 Prioritizing of General Council Work**

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Edison Bardock**

**GC42 2015-003**

It is moved :

1. That the 42nd General Council, 2015 direct the Executive of the General Council to prioritize all the work of the General Council Office, in order to implement the decisions made by this General Council to the fullest extent possible, having regard to the importance of:
  - a) supporting the life and ministries of communities of faith
  - b) the denomination's role in witnessing to the gospel and teachings of Jesus
  - c) focusing at the denominational level on work best done at the denominational level
  - d) transitions the church must make to meet to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century
  - e) responsible stewardship of the financial and other resources of the United Church
2. And that the 42nd General Council, 2015 declare that:
  - a) any decision made by this General Council in response to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group takes precedence over any other decision made by this General Council, to the extent that the two may be in conflict; and
  - b) all decisions made by this General Council be understood to include such modifications as may be necessary for consistency with decisions made in response to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.

**Carried**

An extra half hour was added to the lunch break in order to give time for Commissioners and guests to take part in the Alvin Dixon Memorial Run and Walk.

### **Moderator's Accountability Report**

Mardi Tindal, Past Moderator, assumed the chair for the Moderator's Report.

The Moderator, The Right Rev. Gary Paterson, reflected on the generosity and the gifts he has received over his time in office. He spoke to the collection of mugs, hats, books, prints and photographs he had received and also to the gift of community in the many shared meals from coast to coast.

He noted that the most important role as Moderator was “quickenning in the hearts of the people a sense of God as revealed in Christ, and heartening and strengthening the whole United Church.”

While acknowledging the church’s commitment to the path of justice, he noted the work done in so many congregations working with local food banks, out of the cold programmes, involvement in the ‘unsettling goods’ campaign, writing letters to government, connecting with global partners and working at right relations with aboriginal peoples.

Reflecting back on the 41st General Council and accepting the role of Moderator, he spoke to being the first openly gay person elected to lead a major Christian denomination anywhere in the world. He expressed his deep appreciation to the United Church, for its affirming commitment for inclusion, acceptance and justice.

Gratitude was offered to the Moderator following his report.

### **General Council Executive Reports with Permanent Committee Chairs**

Shirley Cleave, chair, Permanent Committee Governance and Agenda, reported on the work of the committee with their focus being integrating the intercultural tool and affirming process throughout this triennium.

Hugh Johnson and The Very Rev. Marion Parady, members of the Permanent Committee Finance, reported on the church’s call to action for a sustainable church including a financial model for the 42nd General Council. Hugh noted the guiding principles with which the committee has worked to manage the funds, while recognizing the new ways of being church. One of the key messages he stressed was the individual support needed in our congregations, districts and presbyteries to support the work of the Mission and Service Fund. This is key to our faith formation.

Tracy Murton, chair, Permanent Committee Ministry and Employment Policies and Services, reported on the work of the committee highlighting key areas: ‘Recruitment – God’s World Needs Leaders’, Gender Transitioning Health Spending Account, Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships.

Mary Royal-Duczek, chair, Permanent Committee Programs for Mission and Ministry, reported on the work of the committee noting the transitional changes within the permanent committee structure that took place over the triennium. Along with these changes, staff and resource reductions were made as well. She highlighted the work and courageous conversations that have been taking place within French Ministries, the youth and young adult gathering of Rendez-vous 2014 in Winnipeg, the Social Innovation Challenge held in Toronto in June 2015, to name just a few. Concluding her remarks she reiterated that God is with us as we continue to shape how we are church.

**Worship**

Cathy Hamilton along with other members of the Comprehensive Review Task Group invited those present into a time of worship, prayer and song.

**Change Order of the Day****Motion: Nora Sanders/Noah Richardson****GC42 2016-004**

That the order of the day for the close of Moderator Nominations be extended by 15 minutes to allow the Comprehensive Review worship to be completed.

**Carried****Introduction of the Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

Jean Brown and Larry Doyle, co-chairs of the Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee, introduced and thanked the members of the Sessional Committee. They noted that over one hundred proposals and responses had been received and reviewed by the Sessional Committee in the week before General Council began to meet. The Sessional Committee entered into their work by using the nine principles of the Comprehensive Review Task Group:

1. God is doing a new thing. Structures and processes must enable;
2. Communities of Faith in Jesus Christ are the core-focus our resources and energy on supporting and enabling;
3. Diverse, but value being united;
4. Local, regional, and denominational expressions of faith groups that gather for mutual support, ministry, and mission;
5. Intercultural, embrace diversity;
6. Right relations with Aboriginal peoples;
7. Ministry, lay leaders must receive support and education;
8. Separate oversight and discipline from support for ministers and Community of Faith;
- 9a. Governance and support services must be simplified and sustainable; and
- 9b. Funding mechanisms must be transparent.

They reiterated that the Sessional Committee was listening to what the church was saying, lifting up principles and/or assumptions, seeking to clarify the dialogue and find a new place for deliberations.

Gratitude was offered to the Sessional Committee from the court.

**Nominee for Moderator****Motion: Janet Jones/Sue Campbell****GC42 2015-005**

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 receive and place on the ballot the following name as a nominee for the 43rd Moderator – Ann Harbridge.

**Carried**

The Moderator declared the nominations for Moderator closed.

### **Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee Report**

Bill Steadman, chair, Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, reported on the work of the committee as constituted by the General Council.

He highlighted the significant and on-going work being done on Hindu-United Church Relations. The study resource *Honouring the Divine in Each Other: United Church-Hindu Relations Today* has been commended to the wider church for their feedback, with action to be taken by the 43rd General Council.

Other continuing work is that of Land and Covenant, which was the subject of a symposium in May 2014 to look at land from “both the perspective of the Holy Land and from the perspective of the rights and stewardship of Aboriginal people within Canada.” This work will continue to look at the keepers of the land and our role as settlers.

Bill noted that the work contained in the proposal TICIF 1 for the next triennium directing the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to continue in its responsibility to encourage and facilitate theological reflection throughout the church by including as priorities for the next triennium work that:

- examines the theological implications of physician-assisted dying, and offers guidance on the development of a statement as well as provide support for seeking an awareness of the pastoral implications within our congregations;
- develops a theological statement on adoption that will engage the church in this important issue;
- engages the church in a study of theologies of land rooted in our Canadian context but opening to local and global issues;
- explores jointly with the Aboriginal Ministries Council development of an interfaith study of the relationship between the United Church and Traditional Aboriginal Spiritualities.

The Moderator thanked Bill Steadman and the members of the committee on behalf of the court.

### **GS 3 Enacting Remits Authorized by the 41st General Council 2012 and 2013**

**Motion: N. Sanders/W. Sheaves**

**GC42 2015-006**

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 enact the following remits authorized by the 41st General Council, 2012, all of which have been approved by a majority of the presbyteries:

- Remit#1: Vacancies in Session, Church Board and Church Council
- Remit#2: Staff as Lay Members of Presbytery
- Remit#3: Presbytery Representation from Presbytery Accountable Ministries
- Remit#4: Transfer and Settlement – Presbytery Recognized Ministries or Presbytery Accountable Ministries
- Remit#5: Election of Commissioners by Overseas Personnel
- Remit#6: Associate Relationship with Migrant Church Communities
- Remit#7: Election of General Council Commissioners – President-Elect/Leading Elders
- Remit#8: Election of General Council Commissioners – Designated Lay Ministers

**Carried**

**Theological Reflection**

Basil Coward reflected on the word “hope”, as the common thread in our individual and collective stories over the coming days of this gathering.

**Moderator Nominees**

Moderator nominees were introduced to the General Council and presented with stoles made by Susan Sheppard. They are as follows:

Rev. Jim Ball  
Rev. Deborah Bowman  
Rev. Jordan Cantwell  
Rev. Brian Cornelius  
Rev. Shaun Fryday  
Ms. Ann Harbridge  
Rev. Karen Hilfman-Millson  
Rev. Dave Jagger  
Rev. Dr. Andrew Richardson  
Mr. Michael Shewburg  
Rev. Bill Thomas  
Rev. Dr. John Young

**Maybe One – Celebrating 90 Years**

A play written by Scott Douglas, and directed by Douglas Wright was performed by members of London Conference with special guest Ray Jones.

**Monday August 10, 2015****Worship**

Danielle Ayana James led morning worship, which focused on the scripture readings from Exodus 13:17–18, 21–22; 14:10, 15–17, 19–25, 27; and 15:1–2, 20–21.

Fred Monteith updated the agenda with “Today we will....”

**Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

Larry Doyle and Jean Brown, Sessional co-chairs offered further insight on the nine principles used by the Sessional Committee to respond to the Comprehensive Review report considering feedback from the church.

Table Groups were then invited to discuss “What are the core principles or values that would inform your design of a church structure?”

The co-chairs presented on behalf of the sessional committee their report, underlining the committee’s recommendations for each of the following:

- CRTG 1 – Chasing the Spirit
- CRTG 2 – Aboriginal Ministries
- CRTG 3 – Three Council Model

- CRTG 4 – College of Ministries
- CRTG 5 – Association of Ministers
- CRTG 6 – Funding a New Model
- CRTG 7 – Remit/Meeting of GC43

It was noted that the work done was on behalf of the court, with the final decisions to be made by the voting members of the 42nd General Council, 2015.

Table Groups were then invited to discuss the following questions; “How are you feeling?” and “What questions does this raise for you? What answers will you be looking for when you get the full set of proposals at lunch today?”

### **Aboriginal Ministries Council**

Ray Jones, chair of the Aboriginal Ministries Council, highlighted the work of the Council examining the ongoing work of equity, respect and mutuality while continuing to build and develop relationships between the church and its constituency. He underscored the importance of structure and process, and of holding space for the spirit.

He then spoke to the importance of storytelling to indigenous people. Gabrielle Lamouche was invited to tell a story of respect. Lorna Standingready and Former Moderator, The Very Rev. Stan McKay, related a story of mutuality and how it represents the wholeness of life. Adrian Jacobs, Keeper of the Circle, Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, told a story on equality. The report concluded with a role-play by Janet Sigurdson and Russel Burns.

Ray invited table groups into a time of discussion with the question “What have I learned about building relationships that are respectful, mutual, and equitable?”

### **Global Partners**

Michael Blair, Executive Minister, Communities in Ministry, introduced the Global and Ecumenical Partners:

- Rev. Tae Jin Bae, Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, Republic of South Korea
- Rev. Geoffrey A. Black, United Church of Christ, USA
- Rev. Miguel Tomas Castro, Emmanuel Baptist Church, El Salvador
- Rev. Canon Alyson Barnett Cowan, Canadian Council of Churches
- Dr. Mumtaz Cheema, The Muslim Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Esha Faki. Peace for Life, Kenya
- Rev. Chris Ferguson, World Communion of Reformed Churches, Hanover, Germany
- Jennifer Henry, KAIROS Canada
- Dr. Veeresh Gada, Hindu Community
- Most Rev. Peter Hundt, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
- Bishop Reuel Marigza, United Church of Christ in the Philippines, Philippines
- Rev. Dr. Willard Metzger, Mennonite Church Canada
- Rev. Peggy Mulambya-Kabonde, The United Church of Zambia, Zambia
- Rev. Campbell Lovett, United Church of Christ, USA

- Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah, Program for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA), Kenya
- Rt. Rev. Michael Oulton, Anglican Church of Canada
- Bishop Gesner Paul, Methodist Church Haiti
- Marilia Schüller, Koinonia, Brazil
- Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, United Church of Christ, USA

and United Church overseas personnel Sara Beer, Hamilton Conference.

He noted that regrets had been received from Fr. Rex Reyes, National Council of Churches in the Philippines.

The Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah offered greetings to the court on behalf of the Partner Council. He expressed their appreciation for the honour and recognition of being present and part of the 42nd General Council, 2015.

Table Groups were invited to discuss the question: “I wonder where you saw God yesterday?”

### **Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee (Addendum A)**

Larry Doyle and Jean Brown, Sessional co-chairs presented the Sessional report and proposals.

Table groups were invited to talk among themselves and bring questions for clarification to the Business Table.

### **Theological Reflection**

Rev. Miguel Tomas Castro reflected on the church experiencing a time of expectation and anxiety. He referenced the Gospel of St. John 14:1 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”

### **Moderator Nominees**

The Moderator invited the first four nominees to speak. (*The order of speaking had been determined by a random process at dinner with the nominees on Sunday evening.*) At the conclusion of each address, a verse of one hymn chosen by the nominee was sung.

1. Debra Bowman
2. Jim Ball
3. Brian Cornelius
4. Bill Thomas

### **Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

Discernment regarding the Sessional Committee Report continued.

### **Moderator Nominees**

The Moderator invited the next four nominees to speak:

5. Shaun E. Fryday
6. Jordan Cantwell
7. Karen Hilfman-Millson



8. Andrew Richardson

**Moderator Nominees**

After dinner, the Moderator invited the final four nominees to speak:

9. Ann Harbridge
10. Michael Shewburg
11. John Young
12. Dave Jagger

**Worship**

Youth Forum members led closing worship for the day, which included highlights of the pilgrimage across Canada of the Youth Pilgrims to the General Council meeting.

**Tuesday August 11, 2015**

**Worship**

Global Partner, Marilia Schüller, led morning worship, which was based on the scripture reading from 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.

Fred Monteith shared the updated agenda in “Today we will....”

The General Council then moved into three Commissions to continue their work.

**Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Noah Richardson**

**GC42 2015-007**

It was moved that thanks be extended to the Sessional Committee and that they be released from their work.

**Carried**

**Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

Larry Doyle and Jean Brown, clarified the amendments proposed by the Sessional Committee.

The Moderator suggested that the court consider all of the recommendations from the Sessional Committee using the proposal method, leaving each one when it was ready to be moved to the motion stage, until all the related proposals had been worked with and were ready to be moved to the motion stage together, and then debated and voted on. This approach was accepted by the court, and discussion and discernment began.

**Wednesday August 12, 2015**

**Worship**

The worship led by Lorna Standingready and Former Moderator The Very Rev. Stan McKay focused on honouring First Nations people. Tobacco ties were offered to all those present.

Fred Monteith shared the updated agenda in “Today we will....”

### **Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

The General Council continued discussion and discernment of the Comprehensive Review proposals offered by the Sessional Committee.

Arriving at the order of the day, worship was followed by a Sabbath time with optional local excursions.

### **Thursday, August 13, 2015**

Following morning worship, the work of the General Council moved into three separate Commissions to do the work assigned to them.

#### **Worship**

Etienne LeSage led worship which reflected on the scripture reading Mark 10:17-27.

Table groups were invited into ‘Sharing our Faith’. Je me demande: comment feras-tu prevue de bravoure en partant d’ici? I wonder how will you be brave when you leave this place?

Fred Monteith presented the updated agenda in “Today we will...”

#### **Voting for the Moderator**

Fred Monteith reviewed the process for voting for the Moderator.

The Moderator, Gary Paterson led prayer before the first ballot.

Commissioners voted, making use of ballot boxes placed in different parts of the room and then the polls closed for the first ballot.

#### **Truth and Reconciliation Commission**

The Very Rev. Peter Short, Former Moderator, introduced the accountability report for the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools which had been co-chaired by Mel King and barb janes. He gave an overview of the thirty-year journey the church has taken since the Apology to First Nations People (1986) offered by The Very Rev. Robert Smith.

He spoke of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) and that in May 2006 the United Church became a defendant signatory to the largest settlement agreement in Canadian history. Outlining the journey of awareness through humility and hard truths, the church has completed its legal obligations with full participation in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Over 30,000 historical documents and 1,537 photographs were provided to the TRC from 6,036 containers.

In concluding his remarks, he reaffirmed the church’s commitment to the ongoing collaborative work of reconciliation.

Dr. Marie Wilson, Commissioner, Truth and Reconciliation Commission began her presentation by noting that she had addressed the court on two other occasions: at the 40th General Council,

Kelowna, and at the 41st General Council, Ottawa. She reflected on her time as a Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner, by explaining that she is commonly asked “what has moved her the most, and what she hopes will come of the Commission’s work.” She spoke of having heard and witnessed survivors publicly speaking and reclaiming their names and love for themselves, and finding words of forgiveness. These shared stories bring the need to regularly reassess what we are called to do as Canadians to bring an end to the two solitudes found within our country. In conclusion, she referenced a quote from Martin Luther King Jr., “hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” She asked that we always feel outrage at injustice, feel hope for what is possible, and hold the belief that the sacred teaching of love has the power to transform everything.

Elder Lorna Standingready thanked Marie Wilson for her commitment as a witness to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. She then read a poem.

Ray Jones, chair, Aboriginal Ministries Council, introduced National Chief Perry Bellegarde, Assembly of First Nations, from Little Black Bear First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory.

National Chief Bellegarde opened his remarks by reading a line offered by The Very Rev. Bill Phipps, from the 1998 Apology to Former Students of the United Church Indian Residential Schools, and to their Families and Communities, “We are in the midst of a long and painful journey as we reflect on the cries that we did not or would not hear, and how we have behaved as a church.” He then thanked the United Church for their work on reconciliation and social justice.

He illustrated his remarks with references to the teachings of respect with all parts of mother earth and father sky. He expounded on the ongoing struggles between quality of life indigenous and non-indigenous people experience across this country. As a two-legged tribe, he felt that we as a country could and can build better relationships based on mutual respect and collaboration. The struggles indigenous people face is for basic fundamental rights. He stated that reconciliation means nothing less than honouring the promises, restoring respect.

Peter Short offered thanks and presented a small gift of appreciation.

## **GCESE 2 Proposal on Reconciliation**

**Motion: Ray Jones/Mardi Tindal**

**GC42 2015-008**

It is moved that:

The 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Re-affirm its long term commitment to reconciliation and the building of right relations among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples;
2. Receive the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and commend them to the Executive of the General Council for consideration and Action;
3. Direct the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools and the General Secretary to work along with the Aboriginal Ministries Council to provide leadership to the wider church in the development of strategies and materials that will assist the church in supporting, educating, and implementing where appropriate, the Calls to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on June 2, 2015.

4. Encourage wherever possible, collaborative initiatives and actions on the Calls to Action with ecumenical partners such as KAIROS and the Canadian Council of Churches, Indigenous organizations, and the parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement;
5. Encourage congregations to engage in education and action for reconciliation.

**Carried**

**Moderator Election**

The General Secretary announced the names on the second ballot for Moderator.

- Deb Bowman
- Jordan Cantwell
- Brian Cornelius
- Karen Hilfman-Millson
- Dave Jagger
- Andrew Richardson
- Michael Shewburg
- John Young

After prayer, Commissioners voted on the second ballot as they made their way to lunch.

**Moderator Election**

After lunch, the General Secretary announced the names of the third ballot for Moderator.

- Deb Bowman
- Jordan Cantwell
- Andrew Richardson
- Michael Shewburg
- John Young

After prayer, Commissioners voted on the third ballot.

**Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

The General Council continued discussion and discernment of the Comprehensive Review proposals offered by the Sessional Committee.

**Moderator Election**

The General Secretary announced the names of the fourth ballot for Moderator.

- Jordan Cantwell
- Andrew Richardson
- John Young

After prayer, Commissioners voted on the fourth ballot.

**GCE 1 Full Communion Agreement with the United Church of Christ (USA)**

**Motion: Erin Todd/ R. Mathew Stevens**

**GC42 2015-009**

It was moved that:

1. The 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada, meeting in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador (August 8-15, 2015) make the following mutual declaration with the 30th General Synod of the United Church of Christ, meeting in Cleveland, Ohio (26-30 June 2015);
2. That the 42nd General Council *Acknowledge and celebrate* before God that the United Church of Christ (USA) is an authentic, faithful part of the one, universal body of Christ.
3. *Declare and celebrate* that a relationship of full communion now exists between The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA), by which is meant that both churches will pursue with intention ways of expressing the unity of the Church. This includes commitment to mutually recognizing ordained ministers of each partner church as truly ministers of word and sacrament, and ways of manifesting the common mission of witness and service.
4. *Commit* itself to work, with God's help and together with its partner churches, to effect greater unity in the whole church of Jesus Christ; and

Together with the United Church of Christ:

5. *Encourage* study of the biblical, theological, and practical implications of the full communion agreement;
6. *Direct* the General Secretary, General Council to work collaboratively with the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ to establish a United Church Partnership Committee to give guidance to this process;
7. *Receive* the final report of the joint full communion working group, including the possibilities presented for common life and witness together; and
8. *Agree* to commence the full communion agreement with the signing of the common agreement by the two Heads of Communion at a joint service of celebration that will include opportunities for local congregations and conferences across the two churches to celebrate in meaningful ways.

### **Carried**

On a Point of Privilege R. Matthew Stevens asked that “all my relations” be part of the full discussions. Nora Sanders acknowledged and confirmed that this will be noted.

### **GS 9 Mutual Recognition of Ministry**

Nora Sanders introduced GS9 Mutual Recognition of Ministry proposal. She referenced how through mission and ministry we are living into mutual relationships more fully. Conversations are continuing around language and the common use of terminology.

### **Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

The General Council continued discussion and discernment of the Comprehensive Review proposals offered by the Sessional Committee.

### **Moderator Election**

The General Secretary announced the names of the fifth ballot for Moderator.

- Jordan Cantwell

- John Young

After prayer, Commissioners voted on the fifth ballot.

**GS 9 Mutual Recognition of Ministry with United Church of Christ in the Philippines, and the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea**

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Sungmin Jung**

**GC42 2015-0010**

It was moved that the 42nd General Council:

1. *Approve* the establishment of mutual recognition of ministry with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea;
2. *Direct* the General Secretary to conclude and implement these mutual recognition of ministry agreements as approved by the Executive of General Council;
3. *Establish* in The United Church Manual, the category of “ministry partner” for ministers of denominations within mutual recognition agreements, with eligibility for call or appointment within the United Church of Canada as determined by the specific contents of the agreements;
4. *Authorize* a Category 2 remit to test the will of the church that ministry partners, while under appointment or call are full members of Presbytery, and equivalent to ordered ministers of The United Church of Canada in respect to membership and responsibilities in the courts of the church; and
5. *Authorize* the Executive of General Council to approve subsequent mutual recognition of ministry agreements, report to and celebrate at the subsequent General Council.

**Carried**

Rev. Tae Jin Bae, Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, Republic of South Korea offered thanks. This agreement provides us with a common sense of mission and acknowledging respect of our ministry personnel. Gifts were exchanged.

A suggestion was made that although the Executive of the General Council will have the authority to approve any subsequent mutual recognition of ministry agreements, time should be set aside at future General Councils to celebrate them.

The court received this suggestion positively.

**Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

The General Council continued discussion and discernment of the Comprehensive Review proposals offered by the Sessional Committee.

**Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee – One Order of Ministry**

Bill Steadman, chair, Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee introduced the work and outlined the history behind the proposal TICIF 2 A Proposal for One Order of Ministry. The report looked at the relationship between ordained, commissioned and designated lay ministry. The challenge was to understand the differences between the three streams of ministry and to determine what are appropriate educational requirements for ministry leadership today. The committee determined that the future ministry of the church would be better served by an

integration of the three streams into one new order of ministry with multiple paths of educational preparation.

On a Point of Privilege, the court was asked to defer this motion until the 43rd General Council to allow for additional plenary time for the Comprehensive Review deliberations. Questions were raised about whether the wider church needs additional work and consultations before further decisions take place. The Moderator invited the court to reflect on what had been heard and noted that the remit process would in fact invite the whole church into discussion on the proposed direction.

### **Theological Reflection**

Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, the United Church of Christ, USA reflected on the historic moment that took place in the life of both our churches with the full communion agreement. Referencing Isaiah 43:19 “Behold, I will do a new thing;” God is calling us to a new place. Her challenge to us, “Are we ready? Do you dare?”

### **Moderator**

Nora Sanders welcomed the new Moderator of The United Church of Canada, the Rev. Jordan Cantwell.

### **Motion: John Young/All Moderator Nominees**

**GC42 2015-011**

That the vote for Moderator be made unanimous.

**Carried**

## **Friday August 14, 2015**

### **Worship**

Danielle Ayana James expressed her thanks to those who focused the work of the 42nd General Council, by helping the Council live into our intercultural mission and ministry. The Covenant was read in English, Filipino, Korean and Spanish, with the Global Partners leading the call to worship.

Fred Monteith presented an updated agenda in “Today we will....”

### **Ballots**

#### **Motion: Norma Thompson/Robin Green**

**GC42 2015-012**

That all the ballots for Moderator be destroyed.

**Carried**

### **Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

The General Council continued discussion and discernment of the Comprehensive Review proposals offered by the Sessional Committee

### **Celebration and Signing – United Church of Christ (USA)**

Michael Blair, Executive Minister, Communities in Ministry shared that the formal celebration of the full communion agreement with the United Church of Christ (USA) and the formal

signing will take place in Niagara Falls, Ontario on the weekend of November 21-23, 2015.

Rev. Geoffrey A. Black, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ (USA), expressed his joy in establishing a formal relationship with the The United Church of Canada. He articulated the deep calling and shared core values between the two churches and affirmed the relationship. By establishing a formal relationship great possibilities lay ahead.

Michael Blair closed in prayer.

### **Celebrate and Sign Mutual Recognition**

Alan Hall, Executive Minister, Human Resources, announced the celebration of mutual recognition between The United Church of Canada, United Church of Christ in the Philippines and The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea. Through mutual recognition of ministry we are bringing mission and ministry together to fully be the church we are called to be.

Nora Sanders introduced Rev. Bae Tae Jin, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea. Rev. Tae Jin extended his gratitude. In a time of celebration, gifts were exchanged.

Nora Sanders introduced Bishop Reuel Marigza, United Church of Christ in the Philippines. He spoke of how this partnership is an integral part of both our churches. Both churches are now in fellowship and are not contained within national boundaries. Thanks and gifts were then exchanged.

Following the signing of agreements, the Moderator closed with prayer.

### **GS 10: Change in Governance from The United Church Of Canada Act to the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act**

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Valerie Kingsbury**

**C42 2015-013**

That the 42nd General Council, 2015:

1. approve the change in governance of The United Church of Canada as a legal corporation from The United Church of Canada Act to the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act;
2. confirm that in The United Church of Canada, for corporate legal purposes only (as distinct from church membership):
  - (i) the commissioners of the General Council are the “members” of the corporation; and
  - (ii) the members of the Executive of the General Council are the “directors” of the corporation; and
3. authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to this change.

[Note: this proposal requires approval by a 2/3 majority of the General Council under CNCA requirements.]



**Motion to Postpone Definitely: Richard Hollingsworth/Edison Bardock**

That GC 10 Comprehensive Review: Change in Governance from The United Church of Canada Act to the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act be postponed definitely.

**Defeated**

**Motion as Presented**

**Defeated**

**Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee**

The General Council continued discussion and discernment of the Comprehensive Review proposals offered by the Sessional Committee.

**LON 5 Comprehensive Review Task Group “United In God’s Work” Youth and Young Adult Representation at the Denominational Council**

**Motion: Emma Hebb/Ross Bartlett**

**GC42 2015-014**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Affirm its commitment to youth and young adult participation in the courts/councils of The United Church of Canada;
2. Ensure that provisions are made for youth and young adult participation in all three Councils identified in Recommendation 3 of United in God’s Work, The Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group;
3. Affirm that this involvement should be at no less a percentage than provided by existing levels; and
4. Direct the General Secretary, General Council to provide process for youth participation at gatherings of the Denominational Council.

**Carried**

Nora Sanders acknowledged that M&O 17 and M&O18 having been directed to the General Secretary will include input from the francophone constituency.

**TICIF 2 A Proposal for One Order of Ministry**

**Motion: Bill Steadman/Dwaine Dornan**

**GC42 2015-015**

That the 42nd General Council recognize one order of ministry within The United Church of Canada, known as the ordained ministry:

1. provide within the ordained ministry of the church, for those who so choose through an appropriate educational program, ordination to the diakonia;
2. develop multiple paths of educational formation to the ordained ministry based on an overall equivalency of educational and spiritual formation;
3. authorize a Category 3 remit to Presbyteries and to Pastoral Charges to test the will of the United Church with respect to this recognition;
4. incorporate (grandparent) into the ordained ministry all diaconal ministers;
5. direct the General Secretary to establish a process to incorporate into the ordained ministry designated lay ministers currently serving in recognized or accountable ministries;
6. Direct the General Secretary to edit the Statement on Ministry to reflect the decision of the church in regards to this proposal.

**Carried**

The Moderator expressed his gratitude to the committee members, on behalf of the court.

### **Theological Reflection**

Rev. Peggy Mulambya-Kabonde, The United Church of Zambia, reflected on the journey taken by all those present. She stated that the church has gone beyond its mission and ministry. The Council came together as a people of God. Both our churches are being called to be a prophetic witness of justice and peace. She encouraged the church to evangelize and preach the gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

After dinner, the proposals regarding the Comprehensive Review were brought back and a few amendments were made using the Proposal Process. The final motion before the 42nd General Council on this work was moved and seconded:

### **CR OMNI 1 Comprehensive Review**

**Motion: Cathy Hamilton/Larry Doyle**

**GC42 2015-016**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 adopt the following proposals CR 1 to CR 17 inclusive:

#### **CR 1 Chasing the Spirit**

That the 42nd General Council, 2015:

1. commit to supporting new ministries and new forms of ministry through an initiative tentatively called “Chasing the Spirit”;
2. direct that ten (10%) percent of annual Mission and Service givings be invested in this initiative, with the United Church to begin work immediately towards implementation of this direction, and for it to be fully implemented no later than 2018; and
3. direct the General Secretary, General Council that implementation should:
  - include initiatives for existing communities of faith that want to be transformed;
  - reconsider the name of the new initiative and its theological implications;
  - consider setting proportional targets for diverse intercultural ministry expressions;
  - consider accessibility and engagement by rural, remote and other communities;
  - consider additional sources of revenue for the fund, such as revenues from property sales or bequests; and
  - communicate with regions.

#### **CR 2 Aboriginal Ministries**

That notwithstanding any decisions made by the 42nd General Council, 2015 in response to the Comprehensive Review Task Group’s Report, the 42nd General Council, 2015 direct the Executive of the General Council to:

1. establish a process to continue conversations with the Aboriginal ministries that form the Aboriginal Ministries Council to build a relationship based on mutuality, respect, and equity, and to report back no later than GC 43;
2. maintain funding for Aboriginal ministries at current levels, to the extent possible, during the next triennium while the conversations continue; and

3. establish a process for developing a model for funding Aboriginal Ministries and Indigenous Justice on a going forward basis.

### **CR 3 A Three Council Model**

That the 42nd General Council, 2015 approve the reorganization of The United Church of Canada from its current four-court structure to a three-council structure consisting of communities of faith, regional councils, and a denominational council as follows:

#### 1. COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

##### *A. Description:*

A community of faith would be any community of people within the United Church that:

- gathers to explore faith, worship, and serve, including but not limited to congregations, outreach ministries, faith-based communal living, house churches, and online communities; and
- is recognized as a community of faith within the United Church by the regional council through a covenantal relationship between the community of faith and the regional council.

##### *B. Membership*

- The members of the community of faith would be:
- people admitted to membership by the community of faith, within denominational guidelines;
- eligible for election to denominational council and regional council; and
- entitled to vote on all community of faith matters; and entitled to extend the right to vote on financial and administrative matters to adherents.

##### *C. Authority and responsibility*

The community of faith would have authority and responsibility for:

##### *Mission*

- living in covenant with the regional council with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;
- doing regular self-assessments of the ministry of the community of faith; and filing the report with the regional council;
- joining the hearts, voices, and resources of the community to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world;
- local, regional, national and global initiatives and partnerships (community, ecumenical and interfaith) for ministry, mission and justice work;
- ministry with children and youth and young adults;
- honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry, as described in *Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church*.

##### *Becoming an Intercultural Church;*

- recognizing that the Aboriginal Ministries have not yet determined their presence within the new structures of the church; and
- living in covenant with Mother Earth and All My Relations in the Earth community.

#### *Governance and Administration*

- making decisions about the life of the community of faith, including worship, care, spiritual practice, and learning; local administration, finances, and governance, and local mission, justice, and evangelism;
- meeting at least annually;
- complying with denominational and regional policies; and
- buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith property in cooperation with the regional council, within denominational guidelines.

#### *Spiritual Life*

- setting policies for membership, within denominational guidelines and receiving and celebrating new members in the community of faith;
- helping members deepen their faith while exploring their faith journey; and
- ensuring the proper administration of the sacraments

#### *Ministry and Other Leadership*

- cooperation with the regional council, within denominational guidelines, in recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel and other staff, and in ending calls and appointments/covenants with ministry personnel and other staff;
- encouraging members to consider ministry roles a responsibility shared through the whole community of faith; and
- recommending to the appropriate body suitable lay members as inquirers, candidates, and licensed lay worship leaders, as and if required under denominational policy;

#### *Participation in Regional and Denominational Life*

- helping to fund the cost of sending members to the meetings of the regional council;
- electing members to serve on regional council with shared funding of the cost; and
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from members of the community of faith to regional councils.

#### *D. Limitations*

All authority and responsibility of the community of faith would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;
- the covenantal relationship between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the regional council to assume control of the community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

## 2. REGIONAL COUNCILS

### A. *Description*

A regional council would be a decision-making body responsible to serve and support communities of faith within its bounds and provide necessary oversight.

### *B. Membership*

The regional council would be composed of:

- all ministry personnel within the geographic bounds served by the regional council; and
- lay members elected by the community of faith, respecting the balance of lay and ministry personnel where possible.

### *C. Authority and Responsibility*

The regional council would have authority and responsibility for:

#### *Covenanting:*

- recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship with it;
- living in a covenantal relationship with each community of faith, with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant; and
- living in a covenantal relationship with ministry personnel.

#### *Services for communities of faith:*

- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
- managing regional archives;
- providing on-going leadership training for ministers and lay persons; and
- providing funding partnerships with United Church educational and leadership training centres and camps as determined regionally.

#### *Serve, support and provide oversight of communities of faith:*

- reviewing and periodically auditing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council;
- supporting emerging new ministries;
- supporting communities of faith in their life and work;
- serving, supporting and providing oversight when necessary of camps and incorporated ministries in the region;
- promoting articulation of mission and ministry;
- ensuring compliance with the policies and polity of The United Church of Canada and reviewing any relevant records; and
- assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies.

#### *Mission and ministry:*

Encouraging and engaging in:

- joining our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world;
- local regional national and global initiatives and partnerships (community, ecumenical and interfaith) for ministry, mission and justice work;
- ministry with children, youth and young adults;
- honouring and living into intercultural ministry and mission as described in *Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church*;
- recognizing that the Aboriginal Ministries have not yet determined their presence within the new structures of the Church; and
- living in covenant with Mother Earth and All My Relations in the Earth community.

*Policy and finance:*

- administering policy set by the denominational council, and setting appropriate regional policy;
- buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith property in cooperation with communities of faith, and distributing any proceeds within denominational guidelines;
- buying, selling, leasing, and renovating regional property, and distributing any proceeds within denominational guidelines;
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from communities of faith to the denominational council based on denominational policy;
- setting and managing its annual budget including revenue from the denominational assessment and setting any additional regional assessment for any additional services the regional council wishes to undertake;
- participating in determining priorities for mission and ministry work through Mission and Service; and
- meeting at least annually as the entire regional council or through its executive.

*Preparation for Ministry:*

- recruitment and discernment of persons for ministry;
- accompaniment and supervision of persons in the preparation process;
- ordination and commissioning of members of the order of ministry;
- recognition of Designated Lay Ministers;
- licensing of Licensed Lay Worship Leaders; and
- celebrations of admissions and re-admissions.

*Pastoral Relations:*

- Cooperating with communities of faith in recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing and covenanting with ministry personnel and communities of faith.

*Celebrating Retirements*

*Oversight of ministry personnel:*

- encouraging and supporting ministry personnel towards health, joy and excellence in ministry practice;
- assisting with informal conflict resolution processes; and

- maintaining the roll of ministry personnel and informing the office of vocation of those ministry personnel in good standing.

*Participation in denominational life:*

- electing members to serve on denominational council.
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from members of the community of faith to the denominational council; and
- promoting and fostering direct dialogue between communities of faith and the denominational council.

*D. Limitations*

All authority and responsibility of the regional council would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, candidacy, ministry personnel, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council; and
- the authority of the denominational council to assume control of the regional council in extraordinary circumstances where the regional council is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

*E. Staffing*

Each region would have staff to assist the regional council in meeting its responsibilities:

- staffing numbers would be based on assessments, grants from Mission and Service, and any other regional income;
- staffing would be based on priorities and needs as determined regionally;
- staff would be hired and managed by a regional secretary who reports to the General Secretary of the denominational council and relates to the regional council executive; and
- regional councils with more resources would be free to retain more staff, and sharing of all resources across the church would be encouraged.

### 3. DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL

*A. Description:*

The denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church as both a denomination and a legal corporation.

*B. Membership*

The denominational council would consist of:

- those elected by the regional councils according to an agreed-upon formula
- the presiding officer or elder of each regional council;
- the Moderator and the immediate Past Moderator;
- the General Secretary of the denominational council; and
- other members and guests as determined.

*C. Authority and responsibility*

The denominational council would have authority and responsibility for:

*Mission:*

- joining our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world;
- engaging denominational-level ministry and mission including resource development and being a resource to regional councils and communities of faith;
- encouraging local and regional mission and ministry, partnerships, ecumenical and interfaith;
- engaging in national and global partnerships, ecumenical and interfaith relationships;
- honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry as described in *Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church*; and
- living in covenant with Mother Earth and All My Relations in the Earth community.

*Policy:*

- setting policies for the denomination on doctrine, worship, membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and the entrance to paid accountable ministry;
- making decisions on denomination-shaping issues relating to public witness; and
- dealing with proposals received from regional councils;

*Governance:*

- electing a Moderator;
- electing the executive of the denominational council;
- referring all unfinished matters to the executive of the denominational council;
- meeting once every three years in person, with members having the option of full participation through electronic or equivalent means;
- meeting more frequently as required through electronic or equivalent means; and
- approving the number and boundaries of regional councils, supporting them and promoting parity of service across regions;

*Finance and administration:*

- setting a three-year budget framework for the church
- determining the assessment formula for communities of faith and assessing them to meet the requirements of the budget; and
- maintaining the denominational archives.

*D. Limitations*

This proposal does not affect the limitations that exist at the current time:

- *remit*: the Basis of Union may only be changed through the remit process, which requires the approval of a majority of the presbyteries and also, if the General Council considers it advisable because the change is substantive or denomination-shaping, pastoral charges;
- *membership requirements*: no terms of admission to full membership may be prescribed other than those laid down in the New Testament;
- *freedom of worship*: the freedom of worship enjoyed by churches at the time of union in 1925 may not be interfered with in the United Church; and
- *property*: all policy on congregational property adopted by the denominational council must comply with the requirements set in The United Church of Canada Act, 1925.



*E. Executive of the denominational council*

The executive of the denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church between meetings of the denominational council, living into covenantal relationship and mutually accountable with the Denominational Council, Regional Councils, and communities of faith, with size: a fixed number between 12 and 18 members, with the exact number set by the denominational council;

*Authority:*

- dealing with all unfinished matters referred to it by the denominational council;
- dealing with all routine and emergency work of the denominational council;
- between meetings of the denominational council;
- establishing standing and other committees; and
- exercising additional authority and subject to any limitations as set by the denominational council

*F. Staffing*

The denominational council would have staff to assist it in meeting its responsibilities through:

- staffing based on assessments of communities of faith, grants from Mission and Service, and other denominational income;
- staffing based on the priorities and needs as determined denominationally;
- administering denominational policies;
- providing centralized technical services such as information technology, communication, payroll, accounting, human resources, administration, and pension plan;
- supporting the Moderator; and
- providing leadership in global partnerships and national-level ministry and mission work.

## 4. CLUSTERS AND NETWORKS

Alongside the three-council structure, there would also be:

- *clusters*: local clusters of communities of faith that would provide community and support for communities of faith and their leaders, and focus on worship, mission, learning, collegiality, and strategic planning; and
- *networks*: linking people working on specific issues (e.g. supportive housing, intercultural ministry, youth ministry) or for project work (e.g. event planning) that function through the whole church, depending on the issue.

Although the clusters and networks would not be formal governance bodies, they would be central to the living out of our faith.

**CR 4 Elimination of Transfer and Settlement**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the elimination of the transfer and settlement processes for members of the order of ministry within the United Church, including the elimination of the General Council Transfer Committee.

GC42 CR5 Referral – Theological Rational for the 3 Council Model

**CR 5 Theological Rationale for Three Council Model**

That the 42nd General Council 2015:

1. direct the Theology Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to develop a theological rationale for the Three Council Model; and
2. refer the following statement to the committee for consideration in this task:

We believe that God's holy Mystery has expressed itself in the sharing being through the creation, healing and ultimate perfecting of creaturely existence. We believe that the divine Mystery is most profoundly expressed in the event of Jesus Christ, God's Word made flesh. In responding to the divine initiative, and as led by the Holy Spirit, people of faith are called by the Holy Spirit into communion with others as members of Christ in the gathering of a local community of faith. Various known in Scripture as the people of God, the body of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, the church is more than the sum of all local communities. Communities of faith belong to one another across geographic, ethnic, and denominational boundaries in one holy, catholic and apostolic church. United Church governance reflects our belonging together through councils in which local communities of faith exercise mutual support and accountability. We dare to believe that the church is an instrument in God's hands, welcoming people into communion with God in Jesus Christ and seeking to serve God's mission to the world in Christ. Yearning for the coming of God's reign in its fullness, we are called to *be* the church, celebrating God's presence, living with respect in creation, seeking justice and resisting evil, and proclaiming Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

**CR 6 Office of Vocation**

That the 42nd General Council establish a denominational office of vocation as a permanent feature of the denominational structure with the following responsibilities and structure:

*Responsibilities:*

- establishing standards for training and accreditation of ministry personnel according to denominational policies;
- establishing expectations and standards for continuing education, formation, and professional development of ministry personnel according to denominational policies;
- determining the person's fitness and readiness for accreditation to ministry;
- maintaining registry of accredited ministry personnel;
- disciplining of ministry personnel including formal hearings and complaints;
- supporting and responding to requests for assistance from regional councils;
- administering the Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary and Voluntary);
- maintaining a list of trained conflict resolution facilitators;
- maintaining a list of recognized Interim Ministers, and those trained for the Ministry of Supervision; and

- establishing and implementing standards for admitting ministers from other denominations and re-admitting ministers.

*Structure:*

The office of vocations will be overseen by an elected body honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry, as described in *Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church*; consisting of a balance of ministers whether ordained, diaconal, or designated lay ministers and lay people, with a variety of active experience.

### **CR 7 Association of Ministers**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 direct the Executive of the General Council:

1. to establish a working group consisting of ministry personnel to consider the idea of establishing an Association of Ministers; and
2. to receive the report of the working group and to take appropriate action in response.

### **CR 8 Funding a New Model**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the following principles to guide the budgeting process for The United Church of Canada:

1. spend only what is received, which will require at least an \$11 million reduction in spending by 2018 from current 2015 spending levels;
2. determine the number of staff and what they do based on revenues received;
3. use Mission and Service to fund only ministry and mission activities;
4. fund governance and support services, whether at the regional council or the denominational council, by assessing communities of faith;
5. share assessments equitably across the whole church;
6. permit the regional council to use additional resources for regional purposes; and
7. encourage sharing of all resources across the church.

And further, that the Executive of the General Council be directed and authorized to take the actions necessary to finalize and implement the new model based on the above principles, to the extent permissible pending the outcome of this remit.

### **CR 9 Regions and Membership**

That the 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary to address the following prior to the issuing of a remit on the three- council model and report to the General Council Executive:

- the number of regions
- the membership of the regional council executive

- the membership of the denominational council executive
- the costs of conducting the meetings of the regional and denominational councils and who will bear that cost
- the relationship of regional council and denominational council to staff
- the means of participating in meetings (including technology)

With attention to these principles:

- good stewardship of human and financial resources;
- the resources to sustain the councils;
- geographical accessibility to participants
- our tradition of conciliar representation
- aboriginal, ethnic, francophone, racial, intercultural, youth and other diverse voices.
- UCW representation
- the engagement of networks and clusters with the councils
- our tradition of balancing council membership considering lay-ordered, gender and youth, etc.
- the numbers of communities of faith to be serviced, the number of members, their wealth, geographic distances, and sense of belonging
- the possibility of staff being shared among a number of regions within a geographical area

### **CR 10 Method of Assessment**

That the 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary, General Council to address the method of assessment, reporting to the General Council Executive. Upon the approval of the General Council Executive, the method of assessment will form the background material for the necessary remit. In creating this method of assessment, the following principles must be included:

- the principles articulated in CRTG 6
- just, sustainable, understandable and fair
- recognizes the differences in, and gives priority to the financial and spiritual health of communities of faith and regional councils, individually and collectively. money is expended with priority to providing service and support to communities of faith through the most effective means, recognizing that this is most often realized through regional deployment
- the resultant method of assessment should be transparent, understandable, and fair.
- reliable and accurate statistical basis
- awareness that the standard of measurement will affect the behaviour of the church
- mandatory background to any remit on the subject of assessment.

The Proposals M&O 11 and MTU 3 are referred to the General Secretary, General Council for information in the above work.

### **CR 11 Referral of Proposals**

The 42nd General Council refer proposals M&O 18 Francophone Decision-Making Network, MAR 5 Existing Social Justice Networks, M&O 17 Recognition in Principle of Francophones, to

the General Secretary, General Council as part of the work undertaken under CR 9.

### **CR 12 Relationship of Staff**

The 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary, General Council to clarify and report to the Executive of the General Council on:

- the relationship of the Regional Secretaries and the General Secretary; and
- the relationships and accountability of regional staff.

### **CR 13 Evaluation**

That the 42nd General Council direct that the Executive of the General Council define “objectives and ends” for the governance changes adopted and determine measurements for evaluation to be done in time for the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council.

### **CR 14 Property and Investments**

That the 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary to initiate a thorough review of the property and investments (including but not limited to policies and amounts) of The United Church of Canada at all levels, being guided by the principle for the sharing of human and property resources between financially wealthy and financially disadvantaged communities of faith at the denominational, regional and local levels.

### **CR 15 Disposal of Proposals**

That the 42nd General Council take no further action on the following Proposals:

ANW 4 Caring for Pastoral Relationships – a Response to the Comprehensive Review

ANW 7 Membership of the UCW in GC

ANW 8 Number of Regional councils

ANW 9 Organization & Responsibilities of Proposed Denominational

ANW 10 Organization & Responsibilities of Proposed Regional Councils

ANW 11 Funding Model (1) CRTG #6

ANW 12 Funding Model (2) CRTG #6

ANW 14 CRTG – Representation of UCW

ANW 15 Grass Roots Stimulus

ANW 16 Denominational Funding

BC1 Concerning Covenants

BC 10 Considering Terminology in United in God’s Work

BC 12 Amendments to “United in God’s Work”

BC 13 Response to United in God’s Work

BQ 1 Renew the Current Structure

BQ 3 Clarification of the Proposed New Assessment Formula

BQ 4 A Response to the Final Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group

BQ 6 Full Voting Status National UCW President

BQ 8 Natural Justice for College of Ministry

CRTG 1 Comprehensive Review: Chasing the Spirit

CRTG 2 Aboriginal Ministries

CRTG 3 A Three-Council Model

CRTG 4 A College of Ministers

CRTG 5 An Association of Ministers  
CRTG 6 Funding a New Model  
HAM 4 Representation of United Church Women on Councils  
HAM 6 Representation of United Church Women on Councils  
HAM 7 Initiating Comprehensive Review of Property & Monies  
LON 1 Naming the Denominational council  
LON 2 Naming of the Denominational Court  
LON 3 Proposed Name for the Denominational council  
LON 4 Representation to General Council  
LON 6 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 7 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 8 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 9 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 10 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 11 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 12 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 13 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 14 Accountability of Regional councils  
LON 15 College of Ministers & Association of Ministers  
LON 16 Association of Ministers  
LON 18 Funding for Restructuring  
LON 25 Ministers Attached to Courts  
LON 26 Balanced Representation on Regional and Denominational councils  
M&O 1 Alternative 3 Council Model  
M&O 2 Number of Regional councils  
M&O 3 Representation at the National Council  
M&O 4 CR: Strengthen Cooperation & Relationships with Other Churches  
M&O 5 Pastoral Oversight  
M&O 6 Oversight of Communities of Faith  
M&O 7 Comprehensive Review Representation of UCW Councils  
M&O 8 Amendment to the 3 Council Model Regarding Delegate Participation  
M&O 9 Evaluation after Implementation of CR Changes  
M&O 10 Chasing the Spirit  
M&O 11 Funding a New Model  
M&O 12 Resource Sharing  
M&O 13 Enabling Justice Work through Times of Change  
M&O 14 Change the Name of the College of Ministers  
M&O 15 Allow for a Larger Board of Directors for the College of Ministers  
M&O 16 National Listing for Interim Ministry and Ministry of Supervision  
M&O 19 Support for Ministries in French  
MAR 7 The Denominational council Structure & Funding  
MAR 8 Representation of UCW on Councils  
MAR 9 Alternative Structure to College  
MAR 10 Responsibilities of Colleges Assigned to Regional councils  
MAR 11 Regional council Responsibility for Youth Gatherings  
MNWO 1 Attendance Numbers of General Council

MNWO 2 Comprehensive Review – College of Ministers  
 MNWO 3 Comprehensive Review – Three Council Model  
 MNWO 4 Representation of United Church Women on Councils  
 MNWO 5 Comprehensive Review – Lay Leadership Development and Education  
 MNWO 9 Comprehensive Review – United in God’s World  
 MNWO 10 Staff Person for Supporting Transformation and New Ministries  
 MNWO 11 Reconsider Name – Chasing the Spirit  
 MNWO 12 Comprehensive Review – Regional councils Should be Appropriate Size  
 MNWO 13 Comprehensive Review – Order of Ministry and “UCC Memberships”  
 MTU 3 Denomination Funding Formula  
 MTU 4 Comprehensive Review: United in God’s Work – Representation of United Church  
     Women on Councils  
 NL 1 A New Model  
 NL 2 Non-support for an Association of Ministers  
 NL 3 Task Group to Establish Regional Boundaries  
 SK 2 Training & Accountability of Ministry Personnel  
 SK 3 Amendment to College and Association of Ministers  
 SK 4 College & Association of Ministers  
 SK 5 Support, Assessment, Oversight & Discipline for DLMs  
 SK 6 Oversight of Communities of Faith – 3 Court Model  
 SK 7 Strengthening Regional councils – An Alternative  
 SK 10 Amendment to Chasing the Spirit  
 TOR 6 Sharing of Resources  
 TOR 11 UCW Representation on Council

### **CR 16 Remits**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize Category 3 remits to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the reorganization and polity changes set out in motions CR 3, CR 4, CR 6 and CR 8.

### **CR 17 Remits / Meetings of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council**

That the 42nd General Council 2015:

1. waive the requirement for 24 months’ study and information sharing before the remit return date, in order to allow for an earlier return deadline for presbyteries and pastoral charges, for all category 3 remits arising from the Comprehensive Review;
2. advance the date of the regular meeting of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council from 2018 to September 15, 2017, or such other date named by the Executive of the General Council, so that the results of these remits may then be reported to the General Council and, if the remits have been approved, a decision made whether to enact them;
3. authorize the Executive of the General Council to hold the first regular meeting of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council electronically if deemed necessary for the purpose of dealing with remits and other emergent business; and

4. authorize test projects for the Three Council Structure and the Office of Vocation to begin immediately, with participation to be voluntary, and the Executive of the General Council to provide direction for and oversight of the testing.

**Carried**

**Moderator's Advisory Committee**

John Lawson introduced the members of the Moderator's Advisory Committee and highlighted their Accountability Report. He thanked Moderator Gary Paterson for his service to the United Church, and also acknowledged the ministry and support offered by Tim Stevenson to his partner Gary Paterson, to the advisory committee, and to the church. A map showing all the places the Moderator had visited this triennium was projected.

**Summary of Participation in the 42nd General Council, 2015**

Roy West gave an overview of who the 693 people at General Council were. Those present included 348 of 356 eligible Commissioners, 55 Commissioners identified as under 30, 194 Commissioners (56%) had attended a previous General Council as a Commissioner or in another role, 155 Commissioners (44%) were attending for the first General Council. As a community throughout the whole of Council there were 19 non-voting Youth Delegates, 25 Invited Guests including Ecumenical and Global Partners, Intercultural Observers, and members of the Comprehensive Review Task Group, 7 Former Moderators, 88 registered visitors, 13 Executive Secretaries and the Acting Speaker of the Conference, 40 staff from the General Council and Conference offices, and 154 volunteers.

**Closing Procedural Motions**

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Roy West**

**GC42 2015-017**

***Receiving Reports and Discharging the Commissions***

That the 42nd General Council 2015 enter the minutes from the three Commissions in the Record of Proceedings; and

That the 42nd General Council 2015 discharge Commissions Blueberry, Bakeapple and Partridgeberry with the appreciation of the court.

***Powers of the Interim Sub-Executive – Resolution 101***

That the Interim Sub-Executive be given necessary powers:

To accept obligations, loans, hypothecs, transfers, and delegations of payment, and gifts, bequests, Deeds of Dation en Paiement, and conveyances of property both movable and immovable; to bind this Corporation to such conditions as the said Sub-Executive may deem necessary or expedient and to the payment of any consideration price; to grant delays of payment for sums due or to become due under Deeds of Sale or Loan or for other debts and to increase or reduce the rate of interest; to make transfers of sums due to this Corporation and give subrogation with or without warranty and to receive the price; to receive payment of all sums, both capital and interest, in any way and at any time due and for all sums received good and sufficient acquaintances to give and grant: to discharge mortgages, hypothecs, and other privileged claims and release property there from with or without consideration and to limit and restrict any hypothec and privilege or other security upon any immovable property to such sum



or sums and in such manner as the said Sub-Executive may think fit and this either by a separate instrument or by intervention in any deed or document to sell and convey with legal or more extended or more limited warranty any and all movable and immovable property which may now belong to this Corporation acquired from the Sheriff of any District, from any debtor or in any other manner, or that may hereafter come into its possession in any such way or in any such manner whatever; to declare any property sold to be free from encumbrances and to make other declarations thought usual or necessary; the whole upon such terms and conditions and for such price or other considerations as the said Sub-Executive may see fit, to arrange the terms of payment and rate of interest and other details, including the date of possession and the nature and amount of security for the price; to receive the price whenever paid; to hold in such manner as the said Sub-Executive may think proper or be advised by any one chosen to aid or advise this Corporation; to take and authorize to be taken any and all proceedings, suits and actions, legal and otherwise, which may be necessary, or thought necessary, for the enforcing of the claims of this Corporation, the preservation of its rights or the protection of its interests, and to defend all suits and actions; and further, that any one or more members of the said Sub-Executive who may be mentioned in a resolution passed for that purpose may do and perform all acts and deeds and sign and execute all documents and writings which he or they may deem necessary or advisable in or about the premises: and that the said Sub-Executive be and it is hereby further authorized and empowered to name and appoint by resolution one or more persons in the Province of Quebec or elsewhere from time to time as the said Sub-Executive may deem it necessary or advisable to do so; to do and perform for and on behalf of The United Church of Canada all acts and deeds and to sign and execute all documents and writings as the said person and persons may deem necessary or advisable in connection with any one or more business matters which may be referred to in a resolution passed by the Sub-Executive for that purpose.

That the Interim Sub-Executive of General Council be given necessary powers to do any act or thing of a routine or emergency nature which the Executive of the General Council has power to do, except in any case in which the Executive has decided it should not exercise such powers.

***Authority of the Executive of the General Council***

That the authority of the Executive of the General Council shall be as described in *The Manual*.

***Referral of Business from the 42nd General Council***

That all unfinished business from the 42nd General Council be referred to:

The Executive of the General Council: BC 2; LON 22; ANW 1; TOR 8; TOR 7; ANW 2; HAM 1; HAM 3; Blue Composite 3; HAM 2; LON 19; LON 20; LON 21; LON 24; MAR 3; MAR 6; HAM 5; ANW 5; BQ 5; TOR 13; ANW 3; CRTG 7; NEW 1; NEW 2; NEW 3; and

To the General Secretary: BC 5; LON 17.

***Preparation of Remits***

That the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize all of the remits necessary to test the will of the church on the decisions made by this General Council, and that such remits be categorized as Category 2 remits except where this General Council has already specifically named them in its decisions as Category 3 remits.

***Preparation for the 43rd General Council 2018***

That the Executive of the General Council ensure that arrangements are made for the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council 2018; such arrangements to be presented for adoption at the first business session of that General Council.

***Digest of Minutes of the Executive and Sub-Executive of the General Council***

That, upon request, a digest of the actions of the Executive and Sub-Executive of General Council be made available to Commissioners to the 42nd General Council 2015 between the meetings of this 42nd General Council 2015 and that of the 43rd General Council 2018 and that this digest be included in the documentation for the 43rd General Council 2018.

***Authority for Changes in The Manual and Record of Proceedings***

That the General Secretary, General Council be given authority to edit the Record of Proceedings of the General Council and to make necessary changes in *The Manual* resulting from the actions of the General Council.

***Publication of the Record of Proceedings***

That the General Secretary, General Council be given authority to publish the Record of Proceedings in such format(s) as deemed appropriate for the distribution of the actions of this meeting throughout the church.

***Adjournment***

That the 42nd meeting of the General Council be adjourned at the close of the Service of Installation on Friday, August 14, 2015.

**Carried**

The Moderator, Gary Paterson, closed the meeting offering his gratitude to the Council for their work. The 42nd General Council shared in closing worship led by Maya Landell, which included the installation of the new Moderator, Jordan Cantwell.

## **Addendum A**

### **Comprehensive Review Sessional Committee Report & Proposals**

Having heard and reviewed CRTG 1 COMPREHESIVE REVIEW: CHASING THE SPIRIT and proposals BC 10, MNWO 9, MNWO 11, M&O 10, M&O 18, M&O 19, SK 10, the sessional committee recommends that General Council 42 adopt CRTG 1 and refer it to the General Secretary for implementation.

Implementation should:

- include initiatives for existing communities of faith that want to be transformed;
- reconsider the name of the new initiative and its theological implications;
- consider setting proportional targets for diverse ministry expressions such as ecumenical, interfaith, francophone, intercultural, and youth ministries;
- consider accessibility and engagement by rural, remote and other communities;
- consider additional sources of revenue for the fund, such as revenues from property sales or bequests; and
- communicate with regions

Having heard and reviewed CRTG 2 ABORIGINAL MINISTRIES and having received no proposals on this subject the sessional committee recommends that General Council 42 adopt CRTG 2.

Having heard and reviewed CRTG 3 A THREE-COUNCIL MODEL and Proposals ANW 4, ANW 7, ANW 9, ANW 10, ANW 12, ANW 13, ANW 15, BC 1, BC 12, BC 13, BQ 1, HAM 6, LON 4, LON 5, LON 25, MAR 1, MAR 2, MAR 9, M&O 1, M&O 4, M&O 5, M&O 6, M&O 8, M&O 11, M&O 13, M&O 17, MNWO 1, MNWO 5, MNWO 9, MNWO 13, NL 1, SK 2, SK 5, SK 6, SK 7 the Sessional Committee recommends:

That the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the reorganization of The United Church of Canada from its current four-court structure to a three-council structure consisting of communities of faith, regional councils, and a denominational council as follows:

#### 1. COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

##### A. *Description:*

A community of faith would be any community of people within the United Church that:

- gathers to explore faith, worship, and serve, including but not limited to congregations, outreach ministries, faith-based communal living, house churches, and online communities; and
- is recognized as a community of faith within the United Church by the regional council through a covenantal relationship between the community of faith and the regional council.

##### B. *Membership*

The members of the community of faith would be:

- people admitted to membership by the community of faith, within the guidelines of the denomination, ~~including members of the order of ministry;~~
- eligible for election to ~~represent the community of faith in the~~ denominational council and regional council;
- entitled to vote on all community of faith matters; and entitled to extend the right to vote on financial and administrative matters to adherents.

### *C. Authority and responsibility*

The community of faith would have authority and responsibility for:

#### *Mission*

- ~~entering into a~~ living in covenant with the regional council with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;
- ~~doing annual self-assessments of the ministry of the community of faith and filing the report with the regional council;~~
- joining the hearts, voices, and resources of the community to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world;
- Local, regional, national and global initiatives and partnerships (community, ecumenical and interfaith) for ministry, mission and justice work;
- Ministry with children and youth;
- Ministry and mission with all, including but not limited to intercultural aboriginal and francophone communities.

#### *Governance and administration*

- making decisions about the life of the community of faith, including worship, care, spiritual practice, and learning; local administration, finances, and governance, and local mission, justice, and evangelism;
- meeting at least annually;
- complying with denominational and regional policies;
- buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith property in cooperation with the Regional Council.

#### *Spiritual life*

- setting policies for membership, and receiving and celebrating new members in the community of faith;
- helping members deepen their faith while exploring their faith journey;

#### *Ministry and other leadership*

- cooperation with the Regional Council in recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel and other staff, and in ending calls and appointments/covenants with ministry personnel and other staff;

- encouraging members to consider ministry roles a responsibility shared through the whole community of faith;
- recommending to the appropriate body suitable lay members as inquirers, candidates, and licensed lay worship leaders, as and if required under denominational policy;

*Participation in regional and denominational life*

- ~~choosing one of the ministry personnel serving the community of faith in paid accountable ministry where applicable, and one other member of the community of faith, to represent the community of faith on the regional council;~~
- ~~funding the cost of sending representatives to the meetings of the regional council;~~
- ~~choosing one of the ministry personnel serving the community of faith in paid accountable ministry, where applicable, and one lay member of the community of faith, to represent the community of faith on the denominational council;~~
- ~~funding the cost of sending representatives to the triennial meeting of the denominational council; and~~
- electing members to serve on regional council.
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from members of the community of faith to regional councils.

*D. Limitations*

All authority and responsibility of the community of faith would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;
- ~~the terms of the~~ covenantal relationship between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the regional council to assume control of the community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

## 2. REGIONAL COUNCILS

*E. Description*

A regional council would be a ~~regional decision-making body~~ responsible for support and oversight of mission and ministry within its bounds ~~the United Church.~~

*F. Membership*

The regional council would be composed of:

- ~~one ministry personnel from each community of faith that has paid accountable ministry personnel~~
- all ministry personnel within the geographic bounds served by the Regional Council.
- one lay member per 100 members or part thereof from each community of faith within the region

### G. Authority and Responsibility

The regional council would have authority and responsibility for:

#### *Covenanting:*

- recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship with it;
- ~~entering living into~~ a covenantal relationship with each community of faith, with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;
- living in a covenantal relationship with ministry personnel

#### *Services ~~to~~ for communities of faith:*

- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
- ~~creating regional policies for buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith and regional property and the distribution of such proceeds;~~
- managing regional archives;
- providing leadership training for ministers and lay persons as determined regionally;

#### *Oversight and support of Communities of Faith:*

- ~~reviewing and periodically auditing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council;~~
- support to emerging new ministries;
- supporting Communities of Faith in their life and work;
- promoting articulation of mission and ministry;
- ensuring compliance with the policies and polity of The United Church of Canada and reviewing any relevant records;
- assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies;
- overseeing camps and incorporated ministries in the region;

#### *Mission and ministry:*

Encourage and engage in:

- joining our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world;
- Local regional national and global initiatives and partnerships (community, ecumenical and interfaith) for ministry, mission and justice work;
- Ministry with children and youth;
- Ministry and mission including but not limited to intercultural aboriginal and francophone communities.

*Policy and finance:*

- administering policy set by the denominational council, and setting appropriate regional policy;
- participating with communities of faith in property decisions according to policy established by the denomination
- creating regional policies for buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith and regional property and the distribution of such proceeds;
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from communities of faith to the denominational council based on denominational policy;
- setting and managing its annual budget and setting any additional regional assessment for any additional services the regional council wishes to undertake;
- participating in determining priorities for mission and ministry work through the Mission and Service Fund;
- meeting at least annually as the entire regional council or through its executive;

*Ministry personnel and others—except to the extent any of the following responsibilities have been otherwise assigned through the United Church’s legislative process:*

- celebrating retirements;
- ~~appointing persons (i) to accompany a candidate on their pathway to ordination or commissioning, and (ii) to make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to (deciding as to) the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;~~
- ~~appointing a person (i) to supervise a candidate in an internship, and (ii) make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;~~
- ~~ordaining or commissioning each candidate approved by the Regional Council by the College for ordination;~~
- ~~admitting ministers from other denominations who have been approved by the College for admission;~~

- ~~readmitting ministers who have been approved by the College for readmission;~~
- ~~recognizing designated lay ministers; and~~
- licensing lay members as licensed lay worship leaders;

Participating in the preparation of ministry personnel according to denominational policy, including:

- cooperating in the recruitment and discernment of persons for ministry;
- accompaniment and supervision of persons in the process;
- determining the person's fitness and readiness for accreditation to ministry;
- ordination and commissioning of members of the order of ministry;
- recognition of Designated Lay Ministers;
- licensing of Licensed Lay Worship Leaders;
- admitting ministers from other denominations;
- re-admitting ministers.

Pastoral Relations:

- recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing and covenanting with ministry personnel and communities of faith;

Oversight of ministry personnel:

- Encouragement and support of ministry personnel towards health, joy and excellence in ministry practice;
- Informal conflict resolution processes;
- Maintain the roll of ministry personnel and informing the office of vocation of those ministry personnel in good standing;

Participation in denominational life:

- electing members to serve on denominational council.
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from members of the community of faith to the denominational council.

## H. Limitations

All authority and responsibility of the regional council would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, candidacy, ministry personnel, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;
- ~~the terms of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council; and~~
- the authority of the denominational council to assume control of the regional council in extraordinary circumstances where the regional council is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

## E. Staffing



Each region would have staff to assist the regional council in meeting its responsibilities:

- staffing numbers would be based on assessments, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and any other regional income;
- staffing would be based on priorities and needs as determined regionally;
- ~~staff would be hired and managed by a regional secretary who reports to the General Secretary of the denominational council;~~ and
- regional councils with more resources would be free to ~~hire~~ retain more staff, and sharing of all resources across the church would be encouraged.

### 3. DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL

#### *A. Description:*

The denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church as both a denomination and a legal corporation.

#### *B. Membership*

The denominational council would consist of:

- those elected by the regional councils according to an agreed-upon formula
- ~~one ministry personnel from each community of faith that has paid accountable ministry personnel, as chosen by the community of faith;~~
- ~~one lay member of each community of faith, as chosen by the community of faith;~~
- the presiding officer or elder of each regional council;
- the immediate Past Moderator;
- the retiring Moderator; and
- the General Secretary of the denominational council;
- Other members and guests as determined.

#### *C. Authority and responsibility*

The denominational council would have authority and responsibility for:

##### Denominational mission:

- engaging national-level ministry and mission;
- encouraging local and regional mission and ministry;
- encouraging local and global partnerships, ecumenical and interfaith relationships;

##### *Policy:*

- setting policies for the denomination on doctrine, worship, membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and the entrance to paid accountable ministry;
- making decisions on denomination-shaping issues relating to public witness,
- dealing with proposals received from regional councils;

##### *Governance:*

- electing a Moderator;

- electing the executive of the denominational council;
- referring all unfinished matters to the executive of the denominational council;
- meeting once every three years in person, with members having the option of ~~participating~~ full participation through electronic or equivalent means;
- meeting more frequently as required ~~by secular law~~ through electronic or equivalent means;
- approving the number and boundaries of regional councils and supporting them;

*Finance and administration:*

- setting a three-year budget framework for the church ~~and determining the assessment of communities of faith for the three-year period;~~
- ~~assisting communities of faith with the cost of sending representatives to the triennial denominational council meeting by setting a standardized fee for the cost and providing bursaries where needed; and~~
- maintaining the denominational archives.

*D. Limitations*

This proposal does not affect the limitations that exist at the current time:

- *remit*: the Basis of Union may only be changed through the remit process, which requires the approval of a majority of the presbyteries and also, if the General Council considers it advisable because the change is substantive or denomination-shaping, pastoral charges;
- *membership requirements*: no terms of admission to full membership may be prescribed other than those laid down in the New Testament;
- *freedom of worship*: the freedom of worship enjoyed by churches at the time of union in 1925 may not be interfered with in the United Church;
- *property*: all policy on congregational property adopted by the denominational council must comply with the requirements set in The United Church of Canada Act, 1925.

*E. Executive of the denominational council*

The executive of the denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church between meetings of the denominational council, ~~within the following terms of reference:~~

- ~~size: a fixed number between 12 and 18 members, with the exact number set by the denominational council;~~
- ~~membership:~~
  - ☐ the Moderator
  - ☐ the General Secretary of the General Council
  - ☐ a representative of the Aboriginal Ministries Council
  - ☐ lay members and members of the order of ministry elected by the denominational council based on regional council nominations and the

~~need for named competencies as well as Aboriginal, francophone, racialized, youth and other diverse voices; and~~

*Authority:*

- dealing with all unfinished matters referred to it by the denominational council
- dealing with all routine and emergency work of the denominational council between meetings of the denominational council
- establishing standing and other committees, ~~with the chair of each such committee to be a member of the executive of the denominational council~~
- exercising additional authority and subject to any limitations as set by the denominational council

*F. Staffing*

The denominational council would have staff to assist it in meeting its responsibilities through:

- staffing based on assessments of communities of faith, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and other denominational income;
- staffing based on the priorities and needs as determined nationally;
- administering denominational policies;
- providing centralized technical services such as information technology, communication, payroll, accounting, human resources, administration, and pension plan;
- supporting the Moderator; and
- providing leadership in global partnerships and national-level ministry and mission work.

#### 4. CLUSTERS AND NETWORKS

Alongside the ~~three-council~~ structure, there would also be:

- *clusters*: local clusters of communities of faith that would provide community and support for communities of faith and their leaders, and focus on worship, mission, learning, collegiality, and strategic planning; and
- *networks*: linking people working on specific issues (e.g. supportive housing, intercultural ministry, youth ministry) or for project work (e.g. event planning) that function through the whole church, depending on the issue.

Although the clusters and networks would not be formal governance bodies, they would be central to the living out our faith. (CRTG report)

And that the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the elimination of the transfer and settlement processes for members of the order of ministry within the United Church, including the elimination of the General Council Transfer Committee and Conference Settlement Committees;

And further, that the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the reorganization and polity changes set out above.

Having heard and reviewed CRTG 4 A COLLEGE OF MINISTERS, and Proposals ANW 9, ANW 10, ANW 15, BC 12, BQ 1, BQ 8, MAR 9, M&O 01, M&O 5, M&O 14, MAR 10, MNWO 5, MNWO 13, SK 2, SK5, the sessional committee recommends that General Council 42 take no action on CRTG 4.

The Sessional Committee further recommends:

That General Council establish a national office of vocation as a permanent feature of the denominational structure:

Responsibilities:

- Establish standards for training and accreditation of ministry personnel;
- Establish expectations and standards for continuing education, formation, and professional development of ministry personnel;
- Maintain registry of accredited ministry personnel;
- Discipline of ministry personnel including formal hearings and complaints;
- Support and respond to requests for assistance from Regional Councils;
- Administer the Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary and Voluntary);
- Maintain a list of trained conflict resolution facilitators;
- Maintain a list of recognized Interim Ministers.

And further recommends that General Council determine that Regional Council be responsible for:

Participating in the preparation of ministry personnel according to denominational policy, including:

- recruitment and discernment of persons for ministry;
- accompaniment and supervision of persons in process;
- determining the person's fitness and readiness for accreditation to ministry;
- ordination and commissioning of members of the order of ministry;
- recognition of Designated Lay Ministers;
- licensing of Licensed Lay Worship Leaders;
- admitting ministers from other denominations;
- re-admitting ministers.

Pastoral Relations;

- Cooperating with communities of faith in recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing and covenanting with ministry personnel and communities of faith;

Oversight of ministry personnel;

- Encouragement and support of ministry personnel towards health, joy and excellence in ministry practice;
- Informal conflict resolution processes;
- Maintain the Roll of ministry personnel and informing the office of vocation of those ministry personnel in good standing;

Having heard and reviewed CRTG 5 AN ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS and ANW 10, ANW 15, BQ 1, LON 15, LON 16, LON 25, MAR 9, NL 2, SK 3, SK 4, the Sessional Committee was unable to come to consensus on the wisdom of CRTG 5, and therefore in keeping with a positive response to the CRTG report, recommends that the 42nd General Council adopt CRTG 5 – AN ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS.

Having heard and reviewed CRTG 6 FUNDING A NEW MODEL and proposals ANW 11, ANW 12, ANW 16, BC 12, BQ 1, BQ 3, LON 4, LON 5, LON 18, MAR 7, MAR 11, M&O 11, M&O 13, M&O 17, M&O 19, MNWO 5, MNWO 9, MTU 3, SK 7, the Sessional Committee recommends that the 42nd General Council adopt CRTG 6 FUNDING A NEW MODEL.

Having heard and reviewed CRTG 7 REMITS / MEETING OF THE 43<sup>RD</sup> GENERAL COUNCIL, the Sessional Committee refers CRTG 7 REMITS / MEETING OF THE 43<sup>RD</sup> GENERAL COUNCIL to the Business Committee.

#### SC 1 REGIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

Having heard CRTG 3 - THE THREE-COUNCIL MODEL and Proposals ANW 7, ANW 14, BQ 6, HAM 4, HAM 6, LON 10, LON 11, LON 12, LON 13, LON 6, LON 7, LON 8, LON 9, M&O 7, MAR 8, MNWO 4, MTU 4, TOR 11 The sessional committee recommends that the 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary to address the following prior to the issuing of a remit on the three- council model and report to the General Council Executive:

- the number of regions
- the membership of the regional council executive
- the membership of the denominational council executive
- the costs of conducting the meetings of the regional and denominational councils and who will bear that cost
- the relationship of regional council and denominational council to staff
- the means of participating in meetings (including technology)

With attention to these principles:

- good stewardship of human and financial resources;
- the resources to sustain the councils;
- geographical accessibility to participants
- our tradition of conciliar representation
- aboriginal, ethnic, francophone, racial, intercultural, youth and other diverse voices.
- UCW representation
- the engagement of networks and clusters with the councils
- our tradition of balancing council membership considering lay-ordered, gender and youth, etc.

## SC 2 METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Having heard and reviewed CRTG 6 FUNDING THE NEW MODEL and Proposals ANW 11, ANW 12, ANW 16, BC 12, BQ 1, BQ 3, LON 4, LON 5, LON 18, MAR 7, MAR 11, M&O 11, M&O 13, M&O 17, M&O 19, MNWO 5, MNWO 9, MTU 3, SK 7, the Sessional Committee recommends:

that the 42nd General Council direct the Executive of the General Council, not later than its first meeting of the triennium, appoint a task group to define a precise method of assessment, reporting to the General Council Executive. Upon the approval of the General Council Executive, the method of assessment will form the background material for the necessary remit. In creating this method of assessment, the following principles must be included:

- the principles articulated in CRTG 6 (if adopted by GC42);
- just, sustainable, understandable and fair;
- recognizes the differences in, and gives priority to the financial and spiritual health of communities of faith and regional councils, individually and collectively;
- health of communities of faith and regional councils, individually and collectively;
- more money expended at the regional than national level
- the resultant method of assessment should be transparent, understandable, and fair;
- reliable and accurate statistical basis;
- awareness that the standard of measurement will affect the behaviour of the church; and
- mandatory background to any remit on the subject of assessment.

The Sessional Committee further notes:

- A variety of concerns about assessment were expressed through Proposals to the 42nd General Council. The Proposals M&O 11 and MTU 3 are referred to the task group for information.
- Awareness that the standard of measurement will affect the behaviour of the church.

## SC 3 REFFERAL OF PROPOSALS

Having heard Proposals M&O 18 FRANCOPHONE DECISION-MAKING NETWORK and MAR 5 EXISTING SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORKS, the Sessional Committee recommends that these be referred back to the 42nd General Council as they do not fit within the understanding of networks as proposed by the CRTG Report as understood by the Sessional Committee

The Sessional Committee recommends that M&O 17 RECOGNITION IN PRINCIPLE OF FRANCOPHONES and LON 5 YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS REPRESENTATION be referred back to the 42nd General Council.

## SC4 RELATIONSHIP OF STAFF

The Sessional Committee recommends that if CRTG 3 is adopted the 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary to clarify and report on

- the relationship of the Regional Secretaries and the General Secretary
- the relationships and accountability of regional staff

#### SC 5 EVALUATION

Having heard that M&O 9 and LON 14, the Sessional Committee recommends to the 42nd General Council that the General Council Executive define objective and end for the governance changes proposed, and determine measurements for evaluation to be done in time for the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council

#### SC 6 PROPERTY AND INVESTMENTS

Having heard and reviewed BC 12, M&O 11 and noticing TOR 6 and HAM 7 with the intention of facilitating the widest possible just and equitable sharing of resources for the total mission and ministry of the church, the Sessional Committee recommends that the 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary to initiate a thorough review of the property and investments (including but not limited to policies and amounts) of The United Church of Canada at all levels.

#### SC 6 DISPOSAL OF PROPOSALS

The Sessional Committee recommends that the 42nd General Council take no further action on the following Proposals:

ANW 4 Caring for Pastoral Relationships – a Response to the Comprehensive Review

ANW 7 Membership of the UCW in GC

ANW 8 Number of Regional Councils

ANW 9 Organization & Responsibilities of Proposed Denominational

ANW 10 Organization & Responsibilities of Proposed Regional Councils

ANW 11 Funding Model (1) CRTG #6

ANW 12 Funding Model (2) CRTG #6

ANW 14 CRTG – Representation of UCW

ANW 15 Grass Roots Stimulus

ANW 16 Denominational Funding

BC 10 Considering Terminology in United in God's Work

BC 12 Amendments to "United in God's Work"

BC 13 Response to United in God's Work

BC1 Concerning Covenants

BQ 1 Renew the Current Structure

BQ 3 Clarification of the Proposed New Assessment Formula

BQ 4 A Response to the Final Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group

BQ 6 Full Voting Status National UCW President

BQ 8 Natural Justice for College of Ministry

HAM 4 Representation of United Church Women on Councils

HAM 6 Representation of United Church Women on Councils

LON 1 Naming the Denominational Council

LON 2 Naming of the Denominational Court

LON 3 Proposed Name for the Denominational Council  
LON 4 Representation to General Council  
LON 6 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 7 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 8 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 9 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 10 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 11 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 12 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 13 Representation of UCW on Councils  
LON 14 Accountability of Regional Councils  
LON 15 College of Ministers & Association of Ministers  
LON 16 Association of Ministers  
LON 18 Funding for Restructuring  
LON 25 Ministers Attached to Courts  
LON 26 Balanced Representation on Regional and Denominational Councils  
M&O 1 Alternative 3 Council Model  
M&O 2 Number of Regional Councils  
M&O 3 Representation at the National Council  
M&O 4 CR: Strengthen Cooperation & Relationships with Other Churches  
M&O 5 Pastoral Oversight  
M&O 6 Oversight of Communities of Faith  
M&O 7 Comprehensive Review Representation of UCW Councils  
M&O 8 Amendment to the 3 Council Model Regarding Delegate Participation  
M&O 9 Evaluation after Implementation of CR Changes  
M&O 10 Chasing the Spirit  
M&O 11 Funding a New Model  
M&O 13 Enabling Justice Work through Times of Change  
M&O 14 Change the Name of the College of Ministers  
M&O 15 Allow for a Larger Board of Directors for the College of Ministers  
M&O 16 National Listing for Interim Ministry and Ministry of Supervision  
M&O 19 Support for Ministries in French  
MAR 10 Responsibilities of Colleges Assigned to Regional Councils  
MAR 11 Regional Council Responsibility for Youth Gatherings  
MAR 7 The Denominational Council Structure & Funding  
MAR 8 Representation of UCW on Councils  
MAR 9 Alternative Structure to College  
MNWO 1 Attendance Numbers of General Council  
MNWO 2 Comprehensive Review – College of Ministers  
MNWO 3 Comprehensive Review – Three Council Model  
MNWO 4 Representation of United Church Women on Councils  
MNWO 5 Comprehensive Review – Lay Leadership Development and Education  
MNWO 9 Comprehensive Review – United in God’s World  
MNWO 10 Staff Person for Supporting Transformation and New Ministries  
MNWO 11 Reconsider Name – Chasing the Spirit  
MNWO 12 Comprehensive Review – Regional Councils Should be Appropriate Size



MNWO 13 Comprehensive Review – Order of Ministry and “UCC Memberships”  
 MTU 3 Denomination Funding Formula  
 MTU 4 Comprehensive Review: United in God’s Work – Representation of United Church  
 Women on Councils  
 NL 1 A New Model  
 NL 2 Non-support for an Association of Ministers  
 NL 3 Task Group to Establish Regional Boundaries  
 SK 2 Training & Accountability of Ministry Personnel  
 SK 3 Amendment to College and Association of Ministers  
 SK 4 College & Association of Ministers  
 SK 5 Support, Assessment, Oversight & Discipline for DLMs  
 SK 6 Oversight of Communities of Faith – 3 Court Model  
 SK 7 Strengthening Regional Councils – An Alternative  
 SK 10 Amendment to Chasing the Spirit  
 TOR 11 UCW Representation on Council

Discussions then took place providing additional comments for consideration;

- CRTG1 – Chasing the Spirit  
Adoption was recommended with consideration given for changing the name in consideration of diverse ministry expressions.
- CRTG 2 – Aboriginal Ministries  
Adoption was recommended.
- CRTG 3 – A Three Council Model
- CRTG 4 – College of Ministers  
Discussions centred on the principle of membership and the clarification of language used to describe a community of faith. The committee heard the desire from the church to lift up mission and to name that as central to church life. Considerations were also given to the language used in referring to a covenant as a relationship. Further debate was heard on the language used around regional and denominational councils. Concerns were heard around ministry personnel membership in regional councils and their ability to have their voices heard within geographic boundaries. Questions were raised and discussion followed on using the language of ‘College of Ministers’ as a title to describe a vocation not a function. It was felt that responsibilities are key here and raises the question as to how one participates in regional and denominational life of the church. References were made to the question of geographical size and how that would be determines. Staffing and the wording used to reconcile this meaning should not be contingent on the structure of a ‘College of Ministers’. Concerns were also raised regarding clusters and networks and defining their structure. United Church Women (UCW) representation became part of the dialogue due to the number of proposals received from Conferences.
- CRTG 5 – Association of Ministers  
Adoption was recommended
- CRTG 6 – Funding a New Model  
Adoption was recommended
- SC 2 – Method of Assessment

The committee felt that there was still significant work to be done and recommended that a task group be formed to define the precise method of assessment.

- SC5 – Evaluation

The committee recommended that further work be done to define objectives.

- SC6 – Property and Investments

The committee lifted up the principles of sharing equitably the resources for mission and ministry of the church.

- SC7 – Disposal of Proposals

The committee noted that they reviewed each proposal and considered this a technical motion.

**BAKEAPPLE COMMISSION**  
**Civic Centre, Room # 2**  
**Tuesday, August 11, 2015**

**Present:** For the list of members of the Bakeapple Commission see page 98.

The co-chairs welcomed the Commissioners and expressed appreciation for the important work to be done on behalf of the church. The group restated the covenant and reviewed the process for dealing with it. The Commission began its work at 9:30 a.m.

Paula Gale began by introducing the Commission Team:

Co-Chairs – Shirley Cleave and Paula Gale  
Minute Secretary – Susan Whitehead  
Conference Executive Secretary Supporting Co-chairs and Minute Secretary – Lynn Maki  
Projectionist – Susan Sigal  
Conference Executive Secretary Supporting the Projectionist – Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa  
Reference and Counsel – Katherine Moore (ANW), Dale Skinner (HAM), Kate Crawford (LON) and Paul Stott (TOR)  
Resource People – Adele Halliday (Environmental Issues), Erik Mathiesen (Financial/Goldcorp/Pension Fund), Marcus Robertson (Fossil Fuels/Goldcorp/Pension Fund)

**Quorum**

**Motion: Ken DeLisle/Robert Bennett**

**GC42 2015-018**

That there was a quorum of at least 20 people.

**Carried**

**Agenda**

**Motion: Paul Stott/Blair Paterson**

**GC42 2015-019**

That the agenda as presented be accepted and approved by the Yellow (Bakeapple) Commission as its agenda, on the understanding that the agenda may be changed, as necessary by the action of the Commission or the recommendation of the Business Committee.

**Carried**

Shirley Cleave gave a brief overview of the process for proposals.

**Clicker Use – 20% Threshold**

**Motion: Cheryl Wood-Thomas/Linda Buchanan**

**GC42 2015-020**

That Bakeapple Commission will use clickers to vote on proposals, with a 20% threshold to consider any proposal.

**Carried**

Paula Gale gave an overview of the Commission Norms, reviewed the covenants, and led an opening prayer.

**ANW 17 – Reducing Carbon Emissions**

Working by the proposal method the following proposal was presented:

That the 42nd General Council 2015:

1. Support a long-term global emission reduction goal consistent with the Paris agreement;
2. Recognize that a major portion of the Canadian economy produces products that generate Carbon emissions such as electricity, transportation, manufacturing, mining, and production of oil and gas;
3. Remember:
  - a. the impact on the overall economy of Canada;
  - b. the impact on the individuals employed (families) in the various industries noted above;
  - c. the impact on the communities and communities of faith throughout Canada;
4. Encourage investment in renewable energy, and energy efficiency;
5. Encourage investment in training, and job creation, and
6. Direct the Executive of the General Council to take appropriate action to implement this policy.

It was noted that not all renewable energy is positive for the environment so “green” was added.

Information from the Response Sheets for ANW17 was shared.

**Motion: Dave Pollard/Leith Saunders****GC42 2015-021**

That the 42nd General Council 2015:

1. Support a long-term global emission reduction goal consistent with the Paris agreement;
2. Recognize that a major portion of the Canadian economy produces products that generate carbon emissions such as electricity, transportation, manufacturing, mining, and production of oil and gas;
3. Remember:
  - a. the impact on the overall economy of Canada;
  - b. the impact on the individuals employed (families) in the various industries noted above;
  - c. the impact on the communities and communities of faith throughout Canada;
4. Encourage investment in green renewable energy and energy efficiency; and
5. Encourage investment in training, and job creation.
6. Direct the Executive of the General Council to take appropriate action to implement this policy.

**Carried**

**BC 4 – Lobbying Governments for a Price on Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Working by the proposal method the following proposal was presented:

That the 42nd General Council commit the church to lobby the federal and provincial governments to implement an economy-wide price on greenhouse gas emissions where currently such a price does not exist.

Some concerns were raised that “lobby” has negative connotations so the word “encourage” was substituted by consensus.

Information from the Response Sheets for BC4 was shared.

**Motion: Keith Simmonds/Myles Vardy**

**GC42 2015-022**

That the 42nd General Council commit the church to encourage the federal and provincial governments to implement an economy-wide price on greenhouse gas emissions where currently such a price does not exist.

**Carried**

**BC 8 – Travel Carbon Tax**

Working by the proposal method the following proposal was presented:

That the 42nd General Council create policy whereby travel claims related to the business of The United Church of Canada be subject to a carbon tax to be determined by General Council Executive with revenues directed to The United Church of Canada’s Mission and Service Fund. The court receiving the claim pays the tax.

Concerns were raised about imposing a tax on volunteers and this was seen as both encouraging alternative forms of meeting and increasing the cost of travel for volunteers. It was suggested that the tax could be voluntary. It was noted that the General Council is not the body to be creating policy. The suggestion was made that the Mission and Service Fund is not the only option for funds raised through such a tax.

Information from the Response Sheets for BC8 was shared.

Various amendments were suggested:

That the words “request that the Executive of the General Council” be added.

That the word “voluntary” which had been added during the proposal phase be struck.

That the words “The United Church of Canada’s Mission and Service Fund” be struck and the words “support environmental initiatives” be added.

**Proposal as revised through proposal process**

That the 42nd General Council request that the Executive of the General Council create a policy whereby travel claims related to the business of The United Church of Canada be subject to a carbon tax to be determined by General Council Executive with revenues directed to support environmental initiatives. The court receiving the claim pays the tax.

**Motion to Receive For Information and Take No Action**

**Motion: Victor Wiebe/William Sheaves**

**GC42 2015-023**

That the 42nd General Council receive BC 8 Travel Carbon Tax for information and take no action.

**Carried**

### **TOR 3 – Fossil Fuel Divestment for Climate Justice**

**Motion: Victor Weibe/Blair Paterson**

**GC42 2015-024**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

- a) Encourage The United Church of Canada Foundation and direct the Executive of the General Council to take active steps to sell their holdings in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies;
- b) Direct the General Secretary of General Council to encourage United Church members to use less fossil fuels

There was discussion within the court about keeping investments with the fossil fuel companies so that The United Church of Canada can “stay at the table” and talk. There was also a caution issued from commissioners that we not view “fossil fuels as bad and renewable as good;” often times that is not always the case. Some believe that The United Church of Canada voices are not being heard at the table with the fossil fuel companies and it is thought that in order to get the message across, we must divest from these companies.

### **Amendment: Christine Boyle/Jim McKibbin**

That the words from BC 6 and MTU 2 “take active steps to use assets made available by divesting from fossil fuel companies to invest in green renewable energy co-operatives” be added in part (b) and the original part (b) become part (c).

**Carried**

### **Motion as amended**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

- a) Encourage The United Church of Canada Foundation and direct the Executive of the General Council to take active steps to sell their holdings in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies;
- b) Take active steps to use assets made available by divesting from fossil fuels fuel companies to invest in green renewable energy co-operatives.
- c) Direct the General Secretary of General Council to encourage United Church members to use less fossil fuels.

**Carried**

### **BC 6 – Green Renewable Energy Investment**

The 42nd General Council instruct the Executive of the General Council and encourage The United Church of Canada Foundation to take active steps to use assets made available by divesting from fossil fuel companies to invest in green renewable energy co-operatives.

### **MTU 2 – Fossil Fuel Divestment for Earth Justice**

The 42nd General Council (2015) direct The Executive of the General and The United Church of Canada to sell their holding in fossil fuel companies and reinvest funds in companies producing clean renewable energy.

**Motion: Valerie Kingsbury/Blair Paterson****GC42 2015-025**

Since the actions in BC 6 and MTU 2 were imbedded in TOR 3, that having adopted TOR 3, that no further action be taken on BC 6 and MTU 2.

**Carried****MNWO 8 – Assessment of Fossil Fuel Divestment for Climate Justice**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

Direct the Executive of the General Council to request that the Pension Board report publicly to pension plan members and General Council on:

- i. the Board's assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the Christian imperatives of seeking justice, resisting evil, and living with respect in Creation; and
- ii. the Board's assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the report entitled, *Socially Responsible Investment and Resource Extraction*, dated June 28, 2013, and prepared by the working group of the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry; and
- iii. the Pension Fund's exposure to investments in fossil fuels; and
- iv. the Board's rationale for investing in the 200 hundred largest fossil fuel companies given:
  - a. the risk of stranded assets, and
  - b. the possibility of equal or better returns from divesting these stocks and investing in other stocks.

**Motion: Emma Hebb/Teresa Melnychuk****GC42 2015-026**

That the 42nd General Council adopt MNWO 8 as presented.

**Carried****TOR 4 – Pension Fund Proposal**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to request The United Church of Canada Pension Board to report publicly to pension plan members and General Council on:

- i. the Board's assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the Christian imperatives of seeking justice, resisting evil, and living with respect in creation;
- ii. the Board's assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the report entitled "Socially Responsible Investment and Resource Extraction", dated June 28, 2013, and prepared by the working group of the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry;
- iii. the Pension Fund's exposure to investments in fossil fuels;
- iv. the Board's rationale for investing in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies given (a) the risks of stranded assets, and (b) the possibility of equal or better returns on divesting these stocks.

**Motion: Mary Anne Silverthorn/Yvonne Wright****GC42 2015-027**

That having adopted MNWO 8, that no further action be taken on TOR 4.

**Carried**

**Motion: Ruth Denton/Matthew Stevens****GC42 2015-028**

That we extend the order of the day by 10 minutes until 12:10 p.m.

**Carried**

**MAR 2 – United Church of Canada Pension Board Divestment from Goldcorp**

That the 42nd General Council 2015, responding to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitments to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, instructs the General Secretary to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.

It was stated that what we do in the country of Canada impacts other countries. Our money can be used as a lever for change. There is not a lot of investment in Goldcorp (0.09% of the Pension Fund) and it won't make a large financial impact to divest, but it will make a public statement. It was noted that many in the room were wearing gold so we need to think about our statements and our personal behaviour.

**Motion: Valerie Kingsbury/Max Martin****GC42 2015-029**

To adopt MAR 2 as presented.

**Carried**

**TOR 5 – United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) Divestment from Goldcorp**

The 42nd General Council (2015), responding to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitments to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, instructs the General Secretary, General Council to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.

**MNWO 7 – United Church of Canada Pension Board Divestment from Goldcorp**

The 42nd General Council (2015) respond to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitment to Partnership and Right Relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, instruct the General Secretary to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.

**BC 9 – United Church of Canada Pension Board Divestment from Goldcorp**

The 42nd General Council respond to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social Policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitments to Partnership and Right Relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, by instructing the General Secretary to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.

**Motion: Leith Saunders/William Sheaves****GC42 2015-030**

That having adopted MAR 2, that no further action be taken on TOR 5, MNWO 7 and BC 9.

**Carried**



Having reached the Order of the Day, Paula Gale offered grace before lunch.

The court reconvened at 3:45 p.m.

**M&O 21 – Climate Change Proposal for General Council 42**

Working by the proposal method it was proposed that:

The 42nd General Council directs that the work on climate justice be a priority in our denomination and in our work with partners.

There was discussion in the court that some sort of public statement should be made by the new Moderator regarding climate justice. The point was made that if this wasn't done before the Paris talks later this year, it will not be on people's minds in Canada and the world.

There was a suggestion that we add the concept of "lens" to direct and guide the work of the Executive of the General Council.

It was agreed that the words "to use climate justice as a lens for its work in the next triennium" be added, as well as the words "also the 42nd General Council encourage the Moderator to make a clear and forceful and public statement on The United Church of Canada's position on climate justice before the Paris talks in December 2015."

There was a request to vote for the motion seriatim.

**Motion: Ruth Denton/Max Martin**

**GC42-2015-031**

That the 42nd General Council directs the Executive of the General Council:

- a) to use climate justice as a lens for its work in the next triennium, and;

**Carried**

**Motion: Ruth Denton/Max Martin**

**GC42-2015-032**

- b) to make work on climate justice a priority in our denomination and in our work with our partners, and

**Carried**

**Motion: Ruth Denton/Max Martin**

**GC42-2015-033**

- c) also the 42nd General Council encourage the Moderator to make a clear, forceful and public statement on The United Church of Canada's position on climate justice before the Paris talks in December 2015.

**Carried**

**BC 5 – Climate Justice Discussion Circles**

Working by the proposal method it was proposed that:

The 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary, General Council to create online and print resources for the creation of climate justice discussion circles, and further publicize and

make these resources available to congregations and groups in Canada, based on models used within Kootenay Presbytery at Castlegar and Nelson United Churches.

It was noted that perhaps there should only be online resources available, in light of the fact that we are trying to reduce/eliminate carbon footprints. It was noted that there are resources from people such as George Marshall (from Britain), who believes that people are motivated by shared values regardless of culture.

Information from the Response Sheets for BC5 was shared.

**Motion: Robin Wilkie/Michael Kooiman**

**GC42 2015-034**

That BC 5 Climate Justice Discussion Circles be referred to the General Secretary, General Council for information in light of M&O 21.

**Carried**

**BC 11 – Clean Water for All Canadians**

Working by the proposal method it was proposed that:

The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to ask publicly for commitment from the Federal Government that all Canadian communities, including First Nations Communities, have access to potable water by 2018.

In response to a question, it was stated that it is important to remember that anything to do with a First Nations reserve is under the purview of the Canadian Federal Government, including water issues. Therefore, it is appropriate to direct this to the Federal Government. It was noted that potable water was not sufficient because that could mean simply supplying water by truck, etc. It was recognised that many voices are more effective than a single letter.

It was agreed that the words “running” and “encourage The United Church of Canada congregations and members to do likewise” be added.

**Motion: Blair Paterson/Ken Thomas**

**GC42 2015-035**

That the 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary, General Council to ask publicly for commitment from the Federal Government that all Canadian communities, including First Nations communities, have access to running potable water by 2018; and encourage The United Church of Canada congregations and members to do likewise.

**Carried**

**MNWO 6 – Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East Project**

Working in the Proposal method it was proposed that:

The 42nd General Council (2015) have the General Secretary, General Council write to the Federal Government expressing The United Church of Canada’s opposition to The Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East project; and, we encourage each of our pastoral charges to launch a letter-writing campaign expressing their opposition to the Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East project to both their Provincial and the Federal Governments.

Information from the Response Sheets for MNWO 6 was shared.

There was discussion about the oil spills across Canada and modes of transport for oil. There was recognition that we do not have consensus on the best way to transport oil and there is risk however it is transported. It was noted that we will continue to use fossil fuels for the foreseeable future and that the fossil fuel industry employs many United Church people who support the church financially and in other ways. It was also stated that the reason for point b) was to engage the entire church in the campaign, instead of having the General Council Office sending one letter. Because of the lack of consensus, the words “consider launching” were added.

That there be two parts to MNWO 6 and that the words “opposition to” be struck from point a). That the words “consider launching” be inserted in point b), and to strike the words “opposition to” and insert the words “concerns about.”

**Motion: Kate Crawford/Cheryl Wood-Thomas** **GC42 2015-036**

It was moved that MNWO 6 Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East Project be referred to the General Secretary, General Council for further work.

**Defeated**

There was a request to vote for the motion seriatim.

**Motion: Leith Saunders/Hewitt Holmes** **GC42 2015-037**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

- a) have the General Secretary, General Council:
  - i) write to the Federal Government expressing The United Church of Canada’s concerns about The Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East project; and,

**Carried**

**Motion: Leith Saunders/Hewitt Holmes** **GC42 2015-038**

- ii) that we encourage each of our pastoral charges to consider launching a letter-writing campaign expressing their concerns about the Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East project to both their Provincial and the Federal Governments.

**Carried**

**Motion: Robin Wilkie/Blair Paterson** **GC42 2015-039**

That the agenda be changed to move BQ 2 up in the agenda.

**Carried**

### **BQ 2 – New Mission for The United Church of Canada**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of General Council to:

- a) Establish a Task group for the specific purpose of developing a new mission statement for The United Church of Canada;
- b) Direct the Task Group to present the results of their work to the 43rd General Council 2018.

Concerns were raised that the Comprehensive Review focused on structure and not enough on mission. It was noted that our New Creed and a Song of Faith are statements of our mission. Perhaps we need a vision statement in addition. It was noted that the possibility of developing a new mission statement to the full satisfaction of the entire church is a next to impossible mission. However, we need to put some thought in where we hope to be in the next 3 years.

The point was raised that the “God is Still Speaking” campaign from the United Church of Christ USA is focused on outcome, not function and was developed by one person. It was noted that a task group is not the only way to proceed and that the work would be directed to the General Secretary to determine the best way to proceed.

**Amendment: Ross Bartlett/Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro**

That the words “Executive of General Council” be struck and insert “General Secretary, General Council.”

That the words “Establish a Task Group” be struck from point a) and insert the words “To create a process.” That the words “new mission” be struck from point a) and insert the word “vision.”

**Carried**

**Amendment: Ken Thomas/Ross Bartlett**

That the words “Direct the Task Group” and “their” be struck from point b) and insert the word “the.”

**Carried**

There was a request to vote for the motion seriatim.

**Motion as Amended: Robin Wilkie/Matthew Stevens**

**GC42 2015-040**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

- a) create a process for the specific purpose of developing a vision statement for The United Church of Canada; and

**Carried**

**Motion as Amended: Robin Wilkie/Matthew Stevens**

**GC42 2015-041**

- b) present the results of the work to the 43rd General Council 2018.

**Carried**

Shirley Cleave suggested to the court that the Bakeapple Commission return to the original agenda as presented. This was agreed by consensus.

**M&O 20 – The Beaconsfield Initiative, Exploring Canadian Mining Practices and Human Rights Violations in the Southern Philippines, Strengthening Partnerships and Studying the Impact of Canadian Mining Interests in the Southern Philippines**

Working by the proposal method it was proposed:

That the 42nd General Council, in order to extend the work of the Beaconsfield Initiative to the Southern Philippines, direct the Executive of the General Council and General Secretary, General Council to:

1. Call for the following:
  - a) the end of the vilification and human rights violations of people and people's organizations of the Southern Philippines;
  - b) the end of illegal arrest and imprisonment of people;
  - c) the end of abuse, violence, and sex crimes against women in indigenous communities as practiced by the military; and
  - d) the protection of the land and resources from destructive large scale mining and all Canadian mining projects affecting communities ; and
  
2. Take the following actions:
  - a) encourage our church members to lobby the Canadian government to change the Mining Act in order to apply all our environmental, human rights and labour laws to the Canadian mining corporation operating outside of Canada;
  - b) boycott and divest from any companies who use and employ private militias or security forces, trained and equipped by the Armed Forces of the Philippines;
  - c) encourage Kairos and other church partners to do the same.

Alternative wording for 2 a) was provided at the General Council by the originators of this proposal and this language as noted below was considered instead of the original wording.

### **Alternative Wording**

2 a) “encourage church members to lobby the Canadian government to create a comprehensive corporate accountability framework that requires Canadian mining companies operating abroad to respect human rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples, labour rights, and the right to a healthy Environment;

It was agreed that alternative wording for 2 a) would be point 2 a) i). Point 2 a ii) was added during the proposal discussion.

It was stated that in regards to the section 2 c) of M&O 20, “the same” refers to all that comes before it. There was a discussion regarding responsibility for mining considering the BNA Act.

There was a request to vote for the motion seriatim.

### **Motion as Amended: Ken Thomas/Keith Saunders**

**GC42 2015-042**

That the 42nd General Council, in order to extend the work of the Beaconsfield Initiative to the Southern Philippines, direct the Executive of the General Council and General Secretary, General Council to:

1. Call for the following:
  - a) the end of the vilification and human rights violations of people and people's organizations of the Southern Philippines;
  - b) the end of illegal arrest and imprisonment of people;
  - c) the end of abuse, violence, and sex crimes against women in indigenous communities as practiced by the military; and
  - d) the protection of the land and resources from destructive large scale mining and all Canadian mining projects affecting communities; and

**Carried**

**Motion as Amended: Ken Thomas/Keith Saunders**

**GC42 2015-043**

2. Take the following actions:

- a) encourage church members to lobby the Canadian government to create a comprehensive corporate accountability framework that
  - i) requires Canadian mining companies operating abroad to respect human rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples, labour rights, and the right to a healthy environment; and
  - ii) creates mechanisms in Canada where those harmed by Canadian corporate activity abroad can access justice.
- b) boycott and divest from any companies who use and employ private militias or security forces, trained and equipped by the Armed Forces of the Philippines; and
- c) encourage Kairos and other church partners to do the same.

**Carried**

**Motion: Max Martin/Ruth Denton**

**GC42 2015-044**

That the agenda be changed to move LON 17 up in the agenda.

**Carried**

**LON 17 – Comprehensive Review Task Group “United in God’s Work” Secure Funding for United Church Camping**

Working by the proposal method it was proposed that:

The 42nd General Council (2015) build into its restructuring recommendations staff time and funding for United Church Camping ministry. We recommend that Camping be named as a mission and ministry priority under the new restructuring and that a concrete plan for how to fund and resource camps across the country.

It was noted that the current youth strategy includes camping ministry and the Comprehensive Review includes youth.

Information from the Response Sheets for LON17 was shared.

**Motion to Refer: Dave Jagger/Blair Paterson**

**GC42 2015-045**

That in light of recognizing that the youth strategy includes camping, the court refer LON 17 to the General Secretary, General Council.

**Carried**

**Motion: Blair Paterson/Aidan Legault**

**GC42 2015-046**

That the Bakeapple Commission extend the order of the day by 15 minutes until 6:15 p.m.

**Carried**

**Motion: Blair Paterson/Max Martin**

**GC42 2015-047**

That the agenda be changed to move ANW 6 up in the agenda.

**Carried**

**ANW6 – The Rural Ministry of The United Church of Canada**

Working by the proposal method it was proposed that:

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Affirm the importance of the rural ministry of The United Church of Canada; and
2. Direct the Executive of the General Council to appoint a Task Group to consider and make recommendations about the future mission and ministry of the rural ministry of the church.

Information from the Response Sheets for ANW6 was shared.

There was recognition that similar issues occur in remote ministry. There was a request to substitute “Recognize the challenges” for “Affirm the importance” It was noted that a task group was not the only alternative and that the General Secretary could determine how best to proceed.

**Amendment: Blair Paterson/Hanna Strong**

That the words “Affirm the importance” be struck from point 1 and the words “recognize the challenges” and “remote” be added to point 1.

That the words “Executive of the General Council” be struck from point 2 and the words “General Secretary, General Council” be added to point 2. Also, that the words “appoint a task group” to be struck from point 2 and the words “create a process” and “and/or remote” be added to point 2.

**Carried**

**Motion as Amended: Blair Paterson/Max Martin**

**GC42 2015-048**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

1. recognize the challenges of the rural and/or remote ministry of The United Church of Canada; and
2. Direct the General Secretary, General Council to create a process to consider and make recommendations about the future mission and ministry of the rural and/or remote ministry of the church.

**Carried**

**TOR13 – Recycling Non-Biodegradable Plastics**

Direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

1. Call on The United Church of Canada and all of its Conferences, presbyteries, local ministry units and members to follow the motion adopted by the 39th General Council in the year 2006 to avoid the use of bottled water in plastic single use containers where possible;
2. Write to the federal and provincial governments calling on them to:
  - a. Encourage the development and use of compostable bio-plastics in Canada where suitable, particularly where single use plastic items are land filled due to non-recyclability.

- b. Encourage the continued expansion of recycling of non-compostable bio plastics and plastics from fossil hydrocarbons on a national scale in all communities and rural areas.
  - c. Encourage and where necessary legislate reduction in the use of excess plastic packaging
  - d. Request government, industry and international participation in reducing and ultimately elimination of all plastics from entering our water streams and oceans through recycling, land and landfill management and international regulation against disposal of waste at sea.
  - e. Requesting the elimination of and if necessary regulating the use of personal care products containing micro beads or similar items which would ultimately enter the water stream and oceans to be ingested by marine life
3. Direct the Executive of the General Council, through the appropriate committee or action, to launch an awareness campaign to encourage members of the United Church to make choices that support reductions in the use of excess plastics and packaging and encourage recycling of plastics.

### **ANW3 – Social Justice Conversation**

That the General Council direct the General Secretary to engage the whole church in a process of consultation, review and discernment about the social justice ministries and public witness of The United Church of Canada, including addressing questions such as the following: how the church most faithfully engages questions of social justice, its importance to our faithfulness, the dangers and possible failures in this ministry, and what criteria, guidelines and principles might help guide the church to do this ministry in ways that most effectively witness to God's kingdom (kin-dom) and build up the body of Christ.

**TOR13 and ANW3 are referred to The Executive of the General Council for action.**

The Commission team was thanked for their work, with appreciation shown with applause.

Paula Gale sent the Commission forth with words of commissioning and a grace before dinner.

The Commission closed at 6:16 p.m.



**BLUEBERRY COMMISSION**  
**Arena 1 – Commons Space, Pepsi Centre, Corner Brook, NL**  
**Tuesday, August 11, 2015**

**Present:** For a list of members of the Blueberry Commission see page 98.

The co-chairs welcomed Commissioners and expressed appreciation for the important work to be done on behalf of the church. The Commission began its work at 9:40 a.m.

The Commission Team was introduced:

- Co-chairs – Graham Brownmiller and Beverly Kostichuk
- Minute Secretary – Stefanie Uyesugi
- Conference Executive Secretary Supporting Co-chairs and Minute Secretary – Will Kunder
- Projectionist – Jean Wilson
- Conference Executive Secretary Supporting the Projectionist – Doug Goodwin
- Reference and Counsel – Matthew Fillier, Ralph Hayman, Betty Kelly and Nancy Knox

**Procedural Motions**

**Opening and Authority:** Graham Brownmiller opened with prayer and declared a quorum was present.

**Adoption of Agenda**

**Motion: Beverley Kostichuk/Jay Olson**

**GC42 2015-049**

That the agenda as presented be accepted and approved by the Blueberry Commission as its agenda, on the understanding that the agenda may be changed, as necessary by the action of the Commission or the recommendation of the Business Committee.

**Carried**

The proposal method was used to consider Blue 1 Composite: Missing & Murdered Aboriginal Women a composite of SK 1 and TOR 9 which were similar in scope.

**BLUE 1 COMPOSITE: Missing & Murdered Aboriginal Women**

The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

- a. Call upon the Government of Canada to:
  - i. Conduct a full Public Inquiry into the more than 1200 cases of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada;
  - ii. Support and continue to support the struggle against the devaluation of women by conducting this inquiry;
- b. Call upon churches and ministries of The United Church of Canada to at least annually remember Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women through education, and in our prayers, in particular on the Sunday immediately prior to October 4, the date of the cross-Canada Sisters in Spirit Vigil;
- c. Urge individuals to participate in the Sisters in Spirit Vigil on October 4;
- d. Urge congregational members to contact their Member of Parliament to voice support for a National Public Inquiry;

- e. Call upon the Government of Canada and all levels of governance to put resources towards the implementation of the 16 recommendations made by the Special Committee on Violence against Indigenous women.

Following conversation, Blueberry Commission moved into Parliamentary Procedure and the following motions were considered.

**BLUE 1 COMPOSITE: Missing & Murdered Aboriginal Women**

**Motion: Kathy Johnson/Richard Hollingsworth**

**GC42 2015-050**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

- a. Call upon the Government of Canada to:
  - i. Conduct a full Public Inquiry into the more than 1200 cases of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada;
  - ii. Support and continue to support the struggle against the devaluation of women by conducting this inquiry;
- b. Call upon churches and ministries of The United Church of Canada to at least annually remember Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women through education, and in our prayers, in particular on the Sunday immediately prior to October 4, the date of the cross-Canada Sisters in Spirit Vigil;
- c. Urge individuals to participate in the Sisters in Spirit Vigil on October 4;
- d. Urge congregational members to contact their Member of Parliament to voice support for a National Public Inquiry;
- e. Call upon the Government of Canada and all levels of governance to put resources towards the implementation of the 16 recommendations made by the Special Committee on Violence against Indigenous women.

**Carried**

Due to the decision on BLUE 1 COMPOSITE, Blueberry Commission considered the following two proposals.

**SK 1 – Support and Continuing Support for a National Public Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**

It was proposed that the 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Support and continue to support the struggle against the devaluation of women by encouraging a National Public Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls;
2. Call upon its churches and ministries to at least annually remember Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women through education<sup>[ii]</sup>, and in our prayers<sup>[iii]</sup>, in particular on the Sunday immediately prior to October 4, the date of the cross-Canada Sisters in Spirit Vigil;
3. Urge individuals to participate in the Sisters in Spirit Vigil on October 4;
4. Urge congregational members to contact their Member of Parliaments to voice support for a National Public Inquiry;
5. Call upon the Government of Canada and all levels of governance to put resources towards the implementation of the 16 recommendations made by the Special Committee on Violence against Indigenous women;

**TOR 9 – Public Inquiry for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**

It was proposed that the 42nd General Council (2015), direct the General Secretary, General Council to call upon the Government of Canada to conduct a full Public Inquiry into the more than 1200 cases of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada;

**SK 1 AND TOR 9****Motion To Take No Action: Hugh Johnson/John Maich****GC42 2015-051**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

Take no action on:

- SK 1 and TOR 9

**Carried**

The proposal method was used to consider Blue 2 Composite: Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution, a composite of BC 2 and LON 22.

**BLUE 2 COMPOSITE: Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution (BC 2 & LON 22)**

The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to revise the policy on Palestine/Israel by:

1. Stating that The United Church of Canada no longer asserts its preference for a two-state solution for achieving peace for the people of Palestine and Israel;
2. Affirming unequivocally the right of self-determination for Palestinians and declare that any choice regarding statehood must be made by the people living in Israel-Palestine;
3. Re-affirming the right of Israelis and Palestinians to live peacefully within internationally recognized borders.

Conversation focused around some clarity around a two-state solution and inclusion or exclusion of people of Israel and Palestine who lived outside the land. Some alternative language was suggested and staff Bruce Gregerson and Patti Talbot helped to clarify some intentions of this proposal. Comments regarding self-determination and assertion were made, and questions about whether the suggestions made were changing a national policy.

The motion was moved into parliamentary procedure, before an amendment was suggested. Because the amendment was not yet clear, Reference and Counsel was asked to work with the wording.

**Motion To Table Indefinitely: Tom Smart/Hannah Lee****GC42 2015-052**

To table the motion indefinitely.

**Carried****BC 3 – Toward a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine**

The proposal method was used to consider BC 3 Toward a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine:

It was proposed that the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41st General Council to address the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by the state of Israel by also:

1. initiating and developing a program of education and advocacy related to divestment from and economic sanctions against all corporations and institutions complicit in or benefitting from the illegal occupation. This would include education about “nostalgia” tourism which bolsters the oppression of Palestinians; and
2. encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the occupation of the Palestinian territories ends.

Co-chair Bev Kostichuk explained that a suggestion would be made to take no action on proposals TOR 1 and MAR 4, but to commend them for information to this proposal. Clarification was requested on the term “nostalgic tourism” and a change was made to remove the word “nostalgic” as the intent was unclear and added no helpful differentiation.

Moving to Parliamentary Procedure, the following motion was made

**Motion: John Maich/Edna Baker-Graf**

**GC42 2015-053**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41st General Council to address the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by the state of Israel by also:

1. initiating and developing a program of education and advocacy related to divestment from and economic sanctions against all corporations and institutions complicit in or benefitting from the illegal occupation. This would include education about “nostalgia” tourism which bolsters the oppression of Palestinians; and
2. encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the occupation of the Palestinian territories ends.

**Amendment: Steve Berube/Brian Ransom**

That sub point d. from MAR 4 be added as point number 2.

**Carried**

**Amendment: Bill Steadman/Steve Berube**

That the word “expand” be replaced with “focus” at the beginning of the sentence.

**Carried**

**Motion As Amended**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

Focus the current strategies and actions approved at the 41st General Council to address the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by the state of Israel by also:

1. initiating and developing a program of education and advocacy, in cooperation with our partners, related to divestment from and economic sanctions against all corporations and institutions complicit in or benefitting from the illegal occupation. This would include education about tourism which bolsters the oppression of Palestinians;

2. developing and implementing an ethical divestment strategy from companies that derive substantial financial benefit or that contribute significantly to furthering the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and recommends to the United Church of Canada, its Pension Fund and Foundation and other related bodies including congregations to divest from companies that derive substantial financial benefit from the illegal Israeli occupation; and
3. encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the occupation of the Palestinian territories ends.

### **Carried**

Due to the decision of BC 3, Blueberry Commission considered the following two proposals.

#### **TOR 1 – Toward A Just Peace In Israel/Palestine**

It was proposed that the 42nd General Council (2015):

Direct the Executive of the General Council to expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41st General Council to address the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by the state of Israel by also:

- a) initiating and developing a program of education and advocacy within The United Church of Canada related to divestment from and economic sanctions against all corporations and institutions complicit in or benefitting from the illegal occupation; and
- b) encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the occupation of the Palestinian territories ends.

#### **MAR 4 – Extending Support for A Just Peace In Israel / Palestine**

It was proposed that the 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Affirm the work of the United Network for a Just Peace for Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) and General Council staff in raising awareness of The United Church of Canada policy in support of a just peace for Palestine and Israel.

And direct the Executive of the General Council to:

2. Expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41st General Council to provide additional resources for use in local mission units to deepen understandings for denominational members as to why Palestinians, cry out from their suffering under Israeli occupation by:
  - a) Providing additional resources to allow UNJPPI and General Council staff to build and deepen relations with Canadian, American and British churches and church related Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in order to co-ordinate and share in the production of resources and programs focussed on supporting a just peace for Palestinians and Israelis;
  - b) Developing a partnership with Independent Jewish Voices and deepening our relationship with that group in advocating for a just peace for Palestine and Israel;
  - c) Dialoguing with other denominations and church related bodies about their research into companies that are complicit in or substantially benefit from violations of the 4th Geneva Conventions and/or the suppression of human rights and/or international

humanitarian law from the illegal occupation and the conflict between Israel and Palestine;

- d) develop and implement an ethical divestment strategy from companies that derive substantial financial benefit or that contribute significantly to furthering the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and recommends to The United Church of Canada, its Pension Fund and Foundation and other related bodies including congregations to divest from companies that derive substantial financial benefit from the illegal Israeli occupation;
- e) Developing a program of education and advocacy relating to divestment from and economic sanctions against corporations and institutions complicit in or substantially benefitting from the illegal occupation. This would include education about nostalgia tourism which bolsters the oppression of Palestinians; and
- f) Encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the ongoing illegal occupation as defined within the parameters of the 4th Geneva Convention of Palestine ends.

#### **TOR 1 AND MAR 4**

#### **Motion To Take No Action: Hugh Johnson/Kim Horwood**

**GC42 2015-054**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

Take no action on:

- TOR 1 and MAR 4

And refer the background information found in these proposals to the work of BC 3.

#### **Carried**

As LON 23 Divestment for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine is the exact wording as a previous motion, Blueberry Commission quickly moved into Parliamentary Procedure.

#### **LON 23 – Divestment for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine**

It was proposed that:

The 42nd General Council (2015): In light of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy adopted by The 41st General Council in which Section 9, Sub-section (d) directed the Executive of the General Council to explore the wisdom of divesting in companies that are profiting from or supporting the occupation;

1. direct the General Secretary, General Council to divest The United Church of Canada funds from companies that derive substantial financial benefit or that contribute significantly to furthering the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, and
2. recommends The United Church of Canada Pension Fund and the United Church Foundation and other related including congregations divest from companies that derive substantial financial benefit from the illegal Israeli occupation.

#### **Motion To Take No Action: Russell Mitchell-Walker/Bill Steadman**

**GC42 2015-055**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) take no action on LON 23 Divestment for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine.

#### **Carried**

The proposal process was used to consider TOR 2 Relationship-Building towards Peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

### **TOR 2 – Relationship-Building Towards Peace Between Palestinians and Israelis**

It was proposed that the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary of the General Council to allocate resources of staff time and money to work on developing a resource listing organizations both in Canada and in Israel/Palestine that foster the building of relationships of trust between:

- The United Church of Canada and the Canadian Jewish community,
- The United Church of Canada and Canadian Palestinian groups,
- between Palestinian and Jewish groups in Canada, and
- between Palestinians and Israelis in Israel/Palestine (Identify groups within Israel and Palestine doing this kind of trust-building work, to facilitate possible partnerships between these groups and United Church bodies such as congregations, special interest groups or presbyteries.)

It further proposes that these resources be communicated to congregations, groups of interested United Church people, presbyteries and Conferences with encouragement for them to undertake this work.

Information had been received from a Commissioner in another Commission and a member of the court asked that this be shared. There was some conversation regarding the work that is already happening at the General Council Office and regarding funding implications.

Moving into parliamentary procedure, the following motion was made:

#### **Motion To Receive And Take No Action: Hugh Johnson/Tom Smart                      GC42 2015-056**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) receive TOR 2 Relationship-Building towards Peace between Palestinians and Israelis and take no action.

**Defeated**

As we were nearing the order of the day, the following motion was made.

#### **Motion To Extend The Order of the Day: Richard Hollingsworth/Angus MacLennan**

**GC42 2015-057**

That the order of the day be extended until a vote is made.

**Carried**

The Order of the Day was reached once the vote to take no action was defeated. Beverly Kostichuk shared a blessing and the Blueberry Commission departed for lunch at 12:05 p.m.

The Blueberry Commission reconvened at 3:45 p.m. and the court returned to the matter of the proposal TOR 2 Relationship-Building towards Peace between Palestinians and Israelis. Still in parliamentary procedure, the following motion was made.

**TOR 2 – Relationship-Building Towards Peace Between Palestinians and Israelis****Motion: Karen Hilfman-Millson/Rick Balson****GC42 2015-058**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary of the General Council to work on developing a resource listing organizations both in Canada and in Israel/Palestine that foster the building of relationships of trust between:

- The United Church of Canada and the Canadian Jewish community,
- The United Church of Canada and Canadian Palestinian groups,
- between Palestinian and Jewish groups in Canada, and
- between Palestinians and Israelis in Israel/Palestine (Identify groups within Israel and Palestine doing this kind of trust-building work, to facilitate possible partnerships between these groups and United Church bodies such as congregations, special interest groups or presbyteries.)

It further proposes that these resources be communicated to congregations, groups of interested United Church people, presbyteries and Conferences with encouragement for them to undertake this work.

**Carried****BLUE 2 COMPOSITE: Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution (BC2 & LON22)**

The court returned to the matter of the tabled proposal Blue 2 Composite: Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution. As we were in parliamentary procedure, the following amendments were made.

**Motion: Jay Olson/Lorraine Beasley****GC42 2015-059**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to revise the policy on Palestine/Israel by:

1. Stating that The United Church of Canada no longer asserts its preference for a two-state solution for achieving peace for the people of Palestine and Israel;
2. Affirming unequivocally the right of self-determination for Palestinians and declare that any choice regarding statehood must be made by the people living in Israel-Palestine;
3. Re-affirming the right of Israelis and Palestinians to live peacefully within internationally recognized borders.

**Amendments by Reference and Council: Hannah Lee/Cathy Hamilton**

That the word “revise” be replaced with “review”, and “in consultation with partners in the region” be added after “Palestine/Israel” in the first sentence.

That “and Israelis” be added to point 2 after “Palestinians”, “and reconsider the declaration that” be deleted, “Israel-Palestine” be replaced with “Palestine/Israel”, and “rather than asserting a preference for any specific solution already proposed;” be deleted from point 2.

**Carried****Amendments: Jan Stevenson/Jamie Webber:**

To add “or in exile from” to the end of point 1.

**Defeated**

The final amended motion was made.



**BLUE 2 COMPOSITE: Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution****Motion As Amended**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to review the policy on Palestine/Israel in consultation with partners in the region by:

1. affirming the right of self-determination for Palestinians and Israelis so that any choice regarding statehood be made by the people living in Palestine/Israel; and
2. re-affirming the right of Israelis and Palestinians to live peacefully within internationally recognized borders.

**Carried**

The proposal process was used to consider GCE 10 Living Apology to Members of LGBTTTQ Communities.

**GCE 10 – Living Apology to Members of LGBTTTQ Communities**

It was proposed that:

The 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Adopt the Process of a Living Apology as a vehicle for dialogue, story-telling, education and reconciliation with members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTTTQ) community;
2. Direct the General Secretary to partner with Affirm United/S' affirmer Ensemble on a Living Apology art installation project, an example of which is found in appendix A [p. 473];
3. Invite The United Church of Canada into a 3-year journey of dialogue and reconciliation with members of LGBTTTQ communities, that would involve:
  - creative opportunities for conversation, worship and education
  - opportunities to explore concepts such as lament, reconciliation and justice, to be reported and celebrated at the 43rd General Council (2018) in acknowledgement of the 30th Anniversary of the 1988 decision of the full participation of LGBTTTQ peoples in the church.

Some questions for clarification were asked, though the information was available in the Appendix. The co-chair reminded members of the court that we are directing the General Secretary and Affirm United / S' affirmer to use their judgment to create something. Questions and comments regarding language brought us to a place of changing some of the wording.

**Motion: Mynt Marsellus/Lorraine Beasley****GC42 2015-060**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Adopt the Process of a Living Apology as a vehicle for dialogue, story-telling, education and reconciliation with persons who identify as sexual or gender diverse including but not limited to Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Two-Spirited, Queer (LGBTTT2Q) persons;
2. Direct the General Secretary to partner with Affirm United/S' affirmer Ensemble on a Living Apology art installation project, an example of which is found in appendix A [page 473]; and

3. Invite The United Church of Canada into a 3-year journey of dialogue and reconciliation with LGBTTT2Q persons, that would involve:
  - creative opportunities for conversation, worship and education
  - opportunities to explore concepts such as lament, reconciliation and justice, to be reported and celebrated at the 43rd General Council (2018) in acknowledgement of the 30th Anniversary of the 1988 decision of the full participation of LGBTTT2Q peoples in the church.

**Carried**

The proposal process was used to consider SK 8 Solidarity and Support for Progressive Evangelicals within the Emerging Church Movement.

**SK 8 – Solidarity and Support for Progressive Evangelicals Within the Emerging Church Movement**

It was proposed that:

The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

1. send letters of support and solidarity to the Progressive Evangelical congregations in Canada and the United States who have made supportive statements of inclusion and welcome to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people within the last year.
2. provide for ways and means for congregations who have made such statements and find themselves without a church building due to the denominational body withdrawing their support and property from the congregation, to enter into negotiations with United Church congregations that are closing or any congregations that are open to sharing their space. These negotiations, along with presbytery, could provide these progressive congregations with a building and explore ways for them to become a part of The United Church of Canada.
3. explore the implications and possibilities of welcoming Progressive Evangelicals (including pastors who wish to be admitted) into The United Church of Canada as we move through this time of emergence in the church.

It was asked within the Commission whether there were instances of this already having happened, and who writes letters on behalf of the church. Some wording alternatives were suggested.

Having moved into parliamentary procedure, the following motion was made.

**Motion To Receive And Take No Action: Stephanie McClellan/Tom Smart GC42 2015-061**

To receive SK 8 Solidarity and Support for Progressive Evangelicals Within the Emerging Church Movement and take no action.

**Defeated**

Still in parliamentary procedure, the following amendment was suggested.

**Amendment: Bill McAuslan/Hugh Johnson.**

Remove “United Church congregations that are closing” from point 2.

**Carried**

**Motion: James Ravenscroft/Russell Mitchell-Walker****GC42 2015-062**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

1. send letters of support and solidarity to the Progressive Evangelical congregations in Canada and the United States who have made supportive statements of inclusion and welcome to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people;
2. encourage and/or invite congregations who have made such statements and find themselves without a church building due to the denominational body withdrawing their support and property from the congregation, to enter into negotiations with any congregations that are open to sharing their space. These negotiations, along with presbytery, could provide these progressive congregations with a building and explore ways for them to become a part of The United Church of Canada; and
3. explore the implications and possibilities of welcoming Progressive Evangelicals (including pastors who wish to be admitted) into The United Church of Canada as we move through this time of emergence in the church.

**Carried**

The proposal process was used to consider BC 7 Support for a Proportionally Representative Parliament.

**BC 7 – Support for a Proportionally Representative Parliament**

It was proposed that:

The 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Direct the Executive of the General Council to develop resources for congregations to understand and advocate for a proportionally representative federal parliament in Canada; and
2. publicly endorse the campaign led by Fair Vote Canada to:
  - a. conduct a citizen-led consultation process to determine the best model of proportional representation immediately following the next federal election, and
  - b. implement the model in time for the following federal election.

The Commission considered questions of charitable status and political activity. Suggestions were made that there were already organizations that are helping Canadians to do this work, and therefore, the commission agreed that promoting existing resources was better stewardship than developing them ourselves. Finally, publicly endorsing the campaign of Fair Vote Canada (in the original proposal) is already understood in “promoting existing resources.” The co-chair said that the request for a theological rationale would be forwarded to those who are making the educational package.

Moving into parliamentary procedure, the proposal had been reworded as follows:

The 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Direct the Executive of the General Council to develop resources for congregations and other ministries to understand alternatives to the “first past the post” electoral system in Canada.

**Motion To Receive And Take No Action: Pat McDonough/Ralph Hayman GC42 2015-063**  
To receive BC 7 Support for a Proportionally Representative Parliament and take no action.  
**Defeated**

**BC 7 – Support for a Proportionally Representative Parliament**

**Motion: Stewart Walker/Pat McDonough**

**GC42 2015-064**

The 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Direct the Executive of the General Council to develop resources for congregations and other ministries to understand alternatives to the “first past the post” electoral system in Canada.

**Amendment: David Whiting/Stephanie McClennan**

That “promote existing” be added in point 1 after “Direct the Executive of the General Council to...”

**Carried**

**Motion As Amended:**

That the 42nd General Council (2015):

1. Direct the Executive of the General Council to promote existing resources for congregations and other ministries to understand alternatives to the “first past the post” electoral system in Canada.

**Carried**

Closing procedures commenced at 5:55 p.m. The Co-Chairs thanked Blueberry Commission for their time, work, and effort. The Co-Chairs and resource staff were thanked for their work from the Blueberry Commission and the Resource Staff, Reference and Council, and stewards were thanked for their work by the Co-Chairs. Appreciation for all was shown with applause.

Graham Brownmiller closed with a prayer and grace. Having reached the order of the day, Blueberry Commission closed at 6:00 p.m.

**Having reached the order of the day, the following proposals were referred to the Executive of the General Council for action**

ANW 1 – Nuclear Weapons-Free World

ANW 2 – One Death per Minute

BC 2 – Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution

BLUEBERRY 3 – Toward a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine

HAM 1 – Setting the Date for a Meeting

HAM 2 – Quorum

HAM 3 – Changing Structures of a Governing Body

LON 19 – Achieving Quorum

LON 20 – Quorum Requirements

LON 21 – Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign

LON 22 – Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution

LON 24 – Role of Christian Theology in Legitimizing Israeli Palestinian Territories

MAR 1 – Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign

MAR 3 – Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign

MAR 6 – Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign

TOR 7 – Arms Trade Treaty

TOR 8 – Urging Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

**PARTRIDGEBERRY COMMISSION**  
**Civic Centre, Room: Canada House**  
**Tuesday, August 11, 2015**

**Present:** For a list of members of the Partridgeberry Commission see page 99.

The co-chairs welcomed those Commissioners present and expressed appreciation for the important work to be done on behalf of the church.

The Commission Team was introduced:

Co-chairs – Sue Brodrick and Adam Hanley

Minute Secretary – Shirley Welch

Conference Executive Secretary Supporting Co-chairs and Minute Secretary – Bill Doyle

Projectionist – Alison Piercey

Conference Executive Secretary Supporting the Projectionist – Shannon McCarthy

Reference and Counsel – Jean Bethune, Sean Handcock, Stephen Hershey, Don Stiles

Adam Hanley and Sue Brodrick, the co-chairs explained how the work assigned to the Commission would be dealt with, the expected behavioural norms, and shared the agenda on the screen. The group then recited the covenant and began at 10 am.

**Adoption of Agenda**

**Motion: Wilson Gonese/Jean Bethune**

**GC42 2015-065**

That the agenda as presented be accepted and approved by the Partridgeberry Commission as its agenda, on the understanding that the agenda may be changed, as necessary by the action of the Commission or the recommendation of the Business Committee.

**Carried**

Michelle Slater noted that a lengthy report accompanied GCE11 and thought that it would be helpful to the group if this piece of work could be postponed so that everyone could have a chance to read the accompanying report.

**Amended Agenda**

**Motion: Michelle Slater/Jane Johnson**

**GC42 2015-066**

That the agenda be amended to postpone definitely considering GCE 11 until 3:30 p.m. and that the Reference and Counsel prepare copies of the Report of the Working Group on Leadership Formation for Ministry from the November 2014 meeting of the Executive of the General Council.

**Carried**

The co-chairs agreed to print 15 copies of the extra material for GCE 11 and shared that the material was also available online.

Commissioners were reminded to sign in to be included in the minutes. It was also noted that the Commission will report any decisions made to the Plenary.

Sue Brodrick opened the gathering with a blessing.

### **SK 9 Restorative Care for Mission Units or Outreach Ministries**

The proposal SK9 Restorative Care for Mission Units or Outreach Ministries was introduced. Various questions were raised about whether this would be mandatory or optional, whether this would be too much of a burden for smaller mission units or those just beginning, if it would apply to mission units not following The United Church of Canada pay schedule, and whether this action would lead to a two-tiered pay schedule.

#### **Motion: John Haas/Shelley Manley-Tannis**

**GC42 2015-067**

That the 42nd General Council adopt SK 9, Restorative Care for Mission Units or Outreach Ministries:

The 42nd General Council (2015) amend its policy with respect to Restorative Care so that Mission Units, Outreach Ministries, and other ministries which are not pastoral charges be required to participate in (that is, contribute to and receive benefits from) the Restorative Care Plan, and that Mission Units, Outreach Ministries, and other ministries which are not pastoral charges be advised of such requirement to participate.

**Carried**

### **ANW 13 Child Well-Being Index**

An amendment was allowed to include leaders of the opposition parties, both Federal and Provincial. There was also an observation that this seemed to be an idea from our past and that it might be better if individuals wrote to their local representatives. There was an amendment to encourage members of congregations to do this as well. These amendments were agreed to by consensus.

#### **Motion: Edison Bardock/Noah Richardson**

**GC42 2015-068**

That the 42nd General Council adopt that on behalf of The United Church of Canada, the Moderator and the General Secretary promote the adoption of a national Child Well-being Index. This can be achieved by writing to the Prime Minister, each Premier, the whole church and the national media demanding immediate action for children.

#### **Amendment: Catherine Stewart Savage/Alex VanCaeyzeele**

It was moved to amend the motion to include the leaders of the opposition parties, federally and provincially, and to encourage members of United Church congregations to do the same.

**Carried**

#### **Motion as amended:**

That the 42nd General Council adopt that on behalf of The United Church of Canada, the Moderator and the General Secretary promote the adoption of a national Child Well-being Index. This can be achieved by writing to the Prime Minister, the leaders of the opposition parties, federally and provincially, each Premier, the whole church and the national media demanding immediate action for children and encourage members of United Church congregations to do the same.

**Carried**

**TOR 10 Treatment of Prison Inmates**

There was quite a bit of discussion as to whether this referred to punitive versus protective solitary confinement, and whether the word punitive should be added to the motion.

**TOR 10 Treatment of Prison Inmates**

The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

- a) contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to eliminate solitary confinement;
- b) contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to:
  - Provide better training of staff regarding mental health issues of offenders;
  - Schedule mental health assessments and development of treatment strategies;
  - Ensure transfer of inmates prone to injuring themselves to treatment centres;
  - Ensure that there is adequate oversight of prison conditions.
  - Work more closely with the John Howard Society, the Elizabeth Fry Society, and the Canadian Mental Health Association in developing better strategies for treatment and training.

The word “punitive”, as well as a fifth point under b) to “work more closely with the interfaith chaplaincies”; and a point c) “that we encourage communities of faith to do the same”, were added in the proposal stage and then TOR 10 Treatment of Prison Inmates was presented as follows:

**Motion: Mead Baldwin/Brie Wohlers****GC42 2015-069**

The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

- a) contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to eliminate punitive solitary confinement;
- b) contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to:
  - Provide better training of staff regarding mental health issues of offenders;
  - Schedule mental health assessments and development of treatment strategies;
  - Ensure transfer of inmates prone to injuring themselves to treatment centres;
  - Ensure that there is adequate oversight of prison conditions.
  - Work more closely with the John Howard Society, the Elizabeth Fry Society, and the Canadian Mental Health Association in developing better strategies for treatment and training.
  - Work more closely with the interfaith chaplaincies.
- c) That we encourage communities of faith to do the same.

**Amendment: Carolyn Smith/Vanessa Spence**

That the word “punitive” be removed from the motion.

**Carried****Motion as amended:**

The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:

- a) contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to eliminate solitary confinement;
- b) contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to:



- Provide better training of staff regarding mental health issues of offenders;
  - Schedule mental health assessments and development of treatment strategies;
  - Ensure transfer of inmates prone to injuring themselves to treatment centres;
  - Ensure that there is adequate oversight of prison conditions.
  - Work more closely with the John Howard Society, the Elizabeth Fry Society, and the Canadian Mental Health Association in developing better strategies for treatment and training.
  - Work more closely with the interfaith chaplaincies.
- c) That we encourage communities of faith to do the same.

**Carried**

### **GCE 9 The Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway**

There were some questions for clarification. Joe Ramsay, staff person from the MEPS unit, noted that the changes being suggested are to make decisions around suitability of a person earlier in the whole process. The intention is to front end the discernment and to open up eligibility. It was further noted that this is to help open pathways for those who aren't mainline educated, or who may be from other faith backgrounds, etc.

### **Motion: Tracy Murton/Ryan McNally**

**GC42 2015-070**

It is moved that the 42nd General Council (2015) adopt:

1. the implementation of a seven-phase Candidacy Pathway and its purpose to call forth, identify, accompany, equip, assess, authorize, and celebrate those persons whom God calls to and endows for the Order of Ministry, offering leadership in Christ's diverse ministries contributing to God's mission in creation (see GCE 6, 40th General Council, 2009);
2. the implementation of the seven-phase Candidacy Pathway be informed by the report of the Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway;
3. authorize revisions to The Manual of The United Church of Canada required to implement the Candidacy Pathway;
4. the Executive of the General Council be directed to develop a policy document for the Candidacy Pathway reflective of these recommendations and to develop a Candidacy Pathway implementation strategy; and
5. it approve the development and implementation of a seven-phase Pathway toward Recognition as a Designated Lay Minister with the purpose to call forth, identify, accompany, equip, assess, authorize, and celebrate those persons whom God calls to and endows for service as Recognized Designated Lay Ministers, offering leadership in Christ's diverse ministries and contributing to God's mission in creation.
6. And that this General Council authorize a Category 2 remit to test the will of the church with respect to this policy change.

**Carried**

Ralph Schmidt asked that the group refrain from whooping or cheering when motions were passed or defeated in order to be respectful of those who may have a contrary opinion to that which prevailed.

**TICIF 3 Towards a New Model of Membership**

There was a request to deal with the motion seriatim.

It was noted that in many congregations adherents already are allowed to vote on all matters and that this motion is to make changes so that *The Manual* can catch up with reality.

Before the motion could be dealt with the Commission broke for lunch at 12:04 p.m. agreeing to reconvene at 3:30 p.m. Adam Hanley offered a blessing.

At 3:47 the Partridgeberry Commission reconvened by re-speaking the covenant to be present, be love, be wise, be truth, be respect, be humble, be honest, and be brave.

Adam shared the new work plan to deal with motions TICIF 3, MTU 1 and then GCE11. The group indicated approval with a show of cards.

**TICIF 3 Towards a New Model of Membership**

Bruce Gregersen explained about the three points of entry to the faith and how that was important. Sue Brodrick read the response sheet that had been received relating to this proposal regarding inclusion of youth. There was quite a lengthy discussion about the importance of learning about the church before becoming a full member vs. allowing those who have an interest in the church to function more fully whether they were members or not. Many perspectives were voiced.

The original motion read as follows:

The 42nd General Council:

1. Directs the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to invite the church into a study of the meaning of membership, including the relationship of baptism and membership, and bring to the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council a new model of membership for the church;
2. a) Approves that the full members of a community of faith may consent to allow adherents to vote on all matters before meetings of the community of faith; and  
b) Authorizes a category 2 remit to test the will of the church in respect to this change.

**TICIF 3a Toward a New Model of Membership - Study of Meaning on Membership Including Relationship of Baptism & Membership**

**Motion: Wilson Gonese/Catherine Stewart Savage**

**GC42 2015-071**

That the 42nd General Council:

Direct the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to invite the church into a study of the meaning of membership including the relationship of baptism and membership, and bring to the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council a new model of membership for the church.

**Amendment: Janice Frame/Jane Johnson**

That the words “new model” be removed from the motion.

**Carried**

**Motion as Amended:**

That the 42nd General Council:

Direct the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to invite the church into a study of the meaning of membership, including the relationship of baptism and membership, and bring to the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council a recommendation of membership for the church as a result of that study.

**Carried**

**TICIF 3b Towards a New Model of Membership - Full Members of a Community of Faith May Allow Adherents to Vote; Category 2 Remit to Test Will of Church**

The words “community of faith” were removed in the proposal stage and then TICIF 3 Towards a New Model of Membership - Full Members of a Community of Faith May Allow Adherents to Vote; Category 2 Remit to Test the Will of the Church, was presented as an amended motion.

**Motion as amended: Sue Browning/Audrey Brown**

**GC42 2015-072**

That the 42nd General Council:

- a) Approve that the full members of a community of faith may consent to allow adherents to vote on all matters before meetings of the local ministry unit; and
- b) Authorize a category 2 remit to test the will of the church in respect to this change.

**Carried**

**MTU 1 Full Participation of Adherents in All Aspects of Congregational Governance**

The 42nd General Council (2015):

- a) Enable active adherents of United Church congregations, on the approval of a majority of congregational members, to participate fully in the governance of their pastoral charges, including voting on spiritual as well as financial, administrative, and pastoral relations matters.
- b) Authorize a category 2 remit to test the will of the church with respect to this change.

**Motion to Take No Action: Mead Baldwin/Shirley Clarke**

**GC42 2015-073**

That the 42nd General Council (2015) take no action on MTU1 Full Participation of Adherents in All Aspects of Congregational Governance.

**Carried**

**GCE 11 Faithful, Effective and Learned Leaders for the Church We are Becoming:  
Competency-Based Approach to Ministerial Education**

There were questions raised regarding this motion: what is this a proposal for? What will this fix? Are we dissatisfied with the competence of our ministry personnel? Joe Ramsay responded that this began as a consultation two years ago around theological education and formation for ministry; this is attempting to expand or broaden our understanding of what is appropriate preparation for ministry (i.e. one may not have a particular degree but if one passes a set of criteria can still become an ordered member).

There was much discussion including an explanation about testamur. Worry was expressed about the future of United Church theological schools.

The original motion read as follows:

That the 42nd General Council, 2015:

1. a. Approve the adoption of a competency-based approach to equipping and evaluating people for leadership in ministry and mission.
- b. Affirm that assessing the academic readiness and competence for leadership in ministry and mission is a core responsibility of the church.
- c. Affirm The United Church of Canada's relationship with its theological schools, and education and retreat centres, and recognize their on-going contribution to the formation and education of church leadership by continuing to provide funding for representative institutions as outlined in this document.
- d. Direct the General Secretary to establish a process to implement the competency-based approach. This process will include working with the Theological Schools Circle, and other educational partners, to realize the recommendations of the Task Group and the items identified in the Consensus Statement of the Theological Schools Circle, including the tradition of Testamur-granting schools. This process will also include integrating the competency-based approach with other leadership formation and education initiatives that have been, or may be, approved: the One Order of Ministry proposal of the Joint Ministry Group, the Report of the Candidacy Pathways Pilot Project Steering Group, and the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relations initiative.
2. Receive the draft report of the Working Group on Leadership Formation for Ministry, and refer it back to the working group with the request that the final report, incorporating any changes that seem appropriate once the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task group are known, be submitted to the March 2015 meeting of the Executive for referral to the 42nd General Council.
3. Affirm the contribution of the Designated Lay Ministries Program, currently hosted at St. Andrew's College, and continue to provide funding as long as this program is required.

**Motion To Take No Action: Patrick Woodbeck/Erin McIntyre-Garrick      GC42 2015-074**

It is moved that the 42nd General Council take no action on GCE 11 Faithful, Effective and Learned Leaders for the Church. we are Becoming: A Competency-Based Approach to Ministerial Education

**Defeated**

**Motion to Refer: Audrey Brown/Gary Clark**

**GC42 2015-075**

It is moved that the 42nd General Council (2015):

Refer GCE 11 Faithful, Effective and Learned Leaders for the Church we are Becoming: A Competency-Based Approach to Ministerial Education, to the General Secretary for further work and to report back to the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council.

**Carried**

**Break for Dinner**

**Motion: Daniel Reed/Noah Richardson**

**GC42 2015-076**

That the Partridgeberry Commission take a half hour dinner break from 6:00-6:30 p.m. and then work until 7:15 p.m.

**Carried**

The Commission recommenced work after dinner at 6: 37 p.m.

### **TOR 12 Review of Basis of Union, Section 11**

Wendy Cranston explained what the proposal was about: the questions that are asked at ordination/commissioning, and that there had been a major change in 1973, with another change in 1987 to include diaconal ministry; in 1993 questions changed to include inclusive language. Bruce Gregerson and Wendy Cranston have the changes that have been made previously.

A person from London Conference asked if the intent was to relax the theological question threshold for becoming ordained/commissioned. Someone else noted that it would be unwise to step back from the explicit Trinitarian confession required to become ordained. Others pointed out that there may be no need to change but just to review to be sure that most people are in favour of the vows currently undertaken. With the breadth of our orthodoxy, what is meant by “essential agreement”?

The vote was extremely close and some folks feel that they were not heard. Eventually the group decided to move to the next proposal, as it was essentially the same as TOR12.

### **TOR 12 Review of Basis of Union, Section 11**

The 42nd General Council instruct its Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, or other appropriate group, to undertake a broad based and theological review of the Basis of Union part Eleven (11) which deals with the preamble and questions, posed as persons are ordained or commissioned, to ensure their continued relevancy and effectiveness as we move forward in support of our ministry leaders.

### **Motion To Take No Action: Paul Douglas Walfall/Vicki McPhee**

**GC42 2015-077**

It is moved that the 42nd General Council take no action on TOR 12 Review of Basis of Union, section 11.

**Carried**

### **HAM 5 Review of the Basis of Union, Section 11**

The 42nd General Council (2015):

instruct the Executive of the General Council to undertake a broad based and theological review of the Basis of Union part Eleven (11) which deals with the preamble and questions, posed as persons are ordained or commissioned, to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness as we move forward in support of our ministry leaders.

The group had just begun to ask some questions for clarification when the order of the day was reached.

### **ORDER OF THE DAY: 7:15 PM**

Adam Hanley thanked the Commission for their work.

**Having reached the order of the day, the following proposals were referred to the Executive of the General Council for action**

HAM 5 Review of the Basis of Union, Section 11

ANW 5 Justice Within the New Compensation Model

BQ 5 Correcting the Unintended Consequences of the November 2010 Approved Maternity and Parental Leave Policies Proposal

TOR 6 Sharing of Resources

M&O 12 Resource Sharing

HAM 7 Initiating Comprehensive Review of Property & Monies held in Trust at all Level of The United Church of Canada

Adam Hanley closed the Commission.

**Actions of the 42nd General Council 2015**

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
ANW 1	Nuclear Weapons-Free World: A Call for the Negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention	Blueberry Commission	478	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
ANW 2	One Death Per Minute: Call for Canadian Implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty	Blueberry Commission	484	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
ANW 3	Social Justice Conversation	Bakeapple Commission	444	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
ANW 4	Caring for Pastoral Relationships – a Response to the Comprehensive Review	Sessional	302	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
ANW 5	Justice Within the New Compensation Model	Partridgeberry Commission	523	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
ANW 6	The Rural Ministry of the UCC	Bakeapple Commission	447	GC42 2015 - 048	Carried (amended)	GS
ANW 7	Membership of the UCW in GC	Sessional	369	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
ANW 8	Number of Regional Councils	Sessional	308	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
ANW 9	Organization & Responsibilities of Proposed Denominational Council	Sessional	308	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
ANW 10	Organization & Responsibilities of Proposed Regional Councils	Sessional	310	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
ANW 11	Funding Model (1) CRTG #6	Sessional	394	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
ANW 12	Funding Model (2) CRTG #6	Sessional	395	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
ANW 13	Child Well-Being Index	Partridgeberry Commission	501	GC42 2015 - 068	Carried (amended)	GS
ANW 14	CRTG – Representation of UCW	Sessional	368	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)

Proposal #	Title	Court	Page Ref	Motion #	Decision	Follow-up
ANW 15	Grass Roots Stimulus	Sessional	311	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
ANW 16	Denominational Funding	Sessional	396	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
ANW 17	Reducing Carbon Emissions	Bakeapple Commission	414	GC42 2015 - 021	Carried (amended)	GCE
BC 1	Concerning Covenants	Sessional	312	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
BC 2	Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution	Blueberry Commission	454	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
BC 3	Toward a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine	Blueberry Commission	456	GC42 2015 - 053	Carried (amended)	GS
BC 4	Lobbying Governments for a Price on Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Bakeapple Commission	414	GC42 2015 - 022	Carried (amended)	GS
BC 5	Climate Discussion Circles	Bakeapple Commission	438	GC42 2015 - 034	Referred to GS	GS
BC 6	Green Renewable Energy Investment	Bakeapple Commission	420	GC42 2015 - 025	Take No Action	
BC 7	Support for a Proportionally Representative Parliament	Blueberry Commission	476	GC42 2015 - 064	Carried (amended)	GCE
BC 8	Travel Carbon Tax	Bakeapple Commission	416	GC42 2015 - 023	Take No Action	
BC 9	UCC Pension Board Divestment from Goldcorp	Bakeapple Commission	434	GC42 2015 - 030	Take No Action	
BC 10	Considering Terminology in <i>United in God's Work</i>	Sessional	303	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
BC 11	Clean Water for All Canadians	Bakeapple Commission	439	GC42 2015 - 017 GC42 2015 - 035	Carried (amended)	GS
BC 12	Amendments to "United in God's Work:	Sessional	313	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
BC 13	Response to United in God's Work	Sessional	315	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
Blueberry 1 Composite	Missing & Murdered Aboriginal Women (SK 1, TOR 9)	Blueberry Commission	450	GC42 2015 - 050	Carried	GS



<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
Blueberry 2 Composite	Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution (BC 2, LON 22)	Blueberry Commission	454	GC42 2015 - 059	Carried (amended)	GCE
Blueberry 3 Composite	Quorum (HAM 2, LON 19, LON 20)	Blueberry Commission	489	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
BQ 1	Renew the Current Structure	Sessional	315	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
BQ 2	New Mission for The United Church of Canada	Bakeapple Commission	447	GC42 2015 - 040 GC42 2015 - 041	Carried (amended)	GS, GC43
BQ 3	Clarification of the Proposed New Assessment Formula	Sessional	398	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
BQ 4	A response to the Final Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group	Sessional	317	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
BQ 5	Correcting the Unintended Consequences of the November 2010 Approved Maternity and Parental Leave Policies Proposal	Partridgeberry Commission	524	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
BQ 6	Full Voting Status National UCW President	Sessional	370	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
BQ 7	A Proposal to Clarify Sections C and D of The Manual	Plenary Consent	296	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
BQ 8	Natural Justice for College of Ministry	Sessional	412	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
CR 1	Chasing the Spirit	Plenary	138	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 2	Aboriginal Ministries	Plenary	138	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GCE, GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 3	A Three Council Model	Plenary	139	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 4	Elimination of Transfer and Settlement	Plenary	145	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 5	Theological Rationale for Three Council Model	Plenary	146	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	TICIF See CR OMNI 1

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
CR 6	Office of Vocation	Plenary	146	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 7	Association of Ministers	Plenary	147	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GCE See CR OMNI 1
CR 8	Funding a New Model	Plenary	147	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 9	Regions and Membership	Plenary	147	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 10	Method of Assessment	Plenary	148	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 11	Referral of Proposals	Plenary	148	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 12	Relationship of Staff	Plenary	149	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 13	Evaluation	Plenary	149	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GCE, GC43 See CR OMNI 1
CR 14	Property and Investments	Plenary	149	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS See CR OMNI 1
CR 15	Disposal of Proposals	Plenary	149	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS, GC43 See CR OMNI 1
CR 16	Remits	Plenary	151	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GCE See CR OMNI 1
CR 17	Remits / Meetings of the 43rd General Council	Plenary	151	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GCE See CR OMNI 1
CR OMNI 1	Comprehensive Review	Plenary	138	GC42 2015 - 016	Carried	GS
CRTG 1	Comprehensive Review - Chasing the Spirit	Plenary	232	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
CRTG 2	Comprehensive Review – Aboriginal Ministries	Plenary	232	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
CRTG 3	Comprehensive Review – A Three Court Council Model	Plenary	233	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
CRTG 4	Comprehensive Review – A College of Ministers	Plenary	240	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
CRTG 5	Comprehensive Review - An Association of Ministers	Plenary	242	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
CRTG 6	Comprehensive Review – Funding a New Model	Plenary	242	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
CRTG 7	Comprehensive Review - Remits/ Meeting of the 43rd General Council	Plenary	243	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
GCE 1	Full Communion – United Church of Christ USA	Plenary	251	GC42 2015 - 009	Carried	GS
GCE 2	Police Records Checks Policy – REF MEPS 9	Plenary Consent	278	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GCE 3	Congregation DM Policy – REF MEPS 14	Plenary Consent	280	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GCE 4	LLWL Policy – REF MEPS 13	Plenary Consent	282	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GCE 5	Sabbaticals for Persons Involved in Interim Ministry – REF MEPS 19	Plenary Consent	283	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GCE 6	Re Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Leave Policy – REF MEPS 21	Plenary Consent	286	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GCE 7	Conference Interviews for Interim Ministers (GC 41 TOR 1)	Plenary Consent	287	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GCE 8	Effective Leadership & Healthy Pastoral Relationships – MEPS 23	Plenary Consent	289	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GCE 9	The Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway	Partridgeberry Commission	504	GC42 2015 - 070	Carried	GCE, GS Category 2 Remit
GCE 10	Living Apology to Members of LGBTTTQ Communities	Blueberry Commission	471	GC42 2015 - 060	Carried (amended)	GS/Affirm, GC43
GCE 11	Faithful, Effective and Learned Leaders for the Church we are Becoming: A Competency-Based Approach to Ministerial Education	Partridgeberry Commission	509	GC42 2015 - 075	Referred to GS	GS, GC43
GCESE 1	Amending the Disability Provisions of the Manual	Plenary Consent	290	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
GCESE 2	Proposal on Reconciliation	Plenary	254	GC42 2015 - 008	Carried	GCE, GS
GS 1	Procedural Motions	Plenary	221	GC42 2015 - 001	Carried (amended)	
GS 2	Plenary Consent	Plenary	229	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	
GS 3	Enacting Remits Authorized by the 41st General Council 2012 and 2013	Plenary	230	GC42 2015 - 006	Carried	GS
GS 4	Prioritizing the Work of GC	Plenary	231	GC42 2015 - 003	Carried	GCE
GS 5	Appeal – Calculation of Deadline to Initiate Appeal	Plenary Consent	274	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GS 6	Minutes of Court Meetings	Plenary Consent	275	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GS 7	Notice of Congregational Meetings re: Amalgamations and Disbanding	Plenary Consent	276	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GS 8	Members of the Order of Ministry Elected/Appointed to Public Office	Plenary Consent	277	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
GS 9	Mutual Recognition – Presbyterian Church – Republic of Korea	Plenary	245	GC42 2015 - 010	Carried	GCE, GS Category 2 Remit
GS 10	Change in Governance – UCC Act to Non For Profit	Plenary	248	GC42 2015 - 013	Defeated	
GS 11	French Translation of The Manual	Plenary Consent	278	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
HAM 1	Setting the Date for a Congregation or Pastoral Charge Meeting	Blueberry Commission	485	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
HAM 2	Quorum for a Meeting of the Governing Body of a Congregation or Pastoral Charge	Blueberry Commission	490	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
HAM 3	Changing Structures of a Governing Body	Blueberry Commission	488	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
HAM 4	Representation of United Church Women on Councils	Sessional	371	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
HAM 5	Review of Basis of Union, Section 11	Partridgeberry Commission	522	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
HAM 6	Representation of United Church Women on Councils	Sessional	372	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
HAM 7	Initiating Comprehensive Review of Property & Monies Held in Trust at all Level of The United Church of Canada	Partridgeberry Commission	528	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 1	Naming the Denominational Council	Sessional	319	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 2	Naming of the Denominational Court	Sessional	319	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 3	Proposed Name for the Denominational Council	Sessional	320	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 4	Representation to General Council	Sessional	321	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 5	Youth and Young Adult Representation at the Denominational Council	Plenary	321	GC42 2015 - 014	Carried	GS
LON 6	Representation of UCW on Councils	Sessional	373	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 7	Representation of UCW on Councils	Sessional	374	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 8	Representation of UCW on Councils	Sessional	375	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 9	Representation of UCW on Councils	Sessional	376	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 10	Representation of UCW on Councils	Sessional	377	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 11	Representation of UCW on Councils	Sessional	378	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 12	Representation of UCW on Councils	Sessional	379	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 13	Representation of UCW on Councils	Sessional	380	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
LON 14	Accountability of Regional Councils	Sessional	323	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 15	College of Ministers & Association of Ministers	Sessional	392	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 16	Association of Ministers	Sessional	392	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 17	Secure Funding for United Church Camping	Bakeapple Commission	448	GC42 2015 - 017 GC42 2015 - 045	Referred to GS	GS
LON 18	Funding for Restructuring	Sessional	399	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 19	Achieving a Quorum for a Congregational Meeting in the Age of Shrinking Membership Participation	Blueberry Commission	491	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
LON 20	Quorum Requirements for Congregational Meetings	Blueberry Commission	492	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
LON 21	Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign	Blueberry Commission	493	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
LON 22	Israel-Palestine Two-State Solution	Blueberry Commission	455	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
LON 23	Divestment for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine	Blueberry Commission	467	GC42 2015 - 055	Take No Action	
LON 24	Role of Christian Theology in Legitimizing Israeli Palestinian Territories	Blueberry Commission	494	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
LON 25	Ministers Attached to Courts	Sessional	324	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
LON 26	Balanced Representation on Regional and Denominational Councils	Sessional	325	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 1	Alternative 3 Council Model	Sessional	337	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 2	Number of Regional Councils	Sessional	347	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 3	Representation at the National Council	Sessional	348	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
M&O 4	CR: Strengthen Cooperation & Relationships with Other Churches	Sessional	349	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 5	Pastoral Oversight	Sessional	350	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 6	Oversight of Communities of Faith	Sessional	402	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 7	Comprehensive Review Representation of UCW Councils	Sessional	383	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 8	Amendment to the 3 Council Model Regarding Delegate Participation	Sessional	351	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 9	Evaluation after Implementation of CR Changes	Sessional	352	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 10	Chasing the Spirit	Sessional	306	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 11	Funding a New Model	Sessional	402	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action & Referred to GS	GS See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 12	Resource Sharing	Partridgeberry Commission	528	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 13	Enabling Justice Work Through Times of Change	Sessional	352	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 14	Change the Name of the College of Ministers	Sessional	387	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 15	Allow for a Larger Board of Directors for the College of Ministers	Sessional	388	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 16	National Listing for Interim Ministry and Ministry of Supervision	Sessional	388	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 17	Recognition in Principle of Francophones	Sessional	354	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action & Referred to GS	GS
M&O 18	Francophone Decision-Making Network of UCC	Sessional	356	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action & Referred to GS	GS

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
M&O 19	Support for Ministries in French	Sessional	358	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
M&O 20	The Beaconsfield Initiative	Bakeapple Commission	441	GC42 2015 - 042 GC42 2015 - 043	Carried (amended)	GCE, GS
M&O 21	Climate Change Proposal for GC 42	Bakeapple Commission	436	GC42 2015 - 031 GC42 2015 - 032 GC42 2015 - 033	Carried (amended)	GCE
MAR 01	Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign	Blueberry Commission	495		Unfinished	GCE
MAR 02	United Church of Canada Pension Board Divestment from Goldcorp	Bakeapple Commission	426	GC42 2015 - 029	Carried	GS
MAR 03	Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign	Blueberry Commission	496	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
MAR 04	Extending Support for a Just Peace in Israel-Palestine	Blueberry Commission	460	GC42 2015 - 054	Take No Action	
MAR 05	Existing Social Justice Networks & the Comprehensive Review	Sessional	325	GC42 2015 - 016	Referred to GS	GS
MAR 06	Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign	Blueberry Commission	498	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
MAR 07	The Denominational Council Structure & Funding	Sessional	400	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MAR 08	Representation of UCW on Councils	Sessional	381	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MAR 09	Alternative Structure to College	Sessional	327	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MAR 10	Responsibilities of Colleges assigned to Regional Councils	Sessional	386	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MAR 11	Regional Council responsibility for youth gatherings	Sessional	330	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 1	Attendance Numbers of General Council	Sessional	330	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 2	Comprehensive Review – College of Ministers	Sessional	386	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)



<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
MNWO 3	Comprehensive Review –Three Council Model	Sessional	331	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 4	Representation of United Church Women on Councils	Sessional	382	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 5	MNWO 5 Comprehensive Review - Lay Leadership Development and Education	Sessional	333	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 6	Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East Project	Bakeapple Commission	440	GC42 2015 - 037 GC42 2015 - 038	Carried (amended)	GS
MNWO 7	UCC Pension Board Divestment from Goldcorp	Bakeapple Commission	432	GC42 2015 - 030	Take No Action	
MNWO 8	Assessment of Fossil Fuel Divestment for Climate Justice	Bakeapple Commission	423	GC42 2015 - 026	Carried	GCE
MNWO 9	Comprehensive Review – United in God’s World	Sessional	305	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 10	Staff Person for Supporting Transformation and New Ministries	Sessional	334	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 11	Reconsider Name – Chasing the Spirit	Sessional	306	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 12	Comprehensive Review - Regional Councils Should be Appropriate Size	Sessional	335	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 13	Comprehensive Review - Order of Ministry and “UCC Memberships”	Sessional	336	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
MNWO 14	Proposals Recommended by GCE for Adoption– One Order of Ministry	Plenary	266		See TICIF 2	
MTU 01	Full Participation of Adherents in all Aspects of Congregational Governance	Partridgeberry Commission	520	GC42 2015 - 073	Take No Action	
MTU 2	Fossil Fuel Divestment for Earth Justice	Bakeapple Commission	421	GC42 2015 - 025	Take No Action	
MTU 3	Denomination Funding Formula	Sessional	403	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action & Referred to GS	GS See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
MTU 4	Comprehensive Review: United in God's Work – Representation of United Church Women on Councils	Sessional	384	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
NEW 1	Education Centres	Plenary	728	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
NEW 2	Organization of the General Council	Plenary	728	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
NEW 3	Proposals	Plenary	729	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
NL 1	A New Model	Sessional	359	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
NL 2	Non-support for an Association of Ministers	Sessional	393	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
NL 3	Task Group to Establish Regional Boundaries	Sessional	360	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
NOM 1	Appointment of the Executive of the General Council	Plenary Consent	293	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
NOM 2	Appointment to the Committees of the General Council	Plenary Consent	295	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
SK 1	Support and Continuing Support for a National Public Inquiry into Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls	Blueberry Commission	450	GC42 2015 - 051	Take No Action	See Blueberry 1 Composite
SK 2	Training & Accountability of Ministry Personnel	Sessional	361	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
SK 3	Amendment to College and Association of Ministers	Sessional	389	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
SK 4	College & Association of Ministers	Sessional	390	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
SK 5	Support, Assessment, Oversight & Discipline for DLMs	Sessional	390	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
SK 6	Oversight of Communities of Faith - 3 Court Model	Sessional	363	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
SK 7	Strengthening Regional Councils - an Alternative	Sessional	365	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
SK 8	Solidarity and Support for Progressive Evangelicals within the Emergent Church Movement	Blueberry Commission	475	GC42 2015 - 062	Carried (amended)	GS
SK 9	Restorative Care for Mission Units or Outreach Ministries	Partridgeberry Commission	500	GC42 2015 - 067	Carried	GS
SK 10	Amendment to Chasing the Spirit	Sessional	307	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
TICIF 1	Relating to these reports: 1. TICIF Accountability & Future 2. Disability 3. Land & Covenant	Plenary Consent	295	GC42 2015 - 002	Carried	GCE
TICIF 2	One Order of Ministry	Plenary	256	GC42 2015 - 015	Carried	GSCategory 3 Remit
TICIF 3a	Towards a New Model of Membership - Study of Meaning of Membership Including Relationship of Baptism and Membership	Partridgeberry Commission	510	GC42 2015 - 071	Carried (amended)	TICIF
TICIF 3b	Towards a New Model of Membership - Full Members of a Community of Faith May Allow Adherents to Vote	Partridgeberry Commission	510	GC42 2015 - 072	Carried (amended)	TICIF Category 2 Remit
TOR 1	Toward a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine	Blueberry Commission	458	GC42 2015 - 054	Take No Action	
TOR 2	Relationship-Building Towards Peace Between Palestinians and Israelis	Blueberry Commission	470	GC42 2015 - 058	Carried (amended)	GS
TOR 3	Fossil Fuel Divestment for Climate Justice	Bakeapple Commission	417	GC42 2015 - 024	Carried (amended)	GCE, GS UC Foundation
TOR 4	Pension Fund Proposal	Bakeapple Commission	424	GC42 2015 - 027	Take No Action	
TOR 5	Pension Board (UCCP) Divestment from Goldcorp	Bakeapple Commission	429	GC42 2015 - 030	Take No Action	
TOR 6	Sharing of Resources	Partridgeberry Commission	527	GC42 2015 - 016	Referred to GCE	GCE See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Page Ref</b>	<b>Motion #</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
TOR 7	Arms Trade Treaty	Blueberry Commission	482	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
TOR 8	Urging Israel, Pakistan, India and North Korea to Sign Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)	Blueberry Commission	479	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
TOR 9	Public Inquiry for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women and Girl	Blueberry Commission	452	GC42 2015 - 051	Take No Action	See Blueberry 1 Composite
TOR 10	Treatment of Prison Inmates	Partridgeberry Commission	503	GC42 2015 - 069	Carried (amended)	GS
TOR 11	UCW Representation on Council	Sessional	385	GC42 2015 - 016	Take No Action	See CR OMNI 1 (CR 15)
TOR 12	Review of Basis of Union, Section 11	Partridgeberry Commission	521	GC42 2015 - 077	Take No Action	
TOR 13	Recycling Non-Biodegradable Plastics	Bakeapple Commission	443	GC42 2015 - 017	Referred to GCE	GCE
TOR 14	Consensus Decision Making	Plenary	268		Unfinished	GCE

## BUSINESS OF THE 42ND GENERAL COUNCIL

### Proposals to the 42nd General Council

#### GS 1 PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

##### Motion: Roy West/Nora Sanders

##### Bounds of Council

That the bounds of Commons for the 42nd General Council 2015 be the arena 1 floor at the numbered tables at Grenfell Campus of Memorial University, Corner Brook, Newfoundland/Labrador excluding the visitor seating and unnumbered tables.

The bounds of the court when the Commissions are in Session will be: Canada House, Meeting Location 2; Civic Centre Conference Room 2 and the arena 1 floor at the numbered tables at Grenfell Campus of Memorial University, Corner Brook, Newfoundland/Labrador excluding the visitor seating and unnumbered tables.

##### Corresponding Members

That the following persons who are in attendance be corresponding members of the 42nd General Council 2015 and as such, be entitled to speak but not to move motions or to vote:

- Moderators: The Very Reverend David Giuliano, Dr. Marion Best, The Very Reverend Lois Wilson, The Very Reverend Stanley McKay, The Very Reverend Marion Parly, The Very Reverend William Phipps, The Very Reverend Peter Short;
- Global partner representatives, ecumenical, inter-faith and official guests of the Council
- The Youth Forum participants and leaders who are not Commissioners;
- Participants and leaders of the Children and Young Teens;
- ~~Those who have been requested by the General Secretary, General Council to serve as resource persons to the Council;~~
- Members of the Business Committee who are not Commissioners;
- General Council Officers, Executive Ministers, Executive Officers, and Conference Executive Secretaries and Speaker;
- Guests appointed by the Executive of the General Council.
- Connie Budd.

**Resource People:** That the following persons and such other people as the General Secretary, General Council, may designate, be named as Resource People, who may be called upon to speak as needed to support the business of the Council: Kevin Barnes, Perry Bellegarde, Russel Burns, Adele Halliday, Adrian Jacobs, Jamie Scott and Marie Wilson.

##### Business Committee Membership

- Fred Monteith, Chair
- Gary Paterson, Moderator
- Nora Sanders, General Secretary, General Council
- Shirley Cleave, Chair of the Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda
- Karen Smart, Staff Resource to the Business Committee

- Cynthia Gunn, resource to the Business Committee and Parliamentarian
- David Allen, Parliamentarian
- Peter Hartmans – Conference Executive Secretary

### **Parliamentarians**

That the parliamentarians for the 42nd General Council be Cynthia Gunn and David Allen.

### **Friends in Council**

That the Friends in Council of the 42nd General Council 2015 be Roy West, Kathy Brett and Rosemary Lambie.

### **Scrutineers**

That the Scrutineers for the 42nd General Council 2015 be:

- Norma Thompson (Chief Scrutineer)
- Robyn Green
- Tim Crouch
- Charles McMillan
- Ted Harrison
- Annette Taylor
- Mead Baldwin

### **Reference and Counsel**

That the Commons Reference and Counsel of the 42nd General Council 2015 be Katharine Moore, Don Stiles and Nancy Knox.

### **Business before the 42nd General Council 2015**

That the reports and proposals printed in the Workbooks, including online additions, along with any change pages, and any new business received by the deadline for new business, be received for consideration by the 42nd General Council 2015.

### **New Business**

All notices of new business will be presented, in writing, to the Business Committee. The Business Committee will from time to time report items of new business and recommendations for incorporation into the agenda, unless the court otherwise determines in the case of a specific item.

New business received, in writing by the Business Committee, prior to 9 a.m., Friday, August 14, 2015 will be incorporated into the approved agenda, unless the court determines otherwise.

Items of New Business will be ordered:

1. Not on a first come–first presented basis, but with preference to items that:
  - a. Arise unexpectedly in response to the meeting of the Council; and
  - b. Arise in response to global or national matters that occur during the meeting of the Council.

New Business not able to be dealt with due to time limitations will be dealt with by a motion to refer. Referral may be made to the General Secretary, General Council or to the Executive of the General Council. The presenter of the proposal will be allowed to speak to the proposal.

### **Business Procedures**

The Moderator will assume responsibility for chairing the meeting, making any rulings necessary and ensuring that there is full opportunity for discussion and decision-making. The Moderator will apply the rules Rules of Debate and Order (*The Manual Appendix*) and as approved herein in the Opening Resolutions for this 42nd General Council 2015. “*Bourinot’s Rules of Order*” will be used as the authority should a question arise which is not answered by the Appendix.

- **Speakers will:**

- Speak from designated microphones in the court;
- Be recognized by the Moderator prior to speaking;
- Begin comments by identifying themselves by name, role, and Conference (or position as appropriate);
- Only speak once to a given proposal except at the discretion of the Moderator;
- Each new speaker should offer a new perspective or information
- Speak for no longer than 90 seconds except at the discretion of the Moderator;
- Use the designated procedural floor microphone to raise a point of order, that is to raise a specific question of procedure with the Moderator;
- Use the floor microphones to raise points of personal privilege which will be understood to be limited to comments noting that the individual raising the point has been insulted or maligned in the current debate.

**Note:** Points of general privilege (inability to hear, temperature of the room, missing documentation) will be made to the Friends in Council, Roy West, Kathy Brett or Rosemary Lambie, who will determine how the concern will be addressed. Concerns for the well-being of individuals, celebrations of birthdays, etc. will be made to the Friends in Council who will coordinate these for “community moments”.

### **Prioritizing Work:**

The 42nd General Council (2015): will prioritize its work in the following manner:

#### **1st Priority**

Proposals are those that deal directly with the Comprehensive Review Task Group report and recommendations and all related Proposals and Response forms. These will receive priority attention at the 42nd General Council (2015). They will be referred to a Sessional Committee that will bring its recommendations to full court for decision.

#### **2nd Priority**

Proposals are those, other than those outlined in Category 1, which contemplate substantive changes to the Basis of Union that affect denominational identity and would require the 42nd General Council (2015) to authorize a Category 3 Remit. They will be brought before the full court for decision.

**3rd Priority**

Proposals are those calling the church to take a time-bound stand on national or global issues and/or on an issue for which the church does not have an existing policy or statement. They will be referred to a Commission for decision.

**4th Priority**

Proposals are those which contemplate changes to existing General Council policies and procedures, or those which more properly fall within the purview of another court of the church. They will be referred to the Business Committee for prioritization and may be referred to the full court, a Commission, the General Council Executive, or to the court which has responsibility, for decision.

**5th Priority**

Proposals are those calling the church to broader support for existing statements, policies, or procedures of the General Council. They will be referred to the General Council Executive for decision or the General Secretary General Council for action.

**Procedure for Withdrawing Proposals from an Omnibus or Consent Motion**

The 42nd General Council adopt the following procedure in the event that a Commissioner desires that a Proposal be withdrawn from an omnibus or consent motion and/or that a Proposal be assigned to a body other than that recommended by the Business Committee:

1. The Commissioner making such a request will have one minute to make their request and provide their rationale for their request.
2. The Moderator or his designate will ask, having heard the request and rationale, “Are there twenty Commissioners who support the request? Please indicate your support of this position by using your electronic voting device.
3. If there are not twenty Commissioners who support the request, then the request is denied.
4. If there are twenty Commissioners who support the request then the Moderator will direct the Business Committee to find a place for the work consistent with the request.

Although not required, advance notice to the Business Table would be helpful.

**Procedure for Addressing the Work of the Comprehensive Review**

1. The report and recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group and related Response Sheets and Proposals have been referred to a Sessional Committee of the 42nd General Council (2015);
2. The role of the Sessional Committee is to consider said material with a view to bringing recommendations to the full court for consideration and decision.
3. Said Sessional Committee is comprised of one Commissioner from each Conference, two co-chairs named by The Business Committee, two Commissioners named by the Business Committee to ensure participant balance. In addition there is one Youth Forum Delegate who is a corresponding member. They are as follows:



**Co-Chairs:** Larry Doyle and Jean Brown

**Members:** ANCC – TBD, Sharon Aylsworth, Ross Bartlett, Nicole Beaudry, Katelyn Cody, Dwaine Dornan, Janet Gear, Hannah Lee, Regina Madimbu, Ryan McNally, Barb Miller, Greg Smith-Young, Erin Todd, Carey Wagner, and Paul Douglas Walfall

**Corresponding Member:** Ethan Evans

### **Election of Moderator**

That the following be approved as the process for nominations and election of the 40th Moderator of The United Church of Canada:

1. Nominations may be made from the floor up to 5 p.m. on Sunday, August 9. There must be a mover and a seconder, and the nominee must indicate willingness to stand. The Moderator will call for any further nominations just before 5 p.m. Advance notice to the business table of any intended nominations is not essential but will be appreciated.
2. Nominations from the floor of the Council will be declared closed at 5 p.m., Sunday, August 9, 2015.
3. The nominees will be introduced to the Council and presented with their nominee stoles after the supper break on Sunday, August 9, 2015.
4. Candidates will address the Council, individually, on Monday, August 10, 2015.
5. Voting will be by ballot and take place on Thursday, August 13, 2015.
6. A candidate will be declared elected as the 42nd Moderator upon attaining 50 percent plus one of the votes cast.
7. If there are ten or more names on the ballot, four with the least number of votes cast in their favour will be released from the subsequent ballots; if there are seven or more and fewer than ten names on the ballot, three with the least number of votes cast in their favour will be released from the subsequent ballots; if there are more than four and fewer than eight names on the ballot, two with the lowest number of votes cast in their favour will be released from the subsequent ballots; with four or fewer names, the one with the lowest number of votes will be released from subsequent ballots.
8. When there are seven or more names on the ballot and there is a tie in the number of votes cast for the candidates with the least number of votes in their favour as set out in the preceding paragraph, the candidates who are tied will be released from subsequent ballots. This could mean that more than the specified number of candidates could be released from a ballot as set out in the preceding paragraph.
9. Announcements of the results of the ballots will take place at times determined by the Moderator with advice from the Business Committee.
10. Tallies of votes will not be announced.

### **Minutes of the 41st General Council 2012**

That the minutes of the 41st General Council 2012 be approved.

### **Minute Secretary**

That the Minute Secretary for the 42nd General Council 2015 be Susan Fortner.

### **Accountability Reports**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 accept the accountability report of the Executive of the General Council.

That the 42nd General Council 2015 receive for information the following reports:

- Moderator's Accountability Report
- Moderator's Advisory Committee Report
- Accountability Report of the General Secretary, General Council
- A Journey to Full Communion
- Mission and Ministry with Migrant Churches
- Mutual Recognition of Ministries with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
- Mutual Recognition with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines
- Aboriginal Ministries Council Report
- Newfoundland and Labrador Conference Report
- Maritime Conference Report
- Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference
- Bay of Quinte Conference Report
- Toronto Conference Report
- Hamilton Conference Report
- London Conference Report
- Manitou Conference Report
- All Native Circle Conference Report
- Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Report
- Saskatchewan Conference Report
- Alberta and Northwest Conference Report
- British Columbia Conference Report
- Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools Report
- Effective Leadership Report
- Candidacy Pathways Report
- Judicial Committee Report
- The Conference Records Report
- The Manual Committee Report
- The Archives Committee Report
- The United Church Foundation Report
- The Nominations Committee Report
- The Comprehensive Review Task Group Report
- Rulings and Opinions of the General Secretary, General Council – July 2012 to June 2015

- Minutes of the Executive of the General Council – June 2012 to June 2015
- Actions of the Executive – Summary Report

### **Establish Commissions**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 establish three Commissions to meet Tuesday, August 11, 2015 to complete the work assigned to them by the 42nd General Council.

### **Voting Privileges in Commissions**

That the Commissioners of the General Council have voting privileges in the Commission to which their membership has been assigned; that Corresponding members of General Council have privilege of voice but no vote, in Commissions; and that the Moderator and the General Secretary are ex-officio members of all Commissions.

### **Business Assigned to Red – Partridgeberry Commission**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 assign to Red – Partridgeberry Commission the items of business as reported in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42nd General Council.

### **Membership of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 appoint the membership of Red – Partridgeberry Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

### **Leadership of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission**

That Adam Hanley and Sue Broderick be the Co-Chairs and that Shirley Welch be the Minute Secretary of the Red – Partridge Berry Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Red – Partridgeberry Commission be Don Stiles, Jean Bethune, Sean Handcock and Stephen Hershey.

### **Business Assigned to Yellow – Bakeapple Commission**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 assign to the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission the items of business as assigned in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42nd General Council.

### **Membership of Yellow – Bakeapple Commission**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 appoint the membership of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

### **Leadership of Yellow – Bakeapple Commission**

That Shirley Cleave and Paula Gale be the Co-Chairs and that Susan Whitehead is the Minute Secretary of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Yellow – Bakeapple Commission be Katharine Moore, Kate Crawford, Dale Skinner, and Paul Stott.

**Business Assigned to the Blue – Blueberry Commission**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 assign to the Blue – Blueberry Commission the items of business as reported in the Workbook and such other work as may be referred by the 42nd General Council.

**Membership of the Blue – Blueberry Commission**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 appoint the membership of the Blue – Blueberry Commission as assigned in the Workbook.

**Leadership of the Blue – Blueberry Commission**

That Graham Brownmiller and Bev Kostichuk be the Co-Chairs and the Stefanie Uyesugi be the Minute Secretary of to the Blue – Blueberry Commission.

That the Reference and Counsel of the Blue – Blueberry Commission be Nancy Knox, Matthew Fillier, Ralph Hayman and Betty Kelly.

**Agenda**

That the 42nd General Council 2015 accept, as its agenda, the agenda as circulated and approved on the understanding that the agenda may be changed, as necessary, by the action of the General Council, on the recommendation of the Business Committee.

**Unfinished Business**

Unfinished business will be referred to the Executive of the General Council.

**GS 2 PLENARY CONSENT**

**The General Secretary, General Council proposes that:**

***The 42nd General Council (2015) approve the requests for action in the following proposals and direct the Executive of the General Council to ensure that such actions are taken as requested in the proposals:***

- **GS 5 Appeal – Calculation of Deadline to Initiate Appeal**
- **GS 6 Minutes of Court Meetings**
- **GS7 Notice of Congregational Meetings re: Amalgamations and Disbanding**
- **GS 8 Members of the Order of Ministry Elected/Appointed to Public Office**
- **GS 11 French translation of The Manual**
- **GCE 2 – REF MEPS 9 – Police Records Check**
- **GCE 3 – REF MEPS 14 – Congregational Designated Ministry Policy**
- **GCE 4 – REF MEPS 13 – Licensed Lay Worship Leader Policy**
- **GCE 5 – REF - MEPS 19 Sabbaticals For Persons Involved in Interim Ministry (GC41 HAM 10)**
- **GCE 6 – REF MEPS 21 The Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Leave Policy**
- **GCE 7 – REF MEPS 18 - Conference Interviews For Interim Ministers (GC41 TOR 1)**
- **GCE 8 – REF MEPS 23 - Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships**
- **GCESE 1 Amending the Disability Provisions of The Manual**
- **NOM 1 Appointment of the Executive of the General Council**
- **NOM 2 Appointment to the Committees of the General Council**
- **TICIF 1 TICIF Accountability and Future Work**
- **BQ 7 Clarify Section C and D of The Manual**

**GS 3 ENACTING REMITS AUTHORIZED BY THE 41ST GENERAL COUNCIL 2012 AND 2013**

**Originating Body:** General Secretary, General Council

**The General Secretary, General Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council 2015 enact the following remits authorized by the 41st General Council 2012, all of which have been approved by a majority of the presbyteries:**

- Remit#1: Vacancies in Session, Church Board and Church Council**
- Remit#2: Staff as Lay Members of Presbytery**
- Remit#3: Presbytery Representation from Presbytery Accountable Ministries**
- Remit#4: Transfer and Settlement – Presbytery Recognized Ministries or Presbytery Accountable Ministries**
- Remit#5: Election of Commissioners by Overseas Personnel**
- Remit#6: Associate Relationship with Migrant Church Communities**
- Remit#7: Election of General Council Commissioners – President-Elect/Leading Elders**
- Remit#8: Election of General Council Commissioners – Designated Lay Ministers**

**Background:**

The following are the voting results for the remits authorized by the 41st General Council 2012:

Remits to Presbyteries (85)	For	Against
Remit #1	74	NIL
Remit #2	74	NIL
Remit #3	73	1
Remit #4	74	NIL
Remit #5	72	1
Remit #6	64	8
Remit #7	70	NIL
Remit #8	64	6
Remit #9	39	30

Remits #1 to #8 were approved by a majority of the presbyteries. The General Council must now decide whether to enact these approved remits.

**GS 4 PRIORITIZING OF GENERAL COUNCIL WORK****Originating Body:** General Secretary, General Council**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council**The General Secretary, General Council proposes:**

- 1) **That the 42nd General Council 2015 direct the Executive of the General Council to prioritize all the work of the General Council Office, in order to implement the decisions made by this General Council to the fullest extent possible, having regard to the importance of:**
  - a) **Supporting the life and ministries of communities of faith**
  - b) **The denomination's role in witnessing to the gospel and teachings of Jesus**
  - c) **Focusing at the denominational level on work best done at the denominational level**
  - d) **Transitions the church must make to meet to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century**
  - e) **Responsible stewardship of the financial and other resources of the United Church**
  
- 2) **And that the 42nd General Council 2015 declare that:**
  - a) **any decision made by this General Council in response to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group takes precedence over any other decision made by this General Council, to the extent that the two may be in conflict; and**
  - b) **all decisions made by this General Council be understood to include such modifications as may be necessary for consistency with decisions made in response to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.**

**Background:**

The Executive of the General Council is responsible for ensuring that the decisions and recommendations of the General Council are carried out, and for dealing with matters referred to it by the General Council [*Manual* section E.4.5.6.b]. The Executive must fulfill this responsibility in the next triennium within the context of a critical financial situation.

The recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group include significant structural and financial changes, including the elimination of presbyteries and Conferences and the creation of regions. The decisions made by this General Council in response to the recommendations may also include significant changes (subject to remit approval where required).

All other decisions made by the General Council will be based on the current structure. In implementing these other decisions, it may be necessary to make modifications so that they comply with any significant structural changes approved by the General Council. For example, a decision that applies to “presbyteries” and “Conferences” would have to be interpreted in light of any approved new structure.

### **CRTG 1 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council on behalf of the Comprehensive Review Task Group

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015:**

- (1) commit to supporting new ministries and new forms of ministry through an initiative tentatively called “Chasing the Spirit”; and**
- (2) direct that ten (10%) percent of annual Mission and Service Fund givings be invested in this initiative, with The United Church to begin work immediately towards implementation of this direction, and for it to be fully implemented no later than 2018.**

**Background:**

See pages 701–704 of the Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.

### **CRTG 2 ABORIGINAL MINISTRIES**

**Origin:** The Comprehensive Review Task Group

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 direct the Executive of the General Council:**

- (1) to establish a process to continue conversations with the Aboriginal ministries that form the Aboriginal Ministries Council to build a relationship based on mutuality, respect, and equity, and to report back no later than GC43;**
- (2) to maintain funding for Aboriginal ministries at current levels, to the extent possible, during the next triennium while the conversations continue; and**
- (3) to establish a process for developing a model for funding Aboriginal Ministries and Indigenous Justice on a going forward basis.**



**Background:**

See pages 704–707 of the Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.

**CRTG 3 A THREE-COUNCIL MODEL**

**Origin:** The Comprehensive Review Task Group

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the reorganization of The United Church of Canada from its current four-court structure to a three-council structure consisting of communities of faith, regional councils, and a denominational council as follows:**

**1. COMMUNITIES OF FAITH*****A. Description:***

**A community of faith would be any community of people within the United Church that:**

- **gathers to explore faith, worship, and serve, including congregations, outreach ministries, faith-based communal living, house churches, and online communities; and**
- **is recognized as a community of faith within the United Church by the regional council through a covenantal relationship between the community of faith and the regional council.**

***B. Membership***

**The members of the community of faith would be:**

- **people admitted to membership by the community of faith, within the guidelines of the denomination, including members of the order of ministry;**
- **eligible for election to represent the community of faith in the denominational council and regional council;**
- **entitled to vote on all community of faith matters; and entitled to extend the right to vote on financial and administrative matters to adherents.**

***C. Authority and responsibility***

**The community of faith would have authority and responsibility for:**

*mission*

- entering into a covenant with the regional council with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;
- doing annual self-assessments of the ministry of the community of faith and filing the report with the regional council;

*governance and administration*

- making decisions about the life of the community of faith, including worship, care, spiritual practice, and learning; local administration, finances, and governance, and local mission, justice, and evangelism;
- meeting at least annually;
- complying with denominational and regional policies;
- buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith property;

*spiritual life*

- setting policies for membership, and receiving and celebrating new members in the community of faith;
- helping members deepen their faith while exploring their faith journey;

*ministry and other leadership*

- recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel and other staff, and ending calls and appointments/covenants with ministry personnel and other staff;
- encouraging members to consider ministry roles a responsibility shared through the whole community of faith;
- recommending to the appropriate body suitable lay members as inquirers, candidates, and licensed lay worship leaders, as and if required under denominational policy;

*participation in regional and denominational life*

- choosing one of the ministry personnel serving the community of faith in paid accountable ministry where applicable, and one other member of the community of faith, to represent the community of faith on the regional council;
- funding the cost of sending representatives to the meetings of the regional council;
- choosing one of the ministry personnel serving the community of faith in paid accountable ministry, where applicable, and one lay member of the community of faith, to represent the community of faith on the denominational council;
- funding the cost of sending representatives to the triennial meeting of the denominational council; and
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from members of the community of faith to regional councils.

#### ***D. Limitations***

All authority and responsibility of the community of faith would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;
- the terms of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the regional council to assume control of the community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

## **2. REGIONAL COUNCILS**

#### ***A. Description***

A regional council would be a regional decision-making body within the United Church.

#### ***B. Membership***

The regional council would be composed of:

- one ministry personnel from each community of faith that has paid accountable ministry personnel
- one lay member from each community of faith within the region

#### ***C. Authority and Responsibility***

The regional council would have authority and responsibility for: *covenanting*:

- recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship with it;
- entering into a covenant with each community of faith, with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;

*oversight*:

- reviewing and periodically auditing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council;
- assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies;
- overseeing camps and incorporated ministries in the region;

*services to communities of faith:*

- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
- creating regional policies for buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith and regional property and the distribution of such proceeds;
- managing regional archives;
- providing leadership training for ministers and lay persons as determined regionally;

*policy and finance:*

- administering policy set by the denominational council, and setting appropriate regional policy;
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from communities of faith to the denominational council based on denominational policy;
- setting and managing its annual budget and setting any additional regional assessment for any additional services the regional council wishes to undertake;
- participating in determining priorities for mission and ministry work through the Mission and Service Fund;
- meeting at least annually as the entire regional council or through its executive;

*ministry personnel and others—except to the extent any of the following responsibilities have been otherwise assigned through the United Church’s legislative process:*

- celebrating retirements;
- appointing persons (i) to accompany a candidate on their pathway to ordination or commissioning, and (ii) to make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;
- appointing a person (i) to supervise a candidate in an internship, and (ii) make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;
- ordaining or commissioning each candidate approved by the College for ordination;
- admitting ministers from other denominations who have been approved by the College for admission;
- readmitting ministers who have been approved by the College for readmission;
- recognizing designated lay ministers; and
- licensing lay members as licensed lay worship leaders.

***D. Limitations***

All authority and responsibility of the regional council would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;
- the terms of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the denominational council to assume control of the regional council in extraordinary circumstances where the regional council is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

***E. Staffing***

Each region would have staff to assist the regional council in meeting its responsibilities:

- staffing would be based on assessments, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and any other regional income;
- staffing would be based on priorities and needs as determined regionally;
- staff would be hired and managed by a regional secretary who reports to the General Secretary of the denominational council; and
- regional councils with more resources would be free to hire more staff, and sharing of all resources across the church would be encouraged.

**3. DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL*****A. Description:***

The denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church as both a denomination and a legal corporation.

***B. Membership***

The denominational council would consist of:

- one ministry personnel from each community of faith that has paid accountable ministry personnel, as chosen by the community of faith;
- one lay member of each community of faith, as chosen by the community of faith;
- the presiding officer or elder of each regional council;
- the immediate Past Moderator;
- the retiring Moderator; and
- the General Secretary of the denominational council.

***C. Authority and responsibility***

The denominational council would have authority and responsibility for:

***policy:***

- setting policies for the denomination on doctrine, worship, membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and the entrance to paid accountable ministry;
- making decisions on denomination-shaping issues relating to public witness;
- dealing with proposals received from regional councils;

***governance:***

- electing a Moderator;
- electing the executive of the denominational council;
- referring all unfinished matters to the executive of the denominational council;
- meeting once every three years in person, with members having the option of participating through electronic or equivalent means;
- meeting more frequently as required by secular law through electronic or equivalent means;
- approving the number and boundaries of regional councils and supporting them;

***finance and administration:***

- setting a three-year budget framework for the church and determining the assessment of communities of faith for the three-year period;
- assisting communities of faith with the cost of sending representatives to the triennial denominational council meeting by setting a standardized fee for the cost and providing bursaries where needed; and
- maintaining the denominational archives.

***D. Limitations***

This proposal does not affect the limitations that exist at the current time:

- *remit*: the Basis of Union may only be changed through the remit process, which requires the approval of a majority of the presbyteries and also, if the General Council considers it advisable because the change is substantive or denomination-shaping, pastoral charges;
- *membership requirements*: no terms of admission to full membership may be prescribed other than those laid down in the New Testament;
- *freedom of worship*: the freedom of worship enjoyed by churches at the time of union in 1925 may not be interfered with in the United Church;
- *property*: all policy on congregational property adopted by the denominational council must comply with the requirements set in The United Church of Canada Act, 1925.

***E. Executive of the denominational council***

The executive of the denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church between meetings of the denominational council, within the following terms of reference:

- ***size:* a fixed number between 12 and 18 members, with the exact number set by the denominational council;**
- ***membership:***
  - **the Moderator**
  - **the General Secretary of the General Council**
  - **a representative of the Aboriginal Ministries Council**
  - **lay members and members of the order of ministry elected by the denominational council based on regional council nominations and the need for named competencies as well as Aboriginal, francophone, racialized, and other diverse voices; and**
- ***authority:***
  - **dealing with all unfinished matters referred to it by the denominational council**
  - **dealing with all routine and emergency work of the denominational council between meetings of the denominational council**
  - **establishing standing and other committees, with the chair of each such committee to be a member of the executive of the denominational council**
  - **exercising additional authority and subject to any limitations as set by the denominational council**

***F. Staffing***

The denominational council would have staff to assist it in meeting its responsibilities through:

- **staffing based on assessments of communities of faith, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and other denominational income;**
- **staffing based on the priorities and needs as determined nationally;**
- **administering denominational policies;**
- **providing centralized technical services such as information technology, communication, payroll, accounting, human resources, administration, and pension plan;**
- **supporting the Moderator; and**
- **providing leadership in global partnerships and national-level ministry and mission work.**

**4. CLUSTERS AND NETWORKS**

Alongside the structure, there would also be:

- **clusters:** local clusters of communities of faith that would provide community and support for communities of faith and their leaders, and focus on worship, mission, learning, collegiality, and strategic planning; and
- **networks:** linking people working on specific issues (e.g. supportive housing, intercultural ministry, youth ministry) or for project work (e.g. event planning) that function through the whole church, depending on the issue.

**And that the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the elimination of the transfer and settlement processes for members of the order of ministry within the United Church, including the elimination of the General Council Transfer Committee and Conference Settlement Committees;**

**And further, that the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the reorganization and polity changes set out above.**

**Background:**

See pages 707–720 of the Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.

**CRTG 4 A COLLEGE OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** The Comprehensive Review Task Group

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the establishment of a College of Ministers within the General Council [or “denominational council,” if approved through the United Church’s legislative process], based on the following terms of reference, and such other terms as may be set by the General Council [or denominational council]:**

**A. *Membership***

- **Membership in the College would be mandatory for all members of the order of ministry and designated lay ministers serving in paid accountable ministry in congregations and other communities of faith.**
- **Candidates would be student members.**
- **Ministers seeking admission from other denominations would be associate members after they have been approved to enter the admission process under denominational policy.**



- **Congregations and other communities of faith would only be permitted to call, appoint, or hire people who are members of the College when filling ministry positions.**

***B. Authority and responsibility***

- **The College would have authority and responsibility for:**
  - (1) the assessment of candidates, ministers seeking admission from other denominations, and ministers seeking readmission to ministry in the United Church; and**
  - (2) the oversight and discipline of ministry personnel and all those described in (1) above, according to policies and standards set by the General Council [or denominational council].**
- **The Conference [or “regional council,” if approved through the United Church’s legislative process] would remain responsible for the ordination and commissioning of members of the order of ministry and recognition of designated lay ministers.**

***C. Governance***

**The College would be governed by a 20-member board, with the composition of the board set by denominational policy to include:**

- **equal number of: (1) ministers whether ordained, diaconal, or designated lay ministers and (2) lay people;**
- **ensuring representation of each of ordained, diaconal, and designated lay ministers;**
- **ensuring representation of Aboriginal ministries;**
- **election of lay persons on a regional basis; and**
- **election of ministry representatives by their peers on a regional basis.**

***D. Structure***

**The College would have the following three committees, composed of members of the College Board, with each committee to include at least one minister and one layperson:**

- **Admission and Standards Committee: to assess (1) candidates for ordination or commissioning, and (2) ministers for membership in the College;**
- **Complaints Committee: to assess complaints about ministry personnel, order investigations, order a formal hearing, and determine other appropriate outcomes; and**
- **Hearings Committee: to hold formal hearings of complaints and determine appropriate outcomes. Only the Hearings Committee has authority to place a minister’s name on the Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary).**

**And further that the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the establishment of a College of Ministers as set out above.**

**Background:**

See pages 710–715 of the Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.

**CRTG 5 AN ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** The Comprehensive Review Task Group

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 direct the Executive of the General Council:**

- (1) to establish a working group consisting of ministry personnel to consider the idea of establishing an Association of Ministers; and**
- (2) to receive the report of the working group and to take appropriate action in response.**

**Background:**

See pages 715–717 of the Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.

**CRTG 6 FUNDING A NEW MODEL**

**Origin:** The Comprehensive Review Task Group

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the following principles to guide the budgeting process for The United Church of Canada:**

- (1) Spend only what is received, which will require at least an \$11 million reduction in spending by 2018 from current 2015 spending levels.**
- (2) Determine the number of staff and what they do based on revenues received.**

- (3) **Use the Mission and Service Fund to fund only ministry and mission activities.**
- (4) **Fund governance and support services (administration), whether at the Conference/presbytery [or “regional council,” if approved through the United Church’s legislative process] or the denominational level, by assessing communities of faith.**
- (5) **Share assessments equitably across the whole church. Conference/presbytery [or regional council] would be able to use additional existing resources for regional purposes. Sharing of all resources would be encouraged across the church.**

**And that the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the change set out in sections 4 and 5 above [funding through assessing communities of faith].**

**And further, that the Executive of the General Council be directed and authorized to take the actions necessary to finalize and implement the new model based on the above principles, to the extent permissible pending the outcome of this remit.**

**Background:**

See pages 717–721 of the Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.

**CRTG 7 REMITS / MEETING OF THE 43RD GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** The Comprehensive Review Task Group

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Comprehensive Review Task Group proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council 2015:**

- (1) **waive the requirement for 24 months’ study and information sharing before the return date of the following remits, in order to allow for an earlier return deadline for presbyteries and pastoral charges:**
  - **Comprehensive Review: Three Council Structure**
  - **Comprehensive Review: College of Ministers**
  - **Comprehensive Review: New Funding Model**
  - **Comprehensive Review: Change in Governance from The United Church of Canada Act to the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act**

- (2) **advance the date of the regular meeting of the 43rd General Council from 2018 to September 15, 2017, or such other date named by the Executive of the General Council, so that the results of these remits may then be reported to the General Council and, if the remits have been approved, a decision made whether to enact them;**
- (3) **direct that the regular meeting of the 43rd General Council be held electronically; and**
- (4) **authorize test projects for the Three Council Structure and College of Ministers to begin immediately, with participation to be voluntary, and the Executive of the General Council to provide direction for and oversight of the testing.**

**Background:**

The four remits listed above are all Category 3 remits, which are remits sent to both presbyteries and pastoral charges.

Under *The Manual*, the return date for a Category 3 remit must be set so that it allows presbyteries and pastoral charges at least 24 months of study and information sharing before the deadline. This requirement ensures that presbyteries and pastoral charges are given an opportunity to learn about the issues raised in the remit and to engage in conversation about them before voting.

For the first three proposals listed above, this objective has already been met. The Comprehensive Review Task Group shared two discussion papers with the wider church on preliminary restructuring and funding concepts in 2013 and 2014 and later made its final report available to congregations and presbyteries along with accompanying material to help them explore the task group's recommendations. An additional period of 24 months' study would be redundant.

The fourth proposal concerns a change that would eliminate the requirement for the United Church to get approval from Parliament to reorganize into a three-council model or for other restructurings in future.

Any policy change approved by a Category 3 remit may only be implemented if enacted by the next General Council. Normally, the General Council holds its regular meeting every third year. It has authority to advance the meeting date to the second year if it considers the circumstances exceptional.

The changes proposed in these remits address serious and urgent financial circumstances facing the United Church. It is critical to know the will of the church on these particular changes as soon as possible to allow for their implementation if approved or, if not, to allow the church to determine another course of action.

**GS 9 MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY****Origin:** General Secretary of General Council**Financial Implications if known:****Staffing Implications if known:****Source of Funding if known:****The General Secretary proposes that the 42nd General Council:**

- 1. *Approve* the establishment of mutual recognition of ministry with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea,**
- 2. *Direct* the General Secretary to conclude and implement these mutual recognition of ministry agreements as approved by the Executive of General Council,**
- 3. *Establish* in The United Church Manual, the category of “ministry partner” for ministers of denominations within mutual recognition agreements, with eligibility for call or appointment within The United Church of Canada as determined by the specific contents of the agreements,**
- 4. *Authorize* a Category 2 remit to test the will of the church that ministry partners, while under appointment or call are full members of Presbytery, and equivalent to ordered ministers of The United Church of Canada in respect to membership and responsibilities in the courts of the church; and**
- 5. *Authorize* the Executive of General Council to approve subsequent mutual recognition of ministry agreements.**

**Background:**

The Executive of General Council in May 2012 authorized the General Secretary to initiate bilateral conversations towards Mutual Recognition of Ministry agreements. They directed that these conversations include if possible a Canadian denomination, one U.S. based denomination, and a number of global or overseas denominations. More extensive material on the meaning of mutual recognition of ministry and the rationale for entering into them can be found in the Report entitled Mission and Ministry with Migrant Churches.

Conversations were formerly initiated with two global partner denominations that are the subject of this proposal. As the report of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee indicates, the focus of Anglican–United Church dialogue is now on mutual recognition of ministry, a conversation that will likely extend through the next triennium. The proposal for full communion with the United Church of Christ (USA), which will eventually encompass mutual recognition of ministries, emerged out of this initial proposal.

It is important to understand these initiatives have also come from the recognition of the changing character of the global church. The global context for Mutual Recognition of Ministry,

Associate Relationships and the Full Communion proposal are found in the document Mission and Ministry with Migrant Churches found in the REPORTS section (pages 561–569).

In May 2014, the Executive gave approval in principle to a Memorandum of Understanding for the mutual recognition of ministries with the United Church of Christ of the Philippines and in March 2015 approved in principle the Memorandum of Understanding for the mutual recognition of ministries with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea. These agreements are found in the REPORTS section, pages 570–582. In June 2014, the General Assembly of The United Church of Christ of the Philippines approved in principle the mutual recognition of ministries agreement with the United Church of Canada. The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea will receive the proposal for mutual recognition of ministries at their General Assembly in September 2015.

Through mutual recognition of ministry, The United Church of Canada and the respective churches enter into an ecumenical partnership that *recognizes* the ordained or ordered ministries of both denominations (the ordained and commissioned (diaconal) ministries of The United Church of Canada, and the equivalent ministries of the PROK and the UCCP); and *establishes* the framework where ordained and commissioned ministers of each denomination can have mutual authorization for exercising all the prerogatives of ministry in each other's congregations.

In so doing the UCC and the partner churches affirm each other's ministries as true ministries of the one, holy Church of Jesus Christ, blessed by God and called to provide leadership in the church through word and sacrament, pastoral care and education.

In entering this agreement, the churches affirm their desire to give visible expression to the prayer of Jesus "that they all may be one" (John 17:21). Because of this, we believe that we are "no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him", we believe "the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:19–21).

**The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea** and The United Church of Canada, from the foundation of the PROK in 1953, and in their respective bodies long before that time, have been partners in mission. The Presbyterian Church in Korea was established in 1907, but the division which created the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) was forced when the majority Presbyterian Church could not accept the more liberal theology being taught by some Korean (and a Canadian) professors, and espoused by churches whose clergy had studied under them. They were ordered to recant on a charge of heresy, but refused and, leaving, formed the PROK. The United Church was the sole partner denomination choosing to continue to stay in relationship with the PROK in that division.

United Church overseas personnel and its predecessors since the first days have served the PROK in education, medical, social service, administrative, and other fields. Canadians were a significant presence in the liberation struggles of Korea, during the Japanese occupation of 1910–1945, and the dictatorship days of the 1970s and 80s. United Church theological reflections on mission and ecumenism have been greatly enriched by Korea's *minjung* theology.

The churches continue to work closely together in justice and peace issues, including most recently shared work on empire and economic justice.

The Korean population in Canada is now the fourth largest in the world outside Korea and continuing to grow significantly. The UCC is deeply concerned about connecting with this growing Korean population so that it might receive their gifts and be transformed into a church that would better serve God's purposes in the new Canadian reality.

The PROK is concerned for its Korean members now resident in Canada and desires to find ways of continuing to support them pastorally. The PROK also recognizes the growing Canadian and English speaking population in Korea and desires that there be opportunities to share in ministry with The United Church of Canada to this community.

The UCC acknowledges the presence of many Korean ministers and congregations already within the ministry of the United Church. This Mutual Recognition Agreement will expand the possibilities for leadership in these and in new congregations as well as the possibilities for United Church ministers to gain valuable experience serving in the PROK for a time.

The PROK acknowledges that this agreement will provide opportunity for some of their ministers to gain experience and skills in leadership in ministry that might otherwise not be available in Korea. Ministers may gain expanded opportunities for congregational leadership and experience of inter-cultural and multi-faith communities and families.

Both denominations believe that a mutual recognition of ministries is one step of greater cooperation towards the objective of sharing together in God's mission.

**The United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP)** and The United Church of Canada have been in a partner relationship for over 30 years. The foundation of the UCCP comes from the union in 1948, of five distinct church denominations, Presbyterian, United Brethren, Philippine Methodist, Disciples of Christ, Congregational each rooted in North America, into one church rooted in the Philippines. Since that defining moment, the UCCP continues to be a church negotiating national diversity and redefining international relations in a quest to become one truly united church.

This relationship between the United Church of Christ of the Philippines and The United Church of Canada was formally structured in a Covenant of Partnership signed in 1994. This partnership in mission has emerged from the historic missionary movement to current expressions of the sharing of mission personnel and resources, mutual accountability and common witness. Both denominations are committed to deepening their commitments to new forms and expressions of partnership in the world so that God's people and God's world may be blessed. Both recognize that the world has changed remarkably in the last two generations. The Filipino population in Canada is now the third largest in the world outside the Philippines and continuing to grow significantly. The UCC is deeply concerned about connecting with this growing population so that it might receive their gifts and be transformed into a church that would better serve God's purposes in the new Canadian reality.

The UCCP is concerned for its Filipino members now resident in Canada and desires to find ways of continuing to support them pastorally. The UCCP further recognizes that there are no clear policies, nor ordered procedure for UCCP pastors immigrating to Canada and the United States and seeking church assignments. The potential loss of pastors is a deep concern for the church and therefore it welcomes this agreement as a way of mutually establishing a more orderly system of procedures.

The UCC acknowledges the presence of Filipino ministers, people and congregations already within the ministry of the United Church. This Mutual Recognition Agreement expands the possibilities for leadership in these and in new congregations as well as the possibilities for United Church ministers to gain valuable experience serving in the UCCP for a time. The UCCP also desires that the gifts of both Filipino and non-Filipino ministers of The United Church of Canada might offer gifts of ministry and service to the UCCP in the Philippines.

The Churches believe that this agreement will provide opportunity for their ministers and ministerial students to gain experience and skills in leadership in ministry that might otherwise not be available in their home contexts. Both churches believe that a mutual recognition of ministries is one step of greater cooperation towards the objective of sharing together in God's mission.

#### **GS 10 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: CHANGE IN GOVERNANCE FROM THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA ACT TO THE CANADA NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATIONS ACT**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The General Secretary, General Council proposes that**

**the 42nd General Council 2015:**

- (1) approve the change in governance of The United Church of Canada as a legal corporation from The United Church of Canada Act to the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act;**
- (2) confirm that in The United Church of Canada, for corporate legal purposes only (as distinct from church membership):**
  - (i) the commissioners of the General Council are the “members” of the corporation; and**
  - (ii) the members of the Executive of the General Council are the “directors” of the corporation; and**



**(3) authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to this change.**

**[Note: this proposal requires approval by a 2/3 majority of the General Council under CNCA requirements.]**

**Background:**

1. The United Church of Canada Act

The United Church of Canada was established as a legal corporation by legislation of the Parliament of Canada in a special federal statute, The United Church of Canada Act (the “UCC Act”), in 1925.

The UCC Act provides the United Church with a customized set of governance rules designed to serve the context in 1925. These rules, however, do not legally permit the United Church to reorganize itself or make fundamental changes to structural components covered in the Basis of Union without the approval of the Parliament of Canada.

In the 21st century, it seems incredible that the United Church is required to seek and obtain the approval of Parliament in order to make fundamental changes to its own structure and governance. This would be a time-consuming process, and the outcome would depend on the will of Parliament.

2. Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act: a new governance option

The United Church now has another option for making fundamental governance changes through the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act (“CNCA”).

The CNCA is a new federal statute that contains governance requirements for all not-for-profit corporations incorporated under federal law in Canada.

Special act corporations like the United Church may choose to move to governance under the CNCA. If the United Church made that choice, it could then use the process under the CNCA for making fundamental governance changes. The approval of Parliament would no longer be required.

Governance under the CNCA would provide additional benefits. The CNCA rules are modern, simpler, flexible and better suited to the needs of not-for-profit corporations today. They would offer the United Church more agility in responding to the need for governance changes as they arose while still requiring the United Church to follow rules that ensure wider church participation on fundamental matters. These rules are also more easily understood by governments, financial institutions, and others who may interact with the United Church. They also provide more clarity on the legal rights and responsibilities for those serving in corporate leadership roles, and make it easier to address non-compliance with governance rules.

In short, governance under the CNCA would better align the church with the corporate realities of the 21st century.

### 3. Corporate members and directors of the United Church

Under the CNCA, a not-for-profit corporation must have “members” and “directors”. The members hold responsibilities such as attending and voting at the annual general meeting, electing the directors and approving any by-law changes or other fundamental changes to the corporation. The directors are responsible for managing affairs of the corporation.

Within the United Church, the commissioners to the General Council hold rights and responsibilities most equivalent to “members” of a corporation. This is “membership” for corporate law purposes only, and is entirely different from church membership in local congregations or as ordered ministers.

The General Council elects the Executive of the General Council, which oversees the United Church’s affairs between meetings of the General Council. Within the United Church, the members of the Executive of the General Council are most equivalent to the “directors” of a corporation. The United Church has functioned on that understanding for many years, naming the Executive of the General Council as its board of directors in documents filed regularly with government authorities.

If the General Council approves the move to governance under the CNCA, it would also need to confirm who serves as the corporate members and directors of the United Church.

### 4. The United Church of Canada Act: provincial legislation

The federal UCC Act deals with many matters including denominational and congregational property. In Canada, property matters fall under provincial rather than federal jurisdiction. For that reason, each of the nine provinces in Canada in 1925 adopted parallel legislation that was very similar to the federal UCC Act. If the United Church moves to governance under the CNCA, the implications on the provincial acts would have to be addressed as part of the implementation.

For more information on the CNCA, see the Industry Canada website:  
[www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cd-dgc.nsf/eng/cs05170.html](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cd-dgc.nsf/eng/cs05170.html)

**GCE 1 FULL COMMUNION AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (USA)****Origin:** The Executive of the General Council**Financial Implications if known:****Staffing Implications if known:****Source of Funding if known:****The Executive of General Council proposes that:**

1. **The 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada, meeting in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador (August 8–15, 2015) make the following mutual declaration with the 30th General Synod of the United Church of Christ, meeting in Cleveland, Ohio (26–30 June 2015):**
2. **That the 42nd General Council *Acknowledge and celebrate* before God that the United Church of Christ (USA) is an authentic, faithful part of the one, universal body of Christ.**
3. ***Declare and celebrate* that a relationship of full communion now exists between The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA), by which is meant that both churches will pursue with intention ways of expressing the unity of the Church. This includes commitment to mutually recognizing ordained ministers of each partner church as truly ministers of word and sacrament, and ways of manifesting the common mission of witness and service.**
4. ***Commit* itself to work, with God's help and together with its partner churches, to effect greater unity in the whole church of Jesus Christ, and**

**Together with the United Church of Christ;**

5. ***Encourage* study of the biblical, theological, and practical implications of the full communion agreement,**
6. ***Direct* the General Secretary, General Council to work collaboratively with the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ to establish a United Church Partnership Committee to give guidance to this process,**
7. ***Receive* the final report of the joint full communion working group, including the possibilities presented for common life and witness together, and**
8. ***Agree* to commence the full communion agreement with the signing of the common agreement by the two Heads of Communion at a joint service of celebration that will include opportunities for local congregations and conferences across the two churches to celebrate in meaningful ways.**

**Background:**

The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA) share a rich and similar history as “united and uniting” churches in North America. While the two churches share common heritage and values, both churches recognize that greater opportunities for shared common witness can be explored in the context of a full communion agreement. The 30th General Synod (2013) of the United Church of Christ (USA) and the Executive of General Council (November 2013) therefore directed that work be undertaken to explore the possibility of such an agreement.

The United Church of Christ (USA) currently has three full communion agreements, each of which is an expression of visible unity, while exhibiting unique elements that define the relationship between the partners.<sup>1</sup> The experience of the United Church of Christ therefore brought to this discussion a significant history that assisted in the exploration and meaning of a full communion agreement. This proposal comes after a year of study and engagement by representatives of both churches, charged with returning to General Council 2015 and General Synod 2015 a common document. The group of twelve (six from each church), determined that the churches, while similarly engaged, could learn from each other in ways that would enhance their mission and ministry in their respective contexts.

This resolution is a beginning that invites The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ to explore and give vision to living in full communion in the 21st century and beyond. This is a vision of oneness in Christ.

Because the gospel of Jesus Christ unites Christ's followers in a single community of faith and compels us to make our unity visible so “that the world may believe...” (John 17:21; cf. Eph. 4:4–6; 1 Cor. 12:12–26);

Because, the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada have common ecumenical partners, vision of the Church, commitment to social justice, the inclusion of all persons, and to a diverse theological expressions;

Because, the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada in our local churches, Conferences, and in national and international settings are witnessing significant signs of the movement of the Holy Spirit toward unity;

Because, the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada entered into a year of common discernment to seek God’s will and direction for ways to live as the one body of Christ;

Therefore the joint partnership committee in common agreement and spirit, offer this recommendation that a full communion agreement be established between our two churches.

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1. The UCC (USA) has in a full communion agreement, includes mutual recognition of ministries, with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and two larger agreements across a number of denominations in the United States.

**Biblical, Theological, and Ethical Rationale:**

In his last prayer with his disciples, Jesus prayed, “that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:21, NRSV). The desire for unity and visible unity is at the heart and commitment of the ecumenical movement.

The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA) affirm this biblical understanding of unity which continues to guide the ecumenical commitment and engagement with other churches. The churches continue to seek meaningful ways to attend to the call in the gospel and to overcome the separations that stand in the way of the unity of the church that Jesus prayed for. As Christians there is an imperative to find ways to live in unity and to create visible unity for the life of the Church. This call is the essence of the ecumenical movement which seeks to find unity-in-diversity, creating the space to engage divergences and convergences through ongoing dialogue and engagement.

Both churches were created by organic union and live into being “united and uniting” churches. The United Church of Canada was formed in 1925, united through the merger of the Methodist Church of Canada, two-thirds of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Congregational Church of Canada. In 1968, the Evangelical United Brethren joined in the union. Formed in 1957, the United Church of Christ (USA) brought together the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches, both of which were products of earlier mergers. The moment of organic union was not to be experienced as an end, but as a beginning, opening to a realm of possibilities to receive the oneness Jesus prayed for.

The establishment of a joint partnership committee followed two intentional meetings of the staff leadership of both communions. The joint partnership committee was charged to explore the possibility for full communion between The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA), and to bring to the General Synod and the General Council in 2015 a full communion agreement.

The two churches envision full communion as a dynamic and growing relationship that is more than just accepting one another as we now are. It is a mutual commitment to grow together toward a vision of the church that enriches our theological traditions, enhances service and mission, and deepens worship. The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA) will find diverse expressions of what it means to live in full communion in Christ as we experience life together.

Unity and mission are inseparable. If the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada imagine being sacramentally one and do not engage together in mission, we deceive ourselves. Christ calls us to unite in one mission in and to a suffering and divided world. The church is called to visible oneness as a sign, instrument and foretaste of God’s saving reconciliation of all things in Christ. In declaring full communion, these two churches acknowledge that they are partners together in God’s mission to and for the whole world.

The mission of the church takes many forms. The church engages in mission through worship, through proclamation of the gospel, and through action. In worship, the church recalls and

celebrates the mighty acts of God in creation, redemption, and providence. Thus graciously renewed in faith, hope, and love, its people are sent out in the power of the Holy Spirit to be ambassadors, witnesses, and servants of Christ in the world. In proclamation, the church tells the story by which its own life is defined. As it confesses unambiguously the Christ in whom it lives; the church invites all who will to enter its fellowship of life in Christ. In its action, the church embodies God's justice, peace, and love. As the church reaches out to others, both individually and systemically, it manifests God's reconciling purpose and saving reign in all the earth.

In partnership, The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ (USA) fully claim the mission and make deliberate commitment to engage in mission together, wherever and whenever possible.

Members of the Joint Partnership Committee:

**United Church of Christ:**

Susan E. Davies  
David Greenhaw  
Campbell Lovett  
Bernice Powell Jackson  
Karen Georgia Thompson (staff)

**The United Church of Canada:**

Mark Toulouse  
Danielle Ayana James  
Daniel Hayward  
Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa  
Bruce Gregersen (staff)

Accompanying the work of the committee:

General Minister and President  
Geoffrey Black

General Secretary  
Nora Sanders

For the Report of the Joint Partnership Committee please go to: Full Communion Report.

**GCESE 2 PROPOSAL ON RECONCILIATION**

**Originating Body:** Sub-Executive of the Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications:** none

**Staffing Implications:** Staff of the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools and the Aboriginal Ministries Circle

**Source of Funding:** Existing Budgets of Aboriginal Ministries Circle and the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools

**The Sub-executive of the Executive of General Council proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1. Re-affirm its long term commitment to reconciliation and the building of right relations among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples;**

2. **Receive the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and commend them to the Executive of the General Council for consideration and Action;**
3. **Direct the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools and the General Secretary to work along with the Aboriginal Ministries Council to provide leadership to the wider church in the development of strategies and materials that will assist the church in supporting, educating, and implementing where appropriate, the Calls to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on June 2, 2015.**
4. **Encourage wherever possible, collaborative initiatives and actions on the Calls to Action with ecumenical partners such as KAIROS and the Canadian Council of Churches, Indigenous organizations, and the parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement;**
5. **Encourage congregations to engage in education and action for reconciliation.**

**Background:**

Over the past 30 years, the United Church has become increasingly aware of the profoundly destructive and ongoing impacts of the Indian residential school system and of colonization on Indigenous cultures, languages, families, communities and nations. In response, the church offered an apology to First Nations Peoples in 1986 and to former students of United Church Indian Residential Schools and their families and communities in 1998.

In its attempt to live out those apologies, the United Church has identified reconciliation amongst Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples as a priority and has committed itself to right relations initiatives and education. Our church also actively supported the creation and implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada under the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement.

In its summary report, **Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future**, released on June 2, 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission states, “[A]pologies made on behalf of institutions or governments may be graciously received but are also understandably viewed with some skepticism.” And that “Apologies mark only a beginning point on pathways of reconciliation; the proof of their authenticity lies in putting words into action.” That action will require ongoing “commitment to educate church congregations...” (p. 276).

Following the presentation of the Commission’s report, the United Church joined with other churches in a common statement welcoming the Calls to Action. Our church also joined in a statement with the other parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement pledging to continue to work together on reconciliation after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s mandate ends.

**TICIF 2 A PROPOSAL FOR ONE ORDER OF MINISTRY****Origin:** Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee**Financial Implications if known:****Staffing Implications if known:****Source of Funding if known:****The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee proposes:****THAT the 42nd General Council recognize one order of ministry within The United Church of Canada, known as the ordained ministry:**

- 1. provide within the ordained ministry of the church, for those who so choose through an appropriate educational program, ordination to the diakonia;**
- 2. develop multiple paths of educational formation to the ordained ministry based on an overall equivalency of educational and spiritual formation;**
- 3. authorize a Category 3 remit to Presbyteries and to Pastoral Charges to test the will of the United Church with respect to this recognition;**
- 4. incorporate (grandparent) into the ordained ministry all diaconal ministers;**
- 5. direct the General Secretary to establish a process to incorporate into the ordained ministry designated lay ministers currently serving in recognized or accountable ministries;**
- 6. Direct the General Secretary to edit the Statement on Ministry to reflect the decision of the church in regards to this proposal.**

**Background:**

The Executive of General Council, meeting March 21–23, 2015, received this report of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, expressed its appreciation for the Committee in the development of the report, and recommended the report and its proposals to the 42nd General Council for approval.

The Permanent Committee, Ministry and Employment Policies and Services and the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, (the Committees) following the directions of the 41st General Council (2012), have continued in a long process of exploring critical issues related to Paid Accountable Ministry in The United Church of Canada. The Committees have tested in surveys and workshops assumptions that the issues identified here are significant and need to be resolved; that what is at stake relates to the integrity of the church's ministry; and that current practices cannot continue without damage to the ministry and ministers of the church.

At the heart of these issues is the identity and functioning (as expressed in the Statement on Ministry 2012), of: Designated Lay ministers, who "are members of the church called to exercise gifts for leadership in mission and ministry that respond to a need within a local congregation or community ministry"; Diaconal ministers, who "serve in all aspects of ministry and are formally called to education, service, social justice, and pastoral care"; Ordained ministers, who "serve in all aspects of ministry and are formally called to word, sacrament and pastoral care," and paid staff in other forms of lay ministry.



The Committees have developed this proposal believing that the current definitions and expressions of ministry do not have theological integrity, and cannot be explained simply and theologically to ourselves and to others.

The Committees have noted that most of the ministry personnel of the church, in spite of the purported differences between the streams, are called or appointed to the same function (i.e. solo pastoral ministry). It also believes that most members of the church do not understand the differences between the various streams of ministry, and that candidacy processes in many cases have not been able to adequately differentiate between them. (In 2014 there were 1709 Ordained ministers, of which 1543 were in pastoral appointments; 141 Diaconal ministers, of which 125 were in pastoral appointments; and 143 recognized (and 75 applicants) Designated Lay ministers in pastoral appointments.)

Finally, the Committees have heard in numerous surveys the expectation of an educated clergy at the heart of the identity of the church. They note however the tension between this desire and the need for ministry personnel to serve small, part-time or remote churches. The Committees believe that these needs must be held in tension, but fundamentally the church cannot sacrifice the expectation that all ministers of the church should have a basic equivalency in educational preparation for ministry leadership.

### **The Problem in Greater Detail**

The Statement on Ministry (2012), offers a theological reference point for understanding ministry in The United Church of Canada. It outlines in three sections: the Ministry of All (the ministry of the whole people of God); the Ministry of Leadership (those both paid and unpaid, who serve in many aspects of oversight and leadership in the church); and Paid Accountable Ministry (those who are called to designated lay, diaconal, or ordained ministries.) This report deals with the third category of Paid Accountable Ministry.

The Permanent Committee, Ministry and Employment Policy and Services and the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee were tasked to examine two proposals related to the Statement directed to them by the 41st General Council (2012). The first of these issues related to the proposal for the study of “local ordination” as an alternative to the existing category of designated lay ministers (DLMs) serving in pastoral ministry roles. The second involved a proposal for the sacramental authorization of diaconal ministers as a rite of commissioning. The Committees, through a Joint Working Group determined that an underlying issue present in both assignments is the church’s lack of clarity in its current multiple streams of ministry and the complexity and confusion that they create.

The processes that lead to the first version of the Statement on Ministry in 2009 (The Meaning of Ministry Task Group 2006–2009) pointed to the difficulties the church has in differentiating the various streams of ministry. That Task Group struggled to give adequate definition to the streams and found particular difficulty in articulating a difference between designated lay ministry and ordained ministry. It noted the challenge in defining “lay” in the Designated Lay Ministry category and particularly rejected definitions that emphasized designated lay ministry as having a closer relationship to people than those who were commissioned or ordained. Of significant concern was the clear statement of many designated lay ministers themselves that the current definition does not represent their self-understanding and that many find the name itself offensive, and therefore unacceptable.

In the current process (2012–2015) the Joint Working Group of the Committees was also challenged to differentiate the three streams of ministry.

The Working Group noted that the proposal for local ordination was an attempt to resolve the difficulty present in designated lay ministers serving in pastoral ministry in ways indistinguishable from ordained ministry. Many DLM personnel speak of their life-time commitment to ministry within the whole church that arises from a deep and personal call to ministry. Most are authorized for sacraments and, while still requiring yearly appointments, are effectively functioning as if available for call. Recent decisions have also extended the option for life-time membership in Presbytery to those retiring designated lay ministers who request it.

The Committees heard and agreed with challenges to the concept of local ordination; particularly that the “local” in local ordination was not clear or enforceable. It also noted concern over the differences in educational preparation for designated lay ministry and ordered ministry.

The Committees also noted the importance of considering what forms of educational preparation are required for effective leadership in paid accountable ministry today and for the future. They believe that the inability to effectively differentiate commissioned/ordained and designated lay ministry could ultimately situate the DLM program as the basic level of educational preparation for ministry.

However, Designated Lay Ministry was developed with an understanding that it *would* be time limited and localized. “Ministry Together” (GC 2000) set in place the criteria for Designated Lay Ministry as follows:

The report offers the perspective that the vocation of the Ordained or Diaconal Minister involves lifelong service and accountability to the church. It is ordination or commissioning to the church universal. The vocation of the lay minister, on the other hand, is spontaneous, localized, and temporary in its service and accountability. This report affirms that there is a place for designated lay ministry alongside ordered ministry. Given the demands of ministry today, the church needs to be confident that the spiritual, theological, interpersonal, and educational competencies are the same for comparable ministries. (Record of Proceedings GC 2000, page 614).

Because of this, the DLM educational program was also more limited than other programs. However, designated lay ministers themselves as well as significant parts of the church have affirmed that a different understanding has emerged: that designated lay ministry is now seen as a life time call serving the whole church. This understanding was also affirmed by the 2009 General Council in the changes made to the Statement on Ministry. If designated lay ministry is now understood to be a life time vocation to ministry, serving the whole church, then the Committees believe that the educational requirements must change.

As it was expressed by the Ministry Together report above, the Committees believe that the church does want to be assured that the “spiritual, theological, interpersonal and educational competencies are the same for comparable ministries.” The Committees believe that there needs to be a variety of educational paths to ministry leadership, as will be further outlined. This will include a stream of educational preparation that lifts up the circle and experiential model of the current DLM program.

However, the Committees believe that there needs to be a basic educational equivalency between these different paths.

The Committees similarly struggled with the difference between ordained and diaconal, particularly given the request referred from the 41st General Council, that diaconal ministers be afforded sacramental authority as a rite of commissioning.

While there are possible distinctions in emphasis and in training, and certainly in the intentional identification with the worldwide *diakonia* movement for diaconal ministers, the challenge is articulating functional and theological differences between the ordained and diaconal ministries as they live out their specific call to ministry in the church today. The Working Group particularly had difficulty with anecdotal comparisons between the two ordered streams: of ordination focused on power and authority in comparison to diaconal commitments to mutuality and empowerment; or of diaconal ministry as lacking theological depth or missing the skills for overall congregational leadership.

In considering the proposal for authorizing diaconal ministers for the sacraments as a rite of their commissioning, the Committees note that a large majority of diaconal ministers are serving in pastoral ministry roles, often as solo paid accountable ministers, in ways that are functionally indistinguishable from ordained ministers. While the training and commitment of diaconal ministers is focused on teaming and mutuality in ministry, their opportunities to serve in team ministry positions within the United Church are limited (and dwindling). Other diaconal ministers serve in community ministries where sacramental actions, such as gathering around the common table in communion, or being able to baptize individuals when serving in a housing or health-care facility as a chaplain or outreach minister, are important options within worship experiences in those settings.

The Committees note that the Statement on Ministry chose not to distinguish between streams of ministry by sacramental authority. It did so because of the long established patterns in the church of extending authorization for sacramental ministry to those in many forms of pastoral leadership, including most recently sacraments elders. While authorization for sacraments for all those who are not in ordained ministry is still required, the practice of almost universal approval in most conferences, particularly for diaconal and designated lay ministers in solo pastoral ministry, suggests that the church has moved well beyond the more traditional understanding that authority for the sacraments resides solely with the ordained ministry. For this reason, the Committees believe that authorization for sacramental ministries should be extended to diaconal ministers as a rite of commissioning. However such a position reinforces that challenge in distinguishing diaconal and ordained ministry.

The Committees acknowledge that diaconal ministry is more than a question of what functions are performed. The Working Group on Diaconal Ministry, which recently reported to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services, noted that educational formation for the *diakonia* emphasizes teaming, mutuality and non-hierarchical style, with commitment to justice, diversity, and at its heart a rootedness in community and transformation. The report affirmed that “while these characteristics are not exclusive to diaconal ministry, they are characteristics explicitly associated with a diaconal identity and approach to the practice of ministry.”

The long ecumenical history of the diakonia, its foundations in the scriptures and in the early church, and its ongoing support within the United Church, suggested to the Committees that a diaconal option and emphasis in both study and function should continue in some form. The Committees believe, however, that this would best be done as part of one ordained ministry. This is particularly important as we move into consideration of mutual recognition of ministry with partner churches.

The work of the Comprehensive Review Task Group reinforces the reality that we will be a much different church in the future. We will likely be smaller, more congregational and will need to be more effective in our use of resources. We must be more open to diversity while greatly simplifying our structures and our polity. This proposal for “one order of ministry” represents the desire of the Committees to prepare the ministry of the church for such a future. In particular, the committees believe that the move to one order of ministry does not reduce the diversity of ministries within the church, but rather opens a unified ministry up to much greater diversity; in other words, one ministry, many different expressions.

### **The Proposal: One Order of Ministry**

*“The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way unto him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.” Ephesians 4:11–16*

*“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All of these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.” 1 Corinthians 12:4–11*

The scripture passages above point to a number of principles underlying the thinking of the Permanent Committee, Ministry and Employment Policy and Services and the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, in making this proposal for one order of ministry. They wish to affirm that there is a fundamental unity to all expressions of paid accountable ministry in the church; that the church’s understandings of ministry need to be as consistent as possible with a global ecumenical consensus; that interpretations of the nature and function of ministry within the church need to be able to be expressed simply, clearly and with theological integrity; and that a commitment to an educated clergy capable of equipping people to live out their faith in meaningful, loving and mature ways is fundamental to United Church identity.

The Committees propose the following understanding of ministry within The United Church of Canada:

**There shall be one order of ministry of The United Church of Canada, known as the ordained ministry. The rite of ordination in the United Church includes for those who so choose, through the appropriate educational processes, ordination to the diakonia.**

The Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry document of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, published in 1982, remains the most significant consensus document on the nature of ministry in the global Christian community. The centrality of the term “ordination” within the Ministry section of that document provides the strongest rationale for maintaining the term within The United Church of Canada. The document references a traditional three-fold pattern of ordination for bishop, presbyter and deacon. In reformed traditions, the document notes, the episcopal role of the bishop is carried by councils. This is the understanding and practice of the United Church. Throughout the history of the church, the place of deacons or the diakonia has changed as well, but there is significant historical precedent for speaking of ordination to the diaconate.

The proposal for one order offers a return to this understanding. Those who choose to be ordained to the diakonia would prepare themselves through a specific educational path and would commit themselves to the values and principles of the worldwide movement of the diakonia. They will be ordained ministers of the church who offer a commitment to uphold the values and principles of the historic global community of the diakonia. While more detail will have to be developed about the nature of this commitment and the language that will accompany it, for all those ordained ministers who make such a commitment, and for those who do not, there will no difference in respect to authority and function within the church.

### **Staff Associates**

In this proposal, the Committees also affirm the continued valid place of Staff Associates in the overall ministry of churches. Staff Associates are lay people (their membership remains in a congregation) who are congregationally employed and always function in relationship with an ordained minister or ordained minister candidate.

The Committees note that Designated Lay Ministry, initiated in 2000, was an attempt to incorporate into one category a broad range of “lay” ministries in the church, among them Lay Pastoral Ministers and Staff Associates. The Working Group has heard and accepted that the grouping of this broad collection of paid accountable positions into one category has not been satisfactory for most of the personnel. It believes that the proposal for one order of ministry addresses the challenges in the situation of Designated Lay Ministers serving in solo pastoral ministry who are responding to a life-long call to the vocation of ministry that is not limited to a specific place and time. It proposes a return to a familiar language and practice for those who were formerly called staff associates. The further implication of this proposal would be that “Congregational Designated Ministry” would end and be subsumed into the Staff Associate category.

The emphasis in this category of ministry would be on “associate.” In other words, those functioning in a staff associate position would always be understood to be functioning in association (or team) with an ordained minister or candidate. Staff associates would continue to be lay persons meaning that their

membership would continue to reside in a congregation and the call and definition of their work would be focused on, and limited to that local ministry.

In the current terminology, these positions would also be congregational designated positions, or those employed and accountable to the congregation. While these positions will need to meet standards of employment, the congregation will be the sole employer.

The Committees note that the majority of staff associates will be congregational accountable; among them Christian Education workers, pastoral visitors and caregivers, parish nurses, youth workers and music directors. There is, however, an important exception that needs to be considered: those who see themselves functioning as a “staff associate” but who have sought out specialized training and preparation for a particular expression of their ministry. Examples of this would be youth workers who have completed specialized programs, or Christian education workers with a Masters of Religious Education. In these circumstances there has been a desire for some process of recognition of the specialized training that they have undertaken. The Committees’ encouragement is that such individuals see the ordained ministry as expansive and able to incorporate such specialized ministry. This will be increasingly true as new expressions of faith communities emerge. Ministry leadership in these new expressions should be seen to be a full part of the ordained ministry of the church.

The proposal then recognizes two stages of ordained ministry, as ordained candidate and as ordained. The intention is that everyone who is in paid and accountable pastoral leadership of a community of faith must be approved through a discernment process and committed to and entered into one of a number of educational paths to ordained ministry.

Within this model, the current category of designated lay ministry is incorporated within the ordained ministry of the church. The Committees understand this to be consistent with the overall direction of designated lay ministry as a life time call to the ministry of the whole church. It does not understand this to be a “lay” ministry, but rather one indistinguishable from ordained ministry. The critical issue, the Committees believe, are rather the educational requirements for this path of ministry, to be addressed in the next section.

The structure of ministry in the church, as expressed in this proposal, would therefore be as follows:

Staff Associate	Ordained Ministry (Candidate)	Ordained Ministry
Congregational Accountable	Presbytery Accountable	Presbytery Accountable
	Conference Recognition	Conference Ordination
Congregational membership	Presbytery membership (while under appointment)	Presbytery membership
	Sacramental authority (while under appointment) approved by Conference	Sacramental authority
Always in team with ordained minister or candidate	Team or solo leadership in congregation or ministry unit with supervision by an ordained minister.	Team or solo leadership in congregation or ministry unit.

The Joint Working Group has developed this proposal independently of the Comprehensive Review Task Group but has been in conversation with them throughout the process. While it has not incorporated the proposal for a College of Ministers into this proposal, it does believe that the concept of one order of ministry would be workable either in that structure or the current one.

### **Multiple Streams of Educational Preparation**

An important concern in the development of this proposal for one order of ministry is the question, “What educational requirements are necessary for paid accountable ministry leadership?”

The Committees believe that there should be an equivalent educational expectation for all members of the order of ministry of The United Church of Canada. What “equivalency” looks like is a critical factor of this proposal. Educational requirements will need to be expanded to prepare for a greater range of ministries; and there will need to be a variety of educational programs that address different learning styles.

The Committees believe that there are options already existing within the church that represent the approximate level of equivalency that is desired. In particular the committee notes the basic equivalency that has already been established between the various Master of Divinity (M.Div.) programs, the Centre for Christian Studies (CCS) program and the Sandy-Saulteaux program for Aboriginal Ministry. The CCS and the Sandy-Saulteaux models provide for four to five year non-residential programs based on an integration of ministry and learning circles and both grant a diploma on graduation. M.Div. programs are also available throughout the church in a variety of formats from distance learning programs to the more traditional three-year residential models. Part of the requirement for ordination for M.Div. students includes a full time internship of eight months or equivalent. (St. Andrews’s has developed a model with a 20-month ministry internship.) The Atlantic School of Theology offers a five year distance learning program for those engaged in ongoing ministry. Thus M.Div. programs also correspond to a four to five year preparation time.

The Centre for Christian Studies and the Sandy-Saulteaux programs are usually undertaken while in part-time employment. Many M.Div. students also serve in paid part-time ministry appointments during their studies in addition to their paid supervised ministry placement (either the eight month or two year options). The end result is that these two streams and the M.Div. stream require a similar amount of time in preparation and are approximately equivalent in personal financial cost. The somewhat greater cost of the residential M.Div. program (primarily from forgone earning from full time studies) is offset by the gaining of an academic degree.

The Committees affirm that there is a distinctive reality for Aboriginal ministries that requires a program specifically addressed to the context of First Nations communities. For this reason it believes that the Sandy-Saulteaux program should continue, as it addresses specifically preparation for the order of ministry for First Nations peoples. The Committees also believe that the Centre for Christian Studies program should continue as an educational path specifically focused on those who are committed to the diakonia.

The church therefore recognizes both degree and diploma paths for ministry formation. Both the degree and diploma schools carry “testamur” authority from the church, to certify that their candidates are prepared for ordination or commissioning.

The Committees propose that a fourth diploma educational path be developed following the model of the Designated Lay Ministry formation program.

### **Diploma in Theology and Pastoral Care**

The Designated Lay Ministry Program currently requires three years of non-residential theological education, in residential learning circles (two two-week learning circles a year with assigned work in between circles), and in Supervised Ministry Education (supervision) while in appointments of at least 50% time. In addition, students are required to take three additional university level courses. The Committees believe that the Designated Lay Ministry Program can fulfill the level of equivalency expected by extending the program to five years and modeling it on the Sandy-Saulteaux or Centre for Christian Studies program, or the lay and summer distance programs of other schools.

The current Designated Lay Ministry program, under this proposal, would therefore need to be renamed, possibly lodged within an existing theological institution and expanded into a five year model. The Committees propose the terminology of a “Diploma in Theology and Pastoral Ministry” and for the sake of clarity will use that term in the remainder of this paper.

The Committees acknowledge that the proposal for one order of ministry will likely lead towards a greater convergence of theological schools and training for ministry. While continuing to uphold the M.Div. as the traditional standard for congregational ministry leadership, it is also possible, given the transitions that seem inevitable in the social context, that initiatives such as a Diploma in Theology and Pastoral Ministry might, in the future, become the primary entry point for ministry leadership. Therefore, the Committees have explored several questions:

First, what should be the prerequisite for entrance into a Diploma in Theology and Pastoral Ministry stream? Or in other words, what will be the minimum prerequisite for beginning studies towards ministry leadership in the United Church?

Currently there are four prerequisite options for entry into the Designated Lay Ministry program. (One of: Successful completion of a Licensed Lay Worship Leader (LLWL) program; Successful completion of the Leadership Development Module at the Centre for Christian Studies; Successful completion of a lay certificate in ministry (at a United Church theological college); Successful completion of a Prior Learning Assessment that demonstrates a basic level of competence in critical theological reflection.)

The Committees propose that one year of university studies within an established undergraduate program should be an expectation for anyone entering into ministry leadership in the United Church. The Committees believe that a commitment to life-long learning is required for effective ministry. They believe that completion of (at least) a first-year level of university study would be a minimum indication of capacity and discipline necessary for such a commitment. A first-year university program would also provide a basic introduction to humanities as a prerequisite for the Diploma in Theology



and Pastoral Ministry study. The Committees expect that the Aboriginal community would continue to establish its own prerequisite requirements in order to best suit the needs of their communities.

Second, the Committees note that the current DLM program requires completion of three academic courses offered by other United Church theological institutions. The Committees propose that in the new Diploma program, this should be expanded to eight courses (such as that required by the CCS program) to ensure that there is deeper connection with candidates of all educational streams into the experience of theological studies and its interrelationship with critical thinking around mission and ministry. It also notes that a wide range of courses are now available through online options.

Finally, not all candidates for ministry in the various programs of study complete their course within the minimum time frames of the respective programs. This parallels the reality of many undergraduate and certainly graduate degree programs in general university studies. Therefore it is to be expected that candidates for ministry in any of the educational streams will vary in the time taken to complete the program. However, there is also a benefit to the church and to the individual to set a maximum time for completion of the program. The Committees propose that eight years is a realistic time frame to complete the educational requirements for ordained ministry.

### **Competency-Based Assessment**

Consideration of competency based educational models that are currently underway throughout North America and in the United Church can also provide further opportunities to explore the meaning of equivalency in educational expectations. This report is addressed primarily to the theology and function of the order of ministry and is not directly linked to these proposals. However the use of competencies does offer a mechanism to continue to ensure that “the spiritual, theological, interpersonal, and educational competencies are the same for comparable ministries” and that life experience is taken into account in assessing overall fitness for ministry leadership.

### **Candidates for the Order of Ministry**

The Committees note that it has become a common practice for many students in all streams of ministry to be appointed into ministry positions either as part of their educational or candidature processes or as a means of funding their education. They therefore propose that a common terminology be established for all candidates who are appointed into paid accountable leadership that affirms their status and acknowledges their ongoing journey towards ordained ministry. It is proposed that the simple language of “candidate” accompany the term ordained. In other words, all individuals in any of the educational streams who have been appointed to a recognized ministry of the church would be able to identify themselves in this way. Ordained Candidates appointed to a recognized ministry would, in this model, have their membership held in a Presbytery.

### **Can This Model Meet the Needs of the Church for Ministry Personnel?**

In this model, a person who feels called to broader, longer-term ministry leadership to the church would be required to apply to the Order of Ministry before appointment. There would be a discernment, interview and appointment process that would lead to the status of Ordained Ministry (Candidate) and a requirement of entering one of the educational streams. The assumption that underlies this approach is that everyone in solo ministry leadership in a community of faith would be on a journey towards, or have achieved an equivalency in educational preparation and be committed to formal lifelong learning. For an individual called later in life to offer a number of years of service in ministry, the educational

stream might never be finished, but it would represent a commitment to lifelong learning and continuing preparation for more effective ministry leadership. For someone in early or mid-life, the expectation is that the educational work would be completed within eight years. In both cases the educational work would be undertaken while in either full-time or part-time ministry depending on the learning style and life circumstances of the individual.

If a person has gifts for some aspects of ministry but is not able to or chooses not to enter into one of the educational streams for ordained ministry, then the Working Group would encourage that his or her gifts for ministry be used either in a staff associate role, or possibly in a regional team model. This model is outlined in TICIF3 Regional Team Models, *Record of Proceedings of the 41st General Council 2012*, page 294 ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “ROP 2012”) and offers an important option for ensuring that the varied gifts of ministry are available and effectively used for the ministry of the church.

The Committees recognize that the current structures of the church might change dramatically in the future. The committees believe however that this proposal can be adapted to whatever structure the church ultimately adopts. What this proposal offers, the Committees propose, is theological integrity, ecumenical consistency and simplicity in structure and understanding. They also believe that this proposal honours and does not diminish the various gifts currently shared by ministry personnel within the United Church today.

## **MNWO 14 PROPOSALS RECOMMENDED BY GCE FOR ADOPTION – ONE ORDER OF MINISTRY**

**Originating Body:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) postpone definitely the proposals arising from “A Proposal for One Order of Ministry” until the 43rd General Council in 2018 allowing time for ministers, candidates, inquirers, ministry associations, ministries, communities of faith, regional courts, councils or bodies to consider theological and ministry implications.**

### **Background:**

The proposal for One Order of Ministry proposes to expand the ordained ministry of the church to include Diaconal Ministers and Designated Lay Ministers. It further proposes multiple educational paths to ordained ministry based on an equivalency in both educational and spiritual formation (detailed in The Report of the Working Group on Leadership Formation for Ministry). The authors state their report (and recommendations contained therein) is “denominationally

shaping in that it proposes a significant change in the nature of ministry for the church” (GCE 1503 Workbook, 136).

The UCC Commons website hosts a concept paper for One Order of Ministry (May 2014); the final report is contained within the March 2015 GCE Workbook ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “2015-03-21 GCE Workbook”). There appear to be at least a few substantive changes in the final report. Choosing to proceed with these proposals at this time will not allow sufficient time for discussion and theological reflection on the impact of implementing the recommendations contained in the final report nor time to formulate alternatives.

Issues that may need to be addressed include:

- Ensuring the wider church has access to the final report for a sufficiently long period of time to engage in meaningful study
- Would the current vows as detailed in the Basis of Union (word & sacrament, education, service & pastoral care) continue to be used or would new common vows be developed for all members of the Order of Ministry? What are the implications?
- There appears to be no option for current Designated Lay Ministers to choose to be ordained to the diaconate.
- The reintroduction of a Staff Associate category does not adequately deal with issues of shortage of ministry personnel, especially in rural and remote areas.
- What will be the status of recognized or commissioned ministers who chose not to exercise the grandparenting option of ordination?
- Denominationally, as in nature, it is recognized that diversity is critical to healthy communities. What other alternatives might exist to honour and strengthen our diversity in ministry rather than opt for assimilation?

Given the anticipated numbers of proposals coming forth in response to the recommendations contained in *Chasing the Spirit*, will other denominationally shaping recommendations receive the time and reflection necessary to make good and just decisions?

Deliberation on these proposals should be deferred to allow the courts sufficient time to focus on the more immediate and critical work and recommendations of the final report of the Comprehensive Review Task Force, *Chasing the Spirit*.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

**TOR 14 CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING****Origin:** Michael Shewburg/Irene Ty**Financial Implications if known:** Nil**Staffing Implications if known:** Nil**Source of Funding if known:** Nil**MOTION by Michael Shewburg/Irene Ty that:****The 42nd General Council adopt that:**

- 1. the principle of consensus decision-making for the 43rd General Council in 2018, and all subsequent General Councils, based on the consensus decision-making model of the World Council of Churches, and contextualized for The United Church of Canada, with timing for implementation as determined by the Executive of the General Council.**
- 2. consensus will replace the current Rules of Debate and Order (prescribed in the Appendix of *The Manual, 2013*, on pages 211–215) for the 43rd General Council in 2018—and all subsequent General Councils. Consensus will also replace the current Rules of Debate and Order at future meetings of the Executive of General Council, all of the Permanent Committees, national committees, national task groups, Conferences and presbyteries/Districts (or the successors of these courts).**
- 3. consensus decision-making is encouraged for use in pastoral charges, and that the General Secretary, General Council will develop appropriate training resources for pastoral charges.**
- 4. the model of consensus developed and approved for use in The United Church of Canada will:**
  - a. clearly define the meaning of “consensus”**
  - b. include all of the detailed steps needed in this decision-making process**
  - c. offer provisions on how to determine what happens when consensus cannot be reached**
  - d. establish the manner of referring any matter on which consensus cannot be reached to a vote, and**
  - e. meet the necessary corporate law requirements for the United Church as a legal corporation, such as noting what decisions must be made by a 2/3 majority of General Council Commissioners (as “members” of the corporation) and what decisions may not be made by consensus.**

**The 42nd General Council direct that:**

**That the Executive of General Council develops and approves the actual consensus decision-making model as adapted from World Council of Churches and contextualized for the United Church; then, implements, appropriate methods for training of Chairs, Moderators, Commissioners,**

**and Elected Members serving on committees and task groups on this model of consensus decision-making, including writing relevant supporting documents.**

**Background:**

Soon after The United Church of Canada declared its intention to become an intercultural church, a national Task Group on Intercultural Ministries was created. The task group was mandated to offer broad recommendations on what would enable the United Church to live into its intercultural vision, and to share ideas that would positively transform the church. The task group carefully considered programs, processes, and policies in all aspects of the church's life—including, but not limited to, education, leadership, hiring practices, worship and congregational life, and governance.

The task group—which was made up of people of diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds—learned that decision-making in the church was difficult for people to access and understand. This was an issue not only for people for whom English was a second language; it was also a challenge culturally. The necessity of arguing to prove one's point, of moving to a microphone to clearly articulate a thought in English within a given time limit, and the very particular rules of order meant that not everyone would be able to participate fully.

In addition, the Task Group on Intercultural Ministries noted particular power dynamics that took place at meetings. The group noted that the voices of people who were able to engage in debate were heard more clearly and more often; people for whom debate was not natural or comfortable struggled to make their points at a microphone. Some people dominated the meetings by speaking frequently; other voices felt silenced. The task group also noted that people who knew the Rules of Debate and Order very well were able to coherently communicate their perspectives, while others who did not know the processes as well felt uncomfortable and worried about speaking at the wrong times. These particular power dynamics cut across cultural lines.

Further, in 2011, the United Church undertook a national Identity Survey. In the analysis of the survey results, it was noted that “there is work to do if a complete sense of belonging requires full involvement in guiding the direction of the church—not everyone feels comfortable or is active in decision-making.”

As a result of its discernment and research, the Task Group on Intercultural Ministries wrote:

There are significant numbers of people from minoritized communities who are concerned about other people dominating the meeting, not being familiar with how the meeting works, or not feeling comfortable in the language of the meeting.

In turn, this might mean that when making decisions that affect the life of the church, cultural representation—and discerning who is present and who is not—means that the national body hears the voices of some much more loudly than others.

Members of the United Church have observed that people who are not familiar with parliamentary procedure would rarely make amendments or amendment to amendments, and are thus disadvantaged in the current system.

After much consideration, the task group wrote a work plan and suggested that consensus decision-making could be an alternative way of making decisions in governance meetings; it would enable minority groups to participate differently and more fully. This report comes out of that context.

### **Why Use Consensus:**

Consensus means agreement, or an opinion that is shared by most of the group. Global Learning Partners<sup>1</sup> says that when done correctly, consensus decision-making can be positive because

- it involves every person who is affected by the decision in the decision-making process.
- it fosters a creative interplay of ideas: “two heads are better than one.”
- it relies on a cooperative dynamic rather than on a competitive one: the goal is to reach a decision, not to “win.” The power to reveal your part of the truth is the maximum force allowed (non-violence).
- it balances the responsibility of individuals to express their concerns with the responsibility of the group to respect the contributions of members.

Several other denominations and communions have used consensus decision-making, and have found that it has increased participation. The Uniting Church in Australia, for example, noted that consensus decision-making fosters full participation of all members, enables an openness to the unexpected, and takes heed of wisdom from all. The World Council of Churches found it to be a simple, transparent, process that enhanced participation and dialogue with a diversity of voices. For the World Council of Churches, it also assisted people to navigate with courtesy and respect through difficult discussions and contending perspectives, provided orderly deliberations and timely decisions, lifted up an exploration of creative alternatives, limited the power of a few to obstruct decisions, and overall helped to engage in common witness and service throughout the process.

According to Global Learning Partners, consensus recognizes that decisions are not an end in themselves: they begin with an idea and end with the implementation of the decision. Further, even though consensus decision-making processes may take more time, Global Learning Partners notes that quick decisions that do not have the support of the group will take a long time to be implemented, if they ever are, and that unresolved concerns can affect future decisions.

### **Theological Rationale:**

In A New Creed, we affirm that God “works in us and others by the Spirit.” It was the Spirit who moved among diverse peoples at Pentecost (Acts 2) and brought to them new understandings when they gathered. In A Song of Faith, “We sing of the Spirit, who speaks our prayers of deepest longing and enfolds our concerns and confessions, transforming us and the world.” A Song of Faith also declares that “the church has not always lived up to its vision. It requires the Spirit to reorient it, helping it to live an emerging faith while honouring tradition, challenging it to live by grace rather than entitlement.”

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1. Global Learning Partners is a non-profit organization that focuses on learning through dialogue; its website is [www.globallearningpartners.com](http://www.globallearningpartners.com).

The United Church's Call to Purpose, which was affirmed by the 39th General Council in 2006, said that "Spirit has moved in our time, and with a new restlessness we have heard a call to step forward." It went on to say that "we long for deeper connections with one another" and that "in our conversations and decision making we will be mindful of our commitment to interculturalism."

The World Council of Churches uses consensus in its decision-making, and notes in its theological rationale that a fully functioning body integrates the gifts of all its members: parts of the body need each other (1 Corinthians 12:12–27). When consensus is declared, all who have participated can confidently affirm: "It...seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts 15:28). The Uniting Church in Australia notes that when its members gather as the body of Christ, they need the diverse gifts of all. They seek to discern God's will, confident that the voice of the Holy Spirit will guide them through careful preparation, the insights of others, and worship and prayer.

Consensus relies on the movement of the Spirit to bring people to a common mind and understanding among those who have come together for decision-making.

### **Proposed Model:**

Several different models have carefully considered of the models of consensus that are currently used in the Uniting Church in Australia, the United Reformed Church in the UK, and the World Council of Churches. The proposed model for The United Church of Canada would be similar to the model that the World Council of Churches uses in its meetings.

In the World Council of Churches, there are three types of sessions: general, hearing, and decision sessions:

- **General sessions:** These are formal, ceremonial occasions at which no discussion or decision occurs. Examples of general sessions include worship, acknowledgement of the land, introduction of guests, group processes such as open space, or Bible studies.
- **Hearing sessions:** Everyone with the right to speak may participate in these sessions. A wide range of perspectives is encouraged. Understanding of the issue is developed, and fellowship of member churches is deepened, but no decisions are made. Examples of hearing sessions include a first reading of a report, and gathering initial feedback on that report.
- **Decision sessions:** Only delegates may contribute to decision sessions. A proposal can be progressively developed and then decided upon. Speakers should build on earlier contributions, and there is no restriction on speaking again. Indicator cards assist progress to consensus.

It is desirable to move from one session to another with clear divisions between each session. It may also be helpful to have a hearing session on a particular topic one day, so that people can better understand the issue and various perspectives on it, then to seek consensus at another point on the agenda.

In hearing and decision sessions, as discussion and reflection progresses, indicator cards may be used, allowing the Moderator or Chair to gauge the level of support. The Moderator or Chair can ask for delegates to hold a card discreetly at chest level. Orange cards indicate warmth toward an idea/acceptance; blue cards indicate coolness/disapproval. Holding both coloured cards crossed across one's chest indicates that prolonging debate does not seem helpful (for example, if the speaker is repetitious or irrelevant, or the points have been well made by others).

There are no formal amendments in a consensus process; variations to the wording may be suggested, and incremental changes can occur throughout the meeting as agreed. Small conversation groups can be a way to enable fuller participation. Seeking diverse opinions to come to a common mind is encouraged; endless wordsmithing about details is discouraged. A consensus is declared when all are in agreement about an outcome (unanimity); or most are in agreement, and the few who are not have been fairly heard and agree to consensus being recorded as the mind of the meeting (they can live with the outcome).

The World Council of Churches has established provisions for abstentions and for voting (when at least 85 percent of the participants agree to move to a formal voting procedure). The United Church will need to further consider processes for abstentions and voting. Abstentions, for example, require noting an individual's actions and concerns. The United Church will need to reflect on whether noting an individual's concerns is still consistent with the broader community coming to common mind as inspired by the Spirit in a consensus model. With this in mind, the World Council of Churches documents should be further consulted for specific clarifications on a fully developed model within the United Church.

If consensus is elusive, the matter can be referred to a working group to report back later, referred to another body, and then considered at a future meeting. Alternatively, the court could agree to affirm various opinions held within the church, or agree that the matter will no longer be considered.

Despite a desire to move to consensus for decision-making, some decisions at General Council, or its Executive, may continue to require a vote for legal purposes. These may include

- election of the Moderator
- appointing the General Secretary of General Council

The items that require a vote for legal purposes will need to be noted in documents that describe the model of consensus for The United Church of Canada.

### **Current United Church Process:**

The United Church of Canada already has some familiarity with aspects of consensus decision-making in some courts. At recent General Council meetings, for example, some of the business has been done using a "proposal" method, and the Moderators have tested the mood of the court with orange and blue indicator cards.

During the "proposal" stage of these meetings, participants were able to shape a particular proposal without making amendments or using formal motions. The goal at this stage of the process has been to achieve consensus before moving to a motion, or, alternatively, where there



has been not consensus, to receive assurance that the matter before the court has been fully considered. The proposal system, when used effectively, can provide greater flexibility for discussion and discernment; however, when the process is unclear, the system also has a greater capacity for confusion.

At these meetings, proposal processes were used in order to provide a context for discernment and discussion without the cumbersome use of amendments. Proposals provided an opportunity for individuals to express their views about the proposed course of action by using the indicator cards, without needing to speak at the microphone. The proposal system makes it easier to propose changes, and to enable broader voices to be heard.

The United Church also has some familiarity with discernment as led by the Spirit at meetings. At recent General Councils, there has been time for discernment and prayerful reflection to sense the mood of the court. These times of discernment enabled deep conversations and connections with one another, which, in turn, had influence over the gathering. In 2006, for example, the process of discernment resulted in A Call to Purpose, which the 39th General Council directed to its Executive as the Executive gives leadership to the church.

Consensus decision-making further builds upon the principles of the proposal process, which are already familiar to some in the United Church, and deepens these ideas to create a process where more people can participate more fully.

There are, however, some key differences between the proposal process and consensus decision-making. Firstly, at recent meetings of General Council, once the proposals are agreed upon, the court shifts from a “proposal” stage into a “motion” stage. At this point, the Rules of Debate and Order that are prescribed in *The Manual* apply. Secondly, in a voting procedure (which is the final stage in the United Church’s current process), there are “winners” and “losers”; while a range of viewpoints may be heard during the proposal process, voting does not discern the common mind of the court in the same way that consensus does. In a vote, proposals can be passed by a slight majority of people who approve, while there may still be division in the court.

Further, even though the proposal process has been used at recent General Council meetings, neither the proposal process nor consensus decision-making are in widespread use in other courts of the church. This report seeks to enable courts of the church (presbyteries/districts, Conferences, and/or their successors) to also use consensus decision-making in their processes.

This proposed change may raise questions and concerns for some people. It may be helpful, therefore, to remember some of the words of A Song of Faith: “the Spirit challenges us to celebrate the holy not only in what is familiar, but also in that which seems foreign.”

May the Spirit continue to provide wisdom in our discernment and decision-making.

**Intermediate Court Action:  
MOTION by Michael Shewburg/Irene Ty  
MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

**GS 5 APPEAL: CALCULATION OF DEADLINE TO INITIATE APPEAL****Origin:** General Secretary, General Council**Financial Implications:** n/a**Source of Funding:** n/a**Staffing Implications:** n/a

**It is proposed that the 42nd General Council 2015 adopt the following policy change for appeals of decisions of courts of the church, to be reflected in the By-laws:**

- (1) The time period for appealing a decision starts when the person or court directly affected by it receives notice of the decision as set out in the By-laws, or 15 days after the court distributes the draft minutes of the meeting at which the decision was made, whichever is earlier.**
- (2) If, however, the decision as minuted is subsequently changed when the minutes are approved, the time period starts to run when the person or court receives notice of the changed decision as set out in the By-laws, or 15 days after the court distributes the changed minutes, whichever is earlier.**

**Background:**

A decision made by a court of the church may be appealed within a fixed time period by a person or court directly affected by the decision (the “**appellant**”).\* Under the By-laws, this time period starts to run on the *earliest* of three dates:

- the date the appellant gets notice of the decision directly from the court
- 15 days after the court distributes its draft minutes of the meeting at which the decision was made
- 15 days after the court distributes the approved minutes if changes were made to the decision in the minutes when they were approved.

This policy is potentially unfair to appellants and should be changed. The following example illustrates the problem.

A court makes a decision on April 15 and the secretary hand-delivers it to the appellant on April 16. The appeal period starts to run from April 16 as it is the earliest of the three dates listed above. The appellant does not start an appeal because they are satisfied with the decision. At the court’s next meeting on May 20, the minutes of the April 15 meeting are approved with some corrections to the part that contain the decision. The appellant learns of the corrections when the court distributes the approved minutes to all members. The corrections change the decision and the appellant now want to appeal. However, the time period has already expired.

The policy should be revised so that it strikes a fair balance between the rights of those affected by decisions to appeal them, and the court’s need to know within a reasonable time period whether its decision will be appealed.

\*There are other rules that apply to all appeals but they are not relevant to this proposal.

## **GS 6 MINUTES OF COURT MEETINGS**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council

**Financial Implications:** n/a

**Source of Funding:** n/a

**Staffing Implications:** n/a

**It is proposed that the 42nd General Council 2015 adopt the policy that:**

- (a) all courts of the church are responsible for posting the draft minutes of meetings of the court, its executive, sub-executive and commissions on their websites if they have one;**
- (b) if a court does not have a website, it must post the draft minutes by any other means that makes them available to its members promptly;**
- (c) minutes of governing bodies of congregations and other local ministry units must be posted in some way that makes them available to members of the local ministry unit;**
- (d) minutes must clearly indicate any decisions that have been made; and**
- (e) the court must post the minutes again after they have been approved.**

**And further, that the 42nd General Council 2015 direct that the By-laws be changed to reflect this policy.**

### **Background:**

Within United Church polity, there is an implicit understanding that members of a court are entitled to receive minutes of the court's meetings.

The By-laws, however, only require that General Council, Conferences, and presbyteries post draft minutes on their websites if they have one. There is no explicit requirement for a court to make minutes available to members in another way if it does not have a website. And there is no explicit requirement for congregations and their governing bodies to make the minutes of their meetings available to their members in any way at all.

In the interests of clarity and transparency, there should be an explicit requirement for all courts and congregations to post their minutes in a way that makes them available to their members. The word "post" is broad enough to include posting on a website and sending the minutes by mail or email, and is preferable to the term "distribute."

In addition, governing bodies of congregations should be required to make their minutes available to all members of the congregation, not just members of the governing body. This is important for accountability and for appeal rights. The governing body may make a decision that directly affects members of the congregation who are not on the governing body. These members

should be entitled to know of the governing body's decision so they can assess whether they wish to appeal it.

## **GS 7 NOTICE OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS RE: AMALGAMATIONS AND DISBANDING**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council

**1. Financial Implications:** n/a

**2. Source of Funding:** n/a

**3. Staffing Implications:** n/a

**It is proposed that the 42nd General Council 2015:**

- (i) adopt the policy that there be a notice period specifically for congregational meetings called for the purpose of deciding whether to amalgamate or disband the congregation;**
- (ii) set this notice period to be “two Sundays plus one day”; and**
- (iii) direct that the By-laws be changed to reflect this new policy.**

### **Background:**

A decision whether to amalgamate or disband is a fundamental decision in the life of a congregation. When the congregation meets to make this kind of decision, there should be ample advance notice of the meeting to members of the congregation.

Currently, only one Sunday's advance notice is required. If an announcement is made about the congregational meeting at a worship service, the meeting may take place after the service that very day.

For other kinds of decisions, a longer notice period is required for congregational meetings. For example, when the decision involves the pastoral relationship, the advance notice required for the meeting is at least two Sundays plus one day. The announcement must be made on two separate Sundays, and the earliest date that the meeting may take place is on the Monday after the second Sunday.

The same “two Sundays plus one day” advance notice is also required for meetings to elect members of the congregation's governing body (Session/Stewards/Official Board, Board, Council).

This longer notice period should also apply to a meeting where the congregation is deciding whether to amalgamate or disband.

**GS 8 MEMBERS OF THE ORDER OF MINISTRY ELECTED / APPOINTED TO PUBLIC OFFICE**

**Origin:** General Secretary, General Council

**Financial Implications:** n/a

**Source of Funding:** n/a

**Staffing Implications:** n/a

**It is proposed that the 42nd General Council 2015 adopt the policy that applies to members of the order of ministry who are serving in a pastoral charge when they are elected or appointed to any public office:**

- (a) they are responsible for calling a meeting of the pastoral charge’s governing body promptly, for the purpose of initiating any necessary changes to the call or appointment; and**
- (b) if the call or appointment is ended, they are responsible for applying to be retained on the role of the presbytery.**

**And further that the 42nd General Council direct that the By-laws be changed to reflect this new policy.**

**Background:**

The By-laws currently cover the situation where a member of the order of ministry is elected as a member of a provincial legislature or federal parliament. The ordered minister has the responsibilities set out in the above paragraphs (a) and (b), as contained in Section C.2.4 of the By-laws.

Other situations may arise that are similar. An ordered minister may be elected to municipal or band office, rather than as member of a provincial legislature or federal parliament.

Also, an ordered minister may serve in public office by way of an appointment, rather than election.

In those kinds of situations, the same policy should apply as for an ordered minister elected as a member of a provincial legislature or federal parliament.

**GS 11 FRENCH TRANSLATION OF THE MANUAL****Origin:** General Secretary, General Council and the Manual Committee**Financial Implications if known:** n/a**Staffing Implications if known:** n/a**Source of Funding if known:** n/a**The General Secretary proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council 2015 recognize the version of *The Manual 2013* posted at the link below as the official French translation of *The Manual*:**

**<http://egliseunie.ca/ressources/le-manuel/>**

**Background:**

The 2013 edition of *The Manual* was published in English as a complete rewrite of the by-laws contained in the previous edition of *The Manual*. The 2013 *Manual* has now been translated into French. Montreal Presbytery and the Consistoire Laurientien have each given their approval to the translated version.

**GCE 2 – REF MEPS 9 - POLICE RECORDS CHECK****Origin:** Executive of the General Council**Financial Implications if known:****Staffing Implications if known:****Source of Funding if known:****The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Approve that the first paragraph of *The Manual* section J.2 Police Records Checks be amended as follows:**

~~**The United Church has processes to determine suitability for ministry. One process requires individuals who are, or are seeking to be, in ministry positions to obtain a police records check on an ongoing basis.**~~

**The United Church is committed to providing a safe environment for worship, work, and study in all local ministries, institutions, agencies, organizations, and other bodies that operate under its name. As leaders within the church, ministry personnel hold positions of trust and authority and are often in contact with vulnerable persons. The United Church recognizes that all people are vulnerable to varying degrees at different stages in their lives. This may include people typically recognized as vulnerable, such as children, youth, hospital patients and some elderly**

**individuals. However, it can also include otherwise healthy adults who become vulnerable because of personal circumstances.**

**History:**

- **1997** - The 36th General Council put forth a mandate to the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education and the Human Resources Committee to develop a policy, protocol and educational resources for the screening of individuals in positions of trust and authority.
- **1998** - A Task Group with representation from Human Resources, the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, and the Division of Mission in Canada worked jointly on this project.
- **2000** - August the 37th General Council adopted the policy of screening and Police Records Check. National standards were developed, wide consultation performed, and the General Council Executive approved implementation of the Police Record Checks policy.
- **2000** - Memorandum of Understanding entered into between The United Church of Canada and the Toronto Police Service (Level 2 - Vulnerable Sector Check).
- **2004** - Letter to Conferences sent to remind Conferences, Presbyteries, and Congregations about the importance of doing Police Record Checks.
- **2004** - Denominational letter developed and sent to Conferences regarding Police Records Check.
- **2004** - Policy was implemented.
- **2012** - The General Council Sub-Executive approved changes to the police records check procedures as a response to changes in the police record check system.

**Background:**

- The 41st General Council 2012 directed that a policy be developed on the United Church's duty of care and the importance of police records check.
- The draft policy be submitted to the 42nd General Council 2015 for consideration.
- The procedural requirements for police records check be removed from the by-laws (*Manual*) and be made available in a resource document from the General Council Office. This process has been done.

All procedural requirements have been removed from *The Manual 2013*.

If adopted by the 42nd General Council, section J.2 Police Records Checks would read:

The United Church is committed to providing a safe environment for worship, work, and study in all local ministries, institutions, agencies, organizations, and other bodies that operate under its name. As leaders within the church, ministry personnel hold positions of trust and authority and are often in contact with vulnerable persons. The United Church recognizes that all people are vulnerable to varying degrees at different stages in their lives. This may include people typically recognized as vulnerable, such as children, youth, hospital patients and some elderly individuals. However, it can also include otherwise healthy adults who become vulnerable because of personal circumstances.

Ministry personnel, inquirers, and candidates are responsible for getting a police records check and giving it to a court or a committee at various times in their life in ministry. Courts and committees are responsible for ensuring that this responsibility is properly fulfilled.

There are additional policies and procedures that apply to police records checks. They include details about the types of police records checks required, the times they are required, and the courts and committees that must receive them.

**Rationale:**

Providing a policy statement on police records check that articulates our commitment as United Church to provide a safe environment is very helpful.

**GCE 3 – REF MEPS 14 CONGREGATIONAL DESIGNATED MINISTRY POLICY**

**Origin:** Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Adopt the following policy, addressing the role and purpose of congregational designated ministers, for inclusion in *The Manual*, recognizing the role of the Manual Committee in editing and re-writing content to suit the style and clean language of *The Manual*:**

**Policy:**

**The United Church of Canada recognizes that congregational designated ministers make a valuable contribution to the church, serving in programmatic and administrative roles in support of the mission and ministry of local ministry units. Congregational designated ministry is appointment-based ministry, which may be renewed.**



**A congregational designated minister is a baptized lay person employed by a local ministry unit, accountable to the governing body of the local ministry, except in matters of oversight and discipline where they are accountable to the presbytery.**

**The role of a congregational designated minister is to**

- **fulfill a specified ministry position;**
- **work with the ministry personnel who is called or appointed to the pastoral charge, as directed by the governing body; and**
- **comply with the polity of the United Church.**

**History:**

A proposal went to the 41st General Council in 2012 requesting a draft policy be developed as to the role and purpose of congregational designated ministers. The draft policy is to be submitted to the 42nd General Council for consideration.

**Background:**

The by-laws contain criteria for the employment of congregational designated ministers but do not contain any explanation of the purpose and role of congregational designated ministers in the United Church.

**Rationale:**

There should be a policy statement in the by-laws setting out the purpose and role of congregational designated ministers. All other policies and procedures relating to congregational designated ministers, such as employment criteria, would be based on this policy.

**Additional Resources:**

*The Manual*, Pastoral Relations I.1.8; J.7; J.9.8; J.9.9  
*Congregational Designated Minister* resource

**GCE 4 – REF MEPS 13 LICENSED LAY WORSHIP LEADER POLICY****Origin:** Executive of the General Council**Financial Implications if known:****Staffing Implications if known:****Source of Funding if known:****The Executive of the General Council proposes that:****The 42nd General Council (2015):****Adopt the following policy, addressing the role and purpose of licensed lay worship leaders, for inclusion in *The Manual*, recognizing the role of the Manual Committee in editing and re-writing content to suit the style and clean language of *The Manual*:****Policy****The United Church of Canada recognizes that licensed lay worship leaders make a valuable contribution to the church offering occasional worship leadership and preaching in local ministry units that have need of worship leadership on a temporary basis.****A licensed lay worship leader is a lay member of The United Church of Canada, in good standing, who has been recommended by the governing body of their pastoral charge, duly educated, and licensed by their presbytery to offer occasional worship leadership and preaching within the bounds of their presbytery.****The role of a licensed lay worship leader is to**

- **prepare and lead worship services;**
- **prepare and deliver sermons;**
- **work with local ministry members and staff, i.e. musicians, lay readers, church administrators; and**
- **be aware of and address congregational responses to lay leadership and service content.**

**History:**

A proposal went to the 41st General Council in 2012 requesting a draft policy be developed as to the role and purpose of licensed lay worship leaders. The draft policy is to be submitted to the 42nd General Council for consideration. The process for becoming a licensed lay worship leader was to be deleted from the by-laws and moved to a resource document available from the General Council Office.

Prior to the 41st General Council, much of the procedural policy pertaining to licensed lay worship leaders was removed from *The Manual* to the Licensed Lay Worship Leader resource as a part of the larger project to rewrite and simplify *The Manual*.

**Background:**

The current by-laws contain policy about licensed lay worship leaders that addresses membership, jurisdiction (which court is responsible for decision-making), and term of licence,

but do not contain any explanation as to the role and purpose of a licensed lay worship leader in the United Church.

**Rationale:**

There should be a policy statement in the by-laws setting out the role and purpose of licensed lay worship leaders on which all other policies and procedures would be based.

**Additional Resources:**

*The Manual*, Local Ministry Unit B.7.4.5 (a); Pastoral Relations I.1.8.4  
*Licensed Lay Worship Leader* resource

**GCE 5 – REF MEPS 19 SABBATICALS FOR PERSONS INVOLVED IN INTERIM MINISTRY (GC41 HAM 10)**

**Origin:** Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- **take no action on the original proposal HAM 10; and**
- **require all presbytery accountable ministries that appoint an interim minister to intentional interim ministry to pay into the Interim Ministry Sabbatical Fund.**

**Rationale:**

GCE 11 Report of the Interim Ministry Steering Group, originally passed by the Executive of the General Council in November of 2008, and later by the 41st General Council in August of 2012, included the procedural policy for Interim Ministry sabbatical:

4. And that the Executive of the General Council affirm the Application of Sabbatical Beyond the Pastoral Charge as follows:

Presbytery Recognized

Under this heading we have listed Camp/Retreat Manager (FT); outreach: street missions; hospital chaplain; senior care homes; and presbytery ministry. We are considering these positions under two categories: employed by presbytery and employed by a body other than presbytery.

**Employed by Presbytery:**

Presbytery would be responsible for providing sabbatical leaves to employees who are ministry personnel under the same conditions as applicable to congregations – costs would be the responsibility of presbytery

**Employed by a body other than Presbytery:**

In the case of a presbytery recognized ministry that is not operated by presbytery and the ministry personnel are not employed by presbytery, the church would recommend and urge the employing body to make a sabbatical program similar to that offered by the United Church to ministry personnel at the congregational level.

**Retained on the Roll**

Included under this heading were Hospital and Prison Chaplains. We suggest the United Church has no obligation to provide a sabbatical program to ministry personnel in these positions. It would seem reasonable for the Church to recommend to the employing bodies that a sabbatical program, similar to that which is available to ministry personnel at the congregational level, be made available to such Chaplains.

Fully implementing the procedural policy of GCE 11 would meet the requests of HAM 10, with the exception that ministries not accountable to the presbytery can be encouraged, but not required to provide ministry personnel with a sabbatical.

The working group recommends changes to the terms of reference of the Interim Ministry Sabbatical Fund (a program of the General Council Office Financial Assistance program) allowing presbytery-accountable ministries participating in intentional interim ministries to contribute to the Interim Ministry Sabbatical Fund.

**Background:**

The 41st General Council, 2012 heard a proposal from Hamilton Conference (HAM 10 Sabbaticals for Persons Involved in Interim Ministry) that proposed one change to the program of interim sabbatical funding, and two changes to the current sabbatical policy of the United Church:

1. reconsider the decision to limit Sabbatical Funding for Interim Ministers to only those serving in an Interim Ministry position defined as “appointed by Presbytery to work toward specific goals identified by the Presbytery and the Pastoral Charge.”
2. expand the definition to include Interim Ministers who are employed by a Presbytery or a body other than a Presbytery in designated Interim positions that includes specific goals identified by the Presbytery and the employing body.
3. that the General Council directs the Executive of the General Council to develop policy to describe and authorize such situations as Interim Ministries that would be eligible to be included in the "time served" calculations for Sabbatical Funding.

The commission considering the proposal received a briefing note on the proposal that read:

*“Currently the Manual provides for regular sabbaticals for ministry personnel in pastoral charges. The GCE authorized, and this GC is being asked to confirm (through the formal approval of 2008-11-15-329), the provision of sabbaticals leaves to Interim*

*ministers in pastoral charges funded by a levy of the equivalent of two week's salary to a fund administered by the General Council Office. The draft Manual proposal before this Council changes reference to "pastoral charge" to "local ministry". This opens the definition to include a broader range of ministry sites, including those of concern in this proposal. No further action is required to accomplish the objective of this proposal."*

Based on the information that was provided to the commission in the briefing note, and in the following discussion, the commission moved:

**That the 41st General Council take no action and refer those concerned to The Manual "2013."**

**Carried. (Motion: GC41 2012 – 085)**

In *The Manual 2013* previous references to "pastoral charge" were changed to "local ministry unit" in the governance section but not in the pastoral relations section, which is where the sabbatical policy is located. Therefore, the briefing notes to the Council were inaccurate, because the sabbatical policy continued to apply only to pastoral charges, and was not opened to a "broader range of ministry sites." Since the mandate of the simplification of *The Manual* was to clarify and simplify the language and structure of *The Manual*, not to change policy, it would have been beyond the scope of the simplification project to broaden the sabbatical policy beyond pastoral charges. Without a decision by the General Council to change the sabbatical policy, the policy, as it exists, was removed from *The Manual* and placed in the *Interim Ministry Resource* with no change; that is, applying only to pastoral charges and not to other presbytery accountable ministries.

Post-General Council, the General Secretary directed this proposal and the motion to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services for further consideration. The Permanent Committee appointed a Working Group on Interim Ministry to make recommendations on the original proposal (HAM 10). The working group consulted GCE 11 Report of the Interim Ministry Steering Group (GC41 2012 – 084; Carried) which is the original procedural policy for interim ministry sabbatical passed by the 41st General Council, and *The Manual 2013*, sections I.1.7 Interim Ministry, and I.2.3.5 Sabbatical Leave.

## **GCE 6 – REF MEPS 21 PROPOSAL REGARDING THE PASTORAL RELATIONS SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY**

**Origin:** Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Amend the sabbatical leave policy by removing the word “consecutive” and amending *The Manual* and supporting documents accordingly.**

### **Rationale:**

Following the 2011 review of the Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Policy, three focus groups were held to address the policy in four distinct areas: Purpose, Procedures, Flexibility, and Financing. In addition, a few individuals who did not participate in any of the focus groups provided input directly to the Ministry and Employment Unit. The purpose of the Sabbatical Leave was considered to be appropriately defined in the Pastoral Relations: Engaging and Supporting resource document. Generally, the procedures set out in that document relating to Sabbatical Leave were also considered appropriate.

Based on the input received from the participants, two areas of concern with the present policy were raised by a number of participants: flexibility and financing. There is support for the idea of permitting some flexibility in unique situations for ministry personnel to take sabbatical leave in blocks of time, rather than over a period of consecutive months. There is also support for the idea of providing some financial assistance from the General Council Office to pastoral charges for which financing supply ministerial services during the incumbent ministry personnel’s sabbatical leave presents a financial hardship.

It is proposed that the revised wording of the Policy and Procedures Point #1 (found on page 43 of the Pastoral Relations Handbook [*replaced in March 2015 by Pastoral Relations: Engaging and Supporting, page 43*]) be:

It is the policy of The United Church of Canada that every pastoral charge provide a paid sabbatical of at least three months to those in paid accountable ministry who have completed at least five years of service in one call or appointment. Normally, the three months will be taken consecutively.

It is also proposed that a new Funding for Sunday Supply during a Sabbatical document be created and require that applications for funding be sent to the Ministry and Employment Unit.

Given the feedback on the procedures concerning the Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Policy, it is proposed that a new communications strategy on the Sabbatical Policy be developed and communicated in the autumn of 2015 to ministry personnel in pastoral charges and to all pastoral charges.

**Appendix A** to this report ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “2015-03-21 GCE Workbook MEPS Appendix”) contains examples of the feedback received through the focus groups.

**Appendix B** to this report (same link as above) contains the 2011 Working Group Report on the Pastoral Relations Sabbatical Policy.

**Appendix C** to this report (same link as above) contains the 2008 document “Funding for Sunday Supply during a Sabbatical,” for reference.

NOTE: these Appendices are online documents.

## **GCE 7 – REF MEPS 18 CONFERENCE INTERVIEWS FOR INTERIM MINISTERS (GC41 TOR 1)**

**Origin:** Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Approve the following policy for interim ministers, including changes to the by-laws, where necessary:**

- a. an initial designation of an interim minister is required prior to the first appointment;**
- b. an effectiveness interview is required after the initial appointment to determine continued designation;**
- c. re-designation after an initial appointment is valid for five years from the date of re-designation;**
- d. an exit interview is required at the end of every subsequent appointment; and**
- e. a re-designation interview will be required every five years for all interim ministers.**

### **Background:**

The 41st General Council 2012 heard a proposal from Toronto Conference (TOR 1 Conference Interviews for Interim Ministers) that proposed the removal of two pieces of interim ministry procedural policy:

1. Following the first period of interim ministry, the Committee shall interview the Interim Minister, evaluate the effectiveness of the Interim Minister, and make a recommendation to the Conference Executive, for or against the continued designation of the person as an Interim Minister, with or without conditions. The Conference shall make a decision and shall notify the person in writing of the decision. (*The Manual, 2010* 465 b. iv)

2. Following each subsequent period of Interim Ministry, the Committee shall interview the Interim Minister and evaluate the effectiveness of the Interim Minister. (*The Manual*, 2010 465 b. v)

The 41st General Council took no action on the proposal, and referred those concerned to *The Manual 2013*. (GC41 2012 – 086).

*The Manual 2013* removed a majority of the procedural policy to adjunct resources, including most of the interim ministry evaluation procedures referenced in TOR 10. The policy that remains in *The Manual 2013* reads:

#### I.7.6. Evaluation

The Conference must evaluate the effectiveness of the interim minister after each period of interim ministry. The Interim Ministry Transition Committee participates in this evaluation.

The purpose of the simplification of *The Manual* was to clarify and simplify the language and structure of *The Manual*, not to change policy. Without a decision by the General Council to change the evaluation procedures for interim ministers the policy, as it exists, would be removed from *The Manual* and included in the *Interim Ministry Resource* with no change.

Post-General Council, the General Secretary directed this proposal and the motion to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services for further consideration. The Permanent Committee appointed a Working Group on Interim Ministry to make recommendations on the original proposal.

The working group consulted with the original Interim Ministry Steering Group Report, 2008; The Task Group on Interim Ministry Report on Consultation held November 2005; and the Conference Personnel Ministers at their in-person meeting in November of 2014.

#### **Rationale:**

In comparing the consultation notes from the Interim Ministry consultation and report, and the feedback from the Conference Personnel Ministers, the working group found that the majority opinion reached by the Conference Personnel Ministers was very similar to the process of designation originally outlined in the Interim Ministry Report on Consultation held November 2005. The working group decided that two consultations almost ten years apart resulting in a nearly identical process was an indication of functionality within our policy.

The working group felt that the retention of an effectiveness interview after an Interim Minister's initial appointment was important to ensure that theory could be translated in practice: that ministry personnel who were called to intentional interim ministry could function effectively in high-stress environments, manage conflict, empathetically lead church members through transformational change, and know how to set boundaries so that they are not personally depleted. Intentional interim ministry is a vital yet challenging call within the United Church and the Church is responsible for care of the ministers. Part of that care is ensuring that the right ministers are called to this ministry.



The working group did not feel that it was necessary to have an effectiveness interview after every subsequent appointment, and in fact felt that this policy presented a double-standard for interim ministers when all ministry personnel are not required to participate in effectiveness interviews at the point of a change in pastoral relations.

All ministry personnel do have exit interviews at the point of a change in pastoral relations for the purpose of learning from the pastoral relationships, and the working group is therefore recommending that Interim Ministers have exit interviews at the end of appointments to reflect on the appointment, receive feedback from the pastoral charge, and assist the presbytery in knowing how to continue to support the pastoral charge into the future.

## **GCE 8 – REF MEPS 23 EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND HEALTHY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS**

**Origin:** Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- **Receive the report of the Executive of the General Council on the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships testing; and**
- **Approve that the testing continue to develop the principles until such time as new polity and policies are established by the General Council or its Executive.**

### **Background:**

At the March 2015 meeting of the Executive of the General Council, the Chair of the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Services and resource staff presented an overview on the work done on the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project. Concluding their remarks, the chair of the Permanent Committee introduced an alternative motion, put forth by the General Secretary, recommending that Executive of the General Council receive the Proposal for Action on Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships for information, forward the report to the 42nd General Council, thank the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services for their work, and ensure that the recommendations contained in the report inform the development of new policies consistent with the directions determined by the 42nd General Council, 2015.

The alternative motion, GS58, was passed by the General Council Executive and the 42nd General Council is now being asked to extend the testing of Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationship projects until such a time as new polity or policies are established by the General Council or its Executive.

**GCESE 1 AMENDING THE DISABILITY PROVISIONS OF THE MANUAL****Originating Body:** Sub-Executive of the General Council**Financial Implications if known:****Staffing Implications if known:****Source of Funding if known:****The Sub-Executive of the General Council proposes that****The 42nd General Council (2015):****Accept the following proposal on Amending the Disability Provision of the Manual for approval:****Amending the Disability Provision of the Manual****Amend section I.2.2 of *The Manual* by removing the existing wording and replacing it with the following policy:****The United Church is committed to providing disability care and benefits for ministry personnel and lay employees serving in paid accountable positions and who, due to illness or injury become unable to carry out the duties and responsibilities of their position. Disability insurance benefits are available to those who:**

- are members of the group insurance plan;
- are not receiving a United Church pension; and
- have a disability that prevents them from working, as confirmed following the applicable United Church process.

**The United Church will strive to treat fairly and compassionately ministry personnel and lay employees who have a disability that prevents them from working and will also strive to treat local ministry sites and employment sites, with an employee or ministry personnel who becomes disabled, in a manner that is equally fair and compassionate.****The United Church will provide disability benefit plans applicable to two distinct situations—short-term disability (for absences of up to six months) and long-term disability (for absences beyond an initial six month period). The disability programs reflect a focus on treatment and restoration, to the extent possible. The United Church is committed to the implementation of the disability policy in a consistent manner throughout the church.****FYI: There are additional policies and procedures contained in a disability resource that apply to disability benefit plans. That resource is available from the General Council Office.**

**Background:**

- **2006** - A proposal (BQ5) was presented to the 39th General Council, entitled “Use of the Manse by Ministry Personnel on Disability,” seeking a review of the policy related to the use of the manse and housing allowance issues for Ministry Personnel on disability.
- **2006** - The 39th General Council referred the matter to the Executive of the General Council, which in turn referred the matter to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services [the Permanent Committee].
- **2007** - A proposal to consider establishing a working group to review the policy related to the use of the manse and housing allowance for ministry personnel on long-term medical leave was approved by the Permanent Committee at its April 12–13, 2007 meeting.
- **2009** - The Manse Working Group reported to the Permanent Committee in September of 2009, identifying a number of issues of concern regarding the content and meaning of section 037 of *The Manual*.
- The Manse Working Group concluded that a new policy statement should be created to address issues related to disability and that procedural issues concerning disability should be removed from *The Manual* and moved to a separate resource document.
- The Manse Working Group concluded that this was beyond its mandate to address.
- **2010** - Having received the report of the Manse Working Group, the Permanent Committee established a Task Group on Disability Policy and Procedures.
- **2011** - Having concluded its review of the existing disability policies and procedures, the Task Group created a report, outlining its findings and recommendations.
- **2011** - The Permanent Committee agreed in principle with the direction of the report and referred the report back to the Task Group for further development of a number of its recommendations.
- **2012** - In light of the work around the Simplification of Processes and the proposed changes to the next edition of *The Manual*, the Task Group recommended to the Permanent Committee that three of the Report’s recommendations be brought forward to the Executive of the General Council (Report recommendations 1, 2, & 20).
- **2012** – The Permanent Committee proposed to the General Council Executive the implementation of three recommendations:

That the Executive of the General Council...

1. remove the current provisions of s. 037 of *The Manual* in their entirety from the next edition of *The Manual* and replace them with an overall policy statement on the provision of disability insurance benefits plans to ministry personnel and employees working within the various courts of the Church, its pastoral charges, community ministries, missions, and other ministry sites which are currently covered by the Church’s short-term and long-term disability plans;

2. direct the General Secretary, General Council, to:
    - a. create a new Disability Resource which describes in greater detail the policies concerning the provision of short-term and long-term disability benefits, including the provision of benefits to those who become totally and permanently disabled. This single Disability Resource will also include all relevant information on procedures for accessing benefits under each of these plans, including relevant time frames, forms, contact information, and the responsibilities of and obligations on ministry personnel, ministry sites, lay employees, and employment sites; and
    - b. ensure that policy documents of the United Church reflect the principle that a person may not be removed from his or her office or position because of a disability. The wording should refer to the ability of a person to perform the duties and responsibilities of the office or position rather than the presence of a disability.
- The motion to approve this proposal was carried by the Executive of the General Council. (MEPS 29, March 24–26, 2012)
  - This proposal was not presented to the 41st General Council due to an administrative error. Thus it is being presented at this time.
  - Provisions concerning Disability were included in *The Manual 2013* in Section I.2.2. Hence this current proposal refers to Section I.2.2 and not to Section 037.
  - This proposal was approved by the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services on May 12, 2015, and referred to the Sub-Executive of the General Council.

**Rationale:**

The provision of a clear policy statement on disability that articulates our commitment as the United Church to the provision of care and benefits to those who become unable to perform their work due to a disability is helpful and informative and should constitute a bylaw of the church. Removing the details of the disability plans and the procedural requirements to access benefits under those plans from the bylaws (through inclusion in *The Manual*) and including them in a resource document is *consistent with how other ministry and personnel policies are now being presented in The Manual*.

**NOM 1 APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL****Origin:** The Executive of the General Council, Nominations Committee**Financial Implications if known:** no change**Staffing Implications if known:** no change**Source of Funding if known:****The Nominations Committee proposes that****The 42nd General Council (2015):****Appoint the following members to serve as the 42nd Executive of the General Council from the rise of the 42nd General Council (August 2015) until the convening of the 43rd General Council (July 2018)**

## Moderator

- *To be elected by General Council*

## Immediate Past Moderator

- Gary Paterson (2018)

## General Secretary, General Council

- Nora Sanders

Conference Representatives *as elected by Conferences*

- Paula Gale – Newfoundland and Labrador (2021)
- Jean Brown – Newfoundland and Labrador (2021)
- Pauline Walker – Maritime (2018)
- Sean Handcock – Maritime (2021)
- Andrea Harrison – Montreal and Ottawa (2018)
- Rick Balson – Montreal and Ottawa (2021)
- Norma Thompson – Bay of Quinte (2018)
- Judith Evenden – Bay of Quinte (2021)
- Michael Shewburg – Toronto (2018)
- Jim McKibbin – Toronto (2021)
- Sybil Wilson – Hamilton (2018)
- Tim Reaburn – Hamilton (2021)
- Doug Wright – London (2018)
- Wendy Brown – London (2021)
- Erin Todd – Manitou (2018)
- Janice Brownlee – Manitou (2021)
- Anna Stewart – Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario (2018)
- Ken DeLisle – Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario (2021)
- Laura Fohse – Saskatchewan (2018)
- Vic Wiebe – Saskatchewan (2021)
- Sue Brodrick – Alberta and North West (2018)
- Donalee Williams – Alberta and North West (2021)
- Graham Brownmiller – British Columbia (2018)
- Jean Macdonald – British Columbia (2021)

- Nelson Hart – All Native Circle Conference (2018)
- TBD – All Native Circle Conference

Chairperson of the General Council Planning Committee (2018)

- Larry Doyle

Chairperson of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee (2018)

- Daniel Hayward

Chairpersons of Permanent Committees (2018)

- Adam Hanley – Ministry and Employment Policies and Services
- Mary Royal – Programs for Mission and Ministry
- Brian Cornelius – Finance
- Bev Kostichuk – Governance and Agenda

Aboriginal Ministries Council (2018)

- Russel Burns
- Gabrielle Lamouche
- Lori Lewis
- George Montour
- Lawrence Sankey
- Janet Sigurdson

Members at Large (2018)

- Janice Asimwi, youth/young adult
- Noah Richardson, youth/young adult
- Donna Rumpel
- Miriam Bowlby

Francophone Constituency (2018)

- Felix Bigirimani
- Caroline Penhale

Ethnic Ministries Constituency (2018)

- Sungmin Jung
- Vilvan Gunasingham

Representative to the World Council of Churches, Central Committee (2020)

- Miriam Spies

**Background:**

The members proposed for appointment to the Executive of the General Council have been named through the nominations processes of the Executive or of the Conferences.

**NOM 2 APPOINTMENTS TO THE COMMITTEES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL****Origin:** The Executive of the General Council, Nominations Committee**Financial Implications if known:** no change**Staffing Implications if known:** no change**Source of Funding if known:****The Nominations Committee proposes that:****the 42nd General Council 2015:**

1. appoint or reappoint the members recommended in the report with terms as stated:
2. extend appreciation to the members listed in the report who have completed or are completing their terms of appointment.

**Background:**

The members proposed for appointment to the committees of the General Council recorded in the Report of the Nominations Committee have been named through the authorized processes of the Executive or of the Conferences. Having followed these processes, the Nominations Committee offers these names for appointment.

**TICIF 1 THEOLOGY AND INTER-CHURCH INTER-FAITH PROPOSAL****Origin:** Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee**The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee proposes that:****The 42nd General Council (2015):**

1. **Receive the accountability report of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, together with the Committee's reports on Theologies of Disabilities and Land and Covenant, and affirm the Committee in its role of "helping the church in expressing (i) its longing for God; (ii) its theological identity, and (iii) its commitment to whole world ecumenism." (*Manual E 4. 83e, p. 114*)**
2. **Commend the report on Theologies of Disabilities to the church for study and action and direct the General Secretary to provide materials for communities of faith to engage in ongoing reflection, study, worship and action in relation to theologies of disabilities.**
3. **Direct the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to continue in its responsibility to encourage and facilitate theological reflection throughout the church by including as priorities for the next triennium work that:**

- **Examines the theological implications of physician-assisted dying, and offers guidance on the development of a statement as well as provide support for seeking an awareness of the pastoral implications within our congregations;**
- **Develops a theological statement on adoption that will engage the church in this important issue;**
- **Engages the church in a study of theologies of land rooted in our Canadian context but opening to local and global issues;**
- **Explores jointly with the Aboriginal Ministries Council development of an interfaith study of the relationship between the United Church and Traditional Aboriginal Spiritualities.**

**Background:**

For background see Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee Accountability Report and accompanying reports: Theologies of Disabilities and Land and Covenant.

**BQ 7 A PROPOSAL TO CLARIFY SECTIONS C AND D OF THE MANUAL**

**Originating Body:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** N/A

**The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to clarify sections C and D of the Manual to make clear that Candidates for ministry not under appointment to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry may be elected as lay delegates to their Presbytery and Conference.**

**Background:**

This proposal seeks to clarify the sections of *The Manual* concerning the lay membership of Presbytery and Conference. Currently, Candidates for Ministry that are not under appointment are automatically corresponding members of both their Presbytery and Conference. Because of this automatic designation, there has been some confusion as to the ability of Candidates-not-under-appointment to be voting lay members of their Presbytery and/or Conference. This clarification makes it so that candidates-not-under-appointment will only be Corresponding members of Presbytery and Conference if they are not already elected lay members of either of those bodies.



A potential way of clarifying those sections of *The Manual* would be as follows (words in bold are changes to the current wording)

- *Manual* section C.1.3 (b) to read
  - “candidates from that presbytery who are not under appointment to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry **that are not otherwise members of Presbytery under section C.1.2**; and”
- *Manual* section D.1.4 (b) to read
  - “candidates from each presbytery who are not under appointment to a pastoral charge, mission, or outreach ministry **that are not otherwise members of Conference under section D.1.2 or D.1.3**; and”

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Moved by Paul Reed

Seconded by Maxine Reid

Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal.

### **EMAIL AND LETTER FROM BC CONFERENCE**

Attached is the letter from the General Meeting of BC Conference for the Sessional Committee dealing with the Comprehensive Review.

I have left it in Word for easy reformatting, if needed.

As you will recall, the General Meeting of BC Conference (May 28-31) spent significant time talking about the Comprehensive Review report and its recommendations. We focused upon the two recommendations of going to a three court system from a four court one, and the establishment of a College of Ministers. Other recommendations were also discussed.

We also spoke about (but did not vote on) the Proposals that came forward related to the Comprehensive Review.

A Listening Team of four people heard all of the conversation and tried to summarize consistent themes in a PowerPoint presentation. This then came back to the court.

After being heavily affirmed, it was decided that the Listening Team would turn their points into a letter (not a Proposal) that would be sent to the Sessional Committee of the General Council dealing with these matters. In this way we avoided the usual group time spent editing a document. We also then voted on the Proposals themselves, several of which were not accepted since their subject matter would be included in the letter.

The attached letter and the Proposals already sent to you are the result. We believe they accurately reflect the major themes of our conversations at our meeting.

The letter never was intended to be (and is not) a comprehensive response to the Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group. It reflects a few hours of conversation.

We hope, though, that it is helpful to the Sessional Committee in its important, difficult work.

**The Rev. Doug Goodwin**

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To the Sessional Committee of 42nd General Council,

**RE: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW – RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS**

At our General Meeting in May 2015, we, the British Columbia Conference, discussed the proposals and reports put forward by the Comprehensive Review Task Force. We greatly appreciate the hard work done by the Comprehensive Review Task Force, and generally support many of their recommendations. In reviewing and discussing the proposals, however, we have become aware of some issues of which we would like the General Council to be aware. This letter is a summary of the major areas of concern that we identified. We pray that it may help supplement and further clarify the Proposals that are also being transmitted.

We support the movement to a three council model. In doing so, however, we should be cautious of the following issues:

**Isolation**

While we believe eliminating Presbyteries is the right course of action, we have strong concerns that the lack of this middle court will cause communities of faith to become increasingly isolated. We acknowledge the Comprehensive Review Committee's suggestion to create Clusters and Networks, but we are not convinced that such inter-congregational collegiality will actually happen. Currently, and in the recent past, some regions in BC Conference have successfully formed such networks or clusters, but many other areas identify barriers such as geographic distribution, poor relationships, and lack of energy, time or interest.

**Special Ministries**

We are concerned about what will happen to ministries that are currently funded by contributions from Conference or Presbytery budgets, such as youth ministry, children's ministry, campus ministry, community support ministries, and so on. We wish to ensure that there is provision made for these important pieces of United Church work. One possibility is that Regional Councils could support these ministries with funding through assessments to Communities of Faith in the areas in which these special ministries are operating.

**Covenanting and Oversight of Communities of Faith**

Regarding the Communities of Faith, we have some cautions, and a couple of major concerns.

1. **Pastoral Oversight.** We agree that Communities of Faith need to have a relationship with the Regional Councils, but are concerned about the covenanting process. Firstly, we are not sure there is a need to renew such a covenant every year. Second, there needs to be a robust process for Communities of Faith to be held accountable to the Regional Councils. We are concerned that self-assessment and occasional audits may not constitute sufficient oversight.
2. **Pastoral Relations.** The Comprehensive Review Team recommends that recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel will reside with Communities of Faith. At BC Conference we have heard a strong reaction that employment authority should not reside solely with the Community of Faith. Calls and the ending of pastoral relationships should involve the Regional Council. We believe that the opposition to this recommendation is so strong that it would result in a defeat of any remit proposing this change.
3. **Property Management.** We believe the ownership of property serves an important role in binding us together as The United Church of Canada. We further affirm that property is, and should stay an asset of the entire church, and not just of the Communities of Faith. As such, we believe that Communities of Faith should not be able to sell their properties without the approval of a wider court of the church such as the Regional Council, and would otherwise hold these properties “in trust” for the United Church.

### **Format of Regional Councils**

We are concerned about choosing the appropriate number, geography, and size of Regional Councils across Canada. Specifically, our concerns are regarding the staffing levels of Regional Councils and what access Communities of Faith will have to these staff resources. We would need clear answers to these questions before the final adoption of this plan, since the viability of the model hinges on these issues.

### **Membership of Denominational Council**

In our opinion, if the Denominational Council includes up to two members from each Community of Faith, the potential size (4,000+ people) will be much too large for effective decision-making. Our suggestion is that Regional Councils should elect representatives to the Denominational Council and that number should be closer to the size of the current General Council. Again, the response to this recommendation was dramatic, and leads us to believe that it would be defeated at remit.

### **College of Ministers**

We affirm the desire for consistency regarding professional standards, accreditation, and disciplinary process, however we feel that BC Conference and General Council are currently doing much of this work very effectively. A College would not necessarily serve any additional purpose. We also believe that the assessment of ministry candidates should be administered more regionally than a national College. We suggest that instead of creating a College, that the Regional Councils perform personnel functions, operating similarly to BC Conference’s Effective Leadership pilot.

Additionally, among the members of BC Conference there is a great deal of confusion arising from the term “College” when it is really a committee of General Council rather than a professional organization of colleagues as is implied by the name.

### **Finances**

Looking over the financial implications of the Comprehensive Review Recommendations, we have the following concerns:

1. Many costs are being downloaded to Communities of Faith due to added assessments, responsibility for covering costs of attending regional or denominational gatherings, and the need to also sustain networks and clusters. Transferring these formerly shared costs to individual Communities of Faith may create inequalities and exclude Communities that lack significant resources. Perhaps strategies could be developed to mitigate these issues, such as a travel pool to share the costs to Regional or Denominational gatherings.
2. Some members of BC Conference feel there is a lack of clarity regarding responsibility and source of funding for the changes to the courts. We would like to see strategic planning, transparency, and accountability of the financial implications.
3. As a Conference with some financial assets, we are very curious to know what will happen to legacy funds, bequests, and investments that Conferences currently hold.
4. In general, we are not convinced that the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review will sufficiently cut costs that address the operational problems we are experiencing in our current model.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We trust the Holy Spirit to guide the General Council as you make these decisions. Our prayers are with you as you discern the course of our church.

In Christ,

### **BC Conference of the United Church**

President Karen Medland

Dave Anderson

Marion Best

Jacob Black-Lock

Yoko Kihara

## **PASTORAL LETTER FROM ALBERTA AND NORTHWEST CONFERENCE**

Dear Moderator and Commissioners of the 42nd General Council,

Grace and Peace to you from the 2015 Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

We write to you firstly to affirm the work that has already been done by the Comprehensive Review Task Group in particular, and The United Church of Canada as a whole. It is an exciting time to be people God calls.

Our second purpose in writing is to encourage an ongoing process of dialogue as we live into new ways of being church. May we continue to be united in God's work.

In the spirit of continuing the process begun, we offer the following comments and questions as some of the fruits of the Spirit's presence at our Conference Meeting. We have chosen a pastoral letter rather than a proposal in the hopes of offering more encouragement than direction. There is still much work to be done in fleshing out the six recommendations. Our comments are more around the values and identity which ANW Conference folks named as essential to being United Church.

One key area of our discussion focused on Recommendation #3, The Three-Council Model. Ecclesiology matters. We identified the following values:

- being a national church with a diverse congregational base; and
- building community that is inclusive, and justice-oriented.

Some of the criteria we named as important in any future models of governance include (but are not limited to) accountability, communication, flexibility, efficiency, and fiscal responsibility.

Another area of discussion was around Recommendation #4, The College of Ministers. We affirmed the value of having clear professional standards and an arm's length, consistent process of review. We also named the value of having a balance of laity and clergy and the importance of covenant relationships. It is our hope that whatever structure takes shape from your deliberations, it will reflect and strengthen us as the whole people of God.

While there is a willingness to let go of buildings and governance models which no longer fit, the funding process for future assessments raised some anxiety. We also wondered about the implications of separating some administrative work from mission, when in our experience, good administrative structure increases the capacity for mission.

There are many emotions and thoughts as we hold you and your work in our prayers. Together may we leap faithfully into the future God holds.

With gratitude and respect, on behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ of Alberta Northwest Conference.



Paul Douglas Walfall  
President



Leigh Sinclair  
Past President

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#### **ANW 4 CARING FOR PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS (A RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW)**

**Origin:** Red Deer Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Red Deer Presbytery proposes that:**

**In any new organizational model which may emerge from the Comprehensive Review, there be one review process that includes both those responsible for ministers and those responsible for communities of faith, and that, wherever possible, problems in pastoral relationships be approached in ways that support, encourage and guide both the minister(s) and the community of faith.**

**Background:**

In 2009, concerned about the stigma associated with the review process and the consequent reluctance to use it, Red Deer Presbytery proposed that General Council replace the current sections 333 (Review of Pastoral Charges) and Section 363 (Review of Ministry Personnel) with a process in which a review of the Pastoral Relationship would be the normal response of Presbyteries to crises in pastoral relationships, where Dispute Resolution Facilitation has not been successful. The concern was to make the process of review less stressful and more healing for congregations, Ministry Personnel and Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committees. This proposal was referred by the General Council to the General Secretary for action.

The recommendations of the Comprehensive Review team seem to move in the opposite direction by vesting responsibility for oversight of congregations and Ministry Personnel in separate organizations. This would mean that the governing body of a Region concerned with the oversight of a Community of Faith and a College concerned with the discipline of a minister might approach the problem with different biases, different information, and different strategies, further disrupting a fragile situation.

Ideally, oversight of Ministry Personnel and Communities of Faith would be undertaken by a single organization dedicated to the health of Pastoral Relationships.

If the division of responsibilities between a College and a Region is adopted, however, it is therefore important that there be clear structural relationships between these different organizations (for example, there could be a representative of the College on the governing body of every Region).

The financial implications of this are not clear, but it is our expectation that the costs of this proposal would be lower than having parallel and unconnected processes by a College and a Region.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Red Deer Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**BC 10 CONSIDERING TERMINOLOGY USED IN *UNITED IN GOD'S WORK***

**Origin:** Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council consider using *General Council* or *National Council* for *denominational council*, *Engaging the Spirit* for *Catching the Spirit*, and *Investigative Committee* for *Complaints Committee*.**

**Background:**

Recognizing that communication is complex, it is important that chosen terminology provides clarity, deepens meaning and understanding, and avoids inadvertent negative connotations.

1. Concerning *denominational*:
  - a. The term *denominational* seems to put the church in a box rather than allowing for opportunities to colour outside the lines.
  - b. It had been explained that there was a desire to choose something other than *General Council* since changing terminology is a way to help the transition to new structures and processes. Most involved in The United Church of Canada probably already equate *General Council* with an understanding of a body connected to the entire church. That has not changed in the proposed Three-Council Model. As well, there are many in congregations who do not concern themselves with the broader church so are currently unaware of the current structures and processes and therefore will not need the assistance of a terminology change to recognize new ones but would find

comfort in hearing a familiar term in the midst of all the changes they may experience with a move to a Three-Council Model.

- c. The other two terms used in the Three-Council Model appear to be geographic or to have a sense of place. Therefore, *national* would be a better fit.
- d. Recognizing that there are congregations that are members of The United Church of Canada beyond the borders of Canada is a reason for retaining *General* if it is agreed that *denominational* should not be used.
- e. There are a number of Ecumenical Shared Ministries within The United Church of Canada. The most common partner churches are the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and the Presbyterian Church in Canada. For clarity in these congregations, it would be helpful to have a distinctive term. *Denominational* is generic sounding. The terms used in the partner churches are *General Synod* (Anglican), *National Convention* (Lutheran), and *General Assembly* (Presbyterian). The elected bodies that govern the work of the church between national gatherings are known as Council of General Synod, National Church Council, and Assembly Council respectively.

## 2. Concerning *Catching the Spirit*

This phrase generates some images that are not helpful.

- a. There is a sense of running after someone or something. The question is whether the chase is futile or not.
- b. There is a sense of catching something and putting it in a cage.
- c. There is a sense of catching a disease.

*Engaging the Spirit* has a sense of being interconnected, being involved, participating, hiring (or calling upon), and even doing battle (think of Jacob).

## 3. Concerning *Complaints Committee*

There is a sense that the committee's name needs to be more reflective of what it would be doing rather than what it would be receiving. Therefore, *Investigative Committee* is suggested.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference



## **MNWO 9 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW – UNITED IN GOD’S WORLD**

**Originating Body:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) conduct an impact study of these two recommendations (Recommendation 1 “Chasing the Spirit and Recommendation 6 “Funding the New Model) on rural and remote communities of faith within The United Church of Canada prior to implementation.**

### **Background:**

The United Church of Canada was built on smaller rural and remote congregations and still has many small rural and remote congregations, and

There is a continued decline in both membership of the church (according to the 2013 Year Book Volume I there was a 15% decline in membership from 2007 to 2012) and in the number of congregations in The United Church of Canada (according to the 2013 *Year Book* Volume 1 there was a 8.5% decline in the number of congregation between 2007 to 2012), and

These declines have made it more difficult to ensure the viability of congregations of The United Church of Canada, and

The “United in God’s Work” recommends that there be an average increase in assessments of 25% to help to finance the work of the church, and

An increase in assessment might force many congregations, who are just surviving, in rural and remote areas to close without leaving other options for their members to worship, and

The “United in God’s Work” also recommends that the church become intentional about funding new ministries, with the idea of connecting with technology (“Chasing the Spirit” would invest resources in technologies and training to enable communities of faith and networks to connect with each other and engage with more people, especially over long distances), and

Many rural and remote communities either don’t have the technological infrastructure or the infrastructure that they have is unreliable.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

## **MNWO 11 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW – RECONSIDER THE NAME “CHASING THE SPIRIT”**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Pre-existing Administrative Costs

**Staffing Implications if known:** n/a

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating Expenses of UCC Regional Court

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) rename Recommendation #1 in such a way to acknowledge that God’s Spirit is everywhere and wants to be in relationship with humanity, such that we are not only chasing her.**

### **Background:**

There are theological reasons for wanting to change the title from “Chasing the Spirit” to “Encountering the Spirit.” First, we read that God’s Spirit went over the waters of Creation and so was there in the beginning in Genesis; and second, we acknowledge in liturgy and scripture how the Holy Spirit is always ready to come into our lives to make change for the better. While it may feel at times we are chasing the Spirit, that is only because we are reluctant to open ourselves to receive the Spirit into our lives and so, even deny the reality of the Spirit’s presence.

In the case of Communities of Faith and new ministries that would mean that faith communities would open themselves up to an encounter or encounters with the Spirit, the Spirit who is in all Creation ever and eternally present and available. New ministries are possible because of the presence of the Spirit of God.

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted with concurrence*

## **M&O 10 CHASING THE SPIRIT**

**Origin:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council include within the scope of Chasing the Spirit recommendations, partnerships with other faith and interfaith communities.**

### **Background:**

The United Church historically has worked in cooperation with other denominations and faith groups. This should be reflected in the new ministries involved in Chasing the Spirit.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **SK 10 AMENDMENT TO THE CRTG PROPOSAL: CHASING THE SPIRIT**

**Originating Body:** Saskatchewan Conference

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

### **The Saskatchewan Conference proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) amend the Chasing the Spirit Recommendation by:**

- immediately commit to supporting new ministries and new forms of ministry through an initiative tentatively called “Moving with the Spirit” or “Embracing the Spirit,”
- immediately commit to supporting initiatives for the renewal of continuing ministries, and,
- strongly encourage United Church congregations that are disbanding to give at least 10% of the net proceeds from the sale of any property to the initiative tentatively called “Chasing the Spirit.”

### **Background:**

There is concern in the naming of this program/project, that Chasing the Spirit indicates a running after, that the Spirit is not with us. This is contrary to the experience of many in the Church. Suggesting a name change is to reflect a more interactive relationship with the Spirit.

If M&S givings are to be spent only on mission activities as described in the proposal on strengthening regional councils, (rather than a significant portion spent on program staff in the Denominational Council office and some staff in Regional Council offices) there will be sufficient funding to provide for these new initiatives that offer hope for renewal and new life within the United Church.

This report and proposal recognizes that we are in a changing time in the church. There is a movement of Emergence and Brian McLaren is one of its leaders. He is a pastor, theologian and author, and suggests that one thing the United Church could consider, in specific to this proposal of “Chasing the Spirit,” is that all funds from the sale of church property from closed churches be sequestered for the future of the church. This Proposal, suggests 30% of these funds be made available for “Chasing the Spirit,” this new, renewing, and emergent ministries in our communities of faith.

**Intermediate Court Action:** not applicable

## **ANW 8 NUMBER OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

**Origin:** St. Paul Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) establish not less than 30 (thirty) Regional Councils to be divided equitably in order to replace the current structure of Conferences and Presbyteries, with the expectation that each Regional Council will have one full time paid staff to function in the role of Executive Secretary and Personnel Minister.**

### **Background:**

The geography of The United Church of Canada, being expansive, creates logistical challenges and regional identities.

It is the hope of St. Paul Presbytery that the Regional Council will assume the functions that are currently done by our Presbyteries and Conferences.

The Regional Council should be the body that can co-ordinate regional mission beyond the Communities of Faith.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council

## **ANW 9 ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROPOSED DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** St. Paul Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council (2015) amends the proposal for the establishment of Denominational Council to include the following:**

**The membership of proposed Denominational Council be fixed at, at least 200, and not more than 300 persons with three quarters (3/4) of the membership made up of**

**representatives from the Regional Councils, and the remaining to be determined by the Executive to ensure that minority concerns in the church are represented at the Council;**

**That the functions of the Denominational Council include:**

- 1. Oversight of the whole church**
- 2. Develop ecumenical relations at the National level**
- 3. Promote and encourage the mission of the Church on the national stage and through partnerships with other social agencies.**
- 4. Respond and offer a prophetic voice to matters of social concern at the national level.**
- 5. The recruitment, training and discipline of Ministry Personnel**
- 6. The theology of the church**
- 7. Relationships with the world Church; and**

**That the membership of the Denominational Council be made up of equal number of lay members and ministers.**

**Background:**

The current proposal continues to concentrate the work of the Church at the national level. Given the diversity of the Canadian context an effective approach to mission would be to empower regional bodies to address and respond to the issues which address their specific context. The Denominational Council should therefore be free to address issues of national concern.

The current proposal also creates a large and organizationally unwieldy body that would be ineffective for decision making. Furthermore the costs overall to all of the church for such a body to meet every three years would not amount to good stewardship of resources by the church. A smaller body is needed. In addition to this the cost for smaller communities of faith to attend this gathering would be prohibitive even with modest grants being offered to them. Furthermore, experience shows that the voices of smaller groups and minorities are often times drowned out when large gatherings occur unless intentional measures are put in place to ensure that their voices are heard. Given the history of the United Church as a conciliar church, it seems appropriate to maintain that style of governance. Our church has never made decisions through referenda.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted without concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council, with the following additional comments:

1. Alberta and Northwest Conference would like to see a mechanism for a diversity of voices on the Denominational Council; and
2. Alberta and Northwest Conference favours Denominational Council Meetings that are inclusive of representatives from Communities of Faith, but would like clarity as to how administrative decisions will be made in such a large gathering.

## **ANW 10 ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROPOSED REGIONAL COUNCILS**

**Origin:** St. Paul Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) amend the proposal for the establishment of Regional Councils to include the following:**

**That the memberships of the proposed Regional Councils include all ministry personnel, including retired ministers, ministers retained on the roll and a representative from each faith community in the region;**

**That the functions of the Regional Council include:**

- 1. Oversight of Faith Communities in the region**
- 2. Approval of calls and appointments of ministers to the Faith communities in the Region and matters of Pastoral Relations**
- 3. Develop ecumenical relations within the region**
- 4. Promote and encourage the mission of the Church in the region through the faith communities or in collaboration with other social agencies**
- 5. Respond and offer a prophetic voice to matters of social concern within the region**
- 6. Elect representatives to the Denominational Council**
- 7. Determine what structures and appointments will be needed to meet the particular realities within the context of the region; and**

**That the Regional Councils shall meet annually and, at each meeting of the Regional Council, time should be set aside for a meeting of ministry personnel for continuing education, accountability, and fellowship.**

### **Background:**

The current proposal for the establishment of Regional Councils will disenfranchise those ministers who are not in appointments within the church. Furthermore the current proposal places an undue burden on smaller faith communities to finance the attendance of representatives to the Denominational Council. The Presbytery believes that a more effective approach would be to allow for representation to the Denominational Council to come from the regional bodies with the latter paying for their representatives.

The Presbytery believes that given the work done in many Conferences on the matter of Effective Pastoral Relations over the past three years that the work of Pastoral Relations would be better done by the regional bodies.

It is also the view of the Presbytery that the work of the church should not be focused at the denominational level and that there must be a deliberate attempt made to divest some of the current responsibilities of the General Council to the regional bodies to promote and further the work and mission of the church in the regions to be established.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference  
Transmitted without concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council, with the following additional comments:

1. The Motion to Transmit with Concurrence was defeated by a non-majority of the Court (45% in favour: 47% against);
2. Oversight and accountability must be lifted up;
3. Alberta and Northwest Conference places importance on the inclusion, somewhere in the structure, all Ministry Personnel, including retired and non-active Ministers, to allow for mentorship; and
4. Alberta and Northwest Conference acknowledges that the complexity of the Proposal, due to the inclusion of three separate topics, made it challenging to support the Proposal as a whole.

**ANW 15 GRASS ROOTS STIMULUS**

**Origin:** Northern Lights Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Undetermined Cost Saving

**Staffing Implications if known:** To Be Determined

**Source of Funding if known:** Present Resources

**Northern Lights Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) consider the following possible realignment of denominational resources as an alternative to that detailed in the document, “United in God’s Work.” The end goal of our alternative proposal is to redirect the resources of the whole church in such a fashion as to promote, invigorate, enliven, and challenge congregations and faith communities at the local level.**

**Step 1: Regroup congregations and ministries into presbyteries large enough to afford an executive presbyter, a secretary/treasurer, and an itinerant supervising minister.**

**Step 2: Devolve the current duties which now belong to the Conferences into the Presbyteries, and eliminate the Conferences.**

**Step 3: Have a College of Ministers for admissions and accreditation processes. The College would also run the formal hearings when needed. However**

**the presbytery/regional body would handle basic oversight, first level complaints processes, and pastoral relations work around calls and appointments.**

**Background:**

Although we appreciate the work that went into “United in God’s Work,” and are, indeed, grateful for the stimulus it has provided for much needed discussion and re-imagining as we try to determine the best way in our present context to be faithful, Spirit-led disciples of God in Christ, we fear that, if implemented, remote and rural faith communities will be the ones who most acutely will bear the brunt of proposed structural changes and cost cutting. We also fear that an Association of Ministers may not function nearly as well as a presbytery. Finally, in order to provide quality control over the admission of candidates and their final approval for entry into United Church ministry, it might be simpler to have a national commission of capable persons named by General Council. Again, these persons would not need to live in one particular place, but rather could live among the people, and therefore be aware of the needs for ministry in a great variety of contexts.

We recognize there is a need to cut spending. We believe this proposal addresses challenges related to spending and respectful use of volunteer time within our local communities. We also believe that most presbytery/regional bodies would be able to function with 1 to 2 FTE paid positions, depending on geography and population.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Northern Lights Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted without concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council, with the following additional comments:

1. The Motion to Transmit with Concurrence was defeated by a non-majority (48%) of the Court; and
2. Alberta and Northwest Conference wishes to register its concern for isolated and rural communities when discussing future structure of the church.

**BC 1 CONCERNING COVENANTS**

**Origin:** Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** The funding implications are unknown at this time.

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council eliminate the requirement of Covenants between Communities of Faith and the Regional Councils in the United in God’s Work Proposal: A Three Council Model.**



**Background:**

There is no rationale given for the creation of the Covenants between Communities of Faith and the Regional Council.

Nowhere in the report or background material are we told that should we adopt a new Governance Model that existing Communities of Faith would no longer be part of The United Church of Canada and that each would have to rejoin by covenant as implied in the Three Council Model Proposal (CRTG 3, pages 233–234).

There is confusion regarding the frequency of the making and renewal of covenants (e.g., Report & Background material say renewed yearly (page 709). Proposal #3 Three Council Model says a Covenant would happen but has no mention of yearly renewals).

If Covenants were made yearly as suggested in the Report & Background material, we may find ourselves in a chaotic state if Communities of Faith refuse to covenant based on theological, financial, or other reasons. What would happen to the Minister, the mission of the Community of Faith, or the Property?

The responsibilities outlined in the Sample of Covenant could easily be delineated within the body of Three Council Proposed Model Itself.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

**BC 12 AMENDMENTS TO “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”**

**Origin:** BC Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**BC Conference proposed that:**

**The 42nd General Council amend the proposals of “United in God’s Work” in the following ways:**

- 1. the number of Regional Councils, will be no fewer than 10, to reflect the diversity and breadth of our geography, and to be close enough to communities of faith to adequately respond**
- 2. Strengthen the power and authority of Regional Councils by:**
  - a) budget and assessment setting happen at Regional Councils, with the Denominational Council providing their financial needs for inclusion in the budget process of the Regional Council**

- b) **financing the governance of the church at the Regional Council level, and Mission and Service operations at the Denominational level**
  - c) **having Regional Council staff, including Regional Secretaries, be employed and accountable to their Regional Councils**
  - d) **having the General Secretary of the Denominational Council be equal in power and authority to the Regional Secretaries**
3. **Locate funding and staffing within the Regional Councils to support all other mission and ministry priorities, including (but not limited to):**
- a) **leadership formation and development, both lay and ordered**
  - b) **congregational support and oversight**
  - c) **local and global mission**
4. **Affirm that denominational staff and resources focus on the following priorities:**
- a) **leadership in global mission and partnerships and ecumenism**
  - b) **denomination-wide communications**
  - c) **pensions, benefits and payroll**
  - d) **support for denominational policy, including (but not limited to) standards for qualification of ministry personnel and conditions of employment**
  - e) **support for the Moderator**
  - f) **organizing the denominational gathering**
  - g) **administering the Mission and Service Fund**
5. **Reduce the number of participants and the cost of the denominational gathering, by Regional Councils electing a smaller number of delegates**
6. **Deletion of the College of Ministers, leaving membership, formation and oversight of ministry personnel within Regional Councils; and establish a national office of Vocation to register ministry personnel and keep records, and processing formal hearings and complaints**

**Background:**

Core Principles upon which this proposal is based:

1. General support for a three council model with an adequate number of well-funded Regional Councils.
2. The community of faith is the primary mission unit of the church.
3. The Regional Council is the most effective place to vest support and accountability for vital communities of faith, and resources for leadership and congregational development.
4. General support for continuing our historical identity and commitment to holding a healthy tension between congregationalism and conciliar relationships and accountability.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

### **BC 13 RESPONSE TO “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”**

**Origin:** BC Conference

**Financial Implications:** unknown

**Staffing Implications:**

**BC Conference Proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council amend the proposals of “United in God’s Work” in the following way:**

**That both Communities of Faith and Ministry Personnel have the responsibility and authority to request changes of pastoral relationship, and that the final decision-making responsibility and authority on changes of pastoral relationship rest with the Regional Council.**

**Immediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

### **BQ 1 RENEW THE CURRENT STRUCTURE**

**Origin:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1. Implement the Comprehensive Review Funding model proposal.**
- 2. Withdraw the Comprehensive Review College of Ministers proposal.**
- 3. Allow the Effective Ministry and Healthy Pastoral Relationships pilot projects to complete their work, share their findings, and discern best practices for separating oversight, discipline, and the needs assessment-search process.**
- 4. Retain the current 4-Court structure but revise it, among other possibilities, in the following way: Presbytery/District—to be supportive of ministers and communities of faith but not in disciplinary oversight of them. (Covenants, mission articulation, supporting students, sharing creative and temporal resources, and growing in connectedness would become the primary work of Presbyteries/Districts, with the possible addition of the needs assessment-**

search process, depending upon the learnings of the Effective Ministry and Healthy Pastoral Relationships pilot projects.)

5. **Retain the current 4-Court structure but revise it, among other possibilities, in the following way: Conference—to include the disciplinary oversight of ministers and Pastoral Charges as per the findings of the Effective Ministry pilots. (Presbyteries/Districts would listen and support, Conferences would act on conflicts or discipline.)**
6. **Support dialogue among Conferences to explore effective ways to distribute the proposed 60 administrative plus 15 M&S supported staff through creative partnering, sharing, merging, or redrawing Conference boundaries.**
7. **Expand the current team of persons skilled in conflict resolution, reviews, and hearings in lieu of creating a College of Ministers (accreditation and oversight to be done at the Conference level).**
8. **Facilitate a national dialogue on the role and function of the General Council Office and the General Council triennial gathering within the ethos and governance of the United Church.**

**Background:**

The scripture verse grounding GC42 is well chosen: “*Behold, I make all things new*” (Revelation 21:5). One interpretive tack is to draw on Isaiah 43:19, “*Behold I am doing a new thing!*” Another interpretive tack is to read this verse not as “*making all new things*” but as “*making all things new.*” This later path emphasizes how God redeems, God reshapes, God renews.

The Comprehensive Review was a mandate to discern a structure that would allow us to live within our human and financial resources as a church. In the process of that discernment and making all new things” some of the fundamental aspects of the ethos of our church have been challenged. Principles such as shared ministry and balance between clergy and laity in the courts of the church, access to the wisdom of all ministry personnel and retirees, property held in trust for the whole church, and nearby support and accountability for communities of faith are potentially being set aside without a full dialogue.

Manageable pieces such as replacing needs assessments with annual mission reviews and replacing triennial visits with annual missional check-ins as the primary oversight work of Presbyteries/Districts promote a positive, supportive and accountable second court. The ability to flag potential concerns early and refer to Conference for additional support or potential formal review or discipline is critical for maintaining healthy mission-focused communities of faith.

The financial realities requiring staffing cuts would be achieved as Conferences sought creative approaches to carrying out their work and organize and distribute the proposed 60 administrative staff plus 15 M&S supported staff throughout the church, possibly by sharing certain staff, merging or changing Conference boundaries, etc. In addition, the financial saving from not

having a College of Ministers would provide the minimal funding most Presbyteries would need to carry out their responsibilities under this model. If more funding were needed, either the assessment could be increased, or the proposed 60 administrative positions could be reduced slightly in number.

Significant discussion concerning the size, scope, role, and function of our General Council Office and General Council triennial gathering is needed before we can authentically discern appropriate revisions to our current model. Cost concerns for the General Council meeting have not been addressed in this proposal. Potential solutions such as reducing the number of delegates, cost sharing, assessments, etc. could all be explored without changing the structure.

Renewing the current structure in light of the goals of simplified structures and processes to unburden people and free them for ministry and mission, expanding communities of faith beyond congregations, leveraging our strength of being united, separating support and discipline, and creating a transparent funding model is not only possible but preferable in that it greatly reduces the number of potential remits required to make significant progress and greatly reduces the potential chaos of either failed remits or trying to implement something “all new.”

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Quinte Conference voted on each item in-seriatim and carried all of them.

**BQ 4 A RESPONSE TO THE FINAL REPORT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP**

**Origin:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Should be feasible within the proposed funding model  
(Proposal #6 – Comprehensive Review Task Group Final Report)

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:**

**should the 42nd General Council support the recommendation to move to a three court model, the “middle court” must be geographically smaller than the present Conferences, and that Staff be located closer to communities of faith than in the proposed regional model.**

**Theological Rationale:**

Excerpt from *A Song of Faith: A Statement of Faith of The United Church of Canada*

*Each part of creation reveals unique aspects of God the Creator,  
who is both in creation and beyond it.*

*All parts of creation, animate and inanimate, are related. All creation is good.*

*We sing of the Creator,*

*who made humans to live and move and have their being in God.  
In and with God,  
we can direct our lives toward right relationship with each other and with God.  
We can discover our place as one strand in the web of life. We can grow in wisdom and  
compassion.  
We can recognize all people as kin.  
We can accept our mortality and finitude, not as a curse, but as a challenge to make our  
lives and choices matter.*

It is as we are in relationship with one another that we can truly live out the Gospel of love.

**Background:**

The Comprehensive Review Task Group prefaced their report by stating: “We believe God is doing a new thing and is calling The United Church of Canada to be part of a new creation.” Hills and Shore Presbytery would fully support that premise; we also believe that within that new creation congregations are still the backbone of The United Church of Canada.

We all need to feel connected to something greater than ourselves. Every church would welcome opportunities for growth and learning.

A vast majority of United Church Pastoral Charges are rural; rural churches are often smaller and already feel isolated and disconnected from the larger church.

If the new “regions” are larger than our present Conferences travel time alone would exacerbate the isolation not improve it. Each area would need to perceive that someone is close enough to feel like a relationship is a possibility.

Networking will only happen when a sense of community is built and faith communities connect; creating a Staff model that brings staff closer to faith communities will help nurture the sense of connectedness

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal.

**LON 1 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
NAMING THE “DENOMINATIONAL” COUNCIL**

**Origin:** Lambton Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** Unknown

**Lambton Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Act so that the body referred to as the Denominational Council in the United in God’s Work be given another name, i.e. United Church Council, General Assembly, General Council.**

**Background:**

In light of the history of the United Church, having been formed by the union of four denominations, we consider the use of the word “denominational” as inappropriate. We also consider it a mouthful.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 2 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
NAMING OF DENOMINATIONAL COURT**

**Origin:** Tecumseh United Church Board in Essex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** Limited – Part of editing and review

**Source of Funding if known:** None

**The Tecumseh United Church Board in Essex Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) eliminate the term “Denominational” as part of the description of one of the courts in the proposed three court model. We propose that terms such as “General Council or “New General Council” be used.**

**Background:**

The term “Denomination” suggests an adherence to a church “club” with a clear sense of who does or does not belong. It does not reinforce or encourage the renewal and revitalization envisioned with “Chasing the Spirit.” “Denomination suggests exclusiveness and limitations on acceptance. The strength of the United Church is its message of acceptance of people attempting to find their way in living out the gospel in responding to the call to discipleship. The spirit of an evolving understanding is not immediately associated with the term “denomination.” It also

hearkens back to more traditional and entrenched church structures.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Approved by the Official Board, TUC April 19, 2015.

Transmit with concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 3 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” A  
PROPOSED NAME FOR THE DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** Ruthven Pastoral Charge, within Essex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** None

**The Official Board of the Ruthven Pastoral Charge proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) name the Denominational Council in the Three Council Model, “The Assembly of The United Church of Canada.”**

**Background:**

The term “Assembly” is quite common when governments have a bicameral (2 parts) legislature. It would be quite fitting in the Three Council Model for the Denominational Council to be called The Assembly of The United Church of Canada.

The term “Denominational” is vague and awkward. It is especially odd when combined with the term Council.

The term “Assembly” indicates a gathering of people coming together. In Greek the word for assembly is “ekklesia.” The term ekklesia has great significance in the history of the Church.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Official Board, Ruthven Pastoral Charge, May 13, 2015

Transmit without concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

**London Conference:** Did not agree, transmit without concurrence  
London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015



**LON 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
REPRESENTATION TO GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** Lambton Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Less expense

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** Regional and/or Denominational Assessment

**Lambton Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) amend the CRTG 3 proposal so that:**

- 1) representatives to Denominational Council be limited to the present size of the General Council;**
- 2) nominations be made by Faith Communities, but representatives be elected at Regional Council;**
- 3) the cost for representatives be financed through the assessments of regional and/or denominational councils.**

**Background:**

The proposal of two representatives from each faith community would create an expensive, unwieldy body that would be difficult to co-ordinate and plan for.

The proposal to have each faith community pay the costs for their representatives would create an undue burden on individual churches and could limit participation. Sharing the costs throughout the region or country would encourage the participation of those most interested.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Did not Agree, but carried to transmit with the following recommendation:

“General Council to determine a manageable number of representatives not necessarily limited to the present size of General Council.”

London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 5 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATION AT THE DENOMINATIONAL  
COUNCIL**

**Origin:** London Conference Youth Forum

**Financial Implications if known:** to be determined

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown

**Source of Funding if known:**

**London Conference Youth Forum proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1) **Affirm its commitment to youth and young adult participation in the courts/councils of The United Church of Canada;**
- 2) **Ensure that provisions are made for youth and young adult participation in all three Councils identified in Recommendation 3 of United in God’s Work, The Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group;**
- 3) **Affirm that this involvement should be at no less a percentage than provided by existing levels;**
- 4) **Direct the General Secretary, General Council, to provide for youth participation through the cost sharing envisioned for a gathering of the Denominational Council.**

**Background:**

At the March 21–23, 2015, meeting the Executive of the General Council affirmed the Youth and Young Adult (YAYA) Ministry Strategy 2015–2018 ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “2015-03-21 GCE Workbook,” page 156) and directed the General Secretary, General Council, to implement this strategy in the 2015–2018 triennium.

YAYA is overlooked in the Report “United in God’s Work,” and there is no provision for youth and young adult involvement in any of the Councils.

Currently, the degree to which youth and young adults are involved in the courts of the church is determined regionally. Each Conference determines whether any of its General Council Commissioner positions will be dedicated to youth and young adults. Because Commissioners are elected by Conference, there is no guaranteed number of youth and young adult participation in decision-making at the General Council. Youth Forum has traditionally offered the General Council the benefit of input from youth.

The consideration of a new model makes this an ideal time to set a standard for youth and young adult involvement in all Councils of the church.

At General Council 41.5 (1%) Commissioners were under 18 and 44 (12%) Commissioners were 19–30. In addition over 50 youth participated in Youth Forum and had the privilege of adding their voice to the discussion.

For General Council 42, with the new model of Youth Forum, each Conference was asked to ensure that at least the young person participating in the pilgrimage be named a Commissioner. At General Council 42, it is hoped that there will be at least 13 Commissioners under 19 plus a further 26 youth named as corresponding members of the court.

Both of these models provide for roughly 10% or more of those able to speak to be youth. There are also those youth and young adults serving as Commissioners. There is no provision for at least this as a minimal level of involvement in the new model. The goal would be to maintain or increase the involvement of this age group.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 14 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
ACCOUNTABILITY OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Glenwood United Church within Essex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown but expectations of more transparency and input

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown at this time

**Source of Funding if known:** Assessment protocol

**The Official Board of Glenwood United Church proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- A. Implement a review in 2020, by The United Church of Canada, to evaluate the success or failure of the Three Council Model**
- B. Discuss any decisions arising from the review process with the Executive of the Denominational Council prior to implementation.**

**Background:**

People have expressed their fears about increased assessments by possibly reducing their Mission & Service offerings at recent presbytery and informational meetings.

Because of long lists of demands that the “National Church” has had to prioritize through the years, now is the right time to let another group control the procurement of money by assessment. The church is being forced to downsize in staffing and projects as congregations grow smaller and concentrate on incremental change to attract new people.

Humbling ourselves and realizing why we are present will enable us to grow in new ways. At present, we need to continue to tighten the belt in order to rapidly stabilize our situation. “Pie in the sky” type answers will only destroy our credibility when people are looking to the church for substance and meaningful conversation.

This task is entirely doable and passes the test of conformity to democratic principles. This achieves the standard of extending the right of grass-roots members to attend an Annual Meeting each year. One lay person and one order of Ministry person may attend from a Community of Faith. By doing this, people realize the opportunity to have their voice heard. It is the expectation that authority flows up and that leaders at the denominational council serve as our representatives.

Having a 3-year wait time between meetings does not satisfy the expectation of accountability

and it is a common practice to evaluate after 5 years when dramatic changes occur within organizations. The question has to be addressed. “Did we do the right thing?”

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Official Board, Glenwood United Church, April 27, 2015

Transmit with concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday May 19, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 25 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
MINISTERS ATTACHED TO COURTS**

**Origin:** Kent Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** None

**London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that Members of the Order of Ministry, both active and retired, and Recognized Designated Lay Ministers retain their membership in a proposed Regional Council rather than within a local community of faith.**

**Background:**

“United in God’s Work” proposes that membership of the Order of Ministry and Designated Lay Ministers would be in the local community of faith. Only Ministry Personnel serving in a local community of faith would be eligible to participate in the Regional and Denominational Council and, among those serving, only one of the ministry personnel at a local community of faith would be eligible.

Given that our theological understanding of the order of ministry and designated lay ministry includes responsibility to the whole church and not just the local context, that our Reformed heritage encourages ministry personnel to be in personal, accountable and supervised relationships with ministry peers and lay people and that continuity of ministry leadership and service are important to the stability of mission of The United Church of Canada, lodging the membership of ministry personnel only in the local context does not support these goals.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

London Conference: Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**Conference Comment:**

*This is a replacement proposal incorporating ideas expressing fully ideas captured in part in proposals from Essex Presbytery, Kent Presbytery and the Executive of Middlesex Presbytery.*

**LON 26 BALANCED REPRESENTATION ON REGIONAL AND DENOMINATIONAL COUNCILS**

**Origin:** London Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council ensure that the model for determining the composition of the proposed Regional and Denominational Councils be adjusted as necessary to follow the principle of balanced representation of each of two groups:**

- i) members of the order of ministry and designated lay ministers**
- ii) lay members other than designated lay ministers.**

**Background:**

Several proposals may affect the composition of the proposed councils. This proposal indicates our desire to maintain the principle of balanced representation.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**Conference Comment:**

*This proposal was crafted following adoption of London 25: Comprehensive Review Task Group “United In God’s Work” Ministers Attached to Courts, to ensure that the adoption of a membership model for ministers would be sensitive to the lay/ministry personnel balance of the region.*

**MAR 5 EXISTING SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORKS AND THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW**

**Origin:** Chignecto Presbytery, Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Chignecto Presbytery, Maritime Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council:**

- a) **strongly affirms the work of the United Network for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) and the United for Mining Justice Network (UMJN) networks.**
- b) **That these networks be directly and significantly involved in any future discussions surrounding Comprehensive Review and how networks can support the social justice ministry of the denomination under a new structure.**
- c) **That a representative of each network be made an ex-officio member of the Permanent Committee – Programs for Mission and Ministry (PC-PMM) until a new structure evolves.**
- d) **mandates the General Secretary to assist with negotiations for appropriate Director’s insurance for the networks so they can speak truthfully and bravely to the church and other power structures.**

**Background:**

1. Currently, UNJPPI and UMJN have no direct ties to the General Council. UNJPPI was incarnated by the GCO to help with the work mandated by GC 41 with respect to Palestine and Israel. UMJN has evolved out of United Church groups who had been working on the issue of Canadian mining interests being involved in human rights violations in foreign countries.

Both networks play a significant role in these two key social justice issues within the denomination. Both provide thousands of volunteer hours.

The leadership of these networks take seriously the Biblical call to proclaim social justice. These networks stand in solidarity with our international partners who have turned to The United Church of Canada seeking our support in their struggle to have their voices heard in our churches and beyond.

To date, there has been no formal acknowledgement, affirmation or appreciation expressed for their ongoing work and commitment from either General Council Office or General Council.

2. Currently, there has been no direct or indirect contact with UNJPPI or UMJN about the future of social justice work in the denomination even though the Comprehensive Review provides an appendix to the main report and notes the key role networks will play in animating the social justice ministry of The United Church of Canada.

It would make sense for these networks who already understand the struggles and the blessings of their existing structure to provide direct input into how we might effectively

embrace the concept of networks as we explore how to live out God’s call to work for social justice.

3. Currently, the Permanent Committee (PC) - Programs for Mission and Ministry has not invited the networks to provide any input directly to the PC which could assist the PC in supporting the work mandated by the General Council

An ex-officio role on the PC would allow the networks to remain free and independent of the PC and the current power structure within the denomination while still being able to be build relationships. PC-PMM and the networks would mutually benefit from a closer relationship through improved alignment regarding these key social justice issues.

4. The leadership of the networks face the prospect of vexatious lawsuits from those who hold power and privilege in Canadian society. Yet, the networks who work faithfully and diligently on behalf of the denomination are not afforded the same protection as officers of the courts of the church because under our present structure this is not possible. Ironically, the leadership of the networks often function in other roles in various courts of the church where they are covered by the insurance policy of the United Church.

In order to support the work of these networks and allow them to focus on the issues where they have expertise it makes sense to have the GCO staff with expertise in insurance help negotiate on behalf of the networks with The United Church of Canada insurance provider.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Mary White/Sean Handcock moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #5 entitled “Existing Social Justice Networks and the Comprehensive Review” to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada; and take no action on Proposal #14 entitled “United for Mining Justice Network” and #15 entitled “United Network for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel” as they are covered in Proposal #5.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MAR 9 AN ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE TO THE PROPOSED “COLLEGE” OF MINISTERS**

**Originating Body:** Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications:** unknown

**Staffing Implications:** Approximately the same number of staff as the proposed College of Ministers, distributed with approx. 1/3 at the Denominational level, and 2/3 at the Regional level

**Source of Funding:** unknown

**Maritime Conference proposes that as the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review Task Group regarding oversight and discipline of ministry personnel are being considered by the 42nd General Council, 2015 that:**

- (1) Standards for training and accreditation, and discipline of ministry personnel be the responsibility of the denominational body, and that**
- (2) the recognition, support and oversight of ministry personnel be the responsibility of the Regional Council.**

**These responsibilities will be administered in the following manner:**

- 1. Denominational:**
  - (a) Disciplinary procedures for all ministry personnel, including the administration of the Discontinue Service List, both disciplinary and voluntary**
  - (b) The authority to determine the definition of ministry and its requirements and standards of recognition within the church**
- 2. Regional Responsibilities:**
  - (c) Training and oversight of ministry personnel would be administered through an elected committee of regional council, with appropriate staff support**
  - (d) Candidacy and Education and Students processes would be implemented at the regional level.**
  - (e) Ministry Personnel, including retired ministry personnel, would be covenanted members within their Regional Body.**
  - (f) Consideration would be given to the size of regional bodies to ensure accessibility to communities of faith.**

**Background to 1. Denominational Responsibilities:**

- There is a confusion of terms concerning what constitutes a membership association and a regulatory body. *United in God's Work* presents the nomenclature and status of a "College" without the pursuant legislative requirement to be a self-regulatory governing body. For this purpose alone, we would recommend not using this term as it is misleading in both larger society and law. We believe the use of the term "Federation" is much more in keeping with the cut and thrust of the report's proposal.
- A **Federation** is the uniting of a national body, composed of provincial and/or regional entities each retaining their own control of internal affairs while being supported by a National voice and perspective.
- Avoiding the requirements of a College will allow the church to stay true to the vocational and covenantal roots of the United Church rather than vying for a quasi professional status. *United in God's Work* recommends a change to a profession of ministry. In the public realm, the regulation of professions is basically the regulating of transactions between the public and the professionals where governments are expected to ensure the public has some form of



protection. We believe this understanding alone is not compatible with the rich vocation of ministry currently practised and understood in The United Church of Canada.

- The specific legal authority transferred from government to the profession's regulatory body varies with different regulatory models. A Federation would allow for professionalism without the need for stringent government oversight. Under our proposal we still preserve the emphasis of highly skilled professionals exercising discipline of ministry personnel through the Federation.
- Given that government selects from different regulatory approaches, based on the nature of the activities performed by the profession's members and the extent to which the public might be harmed if an incompetent member of a profession provided services (ministry), how then can this aspect of government oversight be ignored in the establishing of a professional College as *United in God's Work* seeks to propose?

### **Background to 2. Regional Responsibilities:**

- There are potential difficulties with pastoral relationships that make it necessary to remove oversight and discipline of ministers from the local jurisdiction. Complexities in these relationships require higher levels of specialized information and skills. At the same time, it is desirable for this oversight to be able to respond as early as possible when difficulties arise, and for this oversight to be aware of the local context.
- By removing oversight and discipline from the regional level, we risk having an uninformed response because one is less aware of regional particularities. It would also require the added expense of further travel.
- The best balance would be to have the oversight responsibilities rest at the regional level, while the corrective disciplinary responsibilities would reside at the denominational level.
- The work of the Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway of The Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services has been monitoring the Candidacy Pathway pilot project currently underway in BC, Manitou, and Bay of Quinte Conferences. It provides favourable insight into a ministry oversight and evaluation model administered almost entirely at the regional level which is especially poignant in the Bay of Quinte Conference where all decision-making powers are held at this level (see "Interim Report of the Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway," Record of Proceedings of the 41st General Council 2012). These pilot projects have effectively assumed a model of centralized authority much similar to that proposed by the College model, with the exception that such authority lies at the regional rather than denominational level.

#### *Sources:*

Manitoba Law Reformed Commission (1994). *Regulating professions and occupations*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Law Reform Commission.

Bayles, M.D. (1988). Profession power and self regulation. *Business and Professional Ethics Journal*, 5(2), 26–43.

Glen, E. Randall, (2000). *Understanding profession self regulation*. Toronto, Ontario.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett/Mary White moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit

with concurrence Proposal #17 entitled “An Alternative Structure to the proposed “College” of Ministers” to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **MAR 11 FOSTERING GATHERINGS OF YOUTH**

**Origin:** Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Maritime Conference Proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council directs that in the responsibilities of Regional Councils be included the responsibility for fostering gatherings of youth.**

#### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett/Sean Handcock moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #24 entitled “Fostering Gatherings of Youth” to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **MNWO 1 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: ATTENDANCE NUMBERS OF GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Originating Body:** Agassiz Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct that the membership of the Denominational Council determine by election at Regional Councils or other regional bodies in a manner that retains our commitment to balanced representation; and that the membership size of the Denominational Council be no greater than the membership of our current General Council.**

#### **Background:**

The proposal for General Council will create a Denominational Council whose size will be unwieldy for effective process and decision making; will restrict representation to congregations or faith communities able and willing to send delegates.

It will eliminate our commitment to ensuring balance among clergy, lay, gender and a voice for youth.

It makes no provision differences in the size of faith communities, discriminates against clergy who are retained or retired, or are in team.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

### **MNWO 3 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: THREE COUNCIL MODEL**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) amend the Three Council Model proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Group as follows:**

**That instead of large regional councils as the middle council we have small clusters of about a dozen communities of faith with responsibilities for ministry covenants, celebrations of ministry and accompaniment of candidates and that all other decision making responsibilities reside with the communities of faith or the denominational council.**

#### **Background:**

It is important for communities of faith to connect with one another for mutual support and accountability.

It has been suggested that Regional Councils will be larger than current Conferences, making them more distant from local communities of faith.

It is expensive to maintain staff at the Regional Council level when we are trying to streamline the church. It is easier for smaller bodies to know the reality on the ground in individual communities and to offer appropriate collegial support as neighbours to communities of faith in times of joy and struggle.

As smaller, local gatherings are more cost effective, easier on the environment, and allow for more relationship-building amongst communities of faith because the gathering would be smaller and probably able to meet more frequently. Too often our current courts get caught up in administrative work and have a limited ability to build community amongst people.

Possible responsibilities could be as follows:

1. Clusters replace Regional Councils in the proposed Three Council Model and keep the name “cluster” as it suggests a community of communities rather than a governing body.
2. That Clusters be small and locally based involving about 10 communities of faith with the specific numbers in each cluster being determined by local geography.
3. The membership of the clusters be as follows:
  - a. *all ministry personnel in paid accountable ministry with communities of faith in the cluster,*
  - b. *one lay representative from each community of faith in the cluster,*
  - c. *any retired or retained ministry personnel residing in the cluster who choose to be involved in the cluster.*
4. That clusters meet at least annually with specific meeting frequencies being determined by local realities.
5. That generally, clusters would not have budgets or staff and appropriate costs for travel and communications would be covered by the communities of faith for their representatives. The only time clusters would have staff would be if they have covenanted together for a particular mission project in their area. The funding of such endeavours would be agreed upon by the cluster.
6. Clusters would have the following responsibilities as currently assigned to the Regional Council in the proposed Three Council Model.
  - a. Authority and Responsibility for Covenanting:
    - i. recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship with it
    - ii. entering into a covenant with each community of faith, with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;
  - b. Oversight:
    - i. reviewing and periodically auditing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council;
    - ii. assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies;
  - c. Services to Communities of Faith:
    - i. providing support, advice, and encouragement to communities of faith
    - ii. ministry personnel and others—except to the extent any of the following responsibilities have been otherwise assigned through the United Church’s legislative process:
    - iii. celebrating retirements
    - iv. appointing persons (a) to accompany a candidate on their pathway to ordination or commissioning, and (b) to make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;
    - v. appointing a person (a) to supervise a candidate in an internship, and (b) make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry;

- vi. ordaining or commissioning each candidate approved by the College for ordination;
  - vii. admitting ministers from other denominations who have been approved by the College for admission;
  - viii. readmitting ministers who have been approved by the College for readmission;
  - ix. recognizing designated lay ministers; and
  - x. licensing lay members as licensed lay worship leaders.
7. The following responsibilities from the current proposal assigned to the Regional Council be assigned to the Denominational Council possibly offered through regionally based staff or archives locations, if appropriate, but administered nationally.
- a. Services to Communities of Faith:
    - i. providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
    - ii. providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
    - iii. creating policies for buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith and other property and the distribution of such proceeds;
    - iv. managing regional archives;
    - v. providing leadership training for ministers and lay persons;
    - vi. overseeing camps and incorporated ministries in the region.

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted without concurrence. The Court decided to transmit all proposals related to the Comprehensive Review.*

## **MNWO 5 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: LAY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION**

**Originating Body:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

*All of above three lines could be financed in the 10% funds allocated to transforming and new ministries*

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) commit to providing resources that will ensure adequate education, training, support and oversight for lay leaders in the future structures of The United Church of Canada at a denominational or regional level.**

### **Background:**

Educated and experienced lay leadership has always and still is a significant part of United Church congregations and ministries and is especially vital to the well-being of congregations and ministries with less than full-time paid accountable staff.

Programs for education and training of lay people have been offered by United Church Education Centres, and by some Theological Schools and Programs, which were supported and encouraged by the Conferences and Presbyteries where they were located. Presbyteries encouraged participation of lay leaders in such programs as Licensed Lay Worship Leadership and Sacraments Elders training.

The new 3-council model of the church proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Force recognizes the importance of vibrant and self-sustaining communities of faith which will include leadership by both Order of Ministry and the laity.

The declining income for many smaller congregations will result in more part-time ministries, which will be difficult to fill in rural and more remote locations, thereby emphasizing the importance of strong lay leadership. New expressions of communities of faith may have no order of ministry staff and be entirely reliant on lay leadership.

In the proposed 3-council model there is no clearly identified commitment to provision of education and training for lay people. There is no clear location in any level of the 3-council model of accountability or responsibility for ensuring support, training or oversight for lay leaders.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

**MNWO 10 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: STAFF PERSON FOR SUPPORTING  
TRANSFORMING EXISTING MINISTRIES AND LAUNCHING NEW  
MINISTRIES**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Pre-existing Administrative Costs

**Staffing Implications if known:** May require travel within regions

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating Expenses of UCC Regional Court

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that the denominational council ensure that financial support from assessments be available for a staff person, who is familiar with local/regional context, to support and resource the development of new ministry initiatives, whether developing new ministries or transforming existing ones.**

**Background:**

In the description of the Regional Court of Recommendation #3 (page 709), it states: “Regional councils would perform some, but not all, of the functions of current presbyteries and

Conferences. They would covenant with and provide advice, support, and services to communities of faith in such areas as human resources and property. They would accompany students, provide mentors and appoint supervisors for internships, and celebrate ordinations, commissioning, admissions, recognitions, and retirements. They would support and provide Communities of Faith with connections to national and global partners for social justice and outreach activities. They would also ensure communities of faith are living up to their covenants, attempt to resolve disputes, and step in if a community of faith is not functioning effectively or failing to meet its responsibilities. The proposed model would require the church to rationalize regional structures and staffing by amalgamating Conferences or sharing staff and resources across separate regional councils.” The understanding so far, is that there would be an Executive Secretary and another staff person to do the above work. But what is not mentioned in the description above is “New Ministries,” which (according to *United in God’s Work*) all Communities of Faith are encouraged to develop. These “New Ministries” would need some special attention and support of Regional Councils.

As a national church we share responsibility to support the development of new ministries of various forms. We are confident that most groups envisioning new ministry initiatives will not have all the expertise to develop and consider staffing implications, or business considerations within their group. As a Church we want to support new ministry initiatives so that they will have firm foundations on which to grow. We recognize that staff with dedicated paid hours to support those envisioning a new ministry initiative will increase the likelihood of success for that initiative. We would consider this staff position as a permanent national, permanent regional or contracted position whose sole responsibility would be to support and resource groups in the development of new ministry initiatives to make them viable, and eventually self-sustaining.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

**MNWO 12 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: REGIONAL COUNCILS SHOULD BE APPROPRIATE SIZE**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Pre-existing Administrative Costs

**Staffing Implications if known:** Staff Travel Costs

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating Expenses of UCC Regional Court

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) consider and deliberate on the size of Regional Councils, of “United In God’s Work,” to be a maximum number of 20 hours of travel one way to a regional meeting.**

**Background:**

This is a very important issue especially to rural churches. Presbyteries and Conferences already struggle with the reality of Canadian Geography and how it impacts meeting attendance and

meeting costs. As we already have some very large Conference regions, the Regional Council's geographic area should not be any larger than 20 hours total travel time across, if meetings can be held in different locations; if meetings were held in a central location all the time then a maximum of 20 hours travel time to the centre of the Region would be reasonable. It is not just the cost to Regional Council that is an issue, there is always a cost to the volunteer who leaves home early to travel to a meeting. The volunteer's time and the risk taken to put in long hours of driving need to be considered.

Canada is called the most urbanized country in the world for a reason—most of its major cities are near the 49th parallel and USA/Canada border. While most of our members are in urban centres we need to keep in mind that is a social privilege, and not the reality of some of our most vulnerable members.

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted without concurrence. The Court decided to transmit all proposals related to the Comprehensive Review.*

### **MNWO 13 ORDER OF MINISTRY AND “UCC MEMBERSHIPS”**

**Originating Body:** Assiniboine Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** n/a

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating Expenses of UCC Regional Court

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) change “United in God’s Work,” Recommendation #3, A Three-Council Model, to have members of the Order of Ministry have their United Church membership held by a body other than that of a local community of faith.**

#### **Background:**

“Given that our theological understandings of ministry include an ordered minister’s service and responsibility to the whole Church, and not only local contexts; and that our Reformed heritage encourages ordered ministers to be in personal, accountable, and supervised relationships with ministry peers and lay people; and that the continuity of ministry leadership and service are important to the stability and mission of The United Church of Canada; and that lodging ordered ministers’ memberships only in a local context does not support these goals; I move that Assiniboine Presbytery/Conference ask the General Council 2015 that, when the CR is implemented post-General Council, members of the Order of Ministry be counted as members of the Regional Council rather than of a local community of faith.”

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted with concurrence*



## **M&O 1 ALTERNATIVE THREE-COUNCIL MODEL IN DIALOGUE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP REPORT**

**Origin:** The Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Within the same financial framework offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group Report.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Within the same staffing framework offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group Report

**Source of Funding if known:** n/a

**Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council direct that:**

- a) a mission statement for each of the three councils be included in the three-council model;
- b) a section on the Executive for each of the three councils be included in the three-council model
- c) there be a consistency in the description of the three councils; and
- d) the substance is found in the background material.

**Background:**

### **1. COMMUNITIES OF FAITH**

#### ***A. Description***

A community of faith is any community of people within the United Church that:

- gathers to explore faith, worship, and serve and can include congregations, outreach ministries, faith based communal living, house churches, and online communities; and
- is recognized as a community of faith within the United Church by the regional council through a covenantal relationship between the community of faith and the regional council.

#### ***B. Membership***

The members of the community of faith would be:

- people admitted to membership by the community of faith, within the guidelines of the denomination, including members of the order of ministry;
- eligible for election to represent the community of faith in the denominational council and regional council;
- entitled to vote on all community of faith matters and entitled to extend the right to vote on financial and administrative matters to adherent

#### ***C. Authority and responsibility***

The community of faith would have authority and responsibility for:

##### ***mission***

- Helping members deepen their faith while exploring their faith journey by joining

collective hearts, voices and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society

- entering into a covenant with the regional council that sets out guiding values, principles, and responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith
- doing annual self-assessments of the ministry of the community of faith and filing the report with the regional council;

***governance and administration***

- making decisions about the life of the community of faith including worship pastoral care, spiritual practice and learning, local administration and governance, finances, local mission, justice, and evangelism;
- meeting at least annually and electing officers and an executive;
- setting policies for membership, and receiving and celebrating new members in the community of faith;
- complying with denominational and regional policies;
- buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith property;

***encouraging lay ministry and supporting members considering a vocation in ministry***

encouraging members to consider ministry roles a responsibility shared through the whole community of faith;

- recommending to the appropriate body suitable lay members as inquirers, candidates, and licensed lay worship leaders, as and if required under denominational policy;

***participation in regional council and denominational council***

- choosing two representatives to the regional council of which up to one can be Ministry Personnel or a member of the order of ministry.
- funding the cost of sending representatives to the meetings of the regional council;
- choosing two representatives to the denominational council of which up to one can be Ministry Personnel or a member of the order of ministry.
- funding the cost of sending representatives to the triennial meeting of the denominational council; and
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from members of the community of faith to regional councils.

***D. Limitations***

All authority and responsibility of the community of faith would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;
- the terms of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the regional council to assume control of the community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

### ***E. Executive of the Community of Faith***

The executive of the Community of faith would be the decision-making body for the Community of Faith between meetings of the membership of the Community of Faith

- ***Size:*** a fixed number determined by the Community of faith (and in the cases of very small Communities of Faith can include the whole membership)
- ***Membership would include:***
  - A Chair
  - Paid Accountable Ministry Personnel (if any)
  - Other elected members from the Community of Faith
- ***Authority:***
  - Dealing with all routine and emergency work of the Community of Faith between meetings of the Community of Faith in keeping with the policies of the Community of Faith and The United Church of Canada

### ***F. Staffing***

The Community of Faith may recruit, choose, call, appoint, and covenant with ministry personnel and other staff, and may end calls, appointments, and covenants with ministry personnel and other staff

- All those in paid accountable ministry must be a member of the College or its equivalent.
- All non-ministerial staffing must adhere to the policies established by the denominational council

## **2. REGIONAL COUNCILS**

### ***A. Description***

A regional council would be a regional decision-making body within the United Church comprised of approximately 100 to 150 Communities of Faith, or larger if regionally determined.

### ***B. Membership***

The regional council would be composed of:

- Two representatives for each community of faith which can include up to one Ministry Personnel or member of the order of ministry.

### ***C. Authority and Responsibility***

The regional council would have authority and responsibility for:

#### ***mission***

- To join collective heart, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, with a specific focus on the vision for mission and ministry within the boundaries of the region;
- providing support services to communities of faith especially those communities of faith in transition
- supporting the emergence of new communities of faith;
- facilitating and supporting partnerships among communities of faith, including clusters and networks.

#### ***covenanting with and providing services to communities of faith:***

- entering into a covenant with each community of faith, setting out guiding values, principles and responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith;
- recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship;
- reviewing and periodically auditing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council;
- assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies; providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
- providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
- creating regional policies for guiding communities of faith when buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith and regional property
- creating regional policies on the distribution of proceeds from the sale of property, oversee and approve the sale and the distribution of proceeds from the sale of property
- providing leadership training for ministers and lay persons as determined regionally;

***governance and administration***

- meeting at least annually,
- administering policy set by the denominational council;
- determining additional regional policies, if any.
- receiving, dealing with, and forwarding on proposals from communities of faith to the denominational council based on denominational policy;
- setting and managing its annual budget and setting any additional regional assessment for additional services the regional council wishes to undertake;
- participating in determining priorities for mission and ministry work through the Mission and Service Fund;
- managing regional archives;
- overseeing camps and incorporated ministries in the region;

***recognizing ministry personnel and those considering a ministerial vocation***

- celebrating retirements;
- appointing persons (i) to accompany a candidate on their pathway to ordination or commissioning, and (ii) to make a recommendation to the College of Ministry Personnel as to the candidate's fitness and readiness for ministry;
- appointing a person (i) to supervise a candidate in an internship, and (ii) make a recommendation to the College or its equivalent as to the candidate's fitness and readiness for ministry;
- ordaining or commissioning each candidate approved by the College or its equivalent for ordination;
- admitting ministers from other denominations who have been approved by the College or its equivalent for admission;
- readmitting ministers who have been approved by the College or its equivalent for readmission;
- recognizing designated lay ministers; and

- licensing lay members as licensed lay worship leaders.

#### ***D. Limitations***

All authority and responsibility of the regional council would be subject to:

- policies set by the denominational council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and any other area within the authority of the denominational council;
- the terms of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council; and
- the authority of the denominational council to assume control of the regional council in extraordinary circumstances where the regional council is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional policies.

#### ***E. Executive of the Regional Council***

The executive of the regional council would be the decision-making body for the Regional Council between meetings of the entire membership of the Regional Council

- ***Size:*** a fixed number set by the Regional Council.
- ***Membership:***
  - A President
  - Regional Secretary (a Regional Secretary may serve more than one region)
  - Lay members and members of the order of ministry elected by the Regional Council based on the need for named competencies as well as ensure diversity of voices
- ***Authority:***
  - Receiving an Accountability Report from the Regional Secretary on the effectiveness of delivering support and services to Communities of Faith.
  - Dealing with all unfinished matters referred to it by the regional council
  - Dealing with all routine and emergency work of the Regional Council that cannot wait until a gathering of the whole Regional Council

#### ***F. Staffing***

Each region would have staff to assist the regional council in meeting its responsibilities:

- staffing would be based on assessments, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and any other regional income;
- staffing would be based on priorities and needs as determined regionally;
- staff would be hired and managed by a regional secretary who reports to the General Secretary of the denominational council; and
- regional councils with more resources would be free to hire more staff, and sharing of all resources across the church would be encouraged.

### **3. DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL**

#### ***A. Description***

The denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church as both a denomination and a legal corporation.

**B. Membership**

The denominational council would consist of:

- Two representatives from each community of faith which can include one Ministry Personnel or order of ministry;
- the presiding officer or elder of each regional council;
- the immediate Past Moderator;
- the retiring Moderator; and
- the General Secretary of the denominational council.

**C. Authority and responsibility**

The denominational council would have authority and responsibility for:

***mission:***

- to join our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world.
- setting policies for the denomination on doctrine, worship, membership, governance, pastoral relations, property, and the entrance to paid accountable ministry;
- making decisions on denomination-shaping issues relating to public witness;

to serve as national voice for the denomination; and to work with ecumenical and inter-faith partners for a compassionate and just witness both in Canada and around the world

***governance and administration:***

- electing a Moderator;
- electing the executive of the denominational council;
- referring all unfinished matters to the executive of the denominational council;
- meeting once every three years in person, with members having the option of participating through electronic or equivalent means;
- meeting more frequently as required by secular law through electronic or equivalent means;
- approving the number and boundaries of regional councils and supporting them; dealing with proposals received from regional councils;
- setting a three-year budget framework for the church and determining the assessment of communities of faith for the three-year period;
- determining for communities of faith the cost of sending representatives to the triennial denominational council meeting by setting a standardized fee for all participants that would include travel costs; and
- maintaining the denominational archives.

***supporting ministry personnel and those considering a ministerial vocation***

- by financially supporting A College of Ministers or its equivalent

**D. Limitations**

This proposal does not affect the limitations that exist at the current time:

- ***remit:*** the Basis of Union may only be changed through the remit process, which requires the approval of a majority of the presbyteries and also, if the General Council considers it advisable because the change is substantive or denomination-shaping, pastoral charges;

- **membership requirements:** no terms of admission to full membership may be prescribed other than those laid down in the New Testament;
- **freedom of worship:** the freedom of worship enjoyed by churches at the time of union in 1925 may not be interfered with in the United Church;
- **property:** all policy on congregational property adopted by the denominational council must comply with the requirements set in The United Church of Canada Act, 1925.

#### ***E. Executive of the denominational council***

The executive of the denominational council would be the decision-making body for the United Church between meetings of the denominational council, within the following terms of reference:

- **size:** a fixed number between 12 and 18 members, with the exact number set by the denominational council
- **membership:**
  - the Moderator
  - the General Secretary of the General Council
  - a representative of the Aboriginal Ministries Council
  - lay members and members of the order of ministry elected by the denominational council based on regional council nominations and the need for named competencies as well as Aboriginal, francophone, racialized, and other diverse voices; and
- **authority:**
  - Receiving an Accountability Report from the General Secretary on the effectiveness of the staff in supporting the work of the denominational council.
  - dealing with all unfinished matters referred to it by the denominational council
  - dealing with all routine and emergency work of the denominational council between meetings of the denominational council
  - establishing standing and other committees, with the chair of each such committee to be a member of the executive of the General Council
  - exercising additional authority and subject to any limitations as set by the denominational council

#### ***F. Staffing***

The denominational council would have staff to assist it in meeting its responsibilities through:

- staffing based on assessments of communities of faith, grants from the Mission and Service Fund, and other denominational income;
- staffing based on the priorities and needs as determined nationally;
- administering denominational policies;
- providing centralized technical services such as information technology, communication, payroll, accounting, human resources, administration, and pension plan;
- Supporting the Moderator; and

- providing leadership in global partnerships and national-level ministry and mission work.

#### 4. CLUSTERS AND NETWORKS

Alongside the structure, there would also be:

- **clusters:** local clusters of communities of faith that would provide community and support for communities of faith and their leaders, and focus on worship, mission, learning, collegiality, and strategic planning; and
- **networks:** linking people working on specific issues (e.g. supportive housing, intercultural ministry, youth ministry) or for project work (e.g. event planning) that function through the whole church, depending on the issue.

**And that the 42nd General Council 2015 approve the elimination of the transfer and settlement processes for members of the order of ministry within the United Church, including the elimination of the General Council Transfer Committee and Conference Settlement Committees;**

**And further, that the 42nd General Council 2015 authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the reorganization and polity changes set out above.**

#### **Background:**

In reviewing the proposal for a Three-Council Model offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group, the Ottawa Presbytery expresses support that The United Church of Canada change from its current four-court structure (Pastoral Charge, Presbytery, Conference, General Council) to a three-council Model (Communities of Faith, Regional Councils, Denominational Council).

However, while the Ottawa Presbytery is supportive of the direction offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group, the Ottawa Presbytery does offer some substantive and significant changes to the proposal offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group. These changes include

1. Clarifications in “Authority and Responsibilities” of all three councils
  - a) Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that there be a consistency in the descriptions of the three Councils under “authority and responsibility.
  - b) Specifically, Ottawa Presbytery notes the importance of mission and has included and provided content to the “mission” of each of the three Councils (the original proposal only had mission under “Communities of Faith). The Ottawa Presbytery has drawn upon the wording in the “principles” explicated by the Comprehensive Review Task Group on page 700 of its report by using the phrase *joining our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society.*
  - c) In addition to outlining covenantal responsibilities, the Ottawa Presbytery believes that the covenants between Communities of Faith and Regional Councils also include guiding values and principles.



- d) For consistency purposes, all activities linked to “governance and administration” were grouped under one heading.
  - e) For consistency purposes, all activities related to support for Lay Leadership, Ministry Personnel, and those considering a vocation in ministry were grouped under one heading
2. Specification that at least two representatives from each Community of Faith be possible at all times, even those communities of faith without Ministry Personnel  
Ottawa Presbytery supports the principle that decision-making within the church be at least 50% laity and wishes to ensure the full participation of Communities of Faith who do not have Ministry Personnel. Ottawa Presbytery proposes that all Communities of Faith have two representatives to Regional and Denominational Councils of which up to one can be Ministry Personnel or order of ministry. This adjustment of policy will likely ensure a “tilt” towards lay representation.
  3. Specification of an “executive” for Communities of Faith and Regional Councils  
In the proposal of the Comprehensive Review Task Group, only the denominational council had explicated terms for an Executive. Ottawa Presbytery sees the values of explicating the existence and terms of an executive for all three Councils and uses the model offered by the Comprehensive Review Task Group for the Denominational Council for the remaining two Councils.
  4. Consistency in how each Council is staffed  
In the proposal of the Comprehensive Review Task Group, staffing of Communities of Faith was included in “authority and responsibility” while separated in the other Councils. For consistency, staffing of Communities of Faith is now a separate category.
  5. Direction on the size of Regional Councils  
Given that the Regional Councils are a decision making Council and that many of these decisions directly impact Communities of Faith, Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that the size of Regional Councils not be so large as to make them “remote” from Communities of Faith. For Ottawa Presbytery, it seems prudent that there is not too great a geographic distance between the Regional Council and the Communities of Faith. While recognizing the diversity that exists across the country and the need for regionally determined solutions, Ottawa Presbytery proposes that Regional Councils consist of 100 to 150 Communities of Faith unless it is regionally determined that the Regional Councils be larger.
  6. Direction on the Relationship of Regional Staff and Denominational Staff to the Executive.  
Given that The United Church of Canada is a church based on effective democracy, Regional Councils need to reflect a democratic voice by meeting at least annually (perhaps more often), democratically elect officers and an Executive, and ensure that staff have clear accountability structures to the Regional Council through its Executive.

7. Provide emphasis that Regional Councils focus on providing support services to Communities of Faith.

The Ottawa Presbytery supports empowerment of Communities of Faith through the reduction in the responsibilities of the proposed Regional Councils as compared to those now exercised by Conference and Presbyteries. Ottawa Presbytery supports the notion of covenant instead of oversight, though the Presbytery recognizes the need for oversight on sale of properties and adequate mechanisms to deal with situations where employment conditions are unacceptable. While many Communities of Faith will find this new organizational direction energizing, others will find the challenges associated with renewal and transformation daunting. For this reason, it is important for Regional Councils to provide effective support during this time of change and renewal. This requires an emphasis on the service aspect of Regional Council responsibilities so that energy is tilted towards supporting Communities of Faith as they deal with emergence and transformation as these Communities of Faith discern and implement new directions for their ministries. Some will with need support as they face closure. Regional Councils can also provide support through this change by encouraging Communities of Faith to find strength in clustering with one another.

8. Ensure that the Regional Council must provide clear guidelines and policies for disbursement of proceeds realized in the sale of property and other capital as well as approve and oversee the disbursements of such proceeds.

Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that Regional Councils must provide more than guidelines in the distribution of proceeds from sale of property and have an approval mechanism in place.

9. Explicate that the Denominational Council be responsible for funding the supports for the provision of a College of Ministers or its equivalent.

Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that the funding and provision of the College of Ministers or its equivalent be within the budget framework of the Denominational Council.

10. Funding Participation of Communities of Faith in the Denominational Council

Ottawa Presbytery concurs that the funding of participation in the Denominational Council come from Communities of Faith. For clarity sake, the cost of travel is included in the standardized fee. The Presbytery is of the view that “bursaries” not be offered because the amount and terms of these “bursaries” is not explicated. The Ottawa Presbytery is of the view that it is better not to promise something that may not be deliverable.

11. Support for maintaining the direction outlined by the Comprehensive Review Task Group in “Funding a New Model.”

Regional Councils will need to operate within the financial resources available in keeping with the principles of “Funding a New Model” proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Group. To this end, Ottawa Presbytery supports the following principles:

- a. Encourage the use of home offices for regional staff and the purchase of office supports such as photocopying and other services from local Communities of Faith
- b. Sharing of staff across Regional Council boundaries such as appointing Regional Secretaries who might supervise staff across several Regional Councils.
- c. Regional Staff remuneration mirror the Ministry Personnel Compensation scale.
- d. Regional Executives conduct most if not all of their meetings through teleconference or other technologies minimizing expenses for travel.
- e. Costs for Regional gatherings be shared equitably among Communities of Faith.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

This Proposal was approved by Ottawa Presbytery.

The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**M&O 2 NUMBER OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

**Originating Body:** Seaway Valley Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Division of Assessments equitably between regions

**Staffing Implications if known:** Equitable staffing between regions

**Source of Funding if known:** National Assessment (if applicable)

**Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council direct that:**

**the Regional Councils be comprised of approximately 100 to 150 communities of faith (20–30 regions), leaving open the option of larger Regional Councils if desired.**

**Background:**

Canada has a huge landmass in which many of our communities of faith struggle to maintain collegiality and community with one another. The report “United in God’s Work” before GC42 implies (though never names) a smaller number of Regional Councils to replace Presbyteries and Conferences. At this time, there are over 900 presbyteries and 13 Conferences. The number proposed is in line with the year 2000 remit to the Church and in keeping with the ethos of contextuality and reasonable localness in administration.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Seaway Valley Presbytery voted non-concurrence.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

### **M&O 3 REPRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL**

**Originating Body:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council direct that:**

**each community of faith may choose two representatives to participate in regional council and denominational council of which up to one can be Ministry Personnel or a member of the Order of Ministry.**

**Background:**

1. Whereas one of the principal drives behind the commissioning of the comprehensive review was to give direction to the church on ways to reduce our costs and live within our means
2. Whereas the rejection of regional representation in favour of representation of every community of faith on the National Council will vastly increase travel costs ( to be paid by each community of faith) and meeting costs ( to be incurred by the National church)
3. Whereas a meeting of such a large group would make decision making unwieldy and thus increase the possibility that decision making would, in reality, be done by a small executive
4. Whereas the United Church has a long history of favouring democratic decision-making over hierarchical top-down decision-making

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: STRENGTHEN COOPERATION AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER CHURCHES**

**Origin:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Net impact should be marginal

**Staffing Implications if known:** Net impact should be marginal

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council direct that:**

**the mission of the Denominational Council include: “to serve as the national voice for the denomination; and to work with ecumenical and interfaith partners for a compassionate and just society both in Canada and around the world.”**

### **Background:**

Originating in serious resource challenges, the Comprehensive Review Report proposes sweeping changes in The United Church of Canada intended to free the Church to “Chase the Spirit” in new ways, while respecting new realities—a strong new pillar to uphold the Church’s values and its work. The vision is empowering but does not go far enough.

There is a risk that the changes proposed will not deal adequately with the problems enumerated, that more and more churches will continue to fold; and that ties among and between local communities and regional and national bodies will weaken and some even disappear, despite the creation of non-binding clusters and networks. All churches are facing similar constraints, some more immediate, but all carry debts to the future coming due in foreseeable time frames. All churches worship one God; all follow one Leader. All denominations acknowledge Jesus’ plea that this lead to greater common purpose among them.

The United Church in its origin and stated goals describes itself as a united and uniting church. Yet the Comprehensive Review Report, addressing fundamental issues related to the future viability of the Church, hardly mentions relationships outside the church. It focuses on internal matters. But this is only part of the story—part of the opportunity and the potential response. It is time to resume actively imagining and carrying through “the policy of the United Church to foster the spirit of unity...” (The Basis of Union 1.2) among those who follow Jesus Christ and those of like mind and purpose. The crises (and the opportunities) before the Church are no less important now than then. This would offer a second strong pillar.

The hope would be that the body of Christ in the world would be prepared to respond to the urgent beckoning of the Spirit and work together toward a future we cannot yet fully see but where we are confident we will continue to find God already present before us, acting and inviting. Such enhanced common purpose and action would strengthen the ability of various parts of the body to be an effective presence in ministering to “the poor and needy” of all sorts and conditions (i.e. to Christ); and strengthen the message of good news that Jesus still speaks to all.

While the openness should be broad, initial conversations might begin more modestly, such as with The Anglican Church of Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and possibly some others, as well as examining ways with groups such as KAIROS to develop, strengthen, and deepen the relationship, and with the Canadian Council of Churches to find new and more active channels for working and speaking together more broadly.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**M&O 5 PASTORAL OVERSIGHT**

**Originating Body:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** co-ordinating time from Conference Personnel Minister, as well as volunteer time and energy

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**That Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes:**

**The 42nd General Council direct that:**

**in the Three Council Model that there be greater clarity in Regional Council processes for accountability to nurture, enable and respond to Communities of Faith who are not meeting their covenantal commitments or need support in meeting their covenantal commitments; processes including but not limited to:**

- a) **informal and formal Conflict Resolution;**
- b) **adherence to all denominational policies including employment and workplace Health and Safety standards.**

**Background:**

Amongst the most important activities of the church is mutual oversight and care. Visitation of Pastoral Charges, were envisioned to offer support, encouragement and guidance, and to ensure the effective work of the pastoral charge/mission unit. Pastoral relations oversight meant that each new call or appointment was reviewed to ensure that it conformed to the policies of the United Church, for the protection of both the Church and of personnel. From time to time, informal and formal processes were needed to address conflict or other large problems.

Restructuring of the church should not interrupt the ongoing support and protection that these pastoral oversight functions provide; however, the model proposed currently in “Chasing the Spirit” does not articulate how these oversight functions will be presented.

While there is currently a proposal to implement a College of Ministers, it will be important to outline the responsibility of the presbytery or future regional body, and role of the College of

Ministers, so that personnel have adequate oversight, support in times of dispute, and recourse after decisions are made.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**M&O 8 AMENDMENT TO THE THREE COUNCIL MODEL REGARDING  
DELEGATE PARTICIPATION AND VOTING AT DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL  
MEETINGS**

**Origin:** Peggy Kinsley, Presbyterian, Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** modest

**Staffing Implications if known:** some additional staff time will be required

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council (2015) amend the Proposal “A Three-Council Model,”  
Section 3, Denominational Council, C. Authority and Responsibility,  
Finance and Administration, by adding the following text:**

**“While the attendance in person of delegates elected to the Denominational  
Council is preferable, provision will be made for delegates not able to attend the  
triennial meeting or other meetings to participate and vote remotely:**

- a) Live streaming of the Council deliberations be broadcast**
- b) For delegates who do not have facilities for viewing live streaming, that  
such facilities be provided in a convenient location**
- c) Delegates who have the electronic facilities be given a secure, legal means  
to vote electronically in real time.”**

**Background:**

I believe it is imperative that all elected delegates be given a fair chance to participate and vote. Otherwise, there could be unfair representation by either region, rural and urban communities of faith, lay versus ministry personnel. Equal representation between ministry personnel and lay participants does not achieve proportional representation by any stretch of the imagination. If one does not build in procedures to allow all delegates to participate, this situation could be exacerbated even more.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

This Proposal was not supported by Ottawa Presbytery.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 9 EVALUATION AFTER IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW CHANGES**

**Origin:** Peggy Kinsley, Presbyter, Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**that the 42nd General Council (2015) define objectives/desired ends for each of the major or important changes proposed; educate the church on these objectives; decide upon indices to measure the degree to which these will have been attained; specify evaluation timeframes, varying by item, and report on the outcome of the evaluation process to the wider church.**

### **Background:**

Setting specific objectives linked to indices for how progress toward them is to be assessed helps everyone better understand what is being done and to contribute toward its attainment. Having difficulty defining such objectives and their associated indices is a mark of a poorly planned change. Setting a review period provides the impetus to identify and actually fix things which didn't work out as wished.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

This Proposal received strong support from Ottawa Presbytery. Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 13 ENABLING JUSTICE WORK THROUGH TIMES OF CHANGE**

**Originating Body:** JGER Committee of Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Staff salaries and programme funding

**Staffing Implications if known:** prioritizing of justice work

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission & Service Fund

**The Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council:**

- 1. Mandate that an enabling level of expertise and allocation of denominational staff be dedicated to facilitating justice work including the following areas:**
  - a. Eco-justice/environment/climate change**
  - b. Refugees**
  - c. Global Partnerships**
  - d. Water and Food Security**



- e. **Economic Justice – which can be integrated into all areas of justice work;**
2. **Mandate that staff working regionally incorporate justice work into their staff plan and collaboration with networks;**
3. **Mandate identification, as clearly as possible, of the areas of justice work that will be animated or resourced by the expertise and capacity of denominational staff.**

**Background:**

We witness to our faith in a just and life-giving God by advocating for justice and peace. “The founders of this church believed that ours is a living faith, a faith that is expressed not only in ministry, but also in mission in and with the world” [formerly on [www.united-church.ca/justice](http://www.united-church.ca/justice)].

The document, *Toward 2025: A Justice-Seeking/Justice-Living Church*, notes that, “It is important that the elements of a justice-seeking/justice-living church do not remain as ideals that we ascribe to and claim as part of who we are, but rather that we seek to define concrete steps necessary for us to live out these characteristics” ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “Toward 2025”).

It is evident, through our projected number of denominational and regional staff funded by M&S (82 staff, 55 at the denominational office, 12 regionally deployed denominational staff, and 15 regional staff\*), that the United Church will not be able to maintain its current level of justice work by denominational staff. Some important areas of our justice work, such as Indigenous justice and right relations, are specifically mandated in the Comprehensive Review. Denominational and regional staff are generally mandated to do justice work as part of their overall mandate. It is expected that much of the justice work of the United Church will take place in networks.

It would be easy for any of the four areas of justice work listed in the proposal to become overlooked or marginalized, and all are areas of increasing urgency in our time. We are becoming increasingly aware of the impact and implications of climate change, and that how we live on our planet impacts the future viability of all species, including humans. Climate change, environmental destruction and contamination, war and political instability are also causing increased human migration and numbers of refugees.

Participation in partnerships has become an essential part of social justice work within local communities of faith, across Canada, and in the global context. The assumption of this proposal would be that the UCC continue substantial organizational support to partners such as Kairos, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Citizens for Public Justice and church bodies such as Canadian Council of Churches and World Council of Churches. The work of these organizations provides staff, resource development, and mutual support for our justice work.

The United Church has developed incredible expertise within its staff, who themselves have become integral members of regional, national and global networks. “Doing work” is so much

more than having assigned portfolios. “Reassigning portfolios” to remaining staff can cloud the fact that we have lost both expertise and capacity to do some of the work that we had seen as important. Clearly identifying what justice work will be animated by national staff, and the justice work that will no longer be nationally resourced, enables regions, networks, and collectives/clusters and individual communities of faith to know where the resource people are, and to determine how they themselves might animate justice work.

\*See Backgrounder 10 – Finances, Table 5, page 8 ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review Backgrounder”).

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**M&O 17 RECOGNITION IN PRINCIPLE OF FRANCOPHONES**

**Originating Body:** Consistoire Laurentien

**Financial implications if known:** None

**Staffing implications if known:** None

**Source of funding if known:** None

**The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**that the 42nd General Council:**

- a) **Reaffirm that the francophone presence is fundamental and essential to the national identity of The United Church of Canada;**
- b) **Request that any future structural change include measures to ensure a continued and dynamic presence for this facet of the church’s identity;**
- c) **Work explicitly to prioritize the consolidation and development of our church’s French and bilingual missions and ministries as a vitally important part of its national identity.**
- d) **Ensure that the recommendations of the National Strategy for Ministries in French adopted by the Executive (PMM 14 of the General Council Executive, November 2014) be incorporated into the planning and budgeting process for the next three-year period and encourage the follow-up and implementation of the said Ministries in French Strategies.**

**Background:**

The United Church strives to be relevant and sensitive to different realities across the country and, consequently, is positioning itself to be able to better respond to the needs of a constantly changing society. In order to foster the development of French ministries, the Executive of

General Council approved a bilingualism protocol recognizing that The United Church of Canada is an officially bilingual church (PMM 8, French Language Translation Strategy, March 2014) and a National Strategy for Ministries in French (PMM 14, General Council Executive, November 2014).

The United Church of Canada is currently undergoing a major transition in order to better fulfill its mission to a Canadian society that is searching for spirituality in a time of rapid change.

Francophones constitute 25% of the Canadian population. This segment of the population, which is concentrated in Québec but present across the entire country, is a vitally important domestic mission field for The United Church of Canada. A significant number of migrants and immigrants from French-speaking countries settle in all regions of Canada.

For historical reasons, French-speaking Canadians (one quarter of the population) remain largely unaware of The United Church of Canada, while at the same time the church's French ministries continue to be marginalized, unnoticed or, even worse, subject to generalized indifference.

In 2014, the Executive of General Council ratified a bilingualism protocol recognizing that The United Church of Canada is officially bilingual.

In 2009, the 40th General Council meeting in Kelowna declared that "Francophone ministries are an integral part of the identity, mission and vision for the future of The United Church of Canada."

The proposals arising from the Comprehensive Review, however, do not give the Ministries in French a clearly defined and adequate place in the new structure and we want in this time to build on decades of affirmative efforts.

The United Church of Canada's witness in French should be clearly visible and explicitly recognized as part of the church's national identity, for the credibility of that witness to a quarter of the country's population is at stake. To achieve this, The United Church of Canada must ensure that its francophone constituency has real and effective means of decision-making.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Consistoire Laurentien voted concurrence

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**M&O 18 FRANCOPHONE DECISION-MAKING NETWORK OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Originating Body:** Consistoire Laurentien

**Financial implications if known:** None

**Staffing implications if known:** None

**Source of funding if known:** Denominational Council and Mission and Service Fund

**The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council create a decision-making francophone Network, with no fixed territory, to be composed of representatives of all French, bilingual and allophone ministries and communities of faith doing recognized ministry in French. This decision-making francophone Network be accorded the rights arising from the new structure and would:**

- a) **Be composed of representatives of all ministries and communities of faith (current and future) for whom French is at least one of the languages spoken as well as of staff and institutions (United Theological College, community ministries, chaplains) working in French;**
- b) **Be responsible for:**
  1. **Stimulating the creation of new ministries;**
  2. **Supporting existing ministries as they develop or transition;**
  3. **Increasing The United Church of Canada’s visibility in French;**
  4. **Identifying sources of funding for existing and future ministries;**
  5. **Ensuring that when ministries come to a close, their experience and heritage is passed on;**
  6. **Sharing experience and nurturing a vision and a desire for creativity in the development of ministries in French;**
- c) **Function and hold meetings in French;**
- d) **Make decisions pertaining to overall strategies for ministries in French and hold the corresponding powers, specifically to:**
  1. **Establish the criteria to be used in deciding which new forms of ministry are to be supported by the “Chasing the Spirit” fund and establish criteria for evaluating new ministries at the end of their trial period;**
  2. **Appoint candidates to the seats reserved for persons associated with French ministries at the decision-making table of the College of Ministers;**
  3. **Appoint candidates to the two seats reserved for persons associated with French ministries on the Denominational Council Executive;**
  4. **Choose the members of the College of Ministers subcommittee responsible for training for ministries in French;**

- e) **Receive a budget specifically allocated for the work with Francophones, with one part to come from the Denominational Council for operational activities and another part to come from the Mission and Service Fund for support and development activities targeting both existing communities and the establishment of new ministries. In regions of the country where the French-speaking population represents a majority or a significant minority, a fixed proportion of each region’s budget shall be allocated to work targeting the Francophone population.**

**Background:**

The United Church of Canada aims to be accessible to anyone seeking spirituality, whatever their cultural or linguistic identity, and is committed to providing services in Canada’s two official languages: this is the vision and objectives of The United Church of Canada for French and bilingual ministries.

In 2009, the 40th General Council meeting in Kelowna enthusiastically adopted (pp. 280–284) the report “A Vision for French Ministries in The United Church of Canada” [pp. 719–730 in French and pp. 730–741 in English, *Record of Proceedings 40th General Council 2009*] declaring that “Francophone ministries are an integral part of the identity, mission and vision for the future of The United Church of Canada.” That General Council committed “the Church to strengthening and expanding ministries in French and instructed the General Council Executive to implement the report proposals.”

The General Council Executive also received proposals to prepare recommendations “on how the Francophone constituency can assume greater responsibility in decisions and policies affecting Ministries in French (MiF) either within existing structures or new emerging structures” (GCE November 2011).

At the current time, Ministries in French participate in the regional and national connexional tables in order to facilitate their collaborative work. These tables have no decision-making powers, which limits their impact on the consolidation of ministries.

The creation of a decision-making francophone Network as proposed herein responds to this prophetic vision as well as to the real needs of the Francophone constituency. This vision has been manifest throughout the history of the United Church and is now, more than ever, relevant for the future.

While we rejoice at the transforming vision proposed in the report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group, we are dismayed by the lack of place accorded to the Francophone constituency and its contribution to the identity of The United Church of Canada. This represents a major and inexplicable step backwards, specifically with respect to the 40th General Council and subsequent sessions of the General Council Executive.

Between 1970 and 2002, thanks to much more enlightened support within the United Church, Francophones saw an increase in their visibility and decision-making power regarding the development of strategies adapted to their unique context and reality. Hard work over time

produced real fruit, including the creation of the Laurentien Presbytery (1985), the MiFWG (Ministries in French Working Group), the Standing Committee for French Ministries (COPERMIF) and, finally, the Ministries in French Unit ((UMiF) in 2002. UMiF became operational in 2004 but was then dissolved in 2009—against the unanimous will of the Francophone constituency—to be replaced by a cluster within a large unit.

The proposals of the Comprehensive Review Task Group would reduce Francophone ministries to a volunteer network with no decision-making power, no budget, no staff and no visible, stable institutional base. At the same time, the new structure would eliminate, without offering a replacement, the only Francophone presbytery, i.e. the only existing francophone decision-making structure, with its forum for discussion, solid budget and public positions.

The creation of a decision-making francophone Network would affirm the fundamental commitment of The United Church of Canada to Ministries in French, as well as its willingness to once again give Francophones responsibility for affirming their identity, developing as a constituency, and upholding an unassimilated and therefore credible witness within our Church and society.

The constitution of a decision-making francophone Network is vital for the future, the credibility, the visibility and the witness of both The United Church of Canada as a whole and its Francophone constituency.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Consistoire Laurentien voted concurrence

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**M&O 19 SUPPORT FOR MINISTRIES IN FRENCH**

**Originating Body:** Consistoire Laurentien

**Financial implications if known:** None

**Staffing implications if known:** None

**Source of funding if known:** Chasing the Spirit

**The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council reiterate the goal of The United Church of Canada to proclaim its message to the large percentage of the Canadian population whose first or second language is French by implementing the following measures:**

- a) **Allocating at least 10% of funding for the “Chasing the Spirit” program to the development of new ministries in French;**
- b) **Ensuring that Francophones are represented when criteria and analysis tools are developed for the assessment of projects submitted to this program;**

- c) **Ensuring that Francophones are represented on the body responsible for assessing projects and approving funding;**
- d) **Providing funding for the translation and production of resources for new ministries in French as well as for the contextual training of leaders for ministries in French and bilingual settings;**
- e) **Ensuring that some of the staff and volunteers responsible for sharing resources and stimulating spiritual renewal have the linguistic and cultural skills required to perform their duties in a Francophone or bilingual setting.**

**Background:**

The United Church is a national institution serving the entire territory of Canada. As a national church, it needs to serve the large percentage of the population whose primary spoken language is French, whether as their mother tongue or a second language.

In 2009, the 40th General Council voted to create five new positions for ministries in French, two of which now exist. Creation of the three other positions approved in 2009 requires a specific source of funding.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Consistoire Laurentien voted concurrence.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**NL 1 A NEW MODEL**

**Origin:** Kathy Brett & Brian Colbourne, Newfoundland/Labrador Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** To be determined by Conference Executive

**Staffing Implications if known:** Consultation with four staff

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Newfoundland and Labrador Conference request that:**

1. **The 42nd General Council permit the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference to pursue the implementation of a new model, and that a task group be put in place to study and determine the model which would best fit our Conference needs based on financial and human resources presently available.**
2. **That if the 42nd General Council approves the Comprehensive Review Proposals that the Newfoundland/Labrador Conference be a pilot.**
3. **That if the 42nd General Council does not approve the Comprehensive Review Proposals that the Newfoundland/Labrador Conference put a task group in**

**place to study and determine a model for the Conference that can be funded within the means of the Conference.**

**Background:**

Considering the present and future financial limitations, the new model would be better stewardship to streamline the existing model for Conference and District.

**Timing:** At the rise of General Council

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**Action:** the Conference agreed with proposal and that it be forwarded to the 42nd General Council

**Motion:** That the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference agreed with the proposal which came with point one and added the following changes:

1. That if the 42nd General Council approves the Comprehensive Review Proposals that the NL Conference be a pilot.
2. That if the 42nd General Council does not approve the Comprehensive Review Proposals that the NL Conference put a task group in place to study and determine a model for the Conference that can be funded within the means of the Conference.

**NL 3 TASK GROUP TO ESTABLISH REGIONAL COUNCIL BOUNDARIES**

**Origin:** Russell Small

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** General Council Staff responsible for Regions and representatives from Conferences.

**Newfoundland and Labrador Conference proposes that:**

**That the 42nd General Council set up a task group that would establish the boundaries of the Regional Councils so the 43rd General Council will be able to make informed decisions regarding the same.**

**Intermediate Court Action:**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Conference agreed with proposal and forward it to the 42nd General Council



**SK 2 TRAINING AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF MINISTRY PERSONNEL****Originating Body:** Chinook Presbytery**Financial Implications:** None**Staffing Implications:** None**Source of Funding:** Not Applicable**The Chinook Presbytery proposes that:****The 42 General Council (2015):**

- **approve the Accountability of Ministry Personnel to The United Church of Canada be to the General Council of the United Church through a Training and Accountability Section within the Permanent Committee on Ministry Employment Policy and Services. (not through an “arms-length” College of Ministers and not requiring renewals of membership)**
- **as to Governance, this Training and Accountability Section would be overseen by a 20-member Board, with the composition of the board set by denominational policy to include:**
  - **equal number of: (1) ministers whether ordained, diaconal, or designated lay ministers and (2) lay people;**
  - **ensuring representation of each of ordained, diaconal, and designated lay ministers;**
  - **ensuring representation of Aboriginal ministries;**
  - **election of lay persons on a regional basis; and**
  - **election of ministry representatives by their peers on a regional basis.**

**The Training and Accountability Section would have the following three committees, composed of members of the Board, with each committee to include at least one minister and one layperson:**

- **Admission and Standards Committee: to assess (1) candidates for ordination or commissioning, {and designated lay ministers, unless they are to remain regionally accountable as is current} (2) ministers seeking admission from other denominations; and (3) UCC ministers seeking readmission.**
  - **Complaints Committee: to assess complaints about ministry personnel, order investigations, order a formal hearing, and determine other appropriate outcomes. Complaints about effectiveness in ministry would continue to require 10 signatures from the ministry unit where the clergy serve; and**
  - **Hearings Committee: to hold formal hearings of complaints and determine appropriate outcomes. Only the Hearings Committee has authority to place a minister’s name on the Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary).**
- **as to Authority and Responsibilities:**
    - **the Training and Accountability Section would maintain an up-to-date list of Ordained, Commissioned and Designated United Church ministry**

- personnel and ministers from other denominations who have been approved to enter the admissions process,**
- **Congregations and other communities of faith would only be permitted to call, appoint, or hire people who are on this list or United Church ministry students approved for internships and supply positions. All calls and appointments must be reported to this Training and Accountability Section so that an accurate list of ministry personnel in active service can be maintained.**
  - **all people in paid ministry in The United Church of Canada would be accountable through this Section, including ministry students and candidates for admission who are taking courses towards being credentialed in The United Church of Canada.**
  - **the Section would have authority and responsibility for:**
    - (1) **the assessment of candidates, ministers seeking admission from other denominations, and ministers seeking readmission to ministry in the United Church; and**
    - (2) **the oversight and discipline of ministry personnel and all those described in (1) above, according to policies and standards set by the General Council [or denominational council].**
  - **the Conference [or “regional council,” if approved through the United Church’s legislative process] would remain responsible for the ordination and commissioning of members of the order of ministry and recognition of designated lay ministers.**
- **authorize a Category 3 remit to presbyteries and pastoral charges to test the will of the church with respect to the establishment of a Training and Accountability Section as set out above.**

**Background:**

In continuity with almost all other Christian denominations’ theology of ministry, and with our own denominational theology and practice, Ordination to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care continues to be understood as a lifetime vocation, suspended only by disciplinary action of the denomination or intentional resignation by a minister.

In continuity with most other Christian denominations’ theology of ministry, and with our own denominational theology and practice, Commissioning to the Diaconal Ministry continues to be understood as a lifetime vocation, suspended only by disciplinary action of the denomination or intentional resignation by a minister.

People who are trained and affirmed as Designated Lay Ministers, unless they are to remain accountable to regional bodies (current or revised) take on the mantle of clergy and are placed in the same position of trust and authority as the other orders of ministry, should be subject to, and beneficiaries of, the same governance as the other orders of ministry.

There is a need to streamline our United Church of Canada decision-making model.

Theology of ministry is important and needs to be in continuity with Reform Protestant churches with whom we are most closely associated. Within this theology, ministry personnel need to be trained by, supported by, and responsible to the whole church and not to a vocational association. The Church cannot abdicate its responsibility to clergy to a vocational association. Even if this were not our theology of ministry, there are not enough members of United Church clergy to make a “College of Ministers” an effective body.

Having all files of ministry personnel: where they are serving, pensions, group insurance etc. handled through one division should be helpful to all.

(An Alternative to that proposed by the Comprehensive Review Final Report because it represents a major and unacceptable change in theology of ministry)

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

## **SK 6 OVERSIGHT OF “COMMUNITIES OF FAITH” UNDER THE PROPOSED THREE-COURT MODEL**

**Originating Body:** Chinook Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Chinook Presbytery proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- **Adopt a new model which has explicit, required provisions for oversight of communities of faith by their governing court, perhaps including, but not limited to, the following:**
  - **Under the proposed three-court model of The United Church of Canada, each community of faith holding a covenant with a Regional Council of the United Church must be subject to inspection by the same;**
  - **One or more representative(s) of the Regional Council of the United Church be recommended to attend a worship service at each community of faith with which that Regional Council of the United Church holds a covenant, at least once per year, as part of the audit of a community of faith’s self-assessment;**
- **The result of the audit of worship of a community of faith is that the Regional Council of the United Church may impose special or additional**

**requirements on that community of faith in order for the community of faith to maintain its covenant with the Regional Council of the United Church;**

- **One or more representative(s) of the Regional Council of the United Church be recommended to attend a meeting of the governing body of each community of faith with which that Regional Council of the United Church holds a covenant, at least once per year;**
- **Changes in pastoral relations between a community of faith and their current or proposed ministry personnel must have the consent of the Regional Council of the United Church;**
- **The Denominational Council have a set of unifying requirements for all covenants between a community of faith and the Regional Council of the United Church, which may include certain points mentioned above, and which must include guidelines for a community of faith’s self-assessment;**
- **The new model has explicit provisions outlining when the Regional Council has the authority to “step in” to manage a community of faith.**

**Background:**

The theological and doctrinal consistency of United Church congregations across Canada is fundamental to our identity as The United Church of Canada.

To claim the title of a congregation or community of faith of The United Church of Canada requires that said congregation uphold the policies and doctrines of The United Church of Canada.

The proposed three-court model requires all communities of faith of the United Church to maintain a covenant with a Regional Council of the United Church. Maintaining an honest, truthful, and open covenant requires regular contact and clear obligations between both parties.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Transmitted without Concurrence

**SK 7 STRENGTHENING THE REGIONAL COUNCILS – AN ALTERNATIVE TO AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY AS DESCRIBED IN COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW PROPOSALS, “A THREE-COUNCIL MODEL” AND “FUNDING A NEW MODEL”**

**Originating Body:** Wascana Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** Unknown at this time

**Staffing Implications:** Unknown at this time

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Wascana Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- **approve in principle the Three-Council Structure subject to the following:**
  - 1) **boundaries for the Regional Councils be concurrent with the present Conference boundaries *until the rise of the 43rd General Council.***
  - 2) **decisions on the precise membership, authority and responsibilities of the Regional Councils and Denominational Council be determined at the 43rd General Council, following rationalization to be done within Regional Councils and the Denominational Council in the interim period.**

**Issues to be addressed during the 3 year period of rationalization:**

- **Effective and efficient oversight of all of the ministry and mission being carried out in the name of The United Church of Canada in each region/conference, including the formal and informal governance structures needed for each region.**
- **Deciding upon what formula will be used to determine assessments throughout the church, including consideration of the differing types of ministries and communities of faith.**
- **Staffing needs for each region (to be determined by the region and to carry out their ministries under the oversight of each region).**
- **Effective and efficient functioning of the Denominational Council as it carries out its essential responsibilities of setting policies necessary to unite the whole United Church (property, pastoral relations, pensions and benefits, theology, global partnerships, public witness) and technical services such as information technology, payroll, accounting; and the election and support of the Moderator.**
- **Determining the structures for effective, accessible, representative decision-making Councils for each region and for the denomination as a**

- whole. Communities of faith should not pay for representatives to Council meetings. Very large bodies cannot do real participatory decision making.**
- **Regional responsibility for nurturing the identity of the United Church and discerning and expressing public witness in each region.**
  - **How the United Church will promote mission, including justice-seeking throughout the church**
  - **Addressing in concrete ways the possible growth of financial inequity in the regions.**
- 3) the following principles guide the budgeting process for The United Church of Canada:**
- **Spend only what is received, which will require at least an \$11 million reduction in spending by 2018 from current 2015 spending levels.**
  - **Use the Mission and Service Fund to fund only mission activities such as grants to partners; overseas personnel; mission support grants within Canada; investing in new ministries; supporting renewal within the continuing communities of faith; providing theological education for ministry personnel and laity.**
  - **Mission and Service funds will not be spent on staff salaries in the Denominational Council or the Regional Councils after 2018.**
  - **All staff work carried out by staff of the Denominational Council and the Regional Councils will be defined as ministry. This ministry work would be funded by sharing assessments gathered from communities of faith by the Regional Councils. Each Regional Council will keep 85% of the assessments and will give 15% of the assessments to the Denominational Council.**
- **The Denominational Council will make decisions regarding the use of the Mission & Service Fund until such time as the 43rd General Council makes further decisions.**
  - **Aboriginal funding needs to be continued—in the interim it will continue to come from the General Council budget and after 2018 would come from assessments.**
  - **Regional differences require differing approaches to organization and governance.**

- **Staff and human resources are most effective and efficient when they are closest to the active ministries and communities of faith – the core of the United Church.**

**Background:**

Assumptions guiding this proposal:

1. Need for change exists because of declining membership and insufficient resources, both of which may have resulted from perceived failure to remain relevant and adapt to cultural shifts.
2. Structural change without addressing the issue of relevance and adaptation may have only short-term benefits.
3. To do nothing is not an option.
4. Regional differences require differing approaches.
5. Dealing with each proposal put forward by the CRTG in detail may be counter-productive, therefore, we should concentrate on major issues.
6. An important part of the identity of The United Church of Canada is being conciliar.

“Conciliar” means:

- Each Council is made up of members of other Councils
- Shared responsibilities for finances and functions. Each Council has the authority to raise finances and make decisions about the use of its financial resources.

Currently 86 Presbyteries and 13 Conferences fund their work through assessments of congregations. It has been proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Group that in the future those assessments would be divided, with the successors to those 99 bodies receiving 50% and 1 Denominational Council receiving the other 50%. Plus the Mission and Service Fund would continue to be collected and used by decisions of the Denominational Council. Other sources of funding, such as retail sales, bequests and investments would still be available to the Denominational Council. This is a significant centralization of financial resources and the power that goes with them.

As the Denominational Council rationalizes how to do its work with the funds available to it, it will be able to negotiate with regions about where to most effectively place the program staff for leadership in ministry and mission from the current General Council Office, thus placing them closer to the communities of faith. Development of resources can efficiently be shared amongst regions, given the technological advances in resource production and electronic communication.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

**ANW 14 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW, *UNITED IN GOD'S WORK*:  
REPRESENTATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of attending meetings

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council ensure that, in the Three-Council Model proposed by *United in God's Work*, provision is made for the full voting participation of the representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women (UCW) in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

In 1960 in Edmonton, the United Church General Council approved the uniting of the Woman's Association (WA) and Woman's Missionary Society (WMS) to form a new organization for the women to "share in a much more meaningful way in the work of the church within the Congregation, Presbytery, Conference and in various boards of the church under the General Council." (*Ordinary Heroes: Celebrating United Church Women*, 2012, page 21)

The proposals from *United in God's Work* offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that the (UCW) play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

The United Church Women have traditionally supported their congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW, many congregations would cease to exist long ago. It should also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service (M&S) Fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was donated to M&S by the UCW throughout Canada.

Including a representative of the (UCW) as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and work of the UCW to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.



**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by the Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**ANW 7 MEMBERSHIP OF THE UCW IN THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

**Origin:** St. Paul Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) appoint a representative from the national United Church Woman as a voting member on the General Council Executive, and subsequently, to the Denominational Council Executive.**

**Background:**

The United Church Women have, historically and currently, provided significant contribution to the life of The United Church of Canada.

The United Church Women have, historically and currently, provided significant financial contribution to The United Church of Canada.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**BQ 6 FULL VOTING STATUS BE GRANTED TO THE NATIONAL UNITED CHURCH WOMEN PRESIDENT**

**Origin:** Bay of Quinte Conference United Church Women

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** Already funded by General Council

**The Bay of Quinte Conference United Church Women proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Grant full voting privileges of the General Council Executive to the NUCW President effective with the approval of this proposal at the 42nd General Council (2015).**

**This proposal is to be directed to the General Council Executive for action and may be referred to the appropriate committee for permanent action.**

**Background:**

The UCW was formed in 1962 and at its inception was the largest adult organization within the church. Membership is declining, much as church membership is declining but the UCW is still a significant presence in the church.

In 2013, our National President attended the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women area meeting in Chicago. She also was present at two General Council meetings during which the Comprehensive Review Task Group was named; the 2013 budget was discussed and approved; met with members of the Ghana Calvary Methodist United Church congregation during which an agreement was signed establishing an association between our two denominations. The executive supported the call of the Native Women's Assembly of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations for the Government of Canada to strike a national inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. In August she attended the World Federation of Methodist and United Church Women's League national meeting in Regina.

The NUCW has taken up a five-year commitment to fight child poverty in Canada. "We are looking to serve as an advocate for children and youth. Who better than the UCW to intentionally look at child poverty in our local communities, our Conference and beyond!" says our new National President, Phyllis Buchner.

Statistics provided show that the UCW has raised \$129 million for the Mission and Service Fund in its 52 years of activity. An organization capable of this commitment and dedication to our church and our Mission & Service is entitled to have our National President as a full voting member of the General Council Executive.

As our 50th Anniversary Initiative in 2012, the UCW raised \$268,000 nationally, for the Morogoro Training Centre in Tanzania to train midwives in maternal health in the region. Our goal had been \$50,000. Each course costs \$15,000 and the cost per participant is \$425. As of

September 2013, seven (7) courses had been held. The Training Centre has determined that it is more efficient to travel to where the women are, than to have them come to the Training Centre. By the end of 2014, our donations will have trained 500 women in the region and have contributed to improved maternal health immensely.

We are an organization 35,000 strong that provides opportunities for Christian Witness, Study, Fellowship and Service for the total mission of our Church.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Conference carried this proposal.

**HAM 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD'S WORK  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Waterloo U.C.W. Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Waterloo U.C.W. Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God's Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

**HAM 6 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD'S WORK  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Halton U.C.W. Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Halton U.C.W. Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God's Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone; \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action: (from the April 28/15 Halton Presbytery Full Court meeting)**

**MOTION:** Amy Hill/Mary Patterson

That Halton Presbytery support the proposal from Halton Presbyterial U.C.W. that the 42nd General Council ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

**CARRIED** (3 abstentions)

This proposal will be transmitted to Hamilton Conference with concurrence.

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

**LON 6 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP "UNITED IN GOD'S WORK"  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Algoma United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Algoma United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Communities of Faith, Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God's Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Algoma Presbytery agreed with this proposal April 25, 26, 2015.

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 7 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**ORIGINATING BODY:** Elgin United Church Women Presbyterial

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:** None

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

**Elgin United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) Ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Elgin Presbytery agreed with this proposal April 21, 2015.

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 8 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Essex United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Essex United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

The Essex U.C.W. Presbyterial Executive approved this proposal on Tuesday, April 28, 2015. Transmit with concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday May 19, 2015.

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 9 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK” REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Huron-Perth United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Huron-Perth United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.



United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Transmit with concurrence April 28, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 10 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Kent Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kent Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 11 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Lambton United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Lambton United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives, as well on the governing body of local communities of faith.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives, as well on the governing body of local communities of faith.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Transmit with concurrence May 21, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 12 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Middlesex United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Middlesex United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Moved and seconded that Middlesex Presbytery endorses the proposal made by the Middlesex Presbytery United Church Women Presbyterial, as circulated. Carried

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 13 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Oxford United Church Women Presbyterial

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Oxford United Church Women Presbyterial proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the U.C.W. to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Transmit with concurrence on May 13, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**MAR 8 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD'S WORK  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Sydney Presbytery/UCW Presbyterial

**Financial Implications:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Sydney Presbytery/UCW Presbyterial proposes that:**

**That the 42nd General Council ensure that in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women (UCW) in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member, while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God's Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that the UCW play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

UCW have traditionally supported their local congregations, fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW, many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident, as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the UCW as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of UCW to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network and the governing structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett/Sean Handcock moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #16 entitled “Comprehensive Review: United in God’s Work Representation of United Church Women on Councils” to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MNWO 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW – REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Originating Body:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications if known:** None

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) provide for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives in the Three Council Model proposed by the Comprehensive Review Task Group document “United in God’s Work.”**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the

denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service fund is evident as in 2014 alone, \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the UCW to inform and guide the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

**M&O 7 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD'S WORK  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Originating Body:** Montreal and Ottawa Conference UCW

**Financial Implications:** Cost of Meeting Participation

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding if known:** n/a

**Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council ensure that:**

- 1) **in the three Council model proposed by United in God's Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives; and**
- 2) **the United Church Women's participation be part of the stated goal of diversity in the makeup of Regional and Denominational Councils and Executives.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women in The United Church of Canada's current structure is not consistent. Currently some Presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God's Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the United Church Women is able to participate fully in the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of Mission and Service is evident as in 2014 \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by United Church Women across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these Councils will allow for the wisdom and the leadership of the UCW to enhance and strengthen the Councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**MTU 4 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD'S WORK –  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Manitou Conference UCW

**Financial Implications if known:** nil

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Manitou Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council ensure that in the three court Council model proposed by "United in God's Work," provision be made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the Regional and Denominational Councils and their Executives.**

**Intermediate Court Action:**

- transmitted with concurrence by North Bay Presbytery (May 2015)
- transmitted with concurrence by Manitou Conference (May 2015)



**TOR 11 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW: UNITED IN GOD’S WORK  
REPRESENTATION OF UNITED CHURCH WOMEN ON COUNCILS**

**Origin:** Toronto Conference United Church Women (UCW)

**Financial Implications:** Cost of meeting participation

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Toronto Conference United Church Women proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council ensure that in the three-Council model proposed by United in God’s Work, provision is made for the full voting participation of a representative of the United Church Women on the regional and denominational councils and their executives as well as the community of faith governing body.**

**Background:**

The involvement of a representative of the United Church Women (UCW) in The United Church of Canada’s current structure is not consistent. Some presbyteries and Conferences and their Executives do include a representative as a full voting member while others, including the General Council Executive, only permit these representatives to serve as corresponding (non-voting) members.

The proposals from United in God’s Work offer an opportunity to address this inconsistency across the church and to recognize the vital role that United Church Women play in the denomination by ensuring that a representative of the UCW is able to participate fully in the regional and denominational councils and their executives as well as the community of faith governing body.

United Church Women have traditionally supported their local congregations fulfilling their purpose by expressing their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service. It is recognized by many, that without the devotion and commitment of the UCW many congregations would have ceased to exist long ago. It could also be noted that the commitment to the wider work of our church through support of the Mission and Service (M&S) fund is evident as in 2014 alone \$1,462,840 was given to M&S by the UCW across Canada.

Including a representative of the United Church Women as a full voting member on these councils will allow for the wisdom and the work of the UCW to inform and guide the councils. It will also provide a link between a key population and network, and the governance structure.

**Intermediate Court Action**

Transmitted with non-concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **MAR 10 COLLEGE OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Maritime Conference recommends to the 42nd General Council that the functions of the proposed College of Ministers be fulfilled by committees of the denominational and regional bodies.**

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett/Sean Handcock moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #23 entitled “College of Ministers” to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

## **MNWO 2 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW – COLLEGE OF MINISTERS**

**Originating Body:** Agassiz Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) Postpone definitely the proposal “Comprehensive Review: A College of Ministers” for the establishment of the College of Ministers until the 43rd General Council in 2017 allowing time for ministers, ministries, regional courts, councils or bodies to consider financial and ministry implications.**

### **Background:**

The College of Ministers is to be the path of accreditation, assessment and qualification of ministers; and it is unclear if a national or regional college would be more effective.

The proposed College of Ministers does not include those retired and retained on the roll of Presbytery and those retired and retained have served and continue to serve the church in various ministry capacities.

The church is also considering competencies for accreditation, education of candidates and ministry membership.

The proposed budget of \$750,000 in the original document does not seem adequate for the work proposed.

The church is proposing changes to structures, boundaries and courts of the church at the same time.

**Intermediate Court Action:** *Transmitted without concurrence. The Court decided to transmit all proposals related to the Comprehensive Review.*

**M&O 14 PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE COLLEGE OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** Rev. Nancy Colton, Presbyter, Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** none

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:** none

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council (2015) amend the Proposal entitled “A College Of Ministers” by removing the name “College of Ministers” and replacing it with the name “Board of Ministry Personnel: Accreditation, Accountability, and Discipline.”**

**Background:**

The word “college” when used in this and similar contexts becomes a term with a very specific, legal understanding. “Colleges” are regulated by provincial and/or federal government legislation because they do very particular kinds of things in terms of regulation etc. However, ministers are not registered professionals in the way doctors, nurses, etc. are so it will be confusing, misleading, and potentially attract undue (and unwelcome) attention to call this board a college.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

This proposal was supported by Ottawa Presbytery.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**M&O 15 A PROPOSAL TO ALLOW FOR A LARGER BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE COLLEGE OF MINISTERS IN ORDER TO CREATE A MORE DIVERSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Origin:** Barbara Reynolds, Presbyter, Ottawa Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council (2015): amend the proposal “A College of Ministers” by adding the following text as a bullet point to Section C. Governance:**

- a) **That the Denominational Council have the power to increase the size of the Board of Directors, if necessary, to manage the workload and/or to ensure the representation of the broad diversity of voices, communities and regions, including Francophone and ethnic voices, within The United Church of Canada;**
- b) **That the Board of Directors be a body made up of equal numbers of clergy and lay persons to be appointed by the Denominational Council on the basis of names submitted by the regional councils, or other appropriate designated bodies;**
- c) **That the discernment processes ensure selection of qualified people for the board.**

**Background:**

Diversity is a hallmark of The United Church of Canada. Thus, it is essential that our structures reflect in the broadest possible way this diversity and richness.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

This Proposal was strongly supported by Ottawa Presbytery. Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**M&O 16 NATIONAL LISTING OF THOSE DESIGNATED FOR INTERIM MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF SUPERVISION**

**Originating Body:** Montreal Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** minimal

**Staffing Implications:** existing GC Office staff, and yet another administrative detail for the Conference Personnel Officer

**Source of Funding:** Budgets of General Council Human Resource Unit and Conferences

**The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council direct, through its Executive, that the College of Ministers maintain a list of those designated by United Church Conferences (or future regional equivalents) as Interim Ministers, and of those who are trained for the Ministry of Supervision, and make those lists available to those who seek these resources.**

**Background:**

Ministers who have been trained and designated for Interim Ministry, Transitional Ministry, and the Ministry of Supervision are important resources needed throughout the church. Centralized lists available through the GC Human Resource Unit would allow mission units to simply access those who have such training and designation, and begin the process of discerning “a good fit” for their ministry needs.

While the Conference (or its future regional equivalent) is the appropriate body to evaluate the credentials of those within their bounds who have received such training for Interim Ministry, Transitional Ministry and the Ministry of Supervision such designation should be accepted, or at least easily transferred, across The United Church of Canada. Those who are so designated should be able to cross administrative boundaries easily, without the encumbrances of regional designation. Those who seek such ministry personnel should be able to do so as broadly as possible.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Montreal Presbytery voted concurrence.  
Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**SK 3 AMENDMENT TO THE CRTG PROPOSALS – COLLEGE OF MINISTERS AND ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Originating Body:** Wascana Presbytery

**Financial implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Wascana Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) receive and postpone definitely the Proposals regarding the College of Ministers and the Association of Ministers until rationalization of the Denominational and Regional Councils has been completed.**

**Background:**

This very complex decision needs to be balanced with knowledge of the shape and functions that form the structure of the new Three Council system. Therefore it can be addressed after the rationalization of the structures, functions and finances of the Councils have been determined.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

#### **SK 4 COLLEGE OF MINISTERS AND ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Originating body:** Good Spirit Presbytery

**Financial implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Good Spirit Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) develop and implement the Proposals regarding the College of Ministers and the Association of Ministers simultaneously.**

#### **Background:**

The College of Ministers will provide the accreditation, oversight and discipline of ministers with the Association of Ministers providing the peer support and collegiality of ministers. Presbytery has been the court that provided the connection and hopefully support and collegiality to ministers. In the proposed 3 Council structure, the regional council will not provide the same peer support and collegiality and therefore the Association must be formed to provide this at the same time that the College is being formed to provide for discipline and oversight.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

#### **SK 5 SUPPORT, ASSESSMENT, OVERSIGHT AND DISCIPLINE OF APPLICANTS FOR DESIGNATED LAY MINISTRY**

**Originating Body:** Tamarack Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of funding:** Not applicable

**The Tamarack Presbytery proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1. approve the inclusion of applicants for Designated Lay Ministry as members in the proposed College of Ministers in order that they might receive the assessment, oversight and discipline of the College and that they might be eligible for appointment to ministry positions with Communities of Faith,**
- 2. direct the proposed Regional Councils to provide support for applicants for Designated Lay Ministry during discernment, to provide support for applicants and for the Communities of Faith where they are appointed to ministry positions during the educational process, and to implement a process for sharing recommendations about the applicants' fitness and readiness for ministry, and,**

**3. direct the General Secretary to ensure that applicants for Designated Lay Ministry are included in appropriate clauses in Remits and other documents that establish Regional Councils and the College of Ministers.**

**Background:**

As The United Church of Canada moves towards implementing the recommendations included in *United in God's Way*, the intention is clear to continue to include Designated Lay Ministers as ministry personnel in The United Church of Canada and to include them as members of the College of Ministers. The proposal for A Three Council Model gives authority and responsibility for recognizing Designated Lay Ministers. The proposal for A College of Ministers says, "Membership in the College would be mandatory for all members of the order of ministry and Designated Lay Ministers serving in paid accountable ministry in congregations and other communities of faith."

*The Manual 2013* and earlier editions of that document do not and did not include a description of the processes of discernment, supervision and receiving Designated Lay Ministers, with details of this work being included in the *Designated Lay Ministry Handbook*. But as The United Church of Canada implements the proposed Regional Councils and the proposed College of Ministers we need to ensure that applicants for Designated Lay Ministry would be eligible for appointment to ministry positions with Communities of Faith. In order for them to be eligible for appointment to ministry positions, applicants for Designated Lay Ministry could be named as student members of the College. Naming applicants for Designated Lay Ministry as student members of the College would also ensure that the proposed College of Ministers would have authority and responsibility for the assessment, oversight and discipline of Designated Lay Ministers while they are completing their educational program, while serving in supervised ministry appointments.

In addition we need to ensure that the proposed Regional Councils will be able to take responsibility for providing support during the discernment process and while applicants complete their preparation for ministry while appointed to ministry positions within Communities of Faith. That might be accomplished through appointing persons similar to those in place for candidates for ordained and diaconal ministries. Those persons could also provide necessary support to the Communities of Faith where the applicants are serving in ministry during their preparation of ministry, while also providing recommendations to the College of Ministers about the applicants' fitness and readiness for ministry.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

**LON 15 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
COLLEGE OF MINISTERS AND ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** Glenwood United Church

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown but expectations of more transparency and input

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown at this time

**Source of Funding if known:** Assessment protocol

**The Official Board of Glenwood United Church proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Pending approval of the establishment of a College of Ministers as Recommended,**

- A. Concurrently establish the Association of Ministers for the mutual support and collegiality of all Ministry Personnel both active and retired.**
- B. Pay the cost associated with establishing this Association through a ministry development fund which would serve as “seed” money until such time the Association of Ministers is self-funding (within 3–5 years)**

**Background:**

When the College of Ministers is established to accredit persons to become ministers, uphold the standards set for ministers by the denomination and oversee and discipline ministers it is imperative that the Association of Ministers be established at the same time.

This is imperative for active and retired Ministry Personnel who are experiencing substantial stress through the many challenges and changes within our United Church of Canada. This Association will need to be established and have a mandate which is varied based upon immediate and short term and long term goals of all ministry personnel.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Official Board, Glenwood United Church, April 27, 2015.

Transmit with concurrence. Essex Presbytery, Tuesday May 19, 2015

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 16 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** Huron-Perth Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** General Council to allocate funds/resources for the work of designing and launching and thereafter funded by members

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown. Association to be national in scope with elections from regions



**Source of Funding if known:** General Council to allocate resources to support the design group in this work. Membership funded once organized

**The Huron-Perth Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) strike a working group of ministers to design and present a feasible model for an Association of Ministers; to be launched in concert with the College of Ministers; to address the social, spiritual and legal needs of ministers.**

**Background:**

In our current structure, presbyteries and districts are meant to provide collegiality and support to ministers as well as oversee and discipline ministers. Ministers may also find support in informal networks they build themselves. In the proposed structure the College of Ministers will make ministers ready for ministry and ensure they stay ready, by implementing standards and exams and performing oversight and discipline.

Therefore no structure will be available for ministers to benefit from collegiality and support unless an Association of Ministers is designed and implemented in concert with the College of Ministers. With many churches closing and more to come in the future, ministers find themselves isolated by distance and resources.

There must not be a lapse in the support of ministers. Therefore Huron Perth Presbytery recommends that a working group of ministers design, not explore, a feasible model for an association of ministers to be launched in concert with the College of Ministers. The function of an association will address the social, legal, and spiritual needs of ministers.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**NL 2 NON-SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATION #5 IN THE “UNITED IN GOD WORK” REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT AN ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS**

**Origin:** Guy Mathews, Gower Street United Church

**Financial Implications if known:** Nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** Nil

**Source of Funding if known:** Nil

**Newfoundland and Labrador Conference proposes that:**

- 1. The 42nd General Council and the church in general, not impede or discourage, in any way, the formation of an Association of Ministers.**

- 2. The 42nd General Council not become directly involved in the process of the possible establishing of an Association of Ministers by either organizing, facilitating, advising or the making available of Financial and/or personnel resources.**

### **Background**

Concern has been expressed by Ministry Personnel that there are perceived injustices that exist in the processes and policies of the church in matters of oversight discipline, review and Pastoral Relationships. In recognition of this concern a proposal is being made to establish a College of Ministers.

It is not understood to be normal practice for an employer, in this case the church, to be actively involved in an Association of Employees, in this case the ministers.

There may also be possible conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in the church being actively participating in such a process.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Conference agreed with proposal and forward it to the 42nd General Council.

### **ANW 11 FUNDING MODEL (1) – COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW #6**

**Origin:** Foothills Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Foothills Presbytery proposes that:**

#### **The 42nd General Council 2015:**

- 1. Utilize a funding model that distributes funds collected by assessments based on an understanding that the majority of ministry is lived out within Communities of Faith, and that these ministries are most effectively supported on a regional basis; and**
- 2. Direct that a 10% tithe of the assessments support those regions that are less financially viable.**

**Background:**

The proposed Three-Council Model takes many functions currently carried out at the Presbytery or Conference levels, and either centralizes them at a National level, or empowers Communities of Faith to carry out the functions.

This proposal asserts that Communities of Faith will be best supported in their work if the support is offered regionally, rather than nationally. One specific area of concern is the decision-making mechanism about which new ministries are to be funded through “Chasing the Spirit.” If these ministries are to be adequately supported at a local/regional level, the initial funding decisions must involve significant regional input rather than relying solely on a more distant, national approach.

Regarding the 10% tithe, the *United in God’s Work* Report, p. 720, outlines the funding challenges currently faced by some Conferences. These challenges will be very apparent with the increase in assessments. A tithe is proposed as a way to ease the pressure on those geographic areas of the denomination that are less financially viable.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Foothills Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**ANW 12 FUNDING MODEL (2) – (COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW #6)**

**Origin:** Foothills Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Foothills Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council 2015 commit to a funding model in which travel and other meeting-related costs are borne by the event, rather than expecting Communities of Faith and/or attendees to bear these costs over and above moneys submitted by assessments.**

**Background:**

In the proposed model, each Community of Faith will have the ability to send two delegates to the Denominational Council, one order of ministry plus one lay. “*Backgrounder #10: Finances*” estimates that there could be roughly 2,630 Communities of Faith in 2018; these will be tremendously diverse, ranging from large, financially solvent communities to tiny, financially struggling communities; some will be within walking distance of the meeting site, some will be far away from the meeting site. If the Denominational Council is held regularly at the same

central location, as suggested by “*Backgrounder #5: A Three-Council Model*,” some Communities of Faith will always be close to the site and others will always be far away.

There is a danger that smaller, financially struggling, and/or more distant Communities of Faith will either (a) offload expenses to the delegates themselves or (b) refrain from sending delegates, simply due to the costs. It is imperative that the Denominational Council set up a mechanism to equalize the expenses—a “travel pool” or similar system.

The Comprehensive Review's “*Backgrounder #5, A Three-Council Model*” states that, “Travel, accommodation, and registration costs [of the Denominational Council] would be paid by Communities of Faith, with bursaries available where needed,” and, “The average cost for all commissioners would be calculated and charged as a standard registration fee to ensure costs for all Communities of Faith are equitable.” The proposal from Foothills Presbytery affirms the critical importance of this equitable sharing of meeting costs. While the example cited is the Denominational Council, the same principle of equity needs to be in place for Regional Councils (and other gatherings) as well, to ensure that all communities of faith have an equal ability to participate in the broader life of the denomination.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Foothills Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**ANW 16 DENOMINATIONAL FUNDING**

**Origin:** St. Thomas United Church, Calgary Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**St. Thomas United Church proposes that the 42nd General Council:**

- 1. Fund governance and support service (administration) by assessing communities of faith;**
- 2. Limit any assessment imposed on faith communities to support and fund denominational infrastructure, such as a Denominational Council;**
- 3. Set the maximum assessment to be not more than 4% of column 40 in Volume I Statistics of the Yearbook & Directory for 9 years;**
- 4. Calculate any assessment to communities of faith based on the average of the most recent three years of data published in Volume I Statistics of the Yearbook & Directory;**
- 5. Set the assessment amount for communities of faith once every three years;**
- 6. Spend only what is received through the assessment process;**

- 7. Determine the number of national staff and the focus of their ministry based on missional priorities of the denomination and the revenues received;**
- 8. Use the Mission and Service Fund to fund only ministry and mission activities, including Aboriginal Ministries;**
- 9. Share assessments equitably (50/50) between any national body and all regional bodies; and**
- 10. Develop a formula for the sharing of assessment between all regional bodies that demonstrates a commitment to the fair and equitable distribution of wealth.**

**Background:**

In the document, *United in God's Work*, the Comprehensive Review Task Group recommends that denominational infrastructure be funded through the assessment of administrative costs to faith communities. In effect, this would segregate the Mission & Service Fund so that, in theory, there is increased transparency between denominational funding on the one hand, and program (mission and ministry) funding on the other.

Recommendation #6: Funding a New Model, states as outcomes that:

- a) The church (meaning the denomination) spends only what it receives.
- b) The number and function of staff depend on the revenues received.
- c) The Mission and Service Fund be used only for ministry and mission activities. (With the notable exception of Aboriginal Ministries.)
- d) Governance and support services (administration) at the regional and denominational levels be funded by assessing communities of faith.
- e) The sharing of all resources, wealth, and abundance be encouraged across the church.

However, there is no recommendation to suggest how the denominational infrastructures will have their revenues defined and thus be able to spend only what it receives. In other words, there is no provision that imposes a realistic limit on the amount that can be assessed by a denominational body for the purposes of governance and support services (administration).

For St. Thomas United Church, the 4.75% of column 40 (based on 2013 statistics) would mean an increase in the operating budget of \$18,830, with no guarantee that the assessment would stay at the 4.75% level. Additionally, this figure does not include any additional assessment, beyond the current assessment, levied by any regional body that St. Thomas United will belong to as a community of faith in a covenantal relationship. Having the denominational assessment locked in for a three-year period would enable greater planning at the communities of faith level and predictably for annual budgeting.

With declining membership, it is time to link our structures directly to the capacity of what communities of faith can support in such a way that, as the denomination shrinks, so too must its infrastructure, and as the denomination grows, so too will its capacity to offer increased supports. In this way it is in the best interest of all levels of denominational infrastructure to support and encourage growth within communities of faith across the country. There is also the need to impose a hard ceiling on what can be assessed that is assured for communities of faith. In such a way the denominational structures will be required to live within its means.

In *United in God's Work* it is also acknowledged that, if there is a regional level, it will require financial resources to live out its rediscovered mission. To accomplish this, 50% of the denominational assessment will be divided equitably amongst the regional bodies, yet it is important that each region be treated fairly but not necessarily the same. The goal is to have regions offer the same level of basic support to communities of faith wherever they are located. By keeping with the tradition of the Apostles and early Christian communities of faith of holding all things in common and each taking according to their need, each region will receive enough resources to offer a minimum level of support. By necessity, this means that where regions have greater access to resources, they will receive less financial resources from the denomination, and where regions have less access, they will receive more. It also provides a mechanism for addressing geographical and contextual challenges faced with The United Church of Canada.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Thomas United Church, Calgary, to Calgary Presbytery.

Transmitted with concurrence by Calgary Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted without concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**BQ 3 CLARIFICATION OF THE PROPOSED NEW ASSESSMENT FORMULA ON PASTORAL CHARGES AND CHURCHES**

**Originating Body:** Upper Valley Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** Source of funding for the operating budget of a new denominational Council

**Staffing Implications:** Unknown

**Source of Funding:** Mission and Service

**The Upper Valley Presbytery proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to provide Commissioners with a detailed accounting of the financial impact of Recommendation Number 6 of the Final Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group on all congregations, along with the justification for setting a new assessment formula of 4.75 percent of column 40, the cost to run a community of faith.**

**Background**

Upper Valley Presbytery is composed of many rural churches that are struggling to stay afloat financially. For this year, many churches and Pastoral Charges are facing a substantial increase in their assessment by Presbytery, along with an increase in the Minister's housing allowance. Some assistance in covering higher Presbytery assessments was provided by the Presbytery, but many congregations and Charges have noted the difficulties they are now facing in meeting their additional expenses.

Some of the Pastoral Charges have calculated that the proposed 4.75 percent levy by a new denominational Council—as recommended in supporting documentation to the Final Report of the Comprehensive Review Task Force—would result in a noticeably higher assessment than the existing Presbytery assessment. It has been estimated in supporting documentation for the Final Report that the new formula would result in an average “one percent increase in the cost to run a congregation (column 40)”—as cited in “Backgrounder #10: Finances.” From our perspective, this seems to be low in the case of smaller churches. A 25 percent increase in an assessment may be “only” \$1,000, but that could easily be more than a one percent increase in a small church’s cost to run a congregation. It appears, then, that in some cases the financial pressures could be greater for the smaller churches under the new recommendation.

Undoubtedly, for some churches the new assessment would have a greater financial impact than for others. We would appreciate Commissioners to the 42nd General Council knowing whether the proposed new assessment formula will be more of a burden for some churches and become the tipping point of whether they can continue to exist or are financially forced to close their doors. Members of the Upper Valley Presbytery therefore request clarification from the Executive of General Council about how this formula was arrived at and the extent to which some congregations will fare worse than others.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

A group of members of Presbytery discussed this question at its regular meeting on April 21, 2015. A motion was drafted (15P17), put to a vote and passed.

The Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal.

**LON 18 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
FUNDING PROPOSAL FOR RESTRUCTURING OF UNITED CHURCH OF  
CANADA**

**Origin:** Lambton Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** That the same amount of money be allotted to support the restructuring of The United Church of Canada as is proposed in the final recommendations of the comprehensive review (Finances Section 10) but distributed differently.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Significantly fewer staff operating at the Denominational Council level. This proposal recommends dramatically reducing the staffing of the Denominational Council. We suggest that this part of the new structure contain the Renewal and New Ministry Development department and a very small, predominantly administrative body to do the remainder of the work

**Source of Funding if known:** The same as proposed by the Comprehensive Review Final Report

**Lambton Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) Reject the funding recommendation of the Comprehensive Review and replace it with the following. We recommend that the**

**31.9 million dollars proposed to be directed towards the Denominational Council be given to the Regional Council and that the 10.9 million designated for the Regional Councils be directed to the Denominational Council.**

**Background:**

In the proposed restructuring the majority of responsibilities will reside at the Regional Council level. It will be untenable to do this work with limited funds spread over wide geographic areas. We believe that staff and resources are of greatest benefit to communities of faith, and to the denomination as a whole, by being proximate. Having a cumbersome structure with many departments and numerous staff at the national level has been a complaint of many United Church members and clergy over many years. This realignment of funding would address these concerns.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**MAR 7 THE DENOMINATIONAL COUNCIL STRUCTURE AND FUNDING  
REGARDING THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA REPORT “UNITED IN GOD’S  
WORK”**

**Origin:** Halifax Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** The cost to the church as a whole is unchanged from the proposals contained in United in God’s Work, but the distribution would shift, giving the Regional Councils 67% of the assessed funds and the Denominational Council 33%.

**Staffing Implications:** The Denominational Council staff would be decreased, and the staff of the Regional Councils increased.

**Halifax Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council direct that all current standing committees and working groups associated with the General Council office be dismantled and that the Denominational Council office be reconstituted with only those personnel and committees that are essential to our new structure, and that 33% of assessments be used to maintain the functions of the Denominational Council and 67% be used to maintain the functions of the Regional Councils.**

**Rationale:**

The United Church has always been a national church with strong regional identity. This proposal is born out of a belief that the spirit moves most freely when people gather within the groups who have the strongest relationships. People hold the strongest bonds with those in their faith community, and the next closest bonds would be with the people who live and work in the same region—people that they see from time to time in their church life. The national office is very distant from the faith communities that make up the backbone of our church.



Much of the work that furthers our ministry as individual churches or as a church happens regionally, or could happen within networks, and does not need to be driven by a national staff. The United Church is best served by a model that gives the greatest power to the congregations and ministry units first, and that works its way up to the regions second, rather than a model that is driven by policy and action flowing from the national church down.

It is the intent of this proposal to free resources from the national structure to be used by the regions for ministry, gathering, and staff support.

It is also the intent of this proposal to strengthen the connections of many faith communities to the denominational structure that is closest to them. This may help to close what often seems to be an increase in perceived distance between the congregation and the wider church.

**Implementation:**

The Denominational Council would be pared down to only that which is essential. Some structures that may be necessary include:

- The Moderator and the General Secretary and necessary support staff
- Small groups for
  - *The Manual*
  - Theology and Faith and Interchurch/Interfaith Relations
  - Finances
  - Minimum legal requirements for Pension and Benefits and appropriate support to Pension Plan members
  - Publications (these to be run at break-even or for-profit basis only)
- Support structure for the Triennial Denominational Council meeting
- Support structure for the Denomination Council Executive
- Support structure for global partnerships
- Support structure for Regional Relationships

In so far as possible, denominational tasks will be addressed either through assigning them to regions (e.g., archives) or in more active partnership (e.g., KAIROS or the ACT Alliance). Denomination-shaping tasks could be assigned to regionally based work groups with provision of networking as necessary by the Denominational Council.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett/Sean Handcock moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposals #13 entitled “The Denominational Council Structure and Funding Regarding the United Church of Canada report “United in God’s Work”” to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **M&O 6 OVERSIGHT OF COMMUNITIES OF FAITH**

**Origin:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**That Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct that in the Three Council Model, Regional Councils:**

- 1) Create regional policies on the distribution of proceeds from the sale of property; and**
- 2) Oversee and approve the sale and the distribution of proceeds from the sale of property.**

### **Background:**

The buying and selling of property can be a difficult process for a community of faith. Errors in process do happen. Pastoral oversight would help to catch these errors, and to provide sober second thought which can be quite important when a community of faith is making a very significant decision. Such oversight is needed for the protection of United Church property.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **M&O 11 FUNDING A NEW MODEL**

**Originating Body:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:** local ministry sites

**Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**that the 42nd General Council create a task group to define a precise assessment formula that is just and sustainable, and that recognises the differences in, and gives priority to the financial and spiritual health of communities of faith, individually and collectively.**

### **Background:**

There is support for the new model of funding work of the denominational council. There is concern about finding a formula that enables the transition from many current ways of determining assessment to a new national one.

The Comprehensive report suggests a formula based on line 40 of the Year Book which is based on expenditures. Other voices suggest that a revenue based formula would be more reflective of the resources of communities of faith. There is concern that increase in assessments not be larger than 25% in a transition time. Another idea that emerged in discussions at Montreal & Ottawa Conference was the possibility of a multi-bracket formula, similar to our income tax system.

These various considerations merit more detail work in the implementation phase of the Comprehensive Review process.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

**MTU 3 DENOMINATION FUNDING FORMULA**

**Origin:** Manitou Conference General Meeting (May 2015)

**Financial Implications if known:** nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** nil

**Source of Funding if known:** nil

**Manitou Conference proposes that:**

**Should the Comprehensive Review funding principle be approved, the 42nd General Council (2015) adopt a funding formula based on a % of total congregational revenues (line 32d of the annual statistical report) rather than based on a % of expenses (line 40), and that the background material prepared for the Manitou Conference General Meeting be forwarded to the 42nd General Council.**

**Notes on Presentation:**

- The numbers in this presentation are mainly from the 2013 Year Book and are the 2012 National Statistics. This data was used because it is the most recent available. The 2014 Year Book has not been published.
- The exception is the Manitou Conference data on slides 10 and 15 to 17. This data, from our Conference Office, is what will be in the 2014 Year Book. We felt since it was available to us that it was best to use the most recent data for presentation to our Conference.
- Should our recommendation receive the approval of Manitou Conference at its 2015 General Meeting we will ask Conference to pass a similar motion for the 42nd General Council as an alternative to the Comprehensive Review Report Recommendation #6.

**Background:**

- The current recommendation #6 from the Comprehensive Review is that churches be charged annual fees to pay for support services and governance activities of the regional councils and the denominational council.

- The fee would be based on a % of the Cost to Run a Church (4.75% of Line 40 “Expended for Operation of Pastoral Charge” in the National Statistics)
- The Review Team feels this basis is the easiest to understand, it is the most widely used currently and it gives a reliable figure for actual spending and therefore evidence of the church’s ability to pay.

**Concern:**

- Our analysis suggests that basing fees on the “Cost to Run a Church” is not a fee based on the ability to pay.
- It is neither a fair nor “just” method
- The cost basis has serious unintended consequences as—
  - In numerous cases churches with high costs have the least ability to pay.
  - It will hurt those churches among us that are struggling the most financially.

*Any church that spends more than 2/3 of its total revenues on the cost to run their church will pay more under the cost basis than under the revenue basis. Those spending less than 2/3rd of their total revenues on the cost to run their church (Line 40) and who are therefore stronger financially will, ironically, pay less under the cost basis.*

**Recommendation:**

- Based on the 2013 Year Book (2012 National Statistics) the proposal to assess based on Line 40—the Cost to Run a Church—at 4.75% would mean a total assessment of \$12.5 million.
- There were several items that could have been used as the base to get the \$12.5 million required e.g. # of members, value of church land, congregational giving, total revenues, costs etc. None are perfect.
- The question we asked is “What is the most fair and most equitable method?”
- We feel “generally speaking” that basing fees on revenues is the fairest method and the better indicator of a church’s “ability to pay.”

Our recommendation is to use Line 32D – Total Revenues. A 3.15% rate (see next slide) will equal the total required assessment of \$12.5 million.

**Impact on Current Conferences**

Data from 2013 Year Book – 2012 Statistics					
	Line 32 D		Fees Based	Fees Based	Test of
<u>Conference</u>	<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Line 40</u>	<u>on Revenues</u>	<u>on Costs</u>	<u>Difference</u>
N & L	\$11,858,516	\$8,916,906	\$373,492	\$423,553	-\$50,061
Maritime	\$40,149,867	\$29,128,338	\$1,264,548	\$1,383,596	-\$119,048
Mont & Ott	\$30,185,903	\$20,340,825	\$950,726	\$966,189	-\$15,463
Bay of Q	\$34,122,559	\$23,216,506	\$1,074,714	\$1,102,784	-\$28,070
Toronto	\$69,045,068	\$40,043,628	\$2,174,623	\$1,902,072	\$272,551
Hamilton	\$49,145,654	\$32,038,501	\$1,547,877	\$1,521,829	\$26,048

<b>London</b>	<b>\$37,945,750</b>	<b>\$23,909,355</b>	<b>\$1,195,128</b>	<b>\$1,135,694</b>	<b>\$59,434</b>
<b>Manitou</b>	<b>\$5,300,626</b>	<b>\$4,052,349</b>	<b>\$166,947</b>	<b>\$192,487</b>	<b>-\$25,540</b>
<b>Manitoba &amp; NW Ont</b>	<b>\$20,714,571</b>	<b>\$14,965,028</b>	<b>\$652,420</b>	<b>\$710,839</b>	<b>-\$58,419</b>
<b>Sask</b>	<b>\$22,073,404</b>	<b>\$14,627,308</b>	<b>\$695,217</b>	<b>\$694,797</b>	<b>\$420</b>
<b>Albt</b>	<b>\$38,828,908</b>	<b>\$25,750,188</b>	<b>\$1,222,944</b>	<b>\$1,223,134</b>	<b>-\$190</b>
<b>BC</b>	<b>\$39,631,586</b>	<b>\$26,531,157</b>	<b>\$1,248,225</b>	<b>\$1,260,230</b>	<b>-\$12,005</b>
<b>Native Circle</b>	<b><u>\$266,028</u></b>	<b><u>\$1,221,813</u></b>	<b><u>\$8,379</u></b>	<b><u>\$58,036</u></b>	<b><u>-\$49,657</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$399,268,440</b>	<b>\$264,741,902</b>	<b><u>\$12,575,240</u></b>	<b><u>\$12,575,240</u></b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>
<b>% to Use</b>	<b><u>3.15%</u></b>	<b><u>4.75%</u></b>			
<b>Total Fees</b>	<b><u>\$12,575,240</u></b>	<b><u>\$12,575,240</u></b>			

**Used this Data to determine revenue % needed (3.15%) so that total fees are equal on revenues and Line 40**

**Used 2013 Year Book, with Statistics from 2012, as this was likely the base when the 4.75% was determined and 2014 book is not available to us at this point.**

**Why a Fee Based on Cost Is Harmful:**

- Revenues are the basis of fees (taxes) in our society, and the other denominations mentioned in the Comprehensive Review base their fees on adjusted revenues.
- **An example based on a person** – Two people each earn \$60,000. One has four children and spends almost the family’s full earnings on feeding and clothing the family, daycare, schooling, children’s sports activities and health care. The second is single, spends very little and saves as much as he can.

Under the recommendation #6, the person with the four children would be taxed more, because his costs are higher. Which is the fairer way to tax these people? On what their costs were or what their incomes were—a cost base or revenue base? Who has the greater ability to pay?

- **Example 1 (using Churches)** – Two Pastoral Charges each have revenues of \$150,000. One is a three point charge with 3 hydro bills, 3 heating bills, 3 snow removal bills and there is very high mileage associated with travel around the three point charge. Total costs are \$140,000.
- The 2nd Pastoral Charge is a single church. It has utility bills for only one property and is in an area with very little snow and mileage. Costs are \$120,000.
- Based on 4.75% of costs the three point charge would pay \$6,650 in fees while the single church would pay \$5,700 or 17% less. Does that seem Fair and Just? Just because the three point charge has higher costs it is assumed under Recommendation Six to have a greater ability to pay? It is actually the opposite.
- In this case under the revenue base proposal (3.15%) each church would pay \$4,725.

- **Example 2** – Two churches each have revenues of \$150,000. One is struggling. It actually used a GIC to meet costs of \$170,000. The church is slowly going under and will close when its investments run out a few years down the road. The second church is fortunate and spends only \$100,000. It is able to buy a GIC for \$20,000.
- Under the cost method the church that is struggling is assessed a fee of \$8,075. (4.75% of \$170,000). The second church is assessed a fee of \$4,750 (4.75% of \$100,000) and therefore pays \$3,325 less (40%). Is this fair and just? Who has the greater ability to pay—the church that is spending more from the weakest financial position, or the church that is spending less from a much stronger financial position?
- Under the revenue base proposal each church would pay \$4,725.

**Summary Manitou Conference**

**Based on Final 2013 Stats from 2014 Year Book**

	3.15%	4.75%	Fees in 2018			
	2013	2013	Fees Based	Fees Based		% Diff
<u>Conference</u>	<u>Line 32 D</u>	<u>Line 40</u>	<u>on Revenues</u>	<u>on Costs</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>compared to Fees on Rev.</u>
Sudbury	\$ 2,459,583	\$ 1,870,196	\$ 77,466	\$ 88,834	-\$ 11,368	-15%
North Bay	\$ 1,685,446	\$ 1,346,994	\$ 53,084	\$ 63,982	-\$ 10,898	-21%
Spirit Dancing	\$ 1,007,445	\$ 762,972	\$ 31,730	\$ 36,241	-\$ 4,511	-14%
	<u>\$ 5,152,474</u>	<u>\$ 3,980,162</u>	<u>\$ 162,281</u>	<u>\$ 189,058</u>	<u>-\$ 26,777</u>	<u>-17%</u>

(Details on slides 15 to 17)

**Other Areas**

Actual Examples Toronto & Hamilton Conference

Fees Based on Costs vs Revenues - 2013 Year Book

						Fees in 2018			
		2012	2012			On Rev	On Costs		
Members		<u>Line 32 D</u>	<u>Costs Line 40</u>	<u>Diff</u>	<u>% Diff</u>	<u>3.15%</u>	<u>4.75%</u>	<u>Diff</u>	<u>of Rev fees</u>
Church A	516	\$1,144,408	\$ 404,720	\$ 739,688	183%	\$36,044	\$19,224	\$16,820	47%
Church B	1373	\$3,505,118	\$ 1,435,044	\$ 2,070,074	59%	\$110,396	\$68,165	\$42,232	38%
Church C	79	\$243,227	\$ 243,738	-\$ 511	0%	\$7,661	\$11,578	(\$3,917)	-51%
Church D	88	\$77,699	\$ 87,123	-\$ 9,424	-11%	\$2,447	\$4,138	(\$1,691)	-69%

Church E	531	\$456,411	\$ 345,493	\$ 110,918	24%	\$14,375	\$16,411	(\$2,036)	-14%
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*Actual examples. Those churches having costs that are less than 66% of their total revenues will pay more under a revenue base as shown in first two examples above. However they do have the ability to pay. Note that within these conferences there are also many churches struggling (lines 3 & 4). Overall more than 2/3rds of pastoral charges in these areas will be better off under a revenue base.*

**Some Facts on Fees Based on Costs (4.75%) or Revenues (3.15%):**

- Any church that pays less than 2/3rds of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their Church will be better off using costs as the base.
- Alternatively any church that spends more than 2/3rds of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their Church will be better off using revenues as the base.
- Normally then who would have the greater ability to pay?
- A church that spends 80% of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their church will pay 21% more fees under the Cost formula.
- A church that spends 90% of its revenues on the Costs to Run their church will pay 36% more fees under the Cost formula.
- When the costs to run the church are equal to the church’s total revenues (in churches struggling to stay alive) fees are 51% more under the Cost formula. **See next slide**

**Cost vs Revenue Base  
Impact on Churches**

<u>Costs as % of Revenues</u>	<u>Line 32 D Revenues</u>	<u>Line 40 Costs</u>	<u>Fees Based on</u>		<u>Diff</u>	<u>Diff as % of Rev Fees</u>
			<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Costs</u>		
50%	\$150,000	\$75,000	\$4,725	\$3,563	\$1,163	33%
55%	\$150,000	\$82,500	\$4,725	\$3,919	\$806	21%
66%	\$150,000	\$99,000	\$4,725	\$4,703	\$23	0%
80%	\$150,000	\$120,000	\$4,725	\$5,700	-\$975	-21%
90%	\$150,000	\$135,000	\$4,725	\$6,413	-\$1,688	-36%
100%	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$4,725	\$7,125	-\$2,400	-51%
120%	\$150,000	\$180,000	\$4,725	\$8,550	-\$3,825	-81%

*Actual examples. Those churches having costs that are less than 66% of their total revenues will pay more under a revenue base as shown in first two examples above. However they do have the ability to pay. Note that within these conferences there are also many churches*

*struggling (lines 3 & 4). Overall more than 2/3rds of pastoral charges in these areas will be better off under a revenue base.*

**Some Facts on Fees Based on Costs (4.75%) or Revenues (3.15%):**

- Any church that pays less than 2/3rds of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their Church will be better off using costs as the base.
- Alternatively any church that spends more than 2/3rds of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their Church will be better off using revenues as the base.
- Normally then who would have the greater ability to pay?
- A church that spends 80% of its total revenues on the Costs to Run their church will pay 21% more fees under the Cost formula.
- A church that spends 90% of its revenues on the Costs to Run their church will pay 36% more fees under the Cost formula.
- When the costs to run the church are equal to the church’s total revenues (in churches struggling to stay alive) fees are 51% more under the Cost formula. **See next slide**

**Cost vs Revenue Base  
Impact on Churches**

<b>Costs as % of Revenues</b>	<b>Line 32 D Revenues</b>	<b>Line 40 Costs</b>	<b>Fees Based on</b>		<b>Diff</b>	<b>Diff as % of Rev Fees</b>
			<b>Revenues</b>	<b>Costs</b>		
50%	\$150,000	\$75,000	\$4,725	\$3,563	\$1,163	33%
55%	\$150,000	\$82,500	\$4,725	\$3,919	\$806	21%
66%	\$150,000	\$99,000	\$4,725	\$4,703	\$23	0%
80%	\$150,000	\$120,000	\$4,725	\$5,700	-\$975	-21%
90%	\$150,000	\$135,000	\$4,725	\$6,413	-\$1,688	-36%
100%	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$4,725	\$7,125	-\$2,400	-51%
120%	\$150,000	\$180,000	\$4,725	\$8,550	-\$3,825	-81%



### Cost vs Revenue Base Impact

<u>Conference</u>	<u>Pastoral Charges</u>	<u># of Pastoral Charges</u>		<u>% Benefiting with Revenues</u>
		<u>Costs</u>	<u>Rev</u>	
<b>NFLD &amp; Lab</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>72%</b>
<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Toronto</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Hamilton</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>London</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>Manitou</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Manitoba &amp; NW</b>	<b><u>156</u></b>	<b><u>50</u></b>	<b><u>106</u></b>	<b><u>68%</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>1213</u></b>	<b><u>366</u></b>	<b><u>847</u></b>	<b><u>70%</u></b>

*Created to determine % of Pastoral charges that were better off using revenues. Shows that 70% of Pastoral Charges have costs to run their church of more than 66% of total revenues. Every Presbytery except Bermuda (2 of 3), had the majority of their Pastoral Charges better off using revenues. Details are available if desired.*

### Impact on Sudbury Presbytery

Fees Based on Costs vs Revenues - 2014 Year Book									
	Members	2013				Fees in 2018			
		Line 32 D	Costs Line 40	Diff	% Diff	On Rev	On Costs	Diff	% Diff
						3.15%	4.75%		of Rev Fees
Elliot Lake	130	\$181,044	\$103,917	\$77,127	74%	\$5,702	\$4,936	\$766	13%
Espanola	88	\$117,153	\$104,051	\$13,102	11%	\$3,690	\$4,942	(\$1,253)	-34%
Gore Bay	72	\$158,882	\$111,463	\$47,419	30%	\$5,004	\$5,294	(\$290)	-6%
Little Current	119	\$151,633	\$99,913	\$51,720	52%	\$4,776	\$4,746	\$30	1%
Manit-Tehk	97	\$142,859	\$87,379	\$55,480	39%	\$4,499	\$4,151	\$349	8%
Massey	64	\$66,236	\$68,629	\$2,393	-4%	\$2,086	\$3,260	(\$1,174)	-56%
Mindemoya	82	<b>\$134,401</b>	<b>\$143,953</b>	<b>\$9,552</b>	<b>-7%</b>	<b>\$4,233</b>	<b>\$6,838</b>	<b>(\$2,605)</b>	<b>-62%</b>
All People's	28	\$33,380	\$27,746	\$5,634	17%	\$1,051	\$1,318	(\$267)	-25%
Capreol	126	\$119,461	\$103,932	\$15,529	13%	\$3,763	\$4,937	(\$1,174)	-31%

Chelmsford	31	\$35,940	\$26,685	\$9,255	26%	\$1,132	\$1,268	(\$136)	-12%
Coniston	19	\$17,015	\$13,704	\$3,311	19%	\$536	\$651	(\$115)	-21%
Copper Cliff	128	\$102,071	\$95,193	\$6,878	7%	\$3,215	\$4,522	(\$1,307)	-41%
Lively	137	\$139,523	\$95,458	\$44,065	32%	\$4,394	\$4,534	(\$140)	-3%
Nickel District	120	\$113,432	\$98,435	\$14,997	13%	\$3,573	\$4,676	(\$1,103)	-31%
Onaping Falls - Dowling	108	\$104,175	\$89,608	\$14,567	14%	\$3,281	\$4,256	(\$975)	-30%
St. Andrew's	185	\$227,854	\$161,072	\$66,782	29%	\$7,176	\$7,651	(\$474)	-7%
St. James in the Valley	80	\$48,527	\$46,737	\$1,790	4%	\$1,528	\$2,220	(\$692)	-45%
St. Mark's	80	\$59,874	\$52,648	\$7,226	12%	\$1,886	\$2,501	(\$615)	-33%
St. Peter's	271	\$263,727	\$157,289	\$106,438	40%	\$8,306	\$7,471	\$835	10%
St. Stephen's On The Hill	138	\$132,726	\$96,377	\$36,349	27%	\$4,180	\$4,578	(\$398)	-10%
Western Manitoulin	43	<u>\$109,670</u>	<u>\$86,007</u>	<u>\$23,663</u>	<u>22%</u>	<u>\$3,454</u>	<u>\$4,085</u>	<u>(\$631)</u>	<u>-18%</u>
Total	<u>2146</u>	<u>\$2,459,583</u>	<u>\$1,870,196</u>	<u>\$589,387</u>	<u>24%</u>	<u>\$77,466</u>	<u>\$88,834</u>	<u>(\$11,368)</u>	<u>-15%</u>

**Note – Mindemoya above, like in church example #2, had to cash a GIC to meet costs. Would have to pay 62% more under cost basis.**

### Impact on North Bay Presbytery

#### Fees on Costs vs Revenues - 2014 Year Book

		Fees in 2018							
		2013	2013			On Rev	On Costs		% Diff
	Members	<u>Line 32 D</u>	<u>Costs Line 40</u>	<u>Diff</u>	<u>% Diff</u>	<u>3.15%</u>	<u>4.75%</u>	<u>Diff</u>	<u>of Rev Fees</u>
Burk's Falls	102	\$107,544	\$99,571	\$7,973	8%	\$3,387	\$4,730	(\$1,342)	-40%
Knox-Callandar	53	\$45,831	\$42,701	\$3,130	7%	\$1,443	\$2,028	(\$585)	-41%
Loring	34	\$85,524	\$70,538	\$14,986	21%	\$2,694	\$3,351	(\$657)	-24%
Mattawa	47	\$23,668	\$19,760	\$3,908	20%	\$745	\$939	(\$193)	-26%
Carmichael	18	\$17,288	\$21,884	\$4,596	-21%	\$544	\$1,039	(\$495)	-91%
Emmanuel	131	\$125,718	\$105,158	\$20,560	20%	\$3,960	\$4,995	(\$1,035)	-26%
Nipissing-Restoule	37	\$47,925	\$24,300	\$23,625	97%	\$1,509	\$1,154	\$355	24%
Omond Memorial	144	\$127,829	\$71,073	\$56,756	80%	\$4,026	\$3,376	\$650	16%
St. Andrews	311	\$303,777	\$219,618	\$84,159	38%	\$9,568	\$10,432	(\$864)	-9%
Trinity	362	\$331,447	\$266,760	\$64,687	24%	\$10,439	\$12,671	(\$2,232)	-21%
Phelps	15	\$24,539	\$9,610	\$14,929	155%	\$773	\$456	\$316	41%
Powassan	102	\$172,870	\$157,005	\$15,865	10%	\$5,445	\$7,458	(\$2,013)	-37%
South River	83	\$115,658	\$91,840	\$23,818	26%	\$3,643	\$4,362	(\$720)	-20%
Sturgeon Falls	34	\$52,690	\$51,695	\$995	2%	\$1,660	\$2,456	(\$796)	-48%
Sundridge	76	\$95,628	\$86,600	\$9,028	10%	\$3,012	\$4,114	(\$1,102)	-37%

Temiscaming: St. Paul's	<u>7</u>	<u>\$7,510</u>	<u>\$8,881</u>	<u>\$1,371</u>	<u>-15%</u>	<u>\$237</u>	<u>\$422</u>	<u>(\$185)</u>	<u>-78%</u>
Total	<u>1556</u>	<u>\$1,685,446</u>	<u>\$1,346,994</u>	<u>\$338,452</u>	<u>25%</u>	<u>\$53,084</u>	<u>\$63,982</u>	<u>(\$10,898)</u>	<u>-21%</u>

### Impact on Spirit Dancing Presbytery

#### Fees on Costs vs Revenues - 2014 Year Book

		3.15%		4.75%		Fees in 2018				
		2013		2013		On Rev		On Costs		% Diff
		Members	Line 32 D	Costs Line 40	Diff	% Diff	3.15%	4.75%	Diff	of Rev Fees
Chapleau: Trinity	68	\$51,389	\$65,595	-\$ 14,206	-22%	\$1,619	\$3,116	(\$1,497)	-93%	
Cochrane: St. Paul's	58	\$91,788	\$44,535	\$ 47,253	106%	\$2,891	\$2,115	\$776	27%	
Englehart	64	\$104,942	\$61,727	\$ 43,215	70%	\$3,305	\$2,932	\$373	11%	
Hears: St. Matthew's & St. Paul's	16	\$28,481	\$21,181	\$ 7,300	34%	\$897	\$1,006	(\$109)	-12%	
Hillview: Pioneer Memorial	38	\$44,540	\$44,874	-\$ 334	-1%	\$1,403	\$2,132	(\$729)	-52%	
Hornepayne: Grace	46	\$41,172	\$25,882	\$ 15,290	59%	\$1,297	\$1,229	\$67	5%	
Iroquois Falls: Trinity	58	\$63,354	\$39,171	\$ 24,183	62%	\$1,995	\$1,861	\$135	7%	
Kapuskasing	34	\$73,552	\$40,195	\$ 33,357	83%	\$2,317	\$1,909	\$407	18%	
Kirkland Lake: Trinity	30	\$62,249	\$54,966	\$ 7,283	13%	\$1,961	\$2,611	(\$650)	-33%	
Matheson: St. Andrews	53	\$72,283	\$61,996	\$ 10,287	17%	\$2,277	\$2,945	(\$668)	-29%	
New Liskeard: St. Paul's	115	\$128,495	\$109,509	\$ 18,986	17%	\$4,047	\$5,202	(\$1,155)	-29%	
Covenant	224	\$128,504	\$112,155	\$ 16,349	15%	\$4,047	\$5,327	(\$1,280)	-32%	
Mountjoy	46	\$55,205	\$45,380	\$ 9,825	22%	\$1,739	\$2,156	(\$417)	-24%	
Porcupine	38	\$47,572	\$21,122	\$ 26,450	125%	\$1,498	\$1,003	\$495	33%	
Val D'Or: Golden Valley	<u>10</u>	<u>\$13,919</u>	<u>\$14,684</u>	<u>-\$ 765</u>	<u>-5%</u>	<u>\$438</u>	<u>\$697</u>	<u>(\$259)</u>	<u>-59%</u>	
Total	898	<u>\$1,007,445</u>	<u>\$762,972</u>	<u>\$244,473</u>	<u>32%</u>	<u>\$31,730</u>	<u>\$36,241</u>	<u>(\$4,511)</u>	<u>-14%</u>	

***Note first & 2nd churches above. Trinity which is spending much more than their total revenues would, under a cost basis, pay 93% more than under a revenue based system. St. Paul's though, with much greater revenues, and who is much better off financially, would pay less than Trinity. Demonstrates within our Presbytery that the cost basis is not a "Just nor Fair" System.***

#### **Our Recommendation:**

- Using the costs as a basis for fee calculations is UNFAIR and it is not a JUST methodology
- Basing fees on costs results in the unintended consequence that it will hurt churches that are struggling the most.
- 70% of the Pastoral Charges will be worse off using costs as the base.
- We recommend that line 32D of the Year Book (Total Amount Raised - Revenues) be used as the base for fee assessment.

**Final Thoughts:**

- If revenues are selected as the base, consideration should be given to excluding revenues received from a property insurance policy as the money will be needed to rebuild.
- **Important** - As fees are based on revenues from two years prior (using 2016 stats in 2018) consider now a policy of having the churches send the 3.15% to the National office in the year of sale for any property sales. This is similar in Ontario when a person sells a car. The buyer must pay the sales tax at point of sale. Otherwise churches which have sold due to closure in 2016 will not be around to pay the fees in 2018. (It is the same issue when basing fees on costs as some churches will have already closed when it comes time to assess fees). This would ensure National receives the fees on property sales and as they would have received the fees early, the actual % in 2018 could be less than the 3.15% used in our study. The same could be put in place for any windfall revenues from bequests etc. although it is not as big an issue if the church has not closed.
- Would likely need to modify Form B to separate these amounts so the amounts are not taxed again in 2018.
- We had some pushback on including fees on bequests. They should be included for two reasons. For churches that will use the money to meet day to day costs, the alternative would be to charge them 4.75% on costs when they spend it. The wealthier churches will not likely use the funds to meet day to day costs and instead spend on capital improvements or additions. These churches then would not pay any fees if they were based on costs as capital is excluded. As a result, only the poorer churches would pay fees and would in fact subsidize the richer ones.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

- transmitted with concurrence by Manitou Conference

**BQ 8 NATURAL JUSTICE FOR COLLEGE OF MINISTRY**

**Originating Body:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct that any College of Ministers ensures natural justice in living out the covenantal relationship between pastoral charges/communities of faith and ministry personnel, by ensuring:**

- a) **The scope of the College's role be expanded to include inquiry, hearing processes, and discipline of communities of faith;**

- b) The size of the College’s Board reflect the expanded workload this broadened scope will create;**
- c) The name of the College be altered from “College of Ministers” to “College of Ministry” to reflect its broader scope.**

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal.

## **Bakeapple Commission Proposals**

### **ANW 17 REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS**

**Origin:** Alberta and Northwest Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Alberta and Northwest Conference proposes that:**

#### **The 42nd General Council 2015:**

- 1. Support a long-term global emission reduction goal consistent with the Paris agreement;**
- 2. Recognize that a major portion of the Canadian economy produces products that generate carbon emissions such as electricity, transportation, manufacturing, mining, and production of oil and gas;**
- 3. Remember:**
  - a. the impact on the overall economy of Canada;**
  - b. the impact on the individuals employed (families) in the various industries noted above;**
  - c. the impact on the communities and communities of faith throughout Canada;**
- 4. Encourage investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency; and**
- 5. Encourage investment in training, and job creation.**
- 6. Direct the Executive of the General Council to take appropriate action to implement this policy.**

#### **Background:**

There is a general concern with climate change.

The Church has participated in a request to G7 Finance Ministers through Investor Group on Climate Change to recognize that “additional investment is needed and this requires well-designed policies that shift incentives from high to low carbon and climate resilient investment and ensures the deployment of available technologies, while achieving a just transition for workers and communities.”

### **BC 4 LOBBYING GOVERNMENTS FOR A PRICE ON GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) commit the church to lobby federal and provincial governments to implement an economy-wide price on greenhouse gas emissions where currently such a price does not exist.**

**Background:**

The Earth's climate is changing at an unprecedented rate and human activity is overwhelmingly responsible. Increased risk of droughts, floods, tropical storms, and altered weather patterns threatens to displace more people and lead to increasing numbers of civil wars and international conflict. People living in poverty and Indigenous populations, including here in Canada, are made especially vulnerable to climate chaos. The people and countries responsible for the majority of historic heat-trapping pollution are least likely to bear the brunt of the changes.

Conversely, the people and countries least responsible for causing climate chaos are most likely to experience increasing levels of disease, displacement, and conflict. Climate chaos is a justice issue with which every follower of Jesus and every person of faith should be concerned. Ocean acidification, also caused by carbon dioxide emissions, is another area of major concern.

The majority of experts, academics, non-governmental organizations, and others engaged in climate justice recognize pricing greenhouse gas emissions as pertinent to slowing and ultimately reversing current trends toward climate catastrophe. Carbon taxes and cap-and-trade systems stand as two effective methods of putting a price on carbon to signal the need to reduce emissions. British Columbia's carbon tax is often celebrated on the world stage as fair, effective, and efficient. Quebec has implemented a cap-and-trade system and Ontario is in the process of following suit, in concert with California. Alberta's carbon tax applies to large final emitters but is not economy-wide. Nova Scotia is considering applying a price to carbon emissions. While these initiatives are significant and laudable, Canada suffers from a dearth of leadership on the climate file at the federal level, and too many provinces currently show no sign of pricing carbon.

This proposal would see The United Church of Canada (UCC) undertake an effort to lobby elected representatives in jurisdictions where an economy-wide price on carbon does not exist. This would apply to all provinces except BC, Quebec, and Ontario (assuming Ontario's cap-and-trade efforts succeed). It would apply to inter-jurisdictional travel, which is often exempt from carbon pricing mechanisms. It would also apply to all federal government activities.

Jesus of Nazareth addressed the injustices he witnessed head-on and with love. The UCC has a history of solid political engagement for the sake of justice and environmental sustainability. This proposal would prioritize the climate as an area for the UCC's lobbying efforts, recognizing that prioritizing lobbying effectively bears particular importance for charities, which must limit lobbying efforts, and which can be audited at the whim of the governing party.

Pricing greenhouse gas emissions is fiscally efficient. It provides revenues for public expenditures by discouraging harmful activity. Most significantly, BC has proven that pricing

carbon reduces emissions quickly, thus allowing us to live into our responsibilities to creation and marginalized people.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

**BC 8 TRAVEL CARBON TAX**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Initially approximately \$0.50/100km of travel

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council create policy whereby travel claims related to the business of The United Church of Canada be subject to a carbon tax to be determined by General Council Executive with revenues directed to The United Church of Canada's Mission and Service Fund. The court receiving the claim pays the tax.**

**Background:**

The Earth's climate is changing at an unprecedented rate and human activity is overwhelmingly responsible. Increased risk of droughts, floods, tropical storms, and altered weather patterns threatens to displace more people and lead to increasing numbers of civil wars and international conflict. People living in poverty and Indigenous populations, including here in Canada, are made especially vulnerable to climate chaos. The people and countries responsible for the majority of historic heat-trapping pollution are least likely to bear the brunt of the changes.

Conversely, the people and countries least responsible for causing climate chaos are most likely to experience increasing levels of disease, displacement, and conflict. Climate chaos is a justice issue with which every follower of Jesus and every person of faith should be concerned. Ocean acidification, also caused by carbon dioxide emissions, is another area of major concern.

Travel is a major contributor of heat-trapping greenhouse gases. Air travel is especially harmful because it is fuel intensive, it cannot yet be fueled on a large scale by renewable sources, and the emissions occurs high in the atmosphere. Other forms of travel are also carbon-intensive because of Canada's fossil fuel-based infrastructure system. The United Church of Canada activities, such as pastoral visits and meetings of all four courts tend to require a high amount of travel. Video conferencing, tele conferencing, conducting business remotely such as over email or social media are all gaining popularity within the denomination; however, travel continues to contribute significantly to the denomination's greenhouse gas footprint.



This proposal seeks to reduce the amount of travel for church-related business and to compensate for the harm incurred by fossil fuel-intensive travel. A “tax” levied on travel will serve as additional incentive to find alternatives to carbon-intensive travel. It will encourage would-be travelers to discern whether travel is truly necessary. It will also encourage the technological upgrades that might be necessary for modes of communication like video conferencing. It will also shore up the revenues of the Mission and Service Fund, some of which address the impacts of a changing climate.

The travel carbon tax would apply only to travel that is reimbursable and when the traveler is completing an expense claim form anyway. Thus, administering the travel carbon tax would be relatively simple, and equal in simplicity to general reimbursement. All courts of the denomination would need to modify travel expense claim forms to account for the travel carbon tax. When completing their travel expense claim forms, travelers would apply a constant emissions factor based on the mode (e.g. Personal vehicle, rail bus, air, etc.). Alternatively, for greater accuracy, travelers could apply that vehicle’s actual fuel efficiency (based on the vehicle’s internal computer) or estimated fuel efficiency (based on the manufacturer’s specifications or [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov)). The tax would begin at \$30/tonne and increase by \$10/tonne each triennium, until reaching a cap of \$50/tonne. A flight from Vancouver to Toronto, for example, would initially cost an additional \$17.60 and increase to \$29.30 by 2018. A drive in a compact car from Corner Brook to St John’s, NL, would initially cost an additional \$4.00 and increase to an additional \$6.60 by 2018.

Revenues from the travel carbon tax would be directed to the Mission and Service Fund. The revenues may then be used to further encourage carbon reductions, or to provide technological upgrades necessary for other modes of communication, or other initiatives at the discretion of the General Council.

The United Church of Canada has spoken prophetically and frequently about climate justice. It continues to be complicit in climate chaos largely because of Canada’s system of fossil fuel infrastructure. It now has an opportunity to put its “own house in order” and model responsible climate policy for the federal government and provincial governments. With that added credibility, the denomination’s calls for climate leadership would bear greater significance.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

**TOR 3 FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE**

**Origin:** Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** The proposal is intended to be revenue-neutral but may lead to increased or decreased returns. Forecasting the financial implications is very difficult.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Research and implementation time from the staff and members of various bodies including The United Church of Canada Foundation and the Finance Committee of the General Council Executive, as well as from the Chief Financial Officer.

**Source of Funding if known:** Existing investments (revenue-neutral)

**Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- a) **Encourage\* The United Church of Canada Foundation and direct the Executive of the General Council to take active steps to sell their holdings in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies;**
- b) **Direct the General Secretary of General Council to encourage United Church members to use less fossil fuels.**

**Background:**

*(This proposal contains the information from Proposals PGC #5A, PGC #5B, and PGC #5C submitted by Bathurst United Pastoral Charge, Trinity-St. Paul's Pastoral Charge, Toronto Southeast Presbytery, and the Social Justice and World Affairs Committee of South West Presbytery.)*

Today the balance of life on Earth is threatened by climate change. Changes in global temperature and precipitation patterns threaten water flow regimes, ocean ecosystems, sea levels, agricultural climates, weather patterns, biodiversity, and ecological functions on which human and all other life depends.

Ironically and unjustly, the global south and Indigenous populations worldwide are the most susceptible to climatic chaos and the least responsible for causing it. Indigenous communities, on whose territories fossil fuel extractive industries are developed, suffer devastating impacts on their environment, habitat, health, and cultures. Not to mention the constant violation of their constitutional rights and treaties in Canada, and human rights in other parts of the world. In Canada, Indigenous communities face the Canadian government's very weak record of respecting Aboriginal rights and title, and its denial that their right to prior, free, and informed consent (as set out in UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People) could actually mean the right to say "no."

The United Church of Canada is complicit in global climate chaos through its investments in fossil fuel companies. This complicity is inconsistent with our call to live with respect in creation, which means ensuring global ecological integrity, and with our call to follow Jesus, who advocated for marginalized, vulnerable populations and called for a restructuring of a disordered unjust economic system. It is time again to align our financial assets with our spiritual assets by living out our many policy statements (see below), and by divesting from the top 200 fossil fuel companies (as identified by Carbon Tracker). Trinity-St. Paul's United Church has taken this step and calls on The United Church of Canada to do the same. Bathurst United Church on principle holds its savings in a Credit Union which they are currently in conversation to ensure that they do not invest in the Tar Sands.

The United Church of Canada has a significant history of work and policy statements that are background for this motion and that have called us for over two decades to act:

In 1992, General Council (GC) adopted the *One Earth Community* policy paper which acknowledged our complicity as humans in the destruction of the streams and seas, the soil, and the forests, and asserted that “we are at a major turning point at which we can either continue along the path of self-destruction, or turn toward restoration and renewal.” It further affirmed that: “We must make institutions accountable to the people whose lives they touch”... and “must restructure economic institutions so that they serve the needs of the poor and function in harmony with ecological reality.” This was followed by 12 key ethical principles to guide the church’s work on ecological issues, including economic justice, human responsibility, sustainable lifestyles, the protection of biodiversity, and ensuring the rights of future generations.

In 2000 General Council adopted *Energy in the One Earth Community*, which called us to move beyond dependence on fossil fuels and other technologies that produce emissions leading to climate change.

In 2009, General Council adopted *The United Church of Canada and Global Warming—The Unavoidable Challenge* which was taken as a priority in The Moderator’s Plan for participating in God’s Abundant Healing of Creation.

Current church work, much done ecumenically through KAIROS and the World Council of Churches (WCC), as well as recent statements from the UCC Moderator, accompanied by audio tapes from four past and present Moderators, highlight the urgency of taking action on this issue, and on the theological and moral reasons for doing so. In July 2014, the WCC decided to pull its investments out of fossil fuel companies.

In September 2014, over 80 leaders, including some United Church of Canada theologians, issued a *Statement from Theologians, Ethicists and Religious Leaders in support of fossil fuel divestment and clean energy reinvestment by faith communities*. They state: “For more than two decades, talented leaders—including legislative and shareholder activities—have implored political and industry leaders to act. Their sound reasoning and humanity’s best interests have been subverted by the vast influence of the fossil fuel industry, a massively profitable and influential collection of firms and states... Because of the grave threat of climate change and the fossil fuel sector’s unyielding refusal to change, it is no longer right for religious groups to profit from companies that, with certainty are creating ecological destruction and human suffering on such a titanic scale.”

It is no longer a matter for debate. Our church has spoken loudly for over two decades about the problem and about the need for action. Moving the United Church Foundation’s \$\$\$\$ (XXX% of assets) and the Treasury’s \$\$\$\$ (XXXX% of assets) away from the 200 largest fossil fuel companies represents a unique opportunity for the church to live faithfully in the midst of empire.

**NOTE:** \*The wording of this proposal has been changed because we can encourage but not direct the United Church Foundation to take action.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**MOTION by David Allen/Ann Harbridge that Toronto Conference propose that the 42nd General Council (2015) direct The United Church of Canada Foundation and The United Church of Canada Treasury to take active steps to sell their holdings in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies;**

**And direct the General Secretary of General Council to encourage United Church members to use less fossil fuels.**

**MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

**BC 6 GREEN RENEWABLE ENERGY INVESTMENT**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Depends on rates of return of current investments and proposed reinvestments (the proposal could be financially advantageous or disadvantageous).

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council instruct the Executive of the General Council and encourage\* The United Church of Canada Foundation to take active steps to use assets made available by divesting from fossil fuel companies to invest in green renewable energy co-operatives.**

**Background:**

Canada and the world must immediately transition to a green renewable energy system to avert climate catastrophe and live into the abundant life of which Jesus spoke. Selling fossil fuel-based assets to morally bankrupt fossil fuel companies is an important step toward this transition. Another important step toward the transition to abundant life is investing in green renewable energy cooperatives.

The co-operative model of ownership stands as an antidote to harmful forms of greedy capitalism and economic disparity, which the Bible denounces more frequently than any other social concern.

Investment can take the form of member-ownership, bonds, and others. At present Ontario and Nova Scotia offer the best opportunities for investing in green renewable energy cooperatives. SolarShare and ZooShare, both based in Ontario, are green energy bonds that are available for purchase to any individual or business (including churches) registered in Ontario. The United Church of Canada would be eligible to participate in these cooperatives by virtue of being based in Ontario.

Green renewable energy can include solar, wind, biomass, tidal, wave, hydro, and other forms. Some forms of renewable energy are not environmentally or socially benign. Investing in companies designated as “renewable energy companies,” therefore, does not ensure an improvement over alternate forms of investment. Renewable energy co-operatives in Canada tend to conform to the highest environmental and social standards available, so investing in co-operatively owned energy projects is the preferred way to ensure renewable energy projects are also environmentally beneficial.

The United Church of Canada’s *A New Creed* espouses living with respect in creation, seeking justice, and resisting evil, following the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ. It has declared climate justice a priority and has spoken prophetically in the face of the failures to address climate chaos and economic injustice. The United Church of Canada now has an unprecedented opportunity to facilitate the transition to lower impact sources of energy in ways that support social justice. Investing in green renewable energy cooperatives is consistent with its faith statements and, furthermore, imperative in light of the theology and ecological theology expressed in *A New Creed*.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

\*The word “encourage” was added by the Business Committee because the General Council does not have the authority to instruct the Foundation.

## **MTU 2 FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT FOR EARTH JUSTICE**

**Origin:** North Bay Presbytery Mission Committee

**Financial Implications if known:** The proposal is intended to be revenue neutral but may lead to increased or decreased financial returns.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Research and implementation time from staff and members of various bodies including The United Church of Canada Foundation and the Finance Committee of the General Council Executive as well as from the Chief Financial Officer

### **Manitou Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council and The United Church of Canada to sell their holding in fossil fuel companies and reinvest funds in companies producing clean renewable energy.**

### **Background:**

As the Conference of the Great Spirit—Gitchi Manitou—we affirm the following:

All life is sacred and as people of faith we are called to protect and preserve the land, the water, and the creatures for future generations. We will live with respect in creation.

As Keepers of the Cairn site of the UCC Apology in Sudbury to First Peoples in 1986, we uphold and commit to live the words of our apology that Right Relations with First Peoples and this Holy Land inform and guide our actions.

As people of the boreal forest we share this vast territory with First Nations peoples bound by the covenant of the Treaties (Treaty #9, Robinson Huron Treaty, Williams Treaty) that resources will be shared and preserved for future generations.

We acknowledge our past failures to protect the land through resource extraction practices that have in some places left the land scarred, the water polluted and the air fouled. We take to heart the call for repentance and our desire to live in a way that protects and preserves the earth which cries out for justice.

We acknowledge the time is now for earth and climate justice. We hear the warning of the UN IPCC (International Panel on Climate Change) calling for immediate action to move to a low carbon economy and zero emissions of carbon dioxide and other long-lived greenhouse gases by the end of the 21st century in order to mitigate “the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts for people and ecosystems.” (*UNIPCC Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*)

We hear (80) brothers and sisters in Christ who urge us to divest from fossil fuels and reinvest in clean renewable energy. (*Divest and Reinvest Now –A Statement from Theologians, Ethicists and Religious Leaders in support of fossil fuel divestment and clean energy reinvestment by faith communities*) We affirm the climate crisis is a spiritual and moral issue calling for a spiritual and moral response.

We take encouragement from the World Council of Churches and the United Church of Christ who have made decisions to divest from fossil fuels.

We acknowledge the hardship on workers in the fossil fuel industry as we plan for a transition to a zero-carbon economy. We agree...now is the time to plan for a “just transition” for oil and gas workers that includes income supports and skills training. (*Just Transition—Creating a green social contract for BC’s resource workers. - CCPA Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives - January 2015*)

We lament that our government has promoted fossil fuel extraction through legislation and tax subsidies and has failed to address the crisis of climate change, failing Canadian citizens from coast to coast to coast. Enough!

We have spoken out against the expansion of the Alberta oil sands enabled by the Trans Canada Energy East pipeline proposal. We note that the expanded oil production will lead to an increase in GHG emissions (*Climate Implications of the Proposed Energy East Pipeline – Pembina Institute- February 2014*) and the pipeline proposal will pose a threat to water, land and communities along the 4000km route. (*OEB - Ontario Energy Board Community Consultation April 2014. Submission from North Bay Presbytery available on OEB website.*)

We remember who and whose we are in our call to divest from fossil fuels...*and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8*

**Intermediate Court Action:**

- transmitted with concurrence by North Bay Presbytery (Spring 2015)
- transmitted with concurrence by Manitou Conference (May 2015)

**MNWO 8 ASSESSMENT OF FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE**

**Origin:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:** Staff time is the only financial implication known at this time.

**Staffing Implications if known:** A considerable time (amount unknown) from various bodies, including The United Church of Canada Pension Board

**Source of Funding if known:** Pension Fund Administration and General Revenue

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Direct that the Executive of the General Council request the Pension Board to report publicly to pension plan members and General Council on:**

- i. **the Board's assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the Christian imperatives of seeking justice, resisting evil, and living with respect in Creation; and**
- ii. **the Board's assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the report entitled, *Socially Responsible Investment and Resource Extraction*, dated June 28, 2013, and prepared by the working group of the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry; and**
- iii. **the Pension Fund's exposure to investments in fossil fuels: and**
- iv. **the Board's rationale for investing in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies given:**
  - a. **the risk of stranded assets, and**
  - b. **the possibility of equal or better returns from divesting these stocks and investing in other stocks.**

**Background:**

Climate change is beginning to threaten our planet and all its systems on a global scale as both droughts and floods increase the threat of famine, violence and war and increase dramatically the number of displaced persons and climate change migrants.

Continuing on the current economic path imposes collective costs of adapting to change which will be enormously higher than the cost of changing course to reduce demand for energy and to develop alternative carbon-free sources of energy.

Astonishing progress is being made in the generation of electricity by other means than burning carbon at the same time that climate researchers are telling us that limiting the expected increase in global temperature will require leaving up to 80% (and even more) of known reserves of coal, natural gas, and petroleum in the ground, stranding these assets of the fossil fuel industry.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

#### **TOR 4 PENSION FUND PROPOSAL**

**Origin:** Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to request The United Church of Canada Pension Board to report publicly to pension plan members and General Council on:**

- (i) the Board’s assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the Christian imperatives of seeking justice, resisting evil, and living with respect in creation;**
- (ii) the Board’s assessment of whether investing in fossil fuels aligns with the report entitled “Socially Responsible Investment and Resource Extraction,” dated June 28, 2013, and prepared by the working group of the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry;**
- (iii) the Pension Fund’s exposure to investments in fossil fuels;**
- (iv) the Board’s rationale for investing in the 200 largest fossil fuel companies given (a) the risks of stranded assets, and (b) the possibility of equal or better returns on divesting these stocks.**

#### **Background:**

*(This proposal contains the information from Proposals PGC #6A, PGC #6B submitted by Bathurst United Pastoral Charge and Trinity-St. Paul’s Pastoral Charge, Toronto Southeast Presbytery.)*



Changes to the global climate threaten our planet and all its systems on a global scale. Intensifying droughts, floods, and desertification, will increase the threat of famine, war and violence, and these will dramatically increase the number of displaced persons and climate change migrants. The changes threaten the entire ecology of many environments, including the oceans due to acidification and heating. Continuing on our current path imposes collective costs of adapting to change which are enormously higher than costs of changing course to reduce demand for energy and develop alternative, carbon-free sources, and are also enormously more than the income generated by business as usual. These changes will require the United Church to raise funds to assist partners after disasters, and increase costs on future pensioners to adapt to changing climate and environment into the future.

Ironically and unjustly, the global south is the most susceptible to climatic chaos and the least responsible for causing it. Indigenous populations around the world, including Indigenous peoples in all parts of Canada face disproportionate risks from these changes, and great impact from the extraction and transportation of fossil fuels from and through their lands, all too often carried out without Free, Prior Informed Consent (FPIC). Such actions by the companies and the companion actions (and inactions) of government are a violation of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, signed by the Government of Canada, and conflict with the commitment of The United Church of Canada to seek right relations with Indigenous peoples. This failure to implement FPIC builds a further huge debt to be repaid to First Nations as partial restoration of the broken lands and lives left behind without their consent. This level of harm should be beyond what the fiduciary duty of the Pension Board to plan members requires or permits.

Increasing numbers of financial advisors and international experts are identifying the risk of stranding fossil fuel reserves as policy shifts to recognize these assets as un-burnable - creating a “carbon bubble.” However, the public reports of major fossil fuel companies indicate that they plan to extract and burn their “assets”—and they expect neither engagement nor public policies to change their plans. Instead they are accelerating the emissions and their impact. These commitments do not permit effective shareholder engagement, and the urgency of the problems mean we must seek other ways to respond. Continuing to hold the stocks and bonds of these companies seems incompatible with the mission of the church and the fiduciary responsibilities of the Pension Board.

We live in hope that peoples’ actions and resulting changes in public policy will make companies leave up to 80% of their current reserves in the ground—a necessary step to reducing the damage of emissions to the climate, the earth, and the oceans, and all life on the earth. Once enough institutions, municipalities, and individuals sell their fossil fuel holdings, commensurate public policy and corporate action would follow, and those who continue to hold such investments will have the value of those investments reduced. Careful discernment of how the Pension Fund investments fit into the rapidly changing investment environment can reduce the risks to the climate as well as the risks to these investments.

The United Church of Canada is called to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God and to serve as partners in God’s mission, which includes abundant life for all creation. Seeking justice means making fiduciary choices to resist climate chaos and changes to the oceans that

threaten populations of peoples and other creatures alike. Climate justice concerns highlight the massive projected impact on the people and countries with the least resources to adapt to this change, which they cannot prevent alone. In 2009, the Executive of the General Council called for additional work on “socially responsible investment” in the Pension Board’s Statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles and terms of reference. This continuing discernment needs to address the increasing risks of holding fossil fuel stocks.

We are not alone in addressing these issues, and effective responses will be collective. The United Church of Canada joined the Carbon Disclosure Initiative in 2007, and the Pension Board should use the new Carbon Tracker tools to assess the Plan’s exposure to carbon-based investments, to assist in planning to reduce or eliminate that associated risk. Signing the UN Principles for responsible investment will support additional collective responses. The United Church Pension Board should commit to the highest standards of responsible investment, including joining further coalitions as part of the Pension Board’s fiduciary responsibilities to plan members.

New options for alternative and positive investments by institutions are appearing every month, and these can offer comparable or better returns at lower risk. Positive reinvestment is a second step that the Pension Board can implement in a diversified asset mix that can sustain and protect the returns of the fund investments and the pensions of plan members, as well as be faithful to the justice mission of the church and of the pension plan members.

In its continuing discernment, The United Church of Canada’s Pension Board is fiduciary to plan members. Plan members deserve to be informed of what the Board discerns, including investment beliefs and guiding principles for the class of fossil fuel stocks, associated investment risks in the pension plan assets, and what rationales there are for the evolving choices of pension fund investments. The Pension Board should report its discernment and resulting investment decisions to the plan members and to the wider church through the General Council.

**Intermediate Court Action:  
MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

**MAR 2 UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA PENSION BOARD DIVESTMENT FROM  
GOLDCORP**

**Origin:** Church in Action Committee, Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

**Proposed by the Church in Action Committee, Maritime Conference that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015), responding to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitments to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, instructs the General Secretary to communicate to The**

**United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.**

**Background:**

*Because of your money, you are complicit. Give your money to something that gives life.*

—Catholic Parish Committee in Defense of Mother Earth, San Miguel Ixtahuacan Nov. 2013 in meeting with the Mining the Connections/KAIROS Mining Delegation

**We bring this proposal forward as an urgent concern for immediate attention. United Church, KAIROS and Canadian Aboriginal partners have urged the UCCPB to publicly divest from Goldcorp.**<sup>i, ii</sup> We are acutely aware of the ongoing suffering of Indigenous Mayan communities, related to negative environmental, social and health impacts. The presence of the

Marlin Mine for a period of more than nine years in Guatemala has resulted in:

- serious environmental damage, especially water contamination<sup>iii</sup>
- disruption of community cohesion and an increase in community conflict
- an increase in domestic violence and family breakdown
- a huge increase in alcohol abuse and sex trade
- a loss of *Mam*, the principal Indigenous language
- an increase in health issues including the spread of HIV/AIDS, skin lesions
- malnutrition among children due to inflated prices for basic products

*The statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles for the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada (2005) Article 33 states: Socially responsible investment procedures can be employed provided there is reasonable assurance that the best long term interest of the members is being served.* The United Church has always affirmed that **respect for human dignity and the well-being of the planet serve the long-term interests of pension plan members.** United Church policies direct that maximizing economic return on investments must give way to economic justice, human rights, and environmental protection.<sup>iv</sup>

Since 2008 the UCCPB's ethical investment advisor, Jantizi Research (now Sustainalytics) has recommended against inclusion of Goldcorp in the UCCPB portfolio, due to ongoing community conflict. (UCCPB communications to Maritime Conference Mining the Connections Working Group.)

Goldcorp continues to obtain exploration and exploitation licenses without the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous communities (required by the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, Article 26).<sup>v</sup> It has obtained licenses in regions where Indigenous communities have voted massively against mining projects in municipal referenda and where Catholic diocesan and parish environmental justice committees are courageously resisting the presence of mining project.<sup>vi</sup> In 2010, the Goldcorp-funded Human Rights Assessment recommended a moratorium on exploration, expansion and conversion of exploration to exploitation licenses, pending effective State involvement in consultation processes. Yet Goldcorp has extended the Marlin Mine underground and plans to develop the nearby Los Chocoyos open-pit mine.

The Cerro Blanco geo-thermal mine near the border with El Salvador threatens the eco-system providing water to 67% of Salvadorans. It was built despite water and soil scientists' warnings of

a flawed environmental impact assessment. Goldcorp has suspended mine operations, citing gold prices. However, problems of extremely hot water and unstable soil containing a naturally high level of arsenic remain unresolved. The El Salvador Roundtable on Metallic Mining (UCC partner ADES is a lead member) and El Salvador's Ombudsperson seek the mine's permanent closure.<sup>vii</sup>

The UCCPB contracts SHARE to engage with Goldcorp management. We question this involvement when our partners see no significant change after nearly a decade of management engagement. SHARE's management engagement takes place within a framework of ensuring the long-term value of the company, making it unlikely to take on issues that may reduce Goldcorp's financial value.<sup>viii</sup>

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Sean Handcock/Mary White moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #2 entitled "United Church of Canada Pension Board Divestment from Goldcorp" to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada with a note from Maritime Conference that this be put before the whole General assembly and not be put as part of an omnibus bill.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

<sup>i</sup> United Church, KAIROS partners: Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala, Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala, CEIBA (Association for Community Development and Promotion), ADES (Social and Economic Development Association of Santa Marta, El Salvador) , [www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/](http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/)

<sup>ii</sup> *Where Our Treasure Is*, <http://marconf.ca/resources/treasure/> Messages from Bishop Ramazzini (Ecumenical Christian Council member) and Catholic parish leader, Sister Maudilia Lopez Cardona. p. 9. Letter by a Canadian Aboriginal woman, Cathy Gerroir, who has collaborated with the United Church in the Maritimes. p. 15

<sup>iii</sup> National Institute of Forensic Sciences March, 2013 report on government ministries' surface and groundwater samplings near the Marlin mine. Commission on Peace and Ecology [www.ciel.org/Law\\_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd\\_water\\_report%20english.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Law_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd_water_report%20english.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Examples: The United Church social policy *One Earth Community – Ethical Principles for Environment and Development* (1992), *the resource Mission and Investing: A Guide for The United Church of Canada Congregations and Organizations* (2002), resources that followed from *Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire* (2006) See *Where Our Treasure Is*, p. 15

<sup>v</sup> [issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un\\_declaration\\_rights\\_indigenous\\_peoples](http://issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un_declaration_rights_indigenous_peoples)

<sup>vi</sup> [www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/](http://www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/)

<sup>vii</sup> [www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468%20http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html](http://www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468%20http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html)

<sup>viii</sup> Shareholder Association for Research and Education [www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human\\_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf](http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf)

## **TOR 5 UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA PENSION BOARD (UCCPB) DIVESTMENT FROM GOLDCORP**

**Origin:** Social Justice and World Affairs Committee, South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** Unknown

**The Social Justice and World Affairs Committee of South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015), responding to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitments to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, instructs the General Secretary, General Council to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.**

### **Background:**

*“Because of your money, you are complicit. Give your money to something that gives life.”*  
—Catholic Parish Committee in Defense of Mother Earth, San Miguel Ixtahuacan Nov. 2013 in meeting with the Mining the Connections/KAIROS Mining Delegation.

We bring this proposal forward as an urgent concern for immediate attention. United Church, KAIROS and Canadian Aboriginal partners have urged the UCCPB to publicly divest from Goldcorp.<sup>1, 2</sup> We are acutely aware of the ongoing suffering of Indigenous Mayan communities, related to negative environmental, social and health impacts.

The presence of the Marlin Mine for a period of more than nine years in Guatemala has resulted in:

- serious environmental damage, especially water contamination<sup>3</sup>
- disruption of community cohesion and an increase in community
- conflict
- an increase in domestic violence and family breakdown
- a huge increase in alcohol abuse and sex trade

<sup>1</sup> United Church, KAIROS partners: Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala, Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala, CEIBA (Association for Community Development and Promotion), ADES (Social and Economic Development Association of Santa Marta, El Salvador), [www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/](http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/)

<sup>2</sup> *Where Our Treasure Is*, <http://marconf.ca/resources/treasure/> Messages from Bishop Ramazzini (Ecumenical Christian Council member) and Catholic parish leader, Sister Maudilia Lopez Cardona. p. 9. Letter by a Canadian Aboriginal woman, Cathy Gerroir, who has collaborated with the United Church in the Maritimes. p. 15

<sup>3</sup> National Institute of Forensic Sciences March, 2013 report on government ministries' surface and groundwater samplings near the Marlin mine. Commission on Peace and Ecology [www.ciel.org/Law\\_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd\\_water\\_report%20english.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Law_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd_water_report%20english.pdf)

- a loss of *Mam*, the principal Indigenous language
- an increase in health issues including the spread of HIV/AIDS, skin
- lesions
- malnutrition among children due to inflated prices for basic products.

The Statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles for the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada (2005), Article 33 states: “Socially responsible investment procedures can be employed provided there is reasonable assurance that the best long term interest of the members is being served.” The United Church has always affirmed that respect for human dignity and the well-being of the planet serve the long-term interests of pension plan members. United Church policies direct that maximizing economic return on investments must give way to economic justice, human rights, and environmental protection.<sup>4</sup>

Since 2008 the UCCPB’s ethical investment advisor, Jantizi Research (now Sustainalytics) has recommended against inclusion of Goldcorp in the UCCPB portfolio, due to ongoing community conflict.

Goldcorp continues to obtain exploration and exploitation licences without the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous communities (required by the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, Article 26).<sup>5</sup> It has obtained licences in regions where Indigenous communities have voted massively against mining projects in municipal referenda and where Catholic diocesan and parish environmental justice committees are courageously resisting the presence of mining projects.<sup>6</sup> In 2010, the Goldcorp-funded Human Rights Assessment recommended a moratorium on exploration, expansion and conversion of exploration to exploitation licences, pending effective state involvement in consultation processes. Yet Goldcorp has extended the Marlin Mine underground and plans to develop the nearby Los Chocoyos open-pit mine.

The Cerro Blanco geo-thermal mine near the border with El Salvador threatens the eco-system providing water to 67% of Salvadorans. It was built despite water and soil scientists’ warnings of a flawed environmental impact assessment. Goldcorp has suspended mine operations, citing gold prices. However, problems of extremely hot water and unstable soil containing unnaturally high level of arsenic remain unresolved. The El Salvador Roundtable on Metallic Mining (UCC partner ADES is a lead member) and El Salvador’s Ombudsperson seek the mine’s permanent closure.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Examples: The United Church social policy *One Earth Community – Ethical Principles for Environment and Development* (1992), *the resource Mission and Investing: A Guide for The United Church of Canada Congregations and Organizations* (2002), resources that followed from *Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire* (2006). See *Where Our Treasure Is*, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> [issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un\\_declaration\\_rights\\_indigenous\\_peoples](http://issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un_declaration_rights_indigenous_peoples)

<sup>6</sup> [www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/](http://www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/)

<sup>7</sup> [www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468%20](http://www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468%20)  
<http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html>  
<http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html>

The UCCPB contracts SHARE to engage with Goldcorp management. We question this involvement when our partners see no significant change after nearly a decade of management engagement. SHARE's management engagement takes place within a framework of ensuring the long-term value of the company, making it unlikely to take on issues that may reduce Goldcorp's financial value.<sup>8</sup>

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received by South West Presbytery (April 18, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference and transmitted with concurrence.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

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<sup>8</sup> Shareholder Association for Research and Education [www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human\\_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf](http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf)

## **MNWO 7 UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA PENSION BOARD DIVESTMENT FROM GOLDCORP**

**Originating Body:** Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) respond to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitment to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, instruct the General Secretary to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.**

### **Background:**

*“Because of your money, you are complicit. Give your money to something that gives life.”*

—Catholic Parish Committee in Defense of Mother Earth, San Miguel Ixtahuacan Nov. 2013 in meeting with the Mining the Connections/KAIROS Mining Delegation

We bring this proposal forward as an urgent concern for immediate attention. The United Church of Canada, KAIROS and Canadian Aboriginal partners have urged the UCCPB to publicly divest from Goldcorp.<sup>(1), (2)</sup> We are acutely aware of the ongoing suffering of Indigenous Mayan communities related to negative environmental, social and health impacts. The presence of the Marlin Mine for a period of more than nine years in Guatemala has resulted in:

- i. Serious environmental damage, especially water contamination<sup>(3)</sup>
- ii. Disruption of community cohesion and an increase in community conflict
- iii. An increase in domestic violence and family breakdown
- iv. A huge increase in alcohol abuse and sex trade
- v. A loss of *Mam*, the principal Indigenous language
- vi. An increase in health issues including the spread of HIV/AIDS, skin lesions
- vii. Malnutrition among children due to inflated prices for basic products

*The statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles for the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada (2005) Article 33 states: Socially responsible investment procedures can be employed provided there is reasonable assurance that the best long term interest of the members is being served.* The United Church has always affirmed that respect for human dignity and the well-being of the planet serve the long-term interests of pension plan members. United Church policies direct that maximizing economic return on investments must give way to economic justice, human rights, and environmental protection.<sup>(4)</sup>

Since 2008 the UCCPB’s ethical investment advisor, Jantizi Research (now Sustainalytics) has recommended against inclusion of Goldcorp in the UCCPB portfolio, due to ongoing community conflict. (In a recent UCCPB communications to Maritime Conference Mining the Connections Working Group.)



Goldcorp continues to obtain exploration and exploitation licenses without the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous communities (required by the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, Article 26).<sup>(5)</sup> It has obtained licenses in regions where Indigenous communities have voted massively against mining projects in municipal referenda and where Catholic diocesan and parish environmental justice committees are courageously resisting the presence of mining projects.<sup>(6)</sup> In 2010, the Goldcorp-funded Human Rights Assessment recommended a moratorium on exploration, expansion and conversion of exploration to exploitation licenses, pending effective State involvement in consultation processes. Yet Goldcorp has extended the Marlin Mine underground and plans to develop the nearby Los Chocoyos open-pit mine.

The Cerro Blanco geo-thermal mine near the border with El Salvador threatens the eco-system providing water to 67% of Salvadorans. It was built despite water and soil scientists' warnings of a flawed environmental impact assessment. Goldcorp has suspended mine operations, citing gold prices. However, problems of extremely hot water and unstable soil containing a naturally high level of arsenic remain unresolved. The El Salvador Roundtable on Metallic Mining (UCC partner ADES is a lead member) and El Salvador's Ombudsperson seek the mine's permanent closure.<sup>(7)</sup>

The UCCPB contracts SHARE to engage with Goldcorp management. We question this involvement when our partners see no significant change after nearly a decade of management engagement. SHARE's management engagement takes place within a framework of ensuring the long-term value of the company, making it unlikely to take on issues that may reduce Goldcorp's financial value.<sup>(8)</sup>

### **Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

<sup>[1]</sup> United Church, KAIROS partners: Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala, Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala, CEIBA (Association for Community Development and Promotion), ADES (Social and Economic Development Association of Santa Marta, El Salvador), [www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/](http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/).

<sup>[2]</sup> *Where Our Treasure Is*, <http://marconf.ca/resources/treasure/>. Messages from Bishop Ramazzini (Ecumenical Christian Council member) and Catholic parish leader, Sister Maudilia Lopez Cardona. p. 9. Letter by a Canadian Aboriginal woman, Cathy Gerroir, who has collaborated with the United Church in the Maritimes. p. 15.

<sup>[3]</sup> National Institute of Forensic Sciences March, 2013 report on government ministries' surface and groundwater samplings near the Marlin mine. Commission on Peace and Ecology [www.ciel.org/Law\\_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd\\_water\\_report%20english.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Law_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd_water_report%20english.pdf).

<sup>[4]</sup> Examples: The United Church social policy *One Earth Community – Ethical Principles for Environment and Development* (1992), the resource *Mission and Investing: A Guide for The United Church of Canada Congregations and Organizations* (2002), resources that followed from *Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire* (2006). See *Where Our Treasure Is*, p. 1.

<sup>[5]</sup> [issuu.com/karinzyysaw/docs/un\\_declaration\\_rights\\_indigenous\\_peoples](http://issuu.com/karinzyysaw/docs/un_declaration_rights_indigenous_peoples)

<sup>[6]</sup> [www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/](http://www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/)

<sup>[7]</sup> [www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468%20http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.htm](http://www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468%20http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.htm), <http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html>

<sup>[8]</sup> Shareholder Association for Research and Education [www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human\\_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf](http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf)

## **BC 9 UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA PENSION BOARD DIVESTMENT FROM GOLD CORP**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council respond to the ethical imperative of our faith as expressed in the social Policies of The United Church of Canada, and commitments to partnership and right relations including support for free, prior and informed consent, by instructing the General Secretary to communicate to The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UCCPB) that the will of the church is to divest of its shares in Goldcorp and make public that divestment.**

### **Background:**

*Because of your money, you are complicit. Give your money to something that gives life.*

—Catholic Parish Committee in Defense of Mother Earth, San Miguel Ixtahuacan Nov. 2013 in meeting with the Mining the Connections/KAIROS Mining Delegation.

We bring this proposal forward as an urgent concern for immediate attention. United Church, KAIROS and Canadian Aboriginal partners have urged the UCCPB to publicly divest from Goldcorp. (1, 2) We are acutely aware of the ongoing suffering of indigenous Mayan communities, related to negative environmental, social and health impacts. The presence of the Marlin Mine for a period of more than nine years in Guatemala has resulted in:

- serious environmental damage, especially water contamination. (3)
- disruption of community cohesion and an increase in community conflict.
- an increase in domestic violence and family breakdown.
- a huge increase in alcohol abuse and sex trade.
- a loss of Mam, the principal Indigenous language.
- an increase in health issues including the spread of HIV/AIDS, skin lesions.
- malnutrition among children due to inflated prices for basic products.

The statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles for the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada (2005) Article 33 states: Socially responsible investment procedures can be employed provided there is reasonable assurance that the best long term interest of the members is being served. The United Church has always affirmed that respect for human dignity and the well-being of the planet serve the long-term interests of pension plan members. United Church policies direct that maximizing economic return on investments must give way to economic justice, human rights, and environmental protection. (4)

Since 2008, the UCCPB's ethical investment advisor, Jantizi Research (now Sustainalytics) has recommended against inclusion of Goldcorp in the UCCPB portfolio, due to ongoing community

conflict. (UCCPB communications to Maritime Conference Mining the Connections Working Group.)

Goldcorp continues to obtain exploration and exploitation licenses without the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous communities (required by the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, Article 26.) (5) It has obtained licenses in regions where Indigenous communities have voted massively against mining projects in municipal referenda and where Catholic diocesan and parish environmental justice committees are courageously resisting the presence of mining project. (6) In 2010, the Goldcorp-funded Human Rights Assessment recommended a moratorium on exploration, expansion and conversion of exploration to exploitation licenses, pending effective State involvement in consultation processes. Yet Goldcorp has extended the Marlin Mine underground and plans to develop the nearby Los Chocoyos open-pit mine.

The Cerro Blanco geo-thermal mine near the border with El Salvador threatens the eco-system providing water to 67% of Salvadorans. It was built despite water and soil scientists' warnings of a flawed environmental impact assessment. Goldcorp has suspended mine operations, citing gold prices. However, problems of extremely hot water and unstable soil containing a naturally high level of arsenic remain unresolved. The El Salvador Roundtable on Metallic Mining (UCC partner ADES (Economic and Social Development Association) is a lead member) and El Salvador's Ombudsperson seek the mine's permanent closure. (7)

The UCCPB contracts SHARE to engage with Goldcorp management. We question this involvement when our partners see no significant change after nearly a decade of management engagement. SHARE's management engagement takes place within a framework of ensuring the long-term value of the company, making it unlikely to take on issues that may reduce Goldcorp's financial value. (8)

#### **Footnotes:**

1. United Church, KAIROS partners: Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala, Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala, CEIBA (Association for Community Development and Promotion), ADES (Social and Economic Development Association of Santa Marta, El Salvador) , [www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/](http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/whose-development-reflections-on-my-visit-to-the-marlin-and-meeting-with-community-members/)
2. Where Our Treasure Is, <http://marconf.ca/resources/treasure/> Messages from Bishop Ramazzini (Ecumenical Christian Council member) and Catholic parish leader, Sister Maudilia Lopez Cardona. p. 9. Letter by a Canadian Aboriginal woman, Cathy Gerroir, who has collaborated with the United Church in the Maritimes. p. 15.
3. National Institute of Forensic Sciences March, 2013 report on government ministries' surface and groundwater samplings near the Marlin mine. Commission on Peace and Ecology [www.ciel.org/Law\\_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd\\_water\\_report%20english.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Law_Communities/Guatemala/copae%202nd_water_report%20english.pdf)
4. Examples: The United Church social policy One Earth Community – Ethical Principles for Environment and Development (1992), the resource Mission and Investing: A Guide for The United Church of Canada Congregations and Organizations (2002), resources that followed from Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire (2006) See Where Our Treasure Is, p. 15
5. [issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un\\_declaration\\_rights\\_indigenous\\_peoples](http://issuu.com/karinzylsaw/docs/un_declaration_rights_indigenous_peoples)

6. [www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/](http://www.mimundo.org/2014/11/18/2014-11-mayan-communities-use-democracy-as-a-tool-to-safeguard-their-territory/)
7. [www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468%20](http://www.stopesmining.org/j25/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=81&Itemid=468%20), <http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.htm>, <http://portalfio.org/inicio/noticias/item/11811-el-salvador-la-pddh-presenta-el-informe-sobre-proyecto-minero-cerro-blanco-ubicado-en-guatemala.html>
8. Shareholder Association for Research and Education [www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human\\_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf](http://www.share.ca/files/SHARE-Human_Rights-Mining-Final.pdf)

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

## **M&O 21 CLIMATE CHANGE PROPOSAL FOR GENERAL COUNCIL 42**

**Origin:** Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** minimal

**Staffing Implications if known:** minimal

**Source of Funding if known:** unknown

### **The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council directs that the work on climate justice be a priority in our denomination and in our work with partners.**

### **Background:**

In August 2009, the 40th General Council adopted a Proposal from M&O Conference (M&O 1 of 2009) on Climate Change and Global Warming which established key policy positions and laid out a menu of actions for consideration by respective courts and bodies of The United Church of Canada.

In 2012, M&O Conference made a proposal (M&O 2 of 2012) to the 41st General Council entitled Noah or Belshazzar—The United Church of Canada and Global Warming: Dare We Risk a Challenge Deferred?

Appendix items 6 and 9 of the latter proposal stated in part: “call the Church as institution, its leaders, the General Council Executive, and the Church’s Courts, bodies and congregants, to assume their respective responsibilities to take more urgent and intentional action on the lines set out in M&O 1, and such other steps as would bring about a paradigm shift within the Church”... And “request the Executive of the General Council to develop an updated program of action on global warming and the crisis of creation, including the oceans, to be carried out by the Church during the triennium 2012-2015”...

Ottawa Presbytery has decided to take action as set out in its attached Motion adopted April 14, 2015. Whatever the outcome of the Comprehensive Review, the federal election of 2015 will be

long over before its decisions are implemented and it is timely and compelling for Montreal and Ottawa Conference to express its concerns about climate change and to urge pressing action on Canada's political leadership, as set out in the Ottawa Presbytery Motion. With regard to longer term action, there will undoubtedly be provision in the implementing legislation and regulations for appropriate United Church bodies to serve a "successor state" function for the duties and responsibilities of terminated or altered existing bodies.

MOTION on Climate Change for the April 14, 2015 Meeting of Ottawa Presbytery

Moved by Norma McCord and seconded by Rev. Caroline Penhale:

That Ottawa Presbytery decide it is time to take up its responsibility in regard to tackling climate change; and initially, to take or actively encourage the steps below to reduce its carbon footprint and to advocate for a national climate change action plan:

1. Ottawa Presbytery commits itself to develop an action plan to assist its congregations in reducing their physical plants' carbon footprints by 25% over the next five years.
2. Climate Change Action Plan
3.
  - A) We (Ottawa Presbytery) work on our own and with partners to encourage development of a national Climate Change Action Plan. Such a plan would include:
    - acknowledgement of the reality of anthropogenic global warming; support for the 2 degree Celsius cap on global warming; and the consequential need for urgent action involving both mitigation and adaptation, including net real reduction of overall Canadian GHG emissions;
    - measures that ensure a steadily rising price on greenhouse gas emissions throughout Canada, including increasingly strict GHG emissions standards across the board;
    - an end to federal subsidies and special tax breaks to the Canadian fossil fuel industry;
    - increased investments in cleaner, low-impact energy alternatives, including widespread adoption of LEED standards;
    - spending on preserving water resources, actual and potential parkland and wildlife habitats;
    - support for the climate change efforts of the most vulnerable, particularly those in the far North and the Global South; and,
    - Active support by Canada of such a position internationally and bilaterally, including at the Paris meeting in December 2015 to finalize an international agreement on climate change.
  - B) We launch a multi-pronged campaign during this coming Federal Election, including creating a sample letter by the September Presbytery meeting. The goal is that over 50% of Presbyters and a large body of members/adherents communicate, in various ways, to their Member of Parliament and each candidate in their riding, their support for strong and early action on climate change along the above lines.

C) Ottawa Presbytery establish a task group responsible to Presbytery Executive in order to pursue and coordinate these actions, as well as to encourage further education and understanding regarding climate change, and to liaise and act with likeminded bodies and individuals.

**Carried**

**Intermediate Court Action:**

The Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted in concurrence.

**BC 5 CLIMATE JUSTICE DISCUSSION CIRCLES**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Development of resources. Quite minimal as the model is already being used at Nelson and Castlegar United Churches

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council direct the General Secretary, General Council to create online and print resources for the creation of climate justice discussion circles, and further publicize and make these resources available to congregations and groups in Canada, based on models used within Kootenay Presbytery at Castlegar and Nelson United Churches.**

**Background:**

The Earth's climate is changing at an unprecedented rate and human activity is overwhelmingly responsible. Increased risk of droughts, floods, tropical storms, and altered weather patterns threatens to displace more people and lead to increasing numbers of civil wars and international conflict. People living in poverty and Indigenous populations, including here in Canada, are made especially vulnerable to climate chaos. The people and countries responsible for the majority of historic heat-trapping pollution are least likely to bear the brunt of the changes. Conversely, the people and countries least responsible for causing climate chaos are most likely to experience disease, displacement, and conflict. Climate chaos is a justice issue with which every follower of Jesus and every person of faith should be concerned. Ocean acidification, also caused by carbon dioxide emissions, is another area of major concern.

There are many different ways to raise concerns about climate change and advocate for justice. There is direct action and civil disobedience, which is occurring around the globe. There is political advocacy, which many groups also employ. There is letter writing, blogging, film-making, and utilizing many media to get the message out. But, as Christian people, along with all of the above, we have always engaged one another person-to-person. People-to-people justice helped to end apartheid, is helping to build reconciliation between 1st Nations and non-1st Nations people, and is a key component to seeking peace for Palestinian people, just to name a few examples.

People who are leading the way in seeking climate justice both within and outside of the Church advocate having conversations, difficult conversations, about our changing climate and what we can do about it. As these conversations lead to other conversations, person to person, the ripples grow larger. Through these conversations the social construct of what is appropriate and inappropriate begins to change. And as the social construct changes, the political discussion changes, too. These ripples of conversation and change are one of the many tools available to communities in seeking climate justice.

The other aspect to the creation of discussion circles is that they take little facilitation and are leaderless, cooperative movements. Different organizations can partner together to host and create discussion circles, but the circles can then spread outward. So, this is an opportunity to both engage in conversations about change and partner with other groups in our communities.

The United Church has churches in many communities in Canada, buildings that are safe spaces for conversations. Churches can be places where many people come to meet to talk together about important things. The use of circles, a long used tradition in the Church, provides a safe place for people to share their concerns and deep feelings about climate change and seek to find ways to work together in advocating climate justice.

Castlegar and Nelson United Churches have developed a process and resources, which are not proprietary and are free to be emulated across the United Church and throughout our country, especially in a cooperative effort with other community groups.

The United Church of Canada has spoken prophetically and frequently about climate justice. This is one other way that we can facilitate discussion as one important tool to help create change in our Canadian political and social construct.

**Intermediate Court Action:**  
Agreement from BC Conference

## **BC 11 CLEAN WATER FOR ALL CANADIANS**

**Origin:** Vancouver South Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None for General Council, but considerable for the Canadian Government

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Vancouver South Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to ask publicly for commitment from the Federal Government that all Canadian**

**communities, including First Nations Communities, have access to potable water by 2018.**

**Background:**

Many Canadian communities, especially Northern and First Nations communities do not have access to clean “potable” drinking water.

39% of First Nations Communities have water systems deemed “high risk” by Canadian Health Authorities. Approximately 20% of Reserve homes have no access to running water and therefore no access to adequate sewage systems.

The lack of clean water leads to many health problems, from minor rashes to dangerous gastro-intestinal illness and other infections. It is considered a serious limitation on community health, economic well-being, educational preparedness and environmental degradation.

The United Church has a history of providing health care services in northern, rural and isolated communities and recognizes that poor water quality is a major barrier to raising health outcomes and life expectancy especially for First Nations people, to the level of the General Population.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

**MNWO 6 TRANS CANADA PIPELINE ENERGY EAST PROJECT**

**Originating Body:** Cambrian Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) have the General Secretary, General Council\* write to the Federal Government expressing The United Church of Canada’s opposition to The Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East project; and, we encourage each of our pastoral charges to launch a letter-writing campaign expressing their opposition to the Trans Canada Pipeline Energy East project to both their Provincial and the Federal Governments.**

**Background:**

The Energy East project will greatly increase the expansion of tar sands oil production and its associated significant on-site pollution issues.

This Energy East pipeline will stretch over 4,000 km of our valued Canadian landscape where leaks would be disastrous.



Diluted bitumen spills are impossible to clean up properly.

This project will contribute massive amounts of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere which will serve to accelerate many negative aspects of climate change.

We, as United Church members, strive to live with respect in creation and to seek justice.

The Energy East project promises very limited economic benefits for Canadians.

**Intermediate Court Action: *Transmitted with concurrence***

\*The original proposal directed the Moderator to write and was changed to reflect our polity that the General Secretary, General Council or the Executive of the General Council receive directions from the General Council.

**M&O 20 THE BEACONSFIELD INITIATIVE, EXPLORING CANADIAN MINING PRACTICES AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES, STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND STUDYING THE IMPACT OF CANADIAN MINING INTERESTS IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES (PROPOSAL)**

**Originating Body:** Montreal Presbytery

**Funding Implications:** Existing Funding and Special Appeal

**Staffing Implications:** Existing

**Source of Funding:** General Council Partners in Mission Budget and Special Appeal

**Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council, in order to extend the work of the Beaconsfield Initiative to the Southern Philippines, direct the Executive of the General Council and General Secretary, General Council to:**

- 1. call for the following:**
  - a) the end of the vilification and human rights violations of people and people's organizations of the Southern Philippines;**
  - b) the end of illegal arrest and imprisonment of people;**
  - c) the end of abuse, violence, and sex crimes against women in Indigenous communities as practiced by the military; and**
  - d) the protection of the land and resources from destructive large scale mining and all Canadian mining projects affecting communities; and**
- 2. take the following actions:**

- a) **encourage our church members to lobby the Canadian government to change the Mining Act in order to apply all our environmental, human rights and labour laws to the Canadian mining corporation operating outside of Canada;**
- b) **boycott and divest from any companies who use and employ private militias or security forces, trained and equipped by the Armed Forces of the Philippines;**
- c) **encourage Kairos and other church partners to do the same.**

**Background:**

The Beaconsfield Initiative was an exposure mission (2010) to the Cordillera Region in the Northern Philippines, with the purpose of establishing long term covenants with partners and church congregations in the Cordillera region and congregations and ministry sites in Canada. As well, to evaluate the impact of Canadian mining practices and interests in the Cordillera, specifically in Abra Province; to explore and document the effect on the lives of Indigenous people; the militarization of the region; the extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances; the resistance to mining explorations; the environmental destruction and human rights violations.

Our new endeavour is an exposure mission to the Southern Philippines (2015), where there are major established Canadian mining corporations, with the purpose of evaluating the impact of Canadian mining practices and interests in the Southern Philippines; to explore and document the effect on the lives of Indigenous people; the militarization of the region; the extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances; the resistance to mining explorations; the environmental destruction and human rights violations; and to link with our Philippines partners. Secondly, we intend to share the information through church channels and also through a detailed media plan we will share the information in the Quebec milieu, with the participation of a journalist. We want to connect the information we collect with the mining issues in the Congo and Guatemala. We will also reconnect with our partners in the Cordillera at the end of our exposure in order to exchange information on human rights issues and mining operations.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Montreal & Ottawa Conference AGM 2012 passed two motions re the recommendations found in the said report, first, a motion to concur with the recommendations, with the addition of one sentence for clarity following the initial paragraph: “To continue the work of the Beaconsfield Initiative in the Cordillera region in the Philippines, we ask the 41st General Council to direct the General Council Executive and General Secretary to take appropriate action on the following.” GC41 passed a unanimous motion to support the Initiative.

At its Annual General Meeting in May 2015, the Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference voted in concurrence.

## **TOR 13 RECYCLING NON-BIODEGRADABLE PLASTICS**

**Origin:** Stanley East

**Financial Implications if known:** Nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** Nil

**Source of Funding if known:** Nil

**Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

- 1. call on The United Church of Canada and all of its Conferences, presbyteries, local ministry units and members to follow the motion adopted by the 39<sup>th</sup> General Council in the year 2006 to avoid the use of bottled water in plastic single use containers where possible;**
- 2. write to the federal and provincial governments calling on them to:**
  - a. Encourage the development and use of compostable bio-plastics in Canada where suitable, particularly where single use plastic items are landfilled due to non-recyclability.**
  - b. Encourage the continued expansion of recycling of non-compostable bio plastics and plastics from fossil hydrocarbons on a national scale in all communities and rural areas.**
  - c. Encourage and where necessary legislate reduction in the use of excess plastic packaging**
  - d. Request government, industry and international participation in reducing and ultimately elimination of all plastics from entering our water streams and oceans through recycling, land and landfill management and international regulation against disposal of waste at sea.**
  - e. Request the elimination of and if necessary regulating the use of personal care products containing micro beads or similar items which would ultimately enter the water stream and oceans to be ingested by marine life**
- 3. Direct the Executive of the General Council, through the appropriate committee or action, to launch an awareness campaign to encourage members of The United Church of Canada to make choices that support reductions in the use of excess plastics and packaging and encourage recycling of plastics.**

### **Background:**

We are concerned about the amount of all plastics non-biodegradable and biodegradable in the ocean. These plastics may or may not be broken down by the sunlight into smaller pieces, which are ingested by marine life threatening marine life and human consumption of marine life as a

food source as well as the eco-balance of marine species. Larger plastic items not broken down also threaten larger marine life.

Greenpeace International, one of many non-government organizations that campaigns for marine conservation and zero pollution, describes a trash vortex in the North Pacific that is the size of Texas, in which an estimated six kilos of plastic for every kilo of natural plankton, along with other slow degrading garbage. Some plastics in the gyre will not break down in the lifetimes of the grandchildren of the people who threw them away.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**MOTION by Stanley East/Janet Jones that Toronto Conference  
MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

### **ANW 3 SOCIAL JUSTICE CONVERSATION**

**Origin:** Red Deer Presbytery, April 23, 2015

**Financial Implications if known:** Much of this work could be done by the Unit within its existing budget, but there may be some expenses for resource sharing and consultation, to be determined by the committee in consultation with General Council Executive.

**Staffing Implications if known:** Significant staff resources would be required to support the appropriate Unit or Committee in designing a consultation process, developing tools for conversation, collating results and preparing a report with recommendations

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Red Deer Presbytery (of Alberta and Northwest Conference) proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to engage the whole church in a process of consultation, review and discernment about the social justice ministries and public witness of The United Church of Canada, including addressing questions such as the following: how the church most faithfully engages questions of social justice, its importance to our faithfulness, the dangers and possible failures in this ministry, and what criteria, guidelines and principles might help guide the church to do this ministry in ways that most effectively witness to God's kingdom (kin-dom) and build up the body of Christ.**

### **Background:**

Work for social justice is often seen as one of the defining characteristics of The United Church of Canada. It is an important part of our ethos, and strongly grounded in the biblical witness, and our Reformed and Methodist heritage.

At the same time, decisions on social justice issues made at various Courts of the church often generate controversy, both within the wider community and within the church. Controversy is not always a bad thing, but people who fundamentally support the social justice ministry of the

church often have legitimate questions about such decisions, how they are made, what the church is trying to do when it makes them, and whether there were different approaches that could have resulted in more faithful outcomes. So it is important that social justice work be done with care, and that the principles on which the church engages this work be clear, transparent, widely understood and carefully grounded in our theology and ethics.

This proposal is grounded in the conviction that it is important for the whole church to engage important issues of political, economic and environmental justice. This is true for many reasons, among which are the following:

- a. justice is the effort to embody love in social form; a concern for economic, political and environmental justice is one way in which we live out our call to love our neighbours;
- b. issues of justice affect the well-being of people and ecosystems in profound ways;
- c. economic, political and environmental issues have ethical and spiritual components which need to be raised to consciousness and discussed in public;
- d. the church is the guardian of ethical principles which need to be upheld in a public way;
- e. the church's role is to take on a prophetic role, opposing injustice and raising ethical and spiritual issues that would otherwise be overlooked;
- f. our political and economic systems often masquerade as “natural” and “inevitable” when they are in fact human institutions which can be shaped differently; and
- g. solidarity with Aboriginal peoples and other marginalized or oppressed groups is a natural reflection of our faith story of God's solidarity with such groups.

At the same time there are many failures, which can lead the church to engage questions of social justice poorly, of which our involvement in residential schools is perhaps the most tragic example. Here are some failures that contribute to poor engagement:

- a. Failing to recognize that we do not start from a neutral position but from a social location that will influence our point of view;
- b. Failing to adequately distinguish between different levels of ethical decision making and to clearly name what level we intend to comment on:
  - i. basic theological and ethical principles,
  - ii. ideological convictions,
  - iii. issues of social analysis,
  - iv. “middle axioms” (broad policy objectives), and
  - v. detailed policy decisions which often involve complex issues of expert analysis;
- c. failing to fully consider the range of faithful perspectives on each of these levels
- d. making a decision based on incomplete and one-sided information, and failing to take into account the range of informed opinion on a particular issue;
- e. trying to take positions on too many issues with too little time, energy or resources to adequately engage them;
- f. failing to carefully consider the most appropriate action the church might take to address a question;
- g. failing to be clear about our role as a church;
- h. failing to take the time to build consensus on an issue within the wider church and not just within a meeting of a particular Court; and

- i. assuming that a resolution at a Conference or General Council is a sufficient response without follow-up with congregations and partners.

Some of these failures are fairly common and undermine the confidence and commitment of the church membership to the work of social justice. It may be helpful to develop some widely shared and commonly accepted guidelines that might help the church to engage important justice questions in a healthier way. Some possible examples of such guidelines:

- a. clearly articulating the theological and ethical principles which guide our engagement;
- b. carefully distinguishing between core theological and ethical convictions and matters on which Christians can legitimately disagree;
- c. crafting policy decisions in language that positively states what we are advocating for, and only rarely in negative language of opposition to specific policy directives;
- d. carefully considering diverse points of view and the ethical and ideological positions which underlie them;
- e. trying to build consensus wherever possible – the majority vote of a church Court often leaves a minority feeling unheard and unrepresented;
- f. inviting a broad constituency of the church to participate in decision-making whenever possible, especially individuals with expertise in issues under consideration;
- g. considering what level of the church is best equipped to address a particular issue and what kind of response would be most helpful;
- h. taking time to consider issues carefully, not being rushed to make a decision within the scope of a single meeting;
- i. being clear about our objectives on a particular issue (are we trying to provoke discussion, lift up overlooked issues, warn against danger, resist an evil, support a marginalized group, or something else?);
- j. choose carefully the issues we need to engage – because our energy, time and ability to carefully consider many issues is limited, and becoming more limited all the time, it may be better to focus on a few key issues over the long term than to spread ourselves too thin;
- k. doing the research to clearly name the issue and making sure we have a full understanding of the range of informed opinion, recognizing that even experts often disagree about relevant facts;
- l. participating critically in partnerships and broad social movements; and
- m. maintaining a focus on grace—taking a stance without being overzealous or judgmental towards those who see the issues differently—reminding ourselves that we are called to be participants in God’s Kingdom (Kin-dom), but it is not a human creation.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Red Deer Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**BQ 2 NEW MISSION FOR THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Originating Body:** Bay of Quinte Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Approximately \$50,000

**Staffing Implications if known:** Support to Task Group

**Source of Funding if known:** Operating funds

**The Bay of Quinte Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of General Council to:**

- 1. Establish a Task group for the specific purpose of developing a new mission statement for The United Church of Canada;**
- 2. Direct the Task Group to present the results of their work to the 43rd General Council 2018.**

**Background:**

The work of the Comprehensive Review Task Group has been driven primarily by financial considerations and the lack of volunteers to do the work of the church. Major structural changes are recommended to address these concerns.

However, in the church our work should be primarily driven by mission, which will then provide the basis on which to make structural or organizational decisions. The principle is that form (structure) follows and is informed by mission (function). In “creating a new thing” (Revelation 21:5) it is our mission that will inform what we create.

Regardless of the outcome of the Comprehensive Review Task Group in terms of structural changes, Bay of Quinte Conference is convinced that development of a mission for The United Church of Canada is essential for the future health of the church.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Bay of Quinte Conference carried this proposal

**ANW 6 THE RURAL MINISTRY OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Origin:** St. Paul Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council (2015):**

1. **affirm the importance of the rural ministry of The United Church of Canada; and**
2. **direct the Executive of the General Council to appoint a Task Group to consider and make recommendations about the future mission and ministry of the rural ministry of the church.**

**Background:**

Until now the majority of the membership of the United Church has existed in the context of the smaller and, often times, rural churches. Many of these congregations continue to survive financially through the ongoing fundraising activities of the members. Many of these congregations are barely getting by at the current levels of assessment and the ability to expand capacity is minimal.

The possibility exists that the rural churches will be negatively impacted by the proposed changes being considered. However, the Presbytery wishes that it be reaffirmed that the church has a necessary mission to the rural context of Canada.

While it has been envisioned that some of the small rural churches may cease to exist in the next few years the belief that their value for the nurturing of members and for the mission of the church overall cannot be overlooked. Any attempt to force the closure of these churches or to write them off as dying communities should be strenuously resisted.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**LON 17 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP “UNITED IN GOD’S WORK”  
SECURE FUNDING FOR UNITED CHURCH CAMPING**

**Origin:** Lambton Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** That a designated amount of money be directed annually either through the Mission and Service Fund or through the Denominational or Regional Council Funds to secure the future of United Church camping

**Staffing Implications if known:** That there be staff at the Regional Council levels who have within their staff portfolio responsibilities for promotion and support of United Church Camps within their Region

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service Funds and Assessments

**Lambton Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) build into its restructuring recommendations staff time and funding for United Church Camping ministry. We recommend that**



**Camping be named as a mission and ministry priority under the new restructuring and that a concrete plan for how to fund and resource camps across the country be developed.**

**Background:**

United Church camping is the most impactful ministry that we do with children and young adults in The United Church of Canada. Every summer thousands of children across our country are introduced to God and nature through United Church Camping. Camping serves both an outreach and an educational ministry purpose for children and youth both within and beyond our church doors. The relationship between The United Church of Canada and its commitment to children's programming through camping dates back to the time of Union. Over the years many generous individuals and congregations have donated beautiful land and their time and talents to assure that this ministry continues. It is our belief that the new structure needs to uphold the importance of this vital ministry by securing its future with funding and staff resources.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

## Blueberry Commission Proposals

### **BLUE 1 COMPOSITE: MISSING & MURDERED ABORIGINAL WOMEN**

**Originating Body:** Blue Commission

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

*The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:*

- a. **Call upon the Government of Canada to:**
  - i. **Conduct a full Public Inquiry into the more than 1200 cases of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada;**
  - ii. **Support and continue to support the struggle against the devaluation of women by conducting this inquiry;**
- b. **Call upon churches and ministries of The United Church of Canada to at least annually remember Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women through education, and in our prayers, in particular on the Sunday immediately prior to October 4, the date of the cross-Canada Sisters in Spirit Vigil;**
- c. **Urge individuals to participate in the Sisters in Spirit Vigil on October 4;**
- d. **Urge congregational members to contact their Member of Parliament to voice support for a National Public Inquiry;**
- e. **Call upon the Government of Canada and all levels of governance to put resources towards the implementation of the 16 recommendations made by the Special Committee on Violence against Indigenous women.**

**Background:**

This composite combines SK 1 and TOR 9.

### **SK 1 SUPPORT AND CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR A NATIONAL PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

**Originating Body:** River Bend Presbytery

**Financial Implications:** None

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The River Bend Presbytery proposes that:**

Composite Proposal

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1. Support and continue to support the struggle against the devaluation of women by encouraging a National Public Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls[i];**
- 2. Call upon its churches and ministries to at least annually remember Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women through education [ii], and in our prayers[iii], in particular on the Sunday immediately prior to October 4, the date of the cross-Canada Sisters in Spirit Vigil[iv];**
- 3. Urge individuals to participate in the Sisters in Spirit Vigil on October 4;**
- 4. Urge congregational members to contact their Member of Parliaments to voice support for a National Public Inquiry;**
- 5. Call upon the Government of Canada and all levels of governance to put resources towards the implementation of the 16 recommendations made by the Special Committee on Violence against Indigenous women;**

**Background:**

As people of faith, we rely on sharing stories: stories of creation, stories of faith, stories of Jesus, stories of salvation. As a church increasingly seeking to strengthen our intercultural identity, it is crucial that our voices be heard, and the voices of those oppressed are heard clearly. We believe in a Holy Love that loves us all equally, and passionately. While it is clear that while the issue of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women is a Canadian issue [v], it is also a faith issue. The issue is a symptom of intersecting colonializing oppressions including racism, patriarchy, and economics. Yet we seek to celebrate and live in a world created by a justice-seeking, story-loving Divine Presence. Without hearing the voices and stories of those directly involved, which an Inquiry would provide, as Canadians we risk perpetuating the errors of the past in trying to fix problems without listening broadly or understanding the issues completely. Any action must be guided by the “essential voices,” that is, those directly involved.

Churches can be safe places for exploring why so little changes have occurred when the economic, social, violence and health disparities between Aboriginal communities and non-Aboriginal communities are well researched and well documented. At its best, our churches are places for self-reflection and collective action. [vi]

At an ecumenical endeavour held in Saskatoon in 2015, *Voices of Our Sisters: Standing Together in Hope*[vii], stories were shared, and solidarity sought. River Bend Presbytery believes that at the local, regional and national level, we walk with our murdered and missing Aboriginal women when we stand with the National Association of Chiefs of Police in partnership with the Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC); the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, the Saskatoon Tribal Council, the Assembly of First Nations, the Premier of the Province of Saskatchewan, Amnesty International, and the (Washington based) Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and many others, to support a

National Public Inquiry. We choose to seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God and with each other.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

- i. In May 2013, the United Church’s General Secretary wrote Prime Minister Stephen Harper informing him of The United Church of Canada’s support of the call by NWAC and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) for a National Inquiry, and urging him to act quickly to institute one. All members of The United Church of Canada were also encouraged to write their respective councillors, mayors, provincial representatives, and MPs.
- ii. Information is available at [www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/takeaction/140912](http://www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/takeaction/140912). [*Note: This webpage is no longer available.*]
- iii. A prayer written by Alydia Smith is available at [www.united-church.ca/worship-theme/aboriginal](http://www.united-church.ca/worship-theme/aboriginal).
- iv. In early 2004, the United and Anglican Churches joined with NWAC to launch the Sisters in Spirit campaign, raising concerns about elevated levels of violence against Aboriginal women. The campaign included a letter from then-Moderator Peter Short and a congregational action kit.
- v. Indigenous women are going missing and being murdered at a much higher rate than other women in Canada—a rate so high it constitutes nothing less than a national human rights crisis. (Amnesty International). According to RCMP data, at least 1,017 Indigenous women and girls were murdered from 1980–2012.
- vi. Summarized from a letter “Call for Collective Action,” *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, written by Janet L. Clarke.
- vii. Organizing participants included those from the Anglican Diocese of Saskatoon; the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada-Saskatchewan Synod; Mennonite Church, Saskatchewan; Presbyterian Church in Canada, Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan; Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon; Saskatoon Native Ministry; Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon; and the River Bend Presbytery of The United Church of Canada.

**TOR 9 PUBLIC INQUIRY FOR MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

**Origin:** Living Into Right Relations (LIRR) Circle, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** minimal to the church

**Staffing Implications if known:** minimal

**Source of Funding if known:** Unknown

**The Living Into Right Relations (LIRR) Circle, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015), direct the General Secretary, General Council to call upon the Government of Canada to conduct a full Public Inquiry into the more than 1200 cases of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada;**

**Background:**

The gospel of the crucified Jesus calls us to renounce violence, and to seek the ending of violence in society.

The United Church of Canada apologized to First Nation congregations in 1986 and to those First Nation people and communities affected by the Indian Residential School legacy in 1998.

The Native Women's Association of Canada, as part of their Sisters in Spirit campaign, has identified over 1,200 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls whose cases go back to 1970, and has been calling for a public inquiry into these cases for a decade.

The United Church has called for an inquiry through its staff and partners, but the call needs to be repeated, and with the moral weight of the entire General Council.

The Ontario delegation at the National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in February 2015 released the following Statement:

*“Too many Aboriginal women and girls have experienced violence, been murdered or gone missing. Too many Aboriginal girls spend their lives in constant fear that they will join their family members and friends as just another statistic. This can no longer be tolerated.*

*That is why Ontario's delegation, including family members and representation from the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, Ontario Native Women's Association, Métis Nation of Ontario, and the Independent First Nations, came to the table today—to bring forward concrete actions we can take collectively and collaboratively to prevent the violence from continuing. Today's roundtable reinforced the need for a collaborative, pan-Canadian solution to this national issue.*

*Ontario has identified 10 proposed actions that we can take right now to improve the situation for Aboriginal women and girls, including the creation of a pan-Canadian public awareness campaign and a socio-economic action plan for Aboriginal women and girls. Leaders of Canada's provinces and territories and National Aboriginal Organizations have agreed that such a plan is necessary to address the root causes of violence. Having the federal government's participation in that plan is critical.*

*To end violence against Aboriginal women and girls, we need all partners working together and committing to taking joint action. We need co-ordinated engagement between Aboriginal, provincial, territorial and federal governments to support awareness and prevention, community safety and healing, and improved police and justice responses.*

*We have also heard the call for a forum for hearing and healing from the families and Aboriginal organizations here today. We have begun this process in Ontario, and we support the call for national forums for the families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.”*

The federal government has ignored repeated pleas to hold such an inquiry, despite petitions calling for a public inquiry having been supported by the United Church and signed by thousands of Canadians, including many within the United Church’s membership.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

**BLUE 2 COMPOSITE: ISRAEL-PALESTINE TWO-STATE SOLUTION**

**Originating Body:** Blue Commission

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

*The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to revise the policy on Palestine/Israel by:*

1. **Stating that The United Church of Canada no longer asserts its preference for a two-state solution for achieving peace for the people of Palestine and Israel;**
2. **affirming unequivocally the right of self-determination for Palestinians and declare that any choice regarding statehood must be made by the people living in Israel-Palestine;**
3. **re-affirming the right of Israelis and Palestinians to live peacefully within internationally recognized borders.**

**Background:**

This composite combines BC 2 and LON 22.

**BC 2 ISRAEL-PALESTINE TWO-STATE SOLUTION**

**Origin:** Fraser Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Fraser Presbytery proposed that:**

**The 42nd General Council revise the policy on Palestine/Israel by:**

1. **stating that The United Church of Canada no longer asserts a preference for a two-state solution for achieving peace for the people of Palestine and Israel;**

- 2. affirming unequivocally the right of self-determination for Palestinians and declare that any choice regarding statehood must be made by the people living in Israel-Palestine.**

**Background:**

The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy stated that “United Church policy should identify and support initiatives that work toward the creation of a viable Palestinian state.”

Many statements on The United Church of Canada website affirm support for a two-state solution.

“The working group concurs that the window for a two-state option is drawing to a close.”

Many advocates for a just resolution of the conflict believe that a two-state solution is no longer possible or viable.

The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy states that “Church policy must honour the right of self-determination for both Israelis and Palestinians. The choice of one or two states must be made by the people themselves.”

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

**LON 22 ISRAEL-PALESTINE TWO-STATE SOLUTION**

**Origin:** Social Justice Division of London Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unchanged

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Social Justice Division of London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Direct the Executive of the General Council to clarify the policy on Palestine/Israel by:**

- 1. stating that The United Church of Canada no longer asserts its preference for a two-state solution for achieving peace for the people of Palestine and Israel;**
- 2. affirming unequivocally the right of self-determination for Palestinians and declare that the choice of one or two states must be made by the**

- people themselves;**
- 3. re-affirming the right of Israelis and Palestinians to live peacefully within internationally recognized borders;**

**Background:**

- The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy stated that “United Church policy should identify and support initiatives that work toward the creation of a viable Palestinian state.”
- Many statements on The United Church of Canada website affirm support for a two-state solution.
- “The working group concurs that the window for a two-state option is drawing to a close.”
- Many advocates for a just resolution of the conflict believe that a two-state solution is no longer possible or viable.
- The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy states that “Church policy must honour the right of self-determination for both Israelis and Palestinians. The choice of one or two states must be made by the peoples themselves.”

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**BC 3 TOWARD A JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

**Origin:** Faith Public Witness Cluster, Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** None

**Staffing Implications if known:** No change in staff numbers. Staff would work from this new policy basis.

**Volunteers:** The United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would support the above policy change.

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Faith Public Witness Cluster, Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

**expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41st General Council to address the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by the state of Israel by also:**

- 1. initiating and developing a program of education and advocacy related to divestment from and economic sanctions against all corporations and institutions complicit in or benefitting from the illegal occupation. This**



**would include education about “nostalgia” tourism which bolsters the oppression of Palestinians; and**

- 2. encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the occupation of the Palestinian territories ends.**

**Background:**

“A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine” issued in December 2009 by Christians in Palestine calls upon Christian Churches around the world “to stand alongside the oppressed and to preserve the word of God as good news for all... not to offer a theological cover-up for the injustices we suffer, for the sin of the occupation imposed upon us... We call on you to say a word of truth and to take a position of truth with regard to Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land. As we have already said, we see boycott and divestment as tools of non-violence for justice, peace and security for all” (A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine: Section 6).

Bishop Desmond Tutu has stated that “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine policy and subsequent motion passed at the 41st General Council approved a number of strategies and actions by the United Church aimed at ending the occupation (numbered 1–11 in General Council Proposal GS3), including a boycott of products produced by Israeli companies and groups in the occupied territory (actually worded “products produced in the settlements”).

Recent visits to the occupied territory have shown that the rate of illegal settlement, demolition of Palestinian homes and farms, confiscation of land, restriction on Palestinians’ movements, diversion and confiscation of water resources, and other illegal actions has not decreased since the General Council last met in 2012. For example, there are now approximately 600,000 Israeli settlers in the occupied territory. In 2014 alone, according to UN figures, over 1,177 additional Palestinians were made homeless by demolitions in the West Bank, half of them children. Many of these demolitions have taken place in the winter. Approximately 100,000 Palestinians are still homeless after the 2014 attack on Gaza.

Many basic rights continue to be denied to Palestinians under occupation. Hundreds of children, some as young as five years old have been arrested, detained and interrogated without parental accompaniment. Many have been incarcerated. “Administrative” detentions of adults often result in incarceration for months or years without charge or legal process.

Many non-Jewish Israeli citizens such as the Bedouin and Palestinian Christians are also being denied rights, services and privileges afforded to Jewish citizens. Legislation being introduced in the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) seeks to further entrench these injustices in law.

The continued expansion of Jewish roads and settlements and takeover of Palestinian lands and resources now threaten the possibility of a two-state solution. A one-state solution is

problematical for the aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians. Decisive and effective action is urgently needed.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery - Concurrence  
Agreement from BC Conference

**TOR 1 TOWARD A JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

**Origin:** The United Network for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) – Toronto group, through the Social Justice and World Affairs Committee, South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** Staff time to develop a program will be required

**Source of Funding if known:** Likely from existing budgets

**The United Network for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) – Toronto group, through the Social Justice and World Affairs Committee of South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference, proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Direct the Executive of the General Council to expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41st General Council to address the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by the state of Israel by also:**

- a) **initiating and developing a program of education and advocacy within The United Church of Canada related to divestment from and economic sanctions against all corporations and institutions complicit in or benefitting from the illegal occupation; and**
- b) **encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the occupation of the Palestinian territories ends.**

**Background:**

“A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine” issued in December 2009 by Christians in Palestine calls upon Christian Churches around the world “*to stand alongside the oppressed and to preserve the word of God as good news for all... not to offer a theological cover-up for the injustices we suffer, for the sin of the occupation imposed upon us.... We call on you to say a word of truth and to take a position of truth with regard to Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land. As we have already said, we see boycott and divestment as tools of non-violence for justice, peace and security for all.*” (A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine: Section 6).

Bishop Tutu has stated that *“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”*

The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine policy and subsequent motion passed at the 41st General Council approved a number of strategies and actions by the United Church aimed at ending the occupation (numbered 1–11 in proposal GS3), including a boycott of products produced by Israeli companies and groups in the occupied territory (actually worded “products produced in the settlements”).

Palestinian civil society leaders and organizations have been calling for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) since 2005, and the Kairos Palestine document of 2009, affirmed by the United Church in 2010, also called for BDS. Yet while the 41st General Council 2012 approved a limited boycott (economic action) campaign against settlement products, the United Church has not undertaken any education or action related to divestment and/or sanctions.

The success or failure of boycott and other such measures is hard to determine in complex historical contexts, but it is worth noting that Sodastream International Ltd. announced last October it was moving its factory out of the Ma’Ale Adumim settlement in the West Bank.

Recent visits to the occupied territories have shown that the rate of illegal settlement, demolition of Palestinian homes and farms, confiscation of land, restriction on Palestinians’ movements, diversion and confiscation of water resources, and other illegal actions has not decreased since the General Council last met in 2012. There are now approximately 600,000 Israeli settlers in the occupied territory. In the month of January (2015) alone, 1,700 additional Palestinians were made homeless by demolitions. Approximately 100,000 Palestinians are still homeless after the 2014 attack on Gaza. Many basic rights continue to be denied to Palestinians under occupation.

Many non-Jewish Israeli citizens such as the Bedouin and Palestinian Christians are also being denied rights, services and privileges afforded to Jewish citizens. Legislation being introduced in the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) seeks to further entrench these injustices in law.

The expansion of Jewish roads and settlements and takeover of Palestinian lands and resources continues at an alarming rate. Decisive and effective action is urgently needed.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received by South West Presbytery (April 18, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference with non-concurrence.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **MAR 4 EXTENDING SUPPORT FOR A JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

**Origin:** Chignecto Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Proposed by Chignecto Presbytery that:**

**That the 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1. Affirm the work of the United Network for a Just Peace for Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) and General Council staff in raising awareness of The United Church of Canada policy in support of a just peace for Palestine and Israel.**

**And direct the Executive of the General Council to:**

- 2. Expand the current strategies and actions approved at the 41st General Council to provide additional resources for use in local mission units to deepen understandings for denominational members as to why Palestinians, cry out from their suffering under Israeli occupation<sup>i</sup> by:**
  - a) Providing additional resources to allow UNJPPI and General Council staff to build and deepen relations with Canadian, American and British churches and church related Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in order to co-ordinate and share in the production of resources and programs focussed on supporting a just peace for Palestinians and Israelis;**
  - b) Developing a partnership with Independent Jewish Voices and deepening our relationship with that group in advocating for a just peace for Palestine and Israel;**
  - c) Dialoguing with other denominations and church related bodies about their research into companies that are complicit in or substantially benefit from violations of the 4th Geneva Conventions<sup>ii</sup> and/or the suppression of human rights and/or international humanitarian law from the illegal occupation<sup>iii, iv</sup> and the conflict between Israel and Palestine;**
  - d) develop and implement an ethical divestment strategy from companies that derive substantial financial benefit or that contribute significantly to furthering the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and recommends to The United Church of Canada, its Pension Fund and Foundation and other related bodies including congregations to divest from companies that derive substantial financial benefit from the illegal Israeli occupation;**
  - e) Developing a program of education and advocacy relating to divestment from and economic sanctions against corporations and institutions complicit in or substantially benefitting from the illegal occupation. This**

- would include education about nostalgia tourism which bolsters the oppression of Palestinians; and**
- f) Encouraging all courts, bodies and members of The United Church of Canada to apply such divestment strategies and sanctions, until such time as the ongoing illegal occupation as defined within the parameters of the 4th Geneva Convention<sup>v</sup> of Palestine ends.**

**Background:**

“A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine” issued in December 2009 by Christians in Palestine calls upon Christian Churches around the world “to stand alongside the oppressed and to preserve the word of God as good news for all... not to offer a theological cover-up for the injustices we suffer, for the sin of the occupation imposed upon us.... We call on you to say a word of truth and to take a position of truth with regard to Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land. As we have already said, we see boycott and divestment as tools of non-violence for justice, peace and security for all.” (A Moment of Truth: Kairos Palestine: Section 6)

Bishop Tutu has stated that “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

The report of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine policy and subsequent motion passed at the 41st General Council approved a number of strategies and actions by the United Church aimed at ending the occupation (numbered 1–11 in proposal GS3), including a boycott of products produced by Israeli companies and groups in the occupied territory (actually worded “products produced in the settlements”).

“For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their soul?” These words of Jesus have guided The United Church of Canada since our inception in regards to how we use our resources in standing for social justice.

**Reports from The United Church of Canada (UCC) Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs), Partners, Israeli and Palestinian Peace Activists, NGOs and the United Nations (UN):**

Since the last General Council all of the above named bodies have reported the situation for Palestinians has deteriorated significantly. Settlements continue to expand along with settler violence. The destruction of olive trees and other crops by settlers and Israeli forces continues in the occupied territories including an attack this year against UCC partner, the Tent of Nations, where over 1,500 trees were destroyed.<sup>vi</sup>

Dr. Jeff Halper, co-founder of The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, on his cross Canada tour in 2015, spoke at length about the level of disruption of Palestinian lives through increasing levels of property confiscations and the demolitions of homes and other structures.<sup>vii</sup>

Another UCC partner, Defense for Children Internal – Palestine (DCP-I), has launched the #Beituniaboys campaign.<sup>viii</sup> It focuses on the killing of two innocent boys, Nadeem Siam Nawara and Mohammad Mahmoud by Israeli soldiers near Ofer Prison on Naka Day 2014. The murders were captured by video cameras. The Israeli soldier(s) who fired the shots were recorded on CNN footage. With overwhelming evidence there has still been no prosecution. The

#Beituniboys campaign is meant to focus attention on the impunity of Israeli soldiers from prosecution for war crimes.

A recent report by UNICEF confirms several of the concerns elucidated by DCI-P around this and other violations of the rights of children such as underage arrests, illegal detention, forced confessions, confessions written in Hebrew rather than Arabic, use of children as human shields by Israeli military and settlers, forcing children to inform on other Palestinians, harassment of children, violence against Palestinian children and killing of Palestinian children by Israeli military forces.<sup>ix</sup>

Amnesty International in its 2013 report, “Trigger Happy,” documents Israeli abuse of power in the West Bank in provoking responses from Palestinians, illegal arrests including those of under-aged children, illegal detentions, Israeli military court abuses including a conviction rate in excess of 99% against Palestinians, use of excessive force up to and including deadly force against the Palestinian population in the West Bank.<sup>x</sup>

The World Council of Churches (WCC) in July 2014 issued the, “Statement on Economic Measures and Christian Responsibility toward Israel and Palestine.” In the document, the WCC commends the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Methodist Church for their recent economic actions in support of peace. It noted that boycotts are, “bearing fruit especially with the European Union.” The statement reminded members that, “We are called to take action in support of peaceful solutions to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Economic pressure, appropriately and openly applied, is one such means of action.”<sup>xi</sup> Ethical investing and divesting from certain companies and industries has been a hallmark of our United Church since inception.

The disproportionate level of violence launched in 2014 by Israel against Palestinians and especially those living in Gaza requires deeper levels of commitment and action if a just peace is to emerge.

In the summer of 2014 Israel broke the existing cease fire with Gaza and then launched attacks for 50 days. The Israel Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (USA) published the following detailed statistical information on the 50 days:

### **People**

- 2,147 Palestinians were killed, including 530 children and 302 women. 81% were civilians, compared to 9% of the 70 Israelis killed.
- Among the dead were 16 journalists, 23 health care personnel and 11 The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for **Palestine** Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) employees.
- 10,870 Palestinians were wounded, including 3,303 children and 2,101 women. A third of the injured children (around 3,000) will suffer permanent disabilities.
- 100,000 Palestinians were evacuated from their homes either because of Israeli threats or because their homes were destroyed or seriously damaged. They have found refuge in UN facilities or with other families, with dozens of people housed in the same home.

### **Buildings and equipment**

- The total number of homes partially or completely destroyed since the start of this latest war on Gaza reached 17,132: 2,465 homes were completely destroyed and 13,644 homes seriously damaged. Tens of thousands of additional homes suffered less- severe damage.
- The number of mosques targeted totaled 171; 62 mosques were totally destroyed.
- 10 churches were damaged.
- 222 schools were destroyed, including 141 government, 76 UNRWA and five private institutions. In addition, six universities were demolished.
- 29 hospitals and primary health care clinics were damaged, along with 36 ambulances.
- 55 fishing boats also were destroyed affecting 3,000 individuals dependent on them for a living, along with 48 NGOs that provide the civilians with services.
- 372 businesses, factories and other industrial or commercial operations were damaged, as well as 19 financial institutions.

### **Economic impact**

- The direct and indirect economic losses from the war are estimated to be \$3.6 billion.<sup>xii</sup> Each United Church Ecumenical Accompanier has reported and documented breaches of the 4th Geneva Convention, violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws. Their experience of living in the West Bank gives them a unique vantage point. Certainly these eye witness accounts bear faithful and credible witness to the reality of the oppression and the loss of human dignity suffered by Palestinians in the West Bank.<sup>xiii</sup>

It is helpful for Commissioners to recognize certain information not widely reported in the mainstream media in Canada or the US.

- A ten-year statistical analysis shows a disproportionate level of violence against Palestinians.<sup>xiv</sup> The last three years have been even more devastating.<sup>xv</sup>
- According to UN documentation, since the end of the devastating conflict between Israel and Gaza this summer Israel was responsible for 94 of the 95 recorded cease fire violations between the end of Aug and Dec. 21, 2014.<sup>xvi</sup>
- Five Gazan children have frozen to death this winter because of lack of adequate shelter created by the devastation of Israel's assault this past summer.<sup>xvii, xviii</sup> The situation in Gaza is not improving because of the continuing Israeli blockade.

Recent visits to the occupied territory have shown that the rate of illegal settlement, demolition of Palestinian homes and farms, confiscation of land, restriction on Palestinians' movements, diversion and confiscation of water resources, and other illegal actions has not decreased since the General Council last met in 2012. There are now approximately 600,000 Israeli settlers in the occupied territory. In the month of January (2015) alone, 1700 additional Palestinians were made homeless by demolitions. Approximately 100,000 Palestinians are still homeless after the 2014 attack on Gaza. The level of violence directed toward Palestinians and suppression of human rights has only deepened since GC41.

Many non-Jewish, Israeli citizens such as the Bedouin and Palestinian Christians are also being denied rights, services and privileges afforded to Jewish citizens. Legislation introduced in the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) has further entrenched these injustices in law.

The continued expansion of Jewish roads and settlements and takeover of Palestinian lands and resources has all but destroyed the possibility of a two-state solution. On March 16, 2015 Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu stated there would never be a Palestinian state while he was in power. This is a complete reversal of his Bar-Ilan two state speech in 2009.

Decisive and effective action is urgently needed from churches and civil society to push governments to create a long-term solution.

Palestinian and Israeli peace activists, ecumenical and global partners continue to call for solidarity and ongoing supportive action in working toward a just and lasting peace for all who are suffering as a result of the ongoing conflict.

There is evidence that global pressure (including economic action) to end the occupation is beginning to have an impact. This is highlighted by Soda Stream's decision to move its factory out of a West Bank settlement.<sup>xix</sup>

It is helpful to remember that the boycott campaign against apartheid in South Africa began in the 1960s and only gained minimal support in the 1970s and fuller support in the 1980s. Apartheid began to be dismantled in 1990.

It is time for the General Council and The United Church of Canada to follow the lead of several European churches to stand for justice for Palestinians. The Presbyterian (USA) church has bravely extended its boycott to include Hewlett Packard, Motorola and Caterpillar because of their complicity in the occupation. The WCC statement notes economic pressure is appropriate and it is beginning to show results. And, what will it profit us to not take a stand while our Palestinian brothers and sisters continue to suffer the loss of dignity, heart and soul through an illegal occupation that is over 47 years old?

#### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett/Sean Handcock moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposal #4 entitled "Extending Support for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine" to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

Ross Bartlett/Sean Handcock moved that the letter from Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek be appended to Proposal #4 entitled "Extending Support for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine."

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

### **Appendix A**

My dear sisters and brothers in The United Church of Canada:

I thank you again for the decision of your last General Council to take action to support the end of the occupation of Palestine. Your Unsettling Goods campaign has helped to build awareness of the injustice of the occupation among Canadian Christians. The boycott of goods produced in illegal settlements by the United Church and other churches around the world has begun to bear



fruit by bringing economic pressure on the Israeli government. Your commitment to a just peace has given us strength in the face of great adversity.

Since your last General Council the situation for Palestinians has deteriorated significantly. Settlements continue to expand as does settler violence and the theft of water and other natural resources. The destruction of olive trees and other crops by settlers and Israeli forces continues. There are increasing levels of abuses of power by the Israeli military including property confiscations, demolitions of homes and other structures, illegal arrests of under-aged children, illegal detentions, torturing prisoners, the use of excessive force up to and including deadly force against the Palestinian population. This is all backed by Israeli military courts with a conviction rate in excess of 99% against Palestinians. The injustice against Palestinians continues to deepen.

Beyond all of this was the horror of the war against Gaza last summer. Over 2,200 Palestinians were killed including over 500 children by Israeli forces. Current reports are stating that at the current pace it will take over 100 years to rebuild.

I therefore commend you to carry on with and expand your Unsettling Goods campaign. I urge The United Church of Canada to join with other denominations around the globe who have decided to boycott and divest from companies that benefit from the occupation. Also I urge you to recognize your own country's complicity in Palestinian suffering under occupation. Please read and study the proposals before you that advocating furthering boycotts and divestment.

As you have courageously done before, may you once again witness to the cause of Christ's justice to free the oppressed and by so doing to liberate the oppressor so that these two peoples can finally be reconciled and live together in dignity, security and peace.

God bless you all, as you as a Church wrestle to discern what God requires of you in this hour.

Yours faithfully,  
Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek

\*An intro to Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek:

**Canon Naim Ateek: Founder/Director**, Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, Jerusalem

Born in 1937 in the Palestinian village of Beisan, Ateek moved to Nazareth after Israel's occupation of Beisan in 1948. He was ordained in the Anglican (Episcopal) Church in 1967, and earned degrees from Hardin-Simmons University and the Church Divinity School of the Pacific; he also holds a doctorate of divinity degree from the San Francisco Theological Seminary. Ateek established the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem in 1991. He is author and editor of numerous books, and has been called "the Desmond Tutu of Palestine" and the "Founder of Palestinian Liberation Theology."

<sup>i</sup> Introduction Kairos Palestine document: [www.kairospalestine.ps/content/kairos-document](http://www.kairospalestine.ps/content/kairos-document)

<sup>ii</sup> [www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/6756482d86146898c125641e004aa3c5](http://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/6756482d86146898c125641e004aa3c5)

<sup>iii</sup> [www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?pr=71&code=mwp&p1=3&p2=4&p3=6](http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?pr=71&code=mwp&p1=3&p2=4&p3=6)

<sup>iv</sup> Roberts, Adam. “Prolonged Military Occupation: The Israeli-Occupied Territories Since 1967.” *The American Journal of International Law* (American Society of International Law) **84** (1): 69. [doi:10.2307/2203016](https://doi.org/10.2307/2203016). SC Res. 446 (Mar. 22, 1979), adopted by 12 votes to none, with 3 abstentions (Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States), reaffirmed the applicability of the fourth Geneva Convention, as well as opposing the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

<sup>v</sup> [www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law](http://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law)

<sup>vi</sup> [rabbibrant.com/2014/05/21/israeli-military-destroys-orchards-at-tent-of-nations-please-act-now/](http://rabbibrant.com/2014/05/21/israeli-military-destroys-orchards-at-tent-of-nations-please-act-now/)

<sup>vii</sup> [www.icahd.org/](http://www.icahd.org/)

<sup>viii</sup> [www.nomoreforgottenlives.com/](http://www.nomoreforgottenlives.com/)

<sup>ix</sup> [www.unicef.org/oPt/Children in Israeli Military Detention - Observations and Recommendations - Bulletin No. 2 - February 2015.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/oPt/Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_-_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_Bulletin_No._2_-_February_2015.pdf)

<sup>x</sup> [www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2014/02/trigger-happy-israeli-army-and-police-use-reckless-force-west-bank/](http://www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2014/02/trigger-happy-israeli-army-and-police-use-reckless-force-west-bank/)

<sup>xi</sup> [www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2014/statement-on-economic-measures-and-christian-responsibility-toward-israel-and-palestine](http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2014/statement-on-economic-measures-and-christian-responsibility-toward-israel-and-palestine)

<sup>xii</sup> [www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/main/component/content/article/18/282-gaza-in-crisis](http://www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/main/component/content/article/18/282-gaza-in-crisis)

<sup>xiii</sup> The blog postings and letters from Ecumenical Accompaniers can be found at: [blogs.united-church.ca/accompaniment](http://blogs.united-church.ca/accompaniment).

<sup>xiv</sup> Data collected from B’Tselem and UN agencies:

Fatalities	Palestinian	Israeli	Palestinian Youth	Israeli Youth
2005–2014	5921	252	1293	21

Ratios: 23.5 Palestinians: 1 Israeli

61.5 Palestinian youth: 1 Israeli youth

<sup>xv</sup> Data collected from B’Tselem and UN agencies

Fatalities	Palestinian	Israeli	Palestinian Youth	Israeli Youth
2012	254	4	43	0
2013	38	1	5	0
2014	<u>2262</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>511</u>	<u>4</u>
	<b>2554</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>4</b>

Ratios: 61 Palestinians: 1 Israeli

112 Palestinian youth: 1 Israeli youth

<sup>xvi</sup> [www.imemc.org/article/70072](http://www.imemc.org/article/70072)

<sup>xvii</sup> [www.nbcnews.com/storyline/middle-east-unrest/father-finds-five-month-old-son-frozen-death-gaza-n289371](http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/middle-east-unrest/father-finds-five-month-old-son-frozen-death-gaza-n289371)

<sup>xviii</sup> [mondoweiss.net/2015/01/exposure-freezing-temperatures](http://mondoweiss.net/2015/01/exposure-freezing-temperatures)

<sup>xix</sup> [www.theguardian.com/business/2014/oct/29/sodastream-move-factory-west-bank-israel-slash-forecast](http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/oct/29/sodastream-move-factory-west-bank-israel-slash-forecast)

## **LON 23 DIVESTMENT FOR A JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

**Origin:** Social Justice Division of London Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Social Justice Division of London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015): In light of the Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy adopted by the 41st General Council in which Section 9, Sub-section (d) directed the Executive of the General Council to explore the wisdom of divesting in companies that are profiting from or supporting the occupation;**

- 1. direct the General Secretary, General Council to divest The United Church of Canada funds from companies that derive substantial financial benefit or that contribute significantly to furthering the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, and**
- 2. recommends The United Church of Canada Pension Fund and the United Church Foundation and other related including congregations divest from companies that derive substantial financial benefit from the illegal Israeli occupation.**

### **Background:**

“For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their soul?” These words of Jesus have guided The United Church of Canada since our inception in regards to how we use our financial resources. Ethical investing and divesting from certain companies and industries has been a hallmark of our United Church since inception.

In the 1970s and 80s we recognized the importance of these policies when we engaged in economic action to raise awareness of the sin of apartheid in South Africa.

Since the 38th General Council, the General Council has taken progressively stronger stands with respect to action in support of a just and lasting peace for Palestine and Israel.

The General Council Executive was asked by the 41st General Council to consider the wisdom of divesting from companies that have derived Council has taken no action.

### **Reports from The United Church of Canada Ecumenical Accompaniers, Partners, Israeli and Palestinian Peace Activists, Non-Governmental Organizations and the United Nations:**

Since the last General Council all of these bodies have reported the situation for Palestinians has deteriorated significantly. Settlements continue to expand along with settler violence. The destruction of olive trees and other crops by settlers and Israeli forces continues in the occupied territories including an attack this year against United Church partner, the Tent of Nations, where over 1,500 trees were destroyed.

Dr. Jeff Halper, co-founder of The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, on his cross Canada tour in 2015, spoke at length about the level of disruption of Palestinian lives through increasing levels of property confiscations and the demolitions of homes and other structures.

Another United Church partner, Defense for Children Internal - Palestine, has launched the #Beituniaboys campaign. It focuses on the killing of two innocent boys, Nadeem Siam Nawara and Mohammad Mahmoud by Israeli soldiers near Ofer Prison on Naka Day 2014. The murders were captured by video cameras. The Israeli soldier(s) who fired the shots were recorded on CNN footage. With overwhelming evidence there has still been no prosecution. The #Beituniaboys campaign is meant to focus attention on the impunity of Israeli soldiers from prosecution for war crimes.

A recent report by UNICEF confirms several of the concerns elucidated by Defence for Children Internal-Palestine (DCI-P) around this and other violations of the rights of children such as underage arrests, illegal detention, forced confessions, confessions written in Hebrew rather than Arabic, use of children as human shields by Israeli military and settlers, forcing children to inform on other Palestinians, harassment of children, violence against Palestinian children and killing of Palestinian children by Israeli military forces.

Amnesty International, in its 2013 report “Trigger Happy,” documents Israeli abuse of power in the West Bank in provoking responses from Palestinians, illegal arrests including those of under-aged children, illegal detentions, Israeli military courts with a conviction rate in excess of 99% against Palestinians, use of excessive force up to and including deadly force against the Palestinian population in the West Bank.

The table below shows just one measure of the disproportionate level of violence experienced by Palestinians over the past ten years.

Fatalities 2005–2014	Palestinian	Israeli	Palestinian Youth	Israeli Youth
	5921	252	1293	21

In the summer of 2014 Israel broke the existing ceasefire with Gaza and then launched attacks for 50 days that resulted in:

**People**

- 2,147 Palestinians were killed, including 530 children and 302 women. 81% were civilians, compared to 9% of the 70 Israelis killed.
- Among the dead were 16 journalists, 23 health care personnel and 11 The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for **Palestine** Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) employees.
- 10,870 Palestinians were wounded, including 3,303 children and 2,101 women. A third of the injured children (around 3,000) will suffer permanent disabilities.
- 100,000 Palestinians were evacuated from their homes either because of Israeli threats or because their homes were destroyed or seriously damaged. They have found refuge in UN facilities or with other families, with dozens of people housed in the same home.

### **Buildings and equipment**

- The total number of homes partially or completely destroyed since the start of this latest war on Gaza reached 17,132: 2,465 homes were completely destroyed and 13,644 homes seriously damaged. Tens of thousands of additional homes suffered less- severe damage.
- The number of mosques targeted totalled 171; 62 mosques were totally destroyed.
- 10 churches were damaged.
- 222 schools were destroyed, including 141 government, 76 UNRWA and five private institutions. In addition, six universities were demolished.
- 29 hospitals and primary health care clinics were damaged, along with 36 ambulances.
- 55 fishing boats also were destroyed affecting 3,000 individuals dependent on them for a living, along with 48 NGOs that provide the civilians with services.
- 372 businesses, factories and other industrial or commercial operations were damaged, as well as 19 financial institutions.

### **Economic impact**

The direct and indirect economic losses from the war are estimated to be \$3.6 billion.

The World Council of Churches in July 2014 issued the, “Statement on Economic Measures and Christian Responsibility toward Israel and Palestine.” In the document, the World Council of Churches (WCC) commends the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Methodist Church for their recent economic actions in support of peace. It noted that boycotts are, “bearing fruit especially with the European Union.” The statement reminded members that, “We are called to take action in support of peaceful solutions to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Economic pressure, appropriately and openly applied, is one such means of action.”

Each United Church Ecumenical Accompanier has reported and documented breaches of the 4th Geneva Convention, violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws. Their experience of living in the West Bank gives them a unique vantage point. Certainly these eye witness accounts bear faithful and credible witness to the reality of the oppression and the loss of human dignity suffered by Palestinians in the West Bank.

It is time for the General Council and The United Church of Canada to follow the lead of several European churches and stand for justice for Palestinians through our investments. The Presbyterian (USA) church has bravely extended its boycott to include Hewlett Packard, Motorola and Caterpillar because of their complicity in the occupation. The WCC statement notes economic pressure is appropriate and it is beginning to show results. And, what will it profit us to not take a stand while our Palestinian brothers and sisters continue to suffer the loss of dignity, heart and soul through an illegal occupation that is over 47 years old?

[rabbibrant.com/2014/05/21/israeli-military-destroys-orchards-at-tent-of-nations-please-act-now/](http://rabbibrant.com/2014/05/21/israeli-military-destroys-orchards-at-tent-of-nations-please-act-now/)  
[www.icahd.org/](http://www.icahd.org/)

[www.nomoreforgottenlives.com/](http://www.nomoreforgottenlives.com/)

[www.unicef.org/oPt/Children in Israeli Military Detention -](http://www.unicef.org/oPt/Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_-)

[Observations and Recommendations - Bulletin No. 2 - February 2015.pdf](#)

[www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2014/02/trigger-happy-israeli-army-and-police-use-reckless-force-west-bank/](http://www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2014/02/trigger-happy-israeli-army-and-police-use-reckless-force-west-bank/)

Data collected from B'Tselem and UN agencies.

[www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/main/component/content/article/18/282-gaza-in-crisis](http://www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/main/component/content/article/18/282-gaza-in-crisis)

[www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2014/statement-on-economic-measures-and-christian-responsibility-toward-israel-and-palestine](http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2014/statement-on-economic-measures-and-christian-responsibility-toward-israel-and-palestine)

The blog postings and letters from Ecumenical Accompaniers can be found at: [blogs.united-church.ca/accompaniment](http://blogs.united-church.ca/accompaniment).

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**TOR 2 RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING TOWARDS PEACE BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELIS**

**Origin:** Bedford Park United Church, Toronto Southeast Presbytery, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications:** allocate to this initiative at least 50% of existing financial resources devoted to peace-building in Israel/Palestine

**Source of Funding:** General Council budget

**Staffing Implications:** allocate to this initiative at least 50% of existing staff resources devoted to peace-building in Israel/Palestine

**Volunteer Implications:** mobilizing people feeling called to do the work of building relationships of trust.

**Bedford Park United Church of Toronto Southeast Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary of the General Council to allocate resources of staff time and money to work on developing a resource listing organizations both in Canada and in Israel/Palestine that foster the building of relationships of trust between:**

- **The United Church of Canada and the Canadian Jewish community,**
- **The United Church of Canada and Canadian Palestinian groups,**
- **between Palestinian and Jewish groups in Canada, and**
- **between Palestinians and Israelis in Israel/Palestine (Identify groups within Israel and Palestine doing this kind of trust-building work, to facilitate possible partnerships between these groups and United Church bodies such as congregations, special interest groups or presbyteries.)**

**It further proposes that these resources be communicated to congregations, groups of interested United Church people, presbyteries and Conferences with encouragement for them to undertake this work.**

**Background:**

The 41st General Council adopted the policies regarding peace in Israel/Palestine that call on the United Church to “identify the importance of trust-building programs between Palestinians and Israelis by: (a) encouraging stronger connections between United Church programs and organizations that build understanding between Palestinians and Israelis; and (b) exploring and supporting initiatives for increasing connections in Canada between Palestinian Canadians and Jewish Canadians.”

Since the 41st General Council, the United Church has primarily focused on the boycott of goods produced in settlements, and has undertaken only limited work on trust-building programs. This has led to a deep rift in Jewish/United Church relations in Canada. Focusing on a punitive and disciplinary form of action may not properly reflect United Church roots of progressive activism and spirituality and the historic recognition of Canada as being a leader in productive and positive peaceful engagement.

More actively engaging in relationship-building will enable the church to live into the statement from the Policy of the 41st General Council that “The United Church expresses a hope and commitment to be able to contribute to justice, even in a small way, that leads to peace in Israel/Palestine.” By focusing on creating opportunities that allow thoughtful engagement and positive solutions, the United Church can help to create a climate of positive engagement.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received for information by Toronto Southeast Presbytery (March 17, 2015)

Given the financial implications posited, that General Council ensure that if it adopts this proposal, that its implications on the other work of the church be shared with all levels of The United Church of Canada

MOTION: that Toronto Southeast Presbytery add to the resolution the comment—that given the financial implications posited in the recommendation from Bedford Park United Church entitled “Relationship-building towards peace between Palestinians and Israelis,” that General Council ensure that if it adopts this proposal that the implications for this proposal on the other work of the church be shared with all levels of the UCC. CARRIED.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

**GCE 10 LIVING APOLOGY TO MEMBERS OF LGBTTQ COMMUNITIES**

**Origin:** The Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council recommends that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1. Adopt the Process of a Living Apology as a vehicle for dialogue, story-telling, education and reconciliation with members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTTQ) community;**
- 2. Direct the General Secretary to partner with Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble on a Living Apology art installation project, an example of which is found in appendix A;**
- 3. Invite The United Church of Canada into a 3-year journey of dialogue and reconciliation with members of LGBTTQ communities, that would involve:**
  - creative opportunities for conversation, worship and education**
  - opportunities to explore concepts such as lament, reconciliation and justice, to be reported and celebrated at the 43rd General Council (2018) in acknowledgement of the 30th Anniversary of the 1988 decision of the full participation of LGBTTQ peoples in the church.**

**Background:**

At its meeting in November 2014 the Executive of General Council (GCE) asked the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry (PCPMM) to develop a process and wording for an apology to the LGBTTQ communities

After consultation with members of LGBTTQ communities, organizations, and various committees within the church about an apology, it was felt that it was not the right time for a formal apology. The collective wisdom was that we needed a longer process of dialogue, story-telling, and education. I am therefore proposing an apology process over the next triennium.

By developing a three-year process, communities of faith are given time to discern how they may live into an apology and what journeys need to be taken on a personal and communal level to create change, reconciliation and healing. In addition, the process seeks to ensure that as many voices as possible are heard, as there are unique and diverse stories from the community.

**Invitation**

The 42nd General Council in August 2015 would invite the church to engage in a three-year process of dialogue, reconciliation and education. The invitation would convey the importance of listening to difficult stories, a willingness to learn and reflect, and the need to create change in the church.

This invitation could be offered in conjunction with opportunities to engage the General Council such as a learning option, a resource table made available throughout the meeting, or as a theme for a worship service.



**Implementation**

One of the primary tools that would be used to engaged in dialogue, story-telling, and education is an art installation that would act as a “Living Apology.” (Additional information about the Living Apology is available in Appendix A below.)

Over the three-year process, resources would be developed to enable communities of faith to engage in courageous conversations around creating space for lament, storytelling, and fostering reconciliation. Furthermore, regional events will be offered to support this work and give members of the United Church from across the country a chance to participate in the Living Apology and participate in community building and workshops.

The United Church would also use social media and online resources to host conversations and offer online workshops.

**Celebrations**

The three-year process would give the church an opportunity to best discern how to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the 1988 decision that all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, who profess faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to him, are welcome to be or become full members of the church. The findings of this process would be shared and celebrated at the 43rd General Council in 2018.

**APPENDIX A****Living Apology**

The Living Apology is an interactive art installation piece that gives participants an opportunity to hear the stories of others, contribute their own, and make their personal commitment to living into the apology. The Living Apology is structured as a spiral labyrinth design with three components.

**Component 1: Remembering/Story-telling**

The first section displays the stories of hurt/harm that has been caused by the church due to homophobia, transphobia, heterosexism, cissexism, and transmisogyny. Individuals will be invited to contribute their stories prior to the event, during their participation in the art installation, or afterwards (as they feel called to). Remembering and storytelling is an essential piece to an apology which enables people to feel heard and seen in their pain (that can often be silenced or surrounded by a sense of isolation). Not only does the collection of stories enable people to recognize they did not experience harm alone, it also helps the rest of the church understand the complexity and multitudes of experiences members of LGBTTTQ communities have in the church.

**Component 2: Accountability/Apology**

The second section would be featured in the centre of the spiral. The middle section of this journey invites participants to reflect on the role they have had perpetuating harm to members of LGBTTTQ communities and how they have benefitted from the injustice. This section would include the official words of the apology, but would also opportunities for individuals to write

their own personal apologies, or for particular communities and/or organizations to share their own apologies as well (i.e. UCW, AOTS, GCO staff, Conference Office staff, Youth Forum, etc.). This section is important as it enables be to be healed from the apologies that have been offered by others without erasing the different forms of privilege which exists even within the LGBTTTQ spectrum (i.e., a gay person may be called to reflect on their participation in bi erasure, or a cis lesbian may be called to reflect on their cissexism).

### **Component 3: Hope/Moving Forward**

The third section highlights the need for ongoing dedication and action to ensure the apology's transformative power is recognized. This section enables people to celebrate and affirm the many ways that members of LGBTTTQ communities and their alive have been resisting oppression and creating change before any major policies in the Church were implemented and before the apology. This section gives people an opportunity to share their experiences of joy and resilience. Also, this section provides an opportunity for people to share their hopes for how the apology will impact communities of faith across the country.

#### **Method:**

The Living Apology is an ongoing art piece that would require a curator to answer any questions an individual may have about participating and ensure that the piece is maintained in a physical sense, but also that the any of the contributions ensure that they uphold the spirit of the apology.

#### **Accessibility:**

- The inclusion of laptops with audio/visual stations would make the stories more accessible to those with visual impairment.
- The art installation would have to be constructed to reflect measurements that would enable someone to use a wheelchair or mobility device with ease throughout the installation.
- Due to the content material that would be discussed in the Living Apology, it would be important to have several chaplains available on site that had access to a private and comfortable place for pastoral care.

#### **Preparation:**

- National call out for submission of stories, gathering stories from the GLBTT Consultation (2011), asking people to bring stories as commissioners from their communities
- Planning and creation of art installation base
- Coordinating chaplains

#### **Proposed Sharing of the Living Apology**

The Living Apology has the potential to be adapted and recreated by any community as a local event (i.e. Conference AGM, youth gathering) by making some of the stories collected available through pdf documents/pictures.

A walking tour of the Living Apology could also be filmed and made available online for those who are unable to attend an event in person.

## **SK 8 SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT FOR PROGRESSIVE EVANGELICALS WITHIN THE EMERGING CHURCH MOVEMENT**

**Originating Body:** Intercultural Ministries Network of Saskatchewan Conference

**Financial Implications:** None; Potential property transfer or sale

**Staffing Implications:** None

**Source of Funding:** Not applicable

**The Intercultural Ministries Network of Saskatchewan Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

- 1. send letters of support and solidarity to the Progressive Evangelical congregations in Canada and the United States who have made supportive statements of inclusion and welcome to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people within the last year.**
- 2. provide for ways and means for congregations who have made such statements and find themselves without a church building due to the denominational body withdrawing their support and property from the congregation, to enter into negotiations with United Church congregations that are closing or any congregations that are open to sharing their space. These negotiations, along with presbytery, could provide these progressive congregations with a building and explore ways for them to become a part of The United Church of Canada.**
- 3. explore the implications and possibilities of welcoming Progressive Evangelicals (including pastors who wish to be admitted) into The United Church of Canada as we move through this time of emergence in the church.**

### **Background:**

We are in a changing time in the church. Part of the Emergence that is happening is a movement of evangelical conservative (and fundamentalist) Christians moving away from their tradition and seeking a more progressive and inclusive theology. This includes congregations within evangelical conservative denominations (for example, Christ Church in Portland) as well as independent congregations (for example, GracePointe in Nashville) and church plants. As The United Church of Canada has a progressive theology and an inclusive policy toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members, we can offer support to these progressive evangelicals who may find this movement challenging and costly. Brian McLaren, Emerging Church leader, theologian and author, suggests that one way we could become more “emerging” is for us to make church property from congregations that are closing available to some of these congregations who have been kicked out of their denomination because of their inclusive stance and have lost their buildings. The United Church of Canada has the potential to explore this and welcome these newly progressive Christians into our community.

The Marin Foundation and New Direction Ministry works with these congregations and can provide lists of congregations who have made inclusive statements and be a resource with regard

to what congregations may be needing buildings for their ongoing ministry. There is also a newly forming Network of Progressive Evangelicals being established by Convergence US.

As we move through this time in the church, we need to be open to new ways of being church, of the convergence that is happening and work to be a part of it. This is one step toward doing that.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

## **BC 7 SUPPORT FOR A PROPORTIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE PARLIAMENT**

**Origin:** Kootenay Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Depends on rates of return of current investments and proposed reinvestments (the proposal could be financially advantageous or disadvantageous).

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Kootenay Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1. Direct the Executive of the General Council to develop resources for congregations to understand and advocate for a proportionally representative federal parliament in Canada; and**
- 2. publicly endorse the campaign led by Fair Vote Canada to:**
  - a. conduct a citizen-led consultation process to determine the best model of proportional representation immediately following the next federal election, and**
  - b. implement the model in time for the following federal election.**

### **Background:**

Canada remains one of few high-income countries to use the first-past-the-post system of electing representatives to its parliament. By consequence, democracy in Canada has descended into shambles: voter turnout remains low, especially among young Canadians; and, increasingly, public policy bears little resemblance of the wishes of the population. Conversely, a system of proportional representation has the potential to re-engage disenfranchised would-be voters; require legislators to work toward consensus; and ensure public opinion is reflected in public policy.

In the 2011 general election, the governing party earned 39% of the votes cast and 54% of the seats in parliament (in Alberta, 66% of the votes won 96% of the seats for one party; in Quebec 43% of the votes won 78% of the seats for another party). This allowed a single party to make every policy decision unilaterally since then. The 1997 general election generated similar results:

39% of the votes won 52% of the seats. In these “false majority” circumstances, the vast majority of Canadians are not represented fairly in Parliament. Since World War I, there have been 16 majority governments elected; only 4 of those received more than half of the popular vote. The other 12 majority governments since World War I have been “false majorities.” According to Fair Vote Canada, approximately 7,000,000 votes (~50%) have no influence in the make-up of Parliament. Voters are justified in feeling disenfranchised.

A fairer methodology, a system of proportional representation, would see a party that wins 39% of the vote occupying 39% of the seats in Parliament. Twenty-five of the 31 countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) govern by coalition governments elected by proportional representation, allowing public policy to land much closer to the median voters’ views. Proportional representation correlates to lower income inequality, stronger environmental standards, and higher representation of women and visible minorities among governing bodies.

According to a poll in April 2013, 70% of Canadians support proportional representation. Thirteen years of public opinion polls show strong support from voters of each of the major parties. Proportional representation has been recommended by ten assemblies and commissions in Canada. Both BC and Ontario held referenda to determine whether to transition to a specific system of proportional representation. In both cases, citizens’ assemblies came out strongly supporting proportional representation, despite members of the assemblies generally feeling only lukewarm toward proportional representation at the outset of their study. The resolution passed in neither jurisdiction, largely because few voters understand the systems proposed and while proportional representation itself was widely supported, voters disagreed on the specific type of proportional representation.

Christians have a duty to advocate for strong democracies. The level of oppression against which Jesus advocated during his life was possible because robust democracy was absent. Jesus’ execution was conducted without a fair judicial system, largely because of the absence of robust democracy. In the absence of robust democracy, power and wealth concentrate in the hands of few and corporations assume a greater influence over public policy than they should.

Robust democracy depends on a robust system of electing representatives. Canada could have a fair electoral system and a robust democracy that could withstand future challenges if Canadians generate sufficient political will for such a change.

The United Church of Canada could contribute to a fair electoral system and a robust democracy by supporting Fair Vote Canada’s initiative as reflected in the motion (above) and by developing materials for congregations to understand proportional representation and its various models. The United Church of Canada is uniquely positioned to connect theology, democracy, and justice such that members and adherents of pastoral charges could better understand proportional representation.

About Fair Vote Canada: “Fair Vote Canada (FVC) is a grassroots multi-partisan citizens’ campaign for voting system reform. We promote the introduction of an element of proportional

representation into elections for all levels of government and throughout civil society.” (Fair Vote Canada 2013. [www.fairvote.ca/about-fair-voting/](http://www.fairvote.ca/about-fair-voting/) Accessed 15 March 2015).

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Agreement from BC Conference

**ANW 1 NUCLEAR WEAPONS-FREE WORLD: A CALL FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONVENTION**

**Origin:** Parkdale United Church, Calgary Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:** General Secretary, General Council Office, The United Church of Canada

**The Parkdale United Church proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) to direct the General Secretary, General Council, to call upon the Government of Canada to urgently:**

- a. **Call upon the United States and Russia to reduce the alert status of their nuclear weapons; and**
- b. **Publicly affirm its willingness to engage in negotiations for a Nuclear Weapons Convention or an equivalent framework of agreements.**

**Background:**

**Observant** of the biblical call, “that I have set before your life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live...” (Deuteronomy 30:20), and that, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:31);

**Concerned** by our knowledge of the 16,300 nuclear weapons on this Earth;

**Distressed** that roughly 2,000 of these weapons are “on alert,” thus capable of being used in under 30 minutes;

**Alarmed** at the knowledge that the smoke from firestorms from even a small exchange of nuclear weapons could trigger climate change adequate to cause a nuclear famine;

**Aware** that 190 states agreed in 1968 to “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race...”;

**Concerned** that multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament have not begun;

**Grateful** for the 2010 unanimous motion of Canada’s Senate and House of Commons that “encourage[s] the Government of Canada to engage in negotiations for a nuclear weapons convention as proposed by the United Nations Secretary-General” and “to deploy a major world-wide Canadian diplomatic initiative in support of preventing nuclear proliferation and increasing the rate of nuclear disarmament; and

**Reassured** by Canada’s support for the 2014 Inter-Parliamentary Union’s resolution, entitled, “Toward a Nuclear Weapon-Free World: The Contribution of Parliaments,” that “recommends that parliaments urge their governments to start negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or on a package of agreements to help achieve a nuclear weapon-free world...”

**Sources:**

Nuclear Forces, published by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

Status of World Nuclear Forces, by Federation of American Scientists

Deadly Climate Change from Nuclear War: A Threat to Human Existence, by Steven Starr

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Article 6

Motion passed unanimously by the Senate of Canada (June 2, 2010) and the House of Commons (December 7, 2010)

Toward a Nuclear Weapon-Free-World: The Contribution of Parliaments, Resolution adopted by consensus by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, March 20, 2014

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Parkdale United Church, Calgary, to the Local and Global Outreach Commission of Calgary Presbytery.

Transmitted with concurrence by the Local and Global Outreach Commission of Calgary Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**TOR 8 URGING ISRAEL, PAKISTAN, INDIA AND NORTH KOREA TO SIGN NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)**

**Origin:** Social Justice and World Affairs Committee, South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Financial Implications if known:** To be done by existing staff and volunteers

**Staffing Implications if known:** To be done by existing staff

**Source of Funding if known:** Unknown

**The Social Justice and World Affairs Committee, South West Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of General Council to:**

- 1) Urge the Canadian government to advocate through appropriate diplomatic and other channels that Israel, Pakistan, India and North Korea both sign and implement the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty;**
- 2) Recognizing limited capacity, develop a program within The United Church of Canada to nurture such advocacy; and**
- 3) Share the background and goals of this proposal with ecumenical and interfaith partners.**

**Background:**

Non-Proliferation Treaty review conferences are held every five years, and there is one April 27–May 22, 2015.

There are four nuclear-armed states that have not signed the NPT: Israel, Pakistan, India, North Korea. Canada has a close relationship with Israel, and may be able to influence Israel as a result.

Five nuclear-armed states have signed the treaty and they are the permanent members of the Security Council: United States, Russia, France, United Kingdom, China.

December 3, 2014 [www.ibtimes.com/israel-should-declare-nuclear-weapons-sign-non-proliferation-treaty-un-1732435](http://www.ibtimes.com/israel-should-declare-nuclear-weapons-sign-non-proliferation-treaty-un-1732435) “*The United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday criticized Israel for failing to join the international non-proliferation treaty and urged it to renounce its arsenal of nuclear weapons. The U.N. also approved a resolution, introduced by Egypt and backed by all Arab nations, calling on Israel to place its nuclear facilities under international oversight.... The U.N. General Assembly reportedly said that Israel, which has so far refused to officially admit to having nuclear weapons, is the only country in the Middle East that has not ratified the NPT, and urged it to ‘accede to that treaty without further delay...not to develop, produce test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons, to renounce possession of nuclear weapons.’ The U.N. resolution, which is largely symbolic and is not legally binding, was adopted after 161 nations voted in its favor. Five countries, including the U.S., Canada and Israel, voted against it while 18 countries abstained.*”

Richard Falk and David Krieger: “*The NPT contains a long-standing and well-understood requirement for good faith negotiations to achieve nuclear disarmament.... There are no good faith negotiations at the moment, nor are there any on the horizon. It appears by now beyond doubt that the main nuclear weapon states, and not just the US, remain opposed, or at best indifferent, to nuclear disarmament, and seem reluctant to bring the issue close to the surface of public awareness.*” (p. 7)



The International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion in 1996: “...*the court was unanimous when it came to the NPT obligation to negotiate disarmament, concluding ‘There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control’*” (p. xvi) Further, Judge Weeramantry of ICJ Advisory Opinion on legality of nuclear weapons 1996, goes beyond Article VI which obliges nations merely to pursue negotiations on nuclear disarmament, the court deemed that such negotiations *must be concluded* (xvii). Falk states that the NPT legal obligation “*clearly intended to push the nuclear weapon states much beyond arms control or the freeze movement.... States were and are legally required to seek general and complete disarmament, which is to address the war system as such, and to take seriously the promise of the UN Charter preamble ‘to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.’*” (p. 45) Falk, Richard and Krieger, David eds. (2008). *At the Nuclear Precipice: Catastrophe or Transformation?*

There have been a number of articles calling attention to increasing danger of actual use of nuclear weapons. First, NATO forces surrounding China and Russia, Obama’s allocation of \$1.1tn for nuclear weapons development, the collapse of a number of Middle East states and the desperation of sectarian conflicts, missile defence development in Israel and in the US making “first strike” more feasible. Indeed, Seymour Hersh ends his 1991 book on Israel stating “*The Samson Option (the suicidal consequences of a nuclear attack) is no longer the only nuclear option available to Israel*”—Israel could “safely” launch a nuclear attack. Helen Caldicott organized a symposium in New York Feb. 28–March 1, 2015 because of the increasing threats of nuclear war (reports by Steven Starr, Bruce Gagnon, Theodore Postel, Alice Slater, and others). Gordon Edwards, Canadian expert on nuclear weapons: “*Nothing does more to destroy trust than undermining the entire concept of arms control treaties by the unilateral and unjustified abrogation of such a solemn agreement by one party without the consent of the other parties to that treaty. Yet that is what the USA did by unilaterally withdrawing from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, commonly known as the ABM Treaty—an agreement that many regarded as a cornerstone of nuclear deterrence during the Cold War period. Uncontrolled development of ABM systems could create the impression that a successful nuclear ‘first strike’ is possible, even planned, thereby pushing an adversary to consider launching a preemptive nuclear first strike of its own as well as heightening the likelihood of an accidental nuclear war sparked by nuclear jitters.*”

From the NPT Action Plan Monitoring Report March 2015 Reaching Critical Will (RCW) is the disarmament programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the oldest women’s peace organization in the world. “*All States parties commit to pursue policies that are fully compatible with the Treaty and the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. All NPT nuclear-armed states and their nuclear-dependent allies continue to include nuclear weapons in security doctrines and policies. e nuclear-armed states are also engaged in or are planning for modernization of their nuclear weapons and related systems and facilities, extending the lives of their arsenals indefinitely. Neither is compatible with the NPT’s letter or spirit. If action 1 is to be implemented, modernization programmes must stop and the nuclear-armed states and those involved in nuclear-armed alliances must remove the role of nuclear weapons from their respective security doctrines and policies.*”

“Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty requires the United States as a nuclear power to: ‘pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.’... “The United States also provides more than \$4 billion in military and economic aid to the state of Israel although Israel refuses to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, or allow outside inspectors, and does not deny that it possesses a considerable arsenal of nuclear weapons. We are not aware of any call by U.S. officials insisting that Israel sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or begin liquidating its own nuclear arsenal.” Brian Becker, National Director of the ANSWER Coalition. [www.answercoalition.org/what\\_could\\_crash\\_a\\_u\\_s\\_iran\\_agreement](http://www.answercoalition.org/what_could_crash_a_u_s_iran_agreement)

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received by South West Presbytery (April 18, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference with concurrence.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

**TOR 7 ARMS TRADE TREATY**

**Origin:** Community Connections and Right Relations Commission, Living Waters Presbytery, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** Nil

**Source of Funding if known:** Nil

**The Community Connections and Right Relations Commission of Living Waters Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

- a. contact the prime minister and appropriate ministers calling on them to sign and enable the ratification of the global Arms Trade Treaty that Canada voted for at the United Nations General Assembly on April 2, 2013; and**
- b. contact the party leaders urging them to call on the Government of Canada to bring the Arms Trade Treaty to the House of Commons so that it can be ratified; and**
- c. contact the prime minister, party leaders and appropriate ministers to express disappointment that Canada is now blocked from participating in the founding meetings of states parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (which will set up a secretariat and other mechanisms for monitoring implementation and elaboration of the treaty) because Canada had not signed and ratified the Treaty when it came into effect on December 24, 2014.**

**Background:**

On April 2, 2013, the United Nations General Assembly approved by an overwhelming majority vote a historic global Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Only three UN states—Iran, North Korea, and Syria—voted against it. The treaty is a milestone victory for the UN. More importantly, it is a new instrument of hope for the millions of people and thousands of communities across the world suffering from or threatened by armed violence. Properly implemented, the treaty will indeed “reduce human suffering.”

The treaty enshrines in new international law a set of clear rules for cross-border transfers of weapons and ammunition. It creates binding obligations for governments to assess arms transfers to ensure that weapons will not be used for human rights abuses, terrorism, transnational organized crime or violations of humanitarian law. It requires that governments refuse any transfer of weapons if there is a significant risk that they will be used to violate human rights or commit war crimes.

The treaty was the result of a negotiation process that by United Nations’ standards was remarkably short (less than seven years). It is a once-in-a-generation achievement. The UN has not agreed to a major treaty to control conventional weapons since the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (sometimes called the Inhumane Weapons Treaty). With the ATT, the UN has demonstrated that it still can provide meaningful action on its core mandate: to build peace and prevent war.

Ratification and Implementation of the treaty: The Arms Trade Treaty can enter into force 90 days after 50 states have ratified it. On December 24, 2014, the treaty entered into force with the required number of ratifications.

As of the writing of this proposal (March 2015), the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs reports that 130 States have now signed the treaty and 63 have ratified it.

Unfortunately, although Canada voted for the treaty at the United Nations, Canada has still not signed or taken steps to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty. It can still sign and then ratify it at any time in the future.

Because Canada missed the deadline of Dec. 24, 2014 when the ATT came into force, Canada cannot participate in the founding meetings of states parties to the Arms Trade Treaty which will set up a secretariat and other mechanisms for monitoring implementation and elaboration of the treaty.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received for information by Living Waters Presbytery (March 10, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

**ANW 2 ONE DEATH PER MINUTE: CALL FOR CANADIAN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARMS TRADE TREATY**

**Origin:** Parkdale United Church, Calgary Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:** General Secretary, General Council Office, The United Church of Canada

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Parkdale United Church proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council, to hereby call upon the Government of Canada to sign, ratify and implement the Arms Trade Treaty.**

**Background:**

**Mindful** of the biblical imperative that, “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13), and that we should, “Do unto others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31);

**Heartened** to note the success of citizens in Ireland, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, and Hiroshima in reconstructing after warfare and building more peaceful relations among their people;

**Deeply concerned** that at least 500,000 people die every year—at a rate of one death per minute—and millions more are displaced and abused as a result of armed violence and conflict;

**Aware** that the trade in arms traps civilians in situations of armed violence, in settings of both crime and conflict, and in conditions of poverty;

**Noting** the concerns of the United Nations with the consequences of the arms trade on civilians in conflict zones, including, disruption of humanitarian and development organizations due to attacks on staff, and threats to peace keeping and peace-building operations;

**Concerned** that the Government of Canada persists in approving exports to states such as Brazil, Columbia, India, Israel, Kenya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey and Yemen, countries which host armed conflict and/or serious human rights violations;

**Noting** the new Arms Trade Treaty would prohibit states from transferring conventional weapons to countries where they know these weapons would be used to commit or facilitate genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, or be used for serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights laws;

**Grateful** that Canada voted in favour of approving the text of the Arms Trade Treaty in 2013; but

**Concerned** that Canada has failed to sign and ratify the Treaty.

**Sources:**

Global Burden of Armed Violence 2011 - Drawing on comprehensive country-level data, including both conflict-related and criminal violence, it estimates that at least 526,000 people die violently every year, more than three-quarters of them in non-conflict settings.

Canada holds off on arms trace treaty even after US has signed, The Canadian Press, September 25, 2013

Canada's arms exports, New report reflects old habits that fall short of the transparency standards of the Arms Trade Treaty, by Kenneth Epps

The Ploughshares Monitor, Summer 2014, wherein they cite their sources to include Project Ploughshares' Armed Conflicts Report, US State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by Parkdale United Church, Calgary, to the Local and Global Outreach Commission of Calgary Presbytery.

Transmitted with concurrence by the Local and Global Outreach Commission of Calgary Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**HAM 1 SETTING THE DATE FOR A CONGREGATION OR PASTORAL CHARGE MEETING**

**Origin:** Waterloo Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:** none

**Waterloo Presbytery proposes that the 42nd General Council (2015):**

**approve a change in policy so that the convener of the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee shall determine a date for a meeting of a congregation or pastoral charge when the purpose of that meeting is to consider a change in pastoral relations,**

**In setting the date, the convener shall ensure that:**

- a) **Proper notice of meeting can be given, as stipulated in *The Manual* B.5.4.2.a; and**

- b) **At least one representative of those who have requested the meeting will be able to attend the meeting to present reasons for a change in pastoral relations; and**
- c) **The ministry personnel settled in or appointed to the local ministry unit have an opportunity to speak at the meeting about the proposed change; and to respond to any questions asked or comments made about the ministry personnel or the pastoral relationship, as is required in *The Manual* I.3.1.4.c; and**

**Effort shall be made to hold the meeting within 30 days after the date on which the written request for the meeting was received. The meeting may not proceed if there are circumstances which, in the opinion of the Pastoral Relations Convenor, make it difficult or impossible to honour the minister’s right to be heard.**

**Background:**

1. The United Church *Manual* (2013) states that a meeting of a congregation or pastoral charge must be called when written request has been received from:
  - (i) the governing body; or
  - (ii) 10 full members of the congregation or pastoral charge.

Also, *The Manual* stipulates that

*“The meeting must be held within 15 days of receiving the request.”* [*The Manual* B.5.3.3.a]

2. *The Manual* stipulates how notice must be given for a congregation or pastoral charge meeting.

If the purpose of the meeting is to consider a pastoral relations matter,

- a) *“Before giving notice to the congregation or pastoral charge, the person calling the meeting must give notice to the secretary of the presbytery and to the ministry personnel settled in or appointed to the pastoral charge.”*
  - b) *“Notice of the meeting must be read during public worship on two Sundays. After notice has been read on the second Sunday, the meeting may take place on the next day (Monday) or on any day after that.”* [*The Manual* B.5.4.2.a]
3. The requirement for the meeting to be held within 15 days, and the requirement for proper notice of at least 2 Sundays, together create a limited “time window” within which the meeting must be held. Depending on when the written request is received, this “time window” can be as wide as 6 days and as narrow as 1 day (see the charts at the end of the proposal).
  4. A meeting called to initiate a change in pastoral relations *“must be chaired by the chair of the presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee or someone appointed by that chair.”* [*The Manual* I.3.1.4.b] Depending on factors such as availability of potential chairpersons, the time of year, and size of the “time window,” it can be challenging to find someone to chair the meeting. This could make it difficult to have the meeting within the required time.

5. At a meeting called to initiate a change in pastoral relations, *“the ministry personnel settled in or appointed to the pastoral charge must be given an opportunity*
  - (i) *to speak about the proposed change; and*
  - (ii) *to respond to any questions asked or comments made about the ministry personnel or the pastoral relationship. The ministry personnel is entitled to this opportunity before the pastoral charge votes to request a change in pastoral relations.”* [The Manual I.3.1.4.c]
  
6. Potentially the required “time window” for a meeting coincide with when one or more ministry personnel are on an approved vacation, study leave, or sabbatical leave. This could deprive the ministry personnel of their opportunity to speak and respond, and the congregation or pastoral charge of the opportunity to consider their response(s) in making its decision.
  
7. A request to consider a change in pastoral relations can arise at a time when the level of conflict in a congregation or pastoral charge is significant. Also, such a request can be part of a pattern of vexatious behaviour toward ministry personnel. In such an environment, the limited “time window” can become an occasion for further harm.
  
8. Allowing the convenor of the presbytery’s pastoral relations committee to determine the date of the meeting makes the decision the responsibility of a neutral person who can consider the specific context and factors involved.

Under current provisions:

**Widest Window Possible = 7 days; when the request for the meeting is received on a Saturday**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						Request received
Day 1 Notice in worship #1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4`	Day 5`	Day 6`	Day 7
Day 8 Notice in worship #2	Day 9 Meeting possible	Day 10 Meeting possible	Day 11 Meeting possible	Day 12 Meeting possible	Day 13 Meeting possible	Day 14 Meeting possible
Day 15 Meeting possible						

**Narrowest Window Possible = 1 day; it is when the request for the meeting is received on a Sunday**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Request received	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
Day 7 – Notice in worship #1	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13

Day 14 – Notice in worship #2	Day 15 Meeting possible					
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**Intermediate Court Action:**

Concurrence from Hamilton Conference

**HAM 3 CHANGING STRUCTURE OF A GOVERNING BODY**

**Origin:** Waterloo Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** none

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:** n/a

**Waterloo Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) approve a change in policy to allow a congregation or pastoral charge to change the structure of its governing body, as long as the new structure meets the requirements for a governing body in *The Manual* (B.7.2). The congregation will inform the presbytery of any changes in a timely manner, and the presbytery may choose to direct or recommend changes as part of its role of overseeing pastoral charges.**

**Background:**

1. The explanatory notes in *The Manual* provide guidance about how a congregation or pastoral charge can structure its governing body [*The Manual* (2013) B.7.2]. The notes state:

- “*The governing body may take any shape the congregation or pastoral charge chooses, with the approval of the presbytery. For example, a very small congregation may choose to have the entire membership of the congregation serve as the governing body.*”
- “*The congregation or pastoral charge works with the presbytery to set up the structure of its governing body. The following three structures are common:*
  - (a) *the Session/Stewards/Official Board model;*
  - (b) *a unified board model, called the Church Board; and*
  - (c) *a council structure, called the Church Council.*

*A congregation or pastoral charge that has one of these structures may continue with it. The presbytery’s approval is not required.”*

- “*It [the congregation or pastoral charge] may also make changes to its structure or decide on a new structure as long as the new structure meets the requirements of section B.7.2 above, including presbytery approval.*”



2. The previous version of *The Manual* stipulated that presbytery approval is required only when a congregation wishes to establish a form of organization different from *the Session/Stewards/Official Board model, or the Church Board model, or the Church Council model*. [*The Manual* (2010) s.279]
3. The rewriting of *The Manual*, effective in 2013, therefore broadened the scope of requirement for presbytery’s approval. This makes it more difficult for a congregation to transition from one time-honoured model to another as its needs and circumstances change. It also increases the workload of presbyteries and their committees responsible for considering such changes.
4. The broad authority given to presbyteries to oversee pastoral charges gives the presbytery adequate authority to ensure that the structure for a congregation or pastoral charge’s governing body complies with the requirements in *The Manual*. [*The Manual* (2013) B.7.2]

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

**BLUE 3 COMPOSITE: QUORUM**

**Originating Body:** Blue Commission

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

*The 42nd General Council (2015):*

*Direct and authorize the Executive of the General Council to review and amend, or remove, the policy regarding quorum requirements for meetings of the congregation and the governing body (B.5.5 and B.7.7.4).*

**Background:**

This composite combines HAM 2, LON 19, and LON 20.

## HAM 2 QUORUM FOR A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF A CONGREGATION OR PASTORAL CHARGE

**Origin:** Waterloo Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** none

**Staffing Implications if known:** none

**Source of Funding if known:** n/a

**Waterloo Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) approve a change in policy to allow a congregation or pastoral charge to determine the quorum required for meetings of its governing body, provide that the requirement meets or exceeds that in the current policy [*The Manual* (2013) B.7.7.4]**

### **Background:**

1. The United Church *Manual* (2013) states that a meeting of a congregation or pastoral charge's Local Ministry Unit's "governing body may take place only if a minimum number of members is present, as follows:
  - (i) For a governing body that has fewer than 60 members, at least 1/3 of them must be present.
  - (ii) For a governing body that has 60 or more members, at least 20 members must be present." [*The Manual* B.7.7.4]
2. A quorum serves as "protection against totally unrepresentative action in the name of the body by an unduly small number of persons." [*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 11th edition (2011), p. 21; while the United Church follows Bourinot's Rules of Order, this definition effectively expresses the purpose of establishing a quorum.]
3. The size of governing bodies in the United Church can vary widely. Some can be quite large (60+ members). Others can be small (5–10 members).
4. The current threshold for a governing body's quorum can create a situation where a very small number can act as the governing body. This is illustrated in the following examples.
  - i) If the governing body is 10 members, then 4 are needed for quorum. A motion can pass with 2 supporting it (with the chair not voting). This is just 20% of the governing body.
  - ii) If the governing body is 15 members, then 5 are needed for quorum. A motion can pass with 3 supporting it (with the chair not voting). Again, this is just 20% of the governing body.
  - iii) If the governing body is 40 members, then 14 are needed for quorum. A motion can pass with 7 supporting it (with the chair not voting). This is only 18% of the governing body.
  - iv) If the governing body is 80 members, then 20 are needed for quorum. A motion can pass with as few as 10 supporting it (13% of the governing body).

5. Because of this, situations can arise where a governing body can take formally valid actions which, in practice, lack legitimacy.
6. Granting a congregation or pastoral charge the power to raise the quorum requirement for its governing body can address this problem.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

**LON 19 ACHIEVING A QUORUM FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS IN THE AGE OF SHRINKING MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION**

**Origin:** Kerwood-Bethesda United Church Council, Middlesex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** Unknown

**Source of Funding if known:** Unknown

**The Kerwood-Bethesda United Church Council proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

**Direct the Executive of the General Council to amend *Manual* (2013) Section B.5.5 Quorum—Minimum Number of Members Present as follows:**

**A meeting of the congregation or pastoral charge may take place only if a minimum number of full members is present, as follows:**

- (a) For congregations or pastoral charges with ~~60~~ 100 or more full members, at least 20 full members must be present.
- (b) For congregations or pastoral charges with fewer than ~~60~~ 100 full members, at least ~~1/3 of the full membership~~ 10 full members must be present.

**Background:**

That the requirement for a quorum for meetings of small congregations with fewer than 100 members be reduced to 10 members rather than the current 20. It is becoming increasingly difficult to attain the required quorum numbers for small congregations. A congregation of 600 people and a congregation of 60 people are required to have 20 people to achieve a legal meeting. It is far easier for the large congregation to attain those numbers. Both large and small congregations have members that do not or will not participate in the decision process involved with running a church. In small congregations this becomes problematic as there is a significantly smaller number of people willing to attend meetings. As congregations age there becomes an even smaller group of individuals that are able to attend such meetings.

Producing a more accurate membership role in order to have the church number fall into the appropriate category has proven to be difficult. Families tend to want their children or grandchildren to remain on the membership role, even though they are no longer living in the area (gone to school) or no longer participating in the faith community. To remove such members to more accurately reflect the active membership would and has caused tension within the church and between members for even suggesting such an action.

We propose, for smaller congregations with fewer than 100 people, that quorum requirement be reduced to 10 members.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Middlesex Presbytery endorses the proposal as circulated with the recommendation of the following addition:

c) with congregations or pastoral charges with fewer than 30 full members at least 1/3 of the full membership must be present

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

## **LON 20 QUORUM REQUIREMENTS FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**

**Origin:** Algoma Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** n/a

**Staffing Implications if known:** General Council

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Algoma Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to review and amend, or remove, the policy regarding quorum requirements for annual congregational meetings.**

**Background:**

At the 2014 Annual Meeting of the St. Joseph Island Pastoral Charge, a motion was passed requesting that General Council review and consider removing the rules concerning quorum requirements for annual congregational meetings.

Both congregations in this two-point northern rural charge have been forced to reschedule annual meetings because they have been unable to meet *The Manual* (Section B. 5.5) requirements. Weather, geography, and an aging constituency are all contributing factors.

As well, each congregation has a number of adherents who are faithful attendees and supporters of the life and work of the church but who for various reasons choose not to become full members. These people often attend the meetings but are not able to be included in the count to

attain quorum.

There are a number of members who support the churches but who do not attend either services or meetings. We know that St. Joseph Island Pastoral Charge is not alone in this difficulty; we also know that many congregations consider quorum to be the members attending the meeting the day it is held.

The strictness of the definition of quorum inhibits congregations from conducting the business of the church, while remaining faithful to the call to be open, welcoming and inclusive places of community and worship.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

## **LON 21 CONTINUATION OF UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN**

**Origin:** Division of World Outreach, Middlesex Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing Implications if known:** We recommend this work to be made a priority for staffing

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service

**Volunteer Implications:** United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would continue their active animation of this campaign

### **The Division of World Outreach, Middlesex Presbytery proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) mandates the allocation of adequate General Council Office resources for the continued implementation of The United Church of Canada Unsettling Goods campaign until a just peace is achieved in Palestine/Israel.**

### **Background:**

- The “Unsettling Goods” Campaign is The United Church of Canada’s response to and implementation of the resolution on Palestine/Israel, which passed with a strong majority at the 41st General Council meeting in August 2012 and is in line with United Church Social Policy Positions – The Working Group on Israel/Palestine Policy (2012) [*Record of Proceedings of the 41st General Council 2012*, pp. 164, 170–175, 182–185].
- We commend the General Council Office staff, elected members, as well as United Church members and friends for the implementation to date of the Unsettling Goods campaign.
- To honour the call of our Palestinian Christian partners (as in the Kairos Palestine document), more time is needed for consciousness raising, education and communication across the United Church on this issue. Continuing courageous conversations can help inform our analysis and strengthen our faithfulness.
- The economic action part of the campaign is a non-violent response to the call of The United Church of Canada’s global partners in the region and reflects a core biblical value that “peace requires justice.”

- The “Unsettling Goods” campaign is a response focused not at Israel itself, but only against those products made in the illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.
- The latest news from the region shows an aggressive increase in both illegal settlement construction and demolition of Palestinian houses by the Israeli military.
- There is evidence that global pressure (and economic action) to end the occupation is having an impact. Keeping pressure on could more quickly lead to just peace. The campaign encourages modest justice-seeking consumer choices (economic action against products made in the illegal Israeli settlements) that aim to help end the occupation and lay the foundation for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.
- As a non-violent response to the disproportionate violence being experienced daily by Palestinians, the “Unsettling Goods” Campaign should be continued until the illegal occupation ends or until a more effective response is identified.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Middlesex Presbytery: transmit with concurrence (Feb 24, 2015)

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

**LON 24 ROLE OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY IN LEGITIMIZING ISRAELI  
PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES**

**Origin:** Social Justice Division of London Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Social Justice Division of London Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to implement item 8 of the GC41 Israel/Palestine Policy adopted by the 41st General Council, specifically:**

- 1. Address the critical role that some forms of Christian theology have played in legitimizing the occupation by:**
  - a. challenging Christian beliefs that theologically justify the occupation and Israel’s possession of a greater Israel that includes the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza;**
  - b. requesting that the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee explore the implications of theologies and beliefs that support the occupation.**

**Background:**

A report of the above action mandated by the General Council in the adopted resolution of the Working group on Israel/Palestine Policy has not been produced.

A conference was organized by Canadian Friends of Sabeel and co-sponsored by The United Church of Canada, the Anglican Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in Canada in May 2015 on the history and theology of Christian Zionism in Canada and the U.S. and on how its manifestations represent a barrier to peace in the Middle East.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

**London Conference:** Agreed, London Conference Annual Meeting June 5–7, 2015

### **MAR 1 CONTINUATION OF UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN**

**Origin:** Church in Action Committee, of PEI Presbytery, Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** If current program is continued, financial implications should not significantly increase over current spending

**Staffing Implications if known:** We recommend this work to be made a priority for staffing.

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service

**Volunteer Implications:** United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would continue their active animation of this Campaign

### **Maritime Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to provide allocation of adequate General Council Office (GCO) resources for the continued implementation of The United Church of Canada Unsettling Goods campaign until the rise of 43rd General Council in 2018.**

### **Background:**

- The “Unsettling Goods” Campaign is The United Church of Canada’s response to and implementation of the General Council resolution on Palestine/Israel which passed with a strong majority at the 41st General Council meeting in August 2012.
- We commend the General Council Office staff, elected members, as well as United Church members and friends for the implementation to date of the Unsettling Goods campaign.
- To honour the call of our Palestinian Christian partners (as found in the Kairos Palestine document), more time is needed for consciousness raising, education and communication across the United Church on this complex issue. Continuing courageous conversations can help inform our analysis and strengthen our faithfulness.
- The campaign encourages church members and supporters to pray, choose and speak to help end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and includes resources for worship and study, ethical tours of the Holy Land, trust-building programs between Israelis and Palestinians, support for Palestinian livelihoods by purchasing fair trade products such as Zatoun olive oil and planting olive trees, and avoiding purchasing products made in the illegal Israeli settlements.
- The economic action part of the “Unsettling Goods” campaign is a non-violent response to the call of The United Church of Canada’s global partners in the region and reflects a core biblical value that “peace requires justice.”

- The “Unsettling Goods” economic action campaign is a response focused not at Israel itself, but only against those products made in the illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.
- The latest news from the region shows an aggressive increase in both illegal settlement construction and demolition of Palestinian houses by the Israeli military.
- There is evidence that global pressure (including economic action) to end the occupation is having an impact. Keeping the pressure on could more quickly lead to just peace. The “Unsettling Goods” campaign encourages modest justice-seeking consumer choices (economic action against products made in the illegal Israeli settlements) that aim to help end the occupation and lay the foundation for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.
- As a non-violent response to the disproportionate violence being experienced daily by Palestinians, the “Unsettling Goods” Campaign should be continued until the illegal occupation ends or until a more effective response is identified.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett/Sean Handcock moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposals #1 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign,” #3 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign,” and #7 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign” to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

### **MAR 3 CONTINUATION OF UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN**

**Origin:** Church in Action Committee, of Halifax Presbytery, Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if Known:** If current program is continued, financial implications should not significantly increase over current spending

**Staffing Implications if Known:** We recommend this work to be made a priority for staffing.

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service

**Volunteer Implications:** United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would continue their active animation of this campaign

**Proposed by the Church in Action Committee of Halifax Presbytery, Maritime Conference that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) directs the Executive of the General mandates the allocation of adequate General Council Office resources for the continued implementation of The United Church of Canada Unsettling Goods campaign until the occupation, as defined by the 4th Geneva Convention, has come to an end.**

### **Theological Rationale:**

There is a strong biblical call to seek justice throughout the New Testament and parts of the Old Testament. We see God’s call to justice clearly articulated in Micah 6:8, “What does the Lord require of you but to seek justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.” We also see it in Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matthew 5:9).



**Background:**

- The “Unsettling Goods” Campaign is The United Church of Canada’s response to and implementation of the resolution on Palestine/Israel which passed with a strong majority at the 41st General Council meeting in August 2012.
- We commend the General Council Office staff, elected members, as well as United Church members and friends for the implementation to date of the Unsettling Goods campaign.
- To honour the call of our Palestinian Christian partners (as found in the Kairos Palestine document), more time is needed for consciousness raising, education and communication across the United Church on this complex issue. Continuing courageous conversations can help inform our analysis and strengthen our faithfulness.
- The campaign encourages church members and supporters to pray, choose and speak to help end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and includes resources for worship and study, ethical tours of the Holy Land, trust-building programs between Israelis and Palestinians, support for Palestinian livelihoods by purchasing fair trade products such as Zatoun olive oil and planting olive trees, and avoiding purchasing products made in the illegal\* Israeli settlements.
- The economic action part of the “Unsettling Goods” campaign is a non-violent response to the call of The United Church of Canada’s global partners in the region and reflects a core biblical value that “peace requires justice.”
- The “Unsettling Goods” economic action campaign is a response focused not at Israel itself, but only against those products made in the illegal Israeli settlements\* on Palestinian land.
- The latest news from the region shows an aggressive increase in both illegal\* settlement construction and demolition of Palestinian houses by the Israeli military.
- There is evidence that global pressure (including economic action) to end the occupation is having an impact. Keeping the pressure on could more quickly lead to just peace. The “Unsettling Goods” campaign encourages modest justice-seeking consumer choices (economic action against products made in the illegal Israeli settlements) that aim to help end the occupation and lay the foundation for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.
- As a non-violent response to the disproportionate violence being experienced daily by Palestinians, the “Unsettling Goods” Campaign should be continued until the illegal occupation ends or until a more effective response is identified.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett / Sean Handcock moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposals #1 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign,” #3 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign,” and #7 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign” to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**


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\*The Fourth Geneva Convention is an international law that forbids an occupying power from moving its own people into areas it occupies. On its website the Canadian government policy states clearly that “Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The settlements also constitute a serious obstacle to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.”

**MAR 6 CONTINUATION OF UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN**

**Origin:** The Church in Action Committee of Maritime Conference

**Financial Implications if Known:**

**The Church in Action Committee of Maritime Conference proposes that:** If current program is continued, financial implications should not significantly increase over current spending

**Staffing Implications if known:** We recommend this work to be made a priority for staffing.

**Source of Funding if known:** Mission and Service

**Volunteer Implications:** United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel would continue their active animation of this campaign

**The 42nd General Council (2015) directs the Executive of the General Council to ensure the allocation of adequate General Council Office resources for the continued implementation of The United Church of Canada Unsettling Goods campaign until the occupation, as defined by the Fourth Geneva Convention, comes to an end**

**Background:**

- The “Unsettling Goods” Campaign is The United Church of Canada’s response to and implementation of the resolution on Palestine/Israel which passed with a strong majority at the 41st General Council meeting in August 2012.
- We commend the General Council Office staff, elected members, as well as United Church members and friends for the implementation to date of the Unsettling Goods campaign.
- To honour the call of our Palestinian Christian partners (as found in the Kairos Palestine document), more time is needed for consciousness raising, education and communication across the United Church on this complex issue. Continuing courageous conversations can help inform our analysis and strengthen our faithfulness.
- The campaign encourages church members and supporters to pray, choose and speak to help end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and includes resources for worship and study, ethical tours of the Holy Land, trust-building programs between Israelis and Palestinians, support for Palestinian livelihoods by purchasing fair trade products such as Zatoun olive oil and planting olive trees, and avoiding purchasing products made in the illegal\* Israeli settlements.
- The economic action part of the “Unsettling Goods” campaign is a non-violent response to the call of The United Church of Canada’s global partners in the region and reflects a core biblical value that “peace requires justice.”
- The “Unsettling Goods” economic action campaign is a response focused not at Israel itself, but only against those products made in the illegal Israeli settlements\* on Palestinian land.
- The latest news from the region shows an aggressive increase in both illegal\* settlement construction and demolition of Palestinian houses by the Israeli military.
- There is evidence that global pressure (including economic action) to end the occupation is having an impact. Keeping the pressure on could more quickly lead to just peace. The “Unsettling Goods” campaign encourages modest justice-seeking consumer choices (economic action against products made in the illegal Israeli settlements) that aim to help end the occupation and lay the foundation for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

- As a non-violent response to the disproportionate violence being experienced daily by Palestinians, the “Unsettling Goods” Campaign should be continued until the illegal occupation ends or until a more effective response is identified.

(\*The Fourth Geneva Convention is an international law that forbids an occupying power from moving its own people into areas it occupies. On its website the Canadian government policy states clearly that “Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The settlements also constitute a serious obstacle to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.”)

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Ross Bartlett/Sean Handcock moved that the 90th Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference transmit with concurrence Proposals #1 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign,” #3 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign,” and #7 entitled “Continuation of Unsettling Goods Campaign” to the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## Partridgeberry Commission Proposals

### **SK 9 RESTORATIVE CARE FOR MISSION UNITS OR OUTREACH MINISTRIES**

**Origin:** The Saskatchewan Conference Finance and Administration Committee

**Financial Implications:** Currently approximately \$700.00 per Mission Unit or Outreach Ministry

**Staffing Implications:** Minimal, as there would be a few ministries added to the list of those contributing or claiming

**Source of Funding:** The Restorative Care levy would be assessed to the Mission Units or Outreach Ministries

**The Saskatchewan Conference Finance and Administration Committee proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) amend its policy with respect to Restorative Care so that Mission Units, Outreach Ministries, and other ministries which are not pastoral charges be required to participate in (that is, contribute to and receive benefits from) the Restorative Care Plan, and that Mission Units, Outreach Ministries, and other ministries which are not pastoral charges be advised of such requirement to participate.**

#### **Background:**

Ministry Personnel who are in a pastoral charge Mission Unit or Outreach Ministry who are disabled are entitled to receive salary & benefits for the duration of the disability up to a maximum of 6 months paid for by the pastoral charge, Mission Unit, or Outreach Ministry (*The Manual*, s. I.2.2.2 and s. I.2.2.3).

This places a burden on the pastoral charge, Mission unit, or Outreach ministry, which must both pay salary & benefits and finance supply and staffing during this absence. Pastoral charges pay into the Restorative Care Plan, which is an insurance plan whose benefits assist with these costs. Other Mission Units or Outreach ministries cannot pay in and are not eligible for benefits.

Not only is this a justice issue with some of our ministries being treated differently than others, not only does work in our health care and inner city ministries have a higher risk of illness or disability, but unlike pastoral charges which have collections and donations from members and adherents as a source of revenue Mission Units or Outreach Ministries are usually short of funds and have fewer sources of revenue both to pay salary for the disabled ministry personnel and to staff ongoing activities in the ministry personnel's absence.

**Intermediate Court Action:** Concurred with by Saskatchewan Conference

**ANW 13 CHILD WELL-BEING INDEX****Origin:** Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women**Financial Implications if known:** unknown**Staffing Implications if known:** unknown**Source of Funding if known:****Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women propose that:**

**On behalf of The United Church of Canada, the Moderator and the General Secretary promote the adoption of a national Child Well-being Index. This can be achieved by writing to the Prime Minister, each Premier, the whole church and the national media demanding immediate action for children.**

**Background:**

“What father among you would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or hand him a snake instead of a fish? Or hand him a scorpion if he asked for an egg? If you then who are evil know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

*(Luke 11:11–13 Jerusalem Bible/Readers’ Edition)*

1. All children have the right to good health and good quality health care. All children should have clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so they can stay healthy.<sup>1</sup>
2. All children have the right to a good quality education and should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level they can.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of an education is to develop every child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities.<sup>3</sup>
3. The government has a responsibility to make sure children’s rights are protected. Governments must help families protect the rights of children and provide an environment where children can grow and reach their full potential.<sup>4</sup>
4. In Alberta alone, 143,200 children lived below the Low Income Measure in 2012. This represents 16.2 per cent of all Alberta children. Compared to 16.4 per cent in 1989, there has been no significant positive change.<sup>5</sup>
5. In 2012, the ruling Conservative Party promised Albertans to eliminate child poverty by 2017. This is far from reality.

We challenge all levels of Canadian government to implement a child-specific index to measure the effectiveness of programs aimed to improve the well-being of all our children.

Child Well-being Index<sup>6</sup>

All children have a right to:

1. three meals a day based on the most recent Canada Food Guide.
2. adequate, affordable, safe housing.
3. enough clothes for different seasons (both new and second-hand) a minimum of 2 pairs of well-fitting shoes and a pair of winter boots.
4. preventative and curative physical and mental health services including:
  - child mental health professionals
  - annual medical check-up

- dental and vision care and required prescriptions
  - adequate rest and play.
5. relationships which nurture each child's spirit in fulfilling the need for:
    - safety at home, at school or daycare and in his or her neighborhood
    - consistent and predictable love and support.
  6. safe, high quality, affordable daycare and drop-in day care.
  7. age-appropriate books, an internet connection, indoor games and educational toys suitable for the child's age and knowledge level and a quiet, bright place to study.
  8. a quality education, where each child is encouraged to reach his or her full potential.
  9. free public transportation in urban areas.
  10. regular involvement in:
    - organized, age-appropriate physical activities both indoors and outdoors
    - the fine arts
    - school and community outings and wilderness experiences.

This Proposal was developed in collaboration with the Canadian Federation of University Women (Lethbridge and District Chapter).

It takes the whole community to raise a child.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed by Canada in 1989 Article 24.
2. Article 28
3. Article 29
4. Article 4
5. *No Change: After 25 years of Promises, it is Time to Eliminate Child Poverty* November 2014 Edmonton Social Planning Council, Alberta College of Social Workers and Public Interest Alberta (25th anniversary of the all-party House of Commons promise to eliminate child poverty in Canada.)
6. *The Child Wellbeing Index was created in Alberta and was adapted and modelled in part using:*
  - the *UNICEF 14-Item Child Specific Deprivation Index*. (Innocenti Research Centre, 2012)
  - the *All You Need Is? Measuring Children's Perceptions and Experiences of Deprivation* (Barnardos and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul based on research conducted by the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin, 2011)
  - *Developing a Deprivation Index: The Research Process* (Matern, Mendelson and Oliphant...The story of the development of the Ontario Deprivation Index, 2009)

#### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by the Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Women to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

## **TOR 10 TREATMENT OF PRISON INMATES**

**Origin:** Community Connections and Right Relations Commission, Living Waters Presbytery, Toronto Conference

**Financial Implications if known:** Nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** Nil

**Source of Funding if known:** Nil

**The Community Connections and Right Relations Commission of Living Waters Presbytery, Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

- a) **contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to eliminate solitary confinement;**
- b) **contact the Prime Minister, the party leaders and appropriate ministers calling on them to:**
  - **Provide better training of staff regarding mental health issues of offenders;**
  - **Schedule mental health assessments and development of treatment strategies;**
  - **Ensure transfer of inmates prone to injuring themselves to treatment centres;**
  - **Ensure that there is adequate oversight of prison conditions.**
  - **Work more closely with the John Howard Society, the Elizabeth Fry Society, and the Canadian Mental Health Association in developing better strategies for treatment and training.**

### **Background:**

The federal government of Canada is facing two current lawsuits around the use of solitary confinement for prison inmates. The BC Civil Liberties Association and the John Howard Society of Canada are claiming that the practice violates the right to life, liberty and security of person. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association and the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies have filed a similar petition challenging the constitutionality of isolation and claiming that it is cruel and inhumane.

Solitary confinement, also known as administrative segregation, is described by Corrections Canada as a measure of last resort. According to the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the purpose of administrative segregation is to maintain the security of the penitentiary or the safety of any person by not allowing an inmate to associate with other inmates. At any given time, as many as 1,800 inmates are in solitary confinement in provincial or federal institutions, deprived of meaningful human contact for up to 23 hours a day. These conditions result in significant periods of sensory deprivation and social isolation.

According to the John Howard Society, solitary confinement is a risk factor for suicide behind bars. It can exacerbate pre-existing mental illness and create mental illness where none previously existed. Solitary confinement has been described by the United Nations and by the Canadian Medical Association Journal as “cruel and unusual punishment.” It is inconsistent with human rights law, particularly when mental illness is involved. The negative effects of long-term solitary confinement are well-documented. These effects include psychosis, hallucinations, insomnia and confusion. Solitary confinement can create mental illness where none previously existed, or exacerbate pre-existing illness.

The damaging effects of solitary confinement increase the longer the prisoner is kept isolated. The effects of long-term isolation can also seriously hinder a prisoner’s rehabilitation. And as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture has observed, when solitary confinement is indefinite—that is, without a specified end-date—harm is compounded: “The feeling of uncertainty when not informed of the length of solitary confinement exacerbates the pain and suffering of the individuals who are subjected to it.” Accordingly, the Special Rapporteur has found that prolonged or indefinite solitary confinement can amount to torture.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has called for greater limits on the use of solitary confinement, including an absolute ban on its use on inmates who are suicidal, self-harming or have other significant mental health problems.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Received for information by Living Waters Presbytery (March 10, 2015) and passed on to Toronto Conference.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

**GCE 9 – REF MEPS10 - THE STEERING GROUP ON THE CANDIDACY PATHWAY**

**Origin:** Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council proposes to:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- 1. the implementation of a seven-phase Candidacy Pathway and its purpose to call forth, identify, accompany, equip, assess, authorize, and celebrate those persons whom God calls to and endows for the Order of Ministry, offering leadership in Christ’s diverse ministries contributing to God’s mission in creation (see GCE 6, 40th General Council, 2009, Appendix A, resource library) [[commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “2014-11-15 GCE 6”];**



2. **the implementation of the seven-phase Candidacy Pathway be informed by the report of the Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway;**
3. **authorize revisions to *The Manual of The United Church of Canada* required to implement the Candidacy Pathway;**
4. **the Executive of the General Council be directed to develop a policy document for the Candidacy Pathway reflective of these recommendations and to develop a Candidacy Pathway implementation strategy; and**
5. **it approve the development and implementation of a seven-phase Pathway toward Recognition as a Designated Lay Minister with the purpose to call forth, identify, accompany, equip, assess, authorize, and celebrate those persons whom God calls to and endows for service as Recognized Designated Lay Ministers, offering leadership in Christ’s diverse ministries and contributing to God’s mission in creation.**
6. **And that this General Council authorize a Category 2 remit to test the will of the church with respect to this policy change.**

**Background:**

See pages 667–675, *Report: The Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway*.

**Policy for the Proposal:**

1. The Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership resource and the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice (or their successor) will be incorporated into all phases of the Candidacy Pathway
2. Each Conference is authorized to develop a Candidacy Pathway suitable to its own context, provided that it incorporates all the Core Values and Principles of the Candidacy Pathway, the Seven Phases of the Candidacy Pathway, the Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership, the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for Ministry Personnel, and the policies included in this proposal
3. One Candidacy Pathway will be developed in each Conference which is adaptable and applicable to both the Ordered Ministry and the Designated Lay Ministry streams

**The Seven Phases:****1. Calling Forth**

- 1.1. The Church will engage a creative and invitational approach for calling forth individuals to serve as ministry personnel within our denomination.
- 1.2. The practice of hosting “discernment weekends” is endorsed as one method (but not the sole method) of calling forth individuals to ministry leadership.

**2. Identify**

- 2.1. The Church will engage a variety of tools or agencies to be used to test a person’s giftedness for ministry and affirms that not all methods need to be used in each case.

- 2.2. The Identify phase of the Candidacy Pathway will be engaged for those who feel called as Designated Lay Ministers and Licensed Lay Worship Leaders).
- 2.3. A committee or board at the Conference level will deal with matters concerning candidacy; Boards may be sub-divided into sub-committees or panels, each of which would interact with a limited number of students.
- 2.4. Those discerning a call to vocational ministry must have been actively involved in a local ministry or mission of The United Church of Canada for a period of 24 months prior to seeking recognition as a Candidate for the Order of Ministry.
- 2.5. There is no membership requirement in a congregation before discernment can begin.
- 2.6. All inquirers sensing a call to ministry must demonstrate active participation in the life and work of a congregation of The United Church of Canada.
- 2.7. All inquirers must be full members of The United Church of Canada to be eligible for recognition as a candidate for the Order of Ministry and for appointment to a ministry position.

### **3. Accompany**

- 3.1. Circles of Accompaniment will support students and candidates, offering clear communication and guidance. Circles of Accompaniment will not have an evaluative role.
- 3.2. When information comes to the attention of a Circle of Accompaniment that raises serious concerns about the student's promise, suitability, fitness, and readiness for service as ministry personnel, those concerns may be communicated to the Candidacy Board for it to address with the student. The Circle of Accompaniment will advise the student that it will be raising the information with the Candidacy Board.

### **4. Equip**

- 4.1. The Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership resource and the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice (or their successors) will be incorporated into students' field placement opportunities and Supervised Ministry Education experiences.
- 4.2. Student learning goals will be matched with the learning opportunities available at the learning site through the educational supervisor
- 4.3. Readiness for a Supervised Ministry Education placement will not constitute a promise of a placement.
- 4.4. The peer learning group model used in the St. Andrew's College internship program and in the educational program for Diaconal Ministry offered at the Canadian Centre for Christian Studies are endorsed as models of integrated Supervised Ministry Education.
- 4.5. Students may request a transfer of their candidacy between Conferences, even if the Conferences do not operate identical Candidacy Pathways; both Conferences involved will determine if the transfer request will be granted on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.6. For those on the pathway to ordained ministry, Supervised Ministry Education may occur before the student has completed her/his educational training at a theological school, and can begin following the completion of the first year of formal graduate-level theological studies [currently not applicable to those enrolled in the Summer Distance Master of Divinity Degree program offered through Atlantic School of Theology and those enrolled in the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre].

- 4.7. Candidates will be permitted to serve their Supervised Ministry Education period on a full-time or a part-time basis; the minimum requirement in a part-time Supervised Ministry Education placement or appointment is half-time (20 hours per week).
- 4.8. Each Candidacy Board will determine the length of Supervised Ministry Education required of the student on a case by case basis; the minimum period of Supervised Ministry Education is 1,360 hours (the equivalent of 34 weeks at 40 hours per week); these hours may be served in one placement or appointment or in a combination of placements and/or appointments; the minimum period for any placement or appointment in Supervised Ministry Education is 13 weeks.
- 4.9. The Candidacy Board will approve each period of Supervised Ministry Education and the nature of that Supervised Ministry Education placement prior to the commencement of each placement.
- 4.10. A variety of Supervised Ministry Education opportunities will be open to candidates for ordained ministry, including placements in missional settings and summer placements; the identification of learning sites is the responsibility of the Conferences.
- 4.11. Intentional efforts will be made to identify potential learning sites and to urge those sites to continue to be learning sites for candidates.
- 4.12. The Ministry of Supervision training program will be adapted to include instruction on longer-term supervision, off-site supervision, the use of technology in supervision, and the Candidacy Pathway's Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership.
- 4.13. The Lay Supervision Team will support, accompany, and encourage the student through providing feedback to the student and periodic evaluation to the student and the Educational Supervisor.

## 5. Assess

- 5.1. The Candidacy Board (or other board of the Conference) will assess the promise, suitability, readiness, and effectiveness of each candidate for ministry.
- 5.2. Candidacy Boards will be trained on maintaining effective, clear, direct, and consistent communications with each student.
- 5.3. Candidacy Boards will be comprised of competent, trained, ethical, and accountable individuals, who operate in a transparent manner and adopt best practices in a consistent manner.
- 5.4. Student will have the right be accompanied by a person of the student's choice present at all meetings with the Candidacy Board or a sub-committee or panel of the Board; the accompanier has the right to be present, but does not have the right to speak unless the Candidacy Board or sub-committee or panel of the Board invites the accompanier to speak or grants permission in response to a request to speak.
- 5.5. Candidacy Boards and any sub-committee or panel of the Boards will endeavor to maintain gender balance in their membership to draw from various ethnicities.
- 5.6. The training of Candidacy Board members will include specific training on "cross-cultural interviewing" and "interviewing those who are differently-abled."
- 5.7. Candidacy Board processes will be open to appeal, should a student wish to challenge a process at any stage of the candidacy pathway; such appeals shall follow the appeals process as set out in the current version of *The Manual* of the United Church.

- 5.8. If a Candidacy Board decides to end a student's candidacy or if the student withdraws from the candidacy pathway and the student subsequently feels called again to ministry, the student will begin the candidacy pathway process at the beginning.

## 6. Authorize

- 6.1. The Candidacy Board and the Conferences will authorize candidates as ready for ordination, commissioning or recognition.

## 7. Celebrate

- 7.1. The ministry of all persons called to paid accountable ministry will be celebrated by the Conference, including those recognized as Designated Lay Ministers.
- 7.2. The Church recognizes the increasing diversity of new and renewing ministries within The United Church of Canada, the opportunities to serve in ministry within the offices of the various courts of the denomination, and the wider opportunities for ministry beyond our denomination (such as chaplaincies in the Canadian Forces, correctional institutions, educational institutions, and hospitals; and teaching ministries) and affirms that candidates for the Order of Ministry may be called to serve in those ministries.
- 7.3. The Church affirms that, as the number of opportunities for service within a pastoral charge context decreases, opportunities to serve in more missional settings may increase. The celebration of ministry through ordination or commissioning will not be limited to those who have received a call or an appointment to a pastoral charge or presbytery accountable ministry or who are pursuing further studies.
- 7.4. The Church will celebrate the achievement of the conclusion of each student's candidacy pathway and the Conference will commission or ordain those who have completed the pathway and who have accepted a call, appointment, or offer of employment to a paid accountable ministry, as determined by the Presbytery in which the ministry is geographically located.

## Particular Concerns for Francophone Inquirers and Candidates

1. Resource documents, forms, and courses will be produced in French language to meet the needs of French-speaking inquirers and candidates.
2. The Church will be intentional in identifying and training suitable individuals to serve as French-speaking educational supervisors.
3. Learning sites among Francophone congregations and within French-speaking missions will be identified and invited to participate in the Candidacy Pathway.
4. Candidacy Boards will endeavor to have a sub-committee or panel whose members are fluent in the French language and have experience in ministry in French within The United Church of Canada.

## Manual Revision Requirements

If the Candidacy Pathway proposal were adopted, the sections of *The Manual 2013* that would have to be revised are:

- C.4.4.2(b)(iv) Secretary of Presbytery sending the names of those the presbytery is recommending for ordination or commissioning to the CES or Speaker by April 1st

H.2	Vocation in Ministry
H.3	Discernment for Ministry
H.4	Preparation for Ministry
H.6.3	Final Examinations and Approval
H.6.4	Transfer and Settlement or Other Approved Option
I.1.3.2 and I.1.3.3	Appointment (to permit candidates to be appointed by presbyteries to fill vacancies and to be appointed to other presbytery accountable ministries)

The Entering Ministry Resource Document and the Designated Lay Ministry Resource Document would also have to be revised significantly.

## **GCE 11 FAITHFUL, EFFECTIVE AND LEARNED LEADERS FOR THE CHURCH WE ARE BECOMING: A COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH TO MINISTERIAL EDUCATION**

**Origin:** The Executive of the General Council

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of the General Council:**

- 1. Recommends to the 42nd General Council that it:**
  - a. Approve the adoption of a competency-based approach to equipping and evaluating people for leadership in ministry and mission.**
  - b. Affirm that assessing the academic readiness and competence for leadership in ministry and mission is a core responsibility of the church.**
  - c. Affirm The United Church of Canada's relationship with its theological schools, and education and retreat centres, and recognize their on-going contribution to the formation and education of church leadership by continuing to provide funding for representative institutions as outlined in this document.**
  - d. Direct the General Secretary to establish a process to implement the competency-based approach. This process will include working with the Theological Schools Circle, and other educational partners, to realize the recommendations of the Task Group and the items identified in the Consensus Statement of the Theological Schools Circle, including the tradition of Testamur-granting schools. This process will also include integrating the competency-based approach with other leadership formation and education initiatives that have been, or may be, approved:**

**the One Order of Ministry proposal of the Joint Ministry Group, the Report of the Candidacy Pathways Pilot Project Steering Group, and the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relations initiative.**

**Background:**

(The Report of the Working Group on Leadership Formation for Ministry with Appendices can be found online at [commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “2014-11-15 Faithful” for the November 2014 meeting of the GCE.)

After two years of extensive discussion, research and consultation, the Working Group on Leadership Formation for Ministry has presented its report to the General Secretary recommending a new competency-based approach to leadership education and formation. The Working Group understands that the adoption of this approach would have especially significant implications for the theological schools that currently retain the right to grant *testamur*. The church’s partnership with its schools is a valued relationship. There has been extensive consultation and conversation, therefore, with the Theological Schools Circle (Principals, Keeper and Deans) at every step of developing this proposal. The members of the Theological Schools Circle have acknowledged the merits of a competency-based approach, named their concerns, and committed themselves to continuing to partner with the church in a renewed spirit of cooperation and collaboration. It is in that spirit that future discussions with the schools regarding implementation of this proposal would be conducted.

**TICIF 3 TOWARDS A NEW MODEL OF MEMBERSHIP**

**Origin:** The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee proposes that the 42nd General Council:**

- 1. Direct the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to invite the church into a study of the meaning of membership, including the relationship of baptism and membership, and bring to the 43rd General Council a new model of membership for the church;**
- 2. a) Approve that the full members of a community of faith may consent to allow adherents to vote on all matters before meetings of the community of faith; and**
  - b) Authorize a category 2 remit to test the will of the church in respect to this change.**

**Background:**

The Executive of General Council, meeting March 21–23, 2015, received this report of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, expressed its appreciation to the Committee in the development of the report, and recommended the report and its proposals to the 42nd General Council for approval.

**Why this proposal? Our current practices and the challenges they present.**

The Theological and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, in 2013 and 2014, undertook an initial review and exploration of theological and functional issues in the current practice of membership in the church. In its initial work, the Committee identified a range of questions concerning membership. It believes that these questions will continue to frame the study proposed for the next triennium.

*What does it mean to be a member of The United Church of Canada? What does it mean for the church when formal understandings of membership no longer work? Should membership be primarily about discipleship and faith, or about governance of the church? Is baptism necessary for membership and or leadership in the church? Is it possible for someone to be a member of the United Church without belonging to a congregation? How might individuals involved in new emerging faith communities be members of the church? What might membership mean in non-congregational settings like community ministries? What happens to membership for those whose church closes and for whom no other United Church community is accessible? How does the United Church deal with a generational shift away from formal structures and therefore formal understandings of membership? Is membership at all a meaningful term today? If membership is no longer working, how can the United Church govern itself?*

These questions emerge from the new social context and generational shifts that have engulfed the church. Diana Butler Bass and others have pointed to this as a shift in understanding from

*Believing – Behaving – Belonging* to *Belonging – Behaving – Believing.*<sup>1</sup>

Many churches experience welcoming people who have not been baptised and who have had little or no experience with traditional church life. Many of these people desire to be involved and are often invited into participation and leadership as part of a journey of deepening faith and connection with the church.

For most of this new generation of participants, membership is synonymous with belonging. Showing up, attending worship, giving, serving on committees and leading activities are all related to this sense of being members, of belonging. It is a challenge for most to understand the significance of Christian baptism and profession of faith as intimately linked to membership. Many have found themselves in circumstances where they discover and are surprised that they are not considered members and eligible to vote or serve on church councils.

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1. *Christianity After Religion*. Diana Butler Bass. 2012

In part, this is because our current membership practice clearly represents the former paradigm above. This model is not a challenge in an overwhelming Christian society where most people are baptised as children. But it looks quite different from the context of someone who has no church memory or history and for whom profession of faith and baptism are entirely new concepts.

Adult baptism and a public profession of faith is, in this context, a significant step that most would choose to take only after a longer journey of exploration and formation. And in many cases it is leadership roles in the congregation that bring individuals to such a faith commitment.

Is baptism then best practiced as the required entry point to membership and active participation in the life of a congregation, or is it better seen as a significant step of discipleship and spiritual commitment emerging from that participation? What might it mean to open our understanding of membership to a new paradigm of membership in which the entry point is the choice to join to participate in God's mission? And how might a shift in this practice allow the church to deepen and strengthen its practice of baptism at the heart of its life?

The United Church has extensively explored its understanding and practice of membership since the 1960s. In 1962 the Division of Mission in Canada released the report "Doctrine and Practice of Church Membership." It was followed by several years of exploration on Christian Initiation (1980–1984) including the first remit extended to all pastoral charges. The most recent report "Belonging: Privilege and Responsibility" was received by the 37th GC (2000).

In 1984 and 2000, remits were sent to pastoral charges and presbyteries testing the affirmation that all who are baptized are members of the church. (The remits emerged from the ambiguous meaning of Basis 5.8.1. which suggest that all baptized children are members, but have the "privilege and duty" when they reach the age of discretion to enter into "full membership." In essence the failure of both remits is understood to mean that a formal profession of faith (expressed for children as confirmation) in addition to baptism is required for membership. While the 1984 remit also sought clarity around the admission of children to communion, and failed, momentum reflected in the liturgical practices of the church, and the significant and timely report "*A Place for You*" has clearly answered the question, regardless of the remit, that children are indeed welcome at communion. The 2000 remit tested a proposal that the church no longer use the term "full membership." While the remit also failed, it is clear that momentum has continued with many churches no longer making a clear distinction between baptism and "full" membership.

The 37th General Council (2000), possibly in anticipation of the difficulties presented by the remit, requested the Theology and Faith Committee to prepare the "necessary resources that would enable The United Church of Canada to engage in a discussion of the meaning and theology of baptism as well as the nature of the church (ecclesiology)." While no formal action was taken by the Theology and Faith Committee on this request, the committee responded for other reasons to the challenge of ecclesiology with the report "A Church with Purpose" to the 41st General Council (2012).



While questions remain of the relationship of baptism, full membership, and profession of faith, it is clear that other questions surrounding the meaning of membership are also taking on significance.

As rural and remote congregations close, what avenues of continued membership remain for faithful members for whom there is no easily accessible United Church community? The Uniting Church of Australia authorizes Presbyteries to maintain membership roles in such situations. Should this be a practice in the United Church?

Community (outreach) ministries are questioning models of the church that exclude people on the margins of society (most often encountered in community ministries) as not full participants or members of the church. Are not many of the attributes of church membership, they question, present among the people who participate in these ministries irrespective of, or perhaps specifically because of the reality that they are often among the poorest and most vulnerable members of our society?

Currently membership is limited to those recorded by a church session or its equivalent (with the exception of armed forces chaplaincies). Membership, in other words, presupposes an established and traditional congregational model. Many new forms of faith communities are emerging. How might it be possible for those who choose to express their faith in these new forms of community to share in membership and leadership in the United Church? Is it possible to open other avenues of church membership that acknowledge much greater variety in what faith communities will look like today and certainly into the future?

Increasing numbers of United Church congregations are responding to requests from members of other faiths who wish to align themselves with the United Church while also remaining connected to their home faith. Is it possible to structure a form of associate membership that has a different quality to it than “adherent”? Does the term “adherent” any longer adequately address the character of commitment and engagement that is represented by those who choose to align themselves with the United Church?

The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee believes that reflection on membership is timely and necessary at this moment in the church’s life. As part of its work it has consulted extensively with the Comprehensive Review Task Group and agreed that clarity around membership in the church is critical to whatever redesign is proposed around its structure.

In undertaking this proposal the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee recognizes an ongoing debate about whether membership in the church needs to be based on welcoming and inviting participation of a new generation of seekers who have little commitment to formal understandings of membership or, should be focused on high expectations of discipleship and significant preparation for a life changing decision. It believes that whatever proposal is offered needs to meet both objectives.

The challenge of developing a new model of membership, therefore, is that it must represent a church attuned to the new realities of our time while maintaining connection to 2000 years of history; that creates space for local communities of faith to emerge and thrive while at the same

time affirming a national identity; to affirm that the church, and therefore membership, is not just an institutional act, but is also incorporation into the body of Christ; and to be open to people in many stages of a faith journey while continuing to affirm baptism as the one universal sacrament of belonging for the world-wide community of Christ.

### **Why the interim step of allowing Adherents to vote on all matters before congregational meetings?**

There are two situations which most clearly reveal the challenges to our current membership practices. The first is the restrictions placed on adherents in voting on “spiritual” matters in congregational meetings. By definition, adherents are active participants in a community of faith. Currently *The Manual* Section 3.7.2 allows, with the approval of full members, adherents the right to vote solely on financial and administrative matters. Further restrictions are placed in Section 3.7.3 on specific areas on which adherents may not vote. Basis 5.8.2 also limits adherents to voting on temporal matters.

For many, the difference between being a full member and adherent is whether they were baptised and confirmed at a younger age, or came into the church later in life and simply became involved. In other words, the difficulty confirms the analysis above that belonging is more important to many today than formal criteria of membership. The restrictions also maintain an increasingly unclear distinction between spiritual and temporal matters. Why can an adherent vote on the budget of a community of faith, with significant spiritual implications, while not being able to vote on anything related to the order of worship? This proposal moves the church in the direction of a new model consistent with that which the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee believes is emerging, and allows congregations to determine for themselves how adherents may participate in decisions of the community of faith.

The second area of difficulty is the restriction against adherents serving on the governing board of a community of faith. Currently all members of the governing board must be full members (Section 7.3.1). Many congregations currently ignore this restriction and allow adherents to serve at times in formal positions of leadership. This proposal does not address this problem. It leaves in place the requirement recognizing it is part of the larger discussion on membership and discipleship and will need to be addressed in a more comprehensive proposal.

### **Appendix A: A Possible Model of Membership for further exploration.**

**This model is not part of the proposal before the 42nd General Council. It is included here to inform the Council of the work undertaken to date by the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee.**

The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee has explored and tested a new model of membership and offers it here only as one possibility that it believes should be examined further in the study proposed for the next triennium. In the initial testing of the model, it became clear that a key issue is the relationship of baptism and membership. This is one of the issues that will require further study and conversation across the church. It is expected that further conversation will help to refine this model, or contribute to the development of a new and different approach.

**Member**

*The Members of a Community of Faith are those who have been welcomed by the governing board and have affirmed their desire to:*

- *Follow Jesus by choosing to live a life of compassion*
- *Live and act in hope for God's world*
- *Grow in faith within (this) community of The United Church of Canada*

*Children of Members are also members of the Community of Faith. At an appropriate age to be determined by the Community of Faith they will be invited to make their own affirmation of membership or to become Professing Members.*

*Members of the Community of Faith are eligible to vote at all meetings and to serve at all levels of governance of the community subject to the oversight of the Community of Faith.*

**Professing Member**

*A person becomes a Professing Member of the Community of Faith with the approval of the governing board (or the Community of Faith) through baptism (if not already baptised) and profession of faith.*

*It is the hope of The United Church of Canada that every member of a Community of Faith will be invited to become professing members of the church.*

*The Community of Faith may determine which offices and roles within its structures require professing membership.*

*All candidates for accountable ministry and representatives to other courts of the United Church shall be professing members.*

*A roll of professing member will be held local communities of faith and may also be held by the General Council.*

**Associate Member**

*A Community of Faith may enter the names of individuals on their membership roll who wish to align themselves with the mission and ministry of the Community and The United Church of Canada as Associate Members. Associate Members shall have voice at all meetings of the Community of Faith but shall not vote.*

**The Implications of This Model:**

In this model, baptism is not required for membership in a local community of faith, nor for positions of leadership in that community of faith. All members (rather than only Full Members) will be allowed to vote on spiritual (non-temporal) matters.

The model proposes “Professing Member” as a change in name for “Full Member” but leaves intact the existing *Manual* provisions, while requiring that all candidates for accountable ministry leadership, and all representatives to higher courts be professing members. The name of

“Associate Member” is changed from the existing category of “Adherent” and Associate Members will have voice at all meetings of the Community of Faith, but no vote.

The model emphasizes an invitation to become members of the church to all those who desire to follow Jesus by living a life of compassion; who desire to align themselves in hope to God’s mission and to grow in faith within a local community of The United Church of Canada. These words have been chosen as a basic, open and invitational call to join with a community of seekers and believers.<sup>2</sup> The phrasing of “to follow Jesus by living a life of compassion” (rather than simply *to follow Jesus*) is intentional in giving meaning and focus to an often abused concept. It also lifts up the link to the scriptural qualities of faith, hope and love.

To follow Jesus by choosing to live a life of compassion	Love
To live and act in hope for God’s world	Hope
To grow in faith within this community of The United Church of Canada	Faith

The affirmations emphasize the movement of the spirit in the life of an individual to engage in ministry as well as function within the organization of the community of faith. It moves the church away therefore from institutional understandings of membership based on rights and responsibilities.

Membership, in this model, will be initiated by a request to the governing board. (For example it could be an *Application for Membership* card with the above criteria that is signed and given to the minister or other representative of the community.) Members are those who are affirmed by the governing board and who are recorded on the roll of members. Members are eligible to vote at congregational or community meetings on all matters and to serve in all positions of leadership within the community of faith (subject to the oversight of the Community of Faith—see later).

The critical difference from existing policy, in this model, is that baptism and a formal, public profession of faith will not be required for local church membership.

In this model, the term *Professing Member* is chosen as a way of being descriptive rather than hierarchical. Professing Members are those who have been baptised and have made a public profession of faith.

The model maintains the existing terminology in the *Manual* for “Full Member” and upholds the language of the Basis of Union 8.6.2 (b) “that no terms of admission to full membership shall be prescribed other than those laid down in the New Testament.”

The intention would be to encourage “members” to move towards “Professing Member” as a journey in discipleship, i.e. to see it as an invitational and significant spiritual step rather than as something necessary for either “fitting in” or as a hurdle to participating in the decision-making of the congregation.

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2. With appreciation, the first two are drawn from the work of Kennon Callahan.

In this model, the following statement would be added to the *Manual* accompanying the description of Professing Member:

*It is the hope of The United Church of Canada that every member of a community of faith will be invited to become professing members of the church.*

The community of faith would maintain responsibility for oversight of membership and could vary in their practices for Professing Member from a formal process of study and a one time “profession of faith,” to more informal practices of multiple occasions of “profession.”

The community of faith would also have responsibility for determining which offices must be filled by Professing Members. In other words, a community of faith might choose to follow a more traditional pattern and determine that all members of the governing board will be Professing Members, or perhaps the Session and Elders if that model of governance is chosen. These options would provide for significant diversity in the practices of membership among communities of faith within the United Church. Christian but denominational identity would be maintained in setting the foundations of membership in the required three affirmations.

Identity and continuity with the global Christian community would also be maintained by requiring all candidates for paid accountable ministry (and therefore all ministers) as well as representatives to other courts of the church to be baptised and professing members. It would also be the hope that a majority of members of a local community of faith would become professing members.

A roll of Professing Members, in this model, would be maintained by a local community of faith, but also might be maintained by the General Council. This would provide a location in which professing (or previously “full” members) of the church whose congregation have closed might maintain their connection with the larger church. Maintaining a record of professing members at the General Council could also replace transfer of membership processes.

### **Associate Member**

The category of Adherent will be renamed as Associate member. Associate Members will be individuals who wish to align themselves with a community of faith (and with the United Church) as a sign of support for their work in the community and the world. It might involve individuals who are members of other faith bodies who do not desire to leave their own tradition (and do not wish to be involved as a voting member of the United Church community) but wish to stand with the United Church community in solidarity. It might be someone who periodically visits (summer or winter home) and again does not want to be a voting member. Associate Members will be recorded on the membership roll and will have voice at community of faith meetings, but no vote.

This understanding of Associate Membership would also mean that distinctions between spiritual and temporal (financial) matters would no longer be necessary.

### **Multiple or Dual Memberships**

In this model, there is no restriction necessarily placed on multiple or dual memberships. This will be the responsibility of the governing board of the congregation to determine. The welcoming as members (of the local community) of those from faiths other than Christian will depend on the willingness of the individual to make the affirmation required (which is possible for many other faith traditions.) In this case it will still be the responsibility of the governing board to explore the reasons for their request to be a voting member of the community of faith, rather than an associate member.

Individuals who desire to maintain membership in other denominations or faiths would not be eligible for Professing Membership, since this involves authorization for serving on governing bodies beyond the local community of faith, and as accountable ministers of the denomination. There will no restriction to those who wish to hold membership or professing membership in more than one United Church community of faith.

### **Theological Background**

The document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (1982) of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches lift ups the centrality of baptism as the universal sacrament of entry into the body of Christ (the church). Together with *One Baptism: Towards Mutual Recognition* (2011) these documents point to diversity in the practice of baptism while maintaining its central meaning of incorporation into the body of Christ, the church. Both documents identify as an aspect of diversity the possibility of significant time between the various rites of initiation.

The United Church has historically affirmed both infant and adult baptism even though infant baptism has long been the usual practice. It is not the intention of this proposed model of membership to diminish the church's emphasis on infant baptism. It will undoubtedly remain the established and normative liturgical celebration of the welcoming or initiation of the child of a believing family into the community of faith. However, as a number of theologians have noted, among them Douglas John Hall, the end of Christendom requires the church to reorient its life. This includes, Hall argues, the recovery of the practice of adult baptism.

As noted earlier, the challenge the church faces appears to be between adopting a stance of radical welcome and hospitality to a new generation of seekers versus a focus on high expectations of discipleship and significant preparation for membership in the church.

To choose the latter suggests that baptism, profession of faith and therefore membership would come only after an extensive time of preparation and that any form of leadership or spiritual decision making in the life of the congregation would be delayed until that time. To choose the former appears to mean abandoning any standards of belief and behaviour for membership.

To accept this polarity however, fails to recognize that growth in faith and capacity for leadership and spiritual discernment takes place over time and through engagement. It fails to acknowledge, as Butler-Bass suggests, that for a new generation, belonging and therefore participating is the entry point to this journey.

This model proposes that it is possible to embrace both directions. It offers an entry point that is based on a simple and yet meaningful affirmation of faith. It is responsive to the nudging of the spirit to allow an individual to say that they find their heart aligned with this community of faith, that they are drawn to be part of it. It invites them into a journey of growth through participation. It acknowledges that God's spirit can be active in their lives before baptism as well as after and that they can offer wisdom and leadership to the community while they are growing in faith.

It is not the intention of this model to separate local from national membership. Member and Professing Member will both be located with a local community of faith. What this model offers is an acknowledgment that people are on a spectrum of journeys within a community but they are all a part of the baptised community.

While the United Church has struggled with the lack of clarity in its Basis of Union between "member" and "full member" there is no question as the two remits have shown, that a profession of faith is an integral part of this rite of initiation. But as noted in the World Council statements noted above, the rites of initiation, which also historically includes participation in the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist, are "taken at different points over an extended period of time." It is this extended period of time that points to the relationship of baptism, profession of faith and membership as fluid and varied depending on the particular needs of the community and of the time.

This model emphasizes that baptism brings the community into being as the body of Christ. But within the baptised community there are those who are at all stages of faith, those who have made a profession of faith through baptism, those who are on a journey of deepening faith, and those who desire only to align themselves with the mission and life of the community expressed in the affirmations of faith for membership. In other words, in this model, room is made for those who are held by the baptised community on their journey towards deeper and fuller expressions of discipleship. In doing so it mirrors the call of Jesus to his disciples, to come and follow me; a call that did not presume baptism, but invited them on a journey.

It affirms that baptism represents the universal and local dimensions of the church. The visible signs of the Kingdom of God at the local level are offered through "membership," locally defined by the community of faith in inclusive and invitational ways, and the "Professing Member" provision connects the local community of faith spiritually (with the baptismal ritual) and institutionally with the wider denominational and global church.

It seeks to hold up baptism at the heart of the community of faith; not as a bridge to participation and leadership, nor as a solely individualistic expression of faith, but rather as the declaration of the whole community that its members are journeying together in faith and discipleship.

And it therefore assists in recovering the importance of baptism and profession of faith in the life of the church; first in the basic affirmations that are part of being a member of a community of faith, and then in the invitation towards public profession. It moves profession of faith away from confirmation (or as some have said, the graduation model) towards a post-Christendom reality of decision for faith.

There are a wide range of biblical foundations for the model: the journey motifs in Genesis, John Wesley’s famous sermon (based on 2 Kings 10:15). “Is your heart right, as my heart is with your heart. If it is, give me your hand”; the gifts of the body (1 Corinthians 12); dry bones taking on flesh as a metaphor for membership (Ezekiel 37); “Come and see” (John 1:45); Jesus’ call of the disciples.

Participation (belonging) in a Community of Faith, together with the basic affirmations of faith, becomes the main criteria for entry into local church membership. The model welcomes participation and affirms that it is integrally linked to decision making (voting) and leadership (office holding). The expectations of preparation for profession of faith and baptism as well as the determination of which offices within a local community of faith require professing membership is left to the community itself. Professing membership, in this model, is upheld as a life decision for discipleship.

Finally, the flexibility offered by this model for membership and for associate membership, represents the long standing commitment of the United Church to be in partnership with all those who share our commitment to “mending the world.” It welcomes into our local communities of faith those who share our values and hopes. It witnesses to the church as a community which seeks allies where they can found for the sake of God’s work in the world.

## **MTU 1 FULL PARTICIPATION OF ADHERENTS IN ALL ASPECTS OF CONGREGATIONAL GOVERNANCE**

**Origin:** Burks Falls Pastoral Charge

**Financial Implications if known:** nil

**Staffing Implications if known:** this proposal will require limited staff time to prepare a remit—to amend *Manual* sections B.3.7.2 & B.3.7.3

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Manitou Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015):**

- a) **Enable active adherents of United Church congregations, on the approval of a majority of congregational members, to participate fully in the governance of their pastoral charges, including voting on spiritual as well as financial, administrative, and pastoral relations matters.**
- b) **Authorize a category 2 remit to test the will of the church with respect to this change.**

### **Background:**

Active adherents often experience a sense of full membership at their local United Church until an occasion arises when they are not permitted to vote. To transfer membership from an ancestral



congregation would be to unnecessarily turn one's back on an important part of their heritage and people.

The Annual Congregational meeting of Katrine United Church on February 9, 2014, voted unanimously to support the request that all active adherents of The United Church of Canada, have the ability to vote on all matters including Pastoral Relations that come before the church. This request assumes that a congregation's governing structure would decide who is an active adherent in any given congregation.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

- transmitted with concurrence by Katrine United Church (February 9, 2014)
- transmitted with concurrence by The Burks Falls Pastoral Charge (April 7, 2014)
- transmitted with concurrence by North Bay Presbytery (Nov. 22, 2014)
- transmitted with concurrence by Manitou Conference (May 2015)

**TOR 12 REVIEW OF BASIS OF UNION, SECTION 11**

**Origin:** Louise Mahood

**Financial Implications if known:** part of the mandate of an existing committee

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of funding:**

**Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council instruct its Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, or other appropriate group, to undertake a broad based and theological review of the Basis of Union part Eleven (11) which deals with the preamble and questions, posed as persons are ordained or commissioned, to ensure their continued relevancy and effectiveness as we move forward in support of our ministry leaders.**

**Background:**

From time to time in our 90 years the questions asked at ordination/commissioning have been amended to meet changes in our cultural and theological outlook. It is time to consider this again.

In light of dramatic changes, intentional and unintentional, currently underway in our church, we need to ensure that our future ministry leadership meets the challenge of change.

This action is requested in light of...

- the perception that there is a wide spectrum of theological outlook in our church;
- the perception that what is taught in our theological colleges is not always what is heard from our pulpits;
- recent events in London and Toronto Conferences relating to how particular ministry personnel publicly express their theological outlook; and

- our now more extensive “statement of doctrine,” in both prose and poetic form, all honoured deeply in our church.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

**MOTION BY: Louise Mahood/Karen Hilfman-Millson**

**MOTION**

**CARRIED.**

**HAM 5 REVIEW OF THE BASIS OF UNION, SECTION 11**

**Origin:** Hamilton Conference

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Hamilton Conference requests the 42nd General Council (2015):**

**instruct the Executive of the General Council to undertake a broad based and theological review of the Basis of Union part Eleven (11) which deals with the preamble and questions, posed as persons are ordained or commissioned, to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness as we move forward in support of our ministry leaders.**

**Background:**

From time to time in our 90 years the questions asked at ordination/commissioning have been amended to meet changes in our cultural and theological outlook. It is time to consider this again.

In light of dramatic changes, intentional and unintentional, currently underway in our church, we need to ensure that our future ministry leadership meets the challenge of change;

In light of the perception that there is a wide spectrum of theological outlook in our church;

In light of the perception that what is taught in our theological colleges is not always what is heard from our pulpits;

In light of recent events in London and Toronto Conferences relating to how particular ministry personnel publicly express their theological outlook;

In light of our now more extensive “statement of doctrine,” in both prose and poetic form, all honoured deeply in our church;

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT**

Hamilton Conference request the General Council to instruct its Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, or other appropriate group, to undertake a broad based and theological review of the Basis of Union part Eleven (11) which deals with the preamble and questions,

posed as persons are ordained or commissioned, to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness as we move forward in support of our ministry leaders.

offered by Paul Currie, Erie Presbytery

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

**ANW 5 JUSTICE WITHIN THE NEW COMPENSATION MODEL**

**Origin:** St. Paul Presbytery

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The St. Paul Presbytery proposes:**

**That the 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to address, as a matter of urgency, the justice issue caused by the differences in pension that will arise because of the New Compensation Model; and**

**That the General Council direct the Executive of the General Council to seek to redress this situation as a matter of urgency.**

**Background:**

The pension for ministry personnel is calculated at 140% of minimum salary. Under the old model of compensation the pension of the ministry personnel would not have been dependent on the locale of their ministry.

With the change to the New Compensation model the cost of living group in which the ministry has been assigned will largely determine the quantity of pension that will be received upon retirement. This means that those ministry personnel in smaller or rural contexts, or in those with a lower cost of living categorization, will receive a lower pension for the same faithful service at the end of their ministry. This means there will be an implicit disadvantage for ministry personnel to accept an appointment or call in the rural context. Also this will negatively impact the ability of small and/or rural Pastoral Charges and congregations to be competitive to attract and retain paid accountable ministry.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Presented by St. Paul Presbytery to the 84th Meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference. Transmitted with concurrence by Alberta and Northwest Conference to the 42nd General Council.

**BQ 5 CORRECTING THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF THE NOVEMBER 2010 APPROVED MATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE POLICIES PROPOSALS****Origin:** Westbrook United Church Bay of Quinte Conference**Financial Implications:** During approved maternity leaves and/or parental leaves, this proposal will reduce and/or nullify the negative monetary impacts of such leaves on the finances of small pastoral charges. If the costs are borne by the National Office in the form of an insurance plan benefit, there will be costs, yet to be determined.**Staffing Implications:** This initiative requires research and implementation time by the staff and members of various bodies including the Finance Committee and the Permanent Committee of the Ministry and Employment Policies and Services.**Source of Funding:** It is proposed that new funding for an Approved Maternity or Parental Leave be created and that the application for new funding be sent to the Ministry and Employment Services Unit.**The Pastoral Charge of Westbrook in Kingston proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) direct the Executive of the General Council to take active steps to correct the unintended consequences stemming from the implementation of the 2010 Approved Maternity and Parental Leave Policies.**

**Background:**

In November 2010, The United Church of Canada (UCC) approved maternity and parental leave policies. These policies supported employees of the United Church in their work and family life, and recognized “the unique situation brought about by new parenthood.”

The policies were aligned with government insurance plans and provided for a salary payment equal to 95 percent of an employee’s weekly rate of pay during the qualifying two-week period to receive maternity or parental leave benefits under the government insurance plan and for a salary top-up to 95 percent of an employee’s salary up to 15 weeks for maternity leave and up to 10 weeks for parental leave.

In approving these policies, the UCC sought to follow the best practices of Canadian employers who choose to support their employees in their choice to become parents and facilitated parental care of a new family member and the early bonding among all family members. Social science research over many decades had documented the benefits of maternity and parental leaves to families and to society more generally.

In approving these policies, the UCC honoured the sanctity of family life and demonstrated its commitment to be a good employer. These general goals conjoined with a commitment to serve affiliated pastoral charges and supported congregational life through faithful and effective ministry.

Anecdotal information, based on the recent experience of a small number of pastoral charges in Four Winds Presbytery suggests, however, that the implementation of the 2010 maternity and parental leave policies has had serious and unintended consequences for both ministry staff and pastoral charges. These included serious conflict within the pastoral charge—among members of

the pastoral charge and between ministry staff and the pastoral charge—before and/or during the employee’s leave and continuing on the employee’s return to work. Such conflicts have led to irreparably broken relationships within the pastoral charge and threatened the very survival of the pastoral charge.

A healthy relationship between a minister and his or her pastoral charge is a deeply personal one. That is why the news of a new baby is exciting not only to the prospective parent(s) but also for the pastoral charge. It is an event to be shared and celebrated. This excitement may be mitigated by the anticipated and inevitable disruptions in congregational life resulting from the absence of an employee who is seen as central to the ministry within the pastoral charge and its role in the larger community of faith.

Such natural concerns may be significantly aggravated, and potentially divisive, when the responsibility on the pastoral charge to pay salary top-up costs and 50 percent benefit costs for an employee on leave, in addition to salary and benefit costs for replacement personnel, are seen to threaten the financial viability and the very survival of the pastoral charge itself. For small congregations, particularly in rural and remote areas, what is seen as a personal cause for celebration is tempered by concern for the potential risk and loss of the pastoral community.

In many organizations, the salary and benefit costs incurred for employees on maternity and parental leave are carried by the central corporate unit. These costs distributed across the organization. In such situations the financial “risk” of these additional employee costs is borne by the full corporate entity on behalf of all employees across individual units. This reduces the vulnerability of any particular unit within the corporate entity to the sudden and significant demand on limited resources. In such organizations, this strategy functions like an insurance plan just as the Employment Insurance does. It provides benefits to anyone who experiences the “risk” of unemployment, including childbirth and new parenthood, through the contributions of all employees.

*\*\*In The United Church of Canada, the costs of a private and individual decision to choose to become a parent is currently and wholly borne by a smaller unit, the congregation/pastoral charge, regardless of its capacity to pay! Under the terms of a policy designed and implemented by the National Office, this is unfair and resentment may be directed to an employee whose private decision to become a parent requires the pastoral charge to solely bear the financial burden of this decision, whatever their capacity to do so, and carry on essential pastoral work.*

\*\*

In Four Winds Presbytery (the former Kingston Presbytery), members of the Ministry Facilitation Action Team (MFAT) share responsibility to support, oversee and mediate pastoral relations between called ministry staff and the lay leadership serving the pastoral charge. With deep sadness, the MFAT (Ministry Facilitation Action Team) has seen the painful and irreparable breakdown of pastoral relationships as the financial responsibility to meet often unbudgeted expenses for replacement staff is considered unfair and even punitive, when a minister chooses new parenthood and quite appropriately accesses the maternity and parental benefits to which they are entitled. In such cases, the pastoral charge finds itself in the position of dealing with a challenge for which it may have neither the tools nor the resources.

On December 9, 2014, the Ministry Facilitation Action Team (MFAT) received notice of a motion passed by Westbrook United Church. The motion approved at a meeting of the Official Board of the Westbrook pastoral charge on October 14, 2014, calls for:

consideration to be given to creating a financial assistance fund administered by the National Church, that would provide support to small congregations experiencing financial hardship during maternity or parental leaves of the ministry personnel. While the monetary issues are important, failure to recognize the human factors and the impact on the future of the church to support and mentor ministers of child-bearing/rearing years will have serious consequences such as:

1. The present system whereby small pastoral charges are solely responsible to pay these leaves is inherently unfair and stressful to both the congregation and the minister;
2. Continuance of the present system means that small congregations will be extremely reluctant to hire ministers of child-rearing or child-bearing years due to the financial hardship of paying both leave and pulpit supply/short-term appointment simultaneously,
3. It may restrict searches to older, retired ordained and designated lay ministers which would be a loss for those congregations of the vitality of a youthful minister, and therefore, furthermore, a loss to The United Church of Canada.

Knowing the circumstances which have prompted the Official Board of Westbrook United Church, the MFAT was very sympathetic to their request, and recognized the proposal that the National Office provide financial assistance to small congregations experiencing financial hardship during parental leaves of the ministry personnel is one possible option, to address a failing of the 2010 design and implementation of maternity and parental leave policies.

This proposal honours several important and complementary principles:

1. to act as a supportive, encouraging employer in order to support their ministry personnel,
2. to support UCC pastoral charges to serve members in their faithful communities of faith,
3. and lastly, to sustain and grow our church.

The Four Winds MFAT requests that Kingston Presbytery and the Bay of Quinte Conference recommend to the National Office and the next General Council that a change in its maternity and parental leave policies be undertaken, to reduce the financial obligation of small congregations during such leaves. This action will reduce the potential risk of conflict within pastoral charges/communities of faith, so that the church as a whole can satisfy its responsibilities to employees and the pastoral community.

#### **Intermediate Court Action:**

October 14, 2014 motion approved at a meeting of the Official Board of the Westbrook pastoral charge.

December 9, 2014, the MFAT (Ministry Facilitation Action Team) received notice of this motion passed by Westbrook United Church.

Moved by Tom Holmes, Seconded by Marg Goodwin  
That Bay of Quinte does not concur with this proposal: Carried

Moved by Paul Reid, Seconded by Marg Goodwin  
That this proposal be transmitted to General Council 42 with recommendation that there be a review of both policies. Carried

## **TOR 6 SHARING OF RESOURCES**

**Origin:** Toronto Conference Executive

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Executive of Toronto Conference proposes that:**

**The 42nd General Council (2015) adopt policies and procedures that allow for sharing of resources and greater financial equity across the church when church properties are sold.**

### **Background:**

In 2014 Toronto Conference convened a consultation on the use of assets realized from the sale of church property. Generally, when properties are sold within the Greater Toronto Area, the sale price can be in the millions of dollars. The consultation struggled with how these resources can be shared across the church when there is such a financial inequality between the various parts of the church.

The consultation recommended and the Conference Executive agreed that the General Council should consider a proposal to more faithfully distribute funds throughout the church in a manner that does not favour the Conferences and/or presbyteries that are financially wealthy because of their geographic location. The consultation suggested three routes to achieve this goal: an equalization program (have vs. have-nots); grants to allow other people from other Conferences to access from the wealthier Conferences; a national fund that all Conferences contribute to on the same percentage from the sale of property and then a larger decision-making group to decide how best to allocate.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Motion passed by Toronto Conference Executive (February 11, 2015) to forward proposal to Toronto Conference Annual Meeting.

Transmitted with concurrence by Toronto Conference.

## **M&O 12 RESOURCE SHARING**

**Originating Body:** Consistoire Laurentien

**Financial implications if known:** Unknown

**Staffing implications if known:** Unknown

**Source of Funding if known:**

**The Synode Montreal and Ottawa Conference proposes that:**

**the 42nd General Council:**

- 1) Adopt a clear principle for the sharing of human and property resources between wealthy and disadvantaged communities of faith at the national, regional and local levels;**
- 2) Create a task group to define the mechanisms for sharing and arbitration.**

### **Background:**

This is to ensure that the church itself lives and practises what it teaches about sharing and justice in accordance with the recorded witness of the first Christian communities:

*“All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.” Acts 2:44–47*

It is understood that the goal of the Comprehensive Review is first and foremost the renewal and transformation of our church. Such a transformation of both the spiritual and material dimensions cannot take hold unless it is founded on a basis of sharing as taught by Jesus and in the Gospels.

### **Intermediate Court Action:**

Consistoire Laurentien voted concurrence.

Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference voted concurrence.

## **HAM 7 INITIATING COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PROPERTY & MONIES HELD IN TRUST AT ALL LEVEL OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Origin:** Laurie White, Diaconal Minister, St. Andrew’s United Church, Hamilton, Ontario

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

**Proposed by Laurie White, Diaconal Minister, St. Andrew’s United Church, Hamilton, Ontario that:**



**When considering “United in God’s Work”—the Report of the Comprehensive Review—the 42nd General Council make the review process truly comprehensive by initiating a review of all financial and property holdings, in order to determine and recommend how these resources might be made available for the ongoing mission and ministry of The United Church of Canada.**

**Background:**

At the outset of the Comprehensive Review process, we were assured by Nora Sanders, General Secretary of the General Council of The United Church of Canada, that “everything would be on the table.” “Everything.”

Now, with the release of the final report, it seems that “everything” was not on the table, as there is no mention at all about property or financial resources held in trust by pastoral charges, presbyteries, Conferences or The United Church of Canada.

It appears that “everything” referred only to matters affecting personnel, and administrative structure.

There is no direction or insight, nor are there courageous recommendations, or creative leadership offered regarding how our United Church of Canada, at all levels, might faithfully use property and financial resources held in trust. There is no call or vision articulated regarding this. The report is disappointingly silent on this crucial issue. Now is the time to be bold, and truly put everything on the table.

**Intermediate Court Action:**

Hamilton Conference transmitted with concurrence

## Reports to the 42nd General Council 2015

### MODERATOR'S ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

**Origin: Gary Paterson, Moderator**

Soon, my time as Moderator will come to an end, and shortly after, I will be returning to my home congregation, St. Andrew's-Wesley, to once again engage in ministry "on the ground." It seems an apt moment to share with you some of what I have done and learned in the journey of the last three years.

I am grateful...for this United Church, now celebrating its 90th anniversary; for the call to be your Moderator, the opportunity to offer what I could for the well-being of this church; for the hundreds, no, thousands of faithful people I have met across the country, and around the world, filled with Spirit, gifts expressed in so many different ways.

On good days, it's easy to be thankful. But it is perhaps even more important to be grateful on the tough days, when we are tired; when worry about the future seems to hold the upper hand, and anxiety leaves us feeling cranky or despairing. As the 17th-century poet George Herbert has said:

*Thou who hast given so much to me,  
Give one thing more, a grateful heart...  
Not thankful, when it pleaseth me,  
As if thy blessings had spare days:  
But such a heart, whose pulse may be  
Thy praise.*

Change is constant, which means the church is always in crisis in one way or another. What is happening to the United Church, and to most, if not all, other denominations in North America, is part of a sea change in our society, our world. There is no quick fix; trust me on this.

I have laughingly said that in past times God sent locusts to wake us up but that nowadays God sends statistics. We are being called (and forced) into a new future. Hence my participation in the work of the Comprehensive Review—the challenges of structural change; the necessity of cutting our budget by some \$10–11 million; and above all, the dreams of a different way of being church.

We must both cherish the past and let it go. And that's not easy. Note this pattern in Isaiah 43:16–18, where verses describing the mighty acts of God in the liberation from Egypt are followed immediately by "*Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.*" So...we are called to remember how God has been with us in the past; to cherish our history; to lament and grieve what is passing away; and then...to let it go, whether that be liturgies, buildings, organs, or a paid, full-time congregational minister in every town.

Nevertheless, this is a time for hope. As the Bengali poet, Tagore, has said, *“Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark.”* And so, I have travelled across the country, singing about the light, the dawn, even though the darkness sometimes feels overwhelming—[commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca) (search “2015-03-21 GCE Workbook,” pages 31–34)—visited all 13 Conferences; attended innumerable events, gatherings, conferences, celebrations, and anniversaries; met with a multitude of congregations and their ministry leaders—urban, rural, and remote; small and large; thriving, and near closure. And over and over I have tried to balance hard words—“Wake up! Everything is changing—NOW! Perhaps half of our buildings will shut their doors in the next 10 years”—with words of encouragement, inviting people to see new possibilities, trusting that crucifixion and resurrection are intertwined...and true.

We are a big-tent denomination. I have spent time with post-theists and Cruxifusion members. I have celebrated with congregations when they became “Affirming,” and I have watched us struggle to understand our place in the multiethnic reality that is Canada. I have preached in French and shared in worship where nine different languages were offered up by members of the congregation. But I also know that we haven’t figured out what it means for us to be intercultural. I have met with people who feel our United Church is “too political” and those who are convinced we’re not doing enough. Some are hungry to rediscover what evangelism is all about; others are worried about what that might look like. But, for all our differences, we are committed to being a “united” church, and we want to understand each other, and strengthen each other. Part of my call has been to be a travelling Moderator who listens, who cross-pollinates, who tells stories from one congregation to people in another part of the country, who believes that our differences makes us stronger and richer. And when I can’t get there in person, I’ve done my best to get the message out with letters, articles, video-greetings, YouTube videos, and above all with my blog—over 160 postings...who knew!!

But we’re going to be smaller; that’s a fact. And as we find ourselves on the margins of power and influence, it might feel a lot like early church days, which could be exciting, a time of experimentation and new possibilities, where we live as salt, yeast, and mustard seed. As Jesuit Daniel Berrigan said, *“We stand on the brink of the unknown. Which is to say, that things are normal, and good, and permissive of joy.”*

During the last three years the text I have preached on most frequently comes from Isaiah 43—*“Thus says the LORD...I am about to do a new thing—now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”* Nobody knows what “the new thing” is, exactly—it’s been called the “Missional Church,” “Fresh Expressions,” the “Emerging/Emergent Church.” It’s why I and 100 ministry leaders attended Greenbelt in August 2013, to be part of a festival where 20,000 people were sharing their experiences and hopes for a new church. It’s why I have been excited by the various “Greenbelt follow-ups” that have occurred, such as “Cracks” at Ottawa; “Festimagouche” at Tatamagouche, the week after General Council ([www.festimagouche.ca](http://www.festimagouche.ca)); or “Skylight,” happening in Paris, Ontario, the week before General Council [www.skylightfestival.ca](http://www.skylightfestival.ca). It’s why we must continue to invest in and support ministry leadership, in both traditional and new expressions. It’s why “Chasing the Spirit” (or whatever we might end up calling it) is the first recommendation of the Comprehensive Review.

I'm convinced that poetry helps. You ask me for a presentation, a reflection, a sermon...and you're bound to end up hearing at least one poem. Here and there I've done workshops on poetry and faith. Metaphors—like salt, yeast, and mustard seeds—grab the imagination and take us to new places. So do images of...overburdened camels that can't get you through the desert alive ([www.gratefulness.org/poetry/lightening\\_the\\_road.htm](http://www.gratefulness.org/poetry/lightening_the_road.htm)); piranhas who turn out to be God's beloved children ([dianneastle.blogspot.ca/2014/05/piranha-prayer-by-evangeline-paterson.html](http://dianneastle.blogspot.ca/2014/05/piranha-prayer-by-evangeline-paterson.html)); weeds in a vacant lot that lead us into deep prayer ([www.goodreads.com/quotes/414333-praying-it-doesn-t-have-to-be-the-blue-iris-itLINK](http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/414333-praying-it-doesn-t-have-to-be-the-blue-iris-itLINK)); the thread you hold onto that saves your life ([www.goodreads.com/quotes/319729-the-way-it-is-there-s-a-thread-you-follow-it](http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/319729-the-way-it-is-there-s-a-thread-you-follow-it)).

I've even suggested that jazz is a metaphor for what we are about—God offers the melody of the gospel, and then asks us to improvise; God gives us our own instrument, and then asks us to play with others.

Spending time with the youth and young adults of our church also helps. I've had the opportunity to be part of several Conference Youth Events: British Columbia's Evolve, London Youth Forum, Toronto's Teen Camp, Worshiplude in Ottawa, Maritime Youth Forum; other youth gatherings in Manitou, Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario, Bay of Quinte, Montreal and Ottawa, and at the Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering; and National Events such as Connections (Camping), Rendez-vous, and Youth Forum. Not just the church of the future, but the church right now, with vibrancy, enthusiasm, and hopefulness! I want to take that energy and sprinkle it across the church. Let's always remember how important it is to support youth ministry.

Because this has been a triennium where we have focused on what it means to be church, there have been frequent conversations about how we will engage in the mission to which God calls us, the ministry of loving neighbour and neighbourhood, the work of peace and justice. What does it mean to have less power, and to know that government pays little attention to what we think and that the media isn't particularly interested in what we have to say unless it's publicly controversial or scandalous? How do we live with the reality that there will be fewer resources for staff and research?

Well, we know that this work flourishes when it is local and contextual, and owned by members of congregations and communities of faith. Networks will become increasingly important. Likewise, partnerships with other denominations and ecumenical organizations; and with non-church groups who are equally committed to the work of changing the world. But we also know, from experience, that staff support is necessary for the long haul, particularly for national and global issues. So how do we find the balance?

I have visited many of our urban ministries across the country, from Victoria to St. John's; met with global partners in Colombia and Cuba; talked to people engaged in the pressing challenge of saving the earth...climate change, fossil fuels, environmental degradation, species extinction; have had conversation with those calling attention to the deep injustices in the land of Israel and Palestine; and have been present at gatherings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

How do we establish priorities? As Archbishop Romero once said:

*We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.  
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,  
An opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.*

I am grateful to have been able to participate in a number of events with Aboriginal people—from ceremonies in Bella Coola where residential school survivors were honoured; to the gathering of Keewatin Presbytery; to intimate listening circles during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission events in Vancouver and Edmonton and elsewhere; to our church's Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering. My understanding of the broken relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people has moved from head to heart. I am certain that how Canada travels the road to reconciliation will define who we are as a country, and I believe that our church has a particular call to take leadership in this journey—for justice for Aboriginal peoples; for our own healing; and for the well-being of this country.

And yes, let me say again, I am grateful. And since we embrace an incarnational faith, let me be specific and concrete. Grateful for Sue Fortner, my Administrative Assistant, who kept my life as organized as possible these past three years; for General Secretary Nora Sanders, a colleague of patient and faithful wisdom; for the staff at the General Council Office, dedicated and creative; for John Lawson (chair) and the members of my Advisory Committee, who helped shape my ministry as Moderator; for the members of the General Council Executive, who meeting by meeting held the well-being of the church in their prayers and decisions. And I offer endless thanks for The United Church of Canada—may we remain faithful to Jesus Christ, whose body we are.

The Right Rev. Gary Paterson  
41st Moderator of The United Church of Canada

## **MODERATOR’S ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE 42ND GENERAL COUNCIL CORNER BROOK**

It is the mandate of the Moderator’s Advisory Committee (MAC) to “provide advice, support and assistance to the Moderator in fulfilling the duties of the office most effectively” (*Manual* 3.17).

It has been the great privilege of the MAC Committee to accompany our Moderator, Gary Paterson, on this three-year marathon that is the Moderator’s journey from Ottawa to Corner Brook, Newfoundland, and the dozens and dozens of places in between. We have marveled at Gary’s great stamina and boundless energy. His heart’s desire is to say “Yes!” to every invitation that came from every United Church across the land—and our gentle reminder that we felt part of our mandate was to ensure that he made it to the finish line healthy in body, mind, and spirit! Each time we met, we witnessed Gary’s deep passion and love for this United Church and the offering of his best leadership ability in this time of transition and comprehensive review. Most of all we witnessed up close his deep Christian faith and call to offer spiritual leadership to our United Church, “quickening in the hearts of the people a sense of God as revealed in Christ, and heartening and strengthening the whole United Church.” (*Manual* 511)

Each Moderator tends to use the MAC Committee in different ways that works for them. We met eight times over the Moderator’s mandate. The rhythm that we worked out was to meet face-to-face for several days each year and supplemented these meetings with conference calls. In each of these meetings we were privileged to listen to the joys and challenges Gary experienced in his role as Moderator and then to pause and explore in a deeper way those areas that Gary needed to ponder and where he needed to hear different perspectives and points of view. Bible stories and poetry always flowed through these conversations. And we were always privileged to join in prayer—with so many others across the church—to pray for Gary in his leadership role, for his family, and for our church.

As Chair I met quite regularly with Gary and Sue Fortner, Administrative Assistant to the Moderator, to consider Gary’s agenda in some detail. In this detailed work, I wish to knowledge with deep gratitude Tim Stevenson, Gary’s spouse, who was most helpful in so many ways but especially helping Gary keep a healthy home/work balance. (By the way, this is an almost impossible task for the Moderator! It is important for us as a church to remember the cost on the family that this Office demands.)

One of the important tasks of the Moderator is to have an extended (six-day) visit to each of the 13 Conferences of our church. Very early in Gary’s mandate we met with the Executive Secretaries from all the Conferences, and they were very frank and forthcoming about what they needed. It was evident that there was “no one-size-fits-all” type of visit. On behalf of the Moderator and the MAC Committee, I would like to extend our thanks to all the Executive Secretaries who did so much to shape, arrange, welcome, and in many cases, act as chauffeur and guide for the Moderator in exploring this wonderful church of ours in their context.

This Committee is made up of a combination of staff and lay/ministry members. The staff has to be there—but they were with us with amazing grace, diligence, and full attention. Mary Frances

Denis always offered sage advice. Nora Sanders, in the midst of a myriad of duties and responsibilities, offered her full attention, solid direction, clarity, and wisdom that came out of an alive and vibrant faith. And finally deepest thanks to Sue Fortner, Administrative Assistant to the Moderator, who has faithfully worked with three Moderators and MAC Committees and has been “Den Mother” to us all. To all the other members of the MAC Committee who shared of their time and wisdom and faith—I wish to offer deepest thanks.

Finally I offer thanks to God for the inspired and faith-filled leadership of our Moderator, Gary Paterson, and this journey we were privileged to share with him.

And since none of our meeting were ever complete without poetry...a poem for Gary and for the readers of this report:

*Not knowing when the dawn will come  
I open every door;  
Or has it feathers like a bird,  
Or billows like a shore?  
Emily Dickinson (1830–86)*

John Lawson, Chair

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the MAC Committee

Gary Paterson (Moderator)  
Marion Best (Former Moderator)  
Mary-Frances Denis (Program Coordinator, Media and Public Relations)  
Susan Fortner (Administrative Assistant to the Moderator)  
Hannah Lee (Member)  
Martha Pedoniquotte (Member)  
Nora Sanders (General Secretary, General Council)  
Michael Shewburg (General Council Rep)

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT****Origin: General Secretary, General Council***Behold, I make all things new.*

—Revelation 21:5

I hold this scripture passage in my heart as I reflect on the past three years and look ahead to implementing the decisions you will make in August at the 42nd General Council. These words tell us God continues to create and call the church into new ways of being. They remind us that God is at the heart of this transformation and recall our Creed, which tells us, “We are not alone, we live in God’s world.”

These hopeful words speak to me especially at this time in the life of The United Church of Canada. This is a challenging time to be in church leadership. Like many denominations, the United Church is struggling to adjust to declining membership, volunteer resources, finances, and influence. But our shared faith that God continues to work in the world is a source of strength and hope that helps me—and I hope all of you who will serve as commissioners to the General Council—see new possibilities in these uncertain times. May we open ourselves to one another and the Holy Spirit as we discern together where God is calling us.

A time when the focus is on structure and process would not have been my choice of times to serve in church leadership. I would rather serve in a time when the focus was on renewal of our faith in ways that speak to current and coming generations. Maybe you feel the same way. And yet here we are, called to leadership in these times. I pray that together we can ensure that, even as decisions about structures and finances occupy us, we will remember that these things exist to support our calling to serve others and to share the good news of Jesus Christ in the world.

God’s promise to make all things new includes our church—his church—and the faith we live and share.

As I write this report in preparation for the 42nd General Council, I share news of my own work, as well as the work of all of the staff colleagues who serve with me. This report is an overview of some of the work the General Council Office has done on your behalf over the past three years. Further details are available in the accountability reports I shared with the Executive of the General Council during the triennium, which were published in the workbook for each Executive meeting. You can find them at [commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca) (search “General Council Executive”).

**The Work of the General Council Office**

Those of you who have visited the General Council Office in Toronto have met the dedicated members of our staff and seen at least some of what we do. But in a church as diverse and geographically spread out as ours, it is sometimes helpful to let you know about the work our office does because so much of it, while crucial to the church, is not always visible.

This list of things that staff of the General Council Office do is not in any particular order, and is by no means complete:

- support the Moderator, including coordinating the Moderator’s visits across the church



- create, share, and facilitate worship resources, including Lenten resources and online Bible studies
- develop public statements on issues of key concern
- collect and analyze church statistics and publish the *Year Book*
- support the work of living into right relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples
- process pre-authorized remittance givings to local congregations and the Mission & Service Fund
- facilitate events—like Rendez-vous, for celebration, learning, and mission
- set standards and policies for United Church camps and incorporated ministries
- provide technical advice and problem-solving support to congregations around finance, CRA compliance, insurance, and organizational change
- support congregational stewardship and raise money for the Mission & Service Fund, which supports the work we do as a denomination
- work with communities of faith to imagine and develop new ministries
- develop and nurture ecumenical and interfaith relationships and work with global partners
- communicate the work and priorities of the church through the denominational website, social media, and print publications
- administer payroll and benefits for ministry personnel and lay employees
- administer our pension fund and ensure it is invested wisely and responsibly
- support Conferences, pastoral charges, and ministers in questions about and supporting healthy local pastoral relations between ministers and congregations
- support the policies that help to ensure safe and healthy local ministries
- call and support members preparing for ministry and coming to the United Church from other denominations in Canada and around the world.
- research, design, and test new and effective ways to support local congregations and their ministers.
- work with Conferences to coordinate work across the church
- support and plan meetings of the General Council and its Executive, the Aboriginal Ministries Council, and denominational committees and task groups

Even after three rounds of staff cuts (sadly, since I have been here, in the first year after each General Council), it's amazing what gets accomplished. I am grateful for all my colleagues at the General Council Office and Conference offices, who contribute so much to the life of our church. The relationships within the Staff Leaders group—composed of the General Council Office management group and Conference executive secretaries and speaker—have been particularly important to me as we have prayed together, and struggled together with the difficult issues that our church faces. Our church is truly blessed by the dedication and loyalty of staff, especially in the face of continuing change and uncertainty.

### **These Times of Change**

Much of our work at the General Council Office over the past three years has been focused on resourcing visioning and planning processes around the future of the church.

The largest and most complex of these processes was the Comprehensive Review, which culminated in *United in God's Work*, a report you will consider and make decisions about in August. Supporting the Comprehensive Review Task Group was a big focus of my work this triennium as it engaged the church in an unprecedented conversation about the future and undertook the huge task of reviewing church structures and processes. I particularly want to thank the seven members of the task group who, along with the Moderator, brought their wisdom, commitment, and countless volunteer hours to the task of reimagining our church. They are true servants of the church who have given up so much to do this work on our behalf. I would also like to thank General Council and Conference staff who supported the task group by offering research, expertise, logistical assistance, and hospitality to the task group.

Having supported the task group as they did their work, my role shifted when their report was completed and released. As General Secretary, it is now my role to encourage engagement with the report across The United Church of Canada, and to ensure that Commissioners have full scope to work with it and consider changes as they come to the General Council to make decisions.

Even after over two years of consultation and discernment, the Comprehensive Review Task Group's recommendations offer broad themes for change. If these changes or variations of them are approved, there will still be many details to be filled in during the implementation phase. I am committed to undertaking this work, with staff colleagues, and with advice and direction from the Executive, and from all courts of the church.

While much of the task group's work focused on nurturing new ministries and developing more agile structures, it also recognized a fundamental imperative: the need to bring our spending in line with our revenue. Whatever decisions are made about our church structures, we are headed for change. With the Permanent Committee on Finance projecting a cumulative deficit of almost \$20 million over the next three years if no steps are taken, it has become clear that we will need to begin to address our financial challenges even before decisions around the Comprehensive Review report and any other related proposals can be finalized and implemented. That's why the Executive of the General Council in March approved in principle a proposal to move to a balanced budget by 2018 at the latest and has directed me to work with the Permanent Committee on Finance to bring to the November 2015 Executive meeting budget plans that will achieve that goal. Our best thinking at this time is that these plans would include reducing grant programs in 2016, initiating planning for staff reductions, reducing travel and governance budgets, and eliminating Conference operating grants by 2018, with the exception of All Native Circle Conference. For more information, please see the report of the Permanent Committee on Finance.

At a time when we know some changes will involve loss, God continues to help us to see opportunities. One of those opportunities lies in strengthening our relationships with other denominations as an expression and extension of our ecumenical and uniting traditions. You will have before you at this General Council meeting three historic proposals; these are a first for the United Church. You are being asked to approve three new relationships that will bring us closer to ecumenical partners: a full communion agreement with the United Church of Christ (USA) and mutual recognition of ministry agreements with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of

Korea and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. All of these, which are the culmination of several years of work, show our commitment to unity as the body of Christ, and offer opportunities for new or richer relationships at all levels of the church.

During this triennium, we have been living into the decision of the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council to enter into another form of ecumenical relationships, a form that is new to our denomination. The Executive has approved Associate Relationships with the Ghana Methodist church, The Methodist Church of the Caribbean and Americas, and the Methodist Church of Zimbabwe. These relationships provide connection with migrant churches, while respecting their desire to maintain their own identity and connection to their denomination in the country of origin.

There are other possibilities for new ways of working with others. Recognizing that many congregations are already involved in Habitat for Humanity projects, we have begun discussions with Habitat about a national partnership to support these relationships. These discussions, which are in early stages, are built on the recognition of common goals of service to others, and the benefits to both organizations of offering church members the opportunity for “hands on” work in service of others, using organizational structures for volunteer involvement that Habitat already has in place.

Also looking to the future, we continue to implement and experiment with a range of technologies to communicate and meet more effectively and efficiently. Perhaps our most visible achievement in this area is the launch of the new denominational websites en français ([www.egliseunie.ca](http://www.egliseunie.ca)), and the coming new English site ([www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca)), which will enhance our ability to serve both English- and French-speaking members and seekers by making content more engaging, easier to find, and accessible on tablets and cellphones.

We are also using technology more and more for education, discussion, and spiritual nurture. Some of you may have participated in webinars hosted by EDGE: A Network for Ministry Development, United in Learning, “Rock the Bible,” our second annual online Lenten Bible study; or the series of live online discussion forums the Comprehensive Review Task Group hosted to engage the church in discussions about the future. We are also using technology to meet over distances. In this triennium, the 41<sup>st</sup> General Council reconvened electronically to deal with a few items of routine business. At this General Council meeting, we have moved increasingly to electronic workbooks instead of paper, and are live-streaming the meeting for people across the church who want to follow the proceedings. And we are looking at the possibility of beginning the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council with an electronic session a year early in 2017 to approve the results of any remits that you may authorize.

Even as some ministries struggle or close, new life and growth are present in many parts of our church. I’m excited about the initiative that has created “The Hope Collection” as a place to celebrate these, and learn from their experiences. [www.hopecollection.ca](http://www.hopecollection.ca)

As we move into the next three years, may we bring hopeful eyes to the possibilities ahead. Perhaps we can experience the inevitability of change as an opportunity to try new things.

### **Responsible Investment**

During this triennium, a Responsible Investment Reference Group created to consider issues and provide advice to all three investing bodies of the denomination nationally (United Church of Canada treasury fund, the United Church Pension Board, and United Church Foundation). Although each has some different considerations because of different legal and fiduciary obligations, the shared Reference Group strengthens the sense of shared principles.

It hasn't just been a matter of studying these issues: the church has been engaged in various forms of advocacy and shareholder engagement as well. We were the first denomination in Canada to become a signatory to UN PRI (UN Principles of Responsible Investment), have partnered with SHARE (Shareholder Association for Research and Education), have written letters to government leaders, and have had representatives speaking up at corporate annual meetings.

### **Major Reports**

This has been a busy triennium, and you will see elsewhere in this workbook the results of other work the General Council Office has supported over the past three years. This work includes reports and proposals on:

- one order of ministry
- a new understanding of membership
- a competency-based assessment system for candidates for ministry
- the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project
- Candidacy Pathway

Each of these reports is the culmination of several years of committee and staff work and in some cases would result in significant changes in our understanding and processes. But I believe each is also a faithful response to our current realities and deserves your consideration and prayer.

### **Living Faithfully in the World**

General Council Office staff continued over the triennium to support and animate the church's social justice priorities. Staff likely spent more time on measures related to peace and justice for Israel and Palestine, including the "Unsettling Goods" campaign, than on any other justice work coming out of the 41st General Council. This work is well begun, but far from complete: at its March meeting, the Executive directed that the work flowing from the Israel/Palestine report and motion at GC41, including deepening and strengthening relationships with the Jewish community guided by the United Church resource *Bearing Faithful Witness*, continue until 2018.

During the triennium, staff also coordinated a number of emergency appeals to raise money for situations of urgent need, including Syrian refugees, the Ebola crisis in west Africa, South Sudan, and Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. I am writing this report just days after the earthquake in Nepal, and already United Church members have contributed generously to support the efforts of ACT Alliance, the ecumenical body we are part of to coordinate response to these major events.

I also want to lift up the fine work of the United Church Women (UCW) in addressing issues of social justice, both in Canada and around the world. The UCW marked its 50th anniversary by raising \$268,956 to fund maternal health training programs in Tanzania that are helping to lower death rates related to pregnancy and childbirth. I have in my office a beautiful rag doll, made by former UCW President Beverly Greene as part of the Alberta UCW Child Well-Being Initiative, a campaign that has been raising awareness about child poverty in Alberta since 2007. Both these initiatives demonstrate the leadership that the UCW provides our church as its members live out in very practical ways the four tenets: Christian witness, study, fellowship, and service.

### **Partner Council**

The United Church is privileged to have the accompaniment of the Partner Council, which is made up of representatives of global and Canadian partners. These partners help us understand that we are a part of a larger global context. Their wisdom and counsel have been a tremendous gift. After exposure to the church's work in right relations, the Partner Council has encouraged us to make choices that could even mean decreased funding to global partners, in order to continue our commitment to right relations. We look forward to the insights of Partner Council members who will be in Corner Brook with us in August.

### **Affirming Ministries**

The 41st General Council directed me to lead the Executive of General Council and the General Council staff in the "Affirming Ministry" study program, and to bring a report and recommendation to the 42nd General Council. We did not use the "Affirming Ministries Study Program" (which is the formal program of Affirm United), because it is designed for faith communities who will be deciding whether to become Affirming; a program was designed in consultation with Affirm United. We were grateful for the assistance of Bruce Hutchinson as a member of Affirm United and a former member of the General Council Executive. The executive had opportunities at each meeting for learning and reflection on what it means to be truly affirming. This and other intercultural lenses were lifted up during both educational times and decision making throughout the triennium.

I recommend that further opportunities be included in the work of the next and successive executives. In the final session, executive members were asked to make suggestions for further things that could be done to demonstrate the Executive's commitment to the affirming process, and these will be considered by the Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda as they plan for the work of the next Executive. I am not recommending other formal steps at this time. The Executive is not a faith community in the way that a congregation is, nor a collection of faith communities, as a presbytery or Conference is, but is a subset of a larger body, the General Council, and is therefore governed by the decisions of the General Council, which has spoken clearly on this topic.

The staff of the General Council Office also took part in an educational process, in their case an in-house workshop about gender identity and sexuality. This workshop included information about the differences and connections between gender and sexuality and best practices for making an environment that affirms individuals of all gender identities and sexualities, with a particular focus on transgender experiences and preferred personal pronouns. All of us who serve as staff of the General Council Office are bound by the decisions and policies of the General

Council, so this process was geared towards growing and learning together as a community, and included exercises to help us explore how to give and receive apologies. It is my intention that we will continue to give staff learning opportunities to equip them to understand and live out this and other priorities of the General Council. If General Council approves the proposal for a “Living Apology” process, staff of the General Council Office will be encouraged to engage with that. In this triennium, we also had a review of the General Council Office Human Resource policies in light of affirming principles. Our policies meet all legislated requirements of a work place and are broadly inclusive and accessible. I do not recommend other formal steps at this time.

### **Right Relations**

After six years of work, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is to release its final report on June 2nd, and I, along with the Moderator and a considerable group of United Church people, will be attending the closing events in Ottawa. This will represent the end of the formal work of the Commissioners in acknowledging and documenting the experiences, impacts, and consequences of residential schools for former students, and raising awareness among all Canadians about the legacy of this shameful part of our history.

One of those Commissioners, Dr. Marie Wilson (who is also a member of the Yellowknife United Church), will be present at General Council to report on the work that has been done and on all that remains to be done for reconciliation to become a reality. As one of the parties to the Settlement Agreement, the United Church has committed to continuing to work together with the other parties (churches, government, and Aboriginal groups) to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations, as we strive to live out our apologies and live into right relations.

### **Youth Forum**

Following the successful Rendez-vous event in Winnipeg last summer, I am excited about this year’s new format for Youth Forum. The combination of the winter session (which I attended a little bit of) in February, involving a larger number of youth, the Pilgrimage across Canada this summer with one young person from each Conference, and the participation with youth commissioners from each Conference in the main body of General Council in Corner Brook, offers wonderful opportunities to youth participants and to the United Church as a whole. Given the significance of the decisions about the future of the United Church that this General Council will make, these youth voices will be especially important.

By the time we gather in Corner Brook, many of you will have encountered the youth Pilgrims on their way across Canada, and we will all benefit from the insights that they bring to General Council.

### **The Manual**

The 41st General Council approved a major overhaul to *The Manual*, and in this triennium the feedback on the new, simpler, clearer, less restrictive *Manual* has been very positive. The Manual Committee has recommended only a few small “tidying up” changes for consideration at this General Council.

Aussi, je suis heureuse que le Manuel soit maintenant disponible en français ([www.egliseunie.ca](http://www.egliseunie.ca)). C'est la première fois qu'une telle ressource complète est disponible et ce sera un outil important pour les délégués francophones et bilingues au Conseil général 42, et les membres de l'église en général. La traduction a été possible grâce aux efforts de Judith Bricault (traductrice) et de Fred Braman (réviseur juridique). Merci à eux.

(Also, I am pleased that *The Manual* is now available in French ([www.egliseunie.ca](http://www.egliseunie.ca)). It is the first time that such a complete resources has been available, and it will be an important tool for the francophone and bilingual commissioners of the 42nd General Council and members of the church generally. Judith Bricault did the translation and Fred Braman reviewed the legal terminology. Thank you to them.

### **Remits**

One of my responsibilities at General Council is to report formally on the results of the remits authorized by the 41st General Council 2012 and 2013. There were nine remits conducted during the past triennium. Eight of the remits have been approved by a majority of the presbyteries. The voting results are included in the proposal that I have brought to this 42nd General Council for enactment of these eight remits.

### **Rulings**

The General Secretary is also responsible for “ruling on questions about the polity, procedures, and practice of the United Church.” The following rulings were given during the past triennium:

- |          |              |   |
|----------|--------------|---|
| 13-001-R | Jan 15, 2013 | Including Names of Respondents Under SAPRPP in Presbytery Minutes |
| 12-002-R | Nov 21, 2013 | Fee for Conference Annual Meeting                                 |
| 14-001-R | Oct 7, 2014  | Oversight re: Mandatory Racial Justice and Boundaries Training    |

### **United Church Foundation**

I serve on the board of the United Church Foundation, and am pleased to report to you that the United Church and its Foundation, while separate entities, are working together to serve the interests of our beloved denomination. During this triennium, \$29.2 million of trusts and endowments were transferred by the United Church to be held and managed by the Foundation, lifting up the principle that the Foundation would have responsibility for the “forever funds” that support future as well as current activities of the church.

### **Location of 43rd General Council**

I am delighted that the Executive has accepted an invitation from Bay of Quinte Conference and All Native Circle Conference to hold the 43rd General Council (2018) at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology and Durham College in Oshawa, Ontario. Bay of Quinte has not hosted a General Council since 1968, and All Native Circle Conference has never hosted a General Council. Due to scheduling issues at the host site, the Council will be held in July rather than August 2018.

## **Final Word**

As this triennium comes to a close, I want to express my gratitude to all those who have supported the work we do together on behalf of the church. In particular, I would like to thank:

- Moderator Gary Paterson, who has inspired me and the church with his visionary and energetic leadership.
- the elected members of the Executive of the General Council and the committees and task groups of the General Council, who have offered their expertise and time to support the work of the church.
- all the members who have served on my supervision committee during this triennium, (Colin Phillips, Nobuko Iwai, Mary Laidlaw, Anna Stewart, Patricia Hassard, Sybil Wilson, and the late Alvin Dixon), who have offered invaluable guidance and encouragement to me over the past three years. I would particularly like to thank John Young, whose term on the committee is ending after six years, including the past three as chair. I am grateful for John's faithful leadership, wise counsel, dedication, and unwavering friendship.
- staff colleagues who serve with such competence and commitment through changing times.

I also want to thank all the faithful people across the church who have held me and staff of the General Council Office in prayer, encouraged us, and challenged us. It is a great privilege to serve you and the church we love during these times of change and opportunity.

Nora Sanders  
General Secretary



## **EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

### **Origin: Moderator, General Secretary, and Chairs of Permanent Committees**

The Executive of the General Council has met seven times this triennium. The first meeting was a very brief one right after the end of the 41st General Council to welcome the new Moderator and appoint a Sub-Executive for any necessary business arising before the first full meeting of the Executive in November 2012. One of the Executive meetings, in November 2013, also coincided with a brief General Council Meeting, marking the first time General Council had gathered partly in person and partly through electronic means. The minutes of the Executive meetings have been shared with the church through Web postings throughout the triennium and can be found at [commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca) (search “General Council Executive”).

The single largest commitment of time for this Executive has been to engage with the work of the Comprehensive Review Task group, which was appointed by the Executive in November 2012, as directed by the 41st General Council. The Task Group reported and received feedback at each subsequent Executive meeting. Each of the permanent committees also offered advice or considered the work of the Comprehensive Review Task Group as it related to their own areas of responsibility, knowing that all areas of the church’s life will be affected by major structural decisions.

During this triennium, all committees gained experience in doing some of their work electronically, instead of always meeting in person, as a way of exercising greater financial and environmental responsibility. The following notes offer other highlights of the Executive’s work as offered by the permanent committees and the Aboriginal Ministries Council.

#### **Permanent Committee on Finance**

Members of the Finance Committee continually repeat the mantra that “financial resources are tools to accomplish our mission.” This committee’s role is to enable elected members to have a clear understanding of finances in order to enhance their decision-making. Thus, throughout this term, the committee used these principles to guide its work:

1. Ground ourselves theologically.
2. Provide clarity in a concise manner.
3. Focus on the future.
4. Recognize that we are being called to do things differently.

#### ***Budget Management and Clarity in Reporting***

The triennium began with the realization that it was necessary to effect major reductions in expenditures in order to live within our means. We continue to face the reality of declining revenues. This required difficult decisions by the Executive of the General Council. As the triennium closes, we are able to report that operating projections and expenses were maintained at target levels throughout the triennium with the help of above-historical-average investment returns. The committee also oversaw a staff process that made adjustments to the reporting systems so that there is great transparency. In particular, there is greater clarity in reflecting the use of reserves as well as report investment income. We also adjusted our practices on the use of bequests in order to invest a portion of these bequests for the long-term benefit of the church.

Significant cost reduction is still required over the coming triennium no matter what the outcome of restructuring proposals.

### ***Philanthropy***

The Finance Committee has made it a priority to focus on philanthropy. Research at the grassroots level offered important insights, both encouraging and challenging. While we have a strong “brand” as a church both locally and nationally, there is sometimes confusion about how our funds are used. This understanding is helpful in guiding strategies to support revenue generation at a local and national level. A new five-week stewardship program for congregations has been developed, providing all of the resources needed for congregational stewardship and Mission & Service giving—to inspire, to ask, and to thank. In addition, Mission & Service giving programs have been strengthened and significantly refined over the triennium to focus on increasing participation.

The transfer of \$29 million in trust and endowment assets from the General Council Treasury to the United Church Foundation—along with increased donations to the Foundation, strong investment returns, and sound management—has placed the Foundation in a strong position, with over \$56 million in assets under management as of March 31, 2015. This is an increase of \$51.5 million from March 31, 2012. This positions the Foundation to support all long-term giving and enabled it become financially self-sufficient.

### ***Responsible Investment***

The Finance Committee continues to support the values of socially responsible investment. Through our ongoing relationship with SHARE, as well as through establishing an advisory committee for both the General Council and the Foundation, it has been possible to engage in a number of issues, specifically excessive executive compensation; climate change, free and informed consent of Indigenous peoples, and human rights concerns. The church became the first denomination in Canada to become a signatory to the United Nation’s Principles of Responsible Investment and is actively pursuing carbon reduction advocacy—both politically and in our investment process.

### ***Other Finance Work***

The Finance Committee continued to receive updates on the General Council Office relocation, to receive results from internal and governmental audits, to consider efforts to improve information technology, to restore the nationally funded Directors’ and Officers’ Umbrella Liability Insurance, and to monitor loan guarantees.

The Finance Committee reminds commissioners to be particularly cognizant of financial affordability and staffing implications when considering the proposals before this General Council.

### ***Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda***

The role of Governance and Agenda is to assist in developing and refining structures, policies, and procedures to facilitate the work of the General Council and its Executive to enable the church to carry out our role in God’s mission.

## ***Governance***

The committee worked to improve governance processes by

- reviewing **decision-making processes**, including refining the proposal process; exploring consensus decision-making with Programs for Mission and Ministry; approving the use of technology to reconvene GC41 electronically to deal with authorizing remits; and approving the use of clickers for voting at General Council 42
- reviewing final revisions to the administrative sections of ***The Manual*** and the **handbooks** authorized by the 41st General Council to complete the process of making ***The Manual*** more accessible and simple
- Providing guidance and advice on a number of **polity issues**, including committee restructuring and membership for Programs for Mission and Ministry; election of youth commissioners in light of the new Youth Forum program; and number and distribution of commissioners to the 42nd General Council, ensuring francophone presence and participation of intercultural observers
- recommending approval of a new **conflict of interest policy** for Conferences, presbyteries, and pastoral charges prepared by the Manual Committee

## ***Work from the 41st General Council***

The committee provided **oversight of the work** sent from the 41st General Council to ensure that work was distributed appropriately and to monitor progress on individual projects. As mandated by the 41st General Council, this committee focused **governance education** on Becoming an Intercultural Church and Living as an Affirming Body in an effort to expand our perspectives and understandings and examine our behaviour and attitudes, both individually and as a body.

## ***Meeting Management***

Position descriptions were developed for individuals assuming leadership roles at executive meetings (e.g., Table Group facilitator, Friend in Court, Music Leadership, Theological Reflector, Chaplain, Reference in Council, Sessional Chair); lighter meals and snacks were introduced; and we tried out the process of using a webinar to provide governance education prior to face-to-face meeting.

## **Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services**

The interconnected projects under the oversight of the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services are described below under headings that lift up the broad themes of the work prayerfully and faithfully engaged in this triennium.

## ***Discerning and Calling Forth***

The Executive received a number of reports that both respond to work from previous General Councils and fundamentally reshape the way in which ministry is understood in The United Church of Canada. The report from the Candidacy Pathways pilot projects culminates nine years of program development, testing in three Conferences (British Columbia, Bay of Quinte, and Manitou), and the work of St. Andrew's College in the equipping phase. (See the Candidacy

Pathways Report, pages 667–675.) The Committee also developed a series of recommendations on Diaconal Ministry that the Executive adopted. They respond to proposals from the 41st General Council 2012, which address issues relating to the processes and policies in place to support this stream of ministry. These may be found in the Executive meeting minutes from November 2014.

### ***Educating and Equipping***

The committee recommended to the Executive that inquirers, during the discernment process, be encouraged to undertake a financial consultation on the affordability of ministry training and lifestyle. Candidates will also be required to contact the Employee and Family Assistance Program during internship for a consultation on debt, living expenses, salary potential, etc.

### ***Supporting and Supervising***

The Executive received regular reports on the progress of the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships testing that occurred throughout the triennium in nine Conferences. (See the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships Report, pages 657–666.) The authorization from the 41st General Council 2012 to test different means of oversight and discipline, pastoral relations, and mission enhancement resulted in a number of different creative expressions of support and accountability for ministry personnel and communities of faith to respond to directions on polity and structure emerging from the 42nd General Council 2015, the Executive proposes to the Council that the testing continue and the results inform the development of new policies coming out of decisions of this Council.

### ***Policy Updates***

The Executive updated and approved the following:

- Staff Associate transition policy
- Licensed Lay Worship Leaders and Congregational Designated Ministers policy
- Human Resource policies
- Admissions policy and procedures
- Interim Ministry policy and procedures
- Sabbatical Leave policy and procedures, including for Interim Ministers
- Gender Transitioning Healthcare Spending Account policy
- Compensation for Supervised Ministry Experience
- Discontinued Service List clarity for reporting and recording
- Disability policy and procedures
- Financial Assistance Committee accountability
- Police Records Checks policy and procedures
- Settlement costs and restrictions review
- Retirement policy clarity

### ***Other Ministry and Employment Work***

Recruitment and development of leaders is an important priority, and the Executive received regular updates on the work focused on Recruitment, and the God's World Needs Leaders campaign. As well, increased awareness of the challenges and benefits associated with military chaplaincy were reviewed. Annually, the benefits plans for ministry personnel and employees of

the United Church are reviewed by the committee and recommendations for changes are considered by the Executive. In addition to reducing premium rates in 2015, the Executive authorized several improvements to benefits.

### **Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry**

The Permanent Committee has been living into a season of transition this entire triennium. The former unit-wide committees on Partners in Mission, and Communities in Ministry, were phased out, and a larger all-encompassing permanent committee was created. Through it all, the committee has grounded its work in worship, study, and community-building as it seeks to live into its identity and ministry as “the people of God.”

### **Partner Council**

The Partner Council, made up of global and ecumenical partners from Canada and other countries, has been a significant part of the United Church’s affirmation and commitment to living out its understanding of partnership. In view of anticipated structural changes, a reduction in the size of the Council from the current nine members to six members is planned. This will allow some cost savings, while still allowing us to have the important advice and insights that come from our partners.

### **Ongoing Work Items**

The program work of the Permanent Committee is broad, interconnected, and complex. Some work items continue to be implemented with staff, working with a variety of networks. The following are ongoing pieces of work that the committee will continue to engage in over the next triennium:

- advocacy networks
- new financial architecture
- global mission personnel review
- French-language resources
- refugees
- program evaluation
- EDGE new Ministry pilot

### **Youth and Young Adult Strategy**

The Executive has approved a new strategy for 2015–2018 to continue to support youth and young adults to grow in faith and offer leadership in the United Church.

### **Migrant Church Working Group** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “2015-03-21 GCE Workbook,” PMM 18, pages 184–192)

This working group, made up of staff and elected members, from the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry; the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policy and Services; and the Theology and Inter-church Inter-faith Committee reported to the Executive, naming key initiatives (Associate Relationship, Mutual Recognition of Ministry, and Full Communion Agreement) and indicating a way forward. This report will be before the 42nd General Council in 2015 as background to the General Secretary’s report on Mutual Recognition of Ministry and the full communion agreement. (See the report *A Journey to Full Communion*, pages 552–560.) The working group recognizes that there is some need for clarification and

changes to our policies and will work with the General Secretary to bring these forward to the General Council and to the work on membership. For more information, please see the background report on the Migrant Church, pages 561–569.

***Unsettling Goods Campaign*** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “2015-03-21 GCE Workbook,” PMM 17, pages 174–175)

The Unsettling Goods campaign was developed to carry out the work directed by the 41st General Council based on the report of the Working Group on Israel and Palestine. This work is not complete, and the Executive has directed that it continue.

***Living Apology to Members of LGBTIQ Communities*** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “2015-03-21 GCE Workbook,” GS53 pages 165–168)

Rather than creating wording for an apology and recommending it for adoption, the Executive has received the advice of a consultation with those affected, and is bringing to the General Council a recommendation for a Living Apology process. This would be an installation that would travel to different places in Canada to allow people to learn and engage with the stories.

### **Aboriginal Ministries Council**

Created in 2009, the Aboriginal Ministries Council is still relatively new and continues to grow in its role within the United Church. In conversations with the Comprehensive Review Task Group, it was recognized that Aboriginal communities of faith and their partners need time for further dialogue as they consider the structures that will best support their full participation in The United Church of Canada. The Aboriginal Ministries Council will be engaging Aboriginal communities on the following key questions:

1. What is a cohesive vision for Aboriginal ministries?
2. What principles will guide relationships with the wider church and with the constituencies that make up the council?
3. How will the vision be achieved?
  - a. What is the precious work that must go forward?
  - b. What is not essential and no longer effective?
  - c. What structure and resources (i.e., staff, networks, technology, funding) are needed to support the work of Aboriginal ministries?

In 2014 Aboriginal communities of faith have come together for Under One Tent conversations, which have provided a platform for this dialogue to begin. Communities share a common experience of growing and of adapting to change. Through these discussions, the Aboriginal constituencies that form the Aboriginal Ministries Council continue to explore ways to work together. For more information please see the Aboriginal Ministries Council Accountability Report, pages 588–597.

### ***Real Property Plan***

The Aboriginal Ministries Council is establishing a property and capital plan for United Church buildings in Aboriginal communities. The purpose of the plan is to articulate, size, resource, and execute a project to improve Aboriginal buildings and residences in partnership with local, regional, and national partners. The project is a joint venture of the Aboriginal Ministries Council and Circle, as well as partners and stakeholders wherever real property buildings are

located. The scope and duration of the project will be determined in the context of the overall Aboriginal ministry strategy and resources. Significant support and collaboration from partners and stakeholders is needed to ensure the objectives will be met.

In February 2015 the Aboriginal Ministries Council agreed to implement the initial phase of the Real Property Plan. This includes consultation with Conferences that have an interest in Aboriginal real property and with the All Native Circle Conference's Council on Sharing. Information on the plan will be shared with Aboriginal communities in early 2015.

There is a strong emotional attachment to buildings. Communities of faith will be asked to hold in balance the value of shared history and the challenges facing the church. They will also be invited to consider how they honour sacred and historic space while building capacity for spiritual nurture and ministry for future generations. Youth and young adults are not attached to buildings. Their spiritual nurture comes through connective space (using technology, events, and gatherings).

### **National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering**

The National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering, with representation from Aboriginal ministries across the United Church, was held in July 2014 on the Oneida First Nation west of London, Ontario. Based on the evaluations from that event, the Aboriginal Ministries Council will support the planning of future gatherings, focusing on vision and objectives, representation, location, youth leadership in planning and facilitation, and roles of host community and council.

### **Theological Reflection**

In doing its work throughout the triennium, the Executive has been guided by worship, prayer, and theological reflection. The Moderator has played a significant role in lifting our hearts with scripture and poetry—always just the right poem! We are grateful for the theological reflections provided at the Executive meetings by Bill Steadman, Alan Boyd, Bruce Gregersen, Abigail Johnson, Basil Coward, and Barb Janes.

## **A JOURNEY TO FULL COMMUNION – RE PROPOSAL GCE 1**

### **Origin: The Report of the Joint Partnership Committee - The United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada, April 2015**

The United Church of Canada and The United Church of Christ (USA) share a rich and similar history as “united and uniting” churches in North America. In 2013, both denominations authorized a Joint Partnership Committee to discern the call of God towards entering full communion. After a year of discernment, the committee is recommending through each denomination’s respective executive body that the 30th General Synod of The United Church of Christ, which will meet June 26-30, 2015, in Cleveland, Ohio, and the 42nd General Council of The United Church of Canada, which will meet August 8-15, 2015, in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, approve a full communion agreement. This document is the formal report of the committee, and is meant to accompany the proposal and serve as a resource for those who will carry the commitment to a full communion relationship into the future.

#### **United and Uniting**

The United Church of Canada came into being in 1925 as the first union in the 20th century to cross historic denominational lines. While union discussions in Canada first began at the end of the 19th century, the Methodist Church in Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada (about one-third of Presbyterian churches in Canada stayed out of union), and the Congregational Union of Canada, along with a large number of Local Union Churches which had formed in anticipation of union, formally celebrated the formation of the new church on June 10, 1925 in Toronto, Ontario. In 1968, at the time of the formation of the United Methodist Church in the United States, the Canadian Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church also joined the United Church.

The United Church of Christ was formed on June 27, 1957, in Cleveland, Ohio, with the merger of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches.

Conversation toward union began in 1938, but the impetus to union had started long before that as both denominations were the result of earlier mergers. The Congregational Churches traced their roots to the English Reformation and to Puritan New England, while the Christian Church had its beginnings on the American frontier. The Evangelical Synod of North America, a 19th-century German-American church, was prominent in the Mississippi Valley, and the Reformed Church in the United States, which was of German and Swiss heritage, was initially made up of churches in Pennsylvania and surrounding colonies in the early 1700s.

There are remarkable similarities between the two churches in their commitment to social justice and commitment to inclusion of diversity in sexual and gender identities, in disabilities, and in theological openness and expression. For example, The United Church of Christ, through its predecessor bodies, ordained its first female minister in 1853, its first black minister in 1892, and its first openly gay minister in 1972. The United Church of Canada first ordained women in 1936, and in 1988 declared that sexual orientation was not a criterion for determining eligibility for ordination.

The churches share many global relationships as well as similar commitments to the ideals of partnership in mission. They have a history of shared appointments in overseas personnel, and



ministry personnel already move through admission processes between the churches. Both churches have also played significant roles in the social transformations of their societies.

The mottos of both churches are based on Jesus' prayer in John 17:20–21, a passage that has often been cited as a foundation for church unions and ecumenism: "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." The United Church of Christ's motto is "That They May All Be One," while The United Church of Canada's motto is *Ut Omnes Unum Sint* ("That All May Be One" in Latin). The United Church of Canada's crest also includes the Mohawk words *Akwe Nia'Tetewà:neren*, meaning "All My Relations," as well as the name of the church in French. These mottoes are a reminder that both churches share a common heritage and ethos as united and uniting churches.

It is also important to see this passage from John as an affirmation that full communion within the body of Christ is a gift that is already present. A full communion agreement expresses more visibly and fully what already exists through the eyes of faith. John 17 speaks to what theologians call a "proleptic" or "as if" reality. The unity we hope for has already been accomplished in Christ. It is not something we strive for, but rather something deeply true about ourselves that we can now only glimpse. It is not something we construct, but something that Christ gives to us. In full communion, we commit ourselves to living out in visible ways the central truth of our separate identities: that we are a part of each other and are one body.

Historically, full communion was first used to indicate the relationship between geographically separate churches that would likely become one body if they were in the same place. This early meaning is significant for the relationship between The United Church of Canada and The United Church of Christ. If Canada and the United States were one country, it seems inconceivable that the churches would not have entered an organic union. However, the United States and Canada are two distinct countries and each church is intimately connected to its national context. This proposal, therefore, does not envisage an organic or structural union.

Yet the Committee believes much can be gained through a full communion agreement and that such an agreement can contribute to the united and uniting movement throughout the world.

More than 60 churches throughout the world see themselves as part of the united and uniting family of churches. While not all use the name "united" or "uniting," most understood their unions as an ongoing process that points to the future. They also understood that their first or most recent union would not be their last, and that they would continue to bear witness to Jesus' prayer that all may be one. Yet today, almost 100 years after the first union of this modern era, few churches have any appetite for structural unions.

In this context, full communion agreements have become one of the few remaining expressions of deeper ecumenical commitment. The committee affirms full communion as an important avenue of ecumenism, but wishes to offer an important consideration.

The committee explored in its first meeting the implications of two northern and comparatively wealthy churches proposing a full communion relationship between themselves, potentially privileging their relationship over ongoing global partnerships with southern and historic mission-receiving churches. The committee affirmed the processes of The United Church of Canada, which paralleled this full communion conversation, to establish mutual recognition of ministry agreements with two global partner churches, the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea and The United Church of Christ in the Philippines. From the beginning, the committee, therefore, wished to see the agreement as a contribution to the larger united and uniting church movement. It has explored the two “United” churches maintaining their own names but identifying themselves as jointly part of a “Uniting” family (for example, “The United Church of Christ – A Uniting Church” and “The United Church of Canada – A Uniting Church”). A proposal to rename the churches seemed premature, but the committee hopes both will explore the idea further.

This full communion agreement is at its heart an expression of the spirit of the united and uniting church movement. With it, both churches seek to lift up and reaffirm the “fire in the belly” for the ecumenical visions that brought them into existence. They also want the agreement truly to make a difference for them and for the world.

### **Context**

A full communion agreement is not a back door to union. It does not mean the two churches are merging. Rather, it recognizes that the local context of each church is not incidental, but rather central to its identity and that each church has been called to God’s mission and ministry in its distinctive location and context. However, the fact that the churches share many common issues and challenges suggests there is much to be gained from increased collaboration.

Both churches recognize that social structures can harm people and that the gospel calls the church beyond a concern solely for individual redemption to work for systemic change. Both churches, therefore, work extensively on issues such as racism, poverty, and homophobia and engage actively in political and social issues.

Many of these issues, while specific to each church’s context, also are interrelated. For example:

- The churches are connected by a common land. Geographically, Canada and the United States share air and climate, water systems, mountain ranges, natural resources, animal migration, ecosystems, and more. As two churches with common commitments to ecological justice and openness to theological exploration, and as churches that share a common land, they can commit to journey together in developing theological reflection, resources, and capacities to heal relationships with the land and the environment.
- The churches can also work together in developing a Christian perspective on borders. Christians must not be bound by identities framed solely by national aspirations. Other churches in North America exist as unified bodies across the Canada/U.S. border. Both churches can benefit from a relationship that puts their distinctly national identities into perspective. How might the churches respect their common border, but not be contained by it?

- Both churches face challenges in adapting to changing social contexts. Demographic and sociological changes mean both churches must become far more diverse, while at the same time maintaining their core values and identities.
- Increasing secularization means Sunday worship will likely no longer be sustainable as the main identifier of church life. Both churches need to understand where God is leading them and discover spiritual practices that connect with new social realities.
- Both churches in their own ways are committed to engaging the great challenges of our time: the threat to life in human-driven climate change, the immense suffering and inequality created by unrestrained capitalism, the clash of religious ideologies, and the creation of new enemy images. Deep issues of spirituality are embedded in these challenges, and both churches need to rediscover a language of faith that connects their evangelical heritages with progressive and inclusive identities. Both need to learn again for a different time how to speak and live the gospel in new and compelling ways.

The gifts of relationship flow not just from what the churches hold in common. The differences between the churches also offer opportunities for collaboration and learning.

Ecclesial differences can provide opportunities for reflective engagement. For example, the Congregational polity of The United Church of Christ offers congregations significantly more independence (including control of property) than the Presbyterian and Methodist polities of The United Church of Canada. As The United Church of Canada considers expanding the role of congregations in its polity, it can learn from the experience of The United Church of Christ.

There are also differences between the two churches related to national voice. In The United Church of Christ's understanding, the General Synod speaks "to the church," not for it. In The United Church of Canada's polity, the General Council speaks "for the church." In reality both denominations are struggling to find an appropriate role for their national councils and can benefit from mutual reflection.

There are also differences in understanding of the role of doctrine. Because of its congregational polity, the doctrinal statement of The United Church of Christ has a limited function in the life of the church. The United Church of Canada recently expanded its historic doctrine section of the Basis of Union to include three additional statements developed since union and by doing so established an expectation that further statements will be added in the future. Neither church, however, requires either members or ministers to subscribe to the doctrinal standards of the church. (The United Church of Canada requires ministers to be "in essential agreement" with the doctrines of the church.) As The United Church of Christ seeks new ways to articulate its beliefs, it might benefit from The United Church of Canada's experience of developing new statements of faith.

The United Church of Christ representatives on the committee have identified the ongoing work of The United Church of Canada in building right relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples as a key area of learning. They note the significance of the two apologies The United Church of Canada has offered to Aboriginal people, the movement towards Aboriginal self-government in the church, the work at healing in response to the history of residential schools, the affirmation of traditional spiritual ways, and the changes to the United Church crest

and historical section of the Basis of Union as some key examples of how The United Church of Canada is building this relationship. They note that The United Church of Christ is just beginning a similar journey and would benefit greatly from the experience and accompaniment of The United Church of Canada.

The United Church of Canada representatives have noted the significant work The United Church of Christ has done on identity. In particular, they noted the clarity of core values and goals at the national level of the church: the “Core Values” of continuing testament, extravagant welcome and changing lives; and the “Bold, Inspirational Goals” of bold, public voice, welcoming, reachable congregations, engaged discipleship, and excellent, diverse leaders. They also noted the importance of well-designed, unified national campaigns as an example of how the church maintains a cohesive identity in the context of a highly congregational polity. The United Church of Canada representatives believe their church could benefit particularly from the experience and wisdom of The United Church of Christ in maintaining a strong national identity.

Both churches need to understand that the challenges they face into the future are not unique to them and they cannot address them alone. It will take a refreshed web of interconnectedness, experimentation, and prototyping with partners who share common commitments and vision. The kind of work each church needs to do is distinctive to the North American context, a liberal and progressive theological identity, and to churches committed to social justice.

Together in ecumenical partnership, the churches can bring their distinctive and perhaps contrasting approaches, gifts, and skills to the task of building a new church of the future.

### **The Marks**

Full communion has been identified historically by five marks:

- common confession of Christ
- mutual recognition of members
- common celebration of the Lord’s Supper/Holy Communion
- mutual recognition and reconciliation of ordained ministries
- common commitment to mission

The World Council of Churches’ Faith and Order Commission meeting in Bangalore, India, in 1978 offered the following vision of full communion agreements:

They will then recognize each other’s ministries; they will share the bread and the cup of their Lord; they will acknowledge each other as belonging to the body of Christ in all places and at all times; they will proclaim together the Gospel to the world; they will serve the needs of humankind in mutual trust and dedication; and for these ends they will plan and take decisions together in assemblies constituted by authorized representatives wherever this is required.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Bangalore Report, cited in Michael Roo, “Full Communion Between Episcopalians and Anglicans in the United States: What Would it Look Like?” *Concordat Essays*, 179.

Full communion agreements, therefore, have a significant history within the ecumenical movement. A rich history of theological reflection supports their content and direction ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “2015-03-21 GCE Workbook,” GS56, Appendix A, pages 123–125).

The committee explored the doctrinal statements as well as understandings of ecclesiology, sacraments, membership, and mission of each church. The committee believes the beliefs, practices, and polity of each church are consistent with a full communion agreement.

It noted the general assessment of many that both churches share remarkably similar identities and positions. Furthermore, it would be foreign to either church’s understanding to question the legitimacy of any other church within the World Council of Churches family. Both churches also share the practice of an open table. The committee concluded that the core aspects of full communion related to common confession of Christ, mutual recognition of members, and common celebration of communion flow naturally out of the life of both churches.

The challenge and meaning of full communion lie more directly instead in mutual recognition of ministries, common commitment to mission, and the aspiration found in the Bangalore statement of planning and taking decisions together in joint assemblies whenever it is required.

Mutual recognition allows for an “orderly exchange” of ministers, or flexibility among ministry personnel to move back and forth across denominational lines with as little hindrance as possible. In essence, it means two denominations that agree to mutual recognition would:

- accept the credentials of each other’s ministers
- authorize ministers to accept calls and be employed in the other denomination’s churches under the same or similar processes used for processing a call in their home denomination
- if possible, allow for the continuation of pension, group insurance, and other benefits in the home denomination

The committee understood its work did not include the formal development of the agreement on mutual recognition of ministry. Instead, the details of this agreement would follow the approval of the full communion agreement. Each church would need to change its by-laws to enact such an agreement, develop mechanisms to establish ministerial standing in each church, and explore what arrangements, if any, can be made for pension continuation.

The United Church of Christ has established mutual recognition of ministry within a full communion agreement with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The United Church of Canada has used this agreement as a model for the proposed mutual recognition of ministry agreements with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea and The United Church of Christ in the Philippines. The overall structure of an agreement, therefore, is already available, but both churches would need to identify aspects that are distinctive to the context of the two churches and any by-law changes that would be required.

The mutual recognition of ministry between the churches is historic but it will take many years before the effects of the orderly exchange of ministry personnel become fully visible.

Common commitment to mission, another mark of full communion, has the potential to be more immediate and transformative. Several possibilities for mutual engagement and learning have already been named, including developing jointly a church-wide mission focus and campaign. This would allow both churches to share resources, and could open the possibility of addressing a common issue across national boundaries. It could potentially invite congregations across the two churches to link together in common initiatives and learning and dramatically expand the impact of a campaign.

Another potential area is in global partnership and mission. The full communion agreement between The United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has led to the formation of the Common Global Ministries Board of the two churches. The board works with 270 partner churches and organizations in 70 countries around the world.

The committee recognized that merging The United Church of Canada's global mission program into this common board is not likely in the near future. Such an exploration would require much more consultation, particularly with global partners that would be impacted by such a direction.

However, the committee did see potential for increased collaboration and sharing. For example, while there is already significant overlap in partners, the breadth of the board's relationships could offer The United Church of Canada opportunities to link with areas of the world and partners with which it currently does not have capacity to engage. This is particularly important as both churches seek to respond to the interests of congregations in nurturing their own global connections.

Shared work, including joint consultations on issues of common concern, is another area of possibility. Respectful and transformative relationships with people of other faiths and the impact of oil pipelines on the environment are two examples of pressing issues that could perhaps effectively be undertaken in partnership.

The churches could also explore together one of the most significant identity issues facing progressive Protestant churches: secularization. In the midst of increasing secularization in both societies, how might the churches be bold in still impacting their respective societies? How might they foster and encourage a compassionate humanity?

A commitment to doing mission together will require planning. The committee believes there are many possibilities for collaboration that can strengthen and widen the engagement of both churches in God's mission. But both churches also need to continue to pay attention to the potential for local engagement.

Michael Kinnamon has noted that recent full communion agreements seem to have made little difference in the ways most local members of congregations live with one another.<sup>2</sup> He argues that if full communion agreements remain primarily at the national level, they are not truly

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2. Michael Kinnamon, 2014, *Can a Renewal Movement be Renewed? Question for the Future of Ecumenism*.

“communion.” The two churches need to establish formal bonds between congregations and between regional bodies. Examples already exist between conferences and between congregations in border regions of the two churches. The committee believes the true potential of the full communion agreement lies in these connections being established both as a witness to the visible unity to which Christ calls us, and as a means of strengthening each other in commitment to God’s mission.

It is why the creation of an implementation committee or committees is a central part of the full communion proposal. The rich potential of this full communion agreement will require careful nurture and planning at various levels of the churches. This is in part what the Bangalore declaration suggested above in noting that “they will plan and take decisions together in assemblies constituted by authorized representatives wherever this is required.”

The committee urges the churches to put in place structures that will allow the experience and commitment of full communion to grow deeper. These structures should enable opportunities to learn, worship, and engage together at both the national and local levels of the churches.

The structures of this full communion agreement, therefore, can keep before the churches the vision of the prayer of Jesus “that all may be one” and that through them the world might be blessed.

### **The Possibilities**

While these activities of full communion are important, it could be argued that they represent an established framework that should be happening anyway, rather than a true opening to something new.

It is possible, the committee believes, to see this full communion agreement as honouring this historic framework and pointing beyond it to new visions in ecumenism; to the emergence of new relationships that enhance current partnerships and opens new possibilities for united and uniting churches throughout the world. It therefore offers some final thoughts on what might flow from this agreement.

In opening themselves again to their calling as united and uniting, the churches can be drawn once again to the core of their identity as followers of Jesus. In their growth together in full communion they can discover the unity that is already present in Christ. They can learn once again the vision of a church that transcends the divisions of the world. They can seek to be more than just a body of faithful people struggling on their own to survive. They can rediscover what it means once again to be a movement of people who choose to follow Christ into the unknown.

The committee therefore encourages the churches not only to go deeper to live out this full communion agreement, but also to go wider.

In this, the committee urges the churches to continue the vision of a wider united and uniting church movement. It hopes this agreement can be extended to other united and uniting churches that seek to reimagine and recover the ecumenical vocation that brought them into being. More specifically, the committee believes that this is a time for closer relationships between united and

uniting churches that are working intentionally at radically inclusive identities grounded in progressive theological exploration.

The committee believes the two churches are being invited to a wider commitment to God’s vision and purpose for united and uniting churches in the world, and that this journey of full communion is an opening to something truly transformative for them and for others. That through this initial step the churches can live more fully into the prayer of Jesus “that all may be one” and that the world might be blessed

Members of the Joint Partnership Committee

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The Rev. Daniel Hayward  
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General Minister and President



## **REPORT: MISSION AND MINISTRY WITH MIGRANT CHURCHES**

### **Origin: Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry**

In August 2015, the 42nd General Council will receive proposals dealing with, and celebrate the initiation of, Associate Relationships, Mutual Recognition of Ministries and a Full Communion agreement. This report offers background and context to these new initiatives that have the potential to transform the church.

This report emerges from the work of the Migrant Church Working Group, a shared initiative of staff and elected members participating from three areas of responsibility: The Permanent Committee: Ministry and Employment Policy and Services, the Permanent Committee: Programs for Mission and Ministry, and the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee.

Global migration is changing the church and the world. Significant numbers of migrant churches are emerging bringing gifts of energy, life and new forms of worship and identity. In 2006 The United Church of Canada committed to becoming an intercultural church, understanding that this would be a multi-generational endeavor. It was a necessary decision, not only because of the changing nature of Canada through immigration, but because we fundamentally believe that God's spirit is behind something new happening in our midst. God is calling the United Church and indeed Northern and Western churches to see the world through different eyes, to know that God is speaking from the marginalized places and peoples of the world. And God is inviting the church to be transformed by hospitality.

### **A Biblical Imperative**

The Bible is steeped in the imagery of the sojourner. From Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Moses, Ruth and Naomi, to Mary and Joseph the Bible is full of stories of those who have left their homes to seek a better land. Psalm 137, for example, captures the heart cry of a people forced from their homes, in language that echoes throughout the scriptures: "How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?"

The biblical record speaks of Jesus born in the midst of a "worldwide" migration, of his family fleeing from a threat and becoming political refugees, of being questioned about his legitimacy because of the place of his birth. It is why the Bible speaks unmistakably about God's call to welcome the stranger: to the people of Israel because they were once strangers themselves in the land; and to the followers of Jesus because it is in the face of the stranger we meet our Lord.

*"When an alien resides with you in your land do not molest him. You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you, have the same love for him as for yourself, for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt." Leviticus 19:33–34*

*"Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Matthew 25:34–36*

A central mark of the church might well be understood as being a migrant community itself, or a *diaspora*, a scattered and dispersed people. The letter to Hebrews declares that believers “have no lasting city but seek one that is to come.” All of us are strangers in the land, all of us find only a temporary residence while struggling and searching together for the promise of a new creation.

*“All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one.” Hebrews 11:13–16*

*“Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.” Hebrews 13:1–3*

Throughout history the church has been challenged to overcome its desire for self-protection, its fear for losing its identity and traditions in the face of otherness, and to acknowledge that as a pilgrim community, it is called to welcome the stranger, to be hospitable, to become a place of mutual welcome.

The spirit of mutual welcome is at the heart of the new creation on which the church is founded. It is based in the realization that in Christ all of us are one people.

*“Here there is no Greek nor Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free, but Christ is all in all.” Colossians 3:11*

*“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:28*

The United Church is challenged to be a faithful witness to the claims of the gospel that the church is a foretaste of the new creation where all people are valued and are loved.

It is not then that the current members of the church need to become better at welcoming others. Rather, the source of the welcome is the essence of the church itself and belongs to the whole community; both those who have been present and those who are newly come. It is a mutual welcoming to a transformed and new church.

### **The Age of Migration**

A migrant may be defined as a foreign born national, who has decided of their own choice to move to a new country to stay temporarily in search of or for work and is subject to immigration controls. The UN uses the term migrant worker to refer to a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national.

The term migrant does not refer to refugees or internally displaced persons. Refugees are persons who been forced to leave their home in order to escape war or persecution. An Immigrant on the other hand is a person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country.

In 2012, the National Bureau of Statistics reported that the migrant worker population had reached 262 million with an average annual increase of about 3.9%.

The difference between a migrant and an immigrant can be defined by the length of stay in the foreign country. The similarities are that they may be seeking a better life and eventually develop social ties to the community they live in. Migrant churches are generally composed of both migrant workers and immigrants who are seeking to become or are Canadian citizens. We will use the terms somewhat interchangeably with this general distinction in mind.

Migration does provide for increased opportunities for many people. Migrant communities contribute in significant ways to their new countries, expanding economies and providing much needed labour. They also provide important funds to their home countries through remittances, which now far exceed the total of all foreign aid transfers.

However there are major human and social costs involved in migration. Poverty and the vast inequalities of wealth and power throughout the world are the major drivers of migration and many migrants, in particular women and children, end up in very vulnerable positions. Many leave husbands or wives and children to work abroad. Many journeys begin with selling property or taking on considerable debt in the hope of a better future. Migrants are vulnerable to exploitation in receiving countries and are often treated as commodities in such areas as domestic work. Structural racism often places barriers to employment and participation in their new countries. Migrants are all too often exploited for political purposes and used to create tension and even hatred between communities. At its worst human trafficking and other forms of extortion (including sexual trafficking and organ removal) result in the worst violations of human dignity imaginable. The impact on migrant's home countries can be equally severe with the loss of often the most highly educated and skilled workers.

Nevertheless, it is clear that we have entered a new time, an age of migration that is dramatically changing the world which we know.

### **The Challenge for the Church**

The Christian witness starts with the affirmation that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God. This is a simple statement that has profound implications. It suggests that everyone has a right to live a life that is truly human, to seek security and safety for themselves and their family, to provide for their future. Throughout human history this has often meant migration. Drought, crop failures, changing climates, war, poverty, have all been factors that have forced large scale human movements. In the past century, world wars displaced millions. Today globalization, economic disparities, and climate change are proving to be drivers of even larger numbers of migrant populations. While the vast majority of migration is intra-regional and the wealthy northern countries experience comparatively small numbers of migrant peoples, nevertheless, many of these countries, including Canada, place significant limits on immigration.

It is in this context that the church is called to offer a different vision of the world; a world that welcomes migration because we are all immigrants; that affirms the rights of people to seek a better life for themselves and their children, because we are all part of one human family.

Members of the United Church are likely among those Canadians who desire to be open and welcoming to immigrants. On a political level it implies a willingness to address immigration policies and social and institutionalized practices that in society not only restrict immigration, but also limit the full participation of migrant peoples.

The church has also been involved or supported a wide range of programs and ministries with migrant peoples including; an extensive program of refugee sponsorship, advocacy on issues such as health coverage for refugees and visa quotas, the provision of sanctuary, ministry with migrant workers, new ministry initiatives, challenging racism and the many initiatives related to the commitment to become an intercultural church.

On a deeper human level, the task the church faces is a change of heart. Canada has benefited significantly from exploitation of global resources that has led to economic dislocation in many countries. It has done little to address climate change which is forcing more and more people from their homes. The change of heart is about believing that people do have a human right to seek safety and security, including financial well-being for themselves and their families, elsewhere, when it is not possible within their own country.

### **What Do Migrant Churches Look Like?**

New migrant churches are emerging and growing in almost all parts of Canada. The members of these churches are most often either first generation Canadians or migrant workers who desire to maintain contact and connection with their home communities. Many if not the majority of these new communities are Catholic or Pentecostal in origin. However a number are from historic Methodist or Reformed roots and come from home denominations which have deep connections to these two global confessional bodies.

As a member of both the World Methodist Conference, and the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the United Church's Methodist and Presbyterian roots provide connections that have invited contact and exploration from these churches.

It is not surprising that immigrant communities desire to maintain contact with their home communities while engaging the challenging task of integration into a new society. The church can be both a place of comfortable connection to the familiar and a place of integration into the new society.

Some immigrants do seek to be part of existing United Church congregations, if they feel welcomed and find some familiarity in language or style of worship. However many find significant language barriers and much different customs of worship. Church and worship are heart experiences, and both need to connect with our heart language. So also for most immigrants, worship in their home language is a critical aspect of feeling welcome.

So migrant communities gather together sometime in homes, sometimes in more formal churches and often reach out to their home denominations to assist them. Sometimes the home denomination has been instrumental in establishing the community, more often the community comes together on its own. Their connection to the home denomination often involves a pastor assigned to them from the denomination. Often formal visits are made by the presiding bishop or a superintendent. Migrant church communities often send funds back to their home denominations.

Two specific examples of this pattern are Ghanaian and Zimbabwean people who have come to Canada bringing with them their Methodist heritage and connections.

In both cases, church communities in various locations in Canada have been established. In the Ghanaian situation formal and structured churches with pastors sent from the Methodist Church of Ghana have been formed. In the Zimbabwean situation, less formal structures with lay leadership exist.

Both denominations are steeped in the Methodist tradition of connectionalism and believe strongly in honouring relationships with Methodist churches (or United Churches with Methodist roots) in the new locations.

The Methodist Church of Ghana for example, has a formal policy of requesting its diaspora churches to seek relationships with the Methodist denomination in the new country. The expectation is that their churches will stay in connection with the Ghanaian home church through the Presiding Bishop's office. Ghanaian clergy are assigned and sent by the denomination. But expectations are also that these churches and their clergy will function best under the oversight and discipline of the local Methodist church, or in Canada's case, the United Church.

### **Associate Relationships**

Conversations with the Presiding Bishop of The Methodist Church of Ghana (who worshipped with a United Church congregation in Ottawa for several years while doing doctoral studies) initiated the overall conversation on associate relationships in the United Church. Our model of Associate Relationship reflects loosely agreements that the Ghanaian church has established elsewhere in the world.

In Associate Relationships the intention is to honour the distinctiveness of migrant churches and their desire to be in relationship both to the United Church and to their home denominations. It seeks to avoid patterns of assimilation that have characterized the past; to value differences and therefore to be open to being transformed in the relationship.

Past approaches to congregations desiring to join the United Church could be characterized as "all or nothing." In other words, such congregations would be incorporated into the United Church including property, membership and authority for ministry. While this option is still available, it has clearly not worked in recent years by evidence of numbers alone. But it is also not worked in a more important way. By its very nature, incorporation (or assimilation) is designed to make the other like us; to effectively become like us and function under our

structures. It offers little room for maintaining separate identities or for developing dual identities and connections.

The 41st General Council approved the definition of Associate Relationship and defined its parameters. Migrant church communities that belong to denominations outside Canada, associated with the World Methodist Council, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, or are a partner denomination through the United Church's global partnership program are eligible to be Associate congregations. The Executive of General Council has the responsibility for approving Associate Relationship agreements. These agreements, while following a similar pattern, are distinctive to each relationship and are generally made with the home denomination.

Ministers of Associate congregations are assigned by their home denominations and have status in the United Church only while under appointment to these congregations. Currently a remit is before the church entitling ministers of Associate congregations to full membership in the Presbytery in which the congregation or ministry is located. The Associate Agreements are meant to define responsibilities such as pastoral and ministry oversight, denominational ethos and aspects of mutual accountability.

Associate Relationships have been formerly established with the Methodist Church of Ghana and are in process with both Methodist Churches in Zimbabwe, the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas and the Methodist Church of Haiti.

It could be accurately said that this approach is an experiment in building relationships with migrant communities. It is not distinctive to us alone. It is built on other models around the world. Yet it will need to be carefully monitored and evaluated.

Associate relationships are not without risk or challenge. Many differences do exist and do require dialogue and understanding. If Associate Relationships are effective however, they will provide opportunities for United Church and Associate congregations to learn and grow in faith with each other, to find God at work in new ways, to experience different forms of worship, to see the world through different eyes and experiences, and to represent the United Church as a community of welcome.

### **Mutual Recognition of Ministry Agreements**

Mutual Recognition of Ministry allows for what is also sometimes called an "orderly exchange" of ministers, or flexibility among ministry personnel to move back and forth across denominational lines with as little hindrance as possible. In essence it means that two denominations who agree to mutual recognition, would accept the credentials of each other's ministers, authorize them to accept calls and to be employed within each other's churches under the same or similar processes used for processing a call for one of their own ministers, and if possible allow for the continuation of pension, group insurance and other benefits to be maintained in the home denomination. While Associate Relationships deal with whole congregations and their ministers in relation to that congregation; mutual recognition deals specifically with ministry personnel themselves.

Mutual recognition of ministry conversations were proposed in part to seek the assistance of global partners in helping the United Church to address the changing demographic character of Canada. We know that the growth of population of Canada through the last two decades has been primarily due to immigration. We know that we need help in reaching out to immigrant communities in establishing new communities of faith, and in transitioning existing congregations faced with changing demographics in their neighbourhood.

The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea and the United Church of Christ of the Philippines are long standing global partners of the United Church closely connected to us in theology, social justice engagement and understandings of ministry. The Korean and Filipino communities of Canada are large and growing. Korean United Churches also represent the largest number of ethnic specific congregations in the church. Seeking mutual recognition agreements with these two denominations is a way of honouring the long relationships, and also asking for their assistance in reaching out to these growing communities in Canada. It is an expression of reverse mission in which we need their assistance and help to fulfill God's mission for the United Church in Canada.

Mutual recognition is being explored for other reasons as well. Part of the rationale is to find mechanisms of deepening ecumenical life and relationships at a time when other patterns of ecumenism are withering. It is certainly to simplify processes of admission for historic church partners and is in response to direct requests specifically from the United Church of Christ of the Philippines.

Mutual Recognition of Ministry agreements have been approved by the Executive of General Council (and will be celebrated at GC42) with the United Church of Christ of the Philippines, and with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea. These two agreements will provide models of mutual recognition that could be extended to other global partner churches in the future. Recently, the ongoing United Church Anglican Dialogue has agreed to focus on mutual recognition of ministries between our churches.

Each agreement has and will be developed to address the specific context of the relationship. Attention has been given to ensuring that the agreements are mutual and reciprocal. For example, the agreement with the United Church of Christ of the Philippines seeks to address concerns such as the loss of personnel (the brain drain). (The UCCP has expressed appreciation for the sensitivity of the agreement and see it as a model to be used with other partners around the world.)

Mutual Recognition of Ministry Agreements will not result in dramatic shifts in ministry personnel. In each one there will still be steps of approval and assessment. Care will be taken to ensure understanding of the distinctive ethos of each denomination, such as the commitment of the United Church to full inclusion of people irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity. The key implication is that we will honour and accept the status of each other's ministers. The impact is likely to be felt over a long period. But it does open the path to new patterns of relationship that can transform us.

The development of mutual recognition agreements reflects a desire to explore new expressions of ecumenical co-operation. They are about strengthening the ministry of the church for God's mission. They reflect an acknowledgement that the United Church cannot face its challenges alone; that it does not have the capacity and the skills to do so. And they express a willingness to open channels of mutual accountability to sister churches in the world.

### **Full Communion Agreement with the United Church of Christ**

The Executive of the General Council in 2012 authorized the invitation to move towards mutual recognition of ministries with several Canadian, U.S., and global church partners. The Executive at the time recognized that mutual recognition of ministry agreements are usually found within larger "full communion" agreements between denominations.

The United Church of Christ, in responding to a request for mutual recognition of ministry from The United Church of Canada, indicated that such an agreement for them would normally take place within the larger agreement. The United Church of Canada welcomed the response and affirmed its willingness to move towards such an agreement.

Full Communion agreements have become identified historically by five marks: common confession of Christ; mutual recognition of members; common celebration of the Lord's Supper/Holy Communion; mutual recognition and reconciliation of ordained ministries; and common commitment to mission. Full communion agreements, therefore, have a significant history within the ecumenical movement. There is also a rich history of theological reflection that supports their content and direction.

While the existing patterns of full communion agreements are important, they do represent an established framework rather than an opening to something new. Our conversations with the United Church of Christ are exploring if it is possible to imagine a vision of full communion that honours this historic framework while pointing to new visions in ecumenism. In particular, it is imagining the emergence of a new relationship that breathes life into our churches and opens new possibilities for united and uniting churches elsewhere in the world.

Each of our churches faces challenges through changing social contexts. The United Church of Canada faces a dramatically shifting society, both demographically and sociologically as does the United Church of Christ. Increasing diversity in our societies mean the both churches must become far more diverse. Increasing secularization, again in both our societies, means that Sunday worship will likely be no longer sustainable as the main identifier of church life. In other words, both churches must now reinvent themselves for a different future.

We cannot and should not pretend that these challenges are unique to us or that we can address them alone. It will take a refreshed web of interconnectedness, experimentation and prototyping with partners who share our commitments and vision. In other words, the kind of work we need to do into the future is distinctive to our North American context, our liberal and progressive theological identity, and our commitment to social justice.



Together in ecumenical partnership our two churches can bring each one's distinctive and perhaps contrasting approaches, gifts, and skills to the task of building new churches of the future.

The Full Communion Agreement with the United Church of Christ will come for approval to the 42nd General Council.

### **The Tasks Ahead**

The commitment of the United Church to become an intercultural church is just beginning and will be a multi-generational task. It will require a transformation unlike anything that the church has experienced before. It is something that we cannot do alone and to accomplish it we need the help and assistance of partners in Canada and around the world.

This report is about only part of this intercultural journey. Associate Relationships, Mutual Recognitions of Ministry, and Full Communion Agreements can and likely will be extended beyond the current initiatives. Each requires ongoing commitments in their implementation, in their practice and in evaluation. Each in their own way helps the United Church to respond to the presence of migrant churches in Canada, and assists the church in becoming a place of hospitality and mutual welcome.

**REPORT: MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF MINISTRIES WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF THE PHILIPPINES****Origin: General Secretary, General Council****Memorandum of Understanding  
Mutual Recognition of Ministries****The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.**

The United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines have been in a partner relationship for over 30 years. This relationship was formally structured in a Covenant of Partnership signed in 1994 at the respective governing bodies of both denominations.

Both churches have formed their identities through the physical and organic union of historic churches representing the Reformed and Methodist traditions. Both seek to be faithful to a common evangelical, reformed, prophetic and ecumenical heritage. They now desire to deepen their shared journey through the mutual recognition and exchange of ministry personnel, and in doing so to witness to a renewed calling to be truly united and uniting churches.

The United Church of Canada (UCC) and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) agree to enter into an ecumenical partnership that:

*recognizes* the ordained, consecrated (UCCP) and commissioned (UCC) ministries of both denominations; and

*establishes* the framework where ordained and consecrated or commissioned ministers of each denomination can have mutual authorization while under appointment for exercising all the prerogatives of their respective ministries in each other's congregations.

In so doing the UCC and the UCCP affirm each other's ministries as true ministries of the one, holy Church of Jesus Christ, blessed by God and called to provide leadership in the church through word and sacrament, pastoral care and education.

**Introduction**

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines and The United Church of Canada are partners in God's mission. This partnership in mission has emerged from the historic missionary movement to current expressions of the sharing of mission personnel and resources, mutual accountability and common witness. Both denominations are committed to deepening their commitments to new forms and expressions of partnership in the world so that God's people and God's world may be blessed.

Both recognize that the world has changed remarkably in the last two generations. The Filipino population in Canada is now the third largest in the world outside the Philippines and continuing to grow significantly. The UCC is deeply concerned about connecting with this growing population so that it might receive their gifts and be transformed into a church that would better serve God's purposes in the new Canadian reality.

The UCCP is concerned for its Filipino members now resident in Canada and desires to find ways of continuing to support them pastorally. The UCCP further recognizes that there are no clear policies, nor ordered procedure for UCCP pastors immigrating to Canada and the United States and seeking church assignments. The potential loss of pastors is a deep concern for the church and therefore it welcomes this agreement as a way of mutually establishing a more orderly system of procedures.

The UCC acknowledges the presence of Filipino ministers, people and congregations already within the ministry of the United Church. This Mutual Recognition Agreement expands the possibilities for leadership in these and in new congregations as well as the possibilities for United Church ministers to gain valuable experience serving in the UCCP for a time. The UCCP also desires that the gifts of both Filipino and non-Filipino ministers of The United Church of Canada might offer gifts of ministry and service to the UCCP in the Philippines.

Both churches believe that this agreement will provide opportunity for their ministers and ministerial students to gain experience and skills in leadership in ministry that might otherwise not be available in their home contexts. Both churches believe that a mutual recognition of ministries is one step of greater cooperation towards the objective of sharing together in God's mission.

Both churches acknowledge that appointments under this mutual recognition of ministry agreement differ from personnel and resource sharing through established global partnership programs. Assignments such as those through the Overseas Personnel and Internship programs of the global partnership program of The United Church of Canada will continue through separate funding and policy agreements.

### **Global Context of Mutual Recognition of Ministry**

Both denominations face in their own context the pressures of increasing globalization and related immigration. Both seek to stand against ideologies that make globalization another form of imperial hegemony.

The UCC recognizes that Canadian policies and practices, particularly related to resource extraction, significantly affect the lives of vulnerable people in the Philippines. The UCCP, more so than any other denomination in the Philippines, has faced the implications of standing with vulnerable Filipino communities in opposition to corporate exploitation of resources. The murder of UCCP pastors and workers by private militias employed by these corporations has involved both churches in shared political interventions in each country.

Economic inequalities have also resulted in large numbers of Filipino workers, domestic and others, present in Canada often in circumstances where they are vulnerable and open to exploitation. The reality of Overseas Filipino Workers has resulted in disruption of families and communities as well as the loss of skilled workers and professionals across the Philippines, including the loss of church workers within the UCCP.

Mutual Recognition of Ministry must take into account these and other realities. It must reflect God's judgement against the mighty and proud nations and a light of hope to the poor and oppressed.

### **Understandings of Ministry**

The UCC and the UCCP acknowledge the similarities and differences that exist in their understandings and practices of ministry.

The churches believe that there is consistency in understanding of the roles and educational preparation for ordained ministry for those who have undertaken graduate study preparation (M.Div. or its equivalent) in both churches. Similarly, the UCCP and the UCC acknowledge a consistency of understanding in the nature of diaconal ministry and accept an equivalency between consecration in the UCCP and commissioning within the UCC.

The UCCP and the UCC commit to honouring the specific contexts and commitments of each other's ministry. Each denomination will encourage its ordained and diaconal ministers seeking to become a ministry partner in the other denomination to be sensitive to and honour these commitments.

These commitments include within both churches the full and equal participation of women and men in ministry, and within The United Church of Canada, the full inclusion of gay, lesbian and transgendered ministers.

*Within The United Church of Canada* ordered ministers are called to a distinct role of leadership within the church. Their leadership is authorized and exercised through their membership in a presbytery (or district). Through this membership, they are called to exercise governance and leadership, shared with elected leaders, in the ministry of the church. Ordered ministers are office holders within The United Church of Canada. While there may be elements similar to employment, the essential nature of the relationship is a covenant with the presbytery, and the pastoral charge or presbytery recognized ministry, and God.

*Ordained and diaconal ministers* are ordered by the church and serve the mission and ministry of the United Church as a whole. Preparation for ordered ministry involves university level theological study and an extensive discernment and assessment process. Ordered Ministers maintain the historic connection of the United Church to the church catholic through the faithful witness to the apostolic tradition and the interpretation of a living faith. Ordered ministers carry responsibility as communicators of the tradition enacted in word and sacrament, education and service. They serve as resident theologians, called to bring the church's theological heritage into the context of God's mission in the world.

They are ordained and commissioned to the ministry of The United Church of Canada within the Holy Catholic Church. Consistent with the historic traditions of the church, in the United Church ordination and commissioning take place through the laying on of hands and once enacted, are not re-enacted.

*Within the United Church of Christ in the Philippines*, ordained ministers are those who have been called and set apart for the Ministry of the Word, Sacraments, Liturgy and Pastoral Care and Leadership in the Church of Jesus Christ. Their talents, gifts and capabilities are seen to mirror the grace of God in Jesus and their contributions to the ministry are recognized and affirmed by the faith communities, as they respond to God's call by offering themselves in leadership as Ordained Ministers. The covenant of the Ordained Ministry is a full-time and lifetime commitment, and those who enter into that covenant dedicate their whole life to the disciplines and lifestyle the covenant requires.

Diaconal Ministers are those who are called and consecrated to serve in specific lines of ministry such as Christian Education, Church Music, Counseling, Chaplaincy, Early Childhood Education, Youth and Campus ministry and some practical theological areas in Ministerial formation such as Christian Educational Ministry, Church Music and research.

### **Eligibility for Appointment**

Mutual Recognition of Ministries means that the ministries of both denominations are considered to be eligible for appointment within both denominations.

Ministers of both denominations must be approved through the respective processes of each denomination. The appointment of a minister from either denomination is based on a letter of good standing from their respective denominations. The UCCP and the UCC commit to ensuring that such letters of good standing ensure that the denomination commends the minister to the other, that their credentials are in order, that there are no disciplinary processes in process, and that their ministry within their home denomination has demonstrated effective and faithful qualities and character. Ministers who are appointed under this Mutual Recognition Agreement will be called Ministry Partners in The United Church of Canada and Mission Co-Workers in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. For the purposes of this agreement, these terms are understood to be equivalent.

### ***Within The United Church of Canada,***

A congregation or ministry of the UCC, which seeks an appointment of a UCCP minister is invited to contact the appropriate unit of the General Council Office. The application is expected to involve the participation of the Presbytery and include a needs assessment and an explanation of why a UCCP minister would best serve the ministry needs of the congregation and community.

The United Church agrees that all UCCP ministers seeking to serve a UCC congregation will be placed through an official church assignment from the UCCP. That is, such assignments will be made by the UCCP, specifically the Office of the General Secretary, in response to a formal request the UCC congregation made through the General Council Office.

UCCP ministers, who are assigned in this manner to a UCC ministry, will be asked to make application to become a ministry partner within The United Church of Canada. He or she will be expected to have gained an appropriate understanding and appreciation for the ethos and polity of the United Church. To assist in this preparation, the United Church provides a range of materials available on-line.

Once approved as a ministry partner the UCCP minister will have the same standing as all United Church ministers. It is important to note that this status of eligibility for appointment does not predetermine or eliminate the further steps that will be required to be undertaken by the UCCP minister through Immigration Canada (Government of Canada) for a work permit in Canada.

***Within the United Church of Christ in the Philippines,***

UCCP Ministers seeking an overseas appointment within The United Church of Canada will do so following the directions of Article VI “The Ministry Without Borders” of the “Magna Carta for Church Workers of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.”

UCC Ministers desiring an opportunity to serve within the UCCP will secure letters of good standing and recommendation from their Conference. Their application will be reviewed and submitted through the General Council Office. The Office of the General Secretary of the UCCP will receive the application and will interview the applicant to determine their suitability for ministry within the UCCP. Following this, the applicant, as a Mission Co-Worker, will be placed within the established processes of the UCCP for ministry assignment.

**Responsibilities**

Recognizing the different cultures and practices that define each other’s identity and the difficulties that are present in adapting to ministry in an unfamiliar context, the UCCP and the UCC commit to ensuring that adequate programs exist within each denomination to support ministers assigned under this agreement. These support programs will include mentoring and accompaniment of Ministry Partners and Mission Co-workers for the first year or more of their appointment.

The UCCP and the UCC, through their Presbyteries or other appropriate means, will also undertake an evaluation meeting with the appointed minister at the end of their first year of service. The intention of this evaluation is to assist the minister in reviewing the first year of ministry in the partner denomination, and determining what additional work or support might be helpful in more effectively functioning in ministry.

**Discipline and Accountability**

Ministry Partners and Mission Co-workers, who are called or appointed to a ministry in the partner denomination, are seen for the purposes of discipline and accountability, to be equivalent to being admitted to the ministry of the denomination while under appointment.

While under appointment or call they are fully accountable to the respective judicatory bodies and subject to its discipline. Such oversight and discipline will be consistent with the polity and practices of the denomination they serve. Forms of disciplinary action will vary by context and the practice of denominations, but ultimately can lead to the removal of ministry status. In such a case, the relationship of the partner denomination with the Ministry Partner or Mission Co-worker is severed, the pastoral relationship and appointment ends, and discipline and accountability reverts to their home denomination. In all processes of discipline of a ministry partner or Mission Co-worker, the partner denomination commits to ensuring that the home denomination is informed of the outcome of such processes.

The status of a Ministry Partner or Mission Co-Worker is also dependent upon good standing with their home denomination. In the event that the letter of good standing is revoked by the home denomination, the status also ends, the relationship of the partner denomination with the minister is severed and the call or appointment is terminated.

### **Benefits and Compensation**

Ministry partners and Mission Co-workers, while under appointment in the partner denomination through this agreement will be compensated by and receive the appropriate benefits within that denomination. The partner denomination will ensure that ministry partners/mission co-workers are compensated according to the established policies of the denomination and that adequate benefits are in place for health and insurance coverage and for pension contributions as permitted.

### **Time Limit of Ministry Partner/Mission Co-Worker Status**

An appointment, made under this Mutual Recognition Agreement will be for a two year period renewable for two additional two year terms for a total of six years. Once the appointment is completed the minister is obligated to return to their home denomination.

In each two year term, four to six months before the end of the term, the appropriate denominational body, using processes appropriate to the denomination, will undertake a review of the appointment and determine its renewal for an additional two year assignment or its conclusion. A decision for conclusion of the assignment is not eligible for appeal.

### **Implementing Guidelines**

Implementing Guidelines will be developed and approved by the respective Executive bodies of the denominations. Such guidelines will be updated periodically and include:

- Compensation, benefits and pension
- Terms of appointments
- Eligibility for consideration for formal admission (in recognition of the reality of migration but with a clear intention that the agreement not be a vehicle for emigration)
- Options for those pastors who have relocated and desire to be recognized in their new church home
- Oversight and discipline
- Cultural sensitivities
- Denominational identity, ethos, and culture
- References to the UCCP Magna Carta, Sending Forth, UCC Manual and procedural policies
- Form for tri-lateral covenant between the denominations and the ministry partner
- Other required forms for application
- An ongoing structure to intentionally evaluate and evolve the concept and practice of mutual recognition

### **Approval of This Agreement**

This agreement is subject to approval by the appropriate governing bodies of each denomination and will take effect upon the signing of the documents by representatives of the governing bodies.

**REPORT: MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY WITH THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA****Origin: General Secretary, General Council****Memorandum of Understanding  
Mutual Recognition of Ministries****The United Church of Canada and  
The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea.**

Through this agreement The United Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea enter into an ecumenical partnership that:

*recognizes* the ordained or ordered ministries of both denominations (the ordained and commissioned (diaconal) ministries of the UCC, and the ordained ministry of the PROK); and

*establishes* the framework where ordained and commissioned ministers of each denomination can have mutual authorization for exercising all the prerogatives of ministry in each other's congregations.

In so doing the UCC and the PROK affirm each other's ministries as true ministries of the one, holy Church of Jesus Christ, blessed by God and called to provide leadership in the church through word and sacrament, pastoral care and education.

In entering this agreement, the churches affirm their desire to give visible expression to the prayer of Jesus "that they all may be one." (John 17:21) Because of this, we believe that we are "no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him," we believe, "the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord." (Ephesians 2:19–21)

**Introduction**

The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea and The United Church of Canada, from the foundation of the PROK in 1953, and in their respective bodies long before that time, have been partners in mission. The Presbyterian Church in Korea was established in 1907, but the division which created the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) was forced when the majority Presbyterian Church could not accept the more liberal theology being taught by some Korean professors, as well as William Scott of Canada, and espoused by churches whose clergy had studied under them. They were ordered to recant on a charge of heresy, but refused and, leaving, formed the PROK. The United Church was the sole partner denomination choosing to continue to stay in relationship with the PROK in that division. Canadian missionaries shared the grief caused by this separation, reminiscent of the pain in Canadian communities at the Presbyterian conflict over Church Union in 1925. At the same time all endured the great grief of being a mission in exile after the division of the country and the Korean War forced the Canadian mission from its centre in Hamheung in present North Korea to Seoul, along with the loss of so many Christians and friends through the conflict of the Korean War.



United Church overseas personnel and its predecessors since the first days have served the PROK in education, medical, social service, administrative, and other fields. Canadians were a significant presence in the liberation struggles of Korea, during the Japanese occupation of 1910-1945, and the dictatorship days of the 1970s and 80s. United Church theological reflections on mission and ecumenism have been greatly enriched by Korea's *minjung* theology. The churches continue to work closely together in justice and peace issues, including most recently shared work on empire and economic justice.

The partnership in God's mission of PROK and UCC has emerged from the historic missionary movement to current expressions of the sharing of mission personnel and resources, mutual accountability and common witness. Both denominations are committed to deepening their commitments to new forms and expressions of partnership in the world so that God's people and God's world may be blessed.

Both recognize that the world has changed remarkably in the last two generations. The Korean population in Canada is now the fourth largest in the world outside Korea and continuing to grow significantly. The UCC is deeply concerned about connecting with this growing Korean population so that it might receive their gifts and be transformed into a church that would better serve God's purposes in the new Canadian reality.

The PROK is concerned for its Korean members now resident in Canada and desires to find ways of continuing to support them pastorally. The PROK also recognizes the growing Canadian and English speaking population in Korea and desires that there be opportunities to share in ministry with The United Church of Canada to this community.

The UCC acknowledges the presence of many Korean ministers and congregations already within the ministry of the United Church. A Mutual Recognition Agreement would expand the possibilities for leadership in these and in new congregations as well as the possibilities for United Church ministers to gain valuable experience serving in the PROK for a time.

The PROK acknowledges that this agreement will provide opportunity for some of their ministers to gain experience and skills in leadership in ministry that might otherwise not be available in Korea. Ministers may gain expanded opportunities for congregational leadership and experience of inter-cultural and multi faith communities and families.

Both denominations believe that a mutual recognition of ministries is one step of greater cooperation towards the objective of sharing together in God's mission.

### **Understandings of Ministry**

The UCC and the PROK acknowledge the differences that exist in their understandings and practices of ministry.

The United Church in particular notes its understanding of one order of ministry with two expressions, ordained and diaconal. The United Church believes that there is consistency in understanding and in educational preparation between ordained ministers in both churches. It

commends to the PROK the distinctive role of diaconal ministers within the UCC and their historic connection to the world-wide movement of diakonia. It commends the diaconal ministry of the United Church to the PROK within this agreement as those ordered within the United Church to distinctive service of education, social justice and pastoral care and invites the PROK to receive their gifts.

*Within The United Church of Canada* ordered ministers are called to a distinct role of leadership within the church. Their leadership is authorized and exercised through their membership in a presbytery (or district). Through this membership, they are called to exercise governance and leadership, shared with elected leaders, in the ministry of the church. Ordered ministers are office holders within The United Church of Canada. While there may be elements similar to employment, the essential nature of the relationship is a covenant with the presbytery, and the pastoral charge or presbytery recognized ministry, and God.

*Ordained and diaconal ministers* are ordered by the church and serve the mission and ministry of the United Church as a whole. Preparation for ordered ministry involves university level theological study and an extensive discernment and assessment process. Ordered Ministers maintain the historic connection of the United Church to the church catholic through the faithful witness to the apostolic tradition and the interpretation of a living faith. Ordered ministers carry responsibility as communicators of the tradition enacted in word and sacrament, education and service. They serve as resident theologians, called to bring the church's theological heritage into the context of God's mission in the world.

They are ordained and commissioned to the ministry of The United Church of Canada within the Holy Catholic Church. Consistent with the historic traditions of the church, in the United Church ordination and commissioning take place through the laying on of hands and once enacted, are not re-enacted.

*Within the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea* ordained ministers are called to serve roles of pastor, teacher, evangelist or other roles according to their own talents and the church's need. There is no difference between a minister and a layperson as a new being in Jesus Christ. However the minister is distinguished from a layperson because of the responsibilities they hold. In a sense of serving the church wholly, the responsibility is a most dignifying, useful, and professional role.

Within the PROK ordained ministers are expected to be sincere in faith and be capable of teaching; healthy and committed to the mission of the gospel. They should manage their own families well, and receive respect from others (1 Timothy 3:1–7).

Ministers are called to lead worship authorized by presbytery. They select hymn, psalms, Bible passages for worship and they are responsible for pastoral prayer, sermon, and benediction. They have authority to exercise ritual, that is, baptism and sacrament by the determination of the board meeting (which is composed of the minister and elders) or the permission of presbytery. They have responsibility to lead the baptized to enroll in a church. And when the pastor is asked to administer the sacrament and baptism by another denomination, church, church association, and other special cases, they can exercise or participate as long as it is not against their conscience.

Ministers are in charge of church administration and discipline for the holiness and peace of the church. Ordained ministry within the PROK is understood to express the commitments of the diakonia in service, education and social justice.

Ministers teach the Bible, doctrines, and church rules to their congregations. They do pastoral visits. They should pray and serve especially for the poor, the ill, the wounded, and the weeping. Ministers can serve educational organizations, administrative institutes, and other mission organizations and they should be devoted to their responsibilities.

### **Ministry Partner and Eligibility for Call**

Mutual Recognition of Ministries means that the ministries of both denominations are considered to be eligible for call, appointment or service within both denominations subject to individual approval as a ministry partner.

Ministers of both denominations must be approved through the respective processes of each denomination to be recorded as a ministry partner. The application of a minister from either denomination is based on a letter of good standing from their respective denominations. The PROK and the UCC commit to ensuring that such letters of good standing ensure that the denomination commends the minister to the other, that their credentials are in order, and that there are no disciplinary actions in process. In addition, letters of reference will be provided indicating that their ministry has demonstrated effective and faithful qualities and character.

### ***Within The United Church of Canada,***

An ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea is invited to apply to the national officer of the United Church responsible for oversight of this agreement. The application format (available on-line) includes a personal statement on ministry and the interest in serving within the United Church. An interview will be arranged either in person or electronically, to review the minister's interest and to determine the preparation and suitability for doing so. As part of the process, the PROK minister applying to become a ministry partner is expected to have gained an appropriate understanding and appreciation for the ethos and polity of the United Church. To assist in this preparation, the United Church provides a range of materials available on-line.

Once approved as a ministry partner the PROK minister will have the same standing as all United Church ministers in eligibility for call or appointment to a United Church congregation. This status will enable a PROK minister either from within Canada or from Korea (or elsewhere in the world) to make applications to United Church congregations advertising for a minister and indicate that they are eligible for call or appointment. It is important to note that this status of eligibility for call does not predetermine or eliminate the further steps that will be required through Immigration Canada (Government of Canada) for a work permit in Canada.

***Within the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea,***

An ordained or diaconal minister of The United Church of Canada is invited to apply to the national officer of the PROK responsible for oversight of this agreement. The application format includes a personal statement on ministry and the interest in serving within the PROK. An interview will be arranged either in person or electronically, to review the minister's interest and to determine the preparation and suitability for doing so. As part of the process, the UCC minister applying to become a ministry partner is expected to have gained an appropriate understanding and appreciation for the ethos and polity of the PROK. To assist in this preparation, the PROK provides a range of materials.

Once approved as a ministry partner the UCC minister will have the same standing as all PROK ministers in eligibility for call or appointment to a PROK congregation. This status will enable a UCC minister either from within Korea (or elsewhere in the world) to make applications to PROK congregations through the usual processes.

It is important to note that this status of eligibility for call does not predetermine or eliminate the further steps that will be required for a work permit in Korea.

**Responsibilities**

Recognizing the different cultures and practices that define each other's identity and the difficulties that are present in adapting to ministry in an unfamiliar context, the PROK and the UCC commit to ensuring that adequate programs exist within each denomination to support ministry partners. These support programs will include mentoring and accompaniment of ministry partners for the first year or more of their appointment or call.

The PROK and the UCC, through their Presbyteries or other appropriate means, will also undertake a reflection meeting with the ministry partner at the end of their first year of service. The intention of this reflection is to assist the ministry partner in reviewing the first year of ministry in the partner denomination, and determining what additional work or support might be helpful in more effectively functioning in ministry.

**Contexts of Ministry**

The PROK and the UCC commit to honouring the specific contexts and commitments of each other's ministry. Each denomination will encourage its ministers seeking to become a ministry partner in the other denomination to be sensitive to and to honour these commitments.

**Discipline and Accountability**

Ministry Partners, who are called or appointed to a ministry in the partner denomination, are seen for the purposes of discipline and accountability, to be equivalent to being admitted to the ministry of the denomination while under appointment or call.

While under appointment or call they are fully accountable to the respective Presbyteries and subject to its discipline. Such oversight and discipline will be consistent with the polity and practices of the denomination they serve. Forms of disciplinary action will vary by context and the practice of denominations, but ultimately can lead to the removal of ministry partner status. In such a case, the relationship of the partner denomination with the ministry partner is severed,

the pastoral relationship, call or appointment ends, and disciple and accountability reverts to their home denomination. In all processes of discipline of a ministry partner, the partner denomination commits to ensuring that the home denomination is informed of the outcome of such processes. The status of ministry partner is also dependent upon the good standing of the ministry partner with their home denomination. In the event that the letter of good standing is revoked by the home denomination, the status of ministry partner also ends, the relationship of the partner denomination with the ministry partner is severed and the call or appointment is terminated.

### **Benefits and Compensation**

Ministry partners, while under appointment or call in the partner denomination will be compensated by and receive the appropriate benefits within that denomination. The home denomination of the ministry partner will have no responsibility for providing compensation or benefits. The partner denomination will ensure that ministry partners are compensated according to the established policies of the denomination and that adequate benefits are in place for health and insurance coverage and for pension contributions as permitted.

### **Time Limit of Ministry Partner Status**

A ministry partner, following application, interview and acceptance by the partner denomination, will maintain the status of ministry partner for a period of three years or for the duration of a call or appointment.

If the ministry partner is unable to secure a call or appointment within a three year period, ministry partner status must be renewed through a new application process. Each denomination will determine the extent of the re-application process and documentation required.

If the ministry partner has secured an appointment or call, the status continues throughout the call or appointment. At the end of the call or appointment, and at each change of pastoral relationship, a new application must be made for ministry partner status to be renewed. Each denomination will determine the extent of the re-application process and the documentation required.

### **Internship**

Supervised ministry education opportunities for ministry students will be explored. The PROK and the UCC will explore the ways in which such opportunities for cross cultural learning can be offered to candidates for ministry in the partner denomination. The exploration will include recognition of such internships as credit towards fulfillment of ordination requirements in the home denomination.

### **Implementation Guidelines**

Implementing Guidelines will be developed and approved by the respective Executive bodies of the denominations. Such guidelines will be updated periodically and include:

- Compensation, benefits and pension
- Terms of appointments
- Eligibility for consideration for formal admission (in recognition of the reality of migration but with a clear intention that the agreement not be a vehicle for emigration)

- Options for those pastors who have relocated and desire to be recognized in their new church home
- Oversight and discipline
- Cultural sensitivities
- Denominational identity, ethos, and culture
- Form for tri-lateral covenant between the denominations and the ministry partner
- Other required forms for application
- An ongoing structure to intentionally evaluate and evolve the concept and practice of mutual recognition

### **Approval of This Agreement**

This agreement will be approved by the appropriate governing bodies of each denomination.

## **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **Origin: The Executive of the General Council, Nominations Committee**

The General Council and its Executive are supported in their mandates, in part, through the work of several committees and task groups as well as people serving as representatives of The United Church of Canada with various partner organizations. The Nominations Committee is charged with recommending the members who will serve on these committees and in these roles. Where other courts or groups are authorized to recommend or to appoint members to committees of the General Council, the Nominations Committee compiles these recommendations into a coordinated report.

In offering its recommendations, the Nominations Committee follows the related guidelines and policies set by the Executive of the General Council, makes use of spiritual discernment practices, and respects the United Church's commitments to diversity, becoming an intercultural church, and embracing the leadership of youth and young adult members.

During the 2012–2015 triennium, the Nominations Committee met on 22 occasions, either in conjunction with meetings of the Executive of the General Council or by video and conference call. Of particular note during this past term was the interest generated in serving with the Comprehensive Review Task Group authorized by the 41st General Council. This call for nominations resulted in 65 people expressing interest to serve on this 7-person task group.

Of no less importance is the work of the other committees, task groups and representative roles of the General Council and its Executive, and all those who faithfully serve with them. At the time of writing, the Nominations Committee has made 251 recommendations for appointment or reappointment to these roles, drawing on 476 expressions of interest.

In this report, the Nominations Committee offers the names of those it is recommending for appointment to the committees that report directly to the General Council. The Nominations Committee also proposes extending appreciation on behalf of the General Council to those who have served on its behalf in these roles during this past triennium.

### **Members recommended for appointment or reappointment (with terms as stated)**

Archives and History Committee (43rd General Council, July 2018)

- Wayne Harris – Layperson, Bay of Quinte, *Chairperson*

*For information: the following members have been elected through their Conferences Archives and History Committees*

- *To be determined* – Newfoundland and Labrador
- Julielyne Anderson – Layperson, Maritime
- Joan Benoit – Montreal and Ottawa
- Diana Duncan-Fletcher – Bay of Quinte
- Mary Gooley – Layperson, Toronto
- Rod Coates – Layperson, Hamilton
- *To be determined* – London

- Dawn Monroe – Layperson, Manitou
- Pamela McLeod – Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario
- John Haas – Ordained, Saskatchewan
- Helen Reed – Diaconal, Alberta and Northwest
- Gerald Hobbs – Ordained, British Columbia
- *To be determined* – All Native Circle

Audit Committee (43rd General Council, July 2018)

- Hugh Johnson – Layperson, Alberta & Northwest, *2nd term, Chairperson*
- Lindsay Mohn – Layperson, Saskatchewan, *2nd term*
- Garnet Webster – Layperson, Hamilton, *2nd term*
- Leah Weiss – Layperson, Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario, *2nd term*
- John Hurst – Layperson, Hamilton
- Robin Pilkey – Layperson, Toronto

Judicial Committee, *as recommended by Conferences*

- Fannie Hudson – Layperson, Newfoundland and Labrador (2021)
- Lynda Goy-Flint – Ordained, Newfoundland and Labrador (2021)
- Diana Ginn – Layperson, Maritime (2024)
- Greg Smith-Young – Ordained, Hamilton (2024)
- David Smith – Lay, Hamilton (2024)
- Steve Wilson – Ordained, Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario (2024)
- Lorna Standingready – Layperson, All Native Circle (2018)

*For information. The following members who continue to serve on the Judicial Committee, were appointed by previous General Councils:*

- Florence Sanna – Ordained, Newfoundland and Labrador (2018)
- Steven Longmoore – Ordained, Maritime (2018)
- Susan MacAlpine-Gillis – Ordained, Maritime (2018)
- Kerri Seward – Layperson, Maritime (2018)
- Gail Christy – Ordained, Montreal and Ottawa (2018)
- Laurie E. Joe – Layperson Montreal and Ottawa, Layperson (2021)
- Paul Macklin – Layperson, Bay of Quinte (2018)
- Paul Reed – Ordained, Bay of Quinte (2018)
- Gary Magarrell – Ordained, Bay of Quinte (2018)
- Bob Little – Layperson, Bay of Quinte (2018)
- Penny Keel – Layperson, Toronto (2018)
- Ellen Mole – Layperson, Toronto (2018)
- Cindy Randall – Ordained, Toronto (2021)
- John H. Brown – Ordained, Toronto (2018)
- Brad Morrison – Ordained, London (2018)
- Bob Gibson – Ordained, London (2018)
- Ken Fraser – Layperson, London (2021)
- Margaret McKechney – Ordained, Saskatchewan (2018)



- Lorraine Harkness – Ordained, Saskatchewan (2021)
- Marilee Iverson – Layperson, Saskatchewan (2018)
- Charlene Orr – Layperson, Saskatchewan (2018)
- James H. Hillson – Ordained, Alberta and Northwest (2018)
- Nancy Steeves – Ordained, Alberta and Northwest (2018)
- Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier – Layperson, Alberta and Northwest (2018)
- Ben McKay – Layperson, Alberta and Northwest (2018)
- Jon Jessiman – Ordained, British Columbia (2018)
- Ruth Wright – Ordained, British Columbia (2018)
- Stan Lanyon – Layperson, British Columbia (2021)
- Kathleen McCallum – Ordained, Manitou (2018)
- Robert Wright – Ordained, All Native Circle (2018)
- Betty Lou Skogen – Ordained, All Native Circle (2018)
- Donald Little – Ordained, All Native Circle (2018)

Executive of the Judicial Committee, *as recommended by Conferences*

- Lynda Goy-Flint – Newfoundland and Labrador
- Steven Longmoore – Ordained, Maritime
- To be determined – Layperson, Montreal and Ottawa
- Paul Macklin – Layperson, Bay of Quinte
- Penny Keel – Layperson, Toronto
- David Smith – Layperson, Hamilton
- Brad Morrison – Ordained, London
- Steve Wilson – Ordained, Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario
- Margaret McKechney – Ordained, Saskatchewan
- James H. Hillson – Ordained, Alberta and Northwest
- Jon Jessiman – Ordained, British Columbia
- Kathleen McCallum – Ordained, Manitou
- Lorna Standingready – Layperson, All Native Circle

Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee (43rd General Council, July 2018)

- Daniel Hayward – Ordained, Montreal & Ottawa 2nd term, Chairperson
- Alison Etter – Ordained, Maritime
- Carmen Lansdowne – Ordained, British Columbia
- Grace Lee – Ordained, London
- Jennifer Janzen-Ball – Ordained, Saskatchewan
- Ryan Slifka – Ordained, British Columbia
- Collin Smith – Layperson, Alberta & Northwest
- Brian Thorpe – Ordained, British Columbia
- Darlene Brewer – Layperson, Montreal & Ottawa, 2nd term
- Teresa Burnett-Cole – Ordained, Montreal & Ottawa, 2nd term
- Martha Martin – Diaconal, Maritime, 2nd term
- Mathias Ross – Ordained, Saskatchewan, 2nd term
- Earle Sharam – Layperson, Alberta & Northwest, 2nd term

- Bill Steadman – Ordained, Manitou, 2nd term

Transfer Committee, (43rd General Council, July 2018)

- Philip Newman – Ordained, British Columbia

**Members who have completed or are completing their terms of appointment on the Executive or committees of the General Council:**

The Executive of the 41st General Council

*Moderator:* Gary Paterson

*Past Moderator:* Mardi Tindal

*Conference Representatives:* Florence Sanna, Claude Hender,\* Ivan Gregan, Charlotte Griffith, John H. Young, Lynella Reid-James, Thom Davies, Steve Lowden,\* Charles McMillan, Bill Rogers,\* Barb Janes, Bev Kostichuk, Robert Mutlow, Armand Houle,\* Jess Cobb,\* Alvin Dixon\* (deceased), Donna Kennedy

*Members at Large:* Adam Hanley, Kellie McComb, Colin Phillips, Adam Brown

*Ethnic Ministries:* John Kim,\* John Lee

*Francophone Ministries:* Nicole Beaudry, Marie Claude Manga

*Aboriginal Ministries Circle:* Ray Jones, Jim White, John Thompson, Martha Pedoniquotte, Susan Gabriel, Grant Qeskekapow,\* Mel King

*Chairperson, Governance and Agenda:* Shirley Cleave

*Chairperson, Ministry and Employment Policies and Services:* Tracy Murton

*World Council of Churches, Central Committee:* Carmen Lansdowne\*

*Chairperson General Council Planning:* Roy West

*Chairperson Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith:* William (Bill) Steadman

*Global Partner:* Ramzi Zananiri (corresponding)

*United Church Women:* Beverley Green (corresponding)

*Observer Board:* Ambury Stewart\* (corresponding)

\*concluded or resigned from appointment prior to the end of the triennium.

Audit Committee – Janet Stockton (Chairperson)

Archives and History Committee – Robert Stevenson (Chairperson), Jean Barman (Academic), Linda White, Karen McLean, Michael Brooks, Edward Avery, Diane Trollope, Earl Gould, Sheila Johnston.

Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee – Aruna Alexander, Jordan Cantwell, Jill Curd, Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd, Adam Kilner.

Judicial Committee – Margaret Bain (Chairperson), Maggie Coffin-Prowse, Helen Barkley (Executive), Deborah Deavu, Scott Campbell, Cynthia Grandejambe, Charles Huband (Executive), Glenna Beauchamp, Jeff Cook, Kirk Windsor.

42nd General Council Planning Committee – Roy West (Chairperson), Gary Paterson (Moderator), Fred Monteith (Business Coordinator), Maya Landell (Worship Coordinator), Miriam Bowlby (Youth Forum Coordinator), Linda Stonehouse (Local Arrangements Co-Chairperson), Kathy Brett (Local Arrangements Co-Chairperson), William Steadman (Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith).

Comprehensive Review Task Group – Cathy Hamilton (Chairperson), Gary Paterson (Moderator), Russel Burns, Wilson Gonese, Lauren Hodgson, Kenji Marui, Beth Symes, Vic Wiebe.

Conference Records Review Task Group – Barbara Reynolds, Pamela Mykityshyn, Katherine Moore.

Faithfully submitted, by Florence Sanna, on behalf of the Nominations Committee:

Pauline Walker – Maritime  
Charlotte Griffith – Montreal and Ottawa  
Norma Thompson – Bay of Quinte  
Lynella Reid-James – Toronto  
Thom Davies – Hamilton  
Doug Wright – London  
Erin Todd – Manitou  
Anna Stewart – Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario  
Laura Fohse – Saskatchewan  
Bob Mutlow – Alberta and Northwest  
Graham Brownmiller – British Columbia  
Donna Kennedy – All Native Circle  
Nicole Beaudry – Ministère en Français  
Diane Bosman & Shirley Welch (staff)

## REPORT OF THE ABORIGINAL MINISTRIES COUNCIL

### Origin: Aboriginal Ministries Council

#### **Introduction: “Behold, I make all things new.” Revelation 21:5**

The Aboriginal Ministries Council (Council) will mark its sixth anniversary in the fall of 2015. The Council gathered for the first time in September 2009 to discern and implement recommendations made within the “Vision of New Beginnings”<sup>1</sup> report. The work of this triennium brought clarity to a vision of partnership rooted in respect, equity, and mutuality with The United Church of Canada. This new and emerging relationship provides rich soil for spiritual renewal within Aboriginal communities of faith and for the whole church.

The Council encourages the church to continue to build on the gifts and contributions made by Aboriginal communities over the past several decades. One cannot overemphasize the need for adequate time to be given for this significant and transformative work to evolve.

Over the last triennium Aboriginal communities of faith have expressed their needs on matters of spiritual well-being and leadership, support to congregations and improvement of church buildings. The Council has listened and has struggled with the question of how it is that we, the church, might hear, understand, and respond?

Yet, in the midst of struggle Aboriginal communities are committed to The United Church of Canada and want to continue to be a part of it.

Blessings come in the form of new connections with global partners, through new fresh engagements in youth leadership development and new commitments to stewardship. There is much to give thanks for and a growing cause for hope.

The Council meets twice a year. The spring meeting is held at the General Council Office. The fall meeting takes place within an Aboriginal community of faith thus enabling connections on matters of ministry, justice, and spirituality. As we look to building efficiencies in the new triennium we will review the community consultation and engagement processes.

The Council has engaged in fundraising events to support local ministry or the Mission & Service Fund.

The Council regularly reports to the Executive of the General Council.

The 2012–2015 Aboriginal Ministries Council membership is as follows:

Marie Dickens

- Jim White\*
- Lori Lewis

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1. Aboriginal Ministries Steering Committee, *Vision of New Beginnings*, approved at the Executive of the General Council, November 15–17, 2008.

British Columbia Native Ministries Council

- Ray Jones, Chair\*

All Native Circle Conference

- Russel Burns - All Tribes Presbytery
- Bernice Saulteaux - Plains Presbytery\*
- John Thompson- Keewatin Presbytery\*
- Lorna Pawis - Great Lakes Waterways\*

Ontario and Quebec Native Ministries

- Susan Gabriel\*
- Martha Pedoniquotte\*
- George Montour, Co-chair
- Wanda Montour

Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre,  
Grafton Antone\*

Inuit/Metis Community

- Rosalyn Cole\*

Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential School Committee

- Melvin King\*
- Ministries in French
- Pierre Goldberger

Executive of the General Council

-Kellie McComb\*

Intercultural and Diverse Communities in Ministry, Lark Kim\*

Executive Minister, Maggie McLeod

\*denotes 2–3 year terms are complete

Since the death of honoured Elder, Mr. Alvin Dixon (July 2014) there has been vacancy for a representative from the Native Ministries Consortium, Vancouver School of Theology.

**The Work of the Triennium**

National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering (Gathering): This Gathering occurs every three years. It is a forum for listening to Aboriginal communities of faith, guests, and partners on matters of spirituality and ministry.

The 2014 Gathering was held July 25–27 on the Oneida First Nation (Ontario). Aboriginal communities of faith (64 in total) were invited to appoint two delegates to the Gathering, 49% responded. The Moderator, General Secretary, members from the Comprehensive Review Task Group and the Global Partner Council attended as observers. Commissioner Marie Wilson brought greetings from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and offered condolences to family and community on the loss of the late Mr Alvin Dixon. The communities of Oneida,

Chippewas of the Thames First Nations, and London Conference, played an active role throughout the planning stages and during the actual event.

The Gathering began with a sacred fire, followed by a memorial service for the late Mr. Alvin Dixon. Guest speaker, the Rev. Dr. Cecil Corbett offered reflections on *All My Relations*. Quilt patches representing Aboriginal communities of faith were stitched together to further honour the theme.

The three-day program included a visit to the Mount Elgin Indian Residential School Commemorative site located on the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. Mount Elgin was one of the Indian residential schools operated by The United Church of Canada. Chief Joe Miskokomon welcomed the Gathering to the territory and shared insights of his community's journey toward reclamation and self-determination. For some participants this was the first time they shared their personal story about how the residential school system impacted their family and community.

Other workshops focused on congregational and leadership development, real property, and stewardship. Youth participants were actively engaged in community and culturally appropriate programming. They offered excellent leadership, particularly in the area of spiritual practices. A silent auction generated over \$1,000 for the Mission & Service Fund. Items for the auction were donated by participants and guests.

Sunday Communion Service was led by the Oneida United Church. The Right Rev. Gary Paterson offered the sermon and the local choir shared beautiful Oneida hymns of praise. Rev. Grafton Antone, and youth delegates presided at communion.

The Council will review the NASG Terms of Reference in early 2015. The review will focus on areas of vision and objectives, representation, location, youth leadership in planning and facilitation; and roles of host community and Council. The Council will consider future sites that will provide opportunity for participants to receive the gift of hospitality from Aboriginal communities of faith while attending to the important logistical aspects that impact participation, cost, and program.

National Elder: The Council continued to develop a proposal for National Elder based on the framework that emerged from the 2011 National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering. It was determined that a position of National Elder could not be defined within a job description. The Elder provides spiritual leadership and vision. A formal process for selecting or electing a national Elder does not exist within Aboriginal community. Regional Elders have been called upon throughout this triennium.

The Cairn: *The Cairn* (Laurentian University) was erected in honour of the 1986 apology to First Nation peoples. The Committee on Indigenous Justice, All Native Circle Conference, Manitou Conference and the Council have interest in maintaining the cairn. The Council will embark upon a proposal with the partners to post the new crest, install solar lighting, and an image of dancers and drummers to reflect revitalization of culture.

The Bundle: Aboriginal Ministries have gathered a bundle of spiritual items. The bundle is housed in the Aboriginal Ministries Circle area of the General Council Office. Historically, elements of the bundle have been present when the Council meets. The bundle consists of:

- A four directions cloth
- The four medicines (sage, tobacco, sweetgrass, cedar)
- The sacred fire Christ candle
- A broken chalice
- A rabbit pelt and an arrowhead shape stone
- The trowel used to repair the cairn in Sudbury, Ontario in 2005.
- An eagle feather and raven feather.
- Lord's Prayer in Mohawk
- Wampum strands
- Three crosses symbolic of the triune God
- A quill box made of birch bark and sweet grass
- A hand crafted wooden United Church Crest

Each gifted component of the bundle has a story and a teaching. As the Council grew to understand their intercultural nature there began a dialogue on the significance and meaning of the bundle for the Council. This presence of the bundle honours and celebrates Aboriginal presence within the United Church. Its intention is to be a spiritual space for unity.

In October 2013 the Council reviewed a paper that contained background and teaching on each of these sacred items in the bundle. There is consensus that traditional teachings are needed and an understanding of protocol is essential. The Council is committed to building understanding of how to honour these items. Elder Myrtle Moneybird, visiting Elder from the Treaty 4 (File Hills, Saskatchewan) cautioned that a bundle is a serious undertaking.

This dialogue carries significant importance and implications for Aboriginal communities of faith. Traditional wisdom teachings from the various regions are and will continue to be shared. There is much complexity in claiming an identity of Indigenous Christian. Respect is foundational. The Council affirms that we are all people of the earth, land, and lake; and, that unity comes in the most common elements of, earth, air, water, and fire.

In February 2015 the Council directed the Executive Minister to consult with a local Elder to determine future actions.

Leadership Development: The Dorothy Jenkins Estate trust account is held by The United Church of Canada. In a document dated August 31, 1995, the terms of the will state: *"To divide the rest and residue of my estate into three (3) equal shares and to pay... the third share to The United Church of Canada for charitable work among our native peoples."* In November, 2010 The Council began a new relationship with the Joint Grants Committee enabling them to develop a Terms of Reference to manage the application and disbursement process. This new partnership acknowledges the leadership capacity Council's has with respect to matters of "charitable work" in today's context of justice and right relations. Regular disbursements were made throughout 2014 and 2015. Aboriginal youth leadership development has been substantially supported through this fund.

The establishment of the Alvin Dixon Memorial Bursary Fund was announced at the March 2015 Executive of the General Council. This fund will support ongoing education for Aboriginal students. The fund honours life and work of the late Alvin Dixon, a respected leader, who died in 2014. The Council and the Joint Grants Committee will manage disbursements.

**Healing Fund:** The United Church of Canada's Healing Fund (Fund) came into existence in 1995 in response to the legacy of the Indian Residential School system. This commitment represented a step toward living out the 1986 Apology to First Nations Peoples and the Apology to Former Students of the United Church Indian Residential Schools and to their Families and Communities (1998). The Fund provides funding to community projects involved in culture and language projects—foundational to spiritual renewal of families and communities.

Promotion for the Fund occurs through The United Church of Canada website and various social media platforms.

Council has undertaken to review the Fund's process and trends. Recent trends show a shift in themes and a decline in requests for support for culture and language projects. There has been an increase in requests for administration health care (seniors care, etc.).

Resources for the Fund resources are drawn from Mission & Service Fund (\$300,000 per year). A total of \$660,000 has been granted this triennium (up to December 2014). It is anticipated there will be an additional \$150,000 granted during the 2015 spring granting process. In all, 84 projects with a focus on language, holistic healing, and cultural renewal will have received support from the Healing Fund in this triennium.

The Council will make recommendations for changes in the Healing Fund in the fall of 2015.

**Congregational Development:** The 2011 National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering has served as an avenue for Council to consult with communities in the development of a framework for the cluster group model. This program began in 2011 and has continued through this triennium with a focus on: congregational leadership, and resource development; real property, and spiritual healing. The objectives of the cluster groups include information sharing, setting goals and priorities, brainstorming and developing strategies for building partnerships.

Typically, cluster groups consist of three to five communities of faith, a local Elder and a Conference or presbytery staff. The number of participating communities increase in areas that are more isolated.

The clustering process is one approach toward achieving the objectives that have been named in this section. The Aboriginal Ministries Circle engages directly with communities of faith and is in partnership with Conferences, presbyteries, and other areas of the church.

In October 2013 a report was prepared by the Executive Minister and Community Capacity Development Coordinators that reflects the experiences of Aboriginal faith communities. The



report identifies barriers and offers strategies to build capacity. The barriers are outlined in detail in the **United in God’s Work** report.

The following quotation captures the essence of the work that lies ahead:

*“Decolonization is the intelligent, calculated and active resistance to the forces of colonialism that perpetuate the subjugation and/or exploitation of our minds, body, and lands, and it is engaged for the ultimate purpose of overturning the colonial structure and realizing Indigenous liberation....” And, “In accepting the premise of colonization and working towards decolonization, we are not relegating ourselves to a status as victims. On the contrary, we are actively working toward our own freedom to transform our lives and the world around us. The project that begins with our minds, therefore, has revolutionary potential.”<sup>2</sup>*

**Youth Leadership Development:** The Council has committed to actively engage in recruiting members from their constituency to fill future appointments and ensure there is inclusivity of youth and young adults.

The planning team for the National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering will include one youth or young adult. The Council is committed to designing safe and youth friendly spaces.

**Real Property:** The Council has a mandate to establish and implement a property and capital plan to address needed repairs, upgrades and restoration to United Church buildings in Aboriginal communities. The Council offers a wide lens from which to discern priorities and has capacity to develop resources that in areas of project planning and management training.

A working group was established March 2014 to develop a Real Property plan and Terms of Reference. This Task Group consists of one representative from each of the constituencies that make up the Council.

The purpose of the plan is to articulate, size, resource, and execute a project to improve Aboriginal Real Property buildings and manses in partnership with local, regional, and national partners. The project is a joint venture of the Aboriginal Ministries Council and Circle, as well as partners and stakeholders wherever Real Property buildings are located. The scope and duration of the project will be determined in the context of the overall Aboriginal ministry strategy and resources. Priority will be given matters of safety. Significant support and collaboration from partners and stakeholders is needed to ensure the objectives will be met. Project objectives are:

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2. Reprinted with permission from *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook*, ed. Waziyatawin Angela Wilson and Michael Yellow Bird (School for Advanced Research, 2005), pp. 2, 3.

1. To review the *2007 & 2008 North Pacific Building Assessment Reports*<sup>3</sup> and updated reports to identify a priority order of work to be undertaken in consultation with stakeholders and partners.
2. Build capacity within Aboriginal communities of faith to develop a vision statement that expresses their ministry.
3. Develop and implement a communication plan for Aboriginal communities of faith, partners, and stakeholders of the Real Property and Capital Plan.
4. Build capacity for communities of faith to identify contractors and local tradesworkers.
5. Upgrade the physical state of real property in accordance to local cultural values with respect to safety, comfort, and aesthetics.
6. Consult with communities of faith, stakeholders, and partners to determine which buildings need to be safely demolished, as well as the capacity to be replaced.
7. Build capacity for communities of faith to assume responsibility for the management and operations of the property.
8. Create opportunity for the church and communities of faith to gain a deeper understanding of real property title within the various communities.

In February 2015 the Council agreed to implement the initial phase of the Real Property Plan. This includes consultation with Conferences that have an interest in Aboriginal Real Property and with the All Native Circle Conference's Council on Sharing. Information on the plan will be shared with Aboriginal communities in early 2015.

The Council appointed five members to serve on the Real Property Task Group. The Task Group will receive and review applications for real property renovation projects from the Aboriginal communities of faith, and will make decisions in a fair and equitable manner.

There is strong emotional attachment to buildings. Communities of faith will be asked to hold in balance the value of shared history and the challenges facing the church. Communities of faith will be invited to consider what the balance is in honouring sacred and historic space while building capacity for spiritual nurture and ministry for future generations.

Partnership with the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential School (IIRS): There was collaboration in the planning and resourcing of the Living into Right Relations Task Group's final meeting in November 2013, the goals of which were to:

- name accomplishments and challenges, experiences, and insights gained by the Task Group and home groups and forward this feedback to those who will have ongoing engagement in this work.
- formulate recommendations with an action plan to carry the work forward within the United Church,
- bring closure to the Task Group through ceremony and acknowledge the five-year commitment and hand over the work to the bodies carrying it on.

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3. This report prepared by the North Pacific Management Services Ltd. for The United Church of Canada (2008) contains an overview of the state of the church and manse buildings in Aboriginal communities of faith in Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec.

The IJRS and Council met twice during this triennium. Their key areas of focus were: the comprehensive review—envisioning the future together; clarifying areas of collaboration; and, exploring the question of what follows the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

#### Comprehensive Review Task Group

In March 2013 Council made two recommendations: i) Aboriginal representation on the Task Group is needed; ii) The Task Group needs to establish a process of consultation with Aboriginal Ministries. The Council committed to a process that would clarify working relationships between the constituencies it represents.

Russel Burns, Council member, was appointed to the Comprehensive Review Team.

The consultation process began with the community of faith conversation. The Aboriginal Ministries Circle staff supported this work by engaging Aboriginal communities of faith in the questionnaire. Approximately 90% participated in this process.

Later, in the fall, members of the Comprehensive Review Task Group and the Council began to explore the presence and the work of Aboriginal ministries in The United Church of Canada. This dialogue enabled a deeper understanding of the Aboriginal context. Stories from communities of faith emerged expressing the barriers that exist in processes relating to ministry preparation, support, and reparation to church buildings.

From the many and varied conversations these questions emerged:

1. What are the characteristics of a sustainable and effective structure for Aboriginal communities of faith?
2. Council wants to be a part of nurturing the identity of the United Church. Honest conversations are needed as we build up the Body of Christ together. What do we value in a partnership?
3. Without the concept of reparation, is it possible to do justice as we accompany communities of faith? What is fair? What is equitable?

In October 2013 the Council envisioned a structure within The United Church of Canada that would facilitate an equal voice for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples within the church.

The Aboriginal Ministries Circle coordinated a research project to review the structures within the Anglican Church of New Zealand and the Uniting Church of Australia's, Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. The research was reviewed by the Council in March 2014. There was some comparison of structures, however, the main focus centred on the principles of the relationships. It was noted how themes of equality and value were reflected within structures.

The following summarizes key points:

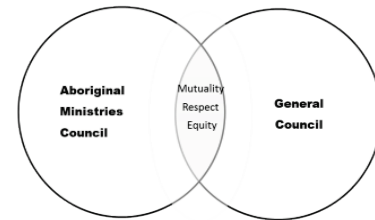
- Our present structure has been useful in many ways. The journey has not been easy, yet it has enabled progress. Much work has been done to achieve what exists now, i.e. Aboriginal Ministries Council and Circle, All Native Circle Conference, Sandy-Saulteaux

Spiritual Centre, British Columbia Native Ministries, Ontario Quebec Native Ministries, and Indigenous Justice/Residential School Committee.

- Indigenous theology needs to be nurtured and documented from within the context of Indigenous communities of faith. There is a need to capture stories for the upcoming generations.
- Equality requires that each party give to the relationship. How will the church address financial dependency? Has our structure created a dependency?
- Aboriginal communities need time and space to express how they want to relate to the wider church.

The dream:

- The foundation of any model needs to recognize the unique relationship between Aboriginal people and Canada.
- The shaded area defines the relationship.
  - Values: Respect, honesty, truth, wisdom, humility, love, hope, strength, courage, sharing, patience, collaboration, traditions, culture.



Aboriginal ministries are positioning themselves for change. The Comprehensive Review process acknowledged and responded to the need for time to further the dialogue.

In February 2015 the Council appointed three members to determine a process to engage Aboriginal ministries in responding to the following key questions:

1. What is a cohesive vision for Aboriginal ministries?
2. What principles will guide relationships with the wider church and with the constituencies that make up the Council?
3. How will the vision be achieved?
  - a. What is the precious work that must go forward?
  - b. What is no longer effective?
  - c. What structure and resources (staff, networks, technology, funding) are needed to support Aboriginal ministries?

The dialogue has affirmed how Aboriginal communities share a common experience of growing and adapting to change. It has become increasingly important that the Aboriginal ministries constitute the Aboriginal Ministries Council establish themselves as one body, working together.

The image of a “smaller house” has been used to describe our future together in the church. To support ongoing life within the church we will carefully consider what we take from the past and present that will continue to serve to revitalize faith and ministry. We will also identify those pieces we leave behind. It is clear that connectional space for spiritual renewal and Aboriginal youth and young adults’ leadership development remain priorities.

The development of Aboriginal ministries has enriched The United Church of Canada and has contributed toward Aboriginal self-determination. This vision has not changed; it continues to

expand in ways that support connection for Aboriginal faith communities in this time. Aboriginal leadership renews the whole church.

Going forward Aboriginal ministries will be cautious of being drawn into empire. Space will be held to examine processes and structure that have the potential to become debilitating and oppressive. A circle of relationships will be nurtured rather than vertical or hierarchical structures. The Council recognizes a need for the whole church to shake the “ties that bind” and lean into the strength of Jesus’ prayer “*That all may be one*” (John 17:21) and the Indigenous truth and wisdom of *All My Relations*.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ray Jones, Co-chair  
George Montour, Co-chair  
Marie Dickens  
Jim White  
Lori Lewis  
Russel Burns  
Bernice Saulteaux  
John Thompson  
Lorna Pawis  
Susan Gabriel  
Martha Pedoniquotte  
Wanda Montour  
Grafton Antone  
Rosalyn Cole  
Melvin King  
Pierre Goldberger  
Kellie McComb  
Lark Kim  
Maggie McLeod, Executive Minister

## **THEOLOGY AND INTER-CHURCH INTER-FAITH COMMITTEE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

**Origin: Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee (Bill Steadman, Chair)**

### **Introduction**

The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee is a committee of the General Council. We update our work on a regular basis to the Executive of the General Council, and are called to full accountability at the General Council Meetings held every three years under our current organization. This accountability report, therefore, will address matters that have been referred to us by the 41st General Council, matters that have arisen during this triennium, and also matters that have carried over from the work of the previous triennium.

Specific work assigned to this committee by the 41st General Council was a request to examine Local Ordination as a way to deal with the unique calling of Designated Lay Ministers as Ministry Personnel within The United Church of Canada. We also were asked to look at the desirability of Diaconal Ministers automatically being licensed to preside over the sacraments from the time of their Commissioning as Diaconal Ministers. Further, as a result of discussion and action taken at the 41st General Council, we needed to revisit the statement on ministry to attempt to clarify the church's understanding of ministry today. All of these issues led to the formation of a Working Group on Ministry within the United Church, and its report, as authorized by the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, and supported by Ministry Employment and Personnel Services Permanent Committee, entitled "One Order of Ministry," is found elsewhere in this packet.

As well, the committee has examined issues of membership that have arisen over the recent years as congregations struggle with how they may maintain our current form of governance which is dependent upon the involvement of full-members while at the same time congregations find more and more of their most active people, who are adherents, are reluctant to enter into full-membership, yet want to be involved in the life, mission and ministry of the congregation. A report that begins to address those concerns also is found within your package of material with separate recommendations and a request for further study by the church.

### **ONGOING WORK**

#### **A. Hindu–United Church Relations**

The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee that served during the triennium continued work begun following the 40th General Council to study Hindu–United Church relations. This study followed earlier processes related to Jewish–United Church Relations and Muslim–United Church Relations.

*Honouring the Divine in Each Other: United Church–Hindu Relations Today*, the study resource prepared by this working group, was completed in this triennium, and is available on-line for study and response by congregations and mission units. We commend this study to the church, and hope that we receive feedback on the statement proposed in the study so that action may be taken to move this relationship forward at the 43rd General Council.

## **B. Land and Covenant**

Coming out of the 41st General Council, and earlier statements on Israel and Palestine, the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee was looking at the whole issue of land from a covenantal perspective. We further realized that land needed to be understood not just in the biblical concept of land as it pertains to the Holy Land (and so the land that is claimed by both Jews and Palestinians), but also to look at land from a sense of Indigenous people, and in particular from the perspective of the land within Canada and our relationship to the land as both Indigenous people and people who have settled on the land, or immigrated into this land, in more recent years.

A symposium was held in May 2014 in Saskatoon that looked at land from both the perspective of the Holy Land and from the perspective of the rights and stewardship of Aboriginal people within Canada. We determined that the goals of that symposium may have been more encompassing than what we could accomplish in three days. More particularly, we have realized that it is difficult, if not impossible, to address the land issues of Israel, Palestine, and indeed the whole Middle East without coming to grips with our own imperfect, indeed seriously flawed approach, to the land issue within Canada.

As a result, we see it prudent for the United Church to look at land as it pertains to Canada and our relationship with those who have carried the stewardship of the land from its beginning, our Aboriginal people, before we seek to offer further comment on the issue of land as it pertains to other regions and nations.

This may help expand the original concepts shared in the Circle and Cross document, and also, we expect, will be of critical importance in helping us to focus on Aboriginal spirituality in a deeper way. As we have sought dialogue and understanding with Jews, Muslims, and Hindus, we see it as of critical importance to look at Aboriginal spirituality in a concerted way in the next triennium. We would seek the support of the General Council in undergoing such work.

A full report with recommendations for further action on this issue is found elsewhere in this report book for action.

**C. Physician Assisted Death** (as a followup to the Moderator's blog in October, and the recent Supreme Court ruling on this issue).

Our Moderator had written a blog in October 2014 in anticipation of the Supreme Court of Canada Hearing on the issue of Physician Assisted Death (the term "Physician Assisted Suicide" was commonly used at that time, but the Supreme Court in its ruling clarified the terminology with which they felt this issue could be handled appropriately). As a committee we were asked to share our perspective in this issue as background to the Moderator's blog, and then as a follow-up, developed a statement on the issue that was meant to help the church in dealing with this issue theologically, pastorally, individually, and corporately. We wish to continue that work in dialogue with the church as a whole.

Recommendations that were made by the General Council Executive in March, 2015:

- affirming the right and capability of individuals to engage with issues involved in end-of-life decisions

- directing the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to examine the theological implications of physician-assisted dying and offer guidance to the Executive on the development of a church statement on this issue
- encourage congregations to deepen pastoral capacities to assist those who are facing end-of-life decisions, including a willingness to talk openly about death and dying

#### **D. Theologies of Disabilities**

This is work that recently has been placed before the committee. A working group to engage theologies of disabilities was formed, made up of two staff members, a theological resource person, two members from the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, and four members chosen from a pool of 17 people who applied to be on this working group through the nomination process.

Early in its process, the working group determined it would be helpful to request personal statements related to the ways in which members have experienced the church dealing with people living with disabilities. The respondents could be self-identified as people living with disabilities, caregivers, or allies. The end result was a huge document of over 150 pages that shared very personal and painful stories of people's experiences within the church. The depth of the reflections in this document, and the overwhelming response when the call went out for members of the working group, both underline the timeliness of this work and the pain that is associated with people's personal experiences within our church as they seek to live their faith in the midst of personal disabilities. Often our church is behind other key sectors within society in addressing individuals' needs with regard to the whole range of disabilities, and meeting them. This clearly is important work for our church, and for all of our congregations and pastoral charges.

The report of this working group has been accepted by the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee and is being forwarded to the General Council for your consideration. The action sought from this report is that we engage communities of faith in exploration of theologies of disabilities. Such engagement will be important for people with disabilities and for the communities of faith in their ministry and in developing important pastoral sensitivity for and by their members as well as the community as a whole.

#### **E. Anglican–United Church Dialogue**

The focus for the Anglican–United Church Dialogue this year has been our understanding of ministry. This focus in part has arisen from the fact we as a denomination have been looking at the issue of ministry, and also we have begun talks with several denominations around mutual recognition of ministry (or, as in the case with the United Church of Christ in the United States, full communion). It seemed to the Dialogue an examination of our mutual understanding of ministry was an important process to enter. They found much that is helpful within an ecumenical context in the "One Order of Ministry" document, and offered some thoughts through our committee on this document and the report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group as it pertains to acknowledging the oversight role within the church. Such documents were made available through our reporting process to the General Council Executive.



**F. The Roman Catholic–United Church Dialogue**

This group has been focussed on issues of ecology, environment and theologies of creation in the last year, and will continue to explore mutual concerns arising from those discussions. One initiative the Dialogue is undertaking is production of liturgical resources that may be used by our two denominations in relation to ecological justice. The dialogue also has offered advice on the Comprehensive Review process, reminding us as a denomination not to lose the importance of ecumenical gifts and commitments as we move into a possible new way of being the United Church. The Dialogue is also making plans for celebrating the 40th anniversary of Roman Catholic-United Church Dialogue this year.

**G. Mutual Recognition of Ministry**

The work being done on mutual recognition of ministry with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, and with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, has had input from our committee and especially through one of our staff persons, Bruce Gregersen. We see these efforts as a helpful way to live the mandate of the committee in our ongoing “inter-church” work.

**H. Full Communion with the United Church of Christ, U.S.A.**

These discussions have progressed very rapidly, and a timeline for formalizing an agreement on full-communion between our denominations has been approved. This process arose out of a request on our part to pursue mutual recognition of ministry with the United Church of Christ. Such a concept was foreign to them; they were, however, quite open to full communion (involving membership, doctrine, mission and ministry) as part of a more inclusive partnership. Dan Hayward of our committee has been part of this process moving toward a full communion agreement.

In the process, there has been a recognition of how much we have in common, and also what we can learn from one another. We were informed that the United Church of Christ has nothing that is the equivalent to our Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, and those involved in these discussions from the United Church of Christ see it as a possible gap in their own process of doing theology within their church. They see value in our process.

**I. Migrant Church Working Group**

Dan Hayward is our committee representative on this group as well, and updated the committee regularly on the work of this group as they seek ways to expand our linkages with those who come from denominations within other countries yet who share an affinity to the theology, values, and liturgical tradition of the United Church.

**J. The Church Towards a Common Vision**

The committee is considering ways to respond to this convergence document from the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. We understand that there are clusters of churches and at least one theological school holding discussions and studies around the document, and the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee will be seeking ways to respond to the document in the fall of 2015.

**K. Together Towards Life**

A working group also is looking at ways to make this World Council of Churches document more accessible. We have also been granted permission to create a study guide more helpful within the Canadian context, with expanded worship and hymn selections. This is work that also is ongoing.

**L. China Christian Council**

The Committee was informed of an opportunity later in 2015 where a delegation is being sought to meet with the China Christian Council. Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith is among the groups within the church with whom this invitation has been shared, as it relates directly to our inter-church mandate. We are pleased that our incoming chairperson, Dan Hayward, has been chosen to be part of that delegation.

**M. Adoption**

This is another area that we have been asked to address as a committee in light of a recent report on the issue of adoption that came to the General Council Executive. We have set up a task group to develop the terms of reference for a future working group that ultimately will work on and develop a theology of adoption during the next triennium. Committee capacity, and the number of pressing issues that needed attention for this General Council, did not allow us the time to address this important issue in the past triennium.

**Summary**

As can be seen in this report, we have been assigned a vast array of tasks from a variety of concerns within the church. The diversity of the work demands that the committee be populated by people with a wealth of experience, an agility in handling theological concepts, and a similar diversity of interests in order for the work of the next triennium to be accomplished. The committee as a whole has been impressed by the people who have offered themselves to serve on this committee in the next triennium, and we look forward to this work being shepherded effectively and efficiently in the years ahead.

On a personal note, I wish to thank a very hard-working, insightful, and compassionate committee for all of their efforts this past triennium. One of our members, Dan Hayward, has been nominated to fulfil the role of chairperson in the next triennium. This is a demanding position given the diversity of the concerns addressed, and the detail of reporting needed. I am sure Dan will fulfil this role admirably.

As mentioned above, some major pieces of business will come from this General Council in the form of specific reports. I shall be available to discuss any of this report at the General Council meeting itself.

**Committee Members this triennium:**

Bill Steadman (chair)  
Aruna Alexander  
Darlene Brewer  
Teresa Burnett-Cole  
Jordan Cantwell

Jill Curd  
Daniel Hayward  
Adam Kilner  
Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd  
Martha Martin  
Mathias Ross  
Earle Sharam

**Staff Support:**

Bruce Gregersen  
Gail Allan  
Christian Nguyen  
Alan Hall (with Working Group on Ministry)

**Recommendations:**

See TICIF 1 Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Accountability and Future Work Proposal, pages 295–296.

## REPORT: THEOLOGIES OF DISABILITIES

Origin: Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee

### Introduction: Why Theologies of Disabilities?

*Many times I have wondered: “Why would God let this happen? Where is God today?”*

*I have been bemused, saddened, and perplexed by the way our church has treated those like me, and has largely refused to hear that there is even a problem.*

The Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee was asked by the Executive of General Council in November 2013 to develop a theology of disability,<sup>1</sup> which could include concepts such as healing, cure, sin, and normalcy. From the beginning, we wrestled with the notion of developing a theology of disability because the category “disability” is not neatly defined or clear. With this principle in mind, we invited people living with disabilities, and allies, to tell their own stories. The *italicized* sections of this report represent a small selection of the 35 submissions received in writing, video performance, and artistic work which we received in answer to our invitation to tell the church a story over a cup of coffee about living with a disability, or being an ally with a person with a disability. We have been honoured to be entrusted with these stories, some painful and some joyful, that have enriched the development of this report.

As affirmed by the United Church in 2012 in the report “Open and Accessible: Ministries with Persons with Disabilities,”<sup>2</sup> people with disabilities may have physical, mental, or emotional conditions that affect movements, senses, or activities. A disability may be visible, or invisible; it may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, developmental, or a combination of these. Disability is complex. A person with a disability is not reduced to their disability alone; rather, ability is just one identity among many—such as gender, sexual orientation, race, class, and age—that make up who a person is. In addition, understandings of disability change over time. Conditions such as Crohn’s disease or chronic fatigue syndrome, for example, were not considered disabilities several years ago. Disability can also be dynamic. It is an elastic category—an open minority—that anyone can join at any time, with the likelihood of joining increasing with age.

As we reflected on the complexity of disabilities, and the diversities of theologies related to this identity, we moved towards developing “theologies of disabilities,” as there is not only one disability and not only one theology related to this. We also want to present theologies that resist categorizing people solely as either normal or disabled. This type of categorization in the medical model is Western society’s prevailing way of understanding disability. It defines disability in terms of what people with disabilities cannot do or what body parts or mental

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1. The United Church of Canada, Executive of General Council, November 2013. “Gathering Together: Toward a Culture of Mutuality and Full Participation for Persons with Disabilities and Their Allies,” and “PMM6 Consultation on Disabilities” ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “2013-11-16 GCE Workbook”), pp. 70–79 and 98–99.

2. The United Church of Canada, Executive of General Council, March 2012. “PCPMM 19 Open and Accessible: Ministries with Persons with Disabilities” ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “2012-03-24 GCE Workbook”), pp. 172–181. A paraphrase of this paragraph also appears in this report.

processes do not work. It emphasizes disability as a bodily defect, loss, or flaw. It also views people with disabilities as heroic when they participate in ordinary activities such as sports or careers. Focused on the individual, the medical model pervades our culture to such an extent that we hardly notice that it is only one way, and a particularly Western way, to understand disability.

The social model of disability, an alternative to the medical model, defines disability not as what a person can or cannot do, but how people with disabilities are treated by society. To have a disability is to experience prejudice and exclusion, called ableism. If disability is understood as socially constructed, then the barriers society sets up become an issue of justice. However, this social model has been criticized for focusing on bias and discrimination, while ignoring the physical and emotional realities of disability. Neither the social nor the medical model can fully define disability or what we understand about disability from a theological perspective, but both of these models can contribute to our understanding of disability.

*The church is behind, playing catch up and not leading. This saddens me, because of your history of fighting for social justice...This is a justice issue in our midst.*

Recognizing that people living with disabilities and their allies often encounter barriers in communities of faith and often find themselves on the margins of church life, the United Church needs to create much more accessible spaces, both in terms of physical space and attitude. According to Statistics Canada, in 2006 14.3 percent of Canadians were persons living with disabilities. In the national identity survey conducted by The United Church of Canada in 2011, only 5.3 percent of respondents identified as living with a disability. This gap illustrates that there are obstacles in the church that prevent individuals with disabilities from participating. And yet people with visible and invisible disabilities are present in all, or nearly all, of our communities of faith. Some may move in and out of church life, and some may move in and out of degrees of disability.

*The problem with the church and disability is cultural, and no amount of legislation, tsk-tsking, or calls to right thinking will change it quickly.*

The Gospel witness of the ministry of Jesus shows that he sought out the very people who faced disability and marginalization in the society of that time. If we are to be true to Jesus's example, and to the biblical witness, we must be clear that a theology of disability is inherent in Scripture. It affirms that all are created in the image of God, and that all of God's people are welcomed into the radical hospitality of Jesus, wherever they are on the spectrum of ability.

### **Difference and Building Community**

*My disability is not [the] totality of who I am. Usually, disability is not the first identity I name. As a person of faith, my first identity, my baptized identity, is as a beloved child of God. This is the primary identity that continues to shape my life, and one that I hope [to] be reminded of as I seek to remind others that they too are beloved children of God.*

Disability is usually viewed as a limitation, and in comparison to those who have the power to define normalcy. Disability, therefore, is a social construct, created by what a society takes for

granted as normal. In fact, both the normalization of ability and the construct of disability can be challenged. There is no normal.

*Ideas of normalcy and imperfection remain and get reinforced in the church making some people feel inadequate because of their disability.*

### ***Engaging Difference***

Disability is about difference: people with disabilities may move, see, hear, speak, and think differently. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities names as a general principle respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity.<sup>3</sup>

Commitment to relationship across diversities presents the challenge of creating communities that expect and honour differences. In the commitment to becoming an intercultural church the United Church has already developed some understandings of what it means to live with difference:

Becoming an intercultural church is the call to live together in intentional ways where there is the mutual recognition and understanding of difference through intentional self-examination, relationship building, and equitable access to power; it is also our attempt to respond faithfully to such a call.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, as affirmed in the United Church's 2012 Ecclesiology Report,<sup>5</sup> we need communities that are prepared to struggle with the ways that the differences among us are reflected in structures of domination and subordination. This means that community is not achieved simply by including everyone in an unchanging church, but involves grappling with the relations of power among us in a dynamic faith community. An intercultural church honours difference, works to transform relations that exclude, and is committed to be changed by those who have been seen as “other.” When difference is recognized as “necessary to truth and goodness”<sup>6</sup> differences become sources of energy, alternative visions of reality, and ways of moving beyond binary thinking into models of multiplicity, mutuality, and dialogue.

Alliance-building through action is key for the work of social transformation.<sup>7</sup> The ethicist Janet Jakobsen argues that without attention to forming alliances in a context of difference, movements for social change tend to reproduce the very dynamics they criticize in the dominant society. She

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3. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, [www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml](http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml).

4. The United Church of Canada, General Council 41. “Intercultural Ministries: Living into Transformation” ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “GC41 ROP”), pp. 312–314, 524–533; and Executive of General Council, “GCE 3 Intercultural Ministries: Living into Transformation (GC41 GCE12 – REF PC PMM 17 2012)” ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “2012-10-26 GCE Workbook”), pp. 137–138.

5. The United Church of Canada, “TICIF Ecclesiology Report”. *Record of Proceedings of the 41st General Council 2012* ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “GC41 ROP”), pages 431–447.

6. Gloria Albrecht, *The Character of Our Communities: Towards an Ethic of Liberation for the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 159.

7. Janet R. Jakobsen, *Working Alliances and the Politics of Difference: Diversity and Feminist Ethics* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998).

contends that alliance-building must engage diversity and complexity within and among groups. Only then can movements for change avoid reproducing the barriers of we/they thinking and instead form working relationships for the creation of “spaces where differences need not imply hierarchy and domination.”<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the starting point for transformation is not simply valuing diversity by expanding categories of inclusion, but challenging existing relations of domination.

### ***Building Community***

Faith communities tend to believe that diversity can be achieved by inclusion through outreach and invitation. Even when committed to diversity, the inclusive community too often reflects notions of pluralism which assimilate differences to the norms of the dominant social order. Honouring and engaging difference entails examining relations of domination and exclusion. Furthermore, building solidarity across boundaries of difference involves risk and struggle.

*I would value a church that spends time thinking about how to walk with people who live with chronic, demanding, unpredictable situations.*

An alternative vision of community is “radical inclusiveness” aimed at “the conversion of all present structures by the transformative power of ‘dangerous’ stories” in order to create communities “where all are able to know themselves to be loved by a God whose desire for them is fullness of life.”<sup>9</sup>

*More than anything, I need you not to be afraid of my story. I need people who are willing to walk with me when I am afraid, angry, exhausted, or sad.*

To be radically inclusive requires that dangerous stories re-shape how the community defines itself. Rather than seeking inclusion at the centre, this model of solidarity at the margins aims to transform the very structures that constitute the centre.

*It is essential to be aware of the power we hold related to our identities and our roles and who makes space for our leadership. How we see ourselves in leadership impacts how others see us and vice versa.*

Re-imagining community in these directions calls regional and national structures as well as local communities of faith to new ways of being church. God calls us through Christ to create spaces of possibility where all people without distinction (Galatians 3) can join to give life to this radically inclusive vision. To do so invites thorough examination of the ways that church life continues to exclude through hierarchical theologies, binary thinking, and relations of domination and subordination. To embrace ambiguity, faith communities need to be open to multiple and complex ways of expressing faith and permit the renewal of traditions through articulating, re-working, and negotiating diverse norms and values and the relationships among them. Diversity is the hard work of building relationships, bearing one another’s anger and pain,

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8. Jakobsen, *Working Alliances*, 20, 15.

9. Eileen Scully, “Solidarity: Love that Moves Hands and Feet,” *Groundswell*, Summer/Fall 1996, 3–4.

confronting complicity, and creating politically effective strategies for justice-making. Diversity work is a transformative process, reconstituting church, society, and individual.<sup>10</sup>

## **Redefining Accessibility, Vulnerability, and Safe Space**

### ***Accessibility***

*At church, the now startlingly regular references in Bible readings and music, to the healing of the blind, to sight miraculously being restored, jumped out at me at every turn with irony and challenge and sometimes a wry smile. I still notice and think a lot about what these words really mean. Has my sight been restored?—sadly no. Has there been healing? This is a more difficult question, and I am grateful to be a member of a denomination and local congregation that can talk about healing at many levels.*

To be radically inclusive, a faith community must be accessible—which means more than enabling people with disabilities to enter a building or see and hear in the sanctuary. The symbol of the white wheelchair on a blue background advertises accessibility, but how do the community’s structures and traditions reflect the diversity of Christ’s body? To welcome “all,” the church must think all the way through changing the physical and organizational structures to include not only potential congregants but also ministry personnel. “Under the guise of providing access, a society can systematically limit or censor access, purposefully determining areas of access and conversely determining areas that would remain inaccessible.”<sup>11</sup> Full accessibility goes beyond removing physical barriers to reconsider the language of worship. Liturgical language may link sinfulness with disability and use terms to describe disability that divide those with “abnormal” bodies from those considered to be “normal:”

Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb,  
your loosened tongues employ.  
Ye blind, behold your Saviour come;  
and leap, ye lame, for joy.<sup>12</sup>

Making our faith communities accessible goes beyond accommodation. Our commitment to becoming an intercultural church prompts us to ask: What social and material arrangements enable all minds, bodies and souls to worship, grow spiritually, and contribute to the community? The radically accessible faith community includes Christians with disabilities as active, self-identified members in the body of Christ whose vulnerability make the church whole, for “difference is how God says beauty.”<sup>13</sup>

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10. This paragraph appears in “A Church with Purpose: Towards an Ecclesiology for The United Church of Canada in the 21st Century.” Report of the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, *Record of Proceedings of the 41st General Council 2012* ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “GC41 ROP”), pages 431–447.

11. N. Kagendo Mutua, “The Semiotics of Accessibility and the Cultural Construction of Disability” in *Semiotics and Disability: Interrogating Categories of Difference*, ed. Linda J. Rogers and Beth Blue Swadener (Albany, NY: State U of New York P, 2001), 113.

12. Charles Wesley, “O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing,” *Voices United* 326.

13. Darren Dahl, “Why Does Ecumenism Matter?” sermon delivered at St. Martin’s United Church, Saskatoon, SK, February 1, 2015.



### ***Vulnerability***

The dual meanings of being vulnerable emerge as we craft relationships across difference and disability in communities of faith. One can be vulnerable in the sense of being, and feeling, threatened. More hopefully, vulnerability feels as if trust is inherent and the ability exists to open oneself up to love. How can this latter sense of vulnerability be fostered among diverse people? People cannot be forced to love, appreciate, or include others they deem unworthy because of their differences. But the scope of our imagination can be enriched if we learn to live with the hidden lessons of the dissonance that diversity occasions. The movement from feeling threatened to feeling trust needs to occur within communities of faith:

*Nurturing relationships, getting to know others and having open communication fosters bridge building. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” and “Be still and know I am God” are important verses that keep my faith “doing and being” in perspective.*

These words illuminate the sense of trust that comes with being vulnerable with others in relationship over time.

### ***Safe Space***

*I need the church to know that I do not need to be fixed.*

*I have been bemused, saddened, and perplexed by the way our church has treated those like me. And has largely refused to hear that there is even a problem.*

Trust is fostered in safe space, a term that has come to mean a place where vulnerable people, such as victims of domestic violence or members of LGBTTTQ communities, are safe from violence and free to express themselves in ways not permitted in the wider community. A safe space is an environment where all are accepted and are free to express themselves fully.

Sometimes the church has provided political sanctuary, but its safe, sacred space is for all aspects of human life and relationships. The United Church strives to welcome all people regardless of their gender, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, or cultural background. Despite good intentions, however, commonly-held theological and cultural beliefs make some communities of faith unsafe spaces for people with disabilities.

The obstacles to nurturing a safe space for people who live with disabilities go beyond inaccessible buildings to overtly and subtly inhospitable attitudes. For example, people with disabilities may be stereotyped as objects of pity, a source of divine inspiration, or recipients of charity rather than embraced by the community as active and contributing members. Further, biblical stories portraying disabilities and illness as connected to sin or acts of healing contribute to confusing messages regarding the church’s view of disability and community membership. Such concerns can lead to the perception that the church may not yet be the safe space it is called to be.

At times theological messages regarding disability such as “God doesn’t give you more than you can handle” serve to protect others’ faith while alienating individuals living with disabilities. In response we may ask, “For whom are we making our church community safe—people with disabilities, or able-bodied members of the community?”

*I was told that God would not give me more than I can handle. I heard these opinions often, and for a young mother (of a child with disabilities) struggling with constant feelings of exhaustion, fear, and uncertainty these suggestions not only did not “cheer me up,” but they engendered feelings of inadequacy and shame.*

Communities of faith have the potential to affirm all as full participants but to do so we need to be open to hearing, and faithfully responding to, the stories of all members of our congregations, including stories of painful exclusion. Indeed, as beloved people of God we have the exciting opportunity to befriend all of God’s creation in its wonderful diversity. Communities of faith are called to create a space where the stories, contributions, and full participation of all are embraced and valued.

*Fast-forward five years, and you can’t tear J, now 16-years old, away from our church. He’s an active member of (the youth group), volunteers at community dinners, attends camp, sings at open-mic, and won’t miss a Sunday for anything. J has embraced the church and the church has embraced him in return.... Our faith community at XYZ United Church has definitely enriched J’s life. He now has faith as well as a whole faith community to support him. And J has enriched the lives of the faith community in return. They know this fantastic young man who grasps life in both hands.*

### **Disability and Theology**

Practices of welcoming people with disabilities and their allies as full participants in churches have their roots in a theological imagination that understands disability neither as flaw nor defining characteristic, but instead as part of the variation that makes up our communities across the range of human experience.

*I am not special. I do not believe that God has uniquely chosen me for this journey. I am not a saint, nor am I some kind of superwoman. In fact, I am the same as you and I am simply doing the best I can because I don’t have any choice in the matter. This is our life...*

*Not all disabled people “suffer.” Disability can be just one more factor that shapes who a person is.*

Theologies of disabilities need to reflect the fact that many people with disabilities do not seek a cure or consider themselves broken or weaker, but rather work with the limits of their lives as something that makes up part of who they are, and may not perceive their disability as a limitation at all, but rather a difference.

*I was born with [cerebral palsy]... Had I the choice of miraculously becoming able-bodied, I would choose not.*

In practice, however, such bodily differences become socially excluded by attitudes based on common but problematic theological notions. Statements such as “there but for the grace of God go I” or “God doesn’t ever give you something you cannot handle,” may be expressed with good intentions but have harmful consequences for people with disabilities, putting the burden on them to suffer the consequences of society’s exclusion. Disabilities are not all the same; there are invisible disabilities and mental illnesses that also affect people.

### ***Image of God***

So there is need to rethink what it means to be human in relation to God. As part of God’s creation, human beings are created from the earth and with the breath of life (Gen. 2:7), neither perfect nor autonomous, but whole as vulnerable and interdependent creatures. “We have this treasure in earthen vessels” (2 Cor. 4:7).

*One of the messages within the Bible is that of perfection, and people with a disability are not perfect. In fact, all people are not perfect.*

The whole person is valued not because of a set list of abilities or capacities but in relation to God, with others and the rest of the good creation. The dignity of human life is connected to God’s creative activity; all humans bear the image of God (Gen. 1:27), loved into being as precious.

*I have never believed that my disability was a “gift from God” or God’s way of “testing” me. I find such ideas abhorrent and nauseating.... [A]ll of my physical and psychological imperfections, visible and invisible, which seem to be piling up the whiter my hair gets, in no way detracts from the light that shines within me. I know I am made in the image of God. I have God’s thumb-print on my soul. At my core I know I have been “fearsomely, wondrously made.”*

Disability is part of the natural limits and conditions of creation, neither a flaw nor a blessing but one of the diverse ways of being an embodied creature. For the image of God is not as a set of capabilities that can be listed and measured according to standards of exchange value, such that their absence makes someone less human; rather, it is a sign of intrinsic goodness and preciousness that is vulnerable and expressed differently in each person.

If all are created in God’s image, we might welcome one another with the intent of honouring the unique and different way that image is borne out in each of us, including disability and/or mental illness. Biblical characters who have a disability—such as Moses (with his stutter) or Jacob (with his limp)—are not somehow special or chosen because of disability; rather, they are examples of how God may work through people with different ranges of gifts and abilities.

### ***The Healing Narratives***

Given this, there is need to rethink how we interpret the many Gospel stories in which Jesus heals people with disabilities. For some examples see Matthew 20:29–34 (healing two blind men), Mark 1:23–28 (healing the man with an unclean spirit), and Luke 13:10–13 (healing the bent over woman).

*Many disabled people have been severely damaged by Christians who have told the person that their faith is insufficient and that is why they have not been healed.*

*I didn't like the way people with disabilities were portrayed in the Bible. There were too many references to the lame walking and the blind seeing. If I couldn't walk or couldn't see, was I to blame for having too little faith?*

The healing stories may be understood differently. For example, Jesus does not treat disability as a sign of spiritual need or deprivation, as punishment for previous sin, or as a blemish marking some kind of danger. In fact, he challenges such cause-and-effect depictions, opening up alternative perspectives on healing. For instance, in John 9:1–41, with reference to a blind man, Jesus counters the disciples' assumption that disability is a consequence of sin, claiming that neither the man's parents nor he had sinned to cause the disability, but rather that the works of God may be displayed. In this story, as in many others, the focus is not merely on the elimination of impairments and illnesses, re-making people so that they function normally. Instead, the emphasis is on the personal and social transformation that takes place through Jesus' presence.

In this sense, healing entails the restoration of community, removing barriers to belonging, for Jesus had already recognized people with disabilities as part of God's community. Healing marks Jesus' radical hospitality, which fosters new possibilities for the wellbeing (*shalom*) that comes from living in transformed relationships with Christ, with oneself, and with others. Stories of healing in the Gospels serve to show Jesus' identity as Christ, revealing a taste of God's realm at hand: making whole, overcoming isolation, and building community.

Therefore, to focus on the physical cure of the individual with disabilities is to miss a richer, social sense of healing. It also makes people with disabilities the problem and overlooks how it is actually societies that demean and exclude on the basis of restrictive standards of value. Indeed, Jesus' ministry calls attention to this exclusion by constantly challenging the status quo and overturning assumptions about what normal is—refocusing community away from the centre toward the margins, welcoming the uninvited outcast as the honoured guest, pointing toward those shunned by society as, in fact, treasured vessels of the new community of God. Instead of indicating a non-functioning person, the presence of disability may instead be the sign of a non-functioning community, marking the limits of its capacity to welcome and foster belonging. In fact, the prophetic call here is toward communal transformation and right relations. Jesus identifies the work of God with the excluded, those wrongly counted as problems.

*I recall being stunned when a woman afflicted with late stage cancer said: "I must have done something very evil for God to have punished me in this way." Sadly it was not the only time I would hear such a statement. I did my best to say: "No, that is not how it works!" but it was an uphill battle.*

*The old dysfunctional folk theology of God dishing out disease as punishment survives like a wolf in sheep's clothing.*

### ***The Disabled God***

In an even more radical sense, theologically Jesus' death on the cross is an expression of his identification with those suffering from marginalization and oppression. It is fitting, then, that the resurrected Christ retains the wounds suffered on the cross (e.g., John 19:20, 27), revealing a God whose solidarity with humanity not only entails vulnerability and suffering, but more powerfully, whose suffering *with* humanity is now displayed as a disability that is raised and taken up into God's own life in the form of Christ's resurrected body.

Jesus now reveals, in the words of disability theologian Nancy Eiesland, a “disabled God” (Luke 24:36–39). Disability is central to the life of God's own presence in Christ, revealing a new wholeness. In Eiesland's words this revelation underscores that “the reality of full personhood is fully compatible with the experience of disability.”<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, it means “rethinking Christian symbols, metaphors, rituals and doctrines so as to...remove their able-bodied bias.”<sup>15</sup> This powerful image of a disabled God, which deserves a more prominent place in our preaching and teaching, opens up solidarity with people with disabilities and a wider sense of access for all.

### ***Being Church Together***

Accordingly, the church—the body of Christ—is that place where welcome, access, and accommodation are central features of life together, through which all members “have the same care for one another” (1 Cor. 12:25). The church is a household of God (Eph. 2:19) in which “dividing walls” based upon human ordinances are abolished (Eph. 2:14–15) and gifts are received from all members of the body (Rom. 12:4–5; 1 Cor. 12), some of whom may be assumed to be weaker but who are in fact indispensable (1 Cor. 12:22).

*We could focus on what is not working, what is broken, but if we focus from a place of positive, such as those who do accept and welcome, we can draw the circle wide and build communities of acceptance, that move equity forward.*

*I have a much clearer sense that I belong in church, especially because people have made me welcome and have made room for me.*

The church is a place where all might give and receive gifts. All belong. Since God's image includes disability, and this image dwells in all human beings, the church is summoned into a radical kind of belonging, as if welcoming each other is to welcome the divine in our midst.

### **Recommendations:**

See TICIF 1 Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Accountability and Future Work Proposal, page 295.

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14. Nancy Eiesland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1994), 100.

15. Eiesland, *The Disabled God*, 104.

**REPORT: LAND AND COVENANT REPORT****Origin: Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee****Prologue**

In response to concerns that Bearing Faithful Witness did not address issues pertaining to the land, the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee decided to work on a theology of the land. We believe that we can only address issues of land and occupation in Israel and Palestine from our own Canadian context of colonization. We know that our context will add a confessional note of humility in our response to Israel and Palestine and that we need the guidance of our Aboriginal leaders. To this end, we called for a Symposium in May 2014 entitled “Doing Theology on Occupied Land: A Symposium on United Church of Canada Engagement with Israel/Palestine.” We invited Aboriginal, Jewish, and Palestinian leaders as keynote speakers and welcomed workshop leaders from a variety of theological, political and activist perspectives. They were asked to address any of the following issues:

- our religious, ethnic and geographical identities related to the land
- the challenge of competing claims to the same land as essential for the cultural and spiritual identity of different peoples
- biblical perspectives on the call to be people “chosen” to live in a “promised land”
- how divine authority has been used to justify or challenge oppression
- how our response to these questions can lead to transformation of colonial relationships within our own context

Both this symposium and our United Church work in Israel and Palestine held up a mirror to our committee. We attempted to write a reflection on what we learned from the symposium, but realized that in order to articulate a theology of the land that might speak to the situation in Israel and Palestine, as well as other places in the world, we need to understand our own history and context much better.

We offer to General Council our reflections on our colonized, Canadian context arising from the symposium. We conclude with recommendations for the way forward.

**Why Focus on the Land?**

Guided by A New Creed’s gospel imperative to seek justice and resist evil, The United Church of Canada has spoken out against injustice and apologized for its own role in perpetuating injustice. It has recognized and apologized for its inability to recognize and respect Traditional Teachings within the First Nations and for the harm caused in the Residential Schools. Overseas, it has spoken against the political violence in the Philippines and the destructive impact of Canadian mining in Central and South America and in SE Asia. It called for a boycott of South Africa because of its Apartheid system, of Nestlé because of the adverse impact of its infant formula, of California grapes and Arizona lettuce because of the treatment of foreign workers. More recently, it has supported the call from Palestinian Christians for a boycott of products coming from the illegal Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian territory.

We are realizing that land plays a significant role in issues such as these. We also realize that we can only speak of land from our own Canadian context of colonization. We must acknowledge the underlying theological rationale that has been used to justify conquest within our own

history. Without addressing this, it will continue to shape actions and attitudes today that justify colonization throughout the world.

### **Colonization of the Americas**

The missionary impulse to convert the world to Christianity, rooted in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20), inspired the early missionaries to accompany explorers and traders in their first forays into the new world. In some places, they provided a moral regulation for traders and settlers, urging them to treat the Indigenous people with respect.<sup>1</sup> In other places, they supported the common European sentiment that Indigenous peoples were savages, to be saved and civilized. This meant that they were to be converted to both Christianity and European culture. In a few places, missionaries called for the annihilation of Indigenous people, in accordance with biblical conquest narratives.<sup>2</sup>

In almost all cases, the missionaries helped to pave the way for settlers to establish themselves in what was considered “empty land.” There seemed to be little recognition that this land in the Americas was not empty. Colonization of Indigenous land was justified by the doctrine of chosenness. Settlers believed that they, as Christians, were chosen by God to settle in a new, promised land. According to the biblical conquest narratives, if there were others who were living in the promised land, God would lead the chosen ones victoriously in either forcibly taking the land or negotiating with the original inhabitants. To be a chosen people of God meant that God would favour them in their endeavours and bless them with a land flowing with milk and honey. This belief led to a sense of land entitlement, which in turn justified conquest and colonization.

When Europeans began to arrive on the shores of North America, relations with the First Nations varied. Companies dependent upon the trapping expertise of First Nations carefully negotiated business relationships. In Newfoundland, there is little record of negotiation. Rather, there was continuous hostility between the settlers and the Beothuk. Settlers forcibly claimed land, primarily as fishing ports, and were frequently raided by Beothuks, who feared the loss of their hunting and fishing areas. Settlers in turn sought to decimate the Beothuks, leading to a near extermination of the Beothuk people.<sup>3</sup>

The search for land and security has been a persistent theme with each wave of immigration to Canada. The early settlers knew the importance of land not only for their own livelihood, but also for their identity. For instance, Nova Scotia was called new Scotland because of the Scottish immigrants, many of whom were landless and lost in their old land. Some of the original Scottish immigrants were crofters who had been pushed off the land they were renting in the Scottish

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1. Catholic Dominican friars Antonio de Montesinos and Bartolomé de las Casas protested against the exploitation of Indigenous people in South America in the early 16th century. Bartolome de Las Casas: *Witness: Writing of Bartolome de Las Casas*. George Sanderlin, ed. and trans. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993), 66–67.

2. Rev. Cotton Mather, a Puritan minister, supported the “War of New England Against the Northern and Eastern Indians” in 1689 on basis of Joshua 11.

3. Although historical accounts claim that the Beothuk people were completely exterminated, there are still some living who trace their origins to the Beothuk.

Highlands. Earlier, they had been forbidden to speak their language (Gaelic) or honour their culture (wear tartans or play their fiddles and bagpipes). The Scots of the highlands were considered “rude barbarians” who needed to be tamed and civilized by the English-speaking lowlanders. When the Scottish settlers arrived in the new world, they were looking for a place where they could both farm and safely honour their Scottish identity.<sup>4</sup>

At first, there was a combination of animosity, curiosity and support between the settlers and the Indigenous peoples. Some of the first Scottish settlers who arrived in Nova Scotia on the Hector ship in 1773 would not have survived their first winter, were it not for the help of the Mi’kmaq, who brought them meat and taught them how to hunt and use snowshoes.

As the settlers gained land and wealth, they shifted from being the dispossessed in their lands of origin to being the colonizers in the North American colonies. The First Nations shifted from being powerful hosts and allies, essential to the outcome of European wars fought on this continent, to being the colonized, depleted in numbers and spirit, and forced into dependency upon the state. By the 1800s, their population was decimated by European-borne diseases, assimilationist policies, and massacres. Ironically, their language and sacred ceremonies were gradually outlawed by some of the same people whose own Scottish traditions had also once been outlawed. In both Scotland and the Americas, the theological rationale for destroying the local culture was to bring civilization and salvation to the “heathen barbarians.”<sup>5</sup> The United Church “Indian Missions” attempted to eradicate Traditional teachings and culture, “inculcating in the Indian child a moral standard which is the antithesis of all his home experience.”<sup>6</sup> One Superintendent of Missions claimed: “Among the Indians the old deep-rooted heathen practices are now dead because the leaders have experienced the New Birth and they are now enthusiastic members of the Church.”<sup>7</sup>

### **Covenant within North America**

The Two Row Wampum Treaty, made between representatives of the Five Nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (called Iroquois by the settler nations) and the Dutch in 1613, is considered the basis of all subsequent treaties and covenants between First Nations and European/North American governments. This treaty was symbolized by a belt with two rows of purple beads. These rows signified the courses of a Haudenosaunee canoe and a European ship travelling down the same river of life together, parallel but never touching. The three white stripes, between and outside the purple, denoted peace and friendship. This was given to the Dutch, accompanied by the following words: “You say that you are our Father and I am your Son. We say we will not be like Father and Son, but like Brothers. This wampum belt confirms our words...neither of us will make compulsory laws or interfere in the internal affairs of the other. Neither of us will try to steer the other’s vessel...As long as the Sun shines upon this Earth, that is how long our Agreement will stand; as long as the Water still flows, as long as the

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4. This search for land and security became a persistent theme in subsequent waves of immigration to Canada.

5. Donald E. Meek, *The Scottish Highlands: The Churches and Gaelic Culture, Gospel and Cultures Pamphlet 11* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996): 2–9.

6. The Women’s Missionary Society report, *The United Church Year Book 1937*: 132.

7. Superintendent Report of Indian Missions from British Columbia, *The United Church Year Book 1933*: 137.



Grass grows green at a certain time of the year. Now we have symbolized this agreement and it shall be binding forever as long as Mother Earth is still in motion.”<sup>8</sup>

The Covenant Chain was a series of alliances and treaties in the 17th century between the Haudenosaunee and the British colonies of North America designed to promote peace and stability in order to preserve trade. It consisted of a three-link silver chain holding an English sailing ship to the Haudenosaunee Tree of Peace in the Onondaga Nation. The links represented peace, friendship and respect.

In 1763, the British Proclamation declared,

whereas it is just and reasonable, and essential to our interest and the security of our colonies, that the several Nations or Tribes of Indians, with whom we are connected and who live under our protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and Territories as, not having been ceded to, or purchased by us, are reserved to them, or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds.

This Royal Proclamation became the basis for treaties between First Nations and the Canadian government and is referenced in the Canadian Constitution. Through this proclamation, the crown wanted to ensure access to resources and land for settlement while the Indigenous people wanted to ensure that the land was shared fairly.

Shawn Atleo and Ovide Mercredi, both former National Chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations, believe that, as treaty people, every citizen of Canada has a responsibility to live into the intent of the treaties. This means mutual respect and peaceful co-existence “where each nation is allowed their way of life, their culture, their religion, their language, their territory.”<sup>9</sup> This respectful co-existence would be extended to First Nations, such as the Hieltsuk in British Columbia, which did not enter into treaty negotiations and still claim title to their land.

Rev. Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada, recognizes that churches have “a unique and special responsibility because they created the framework that led to the treaties...[they] let First Nation peoples see the treaties as a ceremonial, theological, spiritual act.”<sup>10</sup>

Just as churches built a spiritual path for conquest and colonization, they must now build a spiritual path to covenant relations with all peoples of Canada. The concept of covenant is deeply spiritual. Biblical stories of covenant stress the crucial importance of three parties: God, the people and the land. All three elements must be considered in covenant.

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8. David Blanchard, *Seven Generations: A History of the Kanienkehaka* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin & Kahnawake Survival School, 1980. Digitized 17 May 2010), 124.

9. Ovide Mercredi, *Broken Covenant*, Steve Heinrichs, producer Indigenous Relations, Mennonite Church Canada, 2014. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhTg4hUG548&app=desktop](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhTg4hUG548&app=desktop)

10. Mark MacDonald, *ibid.*

While there are biblical stories of land entitlement, leading to land occupation and annihilation of original inhabitants, there are other biblical stories of land as God's gift that are dependent upon right relations amongst all inhabitants and creatures of the land. Consider that the Jewish Purity and Dietary Laws, as described in the Torah and Code of Maimonides were enacted as a way of maintaining a distinctive Jewish identity in the midst of a multicultural environment. This need for a distinctive identity belies the assertions of the conquest narrative in which original inhabitants were annihilated. Instead, they suggest that the Hebrews co-existed in the same land with other ethnic groups. These alternate biblical stories are consistent with First Nations' understanding of land as a gift of the Creator, not to be owned, but respected and shared with all inhabitants.

Particular interpretations of chosenness and notions of land entitlement have fueled a long history of colonization, subjugation, cultural destruction, and environmental devastation in Canada. We have now reached a crisis point in the relationship between settlers and the First Peoples of this land, as well as with the land itself. Scientists, theologians and politicians alike are recognizing the errors of the past that have brought us to this crisis. The church urgently needs to embrace alternative theologies rooted in biblical narratives of land as gift, conditional on justice and right relations, if we are to correct the mistakes of the past and move forward into a more hopeful future.

The Indigenous concept of "all my relations" refers to the delicate balance of creation in which all of the creatures and plants, rocks and earth are related to each other's wellbeing and identity. The biblical stories of covenant also emphasize the importance of land to a people's identity. To remove a people from their land is to strip them of part of their identity. Indigenous land claims in Canada concern more than economic opportunity afforded by the land and its resources. They are concerned with a people's spiritual wellbeing and identity.

Covenant also requires humility and mutual respect, not paternalistic care. Interpretations of biblical concepts of land stewardship that justify dominion over other people and over nature undermine covenant. Following the wisdom of the Haudenosaunee elders 400 years ago, we should not be in relation as parent and child but as siblings, self-determining yet interdependent for the welfare of the earth and all its relations. In the prophetic words of Rev. Stan McKay, Cree elder and former United Church Moderator, "We need to get rid of the helpers and bring in the relatives."

### **Lessons about the Land**

#### *1. Land is essential to one's identity and welfare as a people.*

Indigenous peoples, settlers and newcomers to Canada alike understand the crucial importance of land to their safety, identity and welfare. To deny the First Nations their land, either unceded or negotiated through treaties, is to contravene international law and to deny the right to self-governance, as affirmed in the Two Row Wampum and stated in the Royal Proclamation. It is to teach a forced dependency that undermines pride and identity and makes Indigenous peoples vulnerable to the laws benefiting the more powerful and wealthy colonialists. The original settlers have moved from being the dispossessed in their lands of origin to being the colonizers in North America.

2. *Land is a gift from the Creator, intended to be shared fairly for the welfare of all its creatures.* The first time the word “covenant” was used to describe the agreement between the Indigenous peoples of North America and the settlers was with the Covenant Chain. It was based on respect and referenced both the land and the relations between the different peoples. Land was understood as a gift from the Creator that depended upon respect for the land and all of its creatures.

Elder Jim Dumont, Chief of the Three Fires Midewiwin Lodge’s Eastern Doorway,<sup>11</sup> explains that covenant was first made with the animals, which agreed to teach humans how to look after one another and the earth. In return, they asked for respect. This is the key to peace. A legally-binding settlement, an agreement to disagree and a truce are all examples of forced relations that cannot sustain peace. They lack respect. A covenant, on the other hand, begins with respect for the other and a commitment to share the land in peace. It respects each nation’s autonomy while at the same time recognizes that no one stands alone. We are all related to this land and to one another. We have a responsibility to look after one another, not in a paternalistic relation but as equals affording each other friendship and mutual respect. Recognition of this teaching can lead to lasting peace.

This resonates with biblical mandates of respect. Every human being is created in the image of God and is therefore sacred, deserving of dignity and worth (Genesis 1:26–27). To undermine the autonomy or dignity of any human being is to desecrate the face of God. God also declares the whole earth and all of creation good (Genesis 1:31). To treat any creature or any part of the earth with disrespect is to violate God's blessed creation. When we deny someone their basic human rights, we are denying Jesus, for as we treat the least of all, so we treat Jesus (Matthew 25:31–41). The greatest commandment of all bids us love for God and neighbour, and our neighbour is described as someone with a different ethnic and religious identity (Luke 10:25–37). We are called to seek justice and right relations with one another and the earth, that the Spirit may work through us to help usher in the peaceable realm of God that extends from the past, through the present and into the future (Micah 6:6–8; Mark 1:15). To this end, we have hope, not in things seen, but in the unseen promise of what can be (I Corinthians 13:9–13; Romans 8:19–25). Rev. Mitri Raheb, Palestinian pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church in Bethlehem said, “I am not optimistic, but I do have hope. Hope is not something we see; hope is something we do.”<sup>12</sup>

These biblical mandates call us, as Christians, to have compassion for the “other,” to attend to the fears and needs of those who experience marginalization and oppression, to stand against the desecration of Earth and its creatures, to resist that which leads to the evils of hate, annihilation, dehumanization and vilification. We are called to live into our recitation of A New Creed: to seek justice and resist evil; to live with respect in Creation.

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11. The Midewiwin Lodge is the contemporary movement of the sacred Midewiwin; sometimes referred to as the Grand Medicine Society, of the Anishnabe people. The “original spiritual way and keepers of the sacred knowledge, songs and ceremonies,” it is at the epicentre of the cultural and spiritual renewal of the Anishnabe First Nations. The Eastern Doorway refers to the region compassing Eastern Ontario, Michigan-Lower Peninsula, and Eastern Canada and the United State. [www.three-fires.net/tfn/about.htm](http://www.three-fires.net/tfn/about.htm)

12. Conversation with United Church delegation.

## **The Way Forward**

Those who have benefited from the colonization of this country must listen to those who have lost land, sovereignty, identity and pride. The church cannot dismiss the pain of Indigenous people by saying, “Let bygones be bygones.” Instead, the church has a responsibility to listen carefully, with great humility, and learn how to walk again. This walk is not on a lone path of individualism, hounded by guilt, but in a circle of interdependence and support. Moreover, the church needs to recognize that this communal walk is one trod by multiple stakeholders. Due to the history of colonization and its fragmenting affect in First Nations communities, the church needs to be in dialogue not only with our brothers and sisters in Aboriginal congregations but also with Traditional practitioners and others seeking right relationship and health within First Nations communities. Our prayer is that this walk will take us to self-determined nations committed to living together, because this land is big and strong enough to hold all of us in its embrace.

Just as A New Creed calls us to seek justice and resist evil, it also calls us to live with respect in creation. There is an urgent need for the church to rediscover and reclaim the biblical understandings of land and covenant that place care for the earth and all its inhabitants at the centre of our response to God’s providence. We have much to learn in this regard from our Aboriginal sisters and brothers, as well as from contemporary theological reflection on ecology and incarnation.

To help facilitate this journey forward, the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee proposes two new studies which we hope will engage Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in discussion and action. The first will be a more detailed approach to Land and Covenant, focusing on theologies of land rooted in our Canadian context but opening avenues for exploration of both local and global issues related to land. It might include such issues as colonization, Indigenous self-governance, treaties and covenants, care of the earth and all its creatures (all my relations), clean drinking water, food security, and resource extraction. The second will be a Circle and Cross interfaith study of the relationship between the United Church and Traditional Aboriginal spiritualities.

To move from conquest to covenant requires a radical reimagining of what it means for different peoples to live together in a shared land. Our biblical stories and our own history within North America teach us that this is only possible on the basis of respect for diverse cultures and identities and respect for the land itself. Only if we are able to humbly listen to one another and truly seek the welfare of the other can we move from conquest to covenant. Land cannot be bracketed in this discussion. Rather, it must be understood as crucial to the welfare and identity of all peoples. If it is understood as a gift from the Creator, to be respected and shared equitably, it will bless us with fruitfulness and prosperity. Justice will then roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (Amos 5:24).

## COMMITTEE ON INDIGENOUS JUSTICE AND RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

**Origin: Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools**

### Mandate

The Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools (formerly the Residential School Steering Committee) was established by the Executive of the General Council in 1998. Its mandate, renewed and expanded in 2010, is to:

- a) *co-ordinate all aspects of the issues related to Indian residential schools, including the legal, pastoral, communications, alternate resolution possibilities, healing and reconciliation initiatives, and financial planning;*
- b) *assist the church to live out its apologies through theological reflection and through education and advocacy for Indigenous justice issues including but not limited to land, rights, treaties, the impacts of colonialism, and racism;*
- c) *work in partnership with the Aboriginal Ministries Council and collaborate with Kairos, ecumenical partners and Indigenous organizations;*
- d) *make full reports, and recommendations as required, to the General Secretary and each meeting of the Executive of the General Council.*

In all its work, the Committee is guided by the church's Apologies of 1986 and 1998.

### MEMBERSHIP

The current members are:

- All Native Circle Conference: Sue Evans, Frank Evans
- BC Native Ministries Council: Barbara Wilson, Ray Jones
- Ont/Que Native congregations: Mel King, George Montour
- GCE representative: barb janes
- Honorary Elder: Murray Whetung
- General Secretary, General Council: Nora Sanders
- Executive Minister of the Aboriginal Ministries Council: Maggie McLeod
- Moderator (ex-officio): Gary Paterson

Staff Support:

- General Council Officer: Residential Schools - James Scott
- Liaison Minister: Residential Schools - Cecile Fausak
- Special Advisor: Residential Schools Steering Committee - David MacDonald

The Committee reports to each meeting of the Executive of General Council, issues a newsletter, "Turning the Page Together" ([www.united-church.ca/residentialschools](http://www.united-church.ca/residentialschools)) [*Note: No longer available online*] and has a Facebook page (*Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools*). A separate website provides information on all of the residential schools that the United Church operated ([www.thechildrenremembered.ca](http://www.thechildrenremembered.ca)).

The Committee meets twice a year, often in Toronto but periodically in other communities to connect with former students, and church and community members. In the past triennium, the Committee met in Toronto and in Winnipeg/Brandon, and had 3 joint meetings with the

Aboriginal Ministries Council. We gratefully acknowledge the significant contributions of former members the late Alvin Dixon, Marie Dickens, and staff person, John Bird.

### **INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT (IRSSA)**

In May 2006, The United Church of Canada became a defendant signatory to the largest settlement agreement in Canadian history as a result of its role in the Indian residential school system. The United Church (or antecedents) operated 14 residential schools. Its involvement ended in 1969. The Agreement was implemented in September 2007 and contained six main components: Common Experience Payment (CEP), Independent Assessment Process (IAP), a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), funds for Commemoration, funds for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF), and legal fees. The Agreement also detailed the legal obligations to which the church committed itself.

#### **1. Financial Obligations:**

**a. Core Commitment:** Under the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, the United Church is obligated to a 2-stage payment structure. Our base obligation was **\$6,455,020**. This amount was credited to the church from previously made contributions to abuse claim settlements. A second stage payment of **\$436,150** will become due only if fundraising by the Catholic Entities exceeds \$20,000,000. At this time, it does not appear likely.

**b. “In-Kind” Funds:** Under the “in-kind services” provisions of the Agreement, the United Church received back **\$1,010,600** of our base commitment for reallocation to new services or programs for former students and their families. A United Church Healing and Reconciliation Service Evaluation Committee, with representatives from the United Church, the Assembly of First Nations and the federal government, was created to approve projects according to criteria in the Agreement. As of June 2015, the church completed the disbursement of these funds, supporting such initiatives as survivor travel to Truth and Reconciliation Commission events, a five-year mobile counselor project for four west coast communities, language recovery and promotion of Mohawk and Cree, and a documentary film on the Regina Industrial School.

#### **2. Document Obligations:**

Under the Agreement, the United Church is committed to provide all “relevant” documents in its possession to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada for eventual inclusion in the National Research Centre (now the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation) in Winnipeg. Over the past six years, staff and contractors in the United Church Archives in Toronto as well as the Conference archives in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Northwest, and British Columbia have worked diligently to complete this herculean task on time. The work included undertaking a file review of all our archival and active files, identifying those relevant to residential schools, and then scanning and meta-tagging each file for the Commission’s database. Over 30,000 historical documents and 1,537 photographs were provided to the TRC by the end of April 2015, extracted from 6,036 container sources of publications, periodicals, accessioned and active textual records, maps, blueprints, audio visual materials, near-print publications, pamphlets, and relevant emails up to July 31, 2013. This immense task was completed with dedication by many who saw it as an act of reparation and respect by the church for former students of residential schools and their families.

### **3. Bearing Witness in Abuse Claims:**

The process for settling claims for sexual, physical and emotional abuse is the Independent Assessment Process (IAP). As of March 31, 2015, a total of 37,962 IAP claims were filed from the approximately 80,000 former students still living. Equal numbers of claims have been submitted by men and women, with the average age of 55. Nearly 32,000 claims have been resolved and the Adjudication Secretariat anticipates that all claims will be resolved by 2017. As of March 31, 2015, the United Church had received 2,867 claims, and anticipates receiving up to 100 more. Since the United Church has fulfilled its financial obligations under the Agreement, the government pays 100% of all awards made by the independent adjudicators.

However, the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools has felt it important that the church respond with more than money. We have trained witness/volunteers across the country who represent the church at IAP hearings, when the claimant is agreeable to a church presence. The volunteers bear witness to the stories and experiences of former students and offer the church's apology for its role in the residential school system. The church is indebted to 30 volunteers who have carried out this confidential and caring ministry at 327 claim hearings over the past 10 years. Once a settlement has been paid, the Moderator sends a letter of apology to the claimant. The Committee also offers pastoral care to those who have been accused of abuse.

### **4. Participation in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission ([www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca)):**

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was launched on July 1, 2009 with a five-year mandate to research and document the 130-year history of Indian residential schools in Canada. Justice Murray Sinclair, Chief Wilton Littlechild and Dr. Marie Wilson were appointed as Commissioners. The mandate was subsequently extended for a sixth year and the Commission finished its work on June 30, 2015. In the Settlement Agreement, the United Church committed itself to fully participate, at its most senior levels, in the Commission's work.

The Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools has coordinated participation from all levels of the church and in every part of the TRC's mandate. This has included the significant United Church attendance at TRC National Events (the Moderator presented a formal United Church statement to the Commission at the Edmonton National Event in April 2014, [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca); search "Truth and Reconciliation") the involvement of the General Secretary at meetings of the All Party Leaders' table, the contributions of senior staff to the National Events Working Group, the Document Collection Working Group, the All Party Coordinating Committee, the Public Education Working Group, and the Truth and Reconciliation Transition Team. In addition, local United Church representatives have participated in the seven community-based Regional Advisory Committees which planned the National Events in Winnipeg, Inuvik, Halifax, Montreal, Saskatoon, Vancouver and Edmonton, as well as in the planning for regional events in Victoria, Toronto, Peterborough and Whitehorse.

Conferences, Presbyteries and congregations across the country have been actively engaged in creating educational initiatives on the history and legacy of residential schools and in mobilizing United Church folks to attend and participate in seven national and scores of community TRC events. Volunteers organized and staffed the Churches Listening Circles at each National Event. Our church also contributed \$385,000 towards survivor travel and hospitality as an expression of

reconciliation in addition to funds raised and in-kind services provided by local congregations in communities where National Events were held.

The Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission invited the churches who are Parties to the Settlement Agreement, to redress their history of devaluing and discrediting traditional Aboriginal spiritual practice by making statements of confession and affirmation. The United Church has acknowledged its complicity in the denigration of Aboriginal wisdom and spirituality, and offered a statement quoting documents from its recent history. In doing so, the Church recognized with pain that this is a complex and sensitive issue for some within Aboriginal communities of faith who, as a result of our Christianizing work and the legacy of colonialism, are on a journey to restore harmony and spiritual balance.

The Committee also responded to the invitation of the Commission to submit suggestions on what recommendations the Commission might make in its Final Report.

The Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools continues to work towards reconciliation ecumenically through staff participation in the Ecumenical Working Group on Residential Schools and on the KAIROS Indigenous Rights Circle. The United Church participated with members of the Canadian Council of Churches to create an Expression of Reconciliation which was delivered at the April 2014 TRC National Event in Edmonton. The United Church has made a commitment to ongoing collaborative work with the other Parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement post-TRC to continue the work of reconciliation guided by the recommendations in the Commission's Final Report to be released at the Closing Event in Ottawa on June 2, 2015.

## **RIGHT RELATIONS**

### **1. Living into Right Relations:**

In 2008, the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools, the Aboriginal Ministries unit and unit on Justice, Global, and Ecumenical Relations (JGER) established a national Living into Right Relations Task Group to coordinate the 5-year "right relations" program begun at a national conference in Pinawa, Manitoba. The program brought together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people into a network of people in Conference home groups who covenanted to work together towards right relations. This initiative was seen, in part, as preparation for the church to participate in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

From the onset of the Living into Right Relations program, there was an understanding, particularly from Aboriginal sensibility, that there needed to be intentionality in discerning what it means for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal to "be" together. This need is rooted in Canada's colonial history whereby settler people imposed their culture, language, and systems onto the First Peoples of Turtle Island. This led to an incalculable disparaging impact that remains with Aboriginal people to this day. The United Church of Canada expressed regret for its complicity in this history in the 1986 Apology to First Nations Peoples: "*We imposed our civilization as a condition for accepting the gospel. We tried to make you be like us and in so doing we helped to destroy the vision that made you what you were.*"



The national LIRR Task Group provided guidance and support to the home groups and leadership to the church as it has sought to live out its Apologies. In the fall of 2013, the Task Group held its final meeting which issued in recommended directions for the church in continuing reconciliation and right relations work. The Final Report of the Living into Right Relations program is at [commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca) (Programming and Education folder – Aboriginal folder).

Although the formal program has ended, staff members from the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools and from the Aboriginal Ministries Council continue to support the network by regularly distributing information and resources through the LIRR Digest. A series of 3 webinars have also been developed on the themes of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women (May 6), Free, Prior and Informed Consent (June), and Treaties (September).

## **2. Doctrine of Discovery**

In October 2012, the Executive of General Council adopted a motion to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery (a belief based on 14th century Papal Bulls that explorers could subjugate any peoples who were not Christian and possess their lands) and “commit the church to a process of discerning how its own values, actions, policies and structures continue to be informed by the Doctrine of Discovery”. As follow up, an inter-unit planning team was created that has designed a land-based learning experience to be held at Nishnawbe Spiritual Center (Espanola) from August 27–31, 2015. Participants will journey in faith to unlearn and heal from colonialism and the impacts of the Doctrine.

Four facilitators will engage 30 people from across the church, including 6 young adults, to:

- 1) Become aware, emotionally and spiritually, of the brokenness of relations and the possibilities of healing.
- 2) Be empowered to name the ways the Doctrine of Discovery is operative in both church and society, and offer ways that might transform/reform the church.
- 3) Use this experience to inform the development of resources that would help the church engage in decolonization.

## **3. Justice and Reconciliation Fund**

The Justice and Reconciliation Fund supports initiatives that foster engagement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples and that advance the church’s commitment to justice and right relations. The Fund is administered jointly with the Aboriginal Ministries Council and its Grants Committee of four volunteers is appointed by our two bodies. Over the past triennium, grants were made to 29 projects totalling \$191,400. Projects included educational events on residential schools and anti-racism, film productions, relationship-building women’s canoe trips and youth gatherings. Applications are at [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca) (search “Justice and Reconciliation Fund”).

## **HEALING AND COMMEMORATION**

### **1. Red Deer Industrial School Cemetery**

The Remembering the Children Society, formed in 2011 with First Nations, Metis, and United Church membership (primarily from Sunnybrook United), completed the hosting of four feasts and ceremonies from 2009–2013 to remember the children who died and were buried in a

cemetery associated with the Red Deer Industrial School (1893–1919). In 2013, the feast followed 2 days of Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) community hearings, where 700 high school students participated in Education Day. Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Commission, spoke eloquently at the conclusion of the feast.

The Society offered an Expression of Reconciliation at the Edmonton TRC National Event. “The Remarkable Red Deer” permanent display, which includes a section on the Red Deer Industrial School, was opened in 2013. In June 2014, an outdoor exhibit at Fort Normandeu highlighting the school and the work of the Society was unveiled, and the Red Deer Mayor declared June 11 Remembering the Children Day, in perpetuity. In 2014, the Society was given the Red Deer Heritage Preservation Award. Work is ongoing to designate and mark the cemetery which continues to be in the hands of a private owner.

## **2. File Hills Indian Residential School Cemetery**

The fourth and final feast to remember the children who died at the File Hills Indian residential school and were buried at the associated cemetery will be held in August 2015 on the Okanese First Nation in Saskatchewan. In 2013, Okanese summer students removed bush to recover the cemetery, fence it, and restore the road to it. Research has been done by Susan Roy and her Waterloo university class to develop an initial list of students who attended the school. Saskatchewan Conference and the United Church folk from the Qu’Appelle Valley have been part of these remembrances.

## **3. Regina Industrial School Cemetery**

The Regina Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC) has been offering information, reports and a survey to the Regina City Council asking it to protect the Regina Industrial School (1891–1912) Cemetery from future development. In 2013, a Cemetery Working Group was formed of United and Presbyterian Church members, and representatives of the 44 First Nations from which the children had originally come. The Working Group contacted many of the area bands to provide information and an invitation to a meeting on June 8, 2014. Among the invitees were descendants of former students. The churches raised funds to provide transportation for all representatives, plus meals and billets. Approximately 70 people, including chiefs, elders, appointed band representatives, families, descendants of former students and others attended the gathering at St. James United Church in Regina where there was a display of historic documents, pictures of former students and their families, and other materials related to the Regina school. The gathering, escorted by horseback riders, also held ceremony at the cemetery.

Subsequent meetings, under the leadership of Chief Barry Kennedy of Carry the Kettle First Nation and the File Hills Tribal Council, have taken place to discuss subdividing the property and obtaining Heritage Status for the cemetery, as well as further commemoration activities and a monument.

## **4. Brandon Indian Residential School Cemeteries**

Following a visit by the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools to the site of the Brandon Indian Residential School, a Working Group was struck by Assiniboine Presbytery in 2014 to commemorate the Brandon school cemeteries. The Working Group has undertaken significant exploratory work, and planning with Sioux Valley First Nation about establishing a healing lodge on the site. Katherine Nichols, an archaeology student who did much survey work

of four cemeteries possibly connected to Brandon residential school, has been part of the Working Group as was now retired Conference of Manitoba Northwest Ontario archivist Diane Haglund who provided much assistance in sharing historic information and photos.

### **5. Witness Blanket: Pieces of History**

In 2013, carver Carey Newman began soliciting and collecting hundreds of artifacts from former residential schools, from the institutions that ran them, and from former students in order to create a large “witness blanket” that embodied the experience of the residential schools. This Commemoration project was funded under the terms of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Mr. Newman obtained an artifact from nearly every residential school, including the 14 schools associated with the United Church. The General Council Office also contributed versions of the former and revised crests, along with copies of the 1986 and 1998 apologies. The amazing large-scale cedar art installation is on a national tour until 2021, when hopefully it will be permanently housed at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. This is a national monument “to recognize the atrocities of the Indian Residential School era, honour the children, and symbolize ongoing reconciliation.” <http://witnessblanket.ca/#>

### **6. St. Michael’s Indian Residential School, Alert Bay, British Columbia**

The United Church was well represented on the occasion of the demolition of St. Michael’s Indian residential school (Anglican) in February 2015. Many former students who attended there were from communities served by the United Church.

## **INDIGENOUS JUSTICE**

### **1. Supporting Aboriginal opposition to the Northern Gateway Pipeline**

In light of the motion adopted at General Council 41 to “categorically reject the Northern Gateway Pipeline,” the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools created a “Take Action” notice last fall to support the Pull Together fund-raising campaign of BC First Nations for their court challenge. The Haida, Gitga’at, Gitxaala, Heiltsuk, Nak’azdli, Kitsoo/Xai’Xais and Nadleh Whut’en First Nations joined in this campaign to raise funds to seek a judicial review of the Joint Review panel’s recommendations, and the Federal government’s decision, to approve the project.

The campaign goal of \$250,000 was quickly exceeded as a total of \$350,760 was raised for research and to prepare the documents for the courts. Phase 2 of the campaign hopes to raise a further \$250,000 for court time. A matching donor will contribute up to \$500,000. Contributions by individual and congregations are welcomed. <http://pull-together.ca/>

### **2. First Nations Education, Bill C-33**

A coalition of Aboriginal, church, and justice-seeking groups, including the United Church represented by staff from the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools, was formed under the leadership of the office of the Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue to develop principles and advocate for Aboriginal control and equitable funding for First Nations children who attend school on reserves. Federal funding per child for Aboriginal students is less than funding provided by the provinces for other children. Bill C-33, the First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act, proposed by the federal government, is seen as unsatisfactory to many First Nations leaders. Negotiations have been suspended by the government.

On July 8, 2014, General Secretary Nora Sanders wrote to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Hon. Bernard Valcourt, urging the federal government to provide additional funding to Aboriginal communities for education even as negotiations on the Education Bill are delayed and to create a consultation process with First Nations leaders of respect, openness, creativity and commitment. No response was received to the letter.

### **3. Residential School History in Public School Curriculum**

In its Interim Report of February of 2012, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission offered 20 recommendations to the Parties and the Canadian public. One of the recommendations was that "...provincial and territorial departments of education work in concert with the Commission to develop age-appropriate educational materials about residential schools for use in public schools." The United Church joined with the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches to write the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada in 2013 and 2014 expressing our hope that the history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, particularly the story of the Indian Residential School system, becomes a mandatory part of the curriculum in all Canadian schools. Several jurisdictions have implemented this recommendation and it is under active consideration in others.

### **4. Acknowledging Traditional Aboriginal Territory**

For several years, most Conferences and some Presbyteries have acknowledged, at the opening of their meetings, that they are gathered on traditional Aboriginal territory. The Executive of General Council also does so. There is growing interest in this practice from congregations as well as from other denominations. The Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools unit has collaborated with the Aboriginal Ministries Circle and Church in Mission to create a resource for Acknowledging Territory which was published in the Pentecost 2015 issue of *Gathering* ([www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca); search "Acknowledging Territory").

In response to a proposal from Montreal and Ottawa Conference, adopted at General Council 41 in 2012, the United Church has written to the Speaker of the House of Commons recommending that the House also consider acknowledging that Parliament sits on Aboriginal traditional territory at the beginning of each session of Parliament.

### **5. National Aboriginal Day**

In May 2015, General Secretary Nora Sanders wrote to Prime Minister Harper recommending that he "declare National Aboriginal Day (June 21) a national statutory holiday." She indicated that for several years now, the United Church has given its employees a paid day off on June 21 and encouraged them to use that day to engage in Aboriginal educational and cultural activities. *"Our experience has been very positive, with employees taking part in a variety of learning opportunities, and gaining a deeper understanding of issues that are important in our work and in the life of our nation."*

### **6. Socially Responsible Investing**

In collaboration with the Aboriginal Ministries Council, staff of the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential School contributed to the Socially Responsible Investing report of 2013.

### **7. Pilgrimage for Peace and Justice**

The United Church has responded to the World Council of Churches' invitation to join in a 7-year Pilgrimage of Peace and Justice. Seven themes have been established, and the United

Church has chosen to lift up “Reconciliation” beginning in June 2015 and “Land” in 2016. The Living into Right Relations network is being invited to become “champions” of reconciliation by organizing visits to sites of former residential schools, and responding to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. General Council office staff will visit the Mount Elgin Indian residential school site and the Oneida United Church on June 23, 2015.

### **COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TASK GROUP**

Staff and elected members of the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools met with members of the Comprehensive Review Task Group in November 2013 to clarify the role and mandate of the Committee in providing leadership to the whole church in living out its apologies of 1986 and 1998. Committee members also participated in several joint meetings with the Aboriginal Ministries Council at which Comprehensive Review Task Group members were present to discuss the implications of the Review process for Aboriginal ministries and to explore what a renewed relationship might look like. The Comprehensive Review Task Group has recommended that the work of Indigenous justice and right relations remain a priority for the church going forward.

### **STAFF CHANGES**

There have been several staff changes in the Indigenous Justice and Residential School unit.

**John Bird**, who served as Program Coordinator for Indigenous Justice and Right Relations, saw the term position end on December 31, 2013.

**David MacDonald**, who has served the United Church as Special Advisor on Residential Schools since 1998, will end this role on June 30, 2015. David has provided invaluable wisdom and networking in guiding the church through a critical period of acknowledging and addressing the legacy of Indian residential schools.

**James Scott**, who has served in the role of General Council Officer for Residential Schools since September 2003, will retire as of August 31, 2015. Jamie has been lead staff for the church in its efforts to live out its’ apologies, including the settlement of abuse claims, negotiations for the Settlement Agreement, and the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

**Cecile Fausak** will remain as staff for the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools with an updated job description and title: Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice Animator. A second Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice Animator position will be created out of Jamie’s position effective September 1, 2015, so that the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools will continue to be served by 2 staff.

As of September 2015, the Committee and staff of Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools will be supervised by the Executive Minister for Aboriginal Ministries and Justice.

Respectfully submitted,

barb janes and Mel King

Co-chairs

Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools

## **NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR CONFERENCE**

### **The View from Here**

The view from here is connected, of course, with the view from right across the country. While we have a slightly different view, what we are looking at remains very much the same. In the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference we have been very busy talking about the Comprehensive Review and its recommendations. We have been busying ourselves with the worry of cut backs and how we might continue to operate in the future with fewer resources. And of course, we are very busy planning for all of you who will be with us at the 42nd General Council.

### **Conference Initiatives and Action**

This fall saw the conclusion to our Models of Ministry Task Group work which began in 2006 with a task group called “Future Directions.” The Future Directions Task group recommended that a Models of Ministry Task group be set up to help pastoral charges with demographic changes within the Conference (out-migration, in-migration, decreasing membership, lack of clergy, decreasing financial support, and an aging infrastructure). Research and a presentation on different models for ministry were presented at a mid-point in the task groups work and then, in October 2014, approximately 75 people representing close to 40 pastoral charges gathered for a final workshop. The event had the Rev. Don Stiles and the Moderator, The Right Rev. Dr. Gary Paterson as theme presenters, as well as a variety of workshop leaders. The event spent time with Marvin Anderson’s seven lenses through which a congregation can look at itself, along with 14 suggested Models of Ministry that might be used, piloted throughout the Conference. Congregations and pastoral charges are asked to view themselves through those lenses while looking at their future direction in ministry and perhaps take some risks to try a new model for their circumstance.

The Conference Council of Finance and Administration, through the East and West Finance and Administration Committees, were asked to look at our insurance policy with respect to Replacement Cost and Actual Cash Value (RC and ACV). Some of our smaller congregations had indicated that they would not rebuild in a situation where their church was destroyed but instead would move their membership to a neighbouring point or with another pastoral charge. In negotiation with our blanket insurance carrier, we did put in place a policy where pastoral charges could choose between RV and ACV. The deadline for congregations to let us know is in June. To date we have discovered that all but one of our congregations will remain with Replacement Value Insurance. We are in a very fortunate place in the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference in which our churches/pastoral charges are all covered under a blanket insurance program, which of course give the Conference negotiation abilities with insurance companies.

Another initiative by the Conference Council of Finance and Administration, through the East and West Finance and Administration Committees, was a request heard from our pastoral charges around a new assessment formula. The formula used to assess pastoral charges for the work of the wider church was based on the number of households under pastoral care and a dollar amount for each household. Many of our congregation felt that this formula was unjust and pastoral charge began to cull their numbers and take people off their lists just to keep

assessments down, which was not a very pastoral response to people. Therefore, the three finance committees began research on a better more just formula. The formula approved by the District and the Conference Executive last spring is:

*Total Raised for all purposes by Congregational Givings (line 32A) less Mission and Service received from the Pastoral Charge, exclusive of UCW (line 36)*  
**32A-36 x 5% = Assessment**

For some pastoral charges there were increases and for others there were decreases. We have received correspondence from about seven pastoral charges asking that we look into their assessments as they felt the increase was too high. The District Finance and Administration Committees have dealt with each Pastoral Charge on a one on one basis.

### **Staffing Changes**

We have been able to celebrate with Ms. Rochelle Forward and Mr. Greg Forward in the birth of their second child, Cain, a little brother to Claire. Rochelle is currently on maternity leave, as she, Claire, and Cain have had a year together to continue to bond as a family. We welcomed Ms. Joan Hawkins to the staff team working out of the Grand Falls-Windsor Office filling the position during Rochelle's leave. We will welcome Rochelle back to the office the first week of June. I take this opportunity to thank all staff for offering themselves for the work of the Conference and for their faithful dedication to the work of the church in the Newfoundland and Labrador.

### **Future Directions**

The future directions of our Conference in some ways will depend on the 42nd General Council and its dealing with the Comprehensive Review. We do not know what our Conference will look like in the future, but what we do know is that the church will still be here. An interesting fact is that the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference became part of the United Church before it became part of Canada. The spirit of God was here long before the United Church, as is witnessed through the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches and others in our midst. It was here long before all the church denominations through the spirituality of our aboriginal brothers and sisters; and it will be here long after us. The spirit of God and its ministry will always be here, thanks be to God.

Faith March-MacCuish  
Executive Secretary

## **MARITIME CONFERENCE REPORT**

### **Origin: Maritime Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

The full spectrum of Canadian society can be experienced within the geographic region of Maritime Conference and therefore we cannot claim any particular unique experience this is not also in evidence in other parts of the country. We have poverty and we have wealth. We have gorgeous pristine areas of natural beauty and we have areas of shocking environmental degradation. We have new immigrants and we have multi-generational European settlers. We have Aboriginal communities both on and off reserve. We have thriving churches and we have struggling churches. We have corporate developments and we have citizen activists.

We also have lobster and lupins! Come visit!

As church we continue to seek the wisdom of the Spirit as we discern the Call of God and our expression of ministry within the communities we love and serve. Demographic shifts and changes occur sometimes faster than we can accommodate and we suffer loss and grief as cherished expressions of ministry come to the end of their viability. In other areas, these same demographic shifts provide fresh opportunities for new expressions of ministry. Sometimes we are able to respond and sometimes we grieve our inability to move fast enough to be effective in changing times. Even so, growth is occurring along with loss, and we faithfully seek to express God's love through our actions, large and small.

#### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

The ground laid by the Conference initiative "Ministry in Changing Times" from a few years ago continues to bear fruit. With some shared language and understanding of the dynamics of change, pastoral charges and presbyteries have entered into a variety of experiments and initiatives for changes that will ensure viability and expression of ministry into the community. Conference staff are a resource for these conversations and considerations, while the local decision-making body provides formal leadership.

Conference, somewhat bravely and perhaps too boldly, undertook the construction of a new \$3 million Conference Centre in 2011–2012 that includes office space, meeting space and state-of-the-art Archival storage space. While fundraising efforts continue, regular mortgage payments have now been absorbed into the Conference operations budget, and the increase in allocations, while unwelcome, has been mostly accommodated. Voluntary donations have continued to the extent that an annual payment of \$150,000 directly towards principle was accomplished in 2014, and should be able to be done again in 2015. These early pay-downs have remarkable effect in relieving mortgage interest and shortening the term of the mortgage.

Under the freedom provided by the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relations experiments, Maritime Conference has offered a low-level, experimental increase in Conference staff interactions with several presbyteries. This has increased the confidence and ability of the presbyteries to engage with challenging circumstances; however, this has also increased anxiety as the presbyteries have engaged with challenging circumstances that might otherwise have been ignored for some time.



Following the example of British Columbia Conference, a formal arrangement with a specific real estate company is in the process of development. This effort will serve to offer expert assistance in property matters with congregations, Presbyteries and with Conference, depending on the circumstances and the potential of the particular situation.

Four of our summer residential camps have begun to hold regular conversations together to explore shared opportunities for faith formation ministry with children. This spring, a special Camp Promotions Team was hired for short-term, part-time contracts to promote the camping experience widely.

While there are no United Church Aboriginal congregations in Maritime Conference, there continue to be developing relationships between United Church and Aboriginal folk. We continue to engage to provide support around treaty issues and resource rights. The anti-fracking protest in New Brunswick served to be a gathering of diverse peoples for common cause, with a strong United Church presence.

### **Staffing Changes**

After 15 years of exemplary service, Janice MacLean left the position of Conference Minister, Christian Nurture and Enrichment, in February of 2015. Janice's contributions to the ministry of the Conference and to The United Church of Canada are many, most recently innovating with online offerings of ministry. Janice continues to offer a variety of online ministries through her website, "The Prayer Bench."

Conference continues to maintain the position of Conference Minister, Christian Nurture and Enrichment, but is holding the position vacant until after the meeting of General Council in August 2015. A review in the fall will seek to determine what should happen next.

### **Future Directions**

Conference remains committed to supporting the work of justice and faithfulness with communities of faith around the region and looks forward to the clarification of the organizational means by which these ministries will continue. The needs and requirements of the church and the world are not difficult to identify. However, the overwhelming and looming influence of the Comprehensive Review and the yet-to-be determined decisions of GC42 make future planning difficult.

Respectfully submitted,

David Hewitt  
Executive Secretary  
Maritime Conference

## **SYNODE MONTREAL & OTTAWA CONFERENCE REPORT**

### **Origin: Synode Montreal & Ottawa Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

Montreal and Ottawa Presbyteries have faced a few church closings and amalgamations, while Seaway Valley Presbytery continued its clustering experiment of finding new relationships with neighbouring pastoral charges, therefore able to maintain the structures but share the leadership. Quebec-Sherbrooke Presbytery has been much harder hit by aging populations and the exodus of younger family members to the urban centers, meaning that many of the rural church buildings are being re-purposed in the communities or sold to other denominations. We note that the fundamental and immigrant populations have far greater church attendance and need to space. We have also experienced, in the Quebec presbyteries that although Roman Catholics, the majority church, are still drifting in our direction for worship and weddings, yet many resist the idea of membership and commitment to a protestant denomination. The Consistoire Laurentien continues to be quite fragile and unable to offer full time ministry sites, hence finding appropriate leadership is a challenge but our Spanish congregation is a model of new ministries having launched 5 house churches with lay leadership.

#### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

There have been many exciting ministry and learning opportunities because of the needs of others.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission event in Montreal, April 24–27, 2013, engaged many volunteers, greeting at the event, baking hundreds of cupcakes and making cards for the birthday party at the end, and arriving by bus from further parts of the Conference to learn.

A large focus of work for the staff, particularly the Conference Personnel Ministers has been working with Pastoral Relations and Pastoral Oversight committees, developing and testing new resources for the Effective Leadership project. The goal was to create consistent tools for gathering ministry site data and facilitating processes. The presbyteries have had trainings and are gradually transitioning to using the new Joint Needs Assessment Process and the new Pastoral Care & Oversight tool with hopes to have all visits planned for fall 2015. Living Ministry Profile reports are to be filed annually with traditional Annual Reports following congregational meetings.

The tragic train crash in Lac-Mégantic, QC on July 6, 2013 created a situation to raise the profile of the United Church. I am deeply grateful to the liturgical contributions of Denis Fortin and Darla Sloan, the political fortitude of some and the generous spirit of pastoral charges who raised over \$4000.

Following the 41st General Council, which accepted the Beaconsfield initiative proposal opposed to Mining Actions in the Philippines, several of us joined The Working Group on United for Mining Justice. It is challenged with seeking ways to educate our church about the current issues. The petition from the Beaconsfield initiative was presented with 5000 names in Parliament on October 22, 2014, during the visit of Father Rex Reyes from the Philippines but there is a strong push for the campaign to continue.

Following my first “exposure” trip to the Philippines in November 2011, I have appreciated over 40 opportunities to present, initially on average three invitations per month with presbyteries, UCW groups, and individual congregations and mission groups.

I left for a second trip to the Philippines in November 2013 to represent The United Church of Canada at the Jubilee celebrations of the National Council of Churches (NCCP). The timing was such that I became involved in the relief efforts for Super Typhoon Yolanda. Support for our partners in the Philippines has been very encouraging. As of December 31, 2014 for the Cordillera People’s Alliance we had sent \$2989.00. The project I had been encouraging support for since the typhoon, the Pump Boats project in Estancia, Iloilo, has received \$5,855.00. To date, four boats have been purchased, providing employment for 16 families in the village. I am deeply grateful for the depth of people’s generosity.

The Native Concerns Committee participated in a celebration in Kanesatake for the unveiling of a monument to Chief Joseph Swan and witnessed a wonderful presentation at the Kanesatake High School about the beaded Wampum belts, learning how the Archives of all the First Nations people are told through the images and the oral tradition of passing stories. Committee members are part of an ecumenical group in Ottawa and Rev. Jamie Scott has focused our discussion on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission closure which will take place May 31 to June 3 in Ottawa. The committee is also brainstorming plans to recognize the 25th anniversary of the Oka Crisis which deeply affected relationships with Kanesatake/Oka and Hudson, Kahnawake and Chateauguay. The United Church played a variety of roles during the 78 days of stand-off and there is still healing that needs to happen for “right relationships.”

### **Staffing Changes**

The half-time Youth and Young Adult facilitator Shanna Bernier determined that enjoying her new daughter and youth work for her presbytery was a full load and with her resignation came the hiring of Rev. Jean-Daniel Williams working half time for the Conference and half-time as the Anglican-United chaplain for McGill University, effective January 2015.

Rev. Douglas Stewart, after 35 years of ministry, the last eight as Conference Personnel Minister (East) retired and we welcomed Me. Sabrina Di Stefano into the position on February 1 working with Doug for 3 months and officially taking responsibility effective May 2015.

### **Future Directions**

The Comprehensive Review has been the topic of much conversation and over 30 proposals to be discussed at the 2015 annual meeting. There is interest, agreement, and fear as ministry sites try to imagine their future, and many smaller congregations struggle with the new comprehensive salary which has greatly increased housing allowances, while Mission Support is being cut to the outreach ministries. The necessity for tightening the purse is mostly understood, as rural churches are being sold with increasingly regularity, and urban congregations choosing part time ministry option. Where these changes will lead us, and whether there will be any staff support for those who rely heavily on others to guide the processes, is yet to be seen.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Rosemary Lambie, Executive Secretary

## **THE BAY OF QUINTE CONFERENCE REPORT**

### **Origin: The Bay of Quinte Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

In 2013, we adopted the following Vision Statement

*“Enlivened by the Holy Spirit, the Bay of Quinte Conference in its ministries will nurture and enhance our network of relationships with the intention of deepening the lived faith of all within the Conference in light of the Good News of Jesus Christ and the traditions of The United Church of Canada, as we, an Affirming Ministry, recognize and celebrate diversities”*

Within this past triennium, we have sought to live into this Vision Statement and our Mission goals of enabling, supporting and encouraging presbyteries and congregations in their ministries. This has happened through the process of becoming an Affirming Conference, a restructuring of boundaries from 7 to 8 presbyteries, a physical move of the Conference Office to a more welcoming and accessible space, a re-commitment to Dancing the Circle of Right Relations, a flourishing Youth and Young Adult ministry, and a commitment of our staff to be involved in the life and witness of our presbyteries.

#### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

- Became an Affirming Conference
- Restructured from 7 to 8 presbyteries
- Participated in the Candidacy Pathways Programs
- Participated in Effective Ministry initiative
- Offered workshops in all presbyteries relating to racial justice, boundaries, M&P Committees, congregation visioning and amalgamation
- Worked with EDGE in congregational redevelopment
- Physically moved our office from Frankfort to Belleville, ON
- Supported Mission Awareness Trips to El Salvador
- Formed an Equity Committee welcoming all
- With All Native Circle Conference, will be hosting the 2018 General Council at UOIT/Durham College in Oshawa

#### **Staffing Changes**

In 2012, we hired Mary-Jane Hobden as our Conference Personnel Minister (MEPs).

In 2013, we hired David Timpson as our Conference Personal Minister (Pastoral Care).

This has brought us back to a full staff complement of six, which includes two Conference Personnel Ministers, one program staff, two admin staff (office co-ordinator and Finance and IT) and an Executive Secretary

#### **Future Directions**

Like the rest of the church, we await the decisions of the General Council and presbyteries and congregations (through remit) on the Comprehensive Review. While acknowledging that the

church and its structure may change, we believe its ministry will be ongoing. We therefore recommit ourselves as a Conference to our Vision Statement and Mission goals and strive to nurture and enhance the ministry of The United Church of Canada through its mission units

Respectfully submitted,

William D. Smith  
Executive Secretary  
Bay of Quinte Conference

## **TORONTO CONFERENCE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

### **Origin: Toronto Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

An excerpt from the “context” statement in all staff position descriptions: “Toronto Conference is characterized by significant diversity ranging from urban to rural, and influenced by multicultural and intercultural realities. Experience within the membership of the congregations in the Conference varies widely, and theological perspectives are sophisticated and diverse. Tension exists between areas of high growth and opportunity and areas inclined toward amalgamations and church closings. There is much opportunity for vital and creative ministry within the Conference.”

#### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

In this triennium Toronto Conference has been involved in the General Council’s Effective Leadership project. This required significant reorganization at both the Conference and presbytery levels. In the initial stages there was considerable upheaval, confusion about roles, and the need to hire additional staff. A major evaluation of this work is underway.

The Conference reviewed its policies related to property. Given the real estate market, especially in the Greater Toronto Area, the Conference and its presbyteries often must decide how to use millions of dollars realized from property sales. At present, the four presbyteries have access to \$12,000,000 in funds (\$3,000,000 each). Conference has a similar fund in the same amount, and a new Leadership Development and New Ministries Fund has been established with \$3,000,000. All these funds enable ministry in a variety of ways, but it has forced the question of “How much is enough?”

As a consequence, Conference will share resources with the General Council, The United Church of Canada Foundation and the Toronto United Church Council Sustainable Energy Loan Fund. In addition, we are beginning conversations with the All Native Circle Conference and the Aboriginal Ministries Council about sharing resources.

Other initiatives include:

- Funding an Explorer program in cooperation with other Conferences whereby young people from different parts of the country can spend part of a summer in another part of the country testing whether ministry might be a vocation for them;
- Providing \$100,000 annually to assist internships and other supervised pastoral education;
- Contributed \$200,000 to pay the line of credit of the Five Oaks Centre, one of the two remaining lay education centres within the United Church;
- Began offering sabbatical grants—up to \$3,500 per community of faith to cover expenses like pulpit supply or weekend supply, and up to \$1,500 per minister going on sabbatical;
- Providing scholarships to up to 10 persons to take training as interim ministers.

Right relations with Aboriginal people has been a high priority. Conference provided funds to enable a group to attend the final Truth and Reconciliation event in Edmonton. Approximately 125 people will attend the Reconciliation Walk and TRC closing events May 30–June 3.

The Conference has begun the process of determining whether to become an Affirming Conference.

### **Staffing Changes**

The Conference pays for a total of 14 full-time equivalent staff serving the Conference and the four presbyteries. In addition, three of the four presbyteries have hired additional staff, primarily to assist with Effective Leadership tasks, and the fourth hired a consultant to train volunteers. Two staff had sabbaticals during the triennium, and two others are eligible for sabbaticals beginning in 2015/2016.

### **Future Directions**

Like everyone else, Toronto Conference is waiting to hear what will emerge from the Comprehensive Review Task Group and whatever decisions GC42 makes. In the meantime, we plan to be as useful as possible to assist communities of faith to be better prepared during a major transitional time.

Respectfully submitted,

David W. Allen (Rev.)  
Conference Executive Secretary

## **HAMILTON CONFERENCE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

### **Origin: Hamilton Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

For the communities within Hamilton Conference the past triennium continues as a time of change.

Communities such as St. Catharines, Hamilton, Cambridge, Kitchener and Welland continue to experience higher than average rates of unemployment and the social challenges which often accompany such high rates. However, these communities are witnessing positive improvements. Hamilton in particular has significant growth in its downtown core.

Waterloo, Halton, Milton, and Mississauga, which rely more on “high tech” and service industries, continue to experience high levels of growth.

Our rural communities face constant transition. Changes in farming and the agriculture business have also impacted local congregations. Many rural local communities have seen a decrease in population, while communities along the water are experiencing significant growth. This residential development includes both an increasing population of retirees and “bedroom communities” for those working in urban centres.

#### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

We have continued to work with congregations and presbyteries to support them as they seek new incarnations of church. Following is an outline of some of the initiatives undertaken in the past triennium.

- Resource development and workshop facilitation in the areas of accessibility and workplace safety.
- Organized, in partnership with General Council staff, a workshop on Intercultural and Diverse Communities.
- Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships Test Conference: providing Bruce Presbytery with support around searches, collegial support, congregational essence statements and pastoral oversight.
- Suicide Prevention Workshop.
- Pastoral Care and Mental Health Workshop.
- Racial Justice Training.
- Organized, in partnership with General Council staff, two oversubscribed workshops on Websites and Social Media.
- Conducted a workshop on Advocacy for Social Justice.
- Ministry and Personnel workshops for Presbyteries and Congregations.
- Hosted Cross Conference Interim Ministry Retreats.
- Presbytery Learning Events.
- Congregational Visioning workshops.
- Focus on relationship building and partnerships.
- Action to work toward becoming an Affirming Conference.
- Right Relations Engagement, TRC engagement and support of Nations Uniting.



- Partnered financially with Halton Presbytery to hold the first annual Ministry in Motion conference.
- Partnered with Five Oaks in the creation and leading of Hand in Hand, a training program in Lay Pastoral Visitation and Care.

### **Staffing Changes**

- Staff Equivalent at the Conference Office changed from 7.75 full-time staff to 5.75 full-time staff.
- Full-time Administrative positions eliminated.
- Part-time Administrative position created.
- Full-time Administrative Position with an emphasis on Human Resources created.
- Minister for Congregational Support moved from a two-year contract to full-time.
- Full-time Minister for Faithful Public Witness position was eliminated.
- Part-time Minister for Social Justice position, two-year contract, was created.
- Summer student position was created.
- Executive Secretary, Fred Monteith retired March 1, 2013.
- Executive Secretary, Peter Hartmans started March 1, 2013.

### **Future Directions**

Looking forward Hamilton Conference will continue to provide support to United Church of Canada clergy, staff, presbyteries, and congregations, including partnerships related to Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships. We will support and promote Fresh Expressions in our Conference. The Conference will partner with General Council around any changes related to the Comprehensive Review and the funding transition for Conference related to General Council grants. In 2015, our Conference office will become fully accessible.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Hartmans  
Executive Secretary  
Hamilton Conference

## **LONDON CONFERENCE REPORT**

### **Origin: London Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

London Conference includes southwestern Ontario and the District of Algoma. Although there are urban centres in each of the eight Presbyteries, London Conference is primarily rural/small town. The stresses these congregations face are those experienced by the mainline church in general with the additional strains of depopulation, employment challenges, and limited resources in rural areas.

These circumstances lead some congregations to speak of their future as time-limited, such as “We have two more years.” Others have embraced these changes exploring how to continue to provide a United Church presence in their community, moving into innovative and life-giving partnerships. The latter congregations have experienced new life and have inspired others.

Entering into change with faith and hope continues to be the focus of the Conference as it seeks to resource its Presbyteries and congregations to discern their future.

#### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

Prior to 2012, London Conference had named priorities and established its staff complement but the two pieces of work were done independently. At the 2013 Annual Meeting, a Priorities Working Group was established that continued until the 2015 Annual Meeting. Its goal was to confirm the priorities of the Conference, identify a staff complement to resource these priorities and to recommend a restructuring of the Executive to support them. The priorities named were:

- 1) Ministry with children, youth and young adults
- 2) Testing the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relations Process
- 3) Providing clear, effective and timely communication to the Conference and
- 4) Promoting best practices for healthy congregations.

The Effective Leadership test has been the focus of considerable staff and volunteer time.

London worked in partnership with Toronto Conference to design a process that would reflect the principles adopted by General Council 41. The pastoral charge and presbytery are accountable for the discernment of mission and ministry leadership needs and the support and nurture of pastoral relationships. The Conference is accountable for the pastoral relationship processes related to placement, oversight and discipline. Pastoral relations as well as oversight and discipline are resourced with trained paid accountable staff.

There are a few distinctions between Toronto’s and London’s models based on regional differences. The test has helped standardize and make fair and transparent the pastoral relations and the oversight and discipline processes. Although the work was not possible within existing capacity, the benefits of the test are evident. The Settlement Committee expressed its desire to continue the test and the Executive endorsed this provided staff capacity continued at the current level.

The Executive of London Conference also provided leadership in two additional key areas: 1) focusing on right relations especially concerning Fairfield and the tensions between The United

Church and the Delaware Nation-Moravian of the Thames and 2) making a commitment to begin the Affirming process. In addition, the Executive acted on the direction of the Annual Meeting to create a New Ministries Fund with The United Church of Canada Foundation to receive 10% of the net proceeds from the sale of buildings of closing congregations. A further 10% is directed to Mission & Service and 2% is held in a Conference Archive Capital Fund.

### **Staffing Changes**

The retirement of Judith Gililand from the Congregational Futures portfolio in 2012 and Matthew Stevens from Justice, Stewardship and Right Relations in 2013 changed the configuration of London's staff.

London experimented with its staff complement during the triennium. Elaine Graham started in 2012 in a contract position as Pastoral Support Minister. Her primary responsibilities are the pastoral care of clergy and their families and the development of collegial networks of support in presbyteries. In 2013, Michelle Owens joined the Conference staff as Personnel Minister with key responsibility for the Effective Leadership test. When it became apparent that the test could not be undertaken within existing capacity, a .5 position was created for other elements of the personnel portfolio and Tanya Cameron of the Conference staff took on the role of Minister, Vocations and Training. This change in Tanya's responsibilities created another contract position for financial administration and Krista Ford was recruited. These three contract positions, Pastoral Support Minister, Minister Vocations and Training, and Administrative Support Finance have made possible London's investment in Effective Leadership.

Pretima Kukadia continues to provide graphics for the Conference with responsibility for the website. Betsy Exley, Minister, Faith Formation, Youth and Young Adults offers resources for leaders and programs that help London Conference fulfill its commitment to ministry with children, youth and young adults. On a personal note, I count myself blessed by the opportunity to serve as Executive Secretary.

### **Future Directions**

This spring London held four events to review the report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group, "United in God's Work." Total attendance was between 350 and 400 indicating the interest people have in the changes being proposed. Some presbyteries are discussing how they might embrace elements of the report if it is adopted. Having already experienced the changes tested in Effective Leadership, it would seem that London is interested in being involved in a hands-on way in the next step in the United Church's history.

As of July 2015, the Conference office will move from an office building to premises within Riverside United Church. The new space will provide additional room and enable better remote participation in meetings. It is an excellent example of the way partnership can enrich the life of each involved—a sign of hope for the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa  
Executive Secretary  
London Conference

## **MANITOU CONFERENCE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

### **Origin: Manitou Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

Communities in our region have strong historic links to the mining, forestry, and tourism industries. The fortunes of these sectors deeply affect the fabric of our congregations. Mining and tourism are presently strong but hardship continues for many of our pastoral charges that rely on forestry.

The out-migration of our young adults for education and employment opportunities remains a troubling reality.

A significant percentage of congregations function with no ministry personnel. Many of these faith communities are clear that they see themselves continuing to engage in God's mission regardless of proposed changes to the denominational church structure.

This year is the 40th Anniversary of the creation of Manitou Conference. Question of financial viability is the most significant issue for us. Proposed elimination of Conference Operating Grants will make it impossible to survive within the present staffing model. At the same time, we are profoundly grateful for the way in which other Conferences have absorbed much higher funding cuts in recent years, as the future of the church is being determined. It is humbling! We thank the broader church family for generosity which has enabled us to "stay at the table" while future funding directions are considered by this General Council.

#### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

We believe that God's radical hospitality calls Manitou Conference to:

- Journey into new ways of being church and,
- Understand and engage with the struggle for dignity and economic justice for our neighbours and God's Creation.

Of ongoing importance is our right relations work with First Nations neighbours. This ministry continues to be capably led by our Right Relations Home Group.

We continue to recognize First Nation Traditional Territory wherever our courts meet.

Many congregations offered support and hospitality to the Ninanew Oskapawisak walkers during their journey through Spirit Dancing and North Bay Presbyteries. The group of elders and young Indigenous people made the 53-day journey from Cochrane to Ottawa for the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report.

Manitou is committed to providing strong advocacy for the TRC's "Call to Action."

Conference Executive and each of the presbyteries have been engaged in education and discussion about affirming ministry. At our recent General Meeting we considered a proposal to become an Affirming Conference.

### **Staffing Changes**

In 2014, Conference Personnel Minister, Rev. Catherine Somerville, made the decision to return to congregational ministry. New CPM, Rev. Lillian Roberts, joined the staff team this past November. We've benefited from the gifts that her "new eyes" have brought.

The Conference staff's collective work is guided by three priorities:

- support to ministry personnel
- support to presbyteries
- ensuring a mission focus for Manitou

### **Future Directions**

Participation in the "Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships" pilot project has been a roller coaster of frustration and excitement. Sudbury Presbytery is fully engaged in testing all of the principles approved by the last General Council. The transfer and flow of pastoral relations work, from what had been presbytery responsibility to Conference, is being handled efficiently. For our Conference MPESI committee there is the challenge of managing two totally different pastoral relations processes at the same time. Conference staff time required to resource the pilot was more than we had anticipated. There are very hopeful and positive results as congregations shift to giving priority to their mission.

The theme for the 2015 Conference General Meeting was: "People Get Ready, There's a Train a-Coming!"

Manitou has been well-engaged in the Comprehensive Review process and, like the rest of the church, is eager to see which "track" we will be on following GC42!

I want to offer a word of appreciation for the way in which our GCE reps, Janice Brownlee and Erin Todd, have ably represented Manitou Conference over the last triennium.

These are stimulating times to be The United Church of Canada here in the north!

Respectfully submitted,

Will Kunder  
Executive Secretary  
Manitou Conference

## **ALL NATIVE CIRCLE CONFERENCE REPORT**

### **Origin: All Native Circle Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

All Native Circle Conference spans five provinces with 40 ministries including 10 remote fly-in communities. As the wider church changes and strains to accommodate the administration of this church of ours, the All Native Circle Conference strains that much harder—it is like trying to keep that (too small) fitted sheet on the bed; each of the corners keeps popping undone because the resources both human and financial can no longer be stretched to accommodate the work. We have been described as the “canary in the coal mine.” We have also been described as the ghettoized. We have not adopted either of these stances in our Conference; we are committed, and continue to do the work.

The TRC’s final report has just been offered. We hope to find and strengthen relationship with the help of these challenges that have been put forward to us all.

#### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

In this past triennium we ordained and commissioned six Aboriginal people in our Conference. We currently have 22 Aboriginal ministry personnel working in our Conference.

We are experiencing some chronic vacancies and continue to work on how to serve these communities. We have developed two ministries that are much like circuit rider ministries; both of these serve isolated fly-in communities—this may be the answer for more ministries. Some partnerships are emerging in southern areas with non-Native churches. We continue to share ministry personnel across Conference bounds, and continue to find good process for transitioning non-native clergy into ANCC.

The Council of Healing and Respect attended the TRC in Edmonton, and from that began a right relations conversation with Toronto Conference. The two Conference executives had opportunity to be in a sharing circle in September 2014 to begin to get to know one another. Previous to this, three congregations (two in ANC Conference and one in Toronto Conference) began to work together on a church tear-down and rebuilding project in a fly-in northern Manitoba community, Red Sucker Lake. This church is 85% complete, and plans are to open this July. It is a project that took five years to coordinate and fund. We will celebrate!

ANCC church communities continue to be offered the “Our Journey” workshop based on the Medicine Wheel teachings. We have had limited engagement, but hope for renewed interest as we commit more staff hours to this initiative.

ANCC’s Executive met with the other five Ontario Conferences at a joint executive meeting at Five Oaks in September of 2014. This was a first time sharing of time and energy across these six Conferences; much relationship-building happened, so much so that All Native Circle Conference and Bay of Quinte Conference will now co-host the 43rd General Council in Oshawa. This will be an adventure in coordination. We are looking forward to this work and this conversation. AND we hope to keep Karen Smart sane during this process!

### **Staffing Changes**

\*Gloria Cook ended her contract as Acting Speaker when \*Cheryl Jourdain returned from an eight-month leave of absence 1 December 2012.

\*Rita Flett, Conference Personnel Minister after extended sick leave left the employment of the Conference in 2014.

\*Rick Hebert retired 30 June 2014.

\*Aileen Urquhart served as Acting Conference Personnel Minister from February 2013 to September 2014.

\*Fjola Hart Wasekeesikaw joined the staff team as Conference Personnel Minister in September 2014.

### **Future Directions**

Conflict resolution continues to challenge us (and the wider church). We will need to find a way to have conversation and be able to resolve conflict across cultures.

We continue to find ways to connect with the Aboriginal Ministries Council and Circle as it develops and plans work that intersects with our Conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Jourdain  
Speaker  
All Native Circle Conference

## **CONFERENCE OF MANITOBA AND NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO REPORT**

### **Origin: Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario**

#### **The View from Here**

The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario is a large and geographically diverse conference, we have the flat expanses of prairie in the west and the hills and rocks of the Cambrian Shield in the east, with many lakes and rivers connecting us. We also have great diversity within our many congregations across the Conference, this can be a challenge; however it more often than not is a blessing as we gather and celebrate that which makes us church in this place. Our Conference is blessed with many volunteers who are dedicated to the ministry of the Conference, our six presbyteries, and our many congregations. We continue to have many small, remote congregations unable to afford full-time ministry so therefore have a large number of Licence Lay Worship Leaders and Sacraments Elders offering their gifts and talents across the Conference.

#### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

Our Conference has invested in creating an easy to use website template that is designed for congregations and local ministries to have a website that meets their needs for communication with their congregations through social media as well as connecting them to seekers who want to find a United Church congregation that fits their needs. We have a variety of options for congregations depending on whether they have the technological skills in their midst or need more help from professionals.

As an Affirming Conference we continue to live into what that means in our context and what that calls us to in the wider world. We celebrate that of our six presbyteries two are already Affirming (Cambrian and Winnipeg) and three are in the midst of their education processes to become Affirming (Northland, Assiniboine, and Agassiz). We have also had quite a few congregations in our midst celebrate becoming Affirming Congregations over the past three years.

Right Relations has been a major focus for our Justice Committee. For the past three years this committee has worked together with All Native Circle Conference, Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, and the Centre for Christian Studies to hold an annual “Feast for Friends” right relations event. Other areas for education and advocacy include supporting KAIROS, The Jubilee Fund, Initiatives for Just Communities, Manitoba Council for International Cooperation, and the Interchurch Council on Hydropower Inc. We are presently exploring issues around Mining and Fossil Fuel reliance as well as promoting The United Church of Canada Unsettling Goods Campaign regarding Palestine and Israel.

Ministry for Young Adults and Youth (YAAY) continues to be a strong part of the work of our Conference. Rendez-vous was held in Winnipeg in August of 2014 at the University of Manitoba. This was a celebration of Youth and Young Adult ministry across the church, but also an affirmation of the dedication and hard work of the many local volunteers who helped make it happen. The leadership skills learned through our YAAY networks and events continues to foster strong leaders with our youth and young adult community who are an important part of the leadership in presbyteries, at Conference, at United Church camps and in local congregations.



The Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference has meant a higher portion of staff time focused in this area and that a smaller group of dedicated Pastoral Relations volunteers has taken on much of the Joint Search Committee work formerly done by presbyteries. We thank this group for all the hard work they have done over the last two years. This work is ongoing and we continue to evaluate how it can best work in our context.

Much of our Conference's focus over the last three years has been engaging as fully as possible in the Comprehensive Review Process. Our hope is that as we move into decision-making at General Council 42, that all of our congregations and presbyteries will have had several opportunities to engage in discussion and decision-making around how we move into the future as a United Church.

### **Staffing Changes**

We are preparing to say goodbye to Lee Rye, Administrative Assistant who is retiring at the end of July after 26 years of serving and caring for the people of our Conference; her knowledge and presence in the office and on the other end of the phone will be greatly missed. We wish her well in her retirement. We also said goodbye to long-time Archivist Diane Haglund; she retired in the fall of 2014 after 25 years of service and dedication to the work of our Conference through the MNWO Archives. In December of 2012 Bruce Faurschou stepped down as Executive Secretary and moved on to a new challenge as Director of United Church Halfway Homes; his ministry and leadership throughout his time in the Conference was greatly appreciated. Bill Gillis ably served as Acting Executive Secretary for six months until June of 2013 during the hiring process for a new Executive Secretary. We thank them all for their dedication and service to our Conference and wish them well in their next adventure.

As the new Executive Secretary I was welcomed in July of 2013. Richard Manley-Tannis, Winnipeg Presbytery Minister of Evangelism, Mission and Church Development; and Erin Acland, Keeper of the Archives, were also welcomed to our staff team and we look forward to their ministry with us in this time of change and transition.

### **Future Directions**

Communication, connection, and building relationships are the priorities as we move forward. We know regardless of what happens this summer at General Council the church we are so passionate about is changing. In times of change we look to build trust and rely on the strong foundations of our church to carry us forward. As the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario we look forward to the challenge and know that the strength, dedication, and faith of our people will ensure the mission and ministry of the United Church continues in our context.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon McCarthy  
Executive Secretary

## **SASKATCHEWAN CONFERENCE REPORT**

### **Origin: Saskatchewan Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

In spite of the slowdown in both the oil and potash industries, Saskatchewan continues to do well economically. However, the economic benefits vary widely from region to region and those benefits are not reflected in the financial situation of our pastoral charges. Rural depopulation continues. Many rural pastoral charges are challenged by declining numbers and energy levels of their members. This challenge has increasingly affected our rural presbyteries. Vacancies are increasing and the number of ministry personnel continues to decline which has been exacerbated by few or no settlements. However, we continue to be blessed by the many diaconal ministers and designated lay ministers who have chosen to call Saskatchewan Conference home and by the number of people who have assumed positions as licensed lay worship leaders and sacramental elders.

#### **Conference Initiatives and Action**

A new Conference structure came into effect with the rise of our 2012 annual meeting. One of the results is that the Conference Executive has become smaller. At the same time it has become more collegial and a place where everyone around the table seems to have a voice. It is now more of a fertile place where exciting ideas can sprout from the margins and flourish.

In particular it should be noted:

- After a three-year process, the decision was made at the annual meeting in 2013 that Saskatchewan Conference become an affirming ministry.
- In May of 2014, the decision was made to call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to enter into discussions on resource revenue sharing with First Nations. In the fall of 2014, the Conference Executive decided to challenge ourselves in the same way and so a proposal will be considered at our annual meeting this spring that half of the Moats Land Fund (which is revenue from oil producing property) and half of the net income which accrues to the Fund be shared with the All Native Circle Conference, or its successor.
- We meet more and more by electronic means and have endorsed the principle proposed by the General Council Executive that face-to-face meetings should be minimized by including meetings by electronic formats to reduce the resulting carbon footprint.
- Calling Lakes Centre made the decision to close after many years as an educational centre of the United Church and being central to the life of the United Church in both Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference and Saskatchewan Conference.
- While it feels like there has been a leveling in energy for mission work, much positive continues to be happening within Saskatchewan Conference as educational events, social justice ministry, outreach, chaplaincy in its various forms, intercultural ministry, and reconciliation and relationship building between First Nations peoples and settled peoples.

**Staffing Changes**

Since 2009, the staffing of Saskatchewan Conference has reduced from 8.3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff people to 4.8 FTE staff people plus a contract program staff person for youth and young adult ministry.

In other areas of the United Church staff reductions have been more newsworthy because they have happened in stages. The reduction in Saskatchewan Conference and in many of the other Conferences has been gradual but comparable. This has generally paralleled the gradual reduction in the grant from the General Council to the Conferences.

Since GC41 in the summer of 2012, there have been a few changes in the staffing of Saskatchewan Conference as follows:

- There was a turnover in the administrative staff position which relates to finance. Bev Fawcett retired in February of 2013 after 12 years of employment with the Conference and Heather Dootoff was hired shortly after that time to serve in the same position.
- Katie Curtis was hired as contract program staff person for youth and young adult ministry commencing in the fall of 2012. Youth and young adult ministry is thriving.
- In the summer of 2012, Madeleine McLuhan-Myers started with the Conference as a half-time archivist as the result of an arrangement with the Saskatchewan Archives Board by which we now share her services with the Board.
- Pam Thomas, who started as the Conference Personnel Minister in 2001, has given notice of her retirement effective September 30th of this year. Liz Mackenzie of Hamilton Conference is taking up the position effective September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Hazel Arbon, who started in the employment of Saskatchewan Conference in 2007 as a half-time program staff person, has given notice of her retirement as full-time program staff for Mission and Education effective December 31, 2015. The budget that is being proposed to the annual meeting includes the renewal of this position on a half-time basis.

**Future Directions**

Life on the prairies is changing. How we go about being church on the prairies is changing as well. Congregations are closing. Many communities include shared ministry among the denominations that are present. Lay ministry is increasing as is how much it is being valued.

The United Church in Saskatchewan Conference is prepared to embrace the change which is imminent. As we prepare to move to a new regional structure, it will be important to those of us who are the United Church in Saskatchewan Conference to do what we can to ensure that what makes the Conference distinctive lives on in some way or form.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bill Doyle  
Executive Secretary, Saskatchewan Conference

## **ALBERTA AND NORTHWEST CONFERENCE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

### **Origin: Alberta and Northwest Conference**

#### **The View from Here**

Alberta and Northwest Conference encompasses a large geography and four provincial/territorial jurisdictions: Alberta, northeastern British Columbia, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. We also have two inter-provincial pastoral changes with points in Saskatchewan. The issues and activities in the province of Alberta dominate the life of our Conference. To get an idea of the size of this Conference here is a small but significant fact. The distance between Edmonton, Alberta and Thunder Bay, Ontario is shorter than the distance between Edmonton and Whitehorse, and Whitehorse is located in Alberta and Northwest Conference.

We live in a highly mobile and affluent society and values in the United Church population reflect the values of the general population within Alberta and Northwest Conference. The average household income in this region in 2014 was \$121,000, compared to a Canadian average of \$86,000. The strongest social values found in both the United Church and general populations in our region, according to Environics data are: Need to escape, religiosity, and Canadian identity. In the general population those values are prioritized: 1) Need to Escape 2) Religiosity and 3) Canadian Identity. In the United Church population the same values are prioritized: 1) Religiosity 2) Need to Escape and 3) Canadian Identity. While regular attendance at worship is dropping in the United Church population, financial support of the church is increasing. The average givings per financially supporting household (FSH) in 2013 was \$1,459.

There are demographic distinctions between the United Church population and the general population in our Conference. The profile of the general population is that of a younger, mobile, employed, affluent population which tends to be married with families. There are more young children at home, but also fewer immigrants, compared to the general population in Canada. While Christianity overwhelmingly remains the primary religious affiliation, “no religion” represents the choice of nearly one-quarter of the general population. Among Christian denominations, the United Church comes third after Roman Catholic and “no religion.” The profile of the United Church population is that of a more mature demographic with a median age of 55 (compared to the national United Church population average age of 65) with a high concentration of retired people. The United Church population is concentrated in urban, exurban, and small town contexts. United Church affiliates tend to be people born in Canada (85.6% compared to the national average of 79%). Over 400,000 people in the general population of our Conference identify as United Church. The replacement value of United Church property in Alberta and Northwest Conference is just over \$425 million.

#### **Future Direction**

Responding to advice from the Planning and Administration Committee and from the President’s Committee on the Future of the Conference, the Executive of Alberta and Northwest Conference, at its meeting in October 2010, determined to delay the 83rd Meeting of the Conference to 2012. The Executive directed the Executive Secretary “to initiate consultation that engages the Conference widely in a process to make the future work of the Conference faithful, vital and sustainable; including, but not limited to, the examination of Presbytery boundaries, Conference committees, staff complement and frequency of Conference Meetings.”

At its 83rd Meeting held May 31–June 3, 2012, the Conference adopted a “Mission in Transition” model for its operations. This model allows an opportunity to discern the United Church mission and vision in the Conference while remaining flexible in responding to changing levels of funding, including General Council funding, and places Alberta and Northwest Conference in a positive position to transition into whatever new model is developed by the 42nd General Council for the church’s operations into the future. We have developed a stewardship program which remains flexible in changing times as we recognize that no matter what future direction the General Council discerns, we must develop more cost-effective ways to support of the mission of the church both in terms of dollars and human resources.

The Mission in Transition model reduced the Conference Staff Complement by eliminating four executive-level program positions and maintains a core staff comprised of: Executive Secretary (1.0 FTE), Personnel Minister (1.0FTE), Office Coordinator (1.0 FTE), Administrative Assistant: Personnel (1.0FTE), Accountant (0.6FTE), and Archivist (0.6FTE). No further reductions have been made since 2012.

The Mission Transition model also established a Mission Transition Fund into which there will be an annual contribution of \$75,000—at least 30% of which will be designated for youth and young adult ministries. To date 12 new mission projects have received grants and \$133,700 has been dispersed from this new fund. Projects supported include a Spiritual Arts Collective, a Young Adult Neo-Monastic Community, Presbytery Mission Development, Connecting Congregations for Worship and Study through Technology, Youth Justice and Community Service and Aboriginal History and Culture in school education programs.

The Conference meets to conduct the business of the court every three years, with a major gathering of the Conference to take place mid-triennium for the purposes of education and inspiration.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Lynn Maki, Executive Secretary

## **BRITISH COLUMBIA CONFERENCE REPORT**

### **The View from Here**

The United Church west of the Rocky Mountains has discovered the power of prayer. Across the country people were praying for “change”—well, change has come. Now the old adage rings true: “be careful what you pray for!”

Like much of the rest of the church, many congregations continue to shrink in size and in their ability to maintain an active ministry. Some congregations have disbanded and their properties sold. Amalgamation continues to be an option for others. Most struggle to meet budgets that were quite reachable in the past. Money is saved by allowing buildings to deteriorate. Part-time ministry is becoming commonplace.

At the same time a number of congregations are experiencing revived life and excitement for ministry. Only in rare cases, though, does this translate into financial stability. High property values in pockets of the Conference have allowed some to develop or sell their property to provide longer-term financial security.

Immense immigration into the Vancouver area has not brought with it many people interested in the United Church while the depopulation of rural areas threatens the long-standing core of United Church support.

### **Conference Initiatives and Actions**

BC Conference has benefited from significant cooperation between congregations, Presbyteries and the Conference in creating ProVision Funds. Created primarily from the sale of church properties, these funds now total close to \$7 million and are used to finance creative projects throughout the Conference. In an effort to share the benefits of high property values in some areas, these funds begin by benefiting presbyteries in which property sales happen but over time the capital from the funds starts to benefit the whole Conference equally.

As the 50% beneficiary of the largest charitable gift in BC history (from the Judith Jardine estate), BC Conference was able to significantly reduce its grant from the General Council and to establish a leadership development program entitled LeaderShift. Recognizing that an unknown future needs well-grounded and trained leaders, LeaderShift provides a variety of programs and supportive services to the leaders of the emerging church.

As one of the Conferences authorized to experiment with the Effective Leadership initiative which transferred responsibility for ministry personnel from the presbyteries to the Conference, BC Conference created a staff personnel team and a volunteer support system to develop and operate the new systems needed. While not without difficulties, the transition has proved to be relatively smooth and quite successful. Personnel work is now done more efficiently and presbyteries are finding significantly more time available to focus on the work of mission in their areas.

Recognizing that at least in the urban areas property matters have become both a blessing and a curse for congregations, the Conference began its Property Resource Team. A full-time staff

person, in partnership with a property professional, has worked with congregations on “repurposing” their properties. Presently two large development projects are far into the planning stages, one including facilities for a new Conference office. Numerous other smaller projects have also been undertaken, including ones that include supported housing and senior care.

After hearing from their bank that it was about to foreclose on its large loan, the Centre at Naramata asked for assistance from the Conference. The Conference loaned the Centre enough money to pay off all indebtedness and helped the Centre work with professionals on a new business plan. Part of the plan called for “contracting out” some of the services done by unionized employees which sparked a lengthy labour dispute and closed all operations at the Centre. Despite a successful appeal for funds and intense research and work, the Centre’s Board decided that the huge capital deficit, its financial indebtedness, and its long-standing marginal sustainability meant that there was no alternative but to close the historic Centre.

BC Conference continues to use a Policy Governance system in its governance work, as it has since 2000. In the past year it finalized new Ends policies which articulate what the Conference is to accomplish. They begin with the recognition that the Conference is just one part of the body of our church and that it does not have to do everything the church as a whole wants to do. Instead, it can focus its work on particular activities and beneficiaries. This kind of priority setting is difficult in our church and it remains to be seen whether it can be maintained over time.

### **Staffing Changes**

Bucking the trend through much of our church, BC Conference has managed to increase its staffing complement. Presently there are 18 staff positions and a number of part-time contractors working regularly for the Conference. In the past few years we have added a mission specialist in our northern presbyteries, a personnel person for our Lower Mainland Presbyteries, hired a coordinator for the LeaderShift work, and have added contract work in communications.

### **Future Directions**

In the near future the Conference will develop policy that will help it determine how much of the assets from property sales should be saved for future generations and how much should be spent in the immediate future. Property sales and development will continue to have a major impact on a number of congregations, possibly freeing up significant assets for use locally and more broadly across the church.

The usual “business model” (low property costs, low wages, major volunteer time, high donations, fund-raising, and tax breaks) that has served congregational life so well in the past will continue to be strained and be found increasingly wanting. Congregations will either continue to fail or will adapt by developing new business models or new kinds of ministries. Leaders with new skills and mind-sets may start developing new ministries that will not depend on the usual models of congregational life and giving.

We anticipate that the Conference will become more important as an administrative centre for church life in the region while presbyteries take on more active mission discernment and support.

Of course, like the rest of the church, we are eager to see what emerges from General Council 42 before making too many firm plans for the future.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Karen Medland  
Past President



## **EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND HEALTHY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS REPORT**

### **Origin: Executive of the General Council**

#### **Background**

These recommendations originate with work initiated by the 38th General Council, 2003 which referred the Report of the Task Group on Options for Simplifying Policies and Procedures Related to Pastoral Relations to the Executive of the General Council. The 39th and 40th General Councils referred eight further proposals that called for evaluation of oversight, discipline, and pastoral relations processes to the General Secretary to inform ongoing work.<sup>1</sup>

In May 2010, the General Secretary's report "Planning for a Future Grounded in Faith and Action" and the subsequent motion of the Executive of the General Council directed proposals to be developed to simplify pastoral relations processes and shift responsibilities for some or all pastoral relations from presbyteries to Conferences. The report envisioned presbyteries being freed from the administrative burden of complex human resource and regulatory work so that its leadership could focus on supporting local ministries in their mission and ministry and foster a sense of greater support and collegiality among ministry personnel. The report also imagined that simplified processes would encourage a greater range of ministry possibilities by being more open and adaptable. (See the report at [commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search "2010-05-01 GCE Workbook.")

The Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services undertook a number of initiatives to better understand the causes of the concerns being raised by these many petitions and proposals to General Councils and to research possible courses of action to address them. Current practices and requirements were evaluated, input on the experience of them was gathered, and best practices in other churches, professional and not-for-profit organizations were considered. These initiatives included:

1. the Isolation in Ministry project which engaged a major research survey of nearly 1,600 ministry personnel conducted in partnership with the research division of Warren Shepell (2005);
2. the Task Group on Demographics of Ministry Personnel which reviewed the current and projected demographics for ministry personnel, and the implications for recruitment, retention, and the pension and benefits plans (2008);
3. the Oversight and Discipline of Ministry Personnel projects which produced the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice policy (2006), an extensive legal review of our oversight and discipline policies (2010) and two major reports (2008 and 2011) with recommendations for extensive changes to policy;
4. the Working Group on Isolation in Ministry (2010) which developed specific recommendations to address the issues identified in the 2005 research project;
5. the Pastoral Relations Policy Review Steering Group, which reviewed all policies in *The Manual* related to pastoral relations with recommendations for extensive changes to policy and polity (2010);

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<sup>1</sup> The 39th General Council, 2006, referred proposals GS3, GS23, BC4, LON3, TOR4, MNWO1, and GC94. The 40th General Council, 2009 referred proposal ANW16.

6. the Collaborative Research Project (2011), undertaken with the professional research firms Myers Norris Penny and Prairie Research Associates, surveyed more than 1,700 lay and ordered members of pastoral relations, pastoral oversight, and disciplinary hearing committees across the church testing earlier research conclusions and proposed directions for policy changes;
7. in addition to the above research and data, the Permanent Committee drew on the General Secretary's church-wide invitation to comment on areas of policy needing simplification. A significant 135 responses were received from individuals, pastoral charges, presbyteries, and Conferences. The responses, though varied, spoke to a central theme: complex processes. A separate survey was posted to engage the youth voice and from youth and young adults.<sup>2</sup>

The research and studies revealed numerous recurring conclusions among members:

1. professional level support is required to assist pastoral charges with ministerial compensation and benefits, annual review and assessment of ministry personnel, and on-going discernment of mission and call;
2. volunteers, often with limited knowledge and experience are asked to manage the human resource aspects of pastoral relationships, often leading to unfavourable and inconsistent outcomes;
3. presbytery/district pastoral charge oversight processes are often not effective or helpful, leaving presbytery/district to intervene only when a crisis erupts;
4. the Ministry and Personnel Committee dilemma: members are required to be parishioners while at the same time fulfilling employer roles;
5. ministry personnel feel powerless to affect change and worry about the future of their vocation;
6. presbytery/district-managed pastoral relations often contributes to inconsistent application of policies and standards;
7. responsibilities of presbytery/district should focus less on oversight and discipline and more on collegial support for ministry personnel, mission and programs;
8. overlap of responsibilities between decision making bodies (pastoral charge, presbytery/district, Conference) creates redundancies and poor use of resources, i.e. people repeating the same work;
9. ethno and linguistic specific congregations agree that pastoral relations policies and processes do not meet their needs;
10. high turnover of volunteers increases the burden of training and results in a limited repository of skill and knowledge related to pastoral relations, oversight and discipline;
11. needs assessment, search and selection processes take too long; many pastoral charges report spending a year or more without permanent ministry leadership;
12. presbytery/district, as a circle of peers, is perceived to be often incapable of acting impartially in review panels and disciplinary proceedings;
13. disciplinary responsibilities of presbytery/district hinders collegiality and peer support among ministry personnel.

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<sup>2</sup> For further information on any of these initiatives/reports, please see [commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca) (search "41st General Council background").

Between the summer of 2011 and the winter of 2012, the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services discerned and tested three principles for responding to the collected concerns and recommended changes:

1. the pastoral charge and the presbytery/district be accountable for the discernment and articulation of mission and ministry leadership needs, and the support and nurture of pastoral relationships and ministry personnel;
2. the Conference be accountable for the pastoral relations processes related to credentials, placement, and oversight and discipline of ministry personnel;
3. the courts resource pastoral relations as well as oversight and discipline policies with trained paid accountable staff.

In March of 2012, the Executive of the General Council received a revised report ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “2015-03-21 GCE Workbook,” pp. 78–89), and proposed to the 41st General Council, 2012 that it be authorized to undertake the development and testing of simplified pastoral relations policies that are flexible to contextual and regional differences, supported within overall financial capacity, and reflect, but are not limited to, the proposed principles for the distribution of jurisdiction as well as the provision of staff to manage the pastoral relations and the oversight and discipline work.

### **Process for This Proposal**

The 41st General Council, 2012 passed the following motion, granting authorization to test new ways of doing pastoral relations and oversight and discipline:

1. The 41st General Council, 2012 directed the Executive of the General Council to develop and test simplified pastoral relations as well as oversight and discipline policies that are:
  - a. flexible to contextual and regional differences
  - b. supported within overall financial capacity
  - c. reflective of, but not limited to, a model that:
    - i. the pastoral charge and the presbytery be accountable for the discernment and articulation of mission and ministry leadership needs, and the support and nurture of pastoral relationships and ministry personnel;
    - ii. the Conference be accountable for the pastoral relations processes related to placement, oversight and discipline of ministry personnel; and
    - iii. the courts resource pastoral relations as well as oversight and discipline policies with trained paid accountable staff; and
2. the Executive of the General Council be authorized to implement pastoral relations as well as oversight and discipline policy changes that do not require a Remit and that are consistent with and responsive to the ongoing work of the “Comprehensive Review of How The United Church of Canada Envisions and Lives Out Its Identity.” (2012 Record of Proceedings, p. 296)

The Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project was originally designed around ten program goals:

1. improving the “fit” of pastoral relationships as reported by ministers and pastoral charges
2. increasing the number of ministers and pastoral charges who report having a “healthy relationship”
3. increasing the number of ministers who state that they receive the support they need to perform their ministry well
4. decreasing the number of ministry personnel who report that they feel isolated
5. increasing the vitality of pastoral charges and other local ministries
6. proving viability within overall financial capacity
7. decreasing volunteer workload
8. increasing the competency for handling pastoral relations, oversight and discipline
9. increasing the consistency within each Conference in how pastoral relations, oversight and discipline are handled; and
10. increasing the efficiency of pastoral relations, oversight and discipline.

It was the vision of the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services that increased health in pastoral relationships, increased policy efficiency, increased consistency and competency in the application of policy, and decreased feelings of isolation amongst ministry personnel could all be achieved, over time, by a new model of pastoral relations and oversight and discipline. This model would be simplified, the responsibility of one court, separated from collegiality and programmatic support for ministry personnel, and would be supported within existing overall financial resources.

This model also recognizes that paid accountable ministry is both a vocation and a profession, and that the Church holds a commitment to engage ministry personnel and local ministries with policies that are fair, just and consistently applied (Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services Guiding Theological Perspectives). Effective paid accountable leadership and healthy pastoral relationships among ministry personnel, the local ministry and the governing bodies of the Church are critical components to the faithful and vital fulfillment of God’s mission that we sing of in The United Church of Canada. It is crucial that the policies and procedures supporting the initiation of these relationships, the on-going support and accountability of them, and the conclusion of them be flexible and transparent. It is also important that they be responsive to particular contexts of region and culture. The 2,400 ministers serving in active calls and appointments throughout the church are among The United Church of Canada’s greatest assets in responding to the call to be the Church:

*to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. (A New Creed 1968, rv 1995)*

### **Summary of Conference Projects**

In the late fall of 2012, the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project management team was appointed from the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services and resourced with staff from the Ministry and Employment Unit of the General Council Office. The project

**It is the opinion of the project management group that when 70% of the Church participates in a change that is optional, significant transformation is both possible and timely.**

management team's initial step was to send an open invitation to all Conferences to participate in the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project test, beginning with a face-to-face meeting of exploration and planning. Twelve of the thirteen Conferences came to the initial meeting, and ten Conferences decided to participate in the project. It is the opinion of the project management group that when 70% of the Church participates in a change that is optional, significant transformation is both possible and timely.<sup>3</sup> The Conferences participating in the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project include: British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario, Manitou, London, Toronto, Bay of Quinte, Montreal and Ottawa, Hamilton, and Maritime.

The participating Conferences were given allowance by the Sub-Executive of the General Council ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search "2013-05-16 GCSE," p. 75) to operate outside of some of the pastoral relations policies of *The Manual* for the sake and length of their Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships test. Each of the Conferences designed their own test model, which resulted in four types of tests:

1. movement of all pastoral relations and oversight and discipline policies to Conference, with a focus on collegial support and programming in the presbyteries (British Columbia, London, and Toronto);
2. movement of all pastoral relations and oversight and discipline policies to Conference, with a focus on collegial support and programming in the presbytery, but with the test limited to one presbytery within the Conference (Hamilton and Manitou);
3. test through the Conference, but limited to select policy/procedural policy changes (Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario); and
4. test within two or more presbyteries, and limited to select policy/procedural policy changes (Maritime, Bay of Quinte, and Montreal and Ottawa).

The participation of Saskatchewan Conference was focused on the collection of data regarding the financial and volunteer hours associated with current pastoral relations and oversight and discipline processes. For a number of reasons, including geographical challenges, the data collected did not allow for a comparison with the whole project. However, insights and wisdom from the process are included in the results below. For a summary of the projects in each Conference, please see Appendix A ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search "2015-03-21 GCE Workbook MEPS 23," p. 75).

### **Summary of Evaluation**

Knowing the challenge of evaluating a project in which each of the test sites is distinct, the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project management team worked with consultant Leanne Douglas of the Winnipeg branch of Canadian business advisory, accounting and research firm, MNP, to create an evaluation framework that had the capacity to access data from Conferences and presbyteries who were participating, as well as all active ministry personnel and local ministry units within The United Church of Canada. The evaluation was built to measure the project against the original program goals (see p. 660) at the one-, three-,

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<sup>3</sup> Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships Report for Information and Feedback, Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services, September 19–20, 2014.

and five-year marks. The first round of evaluation was completed in the spring of 2014 when the majority of Conferences were at or around the one-year anniversary of implementation.

The initial evaluation included four distinct pieces. Conferences and presbyteries who were participating in the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project were sent a spreadsheet with a series of quantitative questions about policy, financial capacity, volunteer effort and training, continuing education resources offered by the court, and change management. Ministry personnel and local ministry units/church members were sent an on-line survey that was largely perception-based that asked questions about pastoral relations and oversight and discipline policy, volunteer effort, time commitment, support structures, and staff support. The response rate for the ministry personnel and member surveys was much higher than the Conference and presbytery surveys.

Sufficient response was received from Conferences to make use of the data, but unfortunately not from presbyteries. Some of the feedback from both presbyteries and Conferences was that the information requested was time-consuming and difficult to collect, and that if the evaluation framework had been articulated at the beginning of the project, this information could have been collected throughout the testing. This is a significant learning for the project management team, and for the Permanent Committee: in large projects such as Effective Leadership, evaluation must be incorporated into the project from the beginning. Although the rationale for delaying the development of the evaluation framework included a desire to understand the breadth of the individual projects, the extra work required from the staff in the Conferences to gather the required information became an impediment to the efficiency of the evaluation.

**In large projects such as Effective Leadership, evaluation must be incorporated into the project from the beginning.**

It was also reported to the project management team that the financial cost to implement the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships projects was more than initially expected. Participating Conferences received a one-time grant from the General Council Office of between \$260 and \$8,000 in the 2013 calendar year to off-set implementation costs which ranged from \$7,500 to \$43,000. The expectation of the 41st General Council, 2012 that a project such as this could be implemented and “supported within the overall financial capacity” was unrealistic. As a result, British Columbia, London, and Hamilton Conferences hired program staff to support the development and initial implementation of the project, while Toronto Conference hired additional administrative staff to support the ongoing implementation. Further, feedback from non-participating Conferences suggested that had the availability of grant money been made known, they may have participated in the project. Finally, all participating Conferences reported an underestimation of the length of time required to develop, offer training for, communicate about, and implement the project.<sup>4</sup>

Through the fall and winter of 2014/2015, further consultative conversations occurred with the participating Conferences about project structures, best practices, and elements of Conference projects that could have been improved. An intentional conversation was also held with the Conference Personnel Ministers at their fall gathering in November 2014.

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<sup>4</sup> Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships Report for Information and Feedback, Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services, September 19–20, 2014.

**Rationale**

***Approve the principle of locating oversight and discipline, and pastoral relations policy systems with Conference, or equivalent.***

The data from participating Conferences in the evaluation showed a decrease in volunteer workload and increase in process efficiency. Ministry Personnel also reported that search and selection processes are fairer and more consistent. In consultative conversations with Conferences, settlement committee, staff and ministry personnel reported significant decreases in the timelines necessary from a request for change in pastoral relationships to final selection of ministry personnel.

One of the ways that the flexibility of the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project met the contextual and regional differences is reflected in the development and implementation of some of the projects. British Columbia, London and Toronto Conferences have each implemented projects in which all pastoral relations and oversight and discipline policies have been moved to the court of Conference. Each Conference implemented a different project according to the culture in which they live and worship, and adjusted the implementation plans accordingly. London Conference set a date for implementation and then lived into their project. Toronto Conference established policy and procedures and then followed through with implementation of their project. British Columbia Conference hired a Project Manager and then implemented their project in two stages.

***Approve the principle that the denomination, or representative body, be responsible for education and communication about the denomination-wide oversight and discipline, and pastoral relations policies, and the best practices that consider regional and contextual circumstances.***

Many of the projects focused specifically on congregational mission development as required by contextual circumstances. Best practices of these projects included Hamilton Conference’s Essence Statements and Montreal & Ottawa Conference’s Living Ministry profiles, where staffing and resources were directed to congregational mission. In British Columbia Conference, the name and foci of the triannual oversight visits is being shifted to Ministry Vision & Support visits, which offer the Presbytery an opportunity to support and walk with local ministry units in mission and ministry work. Finally, in Maritime Conference, staff time is directed to assisting congregations with assessment reports regarding the vision, mission and vitality of the ministry to enable the Conference to “come alongside” a pastoral charge when stability is needed.

**All Conferences that moved their pastoral relations processes from presbytery reported a faster turnaround time for changes in pastoral relations.**

When consulted, the Conference Personnel Ministers expressed concerns about regionalization being an unintended consequence of the project. The original intention was to open up the search and selection system to increase consistency and efficiency. Due to the fact that there is no longer one process for calls and appointments, ministry personnel are challenged when entering search processes outside of their own Conference. Similarly, Manitou

Conference reported a challenge in the implementation of the project in only one presbytery and the lack of consistency created internally.

The online system in use in Toronto Conference that matches ministry personnel profiles with pastoral charge profiles is facilitating a more equitable short-listing process in the selection of ministry personnel, thus increasing the diversity of ministry personnel participating in the interview stage of search processes.

***Recognize the successful practices demonstrated by the testing Conferences, and ensure the incorporation of the following specific practices into pastoral relations procedures throughout the church:***

**1. Prioritize financial and staffing support for programs intended to foster collegiality among ministry personnel.**

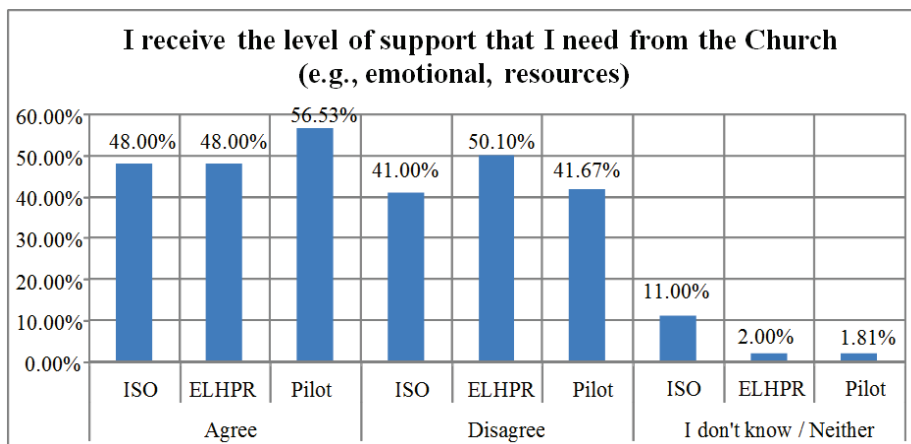
When consulted, each of the participating Conferences indicated essential agreement for the benefit associated with collegial programming. However, the means to engage this goal differed in each project. Hamilton Conference's Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project was limited to Bruce Presbytery and focused on congregational mission development and support of ministry personnel. Bruce Presbytery's test included ministry personnel retreats, which were exceptionally well-attended. Saskatchewan Conference highlighted an important reminder that with the continued prevalence of part-time ministries in that Conference, the capacity of ministry personnel to participate in collegial programming is compromised.

That said, regardless of the number of opportunities that ministry personnel had to network with ministry colleagues, Conference, or community size, the majority of respondents reported that ministry personnel need to build stronger collegial relationships with each other.

**2. Provide support to local ministry unit governing bodies in their employer role and, in particular, training and consultation for Ministry and Personnel Committees, Pastoral Relations/Settlement Committees.**

The majority of ministry personnel report that The United Church of Canada is a better than average (or excellent) employer, that their current ministry is a comfortable and energizing place to work, and that they are appreciated and supported by the community they serve. In comparing responses from two previous surveys of ministry personnel (the Isolation in Ministry survey in 2005 and the Collaborative Research Project in 2010), an encouraging trend appears to be emerging.





**68% of ministry personnel in participating Conferences noticed a decrease in volunteer workload.**

One of the overall goals of the project is to improve the fit between ministry personnel and pastoral charges. When surveyed, 71% of local ministries described the fit between the programming leadership and the ministry needs in their church as excellent or good.

In London Conference’s project the traditional joint needs assessment and joint search process has been replaced by a process where the congregation does both the needs assessment and the search supported by Conference resources, including handbooks and on-line training of the congregational interview teams by the Conference Personnel Minister. Most congregations have been able, under the new process, to move from a request for a change in pastoral relations to interviewing inside of 90 days. Montreal and Ottawa Conference developed a new joint needs assessment process that includes the Living Ministry profile referenced above, that is designed to be accomplished in a one-day workshop. This encourages a broader participation of the congregation, and an expedited process.

In terms of support to ministry and personnel committees, British Columbia Conference is providing resources for ministry personnel performance reviews, while Bay of Quinte Conference reports increased staff availability for ministry and personnel committees.

Conference pastoral relations and settlement committees have also shifted responsibilities in some Conferences with processes like centralizing the processing of applications for ministry positions. Toronto Conference has established a team of volunteer reviewers whose responsibility is to ensure the accurate completion of pastoral relations forms. Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference screens applications for eligibility, ensuring that mandatory training is complete, and credentials are cleared for admissions candidates. Best practices such as these contribute to a more efficient and consistent application of systems; 68% of ministry personnel in participating Conferences noticed a decrease in volunteer workload.

**3. Maximize available communication and database management systems to support pastoral relations systems.**

Many Conferences reported a volunteer shortage to fulfill the responsibilities of supporting pastoral relations systems. However, Conferences reported that the use of technology is

decreasing volunteer effort, especially in terms of travel, meeting time, and cost. Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference has developed PowerPoint presentations to be used in the training of joint search committees that both ensure a level of training and education, as well as reduce the level of staff involvement.

Toronto Conference's project is very focused on technology and is using an on-line matching tool to address bias and cultural assumptions in matching ministry personnel and local ministry units for calls and appointments.

As was highlighted in the Isolation in Ministry report in 2006, there continues to be pastoral charges with little to no access to high-speed internet. While this contributes to the sense of isolation ministry personnel in those areas experience, it also limits the capacity of using technology for the work of pastoral relations, and should be an ongoing consideration for future development.

#### **4. Ensure access to conflict management and change management training for leaders who are initiating or implementing change.**

One thing that can be stated with certainty is that the future effectiveness of ministry in the local church will require significant changes to practices of congregational mission development, the ministry personnel search and selection process, and oversight and discipline procedures. In the responses to the evaluation, more than half of local ministries agreed with the statement "Typically, it is difficult for anyone to make significant changes in our local ministry without it resulting in conflict." Knowing that systemic change is essential, and that change raises levels of conflict, it makes good sense to increase the provision training for conflict and change management as we introduce systemic change throughout the church.

#### **General Observations**

There are many faithful and competent presbytery volunteers throughout The United Church of Canada who have dedicated many hours to the work of pastoral relations and oversight and discipline. Many of the Conferences reported concerns from presbyters that moving these systems to Conference would create a gap between the local context and the oversight body. At the same time, reports of renewed collegiality and capacity to support mission and ministry development within congregations are also emerging. There is also a sense of collaboration between different projects with resources and processes being shared as they are developed. As a result, the proposed changes will continue to build on these insights as the church continues to support and enable the ministry personnel and lay leaders within communities of faith across the country.

**REPORT: THE STEERING GROUP ON THE CANDIDACY PATHWAY****Origin: Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services****A) History of the Candidacy Pathway Initiative**

In May 2008, the Executive of the General Council directed the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry to review the current process by which members of the Church become members of the Order of Ministry (Diaconal and Ordained Ministers). The Permanent Committee established a Candidacy Review Working Group, which reported back to that Permanent Committee. In March 2009, the Executive of the General Council received the recommendations of the Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry that the work of the Candidacy Review Working Group be approved. The Executive recommended that the General Council approve the policy directions and principles of the Candidacy Pathway and authorize the Executive of the General Council to take the necessary steps, including the issuance of required remits and revisions to *The Manual* at appropriate times, and to implement the policy directions.

At the 40th General Council 2009, the proposal to adopt new policy directions for the Candidacy Pathway process for the Church (GCE 6, attached as Appendix A) was presented and considered. A motion (GC 40 2009 – 021) to refer the proposal to the Executive of the General Council for more detail and development was passed (Record of Proceedings, p. 166).

In November 2009, the Executive of the General Council referred GCE 6 – The Candidacy Pathway to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services for further study and development, including an option of trial implementation in up to three Conferences, with evaluation and proposals to be sent to the Executive of the General Council prior to the 41st General Council 2012. In April 2010, the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services referred this matter to a Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway, with a timeframe that anticipated the completion of this work by the 41st General Council 2012.

In 2011, three pilot projects began one in each of British Columbia Conference, Manitou Conference, and Bay of Quinte Conference. These candidacy pathway pilot projects are ongoing at this time. In addition, St. Andrew's College is piloting the equipping phase of the candidacy pathway. As no candidate would be able to complete the seven steps of the Candidacy Pathway model by 2012 and as the work of the pilot projects and the Steering Group could not be completed prior to the 41st General Council in 2012, an interim report on the Candidacy Pathway was provided for information to that meeting of the General Council.

**B) Mandate**

The initial mandate of the Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway was:

- to develop and implement a project plan to study and develop the policy directions of the Candidacy Pathway including oversight and evaluation of trial implementation in up to three Conferences;

- to evaluate the trials and report to the Executive of the General Council through the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services in anticipation of the 41st General Council 2012;
- to provide interim reports to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services;
- in collaboration with the successor to the Unit on Ministries in French and the United Church Francophone community, (a) to review policies related to Supervised Ministry Education, Transfer and Settlement, and Candidacy to ensure maximum effectiveness in deploying Francophone and bilingual candidates for Ministry in French in appropriate settings; (b) to explore the feasibility of Francophone and bilingual candidates requesting to do their Supervised Ministry Education in French-language settings, including funding as necessary; and (c) to explore the feasibility of Francophone and bilingual candidates being prioritized for settlement in ministry-in-French contexts, including the candidates' own Conference.

In September 2010, the mandate was amended to add:

- to monitor and evaluate any explorations or experiments with various aspects of the seven stages named in the candidacy pathway, so as to include reflection on their results in the work leading to the Steering Group's report

In February 2012, the mandate was again amended – this time to provide the Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway with a revised time frame to complete its work by the 42nd General Council 2015.

The Mandate of the Steering Group was specifically limited to the Candidacy Pathway and did not include those on the pathway to recognition as Designated Lay Ministers. Within the policies of The United Church of Canada, the term “candidate” refers specifically to those in the process of preparation for diaconal or ordained ministry. As the Candidacy Pathway developed through various pilot projects, it became apparent to the Steering Group that a pathway for those seeking recognition as Designated Lay Ministers should be developed and implemented, based on the same seven phases and the same resources used in the development of the Candidacy Pathway.

### **C) The Seven-Phase Candidacy Pathway Model – Further Detail and Development**

The Candidacy Pathway Model that is being proposed for implementation within The United Church of Canada is based on 18 “Core Values and Principles” (attached as Appendix B).

Building on that foundation, the seven phases were identified:

1. Call Forth: God calls persons to lead and serve
2. Identify: the Church tests the person's giftedness for ministry and identifies candidates for the Order of Ministry
3. Accompany: the Church accompanies candidates on the pathway
4. Equip: the Church provides opportunities for candidates to be educated for ordered ministry
5. Assess: the Church ensures candidates are gifted and prepared for ordered ministry

6. Authorize: the Church affirms the readiness of candidates for ordered ministry
7. Celebrate: the Church gives thanks to God for those offering to serve in ordered ministry

The goals, target groups, and activities involved in each phase have been developed to provide greater detail (attached as Appendix C).

In addition to these documents, a statement on the Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership has been developed. Four goal areas have been identified:

1. Spiritual, Vocational, and Personal Formation
2. Teach and Facilitate Learning in and of the Christian Faith
3. Cultural and Contextual Sensitivities and Analysis
4. Leadership within the Faith Community and Wider Community

For each of these goal areas, general learning outcomes have been identified, as well as learning outcome elements and examples for the implementation of those elements (attached as Appendix D).

A listing of a series of biblical passages to aid in reflection at various times along the Candidacy Pathway has also been prepared (attached as Appendix E).

#### **D) Pilot Projects**

For the three pilot projects operating at the Conference level, training for the Conference Assessment Boards for these Conferences took place in June (Manitou Conference and Bay of Quinte Conference) and September (British Columbia Conference) of 2011. The training was facilitated by Jennifer Clarke and Tim Elliott of Elliott Clarke & Associates (now Six Oaks Consulting), ministry development consultants.

One of the tools which the pilot projects' Conference Assessment Boards could use in its determination of suitability for candidacy is the Vocational Assessment Report. These reports are provided by the Ministry Development Council. The Ministry Development Council is an international network of accredited centres, providing resources for clergy and other church workers, denominational leaders, and local churches since 1969. The Council has offices in ten cities in the United States and one in Toronto. Jennifer Clarke and Tim Elliott are the partners of the Ministry Development Council's Toronto office and have conducted the assessments of inquirers in the Candidacy Pathway pilot projects.

In each of the pilot project Conferences, the Conference Personnel Minister has played a key role in the implementation of the Candidacy Pathway and continues to provide personnel and leadership support.

Throughout the life of the pilot projects, St. Andrew's College, Manitou Conference, British Columbia Conference, and Bay of Quinte Conference provided written annual reports to the Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway. In addition, representatives of each pilot project have participated via conference call in consultation with the Steering Group. The information from the pilot projects proved invaluable to the Steering Group in its work. Summary reports

reflecting the progress of each of the pilot projects are attached to this report as Appendix F. The recommendations of the Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway are in large part a result of the development and implementation work carried out in the four pilot projects and the findings of those piloting the new Candidacy Pathway model.

The Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway heard a great deal of excitement and enthusiasm around the mechanisms piloted by the Conferences which warrant serious consideration. The pilot project findings showed some significant advantages (such as greater accessibility and a reduction in the number of committees dealing with various steps on the path to vocational ministry). These advantages should be weighed against some issues which arose during the pilot projects, such as the increased costs of implementing the new model at the Conference level in terms of staff time and monetary expenses and the costs of vocational assessments, which were covered by the General Council Office.

### **E) Additional Consultation**

The Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway consulted with others to broaden its understanding of specific wishes of some communities regarding the pathway to vocational ministry.

The Steering Group considered a number of intercultural issues at its meeting in October of 2010, when it met with Rev. Michael Blair, Executive Minister of the then Communities in Ministry Unit. Some of the issues raised were language barriers, cultural reluctance to the practice of raising up ministry personnel from within the congregation they may serve, and the potential lack of placement opportunities (for Supervised Ministry Education experiences and for calls/settlement) for students from ethnic ministries.

The Steering Group is aware that there is a different pathway in place for those from our aboriginal congregations who are called to vocational ministry. The programs offered at the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre have been developed with a particular awareness of the needs and faith tradition and expression of candidates and congregations within the All Native Circle Conference. Consultation on aboriginal issues and candidacy took place between the Steering Group and Aileen Urquhart, Acting Conference Personnel Minister, All Native Circle Conference. The current candidacy process, with its reliance on completion of forms and processes does not fit with the culture of our native ministries and the candidates and applicants who are called from within those ministries.

Following the “Gathering Together – Persons with Disabilities” conference in July of 2013, consultation with three current or former candidates who are differently-abled took place via telephone calls. Individual conversations took place with each one and the staff resource person to the Steering Group. Their recommendations and hopes for the future candidacy pathway were passed along to the Steering Group in plenary. All three agreed that it would be helpful to the process if more training and awareness around the issues of disability were provided to those on committees and boards dealing with inquirers and candidates, so that the focus “is not just on the disability.” All three expressed support for the Candidacy Pathway model and the pilot project work.

The Francophone Candidacy Sub-Committee developed a work plan for consultation with Francophone stakeholders and to develop data collection questions. Data collection from current and former Francophone candidates was conducted by means of a questionnaire. Consultation with other stakeholders took place immediately following a meeting of the Connexional Table in Lachine, QC on November 1, 2013. A member of the Steering Group and the staff resource person to the Steering Group met with representatives of United Theological College, Montreal & Ottawa Conference Office, Montreal Presbytery and its E&S Committee, Consistoire Laurentien and its E&S Committee, the Conference Interview Board, the Conference E&S Committee, and *Ministères en français*. A number of issues specific to Francophone candidates and Francophone congregations were raised, including:

- the policies, forms, procedures, and handbooks governing all aspects of entering ministry are not available in French
- the Ministry of Supervision course is not available in French
- for small pastoral charges, without funding from the General Council Office it would be impossible to be a learning site; due to financial limitations, none of the Francophone pastoral charges can qualify as a learning site
- matching an appropriate site with an intern and a supervisor is not only a question of matching language but also of matching the “cultural context”
- formation must be focused on the future church, not preparing ministers for the classic model of a United Church pastoral charge; Supervised Ministry Education experiences should offer part of the placement in a missional setting or perhaps placement within the presbytery or a region
- the Church must work with theological schools to develop a model of training not based on a 50 year old model but on a model for the future
- the previous model of Supervised Ministry Education experience served over two four-month summer periods should be an available option; 24 months of Supervised Ministry Education could discourage some from pursuing the road to ordination
- if students can accept a call to the pastoral charge that served as their learning site, the Church needs to accompany and prepare these congregations and new members of the Order of Ministry to handle the transition when their roles change
- in light of ethnic differences, perhaps the Church should ask if it really is a good idea to have the same concept of what is a valid ministry for the entire United Church of Canada
- the Church must be intentional in placing bilingual ministry personnel in communities of declining Anglophone ministries where there are the possibilities of transition to a ministry in French or a bilingual ministry
- Conferences must identify places where there is the possibility of growing Francophone or bilingual ministries and share that information with the wider church
- the Church needs to anticipate the growing possibility of its new ministry personnel having to work in a bi-vocational manner

## **F) Evaluation**

The Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway was tasked with evaluating the effectiveness of the new Candidacy Pathway. A contract was entered into with MNP LLP to provide a project evaluation tool and processes for the Steering Group to use in its evaluation work. Leanne Douglas, Senior Manager, MNP Consulting, served as the Lead Consultant on the work. The

Evaluation Sub-Committee met during the summer of 2013. It completed work on a Candidacy Pathway Evaluation Matrix and a time frame in which to complete its work. It also worked with Leanne to develop data collection questions.

Data collection from various target audiences was sought using a variety of data collection tools. Input was obtained from those involved in the pilot projects as well as from those involved in the candidacy process in non-pilot project Conferences. Current and recent inquirers and candidates from within all Conferences were also surveyed, as were educational supervisors. A special survey was developed and translated into French before being sent to current and previous francophone or bilingual candidates. In addition, Presbytery E&S Committees received a specific survey on their capacity to work with Francophone inquirers and candidates in French.

The results of the responses were collected and the trends were then brought to the Steering Group at its plenary meeting in the spring of 2014.

The responses from various committee and board members involved in the Candidacy Pathway pilot projects served to reinforce the information that had been shared in the annual reports from the pilot project Conferences.

The results from new ministry personnel and current students/inquirers/candidates from the pilot project Conferences were surprisingly similar to those from the non-pilot project Conferences. These responses gave the Steering Group the opportunity to hear firsthand feedback from the students actually involved in the pilot project and from those who experienced the traditional path to ordination or commissioning.

From those current and former students in the non-pilot project Conferences:

- most found the resources useful, although not always easy to come by
- just over 20% felt their discernment process began too late
- just over 10% of respondents found the discernment process not at all helpful
- most saw their Discernment Committee as being valuable, a support, offering clarification, affirming, and non-judgemental
- most felt that field education while in theological school, theological education, the Ministry-Based Ordination Program (distance ministry) offered through Atlantic School of Theology, Supervised Ministry Education experiences, supply appointments, and Sunday worship leadership offer ample opportunities to integrate skills, knowledge, values, and faith; about 10% felt the opportunities offered were inadequate
- most have very positive responses to their Supervised Ministry Education experience; just over 11% had a poor experience with their educational supervisor; over 16% felt they did not have enough support
- most experiences with E&S Committees were positive (some terms used: “caring, interested, engaged, committed, providing guidance”) just over 12% said the experience was poor (some terms used: “bigoted, power tripping, negative, critical, little help, non-communicative”); Need identified: better communication and training
- most thought Conference does a good job of assessing readiness for ministry; 12% felt it was not at all good



- just over 30% had never used the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice document; just over 70% had never used the Learning Outcomes document

From those current and former students in the pilot project Conferences:

- most found the resources were useful; they were provided after the student asked for them
- just under 50% felt the Vocational Assessment tool accurately reflected their skills and interests; 30% felt it was somewhat accurate in this
- one quarter of respondents had a Circle of Accompaniment; one quarter had a Discernment Committee; over 20% had both; 21% of respondents felt that the Circle of Accompaniment/Discernment Committee were not helpful
- 25% felt the discernment process started too late; 5% felt it started too early
- the usefulness of the committees (Circle of Accompaniment/Discernment Committee) were perceived as changing as the individual moves through the process (some terms used: “assists with clarifying thoughts and reflections, non-judgemental, its availability varied”)
- two thirds of respondents felt that, through practical ministry experience, pulpit supply, field education, and student supply opportunities, they had ample opportunities to integrate skills, knowledge, values, and faith
- of those who had completed their Supervised Ministry Education experience, 9% of respondents said their experience with their SME supervisor was poor
- most respondents felt their experience with CAB was good (some terms used: “supportive, committed, honest, encouraging, challenging in a positive way”); 11% of respondents said the experience was poor and 17% felt it was a frustrating experience (a frustrating experience – the degree of power held by the CAB; needs better communication, more balanced CAB membership, with adequate training/screening)
- most thought Conference does a good job assessing readiness for ministry
- just over 18% had never used the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice document; just over 25% had not used the Learning Outcomes document

Another constituency that had not provided input to the Steering Group prior to the evaluation process was the Educational Supervisors. Their input reflected the following findings:

- with the growth in off-site supervision, their style of supervision has adapted from face-to-face to include using technology (phone, Skype, etc.) to keep in contact with the student
- they incorporate the learning goals, through open conversations and written summaries
- while most were familiar with the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice document, there was no clear consensus on its value to the Supervised Ministry Education experience
- 31% of respondents were not familiar with the Learning Outcomes document
- support was provided to them in their role of educational supervisor by the Conference Personnel Minister, other educational supervisors, and Conference Internship and

Educational Supervision Committee members; however, some felt they received little or no support

- while the training provided through the Ministry of Supervision course was considered very adequate, many thought that additional courses with other educational supervisors would be welcome

The surveys concerning Francophones on the pathway to ministry very much reinforced the information that had been provided during the Lachine consultation. Other than the Consistoire Laurentien, only one presbytery E&S Committee had encountered a bilingual candidate and the interactions with that individual were conducted entirely in the student's second language, English.

Francophone students or former students provided valuable responses, including the following:

- course work was predominantly done in English
- Supervised Ministry Education was most often done in English, with an English speaking supervisor and an English speaking Lay Supervision Team
- forms were not available in French
- often initial settlements were not in a Francophone or a bilingual community
- there are many bilingual and Francophone ministers but few Francophone pastoral charges; so Francophone and bilingual ministers must work in their second language
- when someone new (who is a Francophone) comes to church, there is a sense that among the congregation Francophones are not really welcome
- a pathway in French for Francophone candidates is very important for our denomination

The Steering Group reviewed all the trends identified in the responses provided to the various evaluation tools used. The evaluation tools provided input on the additional detail and description of the Candidacy Pathway model as it had been piloted. The evaluation tools also provided the Steering Group with a means of comparing experiences and perceptions about the new Candidacy Pathway model with the experiences and perceptions about the traditional path to vocational ministry within The United Church of Canada. The knowledge gained through the responses guided the Steering Group in further defining the seven phases of the Candidacy Pathway model and presenting those as recommendations for adoption along with the adoption of the Candidacy Pathway model as originally presented to the General Council in 2009.

### **G) Gratitude**

The Steering Group on the Candidacy Pathway extends its sincere appreciation to all those who worked on the development and implementation of Candidacy Pathway pilot projects, to Lorne Calvert and Lynn Bayne of St. Andrew's College, to members of new Conference Boards and Committees, to Conference Office staff members who supported this initiative, especially the following Conference Personnel Ministers (CPM): Mary-Jane Hobden (Bay of Quinte Conference), Victoria Andrews (formerly CPM of Bay of Quinte Conference), Catherine Somerville (formerly CPM of Manitou Conference), and Treena Duncan (British Columbia Conference). We are truly thankful for your work and your commitment to the Candidacy Pathway initiative. Our thanks also go to those students who have participated in the pilot

projects and to the educational supervisors and learning sites that have participated in the equipping phase of these pilot projects.

## **JUDICIAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Judicial Committee (which meets as an Executive of ten of the fifty-two members, four named by each Conference) held five meetings by telephone conference in the period since August 2012. There were two appeals heard as reported below.

The Executive of the Judicial Committee deals primarily with appeals at the General Council level from Decisions of Formal or Appeal Hearing panels, Conferences, the Executive or Sub-Executive of the General Council and from Rulings made by the General Secretary of the General Council.

During this term, Margaret Bain chaired the meetings and Nora Sanders acted as secretary. Jon Jessiman and Lorna Standingready joined the Executive to represent British Columbia and All Native Circle Conference respectively.

In the term from 2012 to 2015, the following items were dealt with and are reported here:

### **Item 1**

Elizabeth Amirault appealed a Decision of Bay of Quinte to end Ms. Amirault's application as a Candidate for Ordered Ministry. Paul Macklin, member of the Executive from Bay of Quinte Conference, did not participate in the discussion or decision made whether or not to hear the appeal. The Executive considered the statement submitted by the appellant and the reply from the Conference and concluded that it would not hear the appeal as the grounds for an appeal were not met.

### **Item 2**

The Appeal of Derek Parry from a decision of London Conference was heard in London on July 2012 by a panel chaired by Helen Barkley with members Robert Little and Bill Bruce. Their decision to dismiss the appeal was issued September 7, 2012.

### **Item 3**

The Appeal of Betty Parrell was heard on November 14, 2012 by a panel chaired by Ellen Mole and members Paul Macklin and Steven Longmoore. Their decision to dismiss the appeal was issued on March 22, 2013.

### **Item 4**

Alan Rush appealed the decision of Toronto Conference to dissolve his pastoral relationship with Toronto Chinese United Church. Penny Keel, representative to the Executive from Toronto Conference did not participate in the deliberations with respect to whether or not to hear this appeal, or those in Items 5 or 6 which follow. Submissions made by the appellant and the respondent were considered by the Judicial Committee Executive which concluded that the grounds for appeal were not met. Their decision was not to hear the appeal.

### **Item 5**

Karl Lam appealed the decision of Toronto Conference to dissolve his pastoral relationship with Toronto Chinese United Church. Full consideration was given to the submissions made by both

the appellant and the respondent. The decision of the Executive on the material provided was that the grounds for appeal were not met. As a result, the decision of the Executive was not to hear the appeal

**Item 6**

Toronto Chinese United Church appealed the decisions of Toronto Conference on March 1, 2013 with respect to its structure and function. Submissions were received by the appellant and the respondent on the basis of which the Executive concluded that the grounds for appeal were not met. The decision was made not to hear the appeal.

**Item 7**

David McKay appealed the Bay of Quinte Conference decision to discontinue his Candidacy. Paul Macklin, as member of the Executive appointed by Bay of Quinte Conference, did not participate in the discussion or decision. David McKay made submissions on his own behalf and the Conference made a statement. Both were fully considered and the Executive of the Judicial Committee decided that the appeal did not meet the grounds for appeal.

**Item 8**

Wilson Chan appealed the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario decision to place him on the Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary). Charles Huband, the representative of the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario, did not participate in the discussion or decision made with respect to whether or not to hear the appeal. The Executive of the Judicial Committee considered the submissions of the appellant and the respondent and concluded that the grounds for appeal were not met. The decision was made not to hear the appeal.

Margaret Bain, Chair, Judicial Committee Executive

## CONFERENCE RECORDS REPORT

### Background

41st General Council 2012 approved a new process to meet the General Council's responsibility for review of Conference records from the triennium 2009–2012.

An excerpt from the *41st General Council 2012 Record of Proceedings* follows:

- ***Review of Format:*** *The General Secretary will arrange for review of the records by General Council staff to ensure the proper format has been followed for the records in compliance with section 092 of The Manual. The General Secretary will address any concerns resulting from this review directly with the appropriate Executive Secretary or Speaker and report to the Executive of the General Council on completion.*
- ***Review of Content:*** *The Executive of the General Council will appoint a task group to review the records to ensure all Conference proceedings have been recorded in accordance with The Manual. Upon completion of the review, the task group will relay any resulting concerns to the appropriate Conference and report to the Executive of the General Council with recommendations for any necessary follow-up action.*
- ***Report of Review:*** *The Executive of the General Council will report to the 42nd General Council 2015 on completion of both parts of the review.*

The *Record of Proceedings* goes on to set out (at page 236) that:

*Past practice has been for the General Council to appoint a committee of commissioners to review the records of each Conference (including Executive and Sub-Executive) for the previous triennium. The review takes place over the course of the meeting of the General Council, with the committee reporting its findings by the end of the meeting.*

*For the committee, reviewing these records is a huge time commitment that may affect their availability to participate fully in the various sessions of the General Council.*

*There is no requirement in The Manual that this review take place at the meeting of the General Council. In the spirit of simplification of church processes, the General Secretary is proposing an alternative process so that the actual review would take place after the General Council meeting.*

### Process

The Conference Records Review Task Group was appointed by the Nominations Committee in May 2013 and is composed of Barbara Reynolds (Montreal & Ottawa Conference), Pam Mykityshyn (Alberta and Northwest Conference) and Katharine Moore (Alberta and Northwest Conference). Kathy McDonald is the staff resource person. Barbara Reynolds and Pam Mykityshyn have extensive experience in the work of reviewing the format of Conference records as it was carried out previously.

In preparation for the review, Conference Records were to have been submitted electronically in advance of 41st General Council 2012. All Conference records were received, though two were submitted in hard copy only.

Confirmation and direction from the Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda about the scope of the task was requested midway through the work of the Records Review Task Group. The Permanent Committee directed the Records Review Task Group to keep its work as simple as possible and “to ensure that Conference proceedings have been recorded in accordance with *The Manual*, and to determine whether Conference has authority to take certain decisions.” A copy of the Request for Direction and the response of the Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda dated October 29, 2013 are attached for ease of reference.

With that information in hand, the Task Group proceeded to complete the review of the Conference Records. The minutes of each Conference were reviewed and a summary of motions prepared for each meeting. All the work of the Task Group was done electronically, with members sharing their summaries via email.

### **Findings**

The minutes of the Conferences for the triennium concluding August 2012 were reviewed by the Records Review Task Group. The Task Group found that the minutes of the Conferences are in order. The format of the minutes is appropriate and minutes of the Conferences reflect the work that is being done and is within the scope of the authority of the Conferences.

## MANUAL COMMITTEE REPORT

**Origin: General Secretary, General Council**

The Manual Committee is composed of the following six elected members:

Peter Bishop	Alan Boyd
John Burton	Mary-Beth Moriarty
Cindy Randall	George Thurlow

Cynthia Gunn, one of the church's Legal/Judicial Counsel, serves as a corresponding member.

The role of the Manual Committee is to assist the General Secretary with preparing *The Manual* and conducting remits.

The Committee acts as a resource to the General Secretary in proposing wording for the amendment of existing by-laws or the creation of new ones to reflect policy changes made by the General Council. The Committee's work includes addressing any gaps or inconsistencies in *The Manual*, and recommending improvements to the language and style of *The Manual* generally. The Committee also drafts remits, which are circulated by the General Secretary to presbyteries (and pastoral charges as required) after the remit form and content has been approved by the Executive of the General Council.

During the past triennium, Pat West completed her term as an elected member and was replaced by Peter Bishop. The Committee is grateful for Pat's service and welcomes Peter to its work.

Judith Bricault, formerly with Unité des ministères en français, has been lead staff in the work of translating *The Manual* into French in its entirety, as mandated by the 39th General Council 2006. Judith has been a corresponding member at several Committee meetings to allow for consultation with the Committee on the translation work. She completed the translation of the 2013 edition before her retirement last year and it was reviewed for legal accuracy to the English edition by Fred Braman, a bilingual lawyer.

The 2013 edition of *The Manual* includes a complete re-writing of the by-laws from previous editions, as approved by the 41st General Council 2012. This edition was made available both in hard copy format and as a PDF document on the General Council website. The Committee has continued to hear positive comment about the availability of *The Manual* in PDF format, with appreciation expressed especially for the search features and the hyperlinks that were introduced in the 2013 edition.

The Committee held four in-person meetings during the triennium: in the autumn of 2012, 2013, and 2014, and in the winter of 2015. It also met twice by conference call: during the late autumn of 2012 and again during the winter of 2013.

For meetings early in the triennium, the Committee's primary agenda was the drafting of changes to *The Manual* to reflect the policy decisions made by the 41st General Council 2012.



The Committee also drafted the remits that had been authorized by the 41st General Council in 2012 and 2013.

At subsequent meetings, the Committee reviewed feedback received on the 2013 edition of *The Manual*. This feedback was largely positive, and included much enthusiasm for the new format and content.

The Committee has heard concerns that, in a few instances, the 2013 edition did not reflect the policy contained in the previous edition as clearly or accurately as might be possible. In response to these concerns, it is expected that there will be a proposal to the Executive of the General Council at its fall 2015 meeting for changes to the wording of a few sections of *The Manual*. The Executive of the General Council is responsible for approving all wording changes in *The Manual* for greater clarity and accuracy of policy previously adopted by the General Council.

The Committee has also worked on improving the wording of certain sections in *The Manual* where the improvement would involve changing an existing policy by:

- setting an advance notice period specifically for congregational meetings dealing with amalgamation or disbanding
- extending the policy for ordered ministers elected as members of Parliament to ordered ministers elected to any public office (including provincial and municipal)
- ensuring access to church court minutes by members of the court and congregation
- adjusting the calculation of the time period for appealing a decision by a church court

Since these improvements would require a change to existing policy, they are subject to the approval of the General Council and there is a proposal before the 42nd General Council 2015 for each item listed above.

John W. Burton  
Chairperson

## ARCHIVES AND HISTORY REPORT

### Committee Structure and Responsibilities

The Archives and History Committee is a mandatory standing committee of General Council, which is, according to *The Manual* (Section E 4.8.3a), responsible for coordinating and promoting archival and historical activity of The United Church of Canada.

The Committee consists of: a chair appointed by General Council; two representatives from the Academic Community, also appointed by General Council; one representative from each of the 13 Conferences; the General Secretary, or designate; and the General Council Archivist, as resource. The Executive of the Committee includes the chair, the General Council Archivist, and the General Secretary or designate, plus two other members of the Committee. During my time as Chair, I have relied considerably on the Executive

The Archives and History Committee meets once a year to transact its business. The Executive meets at least once a year or more often if needed, by conference call.

### Sub Committees

There are currently two sub-committees, set up by the Archive and History Committee

- a. Sub Committee on Historic Sites – Linda White (Chair), Jean Barman, Wayne Harris, Don Smith. Their mission is to research what should be defined as historic sites and to come up with a policy to deal with them. They have created the Heritage Commemorations program of which more will be said later.
- b. Ad Hoc Committee on Artifacts – Julielynn Anderson. The purpose of the ad hoc Committee is to investigate how to manage artifacts from the various levels of the church. (Archive and History Committee minutes 2013, XV,b)

### Work of Archives and History Committee Initiated or Continued in the 2012–2015 Triennium

- Historic Commemorations Program  
The Subcommittee on Historic Sites was set up by the Archives and History Committee to consider how to best commemorate historic sites related to the United Church. The subcommittee has approached this topic with great creativity. Their work began in the last triennium and was completed by September 2014. They have set up, with the approval of the Archives and History Committee, the Historic Commemorations Program. This program is designed to highlight distinctive aspects of the Church's history, culture and heritage and will publicly recognize
  - a) Persons of Historic Significance
  - b) Places or Sites of Historic Significance
  - c) Events of Historic Significance
  - d) Distinctive Cultural Traditions/Intangible Culture of Historical Significance
 For more information, go to [www.ucheritage.ca](http://www.ucheritage.ca).
- Artifacts Subcommittee:  
In 2012, the Archives and History Committee approved the idea of setting up a subcommittee on Artifacts. At the Archives and History Committee meeting of 2013, the Committee agreed

by resolution to extend the Ad Hoc Committee on Artifacts for an additional year to propose strategy of managing artifacts into 2014. After this slow start, Julielynne Anderson from Maritimes Conference has accepted the job of Chair of the Artifacts subcommittee. With the support of the Conference Executive, the Conference Archivist and the Presbytery Archives Committee, Julielynne has decided to start a template survey with one particular Presbytery in New Brunswick, specifically the one which includes Fredericton. It has become clear (1) that the term of the subcommittee needs to be longer than one year and (2) there will need to be a coordinator in each Conference that is familiar with the concept of public history and artifacts

- **Part-time Professional Archivist in Saskatchewan Conference:**  
Saskatchewan Conference hired a part time Archivist in 2012 and Newfoundland and Labrador continues to work toward hiring a part time Archivist
- **Move of General Council Archives and Central Conferences Archives to new location:**  
The Archives and History Committee supported the continued relationship between the General Council Archives and the Central Ontario Conferences Archives during negotiations to move The United Church of Canada Archives (Toronto) from 3250 Bloor Street West, Toronto. This relationship was maintained when The United Church of Canada moved to the Christian Resource Centre building in Toronto in the summer of 2013.
- **Contribution from Sale of Church Property to Support the Archives:**  
Since many of the properties being sold are churches no longer functioning, the Archives ad History Committee feels that a portion of the sale receipts from churches should go to support the Archives. Hamilton Conference began this policy in the 1990s and other conferences have followed suit. A survey of all Conferences was carried out in the fall of 2011. At the Archives ad History Committee meeting in September 2012, it was resolved that each Conference of the United Church implement a policy stating that a minimum of 2% of the proceeds from the sale of churches and/or church property in their Conference go to the appropriate Conference Archives to ensure processing, care, maintenance and storage of records.
- **Comprehensive Review of The United Church of Canada:**  
The Archives ad History Committee has put a considerable amount of work into the Comprehensive Review. At the Archives ad History Committee meeting in October 2013, the Archives ad History Committee did a workshop discussing among other things: What work does the Archives ad History Committee do and how might it be accomplished in different ways? In days of leaner structures and resources, how can the operation of the Archives across the country be sustained long term? There was considerable discussion at the Archives ad History Committee meeting again in 2014. The Archives and History Committee sent a report the Comprehensive Review Task Group, which was a distillation of the collective opinions of the Committee. The Archives and History Committee received a message from the Comprehensive Review Task Group stating that our report had been received and read. We were pleased to see that Archives appears in the Comprehensive Review Task Group Final report.

As part of my report, I believe that it is important to convey the views of the Alberta and Northwest Conference on the Comprehensive Review Report. The following are excerpts from information compiled by the Alberta and Northwest Conference Heritage Resources Committee:

### **Ownership of the Records and Archives as the “Corporate Memory” of The United Church of Canada**

The Alberta Northwest Conference Heritage Resources Committee] believes that it is imperative that the new structure clearly state that The United Church of Canada is the legal owner of the records and archives created by the communities of faith, the regional councils and the denominational council. Clarifying the ownership of the records and archives is essential if The United Church of Canada hopes to maintain custody, control, care and preservation of its corporate memory.

### **Denominational Ownership Is Essential in Ensuring Common Best Practices and Policies Being Applied to The United Church of Canada Records and in Supporting The United Church of Canada Archives Network**

If The United Church of Canada retains ownership of its records and archives in future communities of faith, regional and denominational councils, then it will continue to facilitate the application of common best practices (e.g. The Sample Records Schedule for Congregations and Access to Church Registers) and policies (e.g. The Privacy Policy). The United Church of Canada Archives Network has developed several tools and resources to assist our current congregations, presbyteries and conferences that could be re-worked for good stewardship of church records and archives within the proposed new structure.

### **Funding for The United Church of Canada Archives**

If ownership of the records and archives is retained by The United Church of Canada, as its collective corporate memory, then responsibility for funding the care and maintenance of the records and archives should rest with the denominational council. With the disbanding of the Conferences, the fate of the various Conference Archives across Canada is uncertain within the regional structure. There could be multiple archives in multiple locations within the boundaries of one regional council jurisdiction. Some of the Conference Archives currently operate within Conference Offices which might cease to exist. Other Conference Archives function through partnership agreements their Conferences have arranged with secular provincial archives across the country. Active attention must be given to preserve the best elements of The United Church of Canada Archives Network during this time of change and transition, and not simply leave The United Church of Canada Archives as an afterthought in the new structure.

### **Archives Should Remain in Regions Where They Are Created**

Alberta Northwest Conference Heritage Resources Committee firmly believes that the archives of this Conference should remain in the current location, close to where the records have been created over time. The Committee does not think that centralizing The United Church of Canada archives into other locations would be practical or useful to church members or the researching public.

- **Making Room for Women**

The Making Room for Women Committee, an independent committee from the Archives and History Committee, was created over ten years ago to identify and preserve personal papers of women in The United Church of Canada and the records of organizations in which they have participated. In 2014, the Archives and History Committee was asked by this Committee to take a leadership role in furthering this work. The Archives and History Committee set up an Ad Hoc Committee to discuss this issue and make recommendations.

**Presenting Issues for the Next Triennium Include:**

- Dealing with any changes to the Archives, which may result from the CRTG report presented to the 42nd General Council meeting in Corner Brook, Newfoundland/Labrador
- The Annual Meeting of the Archives and History Committee I think that all of us on the Archives and History Committee recognize the need of the Church to use money wisely and the value of new technology such as Skype and Conference Calls to allow the Committee to communicate well at a more reasonable cost. However, I do believe that a face to face meeting is by far the best way to communicate. Beside verbal communication, group interaction and body language can convey a great deal.  
In addition, the format of a two-day conference would have to change to accommodate the different means of communication.
- The Archives and History Committee needs to continue to have good communication with the Archives Network and provide support and ideas for them
- The work of the Historic Sites subcommittee on the Heritage Commemorations program needs to continue and grow.
- As was clearly stated by Rev Helen Reed of the Alberta and Northwest Conference, it is important that the Archives and History Committee urge The United Church of Canada to re-confirm that The United Church of Canada is the legal owner of all archival records.
- Continue to develop new projects that fit the mandate of the Archives and History Committee Making Room for Women; United Church Cemetery work; work of the Archives subcommittee
- To carry on the growing work of Archives across the church, there needs to continue to be a funding formula, which is both adequate and reliable.

**Conclusion**

As a people of the book and disciples of the Word, we are formed in the understanding of the central role that recording, retaining and revisiting our story keeps us faithful; archival records are a significant way in which this faithful activity is sustained. To paraphrase the former General Secretary of The United Church of Canada, Jim Sinclair: “Those who do the work of archives are performing a valuable ministry of the Church, The Ministry of Memory.”

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Stevenson – Chair, Archives and History Committee, The United Church of Canada  
Author of Report

**Committee Members (and alternates)**

Gerald Hobbs – Representative, BC Conference  
Helen Reed – Representative, Alberta and Northwest Conference  
John Haas – Representative, Saskatchewan Conference  
Erin Acland – Representative Manitoba and Northwest Ontario Conference  
Edward Avey – Representative, London Conference  
Michael Brooks – Representative, Hamilton Conference  
Rod Coates – Alternate Representative, Hamilton Conference  
Diane Trollope – Representative, Manitou Conference  
Dawn Monroe – Alternate Representative, Manitou Conference  
Wayne Harris – Bay of Quinte Conference  
Joan Benoit – Ottawa and Montreal Conference  
Julielynn Anderson – Maritimes Conference  
Linda White – Newfoundland and Labrador Conference  
Donald Smith – Academic Representative  
Jean Barman – Academic Representative  
Nichole Vonk – Staff Support (until July 31, 2014)  
Erin Greeno – Staff Support (August 1, 2014 to April 24, 2015)  
Dan Benson – Representative of Nora Sanders, General Secretary, The United Church of Canada  
Bob Stevenson, Chair

## THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA FOUNDATION REPORT

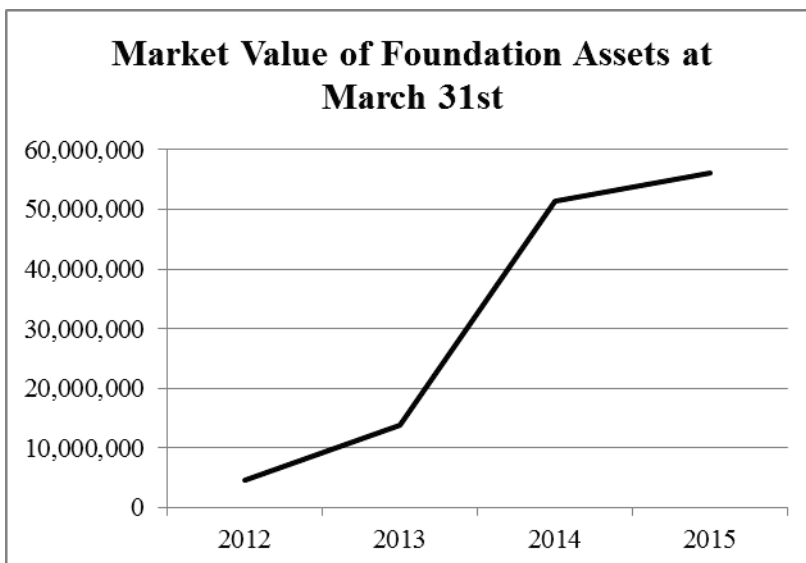
**Origin: the General Secretary**

### Growth of Assets under Management

Since its creation by the Executive of the General Council in 2002 the Foundation began by growing quietly, slowly and steadily. This all changed at the beginning of this triennium when momentum increased significantly.

In this triennium the combination of strong groundwork, strong investment returns, increasing donations and the transfer \$29 million in assets from the General Council Treasury has resulted in over \$56M in assets under management, an increase of \$51.5M since March 2012.

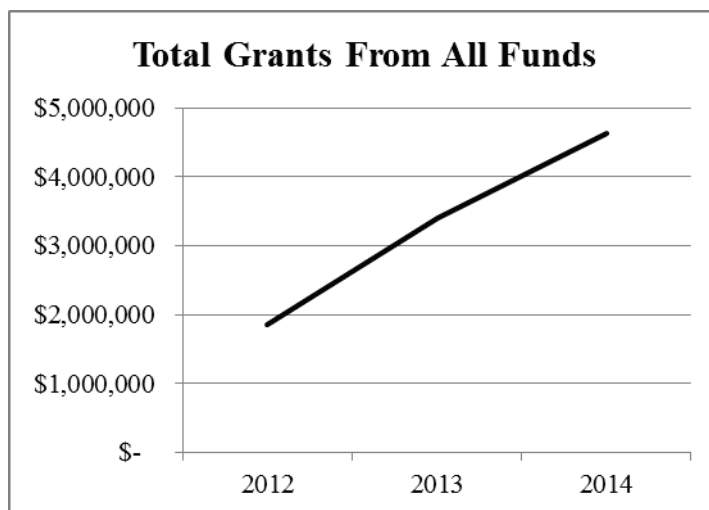
The Foundation’s board of directors is very appreciative of the enormous support and the provision of operating funds by the Church in its initial start-up years. Beginning in January 2015, the Foundation is financially self-sufficient, covering all of its direct and indirect operating costs within the General Council Office. The units that support the work of the foundation will now be reimbursed for the services that they provide such as finance and IT.



### Growth of Total Grants from All Funds

The Foundation’s mission is to support the work of the church. This means supporting the important work of congregations, presbyteries, Conferences, UCC organizations and ecumenical partners through grants and long term fund management. Grants to these diverse areas of work have grown significantly over the triennium.

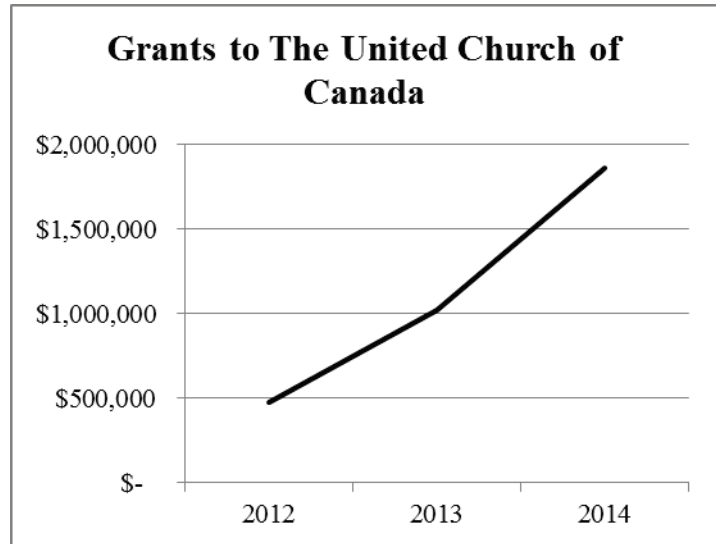
Grants are made through an application process and from short- and long-term funds where donors designate the beneficiaries.



**Growth of Grants to The United Church of Canada**

The Foundation makes grants that support a broad range of the work of the General Council. These grants to The United Church of Canada have also grown significantly. Total grants to the General Council of the church of \$1.7 million in 2014 included:

- Support of Mission & Service of \$300,000 up from \$68,000 in 2013
- grants of just over \$1 million for the program work of the General Council
- the return of the Foundation’s prior year’s operating surplus of \$352,000

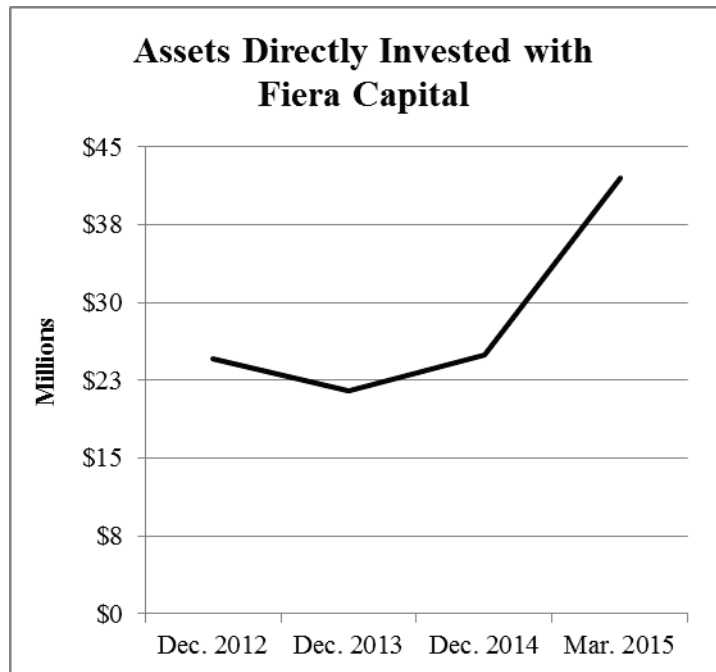


**The Direct Investment Affinity Program**

The Foundation also provides access to its fund manager, Fiera Capital Corp. to interested church organizations.

Congregations, presbyteries, Conferences and affiliated organizations now have \$42M invested directly with Fiera in a variety of investment vehicles with accounts ranging from \$10,000 to over \$4M.

These organizations get solid customer service and investment management track record as well as fees that are lower than industry standard. The most popular retail fund that UCC organizations are invested in returned over 11% in 2014 and has an MER (after rebate) of 1.5%.





## **THE PENSION PLAN OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA REPORT**

**Origin: Marcus Robertson, Chair**

The Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada is a multi-employer plan maintained for the benefit of approximately 9,000 active and retired plan members, with assets exceeding \$1.3 billion. Pension payments and fund expenses total \$70 million annually. With only \$23 million in annual contributions from active members, \$47 million must be generated annually by investments.

The Executive of the General Council is the Plan Administrator. This is not a role delegated to it by the General Council. As Administrator, the Executive is bound to act in the best financial interests of the Plan members and is governed in accordance with the Pension Benefits Act (Ontario). The Executive established the Pension Board to support it in governing, managing, and operating the plan and its assets (the fund). The Executive of the General Council retains responsibility for:

- the Statement of Beliefs and Guiding Principles;
- appointments to the Pension Board and its committees;
- terms of reference for the Pension Board;
- the fund trust agreement;
- annual accountability reports received from the Pension Board.

All other plan functions are delegated to the Pension Board, the details of which are set out in its terms of reference, available upon request from the General Council Office. A brief description can also be found in the governance structure section of the plan's Annual Report to members, available at [www.united-church.ca/leadership/church-administration/pension](http://www.united-church.ca/leadership/church-administration/pension), and the detailed annual accountability report is available in the minutes of the Executive of the General Council.

Two issues of concern regarding the Pension Plan are before the General Council: divestment from Canadian gold mining company Goldcorp and investment in fossil fuels.

In regards to Goldcorp, one of the Fund's external managers holds shares in the company. The holdings represent approximately 0.09% of the Fund. Issues of concern have been raised by church members about company activities at one mine in particular, Marlin in Guatemala. Sustainalytics, a service used by the Board to screen companies on a range of environmental, social and governance criteria, delisted the company in 2008.

The Pension Board concluded that divesting, as recommended, would have no effect on the company or its policies. It would not be a significant news story drawing attention to the company. Nothing would change at the Marlin mine or elsewhere where the company operates. Instead, the Board chose to engage with Goldcorp management to bring to their attention the issues and concerns that have been raised by the church's partners in Guatemala. This engagement has been undertaken with other institutional investors through the Shareholders Association for Research and Education (SHARE) and has resulted in substantial change to corporate policies and practices. So much so, that the larger funds—Ethical Council of the Swedish national pension fund and NEI Investments—have concluded their engagements,

satisfied with the progress. In 2015, Sustainalytics removed Goldcorp from its restricted list, stating that “the company has made significant management improvements in material areas such as human rights, security and human rights, and community relations. These improvements significantly reduce the possibility of recurrence of controversies at the Marlin mine.” In 2015 Goldcorp was for the second time named to the NASDAQ Global Sustainability Index, being noted “for taking a leadership role in disclosing its carbon footprint, energy usage, water consumption, hazardous and non-hazardous waste, employee safety, workforce diversity, management composition and community investing.”

While the larger funds are satisfied with Goldcorp’s progress and are no longer actively engaging the company, because of the information from Mining the Connections, the Pension Board continues to engage management on three issues in particular, issues identified by Mining the Connections as being of primary importance on the ground: potable water availability and greater transparency and community involvement in water testing; free prior and informed consent for any further development; and a review of the progress made on recommendations of the 2010 independent human rights assessment.

Engagement with Goldcorp management has been a responsible, effective, and faithful action that over time has contributed to lasting and meaningful changes that divestment would not have encouraged or accomplished.

The Pension Board is also being proactive in the area of fossil fuels. Because fossil fuel is so pervasively entrenched in all of the global, and in particular in the Canadian, economy, a total divestment may not be possible while continuing to meet the fiduciary duty to plan members and requirement to maintain a diversified portfolio. In the interests of protecting Fund assets for the long-term while also protecting short-term income to maintain solvency and limit the risk of having to reduce benefits, the Pension Board Responsible Investment Working Group is recommending a comprehensive review of the fund from a carbon risk perspective and the development of a plan of action that may include recommendations for corporate engagement, stock screening, proxy voting, engagement with our external investment managers, working with other investors through networks and coalitions, and selective divestment. Meanwhile, the Board is actively engaging companies through SHARE’s core engagement program on climate change, is a member of the Canadian Coalition on Good Governance, and is looking to become a signatory to the United Nations Principles on Responsible Investment. The Board is evaluating the reporting requirements to maintain signatory status against available staff resources.

Investing responsibly and faithfully is a priority for the Pension Board as it seeks to fulfill its obligations to Plan members. It is continuously reviewing its policies and practices for responsible investment and participating with the other major funds of the church and with other institutional investors in identifying and adopting best practices.

## UNITED IN GOD'S WORK

We are not alone... Thanks be to God.  
—A New Creed

### Recommendations

We believe God is doing a new thing and is calling The United Church of Canada to be part of a new creation. The Comprehensive Review, which our task group has been leading since the fall of 2012, is about the church listening and responding to God's call.

After two-and-a-half years of conversations, consultations, research, analysis, and prayer, we offer the following recommendations, which we believe would best enable the church to participate energetically and faithfully in what God is doing. These recommendations would focus our resources on supporting, enlivening, and accompanying communities of faith to live out God's mission at this moment in our society. They would enable us to continue to come together to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus Christ. They would create a more flexible and responsive structure that could change and adapt as God continues to create.

These recommendations would also change the church dramatically. But we believe God is calling the church to change boldly and the church is ready to hear that call. In that spirit, we offer the following recommendations for the church's prayerful consideration.

### *The Comprehensive Review Task Group recommends that:*

#### **1. Chasing the Spirit**

- a) The United Church make a commitment to supporting new ministries and new forms of ministry through an initiative that tentatively would be called Chasing the Spirit. This commitment to the United Church's future would be demonstrated by investing 10 percent of annual givings to the Mission and Service Fund in local and regional initiatives to transform existing ministries and launch new ones. Partial implementation of this initiative would begin in 2016, with full implementation by 2018.

#### **2. Aboriginal Ministries**

- a) A process be established to continue conversations with the Aboriginal ministries that form the Aboriginal Ministries Council to build a relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples based on mutuality, respect, and equity.
- b) To the extent possible, spending on Aboriginal ministries be maintained during the next triennium while discussions continue, and thereafter a set percentage of annual givings to the Mission and Service Fund be dedicated to this ministry.
- c) The important work of Indigenous justice and right relations continue so the church can continue to live out its apologies to Aboriginal peoples.

#### **3. A Three-Council Model**

- a) The United Church be governed by three councils:
  - i) Communities of faith that would nurture people in their faith journeys and, through the Spirit, inspire and empower them to live out their faith in vibrant and diverse ministries.

These would include any community of people based in Jesus Christ that gathers to explore faith, to worship, and to serve. Communities of faith would have a much broader range of decision-making authority than they currently do, including initiating and ending calls and appointments of ministers and buying and selling property, subject to denominational and regional policies. They would function in covenantal relationship with the regional councils.

- ii) Regional councils that would provide advice, support, and services to, covenant with, and connect communities of faith. Regional councils would meet at least once a year in person, electronically, or via their executives to make decisions, and would be composed of one lay representative and one ministry representative (for communities of faith with ministry personnel) from each community of faith in the region.
  - iii) A denominational council that would nurture the identity of the United Church, discern and express a denominational voice, and connect the United Church with God's wider church by making decisions on denomination-shaping issues such as public witness, theology, and governance structure. The denominational council would meet every three years, as it currently does, but would be much larger than the current General Council because it would include representatives from every community of faith. The denominational council's executive would be much smaller than the current Executive of the General Council.
- b) Clusters of communities of faith in a geographic area be encouraged to gather regularly for collegiality, support, and learning, and networks link people with common interests across the church. Although the clusters and networks would not be formal governance bodies, they would be central to living out our faith.

#### **4. A College of Ministers**

- a) A College of Ministers be established to accredit, oversee, and discipline ministers. The college would ensure only qualified persons would be accredited as United Church ministers and the standards of ministry would be maintained.

#### **5. An Association of Ministers**

- a) A working group of ministers be struck to explore whether to set up an association of ministers. This process could include work on the membership of such an association, its role, and how it might be funded.

#### **6. Funding a New Model**

- a) The church spend only what it receives, which would require reducing spending by at least \$11 million by 2018 from 2015 spending levels. Deeper reductions would be required to fund proposed investments in Chasing the Spirit and a College of Ministers. The task group provided for \$13.8 million in cuts in its modelling.<sup>1</sup>
- b) The number and function of staff depend on the revenues received.
- c) The Mission and Service Fund be used only for ministry and mission activities.
- d) Governance and support services (administration) at the regional and denominational levels be funded by assessing communities of faith.
- e) The sharing of all resources, wealth, and abundance be encouraged across the church.

**Invitation**

We believe in God: who has created and is creating...  
—A New Creed

As Christians, we believe God created the universe and continues to create, tend, and enliven it. God calls all followers of Jesus to participate in God's mission to heal and restore creation and follow the example of Jesus by embodying God's love in the world. As God continues to create, God invites us to participate in new ways. This is our reformed tradition: "Once reformed, always reforming."

That is the origin of the Comprehensive Review Task Group, which the 41st General Council (2012) mandated "to examine the comprehensive vision and circumstances of The United Church of Canada and develop a report and recommendations for the 42nd General Council 2015 that will best enable the church to live faithfully in God's world at this time in the church's life." The impetus for the Comprehensive Review was both structural and financial, particularly the need to identify at least \$11 million in cost savings. But the main goal was to enable the church to participate more energetically and faithfully in God's new creation. In the conversation we led, we heard the church yearns to participate abundantly and joyfully in God's mission and celebrate the innovative, creative, and vital ministries that are emerging. Creating a more agile and sustainable structure is a key step toward the spiritual renewal the church is seeking.

After two-and-a-half years of conversations, consultations, research, analysis, and prayer, we offer the following report, vision, and recommendations. Over and over in our conversations, we heard fears we would not be bold enough, and we hope the following report will allay those fears. The following recommendations are substantial because we believe God is calling the church to change boldly. We also believe the church is ready to hear that call. It will not be easy. It has always been challenging and countercultural to proclaim Jesus as our purpose and passion.

These recommendations would change the church dramatically. We would have to let go of things we have always done and things we cherish. We would have to live within our means and accept that we will be smaller. We would have to have the courage to turn our gaze outward, look for new places where the Spirit is active, experiment, and take risks. We would need to expand our vision of partnership with others who share our commitments for healing our world, both ecumenically and in our larger society. And we would also have to be prepared to let ministries end. While these changes would be painful, we believe they offer the best path forward. Our Christian faith tells us that in death and loss there is hope of resurrection and new life.

We are well aware that our task group is the latest in a long line of committees stretching back decades that have been mandated to recommend structural change. In the past, the church has often responded by deferring decisions, striking more committees, and mandating more research. We can no longer wait. The imminent depletion of financial reserves, which we have tapped into for years to make up chronic budget deficits, and the need to find significant cost savings mean keeping things the way they are is not an option. Choosing to keep current structures and processes as financial and volunteer resources decline would still result in deep cuts but without the hope of renewal.

Throughout the church's history, we have listened faithfully to God's call and opened ourselves to the gospel speaking in new ways as our context has changed. The very creation of the United Church in 1925—one of the first unions of churches in the world to cross denominational lines—was spurred by concerns around serving the vast Canadian northwest and the desire for more effective overseas mission. Over the years, the church has continued to respond prophetically to new contexts and issues, including ordaining women beginning in 1936, making declarations on interfaith relationships from 1986 onward, deciding in 1988 that sexual orientation is not a barrier to church membership or ordination, and offering apologies to Aboriginal peoples in 1986 and 1998 for its role in imposing European culture on them and its complicity in operating Indian residential schools.

We believe God is once again calling the church to live out God's mission and share the good news of Jesus Christ in new ways. Like many mainline Protestant denominations, the United Church has experienced decades of membership decline as Canada has become more diverse and secular. Church attendance, which was once a regular part of most Canadians' lives, has become the exception rather than the rule, and many young people have never been part of a faith community. As a result of these demographic and cultural trends, we no longer have the volunteers or money to support our current structures and processes. While there is energy and hope in parts of our church, these challenges are hindering our ability to participate effectively in God's mission.

In the face of these challenges, God helps us see opportunities. In a world where injustice, inequality, and violence mar God's creation, Jesus' message of love and hope remains deeply relevant. Many people who are seeking answers to life's big questions yearn to connect with something larger than themselves, but their past experiences or perceptions may lead them to believe they will not find what they are looking for in church. Yet the emergence of new forms of church and a renewed emphasis on discipleship and evangelism in some communities of faith show us some of the possibilities God is opening to us. We believe God is inviting us to change radically and renew ourselves so we can engage fully and authentically with diverse communities in a changing context.

This report is just another step on the church's journey toward renewal. We believe our recommendations, if adopted, would address the church's immediate challenges. We also believe they would create a new framework that would equip the church to adapt and respond faithfully in the future to new contexts and opportunities as God continues to create.

Those who came before us responded to God's call with courage, faith, and hope. They left behind treasured traditions and stepped faithfully into an unknown future just as the first disciples left their nets to follow Jesus. We invite you to explore and discuss the following recommendations; pray for wisdom and grace; and give thanks for ancestors and traditions. May we open ourselves with faith, hope, and anticipation as we seek new ways of participating faithfully and energetically in God's new creation.

**Prayer**

O Holy One, Source of All, Creator of all that is and will be, Christ, Saviour, and Redeemer, hope of the world to come, Spirit and Sustainer, Advocate, breath of life and love...

We give thanks for your creation.

In awe and wonder, we marvel at the new life and beauty you are continually creating.

And we know, beyond all sense of knowing, that what you are doing is good.

We draw inspiration and strength from places where we already see hope lived out and the Spirit unleashed.

And we know that your Spirit—that sense of unwavering hope—is stirring and speaking life in the very depths of our being and inviting us to be part of your new creation.

We know our attention sometimes strays and we focus on things that do not serve your mission. But your mission is our mission.

We pray for insight, that we may sense your call.

We pray for the strength to let go.

And we pray for the courage to travel more lightly.

May we draw closer to you and your vision, as inspired and invited by Jesus' own example.

Propel us into your future, which is rooted in the richness of our past.

This is our prayer, and in the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

May it be so. Amen

**Vision**

The moment is now! God is calling the United Church into a new creation. In these challenging times the Spirit comes as wind and fire as it did long ago at Pentecost, enlivening our faith and turning us outward in love for the world, as Jesus upended the tables of the money-changers in God's temple.

*We are not alone,  
we live in God's world.*

We are called to be vibrant communities of faith, where people encounter God with their heart, mind, body, and spirit—the Holy One:

*who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others  
by the Spirit.*

We are called to be communities of faith of all shapes, sizes, and forms, yet interconnected as a united church:

*...called to be the Church,  
to celebrate God's presence,*

where people experience the love of God in Jesus Christ; where they are welcomed, included, and affirmed, celebrated in all their diversity, and supported and challenged in their faith journeys.

We are called to be communities where people are transformed by the Spirit, forgiven and strengthened in renewed life, empowered to be courageous, and encouraged to take faithful risks; where we discover our gifts for ministry and, as disciples of Jesus, are sent forth to share the gospel story in word and action; and where we are compassionate toward neighbour and all our relations to work for a better and more just, peace-filled world.

*...to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.*

We are called to be communities of hope, love, prayer, and action, modelled in Jesus' ministry and united in God's work.

*In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.  
We are not alone.*

We say to the world: **You are not alone.**

*Thanks be to God.*

### **Process**

The Comprehensive Review is the United Church's attempt to listen and respond faithfully to God's call to be part of a new creation. From the beginning, it was clear this process would be a huge task that would require the participation and engagement of the whole church. "Everything is on the table," General Secretary Nora Sanders said in August 2012 when the 41st General Council directed that a comprehensive review of the church be conducted.

Many faithful and talented people put their names forward to lead this work. From them, the Executive of the General Council appointed seven members to the task group on the recommendations of the General Council Nominations Committee and the Aboriginal Ministries Council. Moderator Gary Paterson worked closely with the task group as a key focus of his ministry as the church's spiritual leader. Together, we are a diverse and passionate group that collectively brings the wisdom of various generations, experience with organizational change, connections to local and global ministries, deep roots in rural and urban congregational



leadership, experience with various streams of ministry, and a commitment to listen to and lead the church in this conversation.

From our first meeting, we recognized that reimagining the church for the future was not just our work but also the work of the whole church. So we invited you to share your hopes, dreams, insights, and ideas, and regularly reported back to the church what we were hearing. The result was a lively and unprecedented conversation that engaged the whole church: pastoral charges and other communities of faith, presbytery and Conference meetings, youth forums, Aboriginal circles, the United Church Women, global partners, chairs of national committees, the Executive of the General Council, senior staff of Conferences and the General Council Office, individuals, and others. These conversations took place in person, by video conference, on social media, in online discussion forums on [www.unitedfuture.ca](http://www.unitedfuture.ca), and in correspondence. Some were formal consultations, while others were free-flowing conversations. But in all of them, the task group heard passion and energy for participating in God's new creation and recognition that the church needs to refocus its resources to do that effectively.

In addition to these conversations across the church, we conducted a thorough review of key reports from past committees and task groups, and researched and analyzed organizational models from other denominations and non-profit organizations. We also discerned and debated possible options in our nearly monthly meetings, while opening ourselves to the movement of the Spirit by grounding ourselves in scripture and prayer.

The collective wisdom of the church guided this process. We heard hope, energy, ideas, struggles, frustration, and everything in between. We heard about innovative, creative, and vital ministries that are emerging across the church, and other parts of our body that are challenged to live out Jesus' commission because of diminishing volunteer and financial resources. We heard innovative ideas, big-picture wonderings, and proposals for alternate models. We also heard the church knows it has to change, and most importantly, that the church is ready to change. What we heard was incredibly varied, reminding us that the body of Christ does not always speak with one voice and that many parts make up the whole. The church's unique cultures and regional differences truly reflect the abundance of the church and remind us that we certainly are not alone, not when we come together to do God's work.

We have been committed to transparency throughout this process. From the beginning, we believed the Comprehensive Review would result in positive and healthy change only if we invited the whole church to participate actively and authentically in the conversation and shared our preliminary findings and thinking in progress. To that end, we shared

- regular online updates
- the results of conversations with more than 600 communities of faith that took place throughout 2013
- two discussion papers—*Fishing on the Other Side* and *Trust God; Trust the Body*—that set out some preliminary concepts
- feedback presbyteries and Conferences offered on these discussion papers
- an update in November 2014 on the broad directions we intended to recommend

To read the task group’s updates, discussion papers, and consultation reports, please visit [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca).

While we have led the conversation, we believe our recommendations represent the wisdom of the church. The comments, critiques, questions, ideas, and prayers people across the church have offered have been crucial as we have thought about and discerned a faithful way forward. You have identified key issues, sharpened our thinking, nuanced the principles we developed, affirmed some of our directions, and prompted us to rethink others. Most of all, you have inspired us. Thank you for your faithful engagement and hope.

Now, it is up to the church to discern the way forward. The Comprehensive Review will be the main business of the 42nd General Council, which will gather in August 2015 in Corner Brook, Newfoundland. Between now and then, we encourage you to read and discuss this report in your community of faith, presbytery, and Conference and pray for the commissioners who will be making decisions at General Council. If you have ideas to improve these recommendations or want to suggest other ways to do things, you may bring them through your Conference through the proposal processes of the church. If you have been named a commissioner to General Council, we encourage you to listen closely to these conversations and the questions and issues they raise, and come to General Council prepared to discuss them and discern the will of the Spirit.

This process did not start with the 41st General Council’s decision to launch the Comprehensive Review and will not end with the rise of the 42nd General Council. Whatever the General Council decides, the church is changing and will continue to change. As A New Creed tells us, God has created and is creating. We pray for wisdom, faith, and focus to keep our eyes on what God is doing. In Christ and with Christ, thanks be to God.

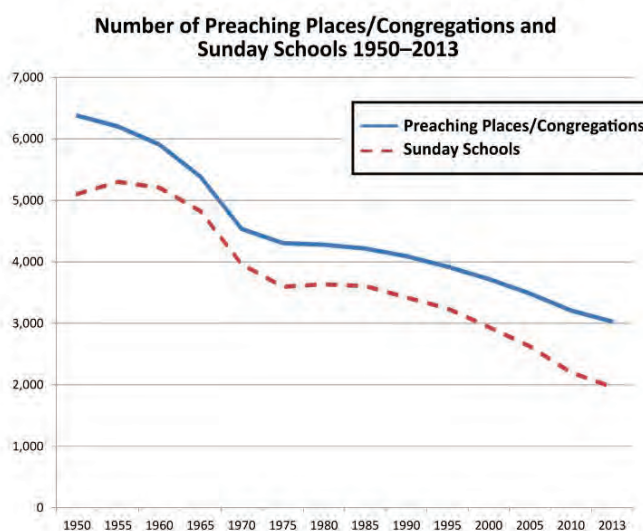
**BACKGROUNDER #1: Mandate, Terms of Reference, and Membership** ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review backgrounder”)

**BACKGROUNDER #2: Past Reports Considered** ([commons.united-church.ca](http://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review backgrounder”)

**Context**

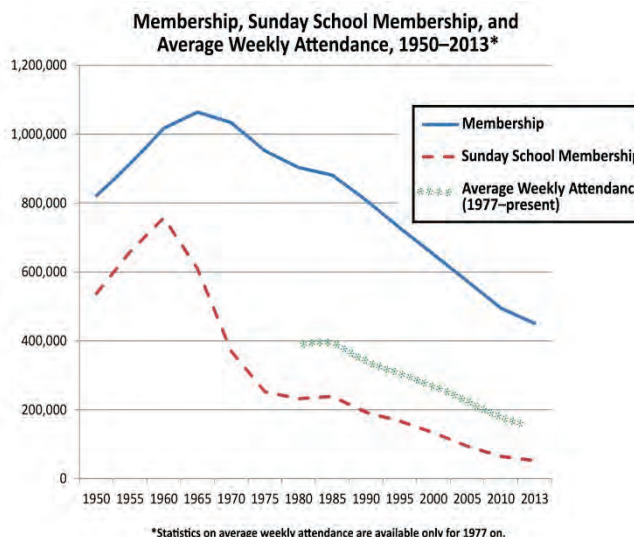
Like many denominations, The United Church of Canada is facing social, demographic, and financial pressures that are challenging us to live out God’s mission in different ways than in the past.

You may be seeing some of these trends in your own community of faith: fewer people attending worship services; fewer young adults, youth, and children participating in the life of your community; overstretched and aging

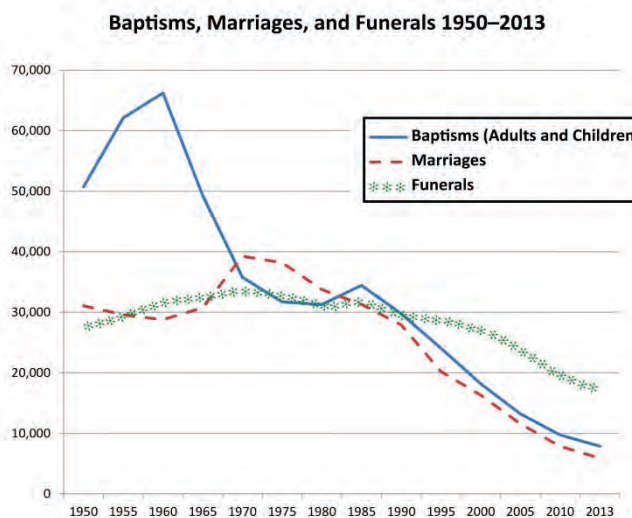


volunteers spending more time on bureaucracy than ministry; and financial pressures that may make it difficult for your community to pay a full-time minister or maintain your building.

You are not alone. Many places across our church are feeling similar pressures as Canadian society becomes increasingly secular and diverse. From 2003 to 2013, the latest statistics available, United Church membership declined by 26 percent, average Sunday attendance dropped by 38 percent, and church school membership plunged by more than 50 percent. Over the same period, the number of United Church congregations declined by 567, or 16 percent. The number of baptisms—a key measure of the church’s effectiveness in nurturing new believers—dropped by 46 percent between 2003 and 2013. Since 2008, more funerals have taken place in United Church congregations each year than baptisms and marriages combined.



The church’s finances reflect this decline in membership and participation. While givings to the Mission and Service Fund, which supports our work as a denomination across the church and around the world, remained relatively constant for about 25 years, they have been declining every year since 2007. Combined with rising costs, the denomination’s financial strength has declined by more than 50 percent since 1980.



As a result, the church no longer has the volunteer or financial resources to maintain its structures and processes, which is hampering the church’s ability to do ministry effectively and faithfully in some places.

The United Church is not unique. Mainline Protestant denominations across North America have experienced similar long-term declines in membership since the 1960s, when baby boomers and their parents filled churches. Like the United Church, they are grappling with the fact that many of their ministries are failing to connect with the communities they are meant to serve. Part of this trend is a church problem: many churches simply haven’t adapted their ministries as their communities have become more diverse and the ways people engage with one another and with spiritual questions have changed.

But part of it may be the result of larger societal trends. As United Church minister David Ewart noted in a 2014 column in *The Observer*, declining church membership is part of a larger trend in our society away from joining organizations. “The simple fact is that Canadians are not going to church like they used to,” Ewart wrote. “In fact, Canadians aren’t going to synagogues, mosques, temples or Kiwanis either. Volunteer membership organizations of all types are declining. Attendance decline is not a problem that can be fixed. It is simply a reality to which we must respond.”<sup>2</sup>

The goal of the Comprehensive Review is not to return to the mid-20th century when churches and Sunday schools were bursting at the seams as the general public proclaimed Jesus as Lord and our denomination wielded significant spiritual and moral influence in Canadian society.<sup>3</sup> That is not realistic. It is also not where God is calling the church. Our future lies in the spirit of the Pentecost—in being smaller, more agile, and innovative; in listening to the Spirit as we go out into our communities to build relationships and work for equality and justice; and in offering a variety of faith experiences that may not look a lot like church as we know it.

May God work in and among us as we move faithfully and prayerfully toward renewal and transformation.

### **Principles**

We have rooted our recommendations in the following principles. These principles reflect the wisdom we heard from the church, our research, and our own discussions.

1. God is doing a new thing. Our structures and processes must enable us to take risks, be bold, and live our faith with passion, energy, and creativity as we participate in God’s new creation.
2. Communities of faith in Jesus Christ are the core of the United Church and increasingly will include not just congregations as we know them but also new kinds of communities that gather to worship, learn, and serve. We must focus our resources and energy on supporting and enabling communities of faith in all their diversity.
3. In our diversity, we value the strength and challenge of being a united church.
4. God calls us to join our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world. To do this, our church needs local, regional, and denominational expressions that gather for mutual support, ministry, and mission.
5. As an intercultural church, we embrace all forms of diversity in mutual ministry, including Aboriginal, ethnic, French language, racial, and other diversities.
6. We need to continue to develop capacity to enable Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples to live into right relations as committed to in the church’s 1986 and 1998 apologies.
7. Ministry and lay leaders must receive support and education to become more effective, dynamic, and innovative leaders.
8. Oversight and discipline must be separated from collegial support for both ministers and communities of faith.
9. Governance and support services must be simplified and sustainable to free people and financial resources for ministry and mission. Funding mechanisms must be transparent.

**Recommendation #1: Chasing the Spirit**

The Comprehensive Review Task Group recommends that the United Church make a commitment to supporting new ministries and new forms of ministry through an initiative that tentatively would be called *Chasing the Spirit*. This commitment to the United Church's future would be demonstrated by investing 10 percent of annual givings to the Mission and Service Fund in local and regional initiatives to transform existing ministries and launch new ones. Partial implementation of this initiative would begin in 2016, with full implementation by 2018.

***Context***

It isn't enough to rearrange our structures. God is doing new things in our world, and the United Church needs to engage with the ways in which the Spirit is stirring and moving among us. Even as we say goodbye to familiar ways, it is essential to incubate creative and transformational ways of experiencing God in our place and time. This will mean supporting those willing to take risks and to try things that may or may not work. The evidence is all around us in both new and emerging communities of faith and existing communities of faith that have reimagined and transformed themselves in response to Christ's call. These new and transformed communities of faith are taking many forms. Some are congregations as we know them, while others meet in cafés and pubs, explore faith through activities such as yoga, or gather primarily to serve others. Some of these communities of faith are permanent, and others are temporary. The common thread in this emerging movement is a willingness to experiment and take risks to participate in Jesus' hope for a new creation.

***The Challenge***

Throughout the history of the Christian church, followers of Jesus Christ have been challenged to live the gospel in ways that are relevant to their own times. God continues to challenge the United Church in this way today, and many places in the church are already responding faithfully to God's call. A movement of renewal and transformation is building in the church, but it can be difficult for the church to support and invest resources in hopeful but uncertain new directions when it is also facing the loss of familiar and treasured things. Yet the experience of denominations throughout North America is that the future of the church lies in nurturing new forms of ministry that require experimentation and risk.

***Why This Recommendation?***

The task group believes the challenge, risk, and hope for the church lie in joining what God is already bringing to life. Simplified structures are needed, but the purpose of changing them is to allow the church to focus on transformational ministries that support discipleship and evangelism in the emerging culture. As Jesus resisted complacency, the church needs to actively nurture, enable, and connect this movement of renewal and transformation that is breathing new life into existing faith communities and giving birth to new forms of faith communities.

This is "big picture" work that involves significant reimagining. It's about preparing leaders to take risks by providing spaces that nurture innovation—incubators for change in the church. This experimental spirit could free churches to become incubators for change in the world. *Chasing the Spirit* would require a significant shift in church culture to create space for rising leaders to experiment with new approaches to ministry, free from institutional pressures and fear of failure.

The United Church can learn from other denominations that are investing significant resources in new forms of ministry. In 2004, the Church of England and the Methodist Church in Great Britain formed Fresh Expressions, a movement that seeks to “transform communities and individuals through championing and resourcing new ways of being church.”<sup>4</sup> The church can learn much from Fresh Expressions about the value of investing in transformation and the challenges and risks of trying something new.

The United Church has its own experience to build on, too. We have ministries in some places that are growing and thriving, where people are trying new things or doing old things in new ways. In many places, this work has been led by EDGE: A Network for Ministry Development, which has been offering innovative leadership to support new developments in ministry across the country. In 2010, the Executive of the General Council allocated \$1 million for new ministries (the New Ministries Formation Fund); that money has now been spent, but it has nurtured new life in exciting ways.

The church will be called to trust passions and visions that are already at work and to embrace changes that are not yet fully imagined. Some of the characteristics of this type of innovation include

- taking risks, knowing that some efforts will fail
- recognizing that even if something is a success it may not last
- meeting people where they are
- endorsing entrepreneurial approaches to creating sustainability
- seeking greater diversity
- collaborating with other denominations

The church must dedicate resources to this work. The task group recommends that 10 percent of annual givings to the Mission and Service Fund be allocated to Chasing the Spirit. Chasing the Spirit would also complement grants that are distributed by The United Church of Canada Foundation’s New Ministries Fund. The task group’s recommendation would expand the work of the New Ministries Fund by including additional money in the denominational budget.

The task group has identified three areas of growth and commitment for the church of the future:

#### *Investing in Innovative Ministries*

Chasing the Spirit would incubate innovative ministries by helping to plant and nurture new ideas, evaluate outcomes, and determine next steps to enable new ministries. This work would require entrepreneurial, big-thinking staff and leaders who would help sow new ways of being church and encourage and support risk-taking and idea-testing. It would be an intentional, active, and interactive process for nurturing and supporting innovative ministries in the church.

Chasing the Spirit would be more than a fund. It would focus on transformational ministries with support, accountability, and celebration, and support discipleship and evangelism in the emerging culture. Regional staff and volunteers across the country would be able to draw on its resources to encourage spiritual renewal. It would help link leaders and communities across the church to share challenges and successes and enable thriving projects to spread.

Chasing the Spirit would build on initiatives already begun through the New Ministries Formation Fund and various Conference initiatives such as Bay of Quinte Conference's Transformational Ministry initiative.

As a result, Chasing the Spirit could provide support to a variety of ministries, such as

- new ministries in communities of faith outside the traditional church
- existing communities of faith that want to be transformed
- testing evangelism and ministry projects, sharing successful projects across the church, and transplanting them to new environments
- entrepreneurial ministries via start-up loans
- other innovative ministries and ideas that may emerge in response to our changing society

#### *Investing in Technology*

Chasing the Spirit would invest resources in technologies and training to enable communities of faith and networks to connect with each other and engage with more people, especially over long distances. Technology support would focus resources on enabling individuals and communities across the church to network. Examples include Alberta and Northwest Conference and Trinity United Church in Thunder Bay, which have invested in technology and leadership to connect communities of faith in worship and share ministry resources through video streaming.

#### *Developing and Supporting Leaders*

The church's talented leaders, both ministry and lay, will need support and resources to continue the cultural change that has already begun in the church. Ministry will be different from the past, and we must nurture and develop ministry leaders who can be creative and adaptable as our context continues to change.

As local faith communities are empowered to take on greater decision-making, it will be important to support their leadership in governance, community engagement, and innovative worship and spiritual practices to meet the needs of generations for whom traditional approaches do not have appeal or meaning. The goal is for communities of faith to be the best they can be.

The task group recognizes that other committees and task groups are developing proposals that will be critical to developing and supporting leaders in the future. This work includes how the church identifies, accompanies, equips, assesses, authorizes, and celebrates candidates for ministry, and a proposal for one order of ministry that acknowledges several paths of educational preparation.

The church can also draw on examples of leadership investment, such as EDGE's mentorship and coaching programs and British Columbia Conference's extensive leadership training programs, LeaderShift and Sowing Promise, Growing Leaders. BC Conference's programs offer compelling models because they are two of the few fully funded and staffed leadership programs in the United Church. They offer specific leadership training resources and tools and invest in new and emerging leaders.

*Practical/Financial Implications*

Allocating 10 percent of annual givings to the Mission and Service Fund to invest in transformational ministry initiatives would, in the absence of an overall increase in resources, require deeper cuts to work that traditionally has been funded. Endings are a necessary component of new beginnings, and we need to create space for new life even as other ministries are ending.

**BACKGROUND #3: Renewal and New Ministry Examples** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca/search/Comp%20Review%20backgrounder); search “Comp Review backgrounder”)

To read more stories about new life in the United Church, visit [www.edge-ucc.ca/stories](http://www.edge-ucc.ca/stories) and [www.hopecollection.ca](http://www.hopecollection.ca).

To learn more about EDGE, visit [www.edge-ucc.ca](http://www.edge-ucc.ca).

For more information about Fresh Expressions, visit [www.freshexpressions.org.uk](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk).

To learn more about funds available through The United Church of Canada Foundation, visit [www.unitedchurchfoundation.ca](http://www.unitedchurchfoundation.ca).

To learn more about Bay of Quinte Conference’s Transformational Ministry initiative, visit [http://bayofquinteconference.ca/?page\\_id=1635](http://bayofquinteconference.ca/?page_id=1635).

**Recommendation #2: Aboriginal Ministries**

The Comprehensive Review Task Group recommends that:

- a) A process be established to continue conversations with the Aboriginal ministries that form the Aboriginal Ministries Council to build a relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples based on mutuality, respect, and equity.
- b) To the extent possible, spending on Aboriginal ministries be maintained during the next triennium while discussions continue, and thereafter a set percentage of annual givings to the Mission and Service Fund be dedicated to this ministry.
- c) The important work of Indigenous justice and right relations continue so the church can continue to live out its apologies to Aboriginal peoples.

**Context**

God is calling the United Church to a right relationship between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal peoples—those who are part of the ministries of the United Church, those who are outside the church, and those who have been affected by historical practices and biases of the United Church and Canadian society, particularly Indian residential schools.

The church has taken steps over the past 30 years to move toward reconciliation and right relations. It offered apologies to Aboriginal people in 1986 and 1998 for its role in imposing European culture and spirituality on them and for its complicity in operating Indian residential schools. The church was involved in negotiating the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement and participated actively in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.



The church's structures include the All Native Circle Conference, Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, BC Native Ministries Council, Ontario and Quebec Native Ministries, and the Aboriginal Ministries Council. A significant step was taken in 2012 when the 41st General Council gave overwhelming approval to a proposal that made changes to the United Church crest to recognize Aboriginal spirituality, and entered into a new covenant in recognition that Aboriginal peoples were not invited to be signatories of the Basis of Union in 1925 when the United Church was formed.

This work has made progress even though patterns of colonized thinking remain in the church. Aboriginal communities of faith are not yet full partners in voice, resources, and decision-making, and the church has not fully lived out the apologies it offered in 1986 and 1998. Aboriginal communities also have work to do to build capacity for sustainable and vibrant ministry.

Lee Maracle, an Aboriginal poet and author, said in a 2008 address at Hart House at the University of Toronto, "It took eight generations of residential schools to get to this stuck place. We have been spiritually impaled. We don't know what it means to be freed (by the apologies of church and government). We need time and space in the institutions to look at our own problems ourselves and to recover from being told that it is our fault."<sup>5</sup>

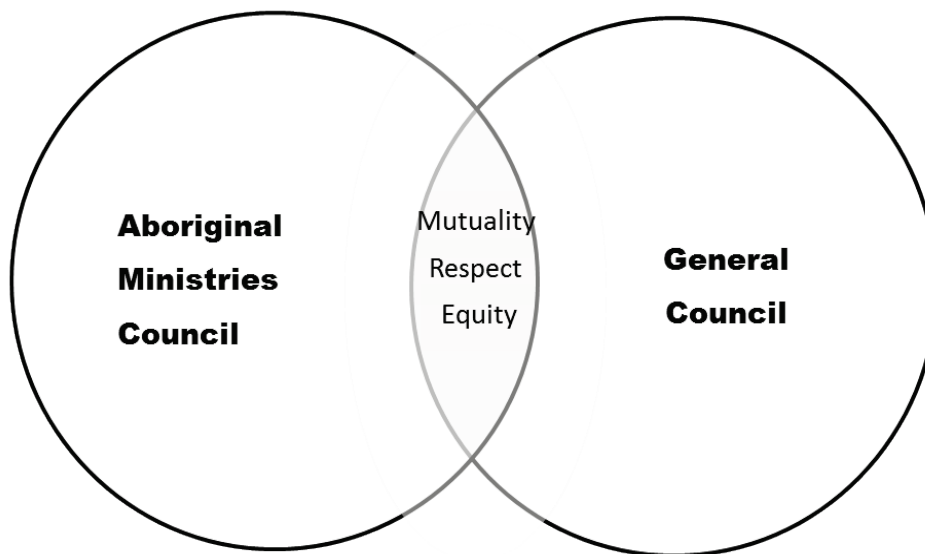
### ***The Challenge***

The process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples and developing a new church structure that recognizes the unique relationship will take time and cannot be completed during the mandate of the task group. Reconciliation goes beyond structures and processes; it is first and foremost about relationship, and must also connect to other work such as racial justice and spiritual healing. It is not the work of the task group alone, but part of a larger conversation that needs to continue and deepen in the United Church. During this process, the church must continue to fund Aboriginal ministries.

### ***Why This Recommendation?***

The task group believes the foundation of any new United Church structure must recognize the unique relationship between Aboriginal people and Canada. Based on mutuality, respect, and equity, a new structure must build capacity to address the need for reparation through community and leadership development, and reflect the values of a diverse group of Aboriginal communities of faith in the church.

One image the Aboriginal Ministries Council has offered uses two overlapping circles to express the relationship Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples aspire to. Together, they represent our unity as one body, yet each circle has its own integrity, mandate, and responsibilities. In practice, the overlapping area might represent shared initiatives and ministry. The image is not a structural representation and is not meant to suggest segregation. Rather, it depicts a new foundational relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in the United Church.



The task group also believes the church needs to continue to take an active role in restoring the dignity of all people. Given the history and impact of the residential school system and colonialism imposed on Aboriginal people, reconciliation will be a multi-generational priority for the church.

Members of the Comprehensive Review Task Group have engaged in a series of five discussions with the Aboriginal Ministries Council and the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools to explore ways of furthering the shift from past colonial relationships to ones that reflect a commitment to right relations as stated in the church’s two apologies. In these conversations, we examined alternate structures, particularly ones in New Zealand and Australia. We explored together what right relations might look like as well as how to fund Aboriginal ministries and the Indigenous justice work the whole church must do.

The conversations have been fruitful, but they are not finished and will not be during the life of this task group. The task group is mindful that living out the apologies and building a healthy relationship is the work of the whole church, not the responsibility of Aboriginal peoples alone. The challenge for the church is to define, embrace, and live into this relationship together and find ways to express it in the church’s structure. In this challenge, the church can draw from the lessons of the past 30 years, which have taught respect and inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives and traditional wisdom.

The timing and processes of Aboriginal ministries must be respected as these conversations continue. It is not necessary, and in fact would be inappropriate, to push this work to conclude to fit with the scheduling of the Comprehensive Review Task Group or the 42nd General Council. That’s why the task group is recommending that the Executive of the General Council establish a process to continue this conversation with Aboriginal ministries that form the Aboriginal Ministries Council.

While these discussions continue, funding to Aboriginal ministries should be maintained at current levels to the extent possible. Going forward, dedicating a set percentage of annual

givings to the Mission and Service Fund to this ministry would establish a relationship based on mutuality, respect, and equity.

In addition to its commitment to Aboriginal ministries, the church must commit to continue the work of the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools. This is the work the non-Aboriginal church must do to walk in right relations with Aboriginal peoples.

### ***Practical/Financial Implications***

This recommendation assumes a significant piece of work will need to continue beyond the life of the Comprehensive Review Task Group. This is the work of the United Church as a whole, in relationship with Aboriginal members and other Aboriginal Canadians. The commitment to this work recognizes the importance of right relations as a central calling of the United Church.

**BACKGROUND #4: Aboriginal Ministries** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review backgrounder”)

Further information about funding Aboriginal ministries can be found in Recommendation #6: Funding a New Model and Backgrounder #10: Finances ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review backgrounder”).

Read the church’s [apologies](https://www.united-church.ca) on [www.united-church.ca](https://www.united-church.ca).

Learn more about Indian residential schools and the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement on [www.united-church.ca](https://www.united-church.ca).

Find out more about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: [www.trc.ca](https://www.trc.ca). Learn more about the United Church crest on [www.united-church.ca](https://www.united-church.ca).

### **Recommendation #3: A Three-Council Model**

The Comprehensive Review Task Group recommends that:

- a) The United Church be governed by three councils:
  - i) Communities of faith that would nurture people in their faith journeys and, through the Spirit, inspire and empower them to live out their faith in vibrant and diverse ministries. These would include any community of people based in Jesus Christ that gathers to explore faith, to worship, and to serve. Communities of faith would have a much broader range of decision-making authority than they currently do, including initiating and ending calls and appointments of ministers and buying and selling property, subject to denominational and regional policies. They would function in covenantal relationship with the regional councils.
  - ii) Regional councils that would provide advice, support, and services to, covenant with, and connect communities of faith. Regional councils would meet at least once a year in person, electronically, or via their executives to make decisions, and would be composed of one lay representative and one ministry representative (for communities of faith with ministry personnel) from each community of faith in the region.

- iii) A denominational council that would nurture the identity of the United Church, discern and express a denominational voice, and connect the United Church with God's wider church by making decisions on denomination-shaping issues such as public witness, theology, and governance structure. The denominational council would meet every three years, as it currently does, but would be much larger than the current General Council because it would include representatives from every community of faith. The denominational council's executive would be much smaller than the current Executive of the General Council.
- b) Clusters of communities of faith in a geographic area be encouraged to gather regularly for collegiality, support, and learning, and networks link people with common interests across the church. Although the clusters and networks would not be formal governance bodies, they would be central to living out our faith.

### ***Context***

Our church currently consists of four courts:

- Pastoral charges may include one or more congregations under the spiritual leadership of a minister. In 2013, there were 2,172 pastoral charges, each of which had a governing body, and 3,016 congregations.
- Presbyteries, districts (in Newfoundland and Labrador Conference), the Consistoire Laurentien, and the Bermuda Synod are administrative groupings of pastoral charges in a local area. Lay and ministry delegates from the pastoral charges meet regularly to oversee the work of the pastoral charges. There are 86 presbyteries, districts, and equivalent bodies in the church.
- Conferences are administrative groupings of presbyteries. Lay and ministry delegates from the presbyteries meet at least once every three years. Staff in Conference offices work with presbyteries and pastoral charges. There are 13 Conferences in the church.
- The General Council is the church's highest decision-making body. Ministry and lay commissioners are elected by the Conferences and meet every three years to set church policy. The Executive of the General Council, composed of 50 members and 20 corresponding members, and the Sub-Executive of the General Council govern between meetings of the General Council. Policy is developed primarily through four permanent committees of the General Council and the Aboriginal Ministries Council, and implemented by staff. There are also about 25 other committees and task groups that are composed of voting members from across the church and corresponding members from General Council staff.

The United Church's structure is conciliar, which means it holds councils that are interconnected for the purpose of common agreement in faith and practice. Presbyteries are made up of representatives of pastoral charges, Conferences are made up of representatives of presbyteries, and the General Council is made up of representatives of Conferences.

### ***The Challenge***

The church's current structure is no longer serving God's mission effectively. The church does not have the volunteer and financial resources required to maintain it, and this is diverting energy and attention from God's ministry and mission. Many members find our complex court system

confusing and unwieldy and feel disconnected from the church beyond their local context, particularly the denominational structures. The church needs a more agile and sustainable structure that better supports and enables communities of faith to respond to God's call, uses resources more effectively, connects and unites people across the church, and is more flexible and adaptable as God calls us to new things.

### ***Why This Recommendation?***

The primary purpose of the proposed three-council structure is to nurture and support vibrant and diverse communities of faith to live out God's mission. Three councils would keep local communities of faith connected to decision-making bodies, both regionally and nationally, and increase understanding that we are one church united in God's work. Direct participation by communities of faith in both regional and denominational councils would enhance their understanding of decisions related to ministry and mission priorities and support services and governance. The structure would be simplified, and decisions would be made only once. It would also be sustainable and scalable as the church's context continues to change.

Communities of faith would have much more freedom to nurture and live out their faith in a variety of ways, subject to denominational and regional policies and in accordance with the covenants communities of faith and regional councils would enter into every year. Areas in which communities of faith would have more responsibilities would include recognizing, receiving, and celebrating new members; structure and governance; mission; property; and covenanting with accredited ministers and other staff. They would engage directly in social justice and outreach activities both locally and with global and national partners. Communities of faith would receive support from the regional and denominational councils to meet the expectations set out in their covenants and competently perform governance, human resources, and property functions.

Regional councils would perform some, but not all, of the functions of current presbyteries and Conferences. They would covenant with and provide advice, support, and services to communities of faith in areas such as human resources and property. They would accompany students, provide mentors and appoint supervisors for internships, and celebrate ordinations, commissionings, admissions, recognitions, and retirements. They would support and provide communities of faith with connections to national and global partners for social justice and outreach activities. They would also ensure communities of faith are living up to their covenants, attempt to resolve disputes, and step in if a community of faith is not functioning effectively or is failing to meet its responsibilities. The proposed model would require the church to rationalize regional structures and staffing by amalgamating Conferences or sharing staff and resources across separate regional councils.

The denominational council would vote on denomination-shaping issues and elect a Moderator. It would establish a three-year budget for the church and the assessment rate for communities of faith to fund the church.

While presbyteries and Conferences as we know them would cease to exist as decision-making bodies, local clusters would support collegiality and shared ministry, and connectional networks would provide space for ministry and mission passions across regions.

***Practical/Financial Implications***

If approved, this recommendation would lead to significant structural changes that would make the church more vibrant and sustainable:

- Communities of faith would have more responsibility and freedom to nurture and live out their faith in a variety of ways, subject to their covenants with regional councils and denominational standards.
- Presbyteries and Conferences would cease to exist and new regional councils would be created.
- Clusters and networks would offer opportunities for communities of faith and people with shared interests and passions to connect outside of decision-making bodies.
- Communities of faith would have greater opportunities to engage in the work of the church at regional and denominational councils by having direct representation on both of these bodies.
- A smaller denominational executive would facilitate more timely decision-making.
- Other committees and networks would be encouraged to meet at the same time as the denominational council.
- The denomination would no longer pay for commissioners to attend the denominational council meeting, but bursaries would be available.

**BACKGROUNDER #5: A Three-Council Model** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review backgrounder”)

**BACKGROUNDER #6: Distribution of Responsibilities for the Processes of the Church** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review backgrounder”)

**BACKGROUNDER #7: Sample Covenant** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review backgrounder”)

**BACKGROUNDER #8: Networks** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review backgrounder”)

**BACKGROUNDER #9: Other Models Considered** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search “Comp Review backgrounder”)

**Recommendation #4: A College of Ministers**

The Comprehensive Review Task Group recommends that a College of Ministers be established to accredit, oversee, and discipline ministers. The college would ensure only qualified people would be accredited as United Church ministers, and the standards of ministry would be maintained.

***Context***

Ministers are highly educated and trained persons God calls to ministry. As a denomination, the United Church must set admission criteria for candidates, establish standards for ministry, and exercise oversight and discipline over ministers when problems arise.

Currently, presbytery and Conference committees across the church make decisions on ordaining, commissioning, and recognizing ministers and are responsible for overseeing and disciplining ministers. These processes must be procedurally fair and sufficiently robust to

survive judicial scrutiny. Presbyteries and Conferences are struggling to achieve these requirements consistently.

### ***The Challenge***

#### *Ordaining, Commissioning, and Recognizing Ministers*

Each year, presbyteries and Conferences across the church establish education and student committees and interview boards to consider, on average, 36 candidates for ordination, seven for commissioning, and 12 for recognition as designated lay ministers. Each year, on average, eight candidates are admitted from other denominations and one person is readmitted to ministry. In addition, education and student committees accompany approximately 240 candidates on their journeys to ordination, commissioning, and admission. Finally, Conferences establish commissions to inquire into objections received about candidates.

The task group heard the current system for qualifying persons to become ministers requires too many volunteers and is time-consuming, and the processes used and results achieved have been uneven, occasionally wrong, and subject to oversight by the secular courts.

#### *Overseeing and Disciplining Ministers*

The United Church is legally responsible for ordaining, commissioning, and recognizing ministers and placing them in positions of responsibility and trust. Each year, a small number of ministers get into serious problems such as abuse of trust, sexual misconduct, misappropriation of money, and other similar conduct. In addition, a small number of ministers are incompetent.

The church, which may be legally responsible for such conduct, must continue to oversee and discipline ministers. Oversight and discipline include ensuring candidates have the necessary competencies to become ministers, ministers continue on a journey of lifelong learning, and ministers are held accountable and removed from ministry for serious breaches.

The current system of overseeing and disciplining ministers involves all four courts of the church, takes hours of volunteer time and money, and does not produce transparent and consistent results.

Each year, on average,

- presbyteries and Conferences authorize 12 reviews of ministers
- General Council investigates six complaints of sexual misconduct by ministers
- presbyteries, Conferences, and the Judicial Committee establish two formal hearing committees and/or appeal committees to hear disputes from these reviews and investigations

The task group heard the current system of oversight and discipline is challenging in a number of ways:

- Conflicts arise when the same group of people is responsible for overseeing and disciplining ministers as well as providing ministers with support and collegiality.

- The current system for overseeing and disciplining ministers is carried out by people who have limited or no experience in conducting investigations, running formal hearings, or hearing appeals.
- The processes used and the decisions reached are not always perceived to be timely, fair, or consistent.
- Appeals to the Judicial Committee and the secular courts are time-consuming and expensive.

### ***Why This Recommendation?***

Many of the church's lay members who are teachers, nurses, accountants, doctors, social workers, and lawyers are regulated by colleges or boards that license professionals, set standards of practice and annual continuing education requirements, and supervise and discipline their members. These kinds of bodies are not limited to the secular world. Some denominations have colleges or boards that accredit ministers and oversee and discipline them.

The task group recommends that the denominational council establish a College of Ministers to accredit persons to become ministers, uphold the standards set for ministers by the denomination, and oversee and discipline ministers. This recommendation continues the Reformed understanding of our church that ministers carry out their ministry in relationship or covenant with communities of faith, and are supported in their ministry and held accountable for their ministry by lay persons as well as other ministers.

A college would separate the functions of oversight and discipline of ministers from support and collegiality and thus eliminate this conflict. It would build on the learnings from the Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships project, which recognized it is challenging for a presbytery to both support and oversee ministers. The potential for discipline negates the trust that is needed for support. Conversely, it is difficult to discipline a colleague who may be a friend.

Rather than distributing oversight and discipline across the regions, ministers and laypersons on the board of the college would be, or become, more experienced in dealing with investigations and conducting formal hearings and appeals than in the current system. This increased expertise would result in processes that are and are perceived to be more fair and transparent, and results that are timely, are consistent, and withstand scrutiny on appeal. Carefully chosen laypersons could also reduce the need for costly legal counsel.

The college would be made up of representatives from the regions but would be positioned to offer consistency of interpretation and application on a national basis. This mechanism is suited to the relatively small number of applications and cases overall, and maintains the tradition of oversight of ministers coming from a body of lay and ministry representatives of our church. The task group has heard concerns that establishing a college would incorrectly cast ministry as a profession, rather than a calling or vocation. The task group believes this use of "profession" as applied to ministers has been misunderstood, and has found the following understanding from the College of Baptist Ministers in Britain to be helpful:



The actual word “profession” stems from the medieval Latin word “*professio*,” which was used on the taking of vows upon entering a religious order. Gradually the word broadened in its usage and came to indicate “a vocation in which a professed knowledge of some department of learning or science is used in its application to the affairs of others or in the practice of an art founded upon it” (Oxford English Dictionary). In other words, professionals are people who apply their knowledge in the service of others. Surely this is what we as Christian ministers seek to do?... Professionalism, rightly understood, implies offering to God our very best—both of mind and of heart. There is nothing cold or unspiritual about professionalism. Professionalism involves whole-hearted commitment to Christ and his church.<sup>6</sup>

### *Membership*

The college would include all ministers in the United Church. Candidates would be student members. Ordained persons from other denominations seeking admission to the United Church would be inquiring members of the college. All ministers serving in paid positions in communities of faith would be required to be members of the college. Retired ministers who provide ministry services for pay would be required to be members. Conversely, communities of faith could initiate calls and appointments only to persons who are members of the college. Membership would have to be renewed annually.

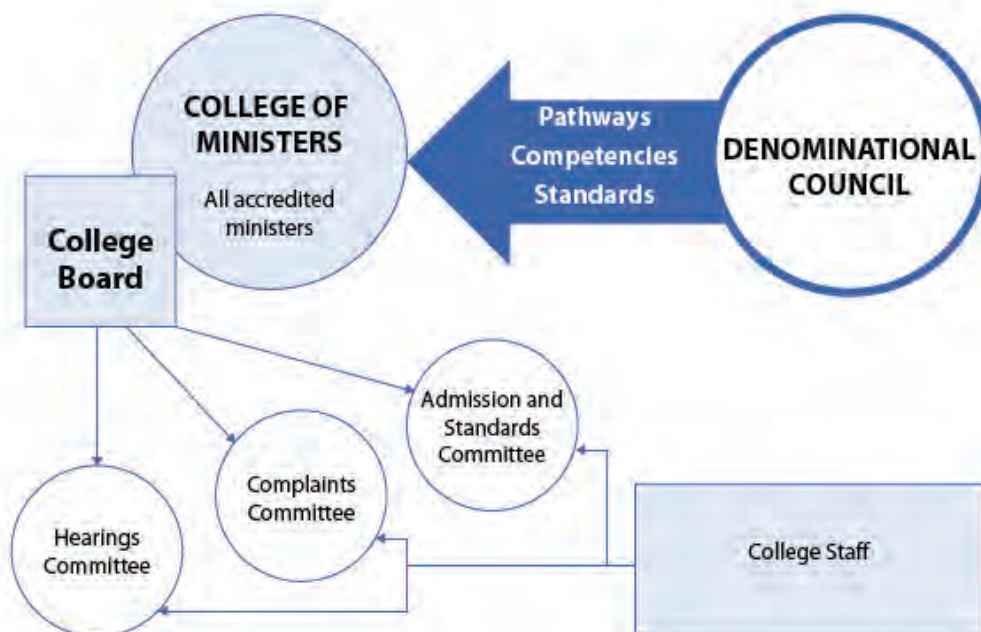
### *Governance*

The college would be governed by a 20-person board with equal numbers of ministers and laypersons, consistent with the tradition of the United Church. Ministers would be elected by their peers on a regional basis. Ordained, diaconal, and designated lay ministers would be represented on the board. Laypersons would be elected by the regional councils. The representation of Aboriginal ministries on the board would also be essential. Members would be elected for two three-year terms, but it might be prudent to stagger the terms to enhance continuity.

People serving on the board of the college would sit on one of three committees, each with at least one minister and one layperson:

- The admission and standards committee would assess candidates to become members.
- The complaints committee would assess complaints about ministers.
- The hearings committee would sit in three-person formal hearing panels to hear evidence about complaints, make findings of fact and law, and determine the appropriate outcomes.

# The United Church of Canada



### *Roles and Responsibilities*

The denominational council would continue to set the pathways to ministry, the competencies for each pathway, the standards for ministry, and the requirements for annual continuing education. The college would implement the denominational policies using a more transparent, timely, and fair process and achieve more consistent results than the current system.

Regional councils would appoint persons to accompany students and would appoint supervisors for the internship period, and each of these would provide reports to the college as part of the accreditation process. Ministers would be ordained, commissioned, and recognized by the regional councils.

The college would maintain a register of all qualified ministers that would be available to communities of faith that are searching for ministers.

Ministers would be responsible for demonstrating to the college that they had met the annual continuing education requirements before they could be accredited for the following year.

Regional staff would continue to promote healthy relationships between ministers and communities of faith. If problems arise, regional staff would provide support and advice, including assistance in ending the relationship should there not be a good fit.

If a community of faith ended the call or appointment of a minister because of misconduct or incompetence, it would be required to report its actions to the college. If a regional council or its staff had reason to believe a minister had committed acts of misconduct or was incompetent, they would be required to report the minister to the college. Any person could file a complaint about a minister. Complaints of sexual abuse by a minister would also have to be reported to the college.

The college would advise the minister of the complaint and seek a response. The complaints committee would assess the complaint and the response, and where warranted, an independent person might be appointed to investigate the complaint. In serious cases, the complaints committee would order a formal hearing. The hearing would be held in the appropriate region depending on where the minister and the witnesses are located. Members of the complaints committee would be trained to review and assess complaints about ministers.

Persons would be chosen for the hearings committee who have prior experience in conducting formal hearings or similar proceedings. Additional training would be provided to ensure members of the hearings committee have the knowledge and skills to conduct formal hearings and write decisions. Formal hearings would be quasi-judicial proceedings that would be required to follow the rules of evidence and of natural justice. Decisions of the hearings committee could result in a minister's removal as a member of the college.

### ***Practical/Financial Implications***

Based on the church's history of ordaining, commissioning, recognizing, overseeing, and disciplining ministers and the experience of regulatory bodies of other professions of a similar size, these functions could be carried out by a college with a staff of not more than five people, including a registrar and resource staff for the board and the three committees, included in a staff of not more than five people.

The task group estimates that the costs to establish and run a college would be \$750,000 per year and would be funded out of the assessments paid by communities of faith.

A college would be compatible with the current practices or with the recommendations that the General Council will be considering regarding a competency-based system for assessing candidates for ministry, or one order of ministry.

### **Recommendation #5: An Association of Ministers**

The Comprehensive Review Task Group recommends that a working group of ministers be struck to explore whether to set up an association of ministers. This process could include work on the membership of such an association, its role, and how it might be funded.

### ***Context***

The church needs strong, effective, and innovative leaders to engage and inspire people in Christian discipleship and action. As our context continues to change, ministers will be crucial in helping existing ministries transform themselves, nurturing new ministry opportunities, and helping to wind down ministries that are at the end of their lives. To be effective in these roles and equip them for change, ministers need collegiality and support.

In our current structure, presbyteries and districts are meant to provide collegiality and support to ministers as well as oversee and discipline ministers. Diaconal ministers have the option of joining the Diakonia of The United Church of Canada. Ministers may also find support in informal networks they build themselves.

Other denominations have associations of ministers. One example is the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, whose mission is to “nurture excellence in ministry through collegiality, continuing education, and collaboration.”

### ***The Challenge***

Ministers often feel they cannot turn for collegiality and support to peers in presbytery who are also responsible for overseeing and disciplining them.

In addition, presbyteries include both ministry and lay representatives. But ministers may be more likely to find the support and encouragement they seek from other ministers who understand the challenges they face.

### ***Why This Recommendation?***

There is a strong consensus in the church that support and collegiality for ministers should be separated from oversight and discipline (see Recommendation #4: A College of Ministers). The task group recommends that this be done by creating a College of Ministers that would perform oversight and discipline, among other functions.

The task group also heard in its conversations with the church that an association of ministers could complement the college by providing support to ministers. The task group believes an association—for ministers, by ministers—would be one way to offer support and collegiality, and we recommend that ministers be encouraged to explore this option.

In its conversations with the church, the task group heard

- considerable approval for the creation of an association
- diverging views on what an association might do
- general agreement that an association should provide advice and support for ministers
- some agreement that an association should also offer education and training
- differing views on whether an association should be the “voice” of ministers
- little support for an association to advocate on behalf of ministers
- differing views on whether membership should be voluntary or mandatory and on how to fund an association
- consensus that ministers alone should determine what an association would be and do

Given the lack of consensus, the task group recommends that the 42nd General Council mandate the establishment of a working group of ministers to explore

- what membership in the association of ministers might be
- what the association of ministers might do and not do
- how the association of ministers might be funded

**Practical/Financial Implications**

The General Council would need to allocate resources to support a working group’s exploratory work.

**Recommendation #6: Funding a New Model**

The Comprehensive Review Task Group recommends that:

- a) The church spend only what it receives, which would require reducing spending by at least \$11 million by 2018 from 2015 spending levels. Deeper reductions would be required to fund proposed investments in Chasing the Spirit and a College of Ministers. The task group provided for \$13.8 million in cuts in its modelling.
- b) The number and function of staff depend on the revenues received.
- c) The Mission and Service Fund be used only for ministry and mission activities.
- d) Governance and support services (administration) at the regional and denominational levels be funded by assessing communities of faith.
- e) The sharing of all resources, wealth, and abundance be encouraged across the church.

**Context**

The life and work of the United Church are funded in a variety of ways, including voluntary givings, mandatory assessments, bequests, investments, other sources of income such as rental fees, and draws on reserves. More than 60 percent of the funding for the broader work of the church comes from congregations, either as contributions to the Mission and Service Fund or from assessments.

Different courts have different funding mechanisms available to them. Both presbyteries and Conferences can assess the court below them. The General Council Office does not assess and relies on voluntary givings to the Mission and Service Fund for most of its activities, including ministry and mission and the services that support these activities.

Currently, the four courts of the church receive income from the following sources:

Court	Sources of Income
Pastoral Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voluntary givings</li> <li>• Investment income</li> <li>• Bequests</li> <li>• Other income, such as rental fees</li> </ul>
Presbyteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments of pastoral charges</li> <li>• Investment income</li> <li>• Other income</li> </ul>
Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments of presbyteries</li> <li>• Grants from the General Council Office</li> <li>• Investment income</li> <li>• Bequests</li> <li>• Other income, such as sales of property</li> </ul>

<p>General Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voluntary givings to the Mission and Service Fund</li> <li>• Investment income</li> <li>• Bequests</li> <li>• Other income, such as retail sales</li> </ul>
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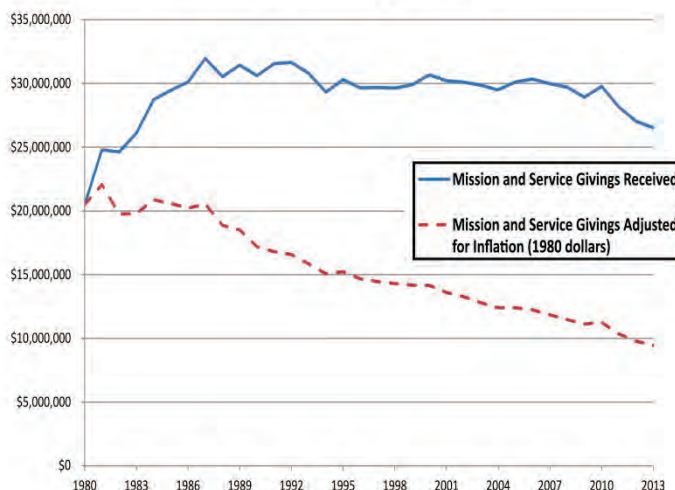
**The Challenge**

As a denomination, we have been living beyond our means. For many years, we have run deficits and used reserves and bequests to fund granting and denominational work in excess of annual revenue. The church can no longer fund deficits this way because it has drawn down unrestricted reserves to a point where they will soon be depleted. Given projected trends, at least \$11 million in costs need to be cut from the system by 2018. These reductions will impact all levels of the church because the Mission and Service Fund supports activity across the whole church.

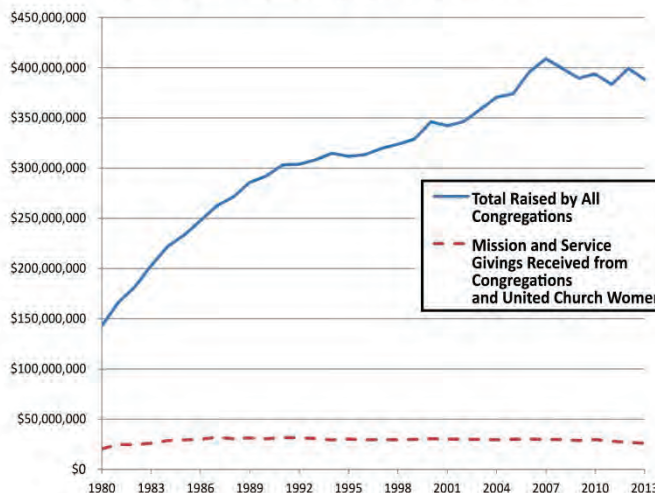
How did we get here? From 1980 to 2007, givings to the Mission and Service Fund remained fairly stable at approximately \$30 million per year. Despite a steady decline in the number of givers, growth in average gifts helped keep the total relatively stable. But over these decades, inflation cut the denomination’s purchasing power by more than half. In the meantime, congregational givings and presbytery assessments tended to keep pace with inflation.

However, all of these trends started to change in 2007 and 2008. Funding at the congregational level has begun to decline slowly, primarily due to church closures and local funding pressures. Similarly, givings to the Mission and Service Fund are now forecast to decline each year. Limited data are available on presbytery assessments, but the data that exist suggest this funding source has been more stable. A number of factors are driving these trends. Church membership and attendance, and therefore the number of potential givers, are declining. Patterns of giving are changing as members increasingly see the church as just one of many organizations with which to share their financial gifts. In addition, the current system of funding the broader courts of the church is not well

Mission and Service Givings, 1980–2013



Total Money Raised, All Congregations, 1980–2013



understood, and the fact that the Mission and Service Fund supports not only ministry and mission activities but also the administrative and governance services that support them is sometimes cited as a barrier to increased giving.

These trends have had a significant impact on funding throughout the church. Since 2006, the General Council has reduced costs by approximately \$11 million, almost all of it through reductions in grants and staff. These budget reductions have affected the whole church and have included cuts to global grants and overseas missions, grants to Canadian mission support, theological education, General Council staffing, and as of 2014, Conference grants.

In light of continuing downward trends, the denomination needs to cut costs significantly by 2018 to live within its means, regardless of whether structural changes are made. Many of the most obvious operational cost savings at the General Council level have already been implemented, so now the church needs to consider more fundamental and strategic restructuring. Whether or not the 42nd General Council approves the task group's proposals or subsequent remits pass, major cost-reduction initiatives must begin in 2016.

### ***Why This Recommendation?***

Given current financial projections, there is no scenario in which the United Church can afford its existing structure. The church needs to reset its system substantially to remove at least \$11 million in costs in the near term and also leave room to grow and evolve in God's new creation. This will require fundamentally changing the church's structures and processes and how they are funded. The alternative is to simply keep cutting costs in our current structure and let each part of the church adapt or die, without hope of renewal.

The task group worked with General Council finance staff and consulted the Permanent Committee on Finance to create financial models to test the feasibility of its recommendations, including a three-council structure. This modelling showed a three-council structure is financially feasible, but only if the church is prepared to rationalize regional structures and make deep staff reductions at both the denominational and regional levels.

The task group's recommendations would fundamentally change how the work of the broader church is funded. Through increased assessments and decreased expenses, this model would remove at least \$11 million from the system. But the task group's financial model contemplates cutting more deeply than is absolutely necessary just to balance the budget for the wider church. Specifically, the task group recommends a financial model that includes cuts of \$13.8 million in 2018 in order to reinvest 10 percent of annual Mission and Service givings in Chasing the Spirit and \$750,000 in a College of Ministers. The Mission and Service Fund would become a transparent funder of ministry and mission, while an assessment of communities of faith would fund services and functions that support ministry and mission.

It is challenging to draw a clear line between ministry and mission and the services that support them. Ministry and mission, supported by the Mission and Service Fund, could include the work of the Moderator; evangelism and ministry transformation; leadership development; Aboriginal ministries; ecumenical and interfaith activities; justice and partnership work; theological education; French, youth, and ethnic ministries; and philanthropy. Support services for mission

and ministry, funded from an assessment, could include the Office of the General Secretary and various support services to communities of faith, including human resources; a College of Ministers; shared services such as finance, information technology, and communications; and costs for meetings, governance, and committees.

The model assumes communities of faith would be assessed at a rate that, on average, would be 25 percent more than is being assessed today. But for an individual community of faith, the increase would be a relatively small percentage of the total annual budget. The financial model assumes that the rate of assessment would be 4.75 percent of column 40, the cost to run a community of faith in the National Statistics. The actual rate of assessment would be set by the denominational council for the following three years and should include a three-year averaging to smooth out significant variations in annual expenditures.

If the assessment were shared equally between the regional councils and the denominational council, \$6.2 million would be available to regional councils and \$6.2 million to the denominational council to fund governance and support services. In addition, the task group projects that \$2.4 million would be available to regional councils and \$18.9 million for the denominational council for mission and ministry funded by the Mission and Service Fund. The task group's model assumes Conference operating grants would be eliminated. It also assumes resources and investments that are held by current Conferences and presbyteries would continue to be held and used regionally or locally, unless the regions choose to share them.

### ***Practical/Financial Implications***

These recommendations, if adopted, would

- provide a pathway to sustainability by linking the amount of support services provided by the denominational and regional councils to revenues.
- significantly improve transparency and accountability in how the church is funded by creating a more sustainable structure that is predicated on the well-being of communities of faith.
- increase the current level of assessment paid by communities of faith by an average of 25 percent, which on average would result in a 1 percent increase in the cost to run a community of faith (which is column 40 in the National Statistics).
- create a clearer mission mandate for the Mission and Service Fund and potentially make it more appealing to givers.
- require that services be rationalized into more efficient regions. Most of the current Conferences would not be financially sustainable if they were forced to rely on their own assessments and current ways of operating. The Conference operating grant from the General Council represents between 30 percent and 50 percent of revenue for many Conferences. If the church chooses to have a middle council, then it would need to rationalize the services it provides into more efficient regions. Decisions about the future of All Native Circle Conference would be part of ongoing discussions around Aboriginal ministries and would be considered part of the ministry and mission activities the Mission and Service Fund would support. The task group recommends that Conferences meet over the next two years to rationalize their structures and staffing, either by amalgamating two or more courts or by sharing staff across separate courts. This rationalization will



need to happen whether the task group's recommendations are accepted or not and must be completed by 2017.

- entail significant staff reductions across the country. In its modelling, the task group anticipates needing to reduce staff at the denominational and regional councils by approximately 23 percent overall from 2015 levels. However, regional councils could choose to mitigate staff cuts by levying additional assessments on communities of faith or using the region's investment or other income.

**BACKGROUND #10: Finances** ([commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca); search "Comp Review backgrounder")

### Next Steps

Over the past two-and-a-half years, the Comprehensive Review Task Group has listened to voices from across the United Church in an unprecedented way, and has researched, debated, and prayed over the report and recommendations you now hold in your hand.

We are now offering our recommendations to commissioners, presbyteries, Conferences, and all members of the United Church to engage with it in preparation for the 42nd General Council. Read the report, talk about it, decide whether you can support its recommendations, think of alternatives to anything you cannot live with and propose them through your presbytery and Conference, and talk to the commissioners from your area who will be going to General Council. This report is now yours to work with. It's about the future of our church.

God is working in our world and within us, as always. Jesus calls us ever onward, beyond our comfort zones and safety nets. The Spirit will be with the commissioners of the 42nd General Council as they find the wisdom to make the decisions they need to make.

The next steps after the 42nd General Council depend on the specific decisions that are made. Whether or not the General Council approves the task group's proposals or subsequent remits pass, major cost-reduction initiatives must begin in 2016.

If the recommendations contained in this report are adopted, it would be up to the Executive and Sub-Executive of the General Council to develop and carry out an implementation plan. Some of the key components of the plan are set out below.

If the General Council decides to take a course of action different from these recommendations, it would still be up to the Executive and Sub-Executive of the General Council to implement the General Council's decisions.

The Executive of the General Council also has authority to take whatever action it considers necessary on behalf of the General Council if critical financial or other circumstances emerge between meetings of the General Council. This could include action beyond the decisions made by the 42nd General Council.

**Remits**

All changes that affect the structure of the United Church in a fundamental way must be approved through the remit process. Three of the changes recommended in this report would be considered Category 3 remits, which means they would be subject to the approval of a majority of all presbyteries and of all pastoral charges:

- Recommendation #3: A Three-Council Model
- Recommendation #4: A College of Ministers
- Recommendation #6: Funding a New Model

As well as the task group's recommendations, the General Council will be considering a proposal from the General Secretary that would require a Category 3 remit. See the heading "Legislative Change: Federal," below.

The remits would be sent to presbyteries and pastoral charges by the end of 2015. The return date would be set to give these courts at least a year to make their decisions before the 43rd General Council meets.

When a remit is approved by a majority of presbyteries and pastoral charges, there is a final step in the process: the change comes into effect only if it is enacted by the next General Council. The 43rd General Council would be responsible for deciding whether to enact any of the remits that have been approved.

If one or more of these remits is not approved, or not enacted, it would be up to the 43rd General Council to decide on an alternative course of action for the United Church. Again, the Executive of the General Council has authority to act on behalf of the General Council between meetings of the General Council if emergency financial or other circumstances require it.

**Legislative Change: Federal**

The changes contemplated in Recommendation #3: A Three-Council Model are so fundamental that they would require an amendment to The United Church of Canada Act, the federal legislation that created The United Church of Canada in 1925. Under our current structure, this amendment would require the approval of Parliament, initiated by either the federal government or a private member's bill. The process could be a lengthy one and may not necessarily result in the amendment being approved.

The United Church could move to governance under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act rather than The United Church of Canada Act. This would give the church the option to make major structural changes without the need for parliamentary approval. Moving to the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act would also require a Category 3 remit, which would be sent to all presbyteries and all pastoral charges at the same time as the other remits.

If the remit passed and was enacted by the 43rd General Council, the Executive of the General Council could then complete the move to governance under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act. All of the changes approved by the other remits could then be legally implemented through that Act following the 43rd General Council.

If the remit failed, the only option would be for the United Church to seek parliamentary approval for the three-council model, or to restructure in another way that did not eliminate Conferences and presbyteries. Those decisions would be up to the 43rd General Council.

### ***Legislative Change: Provincial***

In addition to the federal legislation, there is parallel legislation entitled The United Church of Canada Act in nine Canadian provinces (not Newfoundland). The impact of the proposed changes—a three-council model and a move to governance under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act—on the provincial legislation would need to be explored and addressed as part of the implementation plan. This could begin immediately after the 42nd General Council, with any decisions being deferred until the outcome of the remits is known.

### ***Pilot Projects***

Some Conferences and presbyteries may be keen to begin moving into new models following the 42nd General Council. If the General Council approves the restructuring, it should also consider approving the initiation of pilot projects on the College and the three-council structure on a voluntary basis. These projects would generate learnings that would help inform the implementation of restructuring on a church-wide basis, if approved by remit.

### ***Other Work***

Concurrent with the work of the Comprehensive Review, several other significant reviews and projects have been underway, relating in one way or another to ministry in the United Church:

- “One Order of Ministry” proposes a revised model for the status and roles of professional church leaders.
- “The Candidacy Pathway” proposes a revised model for discerning, identifying, and training professional church leaders.
- “Leadership Formation for Ministry” proposes a new competency-based model for assessing formal and experiential learning and would redefine the church’s relationship with theological schools.
- The “Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships” project focused on ensuring support, oversight, and accountability of ministry personnel, and matching the qualifications of ministry personnel with leadership needs.

The task group has met with those engaged with these pieces of work. The task group’s recommendations are designed to work with and build on the results of these other pieces if they are approved, but do not depend on them going forward.

Although much is uncertain about the future, one thing is clear: if we want to offer a place where the next generation can find their spiritual home, we must be willing to risk new and unfamiliar ways. This isn’t new; this is the essence of following Jesus.

### **Commissioning**

It is with profound gratitude and hope that the Comprehensive Review Task Group offers this work to the church. Early in the process, we recognized that if any change were to happen, the

whole church had to be engaged in the process, listening to one another, praying together, and learning to trust one another. We did our best to listen to your wisdom, hear your advice, and engage your imagination. The task group believes there has been real conversation, and sense an acceleration of changes in our culture and church processes right across the country. The evolution of Jesus' ministry is ongoing and at hand. The Spirit is active among us.

Frequently, we have been bowled over by the movement of the Spirit. We do not claim this model is God's plan for the United Church. Rather, we have been caught up in a Spirit-storm of change that is already taking place and trying to create support structures that would enable the church to be our best selves, sustainable but not static, long into the future.

We have been moved by your prayers as individuals, as committees, as networks, and on social media. We encourage those prayers and hope they will continue and intensify as the church approaches the 42nd General Council in August 2015.

While the catalyst for this work was declining financial and human resources, the goal of the review was to create a structure that would enable a more vibrant and energetic church. Staying the same is not an option.

You asked us to be bold, and now we are asking the same of you. We are counting on your continued involvement to clarify, improve, and celebrate this new future. We believe these extensive structural and procedural changes are the church's best hope for vibrant sustainability, but also trust the Spirit will lead us together. Consequently, while we will be available for clarification and continued deep conversation, the report now belongs to the whole church to use in preparation for our gathering at General Council.

The need for change in how the church is and will be united in God's work is pressing. This process of listening to and responding to God's call continues to be the work of the whole church. We encourage people across the church to listen to one another with careful attention, and to listen for the movement of the Spirit. This is not just about money or structural change, but about transformation in the church.

God, through Jesus Christ, will be active in the world no matter what we choose to do.

So, embrace the Spirit as she sparks new life and opens new paths to the realm of God.

## **Glossary<sup>7</sup>**

### *Aboriginal Ministries Council*

A decision-making body composed of representatives from Aboriginal constituencies across The United Church of Canada, including All Native Circle Conference, British Columbia Native Ministries Council, Ontario and Quebec Native Ministries, and the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre. Representatives are sought from French and intercultural ministries as well as from the Aboriginal communities of Inuit/Métis, the Maritimes, and Indigenous traditional wisdom.

*Accreditation*

The process of ensuring ministers in the United Church are in good standing and in compliance with the standards set by the denominational council. The proposed College of Ministers would keep a roster of accredited ministers. Communities of faith could select and covenant only with accredited ministers.

*Assessment*

The amount of money each community of faith must contribute to fund the life and work of the wider church. In the proposed model, the denominational council would assess communities of faith. This assessment would fund the governance and support services of the church at the denominational and regional levels.

*Chasing the Spirit*

The tentative name of a proposed initiative to support and develop new ministries and forms of ministry. It would provide space for risk, innovation, and transformation and would be funded by 10 percent of annual givings to the Mission and Service Fund.

*Clusters*

Geographic groupings of communities of faith that would gather for collegiality, support, sharing best practices, and determining priorities for common mission and ministry in the area.

*College of Ministers*

A body established by the denominational council that would be responsible for accrediting, admitting, overseeing, and disciplining ministers according to denominational policy.

*Communities of Faith*

Communities of faith would include any community of people based in Jesus Christ that gathers to explore faith, to worship, and to serve, and could include congregations as we currently understand them, outreach ministries, faith-based communal living, house churches, shared ministries with other denominations, online communities, and others. They would connect with other communities of faith through clusters and networks, and send representatives to regional and denominational councils.

*Denominational Council*

A body with representatives from each community of faith that would meet every three years to nurture the identity of the United Church, discern and express a denominational voice, and connect the United Church with God's wider church. It would deal with denomination-shaping issues related to public witness, theology, and governance structure. The council would establish a three-year budget envelope for the church, set the assessment rate for communities of faith to fund the church, and elect a Moderator.

*Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships Project*

A new model for the human resources work of beginning, supporting, and ending pastoral relationships between ministers and pastoral charges. Pilot projects have been conducted in many Conferences across the church since 2011 based on principles of separating oversight and discipline responsibilities for ministers, emphasizing collegiality among ministers, increasing

focus on mission and ministry in pastoral charges and presbyteries, and engaging trained staff support for this work.

### *Fishing on the Other Side*

A discussion paper prepared by the Comprehensive Review Task Group that explored a structure with two councils, a connectional space, a college of ministers, and an association of ministers. This discussion paper was the basis of the consultation with all presbyteries, districts, the Consistoire Laurentien, and the Bermuda Synod in spring 2014.

### *Incompetence*

Failure to meet the standards of ministry as defined by the denominational council.

### *Ministers*

The United Church of Canada since its beginning has upheld a central tenet of the Reformation: that the ministry of the church includes the ministry of all the baptized (1 Peter 2:9). However, in this paper “minister” is the general term used for a variety of persons recognized as working in paid ministry and includes those who are ordained, commissioned, and recognized to provide leadership in communities of faith.

### *Mission and Service Fund*

The unified fund that supports service and ministry of the United Church by donations. Individual members, communities of faith, and organizations such as the United Church Women contribute generously to this fund every year. Gifts are combined to support global and local mission, Aboriginal ministry, theological education, faith formation, the work of Conferences, and the General Council. In the proposed model, Mission and Service donations would be used exclusively to fund the mission and ministry of the United Church, while governance and support services would be funded by an assessment of communities of faith.

### *Networks*

A group of people or communities of faith who organize around a particular issue or passion. Networks would not be bound by geography, although there could be local groups within a national network. Examples already exist, including Affirm United, United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel, Table de concertation régionale des ministères en français, and many others. The proposed model would encourage further development of networks.

### *Regional Councils*

Geographically based councils that would connect, covenant with, and provide advice, support, and services to communities of faith. Regional councils would be composed of one lay representative and one ministry representative (as applicable) from each community of faith within the region, and would meet at least once a year in person, electronically, or via their executives.

### *Remit (from F.2 of The Manual, 2013, p. 125)*

A vote by presbyteries, or by presbyteries and pastoral charges, to change the Basis of Union.

*Trust God; Trust the Body*

A discussion paper prepared by the Comprehensive Review Task Group that asked questions about funding, the relationship and accountability of communities of faith to the denomination, social justice, discerning a national voice, and identifying regional needs and opportunities. This was the basis of the consultation with all Conferences in the United Church in 2014.

**Notes**

1. The task group's November 2014 update indicated a net cut of \$10 million would be required to live within our means, based on the 2014 budget. Based on updated spending projections for 2015, that figure is now at least \$11 million.
2. David Ewart, "Reality Check: It's Not Your Fault," *The United Church Observer* (January 2014): 41. Reprinted with permission of the author.
3. Phyllis Airhart, *A Church with the Soul of a Nation* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014).
4. [www.freshexpressions.org.uk](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk), retrieved January 12, 2015
5. *Covenanting to Live Faithfully in the Midst of Empire*, Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry, Presentation to the Executive of the General Council, March 2009.
6. The College of Baptist Ministers, "Who are we?" Retrieved January 9, 2015, from [www.collegeofbaptistministers.org/about](http://www.collegeofbaptistministers.org/about). Reprinted with permission.
7. In this glossary, terms related to the church's current structures and processes are referred to in the present tense. Terms related to proposed structures and processes are in the conditional tense.

## NEW PROPOSALS

### NEW 1 GC CENTRES PROPOSALS

**Originating Body:** Paul Browning and Catherine Stewart-Savage

**Financial Implications if known:**

**Staffing Implications if known:**

**Source of Funding if known:**

*The 42nd General Council (2015) direct:*

**The Executive of the General Council in its discernment of priorities for the Church, explore the future of the Education Centres for the formation of leaders and ministry of the Church, and consult with the Boards of the Centres and report to GCE by Spring 2016.**

#### **Background:**

In 2014 Calling Lakes in Saskatchewan closed. In January 2015 Naramata in British Columbia ceased operations. In July 2015 all staff at the Tatamagouche Centre in Nova Scotia received layoff notices. Five Oaks in Ontario faces financial and infrastructure crises at this time. Significant time, effort and energy has been invested by staff and volunteers to work at various sustainable plans. However, it is not clear if the Centres have a clear value to the church going forward.

Over the past half-century, the United Church of Canada's Centres have been vital for the faith formation of many members. Their innovative, challenging programs have deepened and broadened our understanding of ourselves, our Christian tradition and of our role of Church as a Church. Their natural beauty has offered spiritual retreat, nurture and renewal. Through creative programs and partnering, the Centres have been an Outreach Ministry. They have become a "greenhouse" through which visions of a new "post-Christendom" Church can be seen emerging.

### NEW 2 ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

**Origin:** Scott Kell

That the 42nd General Council (2015) develop two separate organized bodies of The United Church of Canada to replace the General Council:

**A. The United Church of Canada: People of the Way**

**B. The United Church of Canada: Denominational Council**

#### **Background**

Where the responsibilities, celebrations, teachings and events in the current structure of General Council impedes its ability to give adequate attention to all the work and life of the church. The current structure of the United Church General Council might be improved on and revised;



influenced by examples of other structures such as the enthusiasm of The United Church of Christ Synod. See website [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org).

Description of the bodies suggested above.

**A. The Denominational Council/Assembly**

A representative body, with representatives chosen in a similar way as they are chosen now.

Using the same format for proposals and potentially commissions as General Council, this body would decide upon issues of policy, doctrine, and polity. This body would base itself in prayerful discernment, and worship. Using that faithful base the body would make its decisions. Additional events and speakers that would have been at General Council would be a part of the next body.

**B. People of The Way**

This would be a large national gathering to celebrate the United Church of Canada and all our relations. The gathering would be filled with worship, music, workshops, presentations, and community-building. The purpose of the gathering would be to foster the faith of attendees, unite congregants from across Canada, praise God, provide resources to ministry personnel and laypeople, and be a declaration to the greater public of what our church believes.

A celebratory gathering like the People of The Way might provide an opportunity for an understanding on directions of the church, perhaps an option for questions to be answered and for suggestions to be made from congregants directly to church leaders. The attendees of the denominational council/assembly may also attend the People of The Way and the People of the Way would be open to a much larger group or perhaps not even have a limit of who might be allowed to attend as policy decisions are not made at that gathering, but additional voices could be heard.

**NEW 3 PROPOSALS**

**Origin: Vanessa Spence**

**That the 42nd General Council (2015), direct the General Secretary, General Council to:**

**Develop and create resources to shape proposals used in the decision making bodies of The United Church of Canada.**

**Background**

In the past number of years, The General Council has begun to use a proposal system so that:

- All voices and insights might not have had the opportunity to be dutifully and respectfully heard
- All consequences might not have been fully considered and explored
- Multiple proposals with similar ideas kept separated might complicate the decision making process
- Decisions on proposals might not have been made with a full understanding of its complexity

- That time for prayer within the decision making process might not have been made available due to a variety of factors such as time limitations
- New information or insight might not have the opportunity to be brought forward prior to or during the decision making process

If recommended by the 42nd General Council (2015) a Web-based centre made widely available could serve as a place to discuss ideas to be considered for possible proposals. One idea would have one proposal, that all information might be available and presented clearly. This Web centre would host multiple ideas in process of becoming proposals and in relation with each individual idea include relevant research information and communications. This website could offer scheduling, web location and access instructions of resources such as related Web lessons, presentations and Internet based conversations etc. These would all be available during the idea forming process for reflection, research and revisioning.

The forming of the idea into a proposal could be done through organized respectful conversations and after revisions further conversations could continue until the proposal is finalized and agreed on to best represent the intent. Voices of support and concern could be noted for consideration.

In seeking to make more educated decisions we should respectfully hear the wisdom of others to better shape the idea. We must research the effect of the idea beyond the intended outcome to recognize the ramifications of our decisions and consequences of our actions and discuss possibilities to find clear direction that best serves the intent of the idea. This information should be collected and presented clearly.

Once a proposal finalization is approved it could then be forwarded to the proposal decision making body of the United Church of Canada allowing for focus on seeing how each proposal would help The United Church of Canada to serve God through prayerful discernment.

**Rulings and Opinions of the General Secretary, General Council,  
August 2012–August 2015**

13-001-R	January 16, 2013	Including Names of Respondents Under SAPRPP in Presbytery Minutes
13-002-R	November 21, 2013	Fee for Conference Annual Meeting
14-001-O	October 7, 2014	Oversight re: Mandatory Racial Justice and Boundaries Training
15-001-R	May 5, 2015	Process for Addressing Theological Concerns re: Ordered Minister



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