

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**  
**MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE**  
**MINUTES**  
**November 18-19, 2022**

The 44th General Council Executive of The United Church of Canada met online on Friday, November 18 and Saturday, November 19, 2022. The Moderator, Carmen Lansdowne, presided.

**Attendance**

Voting Members: Mitchell Anderson, Michael Blair, Richard Bott, Kathy Brett, Teresa Burnett-Cole, Michael Caveney, M Chorney, Samuel Vauvert Dansokho, Catherine Glover, Carmen Lansdowne, Kit Loewen, Jane McDonald, Arlyce Schiebout, Thea Sheridan-Jonah

Corresponding: Diane Bosman, David Dawrant, Treena Duncan, Alan Hall, Sarah Charters, Treena Duncan, Adele Halliday, Jennifer Henry, Jennifer Janzen-Ball, Faith March-MacCuish, Erik Mathiesen, Japhet Ndhlovu, Murray Pruden, Nicole Treksler, Sara Stratton

Regrets: Paul Douglas Walfall, Wilson Gonesse, Marlene Lightning

Guests: Shirley Cleave, Bob Fillier, Julie McGonegal (*Broadview*)

**Friday, November 18, 2022**

**Welcome**

The Moderator and General Secretary welcomed those gathered to this meeting of the Executive. The Moderator, Carmen Lansdowne, briefly reviewed the method of voting to be used for this meeting.

**Constituting the Meeting**

The Moderator constituted the meeting in French and English.

"Au nom de Notre Seigneur, Jésus-Christ, seul chef souverain de l'Église, et par l'autorité qui m'a été conférée par le quarante-quatrième Conseil général, I hereby declare this meeting of the Executive of the General Council to be in session for the work that may properly be brought before it to the glory of God."

**Territory Acknowledgement**

M Chorney led the group in the territory acknowledgement. At the conclusion of M's sharing of the Prairie to Pine Regional Council acknowledgement, the Moderator invited those present to type into the chat box indicating their territory or status on the land.

## **Agenda Overview**

The Business Planning Committee chairperson, Kit Loewen, highlighted the structure of the agenda, which was designed to enable the Executive to engage in deep discussions while staying focused on their fiduciary, strategic and generative responsibilities (*Appendix I*). Kit also reported the regrets for the meeting, and welcomed Julie McGonegal who was present on behalf of the *Broadview* magazine.

## **Covenant / Holy Manners / Equity Commitments and Lenses**

The Moderator and Adele Halliday, Anti-Racism and Equity Lead, outlined various commitments for working together and equity aspirations to guide the conduct of the meeting. The Equity Aspirations (*Appendix II*) were shared onscreen throughout the meeting. There were set times during the meeting for those gathered to consider how the group was attending to those covenants and commitments.

## **Gathering Worship**

The opening worship focused on Joel 2:28, with the Moderator inviting reflection on hopes and visions for a world ten years from now. Prayers for the church were offered from submissions received from regional council presiding officers / presidents, as well as those present.

## **GS 02 Procedural and Consent (*Appendix III*)**

The Moderator invited the General Secretary to introduce the opening motion. The General Secretary briefly outlined the various pieces of work contained in *GS 02 Procedural and Consent*.

## **Motion: Michael Blair/Kit Loewen**

**2022-11-18-005**

That the General Council Executive:

1. Approve the minutes of the General Council Executive meeting held on September 18, 2022.
2. Adopt the agenda for this meeting as circulated, with any changes which may be necessary as the meeting evolves, to be made on the recommendation of the Business Committee.
3. Name as corresponding members to this meeting any General Council Officers, Executive Ministers, Executive Officers, and Regional Council Executive Ministers who are present; anyone else who may be named by the General Secretary to serve as resource persons to the General Council Executive.
4. Receive for information the following reports:
  - General Secretary's Accountability Report
  - Moderator's Accountability Report
  - National Indigenous Council Report
  - Strategic Plan Report
  - Action Plan for Governance: Work Flow Working Group Report

- Anti-Racism Action Plan Update
- Pension Board Accountability Report
- GC44 Planning Committee Final Report
- World Council of Churches Delegates Report
- KAIROS Report

5. Approve the following proposals:

- GS 03 Editorial Changes to *The Manual*
- GS 04 Updates to *The Manual* to Reflect Decisions Made by GC44
- GS 05 Addition of Intercultural and Anti-Racist Statements in the Declarations Section of *The Manual*
- GS 06 Incorporated Ministries Policy Update
- GS 07 Reappointment of the Partner Council (2022-2025)
- GS 08 Terms of Reference for the Task Group to Review the Roles of the Moderator and General Secretary
- NOM 02 Recommendations for Appointment

**Carried**

**Workflow of the Executive / GCE 01 Governance Renewal Action Plan**

Mitchell Anderson, chair of the Work Flow Task Group, provided an update on the work done by the task group. He extended his gratitude to the members of the task group: Shirley Cleave, Bob Fillier, Teresa Burnett-Cole, Treena Duncan, supported by Michael Blair, Diane Bosman and Shirley Welch. He noted that the desire of the Executive to work more efficiently and at more of an oversight level had prompted the formation of the task group. He outlined the ten recommendations (*Appendix IV*) regarding how the Executive role might be shaped so that its governance enabled God's call and vision for the church.

In response to a question about how the work might look different using these recommendations, Mitchell noted that the reshaping of the agenda, as had been done for this meeting was a good step. Looking at the work differently, determining how work fits with the strategic plan, not sinking into the operational details, and developing an attitude of trust regarding work done by staff will also be important.

The Moderator thanked Mitchell for his presentation and work on this task group. Mitchell gave regrets for the rest of the day.

Those present broke into small groups to respond to the following questions:

1. Any further questions on the proposal? What else do you need to know?
2. What affirmations and concerns about the proposal do you have?
3. How should the GCE move forward in implementation?

There was time in plenary for the discussion groups to share thoughts or questions. Key feedback that was shared included:

- a general affirmation for the recommendations;
- a request to further develop Recommendation 8 regarding a covenant;
- a request that Recommendation 6 include the understanding that “technical” would mean any complex matters that would benefit from additional consultation, consideration and expertise, not just financial, or human resources items;
- an observation that governance at national level and congregational / regional levels are quite different; it would be helpful to articulate those differences, so the wider church understands the distinctions; and
- an affirmation on the importance of the need to foster trust.

When introducing the motion, the General Secretary noted the change in wording to “agree in principle” from what had originally been shared with the Executive. He reported that the working group will come back to the Executive early in 2023 regarding some unfinished pieces of work.

**Motion: Teresa Burnett-Cole/Jane McDonald**

**2022-11-18-006**

That the General Council Executive:

- agree in principle with the Governance Renewal Action Plan and commit to living it out; and
- invite the Work Flow Task Group to continue its mandate as it works to identify potential policy changes, including potential changes to *The Manual*, to further implement the direction of the Governance Renewal Action Plan.

**Carried**

**Consensus Decision-Making**

The Moderator gave a short presentation on consensus discussions based on the World Council of Churches model, making use of orange and blue cards to indicate agreement with discussions and readiness to vote. She feels that this will help with the equity aspirations by ensuring that all perspectives in discussions are explored during the meetings of the Executive.

A test discussion showed how this process could be used.

Some members noted that they had not received their cards in the mail. These will be sent out prior to the next meeting to anyone who has still not received them.

**Reflections – Equity Aspirations**

Kit Loewen invited the group to reflect silently regarding the group’s adherence to the equity aspirations so far during this meeting. She then invited folks to share positive experiences regarding the upholding of the commitments. Feedback could also be shared directly by email.

The Moderator invited Bob Fillier, of the Work Flow Task group, to share a prayer to close this portion of the meeting. She also took a moment to thank the members of the task group for their work.

### **Meeting as the Pension Administrator (Appendix V)**

The Moderator introduced Anne Soh, the new Pension Board Chair, who was joining the Executive for her first meeting as chairperson. Anne's presentation provided highlights from the past year, looking at the overall performance of the pension plan, benefit improvements provided, plan administration activities, responsible investing and a preview of the proposed Pension Board strategy.

There was time for questions and comments. During this time education and communication were raised as important aspects for members of the pension plan. The rarity of a defined benefit pension plan was highlighted as the type of information that should be shared with pension plan members. There was a question regarding ministry personnel who have lived in manses and who were not able to build financial equity through the purchase of a residence. Alan Hall, Executive Minister, Ministry and Employment, noted that ministers in a manse miss the opportunity to build equity in real estate. While not a pension or compensation issue, it does impact resources in retirement and will be included in the total compensation review that GC44 directed be undertaken in this triennium.

The Moderator thanked Anne for her time with the GCE, as well as staff, Shenagh Rosa, Manager, Pension Compliance and Communications, Ministry and Employment, and Alan Hall. Samuel Vauvert Dansokho offered a prayer for the pension plan and those working to ensure it remains healthy and viable into the future.

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

After a break, the General Secretary invited questions, comments or concerns regarding his comprehensive accountability report. There was a question regarding the governance structure with regard to the new insurance program. There will be a separate structure, but the board will be accountable to the United Church, in a similar way that Kindred Works (formerly United Property Resource Corporation) is accountable.

### **GS 17 Realignment of General Council Office Unit and Appointment of Executive Minister**

As an addition to his verbal update the General Secretary brought the following motion regarding realignment of work within the General Council Office by combining Communications with the strategy work. There was general approval for the rearrangement of these pieces of work, but a concern was raised that the Executive Minister position had not been posted publicly.

Kit Loewen asked that the minutes note a request for the Work Flow Working Group to consider the current requirement that the Executive approve changes to the working units of

the General Council Office as they think about how this particular kind of decision could be addressed more appropriately in the future with whatever operational amendment to policy or *The Manual* that may need to take place.

**Motion: Michael Blair/Samuel Vauvert Dansokho**

**2022-11-18-007**

That the General Council Executive

- a) approve the realignment of the Communications Unit and the strategy work to create the Organizational Development & Strategy Unit; and
- b) affirm the appointment of Jennifer Henry as the Executive Minister of the newly realigned unit, Organizational Development & Strategy Unit beginning January 2, 2023.

**Carried**

**GS 16 Strategic Operational Plan**

After Jennifer Henry, Senior Program Development and Strategy Lead, and Interim Senior Manager, Communications, had rejoined the meeting, she was invited by the Moderator to outline the Strategic Operational and Priority Plan 2023-2025. This furthers the work approved by the previous Executive and GC43. The plan will operate within an approved budget framework, with annual reporting on implementation. During the time for comments or questions, there was affirmation for presentations done by Jennifer with regional councils as a way of sharing information regarding the strategic plan.

**Motion: Michael Blair/Jane McDonald**

**2022-11-18-008**

That the General Council Executive

- a) receive for information the Strategic Operational and Priority Plan;
- b) direct the General Secretary to operationalize the plan within an approved budget framework; and
- c) report annually on the implementation of the plan.

**Carried**

**GS 15 Ministry Leadership to Meet the Needs of the Church in the 2020s (Part B)**

The Executive received a workplan related to the future of ministry leadership in the United Church as part of the General Secretary's report. The General Secretary outlined the background related to this proposal coming from General Council 44. He noted that after much debate at GC44, the portions of the original proposal relating to Designated Lay Ministry had not had any action determined before the end of that meeting. For this reason, the work plan includes preparation of material for the Executive's consideration prior to the October 2023 GC44 Annual Meeting. Input from DLMs will be sought as the work progresses. Alan Hall and Jennifer Janzen-Ball, Executive Minister, Theological Leadership, were available for questions. Jennifer explained the difference between a Congregational Designated Minister (CDM) and a Designated Lay Minister (DLM), where a CDM is usually doing a focused piece of work, while a DLM has a full scope of ministry. Alan noted that streams of ministry will continue to evolve in the life of the church. There was a question regarding whether this proposal would address the

status of DLMs between assignments. It is one of the considerations that will be developed for the 2023 Annual Meeting.

**Motion: Michael Blair/Kit Loewen**

**2022-11-18-009**

That the Executive of the General Council direct the General Secretary to develop proposals on the role of current Designated Lay Ministers (DLM) and future DLMs, based on Part B of the GCE06/Way Forward 16 proposal for the consideration of the Executive at its September 2023 meeting.

**Carried**

**GS 09 Transfer of Testamur to Montreal Diocesan Theological College**

The General Secretary and Jennifer Janzen-Ball were available to respond to questions regarding this item. The General Secretary noted that the General Council and its Executive have authority regarding granting educational institutions the right to issue Testamur. He then shared background on the decision of the merger between United Theological College and Montreal Diocesan College, with Montreal Diocesan Theological College (Dio) continuing to offer training on behalf of The United Church of Canada. Jennifer noted that Dio has committed to having a Director of United Church studies and has amended their governing bodies to include significant United Church representation on those bodies, including the Board of Governors, and its standing committees. Samuel Dansokho expressed his delight that theological education will continue to be available in French.

**Motion: Michael Blair/Kit Loewen**

**2022-11-18-010**

That the General Council Executive

- affirm the decision of the Board of United Theological College to cease to exist as a legal entity and to combine with Montreal Diocesan Theological College, to create a combined college, in keeping with the [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\) from April 2021](#);
- revoke United Theological College's power to issue testamur;
- give to Montreal Diocesan Theological College, including to the same legal entity under a different legal name, the power to issue testamur; and
- request the General Secretary to formalize a new MOU with the combined college.

**Carried**

**Time with the Moderator**

The Immediate Past Moderator, Richard Bott, took the chair, noting that the Executive had received the written report of the Moderator. The Moderator reflected on her time in the position thus far and shared her growing sense of discernment of a plan of work related to enhancing human flourishing that is focused on flourishing in the church and addressing systems that prevent flourishing in broader society. Out of a question regarding visiting regional councils, the Moderator noted her desire to be attentive to the needs of the rural church, and not just to act on requests from large urban churches.

*Approved motion 2023-02-10-024*

Richard thanked the Moderator for her report and offered a prayer for Moderator Carmen and her continuing work.

The Moderator resumed the chair.

### **Offering and Thanks**

The Moderator invited Sarah Charters, Executive Minister, Philanthropy and President UCC Foundation, to share the work of the Mission and Service Fund. Sarah shared a video from the 2022 Your Generosity Matters series, about the work being done by Rev. Lynn Smith-Reeve and her work at Bridges Peterborough. Sarah urged those present to amplify the work of Mission and Service on Facebook, or other social media. She ended the time devoted to offering and thanks by sharing the names of those for whom donations had been made to Mission and Service throughout 2022.

The Moderator and General Secretary thanked Sarah and her team for the work that they do encouraging gifts to Mission and Service.

### **Reflections on the Day**

Kit Loewen invited those gathered to reflect silently on the practice and adherence to Holy Manners, the Equity Aspirations, and the expression of the governance modes throughout the day.

In response to a question from Samuel Dansokho, the Moderator noted that decisions regarding Elders attending Executive meetings have not yet been made. The Moderator is hoping to have a conversation with the National Indigenous Elders Council prior to the next meeting.

### **Closing prayer**

Kathy Brett offered a prayer to close the day.

## **Saturday, November 19, 2022**

Teresa Burnett-Cole sent regrets for this day.

### **Regathering Worship**

The Moderator led worship at the beginning of the second day of the meeting. She noted that the following day would be the Day of Remembrance for Transgender People and that would be the focus of the worship.

### **Decolonizing our Work**



The Executive continued the conversation on decolonization which had started at the September GCE meeting. This time was led jointly by Mitchell Anderson, Kit Loewen, Adele Halliday, Anti-Racism and Equity Lead, and Murray Pruden, Executive Minister, Indigenous Ministries and Justice. Mitchell began by noting that there had been a realization that the Executive should come to a common understanding of what decolonizing would mean for the work of the GCE. Adele then briefly recapped the information shared at the last meeting regarding three possible interpretations of decolonization (Tuck and Yang, Michelin, and Dei).

Each of three small groups considered the text from Deuteronomy (26:1-11) and then worked on a particular set of questions. The notes from these considerations will be used by the ad hoc working group to distill a draft statement for consideration at the next GCE meeting.

Murray closed this time by encouraging the Executive to continue reflecting on decolonization and he expressed thanks for the commitment to the work ahead.

The Moderator thanked Mitchell, Kit, Teresa, Adele and Murray for their leadership in this work. Mitchell gave his regrets for the rest of the meeting.

#### **GS 10 TRC Call to Action 46: Covenant of Reconciliation**

The General Secretary noted that this proposal responds to one of the calls from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – to develop and sign a Covenant of Reconciliation that would identify principles for working collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canadian society.

The General Secretary invited Sara Stratton, Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice Animator, Indigenous Ministries and Justice, to provide further background to the proposal. After Sara's presentation there was time for questions or comments. These included questions about those excluded from the settlement agreement; the involvements of the Catholic Church and the need to have an action plan on how the church will live into reconciliation. Sara concluded with the hope that this covenant would be more than just words on a page.

The General Secretary brought a proposal which had been amended from what was originally presented to the Executive.

#### **Motion: Michael Blair/Kathy Brett**

**2022-11-18-011**

That the General Council Executive engage in further study and discussion at a date to be determined with the goal of providing its input into the next phase of the Covenant.

**Carried**

The Moderator thanked Sara for her work assisting the church in moving toward reconciliation.

#### **GS 11 2023 Operating Budget Principles and Assumptions**

Erik Mathiesen, Executive Minister, Finance, outlined the budget assumptions that would guide finalizing the 2023 budget. Erik indicated that the Finance Advisory Committee has agreed with the staff recommendation to defer finalizing the budget to allow ongoing refinement of the strategic plan and gauge the impacts of the pandemic on congregational finances and resulting capacity to fund assessment and Mission and Service. Jane McDonald noted that the finance committee engaged in robust conversations over the need for a deficit budget and deficit magnitude. The Finance Advisory Committee sees this as a unique time requiring investment in the future, giving the Strategic Plan an opportunity to take root. There was a question about point g) regarding bequest income. Erik clarified that a decision was made in 2014 that 50% of bequests received by the United Church would be transferred to the United Church Foundation. Since 2019 this policy has been intentionally suspended as the church completed transition to a new funding model.

**Motion: Michael Blair/Jane McDonald**

**2022-11-18-012**

That the General Council Executive:

Approve the following principles, assumptions and targets for the 2023 budget:

- a) Total Operating Budget Deficit not to exceed \$4 million;
- b) Annual incremental investment in strategic plan not to exceed \$1.5 million;
- c) 2023 Mission and Service distributions held level with 2022;
- d) 2023 Assessment distributions to be shared consistent with General Council approved formula. This will mean a slight increase for some regions in 2023;
- e) The COLA factor for 2023 will be 3.4% consistent with existing practice and policy;
- f) Continued decline in annual congregation M&S (\$1,000,000 per year) consistent with membership related metrics;
- g) Bequest income will be used to support the operating budget for the coming triennium as has been the case for 2019-2022 (*this maintains on hold our 2014 policy of transferring 50% of bequests to the Foundation*); and
- h) Embracing the Spirit funding to be directed towards the strategic plan growth initiative and maintained at current target level of \$1,000,000 rather than increased towards GC 42 directed target of 10% of annual M&S contributions.

**Carried**

**GS 12 Funding the Captive Insurance Model**

Erik Mathiesen provided background to this proposal which will authorize \$3 million in funding to enable the establishment of the captive insurance entity. General Council 44 had approved the initiative and related funding in July 2022. An Executive motion is required to formally establish the loan to The Common Good Foundation, which in turn will capitalize the insurance operation effective December 1, 2022.

**Motion: Michael Blair/Jane McDonald**

**2022-11-18-013**

That the General Council Executive approve:

- a) funding of this initiative by resolution attached; and

*Approved motion 2023-02-10-024*

- b) authorizing the General Secretary to effect the requisite Letter of Credit.

**Carried**

The General Secretary expressed his deep appreciation for the work done by Erik and the finance team on this enterprise aimed at easing the financial burden on congregations. Jane McDonald gave regrets for the rest of the day.

**GS 13 Active Benefit Plan Changes**

David Dawrant, Director, Pension and Benefit Administration, and Alan Hall presented an overview of the state of group benefits, noting that the difficult changes that were approved by the previous Executive seem to have had a positive effect with regard to the sustainability of the active member plan, and, as a result, there would be no proposed premium increases to the active member plan in 2023. A proposal to enhance benefits for members with dependent children was considered by the Executive.

**Motion: Michael Blair/Richard Bott**

**2022-11-18-014**

That the General Council Executive increase the age limits on dependent child coverage under the active employee health and dental plan as follows:

- increase the age limit for dependent children not in full-time education to age 21; and
- equalize the age limit for dependent children in full-time education at age 26.

**Carried**

The Moderator thanked David and Alan for being present with the Executive.

**Reflections – Equity Aspirations**

Kit invited M Chorney and Thea Sheridan-Jonah, specifically, and then the Executive generally, to share their thoughts regarding the observance of the equity aspirations so far this day.

**Congratulations – Cheri DiNovo and Jamie Scott**

The General Secretary expressed congratulations and gratitude for the contributions of the Rev. Dr. Cheri DiNovo and the Rev. Dr. Jamie Scott, who were both invested into the Order of Canada this week. Cheri DiNovo has been instrumental in advancing church and societal inclusion of Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+ persons in Canada, particularly but not only through the passage of Toby's Act (Right to be Free from Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity or Gender Expression) in the province of Ontario. Jamie Scott has a long history in advancing restorative justice and reconciliation, representing the United Church in the processes leading to, and including, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Moderator invited Michael Caveney to offer a prayer before the scheduled break.

**WF 13 CS02, WOW01, CW01 Essential Agreement**

The General Secretary provided background regarding proposal Way Forward 13, which is to take no action on General Council 44 proposals *CS02 Essential Agreement*, *WOW01 Considering Faithful Ministry Personnel* and *CW01 Requiring Ongoing Essential Agreement for Ministry Personnel*. While the General Council began the decision-making process on this proposal, it was not completed. The GCE Business Planning Committee suggested that prior to deciding on Way Forward 13, it be forwarded, along with the notes from the discussion groups at GC 44, to the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee (TICIF) and the Office of Vocation for recommendation.

Kit Loewen, as chair of the Business Planning Committee, introduced the following proposal.

**Motion: Kit Loewen/M Chorney**

**2022-11-18-015**

That the General Council Executive forward proposal *WF13: CS02, CW01, WOW01 Essential Agreement* and the notes from the General Council 44 discussion groups to the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee (TICIF) and the Office of Vocation for discernment and direction, and report back to the Executive for action.

**Carried**

The General Secretary noted that any further comments regarding these proposals or essential agreement could be sent to him to be forwarded to TICIF and the Office of Vocation.

**WF 35 NS03 Criteria and Authority for a Regional Council Ending a Pastoral Relationship**

The notes from the GC44 Facilitation Team regarding this proposal were read.

The Moderator noted that any further input regarding this piece of work could be submitted to him by email after the meeting.

**Motion: M Chorney/Arlyce Schiebout**

**2022-11-18-016**

That the 44th General Council Executive, in response to NS03, refer the proposal to the General Secretary for further review of the discussion group comments to determine a way forward.

**Carried**

**GS 14 HR Policy Update: Compensation and Benefits Policy (Appendix VI)**

The General Secretary briefly introduced this policy change. He then invited Alan Hall to provide further background. Alan reported that in a changed labour environment, more discretion is needed to respond in exceptional cases to market pressures in retaining specialized, technical staff. Restrictions in the current policy have created significant organizational risk, having direct negative consequences on congregations and ministry personnel, particularly in the areas of support services for payroll, information technology, and pension and benefits. There was an assurance that the impact to the budget would not be great. The former Moderator, Richard Bott, raised the importance of messaging around the total compensation study and those who

are not included in this policy (i.e. those outside the General Council office / Regional Council office structures).

**Motion: Michael Blair/Kit Loewen**

**2022-11-18-017**

That the General Council Executive:

- approve the attached revised 2.1 Compensation and Benefits Policy.

**Carried**

As there was time in the agenda, the Moderator took the opportunity to play a French hymn.

**GS 18 Appointment of Regional Council Executive Minister**

The General Secretary prefaced the next piece of work by noting the confidentiality of this proposal until the news was officially shared the following week. He then introduced the following motion, noting the long service of former Regional Executive Secretary, Rosemary Lambie. Samuel Dansokho expressed his pleasure with this appointment along with his disappointment in the loss of Éric Hébert-Daly as Responsable des ministères en français. The General Secretary indicated that he wished to be in conversation with la Table before hiring a new Responsable.

**Motion: Michael Blair/Kit Loewen**

**2022-11-18-018**

That the General Council Executive approve the appointment of Éric Hébert-Daly as Regional Council Executive Minister, East Central Ontario, Eastern Ontario Outaouais, and Nakonha:ka Regional Councils, with a starting date to be negotiated by the General Secretary, not later than March 1, 2023.

**Carried**

After a short break, the following new proposal was brought to the Executive.

**Motion: Samuel Vauvert Dansokho/Arlyce Schiebout**

**2022-11-18-019**

That, in keeping with the Strategic Priorities, we reaffirm our commitment to ministries in French and to becoming a functionally bilingual church, and direct the General Secretary to ensure the adequate staffing of ministries in French.

**Carried**

The Moderator invited Thea Sheridan-Jonah to offer a prayer of care for our administrative personnel and our staff in the General Council Office.

**GCE Member Vacancy**

The Moderator invited Kit Loewen to share with the Executive the work that has been done since the September GCE meeting with regard to the member vacancy. Kit reported that she had met with Mitchell Anderson and developed a framework which could be used in the process of member recruitment. This was shared with members prior to this meeting. Kit asked for feedback and reaction to this document. There was affirmation for the framework and appreciation for the incorporation of the strategic plan. Further work will be done to develop and implement a recruitment plan for the vacancy.

**Commissioner Relations**

The General Secretary provided background regarding this item, noting the importance of transparency and good communications about the work of the Executive on behalf of the General Council and the wider church. With the smaller Executive in the new structure, the question of transparency and communications has become more important. The Executive discussed opening their meetings to Commissioners as one means to further this. Conversation lifted up various questions and comments including the need to accommodate matters that require confidentiality.

The Business Planning Committee will consider the conversation and return with further recommendations.

**Reflections – Equity Aspirations**

Kit Loewen noted the integration of the equity aspirations, the three governance modes and the strategic priorities in the agenda. She asked members for their insights regarding this way of framing the agenda and whether this should be continued. There was strong affirmation for the structure of the agenda at this meeting. The pacing for the various discussions and decisions was commended. All voting and corresponding members were invited to share their feedback and insights on the meeting.

One emerging suggestion from Murray Pruden was to read Holy Manners aloud in French and English to honour the words and the commitment.

Another suggestion was to consider ways to engage between meetings to ensure those members who are not able to be present can still participate.

**Reminder of Next Steps on Decisions Made**

Kit Loewen listed various items emerging from this meeting for continuing work, supplemented by additional items from the General Secretary:

- the ad hoc task group on decolonization will bring a progress report to the next GCE meeting;
- the Moderator will explore the participation of Elders at GCE meetings;
- the Business Planning Committee will discuss Commissioner attendance at GCE meetings;
- continue the current refinements to the meeting agenda;
- the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee will develop workplan to share in February;
- a special meeting regarding the covenant of reconciliation will be scheduled;
- the dates of upcoming meetings will be shared on the Committee site – the next meeting will be February 10-11, 2023; and

- items coming to the next meeting include: the remit question regarding the Indigenous church and the education material to accompany the remit; a report from the Board of Vocation; and an update about the move of the General Council offices to 300 Bloor Street West (Bloor Street United Church).

### **Closing Motion**

The Moderator thanked those present for their participation in this meeting of the Executive. She then invited the General Secretary to introduce the closing motion.

### **Authorizing the Sub-Executive of the General Council**

**Motion: Michael Blair/Kit Loewen**

**2022-11-18-020**

That the General Council Executive authorize its Sub-Executive to deal with the business placed before it by this meeting of the Executive, and any emergent business that may arise prior to the next meeting of the General Council Executive.

**Carried**

The Moderator offered a closing prayer.

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Moderator, Carmen Lansdowne

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General Secretary, Michael Blair