

**APPENDIX**

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## Appendix I

### Governance as Leadership: An Introduction

This framework offers governors and executive staff practical and energizing approaches to enrich non-profit leadership. The central construct in the framework is described in three distinctive yet interdependent “modes” of governance that allow leaders to anticipate and set effective mindsets or mental models to support decision-making, strategizing and imagining possible futures for their organizations. The three mindsets, mental models, or **modes** are:

#### Fiduciary (Type I)

When working in this mode, governors seek to ensure that the organization’s assets are conserved and optimized to advance the mission and vision and that all regulatory and compliance issues are addressed. The focus of Type I/Fiduciary governance is on oversight/monitoring of audits, budgets, assets, investments, funding, facilities; lawful and ethical conduct (compliance with regulations/policies/bylaws/codes), and on CEO/GS performance.

When attending to Type I/Fiduciary issues, governors tend to *look at issues from the inside out*, they focus on **oversight** and act like **sentinels**.

Disposition: Oversight  
Key Questions: “What...?”

#### Strategic (Type II)

When working in this mode, governors seek to ensure that the organization is actively seeking to align its internal strengths and opportunities with external strengths and opportunities to maximize its impact; governors intend to construct consensus about what the strategy should look like while avoiding the operational. In an effective Type II/Strategic mode, board structures, meetings, and information are all designed to facilitate strategic work; form follows function/purpose.

In Type II/Strategic work, governors’ *attention shifts to outside in* (from “conformance towards performance”); they focus on **foresight** and act as **strategists**.

Disposition: Foresight  
Key Questions: “How...?”

#### Generative (Type III)

Working in the generative mode encourages cognitive processes for deciding what to pay

attention to, what it means and what is possible in response. Generative thinking produces a sense of what knowledge, information and data mean; it is a subjective process that illuminates multiple perspectives and dominant frames and allows thinkers to deliberately shift frames to take perspective and see opportunities. In the generative mode, *problem framing* precedes *problem solving*.

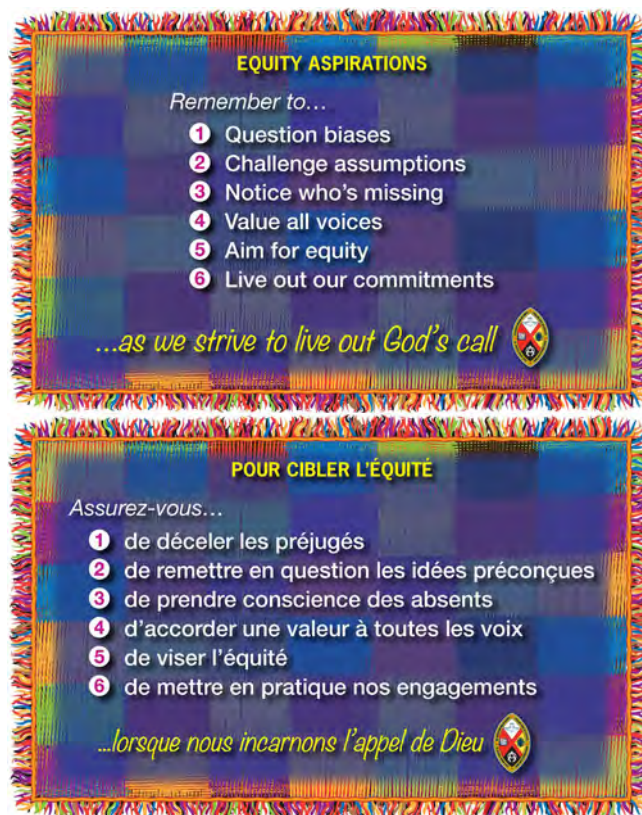
As governors work in this mode, they focus on **insight**, they are **sense makers**, interrogating their current reality by acknowledging their preferred frames, *re-framing*, and *anticipating* future challenges facing the organization.

Disposition: Insight

Key Questions: "Why...?"

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## Appendix II



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## Appendix III

### GENERAL SECRETARY'S ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

Origin: General Secretary

**2 Corinthians 3:12** “Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness...”

This is my first opportunity to provide you with an update on the work of the staff of the General Council. As we begin this season of collaboration, I look forward to the ways in which we will, as staff and elected members, exercise our calling to serve the church in this particular time in its history. For me, in keeping with the spirit of the Strategic Plan, I trust that we can nurture hope for a church that is struggling to be hopeful in the midst of the complexity of this new world we find ourselves, and in doing so I hold to the words of the prayer of the Call to Purpose (GC39, 2006), “God propel us into your future rooted in the richness of the past.” May the deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice of our ancestors reorient our imagination as we lead.

**Framework for the report:** for the triennium my report to you will be shaped around the five strategic objectives of the Strategic Plan – *Embolden Justice, Nurture Common Good, Deepening Integrity (Climate), Strengthening Invitation and Leadership*, in addition to the *Indigenous Pathways*. This report for the most part will offer you an update of the ongoing work of the staff of the General Council, and particularly the work assigned from the 44th General Council. I will conclude by identifying a number of risk management issues that we are currently managing. I will also name some of the emerging issues for the church at this particular time.

In reporting, there will be times when I will be soliciting your wisdom and possible direction.

As you review this report it will be helpful to hear from you if this provides you with the information you need to engage in your ministry as governors. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have either before or during the meeting.

**General Council 44:** you will have received as part of your package for this meeting the report from Susan Brodrick, chair of the Business and Planning Committee of the 44th General Council. It was a historic Council with many learnings which will help to shape some of the thinking around GC45. In preparation for the Council, all the proposals were sorted using the framework of the strategic objectives. Coming out of the Council, we have ensured that all the decisions are reflected in the activity streams of the operational plan of the Strategic Plan. We will be reporting to you on the operational plan over the course of the triennium. You can find information about the various proposals and the direction given by GC44 on [the Commons](#).

The 44th General Council referred back to you Section B of the proposal on Designated Lay Ministers (DLM), *WF16: GCE06 Ministry Leadership to Meet the Needs of the Church in the 2020's*. In addition to the proposal that went to General Council, there was a larger piece of work related to the ministry needs of the church. In the document, Workplan and Recommendation on Ministry Leadership in the 2020s ([Appendix I](#)), I have provided you with a plan for this large piece of work, as well as some recommendations related to moving forward with the General Council's referral of section B. This item is for your discernment and decision.

A number of the GC44 proposals have financial implications and I will identify those for you in the budget assumptions and timelines for implementation. Some of the decisions will require significant work which will also be identified. The Manual Committee has already met to begin the work of editing *The Manual* (2023), and you are being asked to approve some of those changes at this November meeting; some changes will need to wait until the work approved has been done on a number of proposals.

### **Indigenous Pathways**

***Covenant of Reconciliation:*** At this meeting you will be introduced to the draft Covenant and "inclusion process" in the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the church's Strategic Plan. You will also be asked to participate in the inclusion process at a date before the next GCE meeting in February. In their final report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioners urged the parties to the Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) to develop a Covenant of Reconciliation, and to invite parties who were excluded from or not included in Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) to join. The "parties" comprise survivors, the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit, Tapiriit Kanatami, the Government of Canada, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, The United Church of Canada; and until it was released from the Agreement in 2015, the Corporation of Catholic Entities. The Covenant reiterates our commitment to reconciliation; fully repudiates concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and seeks to reform laws, governance structures, and policies that continue to rely on such concepts; adopts and implements the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and supports the renewal or establishment of Treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for maintaining those relationships into the future.

***Bringing the Children Home:*** There has not been much activity on this initiative. We are anticipating news from Port Alberni about the number of graves that have been unearthed. We continue to make the information about the initiative available to communities, as well as providing access to the information in the archives.

***Remit on the Indigenous Church:*** You will receive the question for the remit on the Indigenous church at the February 2023 meeting. The remit will be sent to regional councils and

communities of faith in March 2023 and will be due in 2024. I have already consulted with regional council executive ministers regarding the timing.

### **Embolden Justice**

***Iridesce Project Report:*** This project has been in process since 2009, when the 40th General Council approved a national consultation on Homophobia and Heterosexism in the Church. The final report from this consultation was presented to the General Council Executive in January of 2012. *Iridesce: The Living Apology Project* (*Iridesce*) grew out of the 2012 consultation as a way for the church to examine, through the sharing of stories, lament, education, and prayer, what next steps were needed and how the Church might best move forward. After further consultation and consideration, it was felt that a process was needed to determine what an apology might look like. As a result, in 2015, the 42nd General Council approved a motion (GC42 2015-060) directing the General Secretary to partner with Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble to create the process of a Living Apology art installation project "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 persons."

*Iridesce: The Living Apology Project* was launched in September 2017 in partnership with Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble and the church—as a mechanism to gather personal stories of being: trans, bisexual, Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, queer (or another gender or sexual identity/expression) within the United Church past or present; In 2018, the General Council Executive approved a motion (GCE 13 - PMM 15) to extend *The Living Apology Project*, to report to the spring 2020 meeting of the Executive of the General Council. Due to COVID-19 this was extended to the fall of 2020. In January of 2021, the GCE received the report *Iridesce: The Living Apology Project*, and directed the General Secretary to establish a working group to work through the recommendations of the report and particularly the recommendation on offering an apology to the Two Spirit and LGBTQIA communities. The working group developed in consultation with Affirm United /S'affirmer Ensemble (AU/SE) began its work in January of 2020.

There have been some challenges in getting the working group formed and working. Nevertheless, the work is ongoing. A great deal of time and energy was spent on developing a diverse and functional group who could authentically carry out the task mandated by General Council Executive. The *Iridesce* Working Group, will be offering recommendations to the General Council for actions in response to the Final Report of *Iridesce: The Living Apology Project*. These recommendations will be the product of a year-long plus process of deliberation, on the recommendations from the original report. These deliberations reflect a breadth of individual and community experiences across The United Church of Canada. They express our conviction that God is urgently calling us to reconciliation around issues of sexuality and gender, and our longing for a Church that fully embraces 2S-LGBTQIA+ people. The final report will be before you in February.

**Anti-Racism:** with the decision to becoming an anti-racist denomination, the General Council requested that the General Secretary provide regular update as to the work being done. You have received a report as part of your materials for this meeting.

## **Nurture Common Good**

### **A. Institutional Health**

**Task Group: Role of the Moderator and General Secretary:** The Manual requires that the role of the Moderator be evaluated every ten (10) years, it has been over ten years since the last review. With the changes to the structure of the church, the previous Executive proposed that the role of the General secretary also be reviewed. It is my hope that we will begin in the spring of 2023 and will dovetail with the mandated review of the structural changes due in 2024. The proposal for the terms of reference for the Task Group is included in your package.

**Centennial Committee:** please find appended an update on the activities of the committee ([Appendix II](#)). It was established to curate initiatives to acknowledge the centennial in 2025.

**300 Bloor Street:** The construction phase has begun at our likely future office. We say likely because legal documents are yet to be signed. However, it looks increasingly likely that there will be a formal agreement to share office space with the Anglican and Presbyterian national bodies and we are targeting approvals for early 2023 so that space and process planning can proceed. With the United Church shift to a hybrid work model, it has become possible to include a shared archives facility onsite. This is attractive to all three denominations and provides greater opportunity to leverage resources for the longer term.

**Operational Plan:** Through this period, work continued on developing the operational plan towards its implementation in 2023. After a period of revision and adjustment, we have signed off on 2023 goals, initiatives, and activities, and identified the areas of priority within that plan. We have moved to the next stage of identifying activity leads for each activity from among the General Council Office staff, beginning with the priorities. We are working with supervisors to make this transition towards project management, within an operational plan, and are developing training for activity leads. At the same time, we are developing the systems and processes to aid in systematic monitoring and evaluation over the coming year. Based on the priority plan, and within the budget 2023 proposed assumptions, we are working to develop an investment case for new funds to invest in growth. We are also developing a strategy for aligning resources in current unit budgets, beyond fixed costs, with activities, and therefore progress on strategic objectives.

We continue to share the Call and Vision of the Strategic Plan across the church, including sharing existing resources through a social media blitz in mid-September, combined with follow up communication with all participants in the town hall meetings, as well as ethno-cultural networks and the Indigenous church. We also are taking opportunities to inform different



communities about the Strategic Plan, such as the Anti-Racism Common Table, regional councils, and the Board of the Office of Vocation.

**Program Audits:** As part of the strategic planning process, I commissioned two audits, one of our communication processes and infrastructure, and one of the EDGE programs. With EDGE, the key question is whether to pull it into the programmatic life of the work of the Council or spin it off as was the original plan. The question became critical with the understanding that both innovation and growth strategy are a significant part of the future of the church. The Communications audit has been completed, and I am beginning to implement some of the recommendations. Two very critical surveys were conducted as part of this audit—one of congregational experience of communications and one of the interests of the general population regarding the United Church. I have restructured accountabilities and we are in the process of hiring a director for the Communications unit. With a director in place, hopefully by January 1, we will begin aligning the unit structure and resources to the audit results, the Strategic Plan implementation, and the opportunities suggested by the surveys. The EDGE audit continues, with a likely completion date of the end of November 2023, enabling decision making at that time.

#### **B. Support to Communities of Faith & Ministry Personnel**

**Captive Insurance:** General Council 44 ratified the establishment of a captive insurance structure and commitment of \$3 million in seed capital to potentially deliver annual premium savings of over \$1 million to congregations and other ministries participating in the plan. At this meeting you will be asked to approve the \$3M expenditure. Work is underway to launch the program effective December 1, 2022. The program was announced on September 27th and has generated considerable interest and activity. The immediate focus is the transition of existing affinity program participants on a “rollover” basis. New entrants will be underwritten in 2023. Response has been extremely positive as one would expect with the quantum of savings offered. Underwriting of new entrants and unusual cases will inevitably cause some negative response, but right now any negative sentiment is around having to wait to join.

**Cost of Living Group Reassessment:** We engaged compensation specialists from the consulting firm Mercer to review the model for regional cost of living groups. The original model was based on the median sale prices of houses in each location. The revised model, using federal government data, accounts for housing, property tax and utilities, provincial taxes, and goods and services to determine the cost-of-living group for each location. The model and updated assignments will be available after this meeting of the Executive. Because of proximity of the completion of this project with year-end, we have decided to implement the changes effective **July 1, 2023**. While it delays increases for ministry personnel six months, it allows communities of faith six months to adjust financial plans for the balance of the year. I have attached a brief background document to provide you with some context for this work ([Appendix III](#)).



A general announcement of the completion of this project was made at the October treasurers webinar and in the November edition of Connex. After this meeting, the assignments will be posted on the United Church website. Regional pastoral relations ministers were especially helpful in assisting communities of faith in 2019 where there also were a number of adjustments. They have been briefed and will be supported by Ministry & Employment Unit staff. The General Council Office Payroll Team will be available to assist communities of faith with payroll adjustments. Each community of faith with a change of group will receive a letter describing the revised model, advising them of the change and assisting them with processing the payroll changes.

**Change to Annual Economic Adjustment (COLA):** At the last meeting I had indicated that the Cost-of-Living Adjustment would be 3.2% for 2023 to be effective January 1. As a reminder, minimum salaries are increased annually by a percentage equal to the average percentage rise in the cost of living within Canada for the year ending December 31, one year prior to the effective date of the new salaries. The minimum salary rates that take effect on January 1, 2023, reflect the average rise in the Canadian cost of living as of December 31, 2021. For 2023, the annual cost of living increase will be 3.4% instead of the 3.2% previously reported. This was the Bank of Canada Consumer Price Index published rate on October 1, 2022, for “CPI-Common” as of Dec 31, 2021.

**Moving Expenses for Ministry Personnel:** This proposal (GC43 MNWO 05) was referred to the General Secretary in 2018. We recently realized that while some initial work was done on it by staff, it was not completed and did not come back to the Executive for action. Staff is again reviewing and costing options for your consideration at a later meeting.

**Compensation Equity Review:** In November 2021 you directed that I engage statistical compensation experts to analyze the ministry personnel compensation policies and practices of the three councils of the church and their impact on Indigenous, racialized, women, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ ministers. Unfortunately, data is not available to support a review of this scope. Staff involved with our data will meet with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consulting team at Mercer to consider what can be assessed with the limited data points that we do have. Meanwhile, staff continue to explore possible data overlaps with the Pastoral Relations Equity Project and Leadership Counts identity survey. I hope to have more definitive information for you by our May 2023 meeting, at the latest, including whether it might be advisable to fold this analysis into the total compensation study that the General Council has directed.

**Group Health Plan Changes:** The GCE made difficult and controversial decisions about our group health plans in 2021. A report on the plan performance in 2022 and decisions about premium rates for 2023 will be before you at this meeting.

**Pension Plan:** You will find with this package the annual Accountability Report for the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada. Anne Soh, chair of the Board, will meet with you in your role as Administrator of the Plan.

**Ministry Personnel Taking Maternity/Parental Leave:** On the recommendation of staff and the support of the Finance Advisory committee, we are moving to implement this proposal. The cost of this implementation is part of the budget assumptions presented at this meeting.

### **C. Budget/Finance**

**Overview:** Church financial management continues to involve managing greater variability and uncertainty in the current results as well as projecting potential future scenarios in support of an emerging strategic plan. This would likely have been true without the pandemic, but has been exacerbated by same. Recent inflation pressures add yet further complexity. Inflation rates may be moderating but are still significant. None of our revenues are inflation protected. We are wrestling with this issue from a General Council Office (GCO) perspective, but perhaps more importantly, as it impacts both ministers living expenses and increased costs for congregations through any minimum salary policy decisions.

- I. **Assessments:** A key element in reaching financial sustainability lies in completing the transition to the new assessment funding model by 2023. In April 2021, the you approved a one-year extension so that all pastoral charges will be assessed at target level by 2023, but with a further one-year transition for those facing larger increases. 325 pastoral charges got an increase of \$500 or less which brought them to target. A further 570 pastoral charges were looking at an increase of more than \$500 and absorbed 50% of their increase in 2022 and are looking at a similar increase in 2023 depending on what happens with revenues. You will recall GC43 approved an assessment of investment balances rather than market gains, which can fluctuate dramatically. This concept had been well received in presentations to several regions and in national treasurer webinars. However, we will hear some complaints in 2023 when the assessment calculation uses investment AUM (assets under management, or total investments) values that may have declined. (It is still only 25 basis points or ¼ of one percent.)
- II. **Investments:** Treasury Investments are down over 12% year to date Q3 as are Pension holdings. This reflects worldwide circumstances where the only asset classes performing relatively well are energy equities (which the church excludes) and real estate/private equity (which the church doesn't hold but the pension plan does). We have had quick bounce-backs in recent years from this kind of result, but that was before the war in Ukraine. It is hard to imagine a scenario where investment results for the year are not negative. The Investment Committee completed its scheduled, periodic formal manager review of Fiera Capital in May with a report from Mercer consultants. An outcome of this review was a decision to exit the Emerging Markets asset class. The Investment

Policy Statement has been updated accordingly and approved by the Finance Advisory Committee, and is now available on the website.

I have attached the fulsome report from our Executive Officer, Finance for more details ([Appendix IV](#)).

**Mission and Service:** Continued generosity from United Church folks across the country carries on including incredibly strong support for the people of Ukraine. To date, we have received nearly \$1.5M in gifts supporting relief efforts for folks in that region. As with all gifts related to emergency relief, 15% is held back to enable the Church to respond to other disasters that receive less, or sometimes no publicity. Giving through communities of faith, which is the largest source of donations for Mission & Service, is down this year compared to last. The economy, the reality of being back in buildings having in person worship for a sustained amount of time, and volunteer and leadership burnout are all factors. However, we see bright spots in the continued increase of direct giving through seasonal campaigns and the number of communities of faith participating in stewardship education that will not only help their own financial picture, but has been proven to increase giving to Mission & Service at the same time. Campaigns for Giving Tuesday, focusing on emergency relief, and for Advent & Christmas, focusing on children, are upcoming. We will share those with you for you to pass on within your networks. Additionally, providing more support for communities of faith to engage with seasonal campaigns has gone well and could be a source of growth over the next year.

**The United Church of Canada Foundation:** In November 2002 The United Church of Canada Foundation officially came into being. The GCE established the Foundation as a way to provide reliable, sustainable funding for the future of the church. The initial two-year campaign to fund the Foundation closed in 2004 and raised \$420,000 from 327 donors – well in excess of the goal of \$250,000. During the first few years of the Foundation’s life, The United Church of Canada provided grants to help the fledgling organization grow. The partnership continued and another milestone in the Foundation’s history was the transfer of long-term assets from the General Council Office to the Foundation in 2013. That transfer gave the Foundation the asset base necessary to become self-sustaining. Since 2002, the Foundation has granted \$64,365,226 in support of ministries and charitable organizations across the country either at the request of a donor or through one of our grant application programs. That is completely due to the immense generosity of the people of the United Church. For its 20th year, the Foundation renewed its sense of purpose and focus with the launch of a new strategic plan. The Foundation affirmed its purpose is: “to foster deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice by attracting and deploying financial resources. Through capacity building, convening, granting, and careful stewardship of funds entrusted to us, we support congregations, ministries, and programs that enrich The United Church of Canada, create a more just planet, and celebrate God’s abundance in the world.” For more information, visit the website at <https://www.unitedchurchfoundation.ca>

**United Church Property Resource Corporation:** The Property Corporation is fully funded from a United Church investment perspective since 2021 (\$10 Million) and is working with property proposals from Halifax to Vancouver Island. UPRC is now reflected on an equity basis on the church financial statement showing a \$1.6 Million loss in 2021 which is a cumulative adjustment arising from the change in accounting methodology. Operationally it is evolving to having its own payroll system and a benefits plan needed to recruit the talent they need.

Several regional councils have formalized a working relationship with UPRC. There are currently 22 active projects in pre-development/municipal approval process, representing over 2,300 total rental units. UPRC is anticipating four projects with shovels in the ground in spring 2023. The full \$20M from the CHMC Affordable Housing Innovation Fund was drawn by December 31, 2021, as required under the funding agreement, exceeding the targeted number of affordable units required to draw the funding.

UPRC has intentionally been operating “under the radar” for its first two years. However, in May a more public phase began. Part of this was a re-branding the development arm of UPRC to Kindred Works. <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/kindred-works-sets-out-new-approach-to-solving-canada-s-housing-crisis-834924041.html>

UPRC / Kindred Works continues to refine a focus on building affordable rental housing with community space across Canada through a self-supporting model that leverages real estate to invest and re-invest in building long-term communities for the common good. UPRC’s buildings address the climate crisis through environmentally responsible building practices aimed at net-zero carbon emissions. UPRC’s model will prioritize Indigenous and social enterprises and excellent progress has been made on this front.

From a governance perspective, General Council’s ongoing involvement is that of sole shareholder. UPRC will be a key element in UCC strategic planning with initial return on investment now expected in 2024. In addition, developed projects will return the net income to the respective communities of faith quarterly, based on regional property policies, to support local ministry and mission. UPRC’s model aligns with the polity of property in the United Church. Work is underway to establish a “land bank” concept where regional councils and the General Council can transfer properties for future development and at same time provide UPRC with a vehicle to support funding agreements and capital raises.

### **Deepening Integrity**

**Conference of the Parties (COP):** COP 27 – the 27th Conference to the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is being held in November 6-18th in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. This year, we are sharing our accreditation by collaborating with KAIROS and *For the Love of Creation* in its COP engagement. KAIROS and For the Love of Creation are leading a 13-person delegation of women peacebuilders, land defenders, Indigenous and youth leaders from the Global South and Turtle Island to COP27 to raise awareness about their critical

and urgent role in addressing the climate crisis and to advocate with the Canadian government on the policies and programs needed to support the leadership and solutions of partners and communities most impacted by the climate crisis.

**Faithful Footprints:** this program to collaborate with communities of faith in addressing the issues of their climate impact, continues to be one of the good news stories of the church. You will find attached the recent report to the staff team overseeing the project ([Appendix V](#)). This is one area of service to the church that will require additional investments.

### **Strengthening Invitation**

The recent Stats Canada report 2021 has indicated that there are now fewer people 1.2 million, down from more than 2 million, who identify as associated with The United Church of Canada. These number are both sobering and filled with possibility. It makes the strategic commitment to strengthening the invitation critical. See further stats

[https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=9810034201&request\\_locale=en](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=9810034201&request_locale=en)

### **Invigorate Leadership**

**United Theological College & Montreal Diocesan Theological College in Montreal:** In April 2021, United Theological College (UTC) and Montreal Diocesan Theological College (Dio) established a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), for the 2021-2022 year, to explore the possibility of forming a combined college in Montreal for Anglican, United, and other students. The principal of Dio, Jesse Zink, also became the principal of UTC in July 2021, with the retirement of Maylanne Maybee as principal of UTC at the end of June 2021.

Throughout 2021 and early 2022, the Boards of the respective colleges met together and separately, to continue to explore the possibilities of a shared life together as one college. They were guided by an external consultant and engaged in thoughtful research, conversation, and discussion with their wider constituencies. In April 2022, the two Boards agreed that UTC and Dio would form an ecumenical partnership, with the two schools becoming a “combined college.” UTC agreed to wind up its existence as a legal entity and Dio agreed that the “United Church Studies Program at Dio” would form part of Dio’s theological education programs. In addition, Dio and UTC agreed that endowments would be transferred to Dio and that Dio would change its governance structure and charter to incorporate meaningful United Church presence and participation. Dio has also agreed, through a separate Memorandum of Understanding with *Ministères en français*, to continue to offer theological formation in French. Since UTC will cease to exist as a legal entity in the next few months, the right to grant testamur to United Church candidates for ministry will need to be transferred to Dio.

Work is underway to create a new Memorandum of Agreement with Dio, which will include the terms for testamur and for devolving the responsibility of General Council for appointing United Church members to the governing body of Dio. This reflects the terms of the current MOA with UTC.

**Staffing:** at the end of October, we bid farewell to two staff colleagues who have served the church for 40 years each. *Rosemary Lambie* retired after serving almost 17 years as Conference Executive Secretary/Executive Ministry, and previously in various capacities. *Roland Hertling* retired from the Finance Unit after 40 years. Much gratitude to them both for their service to the church.

I am creating a new unit which will include Strategic Planning, Communications and Growth. Jennifer Henry will become the Executive Minister of the Organizational Development and Strategy and we will hire two directors, one for Communications and one for Growth.

The current employment climate, has made it evident that retention of certain critical professional and skill sets is important, as well as the ongoing need for a robust succession planning. You will have before you a proposal to update the Human Resources policy which will begin to address some of these challenges.

### **Risk Management**

There are a number of risk management issues that we are managing. Many of these are out of our control, and is part of the context we are seeking to be deep, bold and daring. We appreciate that these risks could cause us to be somewhat cautious, yet at the same time we recognize we also add another level of risk if we try to play it too safe.

One risk that is out of our control is rising interest rates, and we must be prepared to respond as best we can. Our revenues are not inflation protected, as expenses inevitably grow with inflation. This is also a burden to congregations' ability to fund their own operations as well as contribute to the whole – and to the property corporation as some projects may need to be re-priced or even shelved.

In mid-October we received notice that we have been named in a class action lawsuit related to Maternity Homes (1920-1980). As you are aware, the church has been attending to the reality of Maternity Homes and in 2020 we offered an apology to families impacted by practices of the time. We are working on a communication strategy and will continue to monitor this as it proceeds through the legal system.

We continue to monitor the stress and wellbeing of our ministry personnel who are dealing with the continuing complexity of ministry in the new reality we find ourselves. Regional Councils, the Office of Vocation, and Pastoral Relations ministers are all attending to the commitment to the health and flourishing of these folks who are vital to our ministry together.

Another area we are monitoring relates to the long-term impact of COVID-19 with its effect on church closures, financial challenges and technological needs of our communities. We are seeking to be aware of all the ways we need to be creative and to live into the nimbleness of our new structure.

**APPENDIX I****WORKPLAN AND RECOMMENDATION: MINISTRY LEADERSHIP IN THE 2020'S**

The Executive of the General Council in November 2021 received a report and recommendations regarding Ministry Leadership in the 2020s and directed the General Secretary with regard to:

| <b>Decision</b>  | <b>Activity</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>A. The Statement on Ministry (2012)</b><br>i) review the Statement on Ministry (2012) in the context of the 2020s and to more fully develop the understandings of the priesthood of all believers as it relates, in particular, to the recovered roles of lay ministry in the church; and<br>ii) recommend to the 45th General Council any proposed revisions.                        | <i>Referred to the Theology and Inter-church Interfaith Committee with a view to proposed revisions to the GCE in November 2024.</i><br><i>Connected to the Reinvigorate Leadership objective in the strategic plan.</i><br><i>This will be undertaken by a task group of the committee and the Board of Vocation.</i> |
| <b>B. Indigenous Ministries</b><br>i) engage with the National Indigenous Council to establish designated lay ministry criteria relevant to its context/communities of faith;<br>ii) engage dialogue with the National Indigenous Council, when invited, about broader vocational ministry needs and practice in Indigenous communities and the establishment of an Indigenous Testamur. | <i>The General Secretary will initiate conversation with the National Indigenous Council regarding Designated Lay Ministry.</i><br><br><i>Await guidance from the National Indigenous Council regarding an Indigenous Testamur.</i>  |
| <b>C. Better Supporting Rural and Smaller Communities of Faith</b><br><br><u><i>Bi-vocational Ministry</i></u><br>i) identify ministry personnel currently in bi-vocational ministry roles;<br>ii) drawing on recent research and current data, develop models of and promote opportunities to engage in bi-vocational ministry by both ministry personnel and communities of faith;     | <i>A task group resourced by the Ministry &amp; Employment Unit to be named.</i><br><i>Connected to the Reinvigorate Leadership objective in the strategic plan</i>  |



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| <p>iii) develop for the consideration of the 45th General Council proposals for the resolution of any polity provisions that complicate bi-vocational ministry practice.</p>   |  |
| <p><u><i>Lay Leaders' Accountability</i></u></p> <p>i) convene a joint General Council and regional councils task group to develop recommendations for the 45th General Council on:</p> <p>ii) when/where lay leader accountability to the wider church is necessary, prudent, and duly diligent.</p> <p>iii) how that accountability can be exercised in ways that are sustainable for the community of faith and sustainable for the regional and General councils.</p> <p>iv) where there needs to be consistency of policy or credential and where there needs to be regional council flexibility.</p>   | <p><i>A task group resourced by the Church in Ministry Unit and involving regional councils to be named.</i></p>   |
| <p><u><i>Collaborative Ministry Models and Formation</i></u></p> <p>Working with the regional councils,</p> <p>i) research existing collaborative, wider-parish models in the United Church and in partner churches and develop a collection of models, and polity to support them, for use in the United Church;</p> <p>ii) engage communities of faith, through regional councils, in reimagining vocational ministry service in the context of collaborative, wider-parish models;</p> <p>iii) with the wisdom and experience of the Centre for Christian Studies as a starting point, engage the theological colleges providing ordered ministry training in conversations about collaborative, wider-parish models being a new norm and the theologies and the skills that will better equip ministry personnel to minister in this context;</p> <p>iv) engage the Board of Vocation and candidacy boards in both understandings and appreciations of the skills and outlooks that are compatible with collaborative, wider-parish models of vocational ministry practice;</p> <p>v) develop policies and practices for the consideration of the 45th General Council to facilitate appointment or call to multiple communities of faith/pastoral charges and across regional council boundaries:</p> | <p><i>Referred to the Ministry &amp; Employment Unit to resource and initiate for items i, ii, iv, v;</i></p> <p><i>for item iii: With the Executive Minister, Theological Leadership and staff from the Ministry &amp; Employment Unit (Office of Vocation)</i></p> <p><i>Connected to the Reinvigorate Leadership objective in the strategic plan.</i></p> |

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| <p>a) permitting personnel to be engaged through one of the existing pastoral charges who is a member of the collaborative ministry arrangement;</p> <p>b) establishing standardized terms and templates (a “Service Agreement” or “Memorandum of Understanding”) for deployment in addition to or integrated with current Record of Call/Appointment forms;</p> <p>c) facilitating oversight and supporting structures for teams dispersed across more than one pastoral charge (a single ministry and personnel committee); encourage regional councils to consider the potential relationship among an offsite pastoral charge supervisors with licensed lay worship leaders and congregational designated ministers in collaborative ministry arrangements with clearer lines of accountability.</p> |  |
|--|--|

**The 44th General Council decided that with regard to:**

| <b>Proposed Action</b>  | <b>Activity</b>  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>A. Better Supporting Rural and Smaller Communities of Faith</b></p> <p><u>Lay-led Communities of Faith</u></p> <p>i) affirm the importance and value of “lay-led congregations” (a descriptive term, not a formal “class”, loosely describing a congregation without called or appointed ministry personnel for more than a year) continuing to be linked to the denomination and supported in governance by a regional council appointed pastoral charge supervisor;</p> <p>ii) affirm the role of the regional councils in assisting communities of faith in determining appropriate governance and decision-making practices and necessary oversight of any person paid for services (custodial, administrative, ministry, etc).</p> | <p><i>By passing these two proposed provisions, the Council affirmed the value of lay-led congregations. Referred to the Theology and Inter-church Interfaith Committee for inclusion in the review of the Statement on Ministry 2012.</i></p> <p><i>Connected to the Reinvigorate Leadership objective in the strategic plan</i></p> <p><i>Referred to regional councils.</i></p> |

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| <p><u><i>Licensed Lay Worship Leaders</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) reaffirm that licensed lay worship leaders continue to be limited to worship leadership on an occasional basis, “occasional” determined by the regional council;</li> <li>ii) revise the policy with respect to Licensed Lay Leaders to require that where the community of faith requires a larger scope of service, or more than “occasional” leadership, than is within the scope of a licensed lay worship leader, the regional council work with the community of faith to develop either a collaborative ministry or a congregational designated ministry role with its attendant accountabilities and ensure adequate training and oversight of congregational designated ministry.</li> </ul>   | <p><i>Referred to regional councils.</i></p> <p><i>Referred to Ministry &amp; Employment Unit for inclusion in handbook.</i></p> <p><i>Referred to regional councils.</i></p>  |
| <p><u><i>Congregational Designated Ministry</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) revise the policy with respect to congregational designated ministers to require that:</li> <li>ii) if a congregational designated ministry position includes worship leadership the congregational designated minister must successfully complete the licensed lay worship leadership program of that regional council, or an equivalency determined by the regional council, and be a full member of The United Church of Canada;</li> <li>iii) if the congregational designated minister is the primary individual leading worship, then they must be a full member of The United Church of Canada;</li> <li>iv) revise Section I.1.11.4 d) of The Manual to delete the requirement that there be a ministry personnel appointed or called to the community of faith and replace it with the requirement that the regional council ensure that there is adequate and appropriate support and oversight of the ministry.</li> </ul> | <p><i>Referred to the Ministry &amp; Employment Unit for action.</i></p> <p><i>Referred to regional councils.</i></p> <p><i>Refer to the Manual Committee.</i><br/><i>Refer to regional councils.</i></p> <p><i>Refer to the Manual Committee.</i></p> |

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| <p><u>Pastoral Charge Supervisors</u></p> <p>i) affirm the importance of the role of pastoral charge supervisors to nurture the connexion with and support of the United Church with churches that do not have appointed or called ministry personnel;</p> <p>ii) direct the General Secretary, with the regional councils, to consider how the role of paid pastoral charge supervisors may support the development and evolution of collaborative ministries.</p> | <p><i>Refer to regional councils.</i></p> <p><i>Referred to the Ministry &amp; Employment Unit in consultation with regional councils.</i></p> <p><i>Connected to the Reinvigorate Leadership objective in the strategic plan.</i></p> |
| <p><u>Technology</u></p> <p>i) encourage regional councils to give priority to and encourage leveraging technology to support communities of faith in the provision of worship and pastoral care and for supporting oversight, supervision, and governance.</p>   | <p><i>Referred to regional councils.</i></p> <p><i>Referred to the Information Technology and Management Steering Committee to consider infrastructure to enable.</i></p>  |

**The 44th General Council referred Section B Ministry Leadership in the 2020s (Way Forward 16) regarding Designated Lay Ministry back to the GCE for further discussion and clarification, to be returned to the next annual meeting of the 44th General Council.**

| Proposed Action   | Activity  |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Acknowledge the gifts of faith and leadership Designated Lay Ministers have brought to the church since the inception of the stream by the 37th General Council in 2000 and give thanks for the rich diversity of skills and experience that they bring to vocational ministry.</p> | <p><i>Refer to the Theology and Interchurch Interfaith Committee, the Board of Vocation and the Identity and Mission Network Coordinator to develop an acknowledgement and a liturgy to accompany it.</i></p> |

Given the failure of Remit 6 One Order of Ministry, given the experience that the current status of Designated Lay Ministry is untenable for designated lay ministers, and given that most designated lay ministers are responding to a life long call to the vocation of ministry, **the Executive of the General**

**Council directs the General Secretary to develop proposals for the consideration of the 44th General Council Annual Meeting in October, 2023 to:**

| <b>Proposed Action</b>   | <b>Activity</b>  |
|--|--|
| 2. Articulate the distinction between those called to ministry in the community of faith or pastoral charge where their membership resides and those called to life-long denominational vocational ministry.   | <i>Refer to the Theology and Interchurch Interfaith Committee and the Board of Vocation to incorporate into a revised Statement on Ministry for consideration of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council.</i><br><br><i>Connected to the Reinvigorate Leadership objective in the strategic plan</i>   |
| 3. Encourage the Board of Vocation and candidacy boards to direct people discerning a call to life-long church-wide ministry towards ordered ministry preparation and formation.   | <i>Refer to the Board of Vocation.</i>   |
| 4. Work with theological schools to ensure that there are Testamur-based educational programs that are accessible to candidates for vocational ministry in the whole of the church who may not have an undergraduate degree or who desire a cohort circle style of learning, recognizing that the Atlantic School of Theology Distance Ministry and the Centre for Christian Studies programs currently offer such programs. | <i>Refer to the Board of Vocation and the Executive Minister Theological Leadership.</i><br><br><i>Connected to the Reinvigorate Leadership objective in the strategic plan</i>  |
| 5. Refocus designated lay ministry as a lay practice of ministry specifically on localized and time-specific appointment within their community of faith, or the current community of faith appointment as originally envisioned.  | <i>Refer to the Ministry &amp; Employment Unit and the Executive Minister Theological Leadership to develop an initial outline in advance of the next annual meeting in October 2023 so that Commissioners see what this might look like if passed.</i><br><br><i>Connected to the Reinvigorate Leadership objective in the strategic plan</i> |

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|---|---|
| 6. In consideration of this localized character of the practice of designated lay ministry, request that regional councils not approve appointments of designated lay ministers to communities of faith that are not the home communities, or current site of appointment, of the designated lay minister.  | <i>Refer to the regional councils if passed.</i>  |
| 7. Recognize the lifelong vocational call of many current designated lay ministers and, building on the Office of Vocation practices and in consultation with designated lay ministers, design an accessible pathway for meeting the Testamur requirements for ordering (commissioning or ordination) through prior learning assessments and/or additional accreditations. Many active designated lay ministers may already meet the criteria for Testamur and will qualify for immediate transition into ordered ministry. | <i>Refer to the Office of Vocation and the Executive Minister Theological Leadership to design, in consultation with designated lay ministers, an appropriate pathway in advance of the next annual meeting in October 2023 so that Commissioners see what this might look like if passed.</i><br><br><i>Connected to the Reinvalidate Leadership objective in the strategic plan</i> |
| 8. Authorize changes to the By-Laws, policies and procedures to grant ministry personnel status to designated lay ministers retired before the implementation of an opportunity to transition to the Order of Ministry.   | <i>Refer to the Ministry &amp; Employment Unit and the Manual Committee to identify and draft changes.</i>  |
| 9. Develop brief, concise, and clear resources to assist Commissioners in consideration of these proposals.   | <i>Referred to a small task group comprised of a member of the GCE and executive ministers of Theological Leadership and Ministry &amp; Employment.</i>   |

## APPENDIX II

### United Church of Canada, Centennial Celebrations Committee

September 2022 - Status Report

#### Mandate of the Committee:

The Centennial Celebrations Committee will assist in architecting the scope of the denominational celebration for the 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada in 2025. This committee will work in collaboration with General Council Staff to identify a variety of opportunities and methods to celebrate this anniversary.

The committee will:

- Be able to give expression to the sense of identity that has emerged about the United Church since 1925.
- Create a space to engage the broader church community and to find new ways of celebrating being church.
- Give interim reports and receive feedback from the General Council Executive throughout the triennium.

The focus of the committee will be to:

- Design and identify opportunities for the celebration of the centenary leading up to 2025 and beyond.
- Invite ideas and participation from across the church.
- Determine ways to support events of Regional Councils.
- Propose a possible schedule of events.

The Committee met February 28th, April 12th and June 9th in 2022 and submitted a [report on activities to the General Council Executive April 30th 2022](#).

| Action Item                     | Description   | Status      | Due       | Active Work Items<br>Notes    |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Commemorative Stamp Application | <a href="https://www.canadapost-postescanada.ca/cpc/en/support/kb/general-inquiries/general-information/suggest-a-stamp-subject-or-apply-to-design-a-stamp">https://www.canadapost-postescanada.ca/cpc/en/support/kb/general-inquiries/general-information/suggest-a-stamp-subject-or-apply-to-design-a-stamp</a> | In progress | Fall 2022 | Draft application in progress |



| Action Item   | Description   | Status      | Due           | Notes  |
|---|---|-------------|---------------|--|
| <b>Centennial Website</b>   | Creation of a website to centrally communicate and generate interest in the planned Centennial events, activities or resources in development at various levels across the United Church of Canada  | Planning    | June 10, 2023 | Submitted to Communications Unit, presented to IMTSC<br><a href="#">Centennial Website planning.docx</a>   |
| <b>Creation of principles for Centennial events or celebrations</b> | Committee will draft a set of guiding principles and requirements for any events and 'endorsed' events  | In Progress | Fall 2022     | Draft in progress on Committee site<br><a href="#">Guidelines principles and requirements for Centennial Events.docx</a>   |
| <b>Communication Planning/Strategy</b>                              | Several action items including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying stakeholder groups and outreach being done by the Animation of the Call and Vision taskgroup around the Strategic Plan</li> <li>Developing appropriate methods to solicit ideas and feedback on Centennial Celebrations from stakeholder groups</li> <li>Internal and external communications planned, to allow time for translation requirements</li> </ul> | Planning    | January 2023  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary outline for stakeholder/ community engagement<br/><a href="#">Stakeholder and Community Outreach Planning.docx</a>; <a href="#">Centennial Celebrations Committee - Stakeholder List - All Items</a> (<a href="#">sharepoint.com</a>)</li> <li>Discussion with Animation of Call and Vision Taskgroup (June 9/2022)</li> <li>Draft stakeholder Planning form<br/><a href="https://forms.office.com/r/TwXeuXunZK">https://forms.office.com/r/TwXeuXunZK</a></li> <li>Preliminary discussions with MIF about translation needs</li> </ul> |
| <b>External Communications</b>                                      | Announcement about work of Centennial Committee and forthcoming website   | Planning    | January 2023  | Draft media release announcing work of CCC and forthcoming   |

| Action Item             | Description  | Status   | Due                    | Notes  |
|-------------------------|--|----------|------------------------|--|
|                         |  |          |                        | website:<br><a href="#">Media Release Centennial Celebrations Committee EN.docx</a>  |
| <b>Centennial Ideas</b> | Mandate of the committee <i>"This committee will work in collaboration with GC Staff to identify a variety of opportunities and methods to celebrate this anniversary"</i> | Proposed | October 2022-June 2023 | Ideas already in progress have been collected in the Idea List:<br><a href="#">Centennial Celebrations Committee - Centennial Ideas List - All Items (sharepoint.com)</a><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggest GCO and RCO campaign for ideas to develop</li> </ul> |

**APPENDIX III***Report for GCE***Cost of Living Group Reassessment - Background**

In 2006 the General Council affirmed the principle of regionally based minimum comprehensive salaries for ministry personnel reflecting local cost of living. This principle was implemented in 2015 with pastoral charges assigned to one of six cost of living groups base on median home values. Assignments were adjusted in 2019 based on changes in median housing values.

The comprehensive compensation model replaced a long-standing (1950s) model of a single national base minimum salary established by the General Council and a minimum housing allowance based on local rental values established by the Presbytery. In practice, however, many presbyteries were not reviewing housing allowances with any regularity and in many communities with more than one United Church, the housing allowances paid varied as much as 100%. Thus, the Council's decision to move to minimum comprehensive salaries reflecting the local cost of living. A team developed a model based on median house sales values as manually drawn down from Realtor.ca.

When the decision was made to attach the COL group to the cost of housing, it was a stable metric with a reliable data source (realtor.ca). It was also helpful for people to see a housing component in the transition from a housing allowance. It proved, however, to not be a stable or sustainable metric. It has also led to a misunderstanding that if housing values in a town increased 30% then salaries would increase 30%.

Assignments are reviewed every three years. The 2021 review was postponed to allow for a review of the model given the volatility of housing prices. External regional compensation specialists were engaged to assist in building a model that would provide for "a modest recognition of regional cost of living differences" (41st General Council 2012 Record of Proceedings p. 516), be based on independent verifiable economic data and easily updated triennially.

The revised model uses federal government data that accounts for housing, maintenance, property tax and utilities, provincial taxes, and goods and services. Category indices are weighted based on the expenditure profile of a typical Canadian household as established by government data. Weights are applied against each category index to derive the component expenditure index to determine the average cost of living in each location. COL group three is the base line with indices of 100-105.9. Locations with lower cost of living indices are: COL group one (below 97); COL group two (97-99.9). And locations with higher cost of living indices are: COL group four (106-113.9); COL group five (114-121.9); and COL group six (above 122).

While both original and revised models result in a range of minimum salaries which appears to disadvantage some, mostly in rural areas, over others, mostly in urban areas, they reflect the General Council's wish to recognize and account for the variable cost of living among these areas, in effect giving each area a similar "buying power". Higher levels of minimum compensation reflecting the higher cost of living in those areas, allow those communities of faith to attract and retain ministry personnel. These same higher levels of minimum compensation in other areas of lower cost would not be sustainable for most of the communities of faith in those areas and would provide a higher real compensation to those ministry personnel. This revised model provides a more comprehensive assessment of regional cost of living based on government economic data which can be readily accessed for triennial reviews of the assignments.

With the revised model there is no change to the assignment of 43% of communities of faith. 40% of communities of faith have stepped up one category. 17% have stepped down one category. These changes reflect the change in housing costs as well as the significant differences in property and provincial taxes among locations.

Salaries for ministry personnel serving in locations where the COL group assignment has been adjusted down will maintain their current salary as per the terms of the appointment or call. Those whose appointments renew will also maintain the COL group of record in their original terms of appointment. Ministry personnel serving locations where the COL group has been adjusted up will receive an adjusted salary starting in July 2023. The difference between COL groups varies from \$2,500 to \$6,000 annually. For six months, this will be a payroll change for communities of faith between \$1,250 and \$3,000. The full amount will apply in 2024.

The triennial review of COL group assignments allows for adjustments based on changes in regional cost of living. In addition to these periodic reviews, minimum salary levels are subject to annual economic adjustments (indexing) based on the Consumer Price Index – Common (CPI – Common) one year prior, providing another means to preserve compensation value. This annual adjustment to minimum salary levels is implemented on January 1st.

A variety of tools will be used to communicate the specifics of the model and the resulting changes to communities of faith and ministry personnel beginning at the end of November, 2022.

**APPENDIX IV****Finance Update to Various Committees and Stakeholders****Erik Mathiesen, Executive Minister, Finance****November 2022 edition**

I repeat the opening sentence Harry Li and I plan to use with virtually every church finance communication for the next year: “Church financial management continues to involve managing greater variability and uncertainty in the current results as well as projecting potential future scenarios in support of an emerging strategic plan.” This would likely have been true without the pandemic, but has been exacerbated by same.

**New items or new reporting from our Labour Day report**

- 1. Update on pension plan activities and risk management**
- 2. Updated for General Council Executive decisions re COLA, captive insurance**
- 3. New developments – property transfers, 2023 budget approval timing, litigation**

Recent inflation pressures add yet further complexity. Inflation rates may be moderating but are still significant. None of our revenues are inflation protected. We are wrestling with this issue from a General Council Office (GCO) perspective, but perhaps more importantly, as it impacts both minister living expenses and increased costs for congregations through any minimum salary policy decisions. The GCO practice has been to apply the Statistics Canada COLA factor with a one-year lag and this approach has now been affirmed. Note that the number we will use is 3.4% which is the value reported at October 1. Normally we use the published Bank of Canada/Stats Can number but it has been retroactively adjusted twice in the last month! Using this approach, the inflation adjustment for 2024 is likely to be in the 6% range. The Executive also approved an increase in mileage reimbursement rates and will be approving Cost of Living Region adjustments for phase in during 2023. In short, we have significant cost pressures as we try to also ensure adequate compensation for ministers and lay staff.

Double digit investment returns in 2019, 2020 and 2021 were the major factor in balance sheet improvement until now. On the pension side, this enabled the granting of ad hoc increases to the members and on the church side a growth in reserves and funding of the United Property Resource Corporation, captive insurance and a commitment to further indigenous reconciliation.

YTD investment returns for both the church and the pension plan are down double digits at September 30. However, on the pension side funded status remains strong because the adverse investment results are offset by the increase in discount rate. On the church side, we do have less to work with.

GC44 approved a change of external auditors from PwC to KPMG effective 2022. Audit planning work has been initiated and audit plans for Foundation, Pension Plan, Church and Kairos will be finalized in November. The first year of auditor transition requires extra work and documentation from all parties. Accordingly, the fall meeting of the Audit Committee is being split into two sessions – the first focusing on introductions, orientation and business briefing; the second for presentation of audit plans for each entity. We are also working with KPMG on items that are net new: captive insurance and property transfers.

GC44 also ratified maintaining the existing assessment rate and sharing formulae for 2023, which is the final year of transition, bringing all pastoral charges up to the target assessment rate contemplated in 2019. Assessment revenue is projected to increase in 2023 from \$10.5 million to almost \$11.5 million based on statistics received to date (90%). This increase arises entirely from bringing folks to target.

GC44 ratified the establishment of a captive insurance structure and commitment of \$3 million in seed capital to potentially deliver annual premium savings of over \$1 million to congregations and other ministries participating in the plan. Work is underway to launch the program effective December 1, 2022. The program was announced on September 27<sup>th</sup> and has generated considerable interest and activity. The immediate focus is the transition of existing affinity program participants on a “rollover” basis. New entrants will be underwritten in 2023. Response has been extremely positive as one would expect with the quantum of savings offered. Underwriting of new entrants and unusual cases will inevitably cause some negative response, but right now any negative sentiment is around having to wait to join.

For the 2022 expenses are largely on track for both the pension plan and church operations.

The pension plan has devoted considerable energy to the development of a strategic plan and refining risk management policies. Systems development continues on track with a key milestone being the conversion of pensioner payments to a new system September 1. The overall project remains on track for completion October 2023. Board and committee renewal is underway with a number of strong recruits and Anne Soh assuming the board chair role from Marcus Robertson.

We focus most of our commentary on the church side now as the Pension Board oversees all aspects of the pension plan. Church expenses will be underbudget but so too will revenues as the ongoing decline in M&S contributions has reverted to a \$1 million decline. Harry Li is working on ongoing refinement of our accounting processes to support full quarterly reporting. This work may be delayed however to support realigning our reporting to the new strategic plan. It should be noted that the approved 2022 placeholder budget has a structural deficit of \$1 million that must be dealt with (the total deficit budget of \$2.7 million included \$1.1 million for GC44 and over \$0.5 million one-time additional support to regions as a transition measure

in eliminating the lay/ordained salary differential). The actual 2022 result will be better than plan with the deficit cut roughly in half by expense savings.

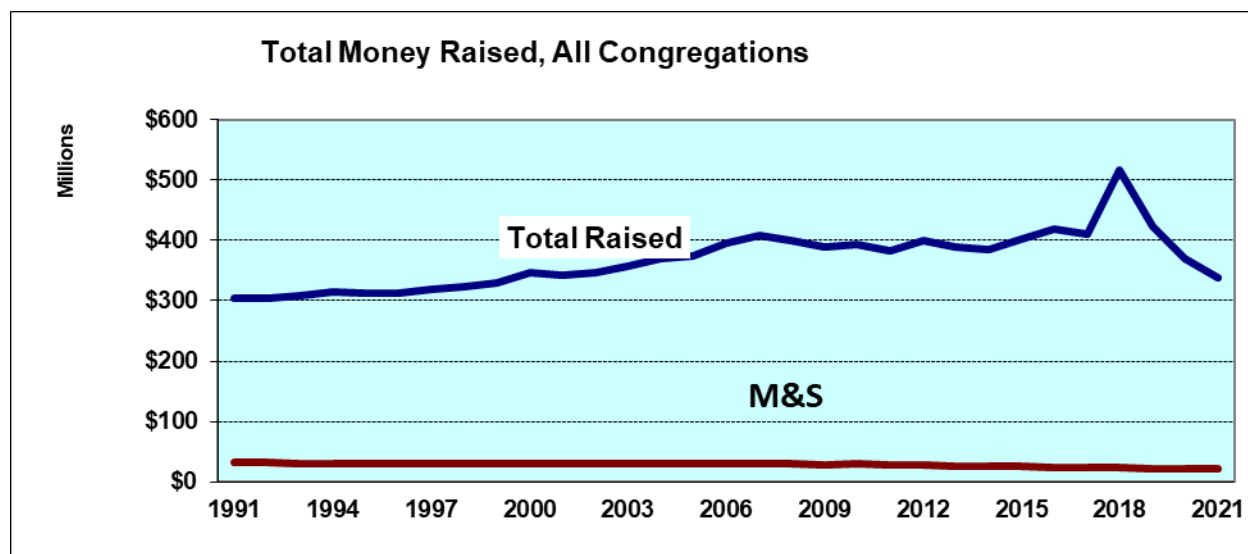
The 2020 and 2021 overall financial results have certainly provided improved capacity to absorb current and future volatility and uncertainty. This allowed us to allocate \$3 million to respond to residential school unmarked graves in 2021, with a first disbursement recently agreed. A \$10 million line of credit was also obtained to provide for adverse contingencies.

2023 operational planning is underway with the usual pressures one can anticipate from a declining revenue environment. We have now deferred governor review till Q1 to allow for more time to gauge strategic plan costs and COVID impacts on congregation capacity to fund:

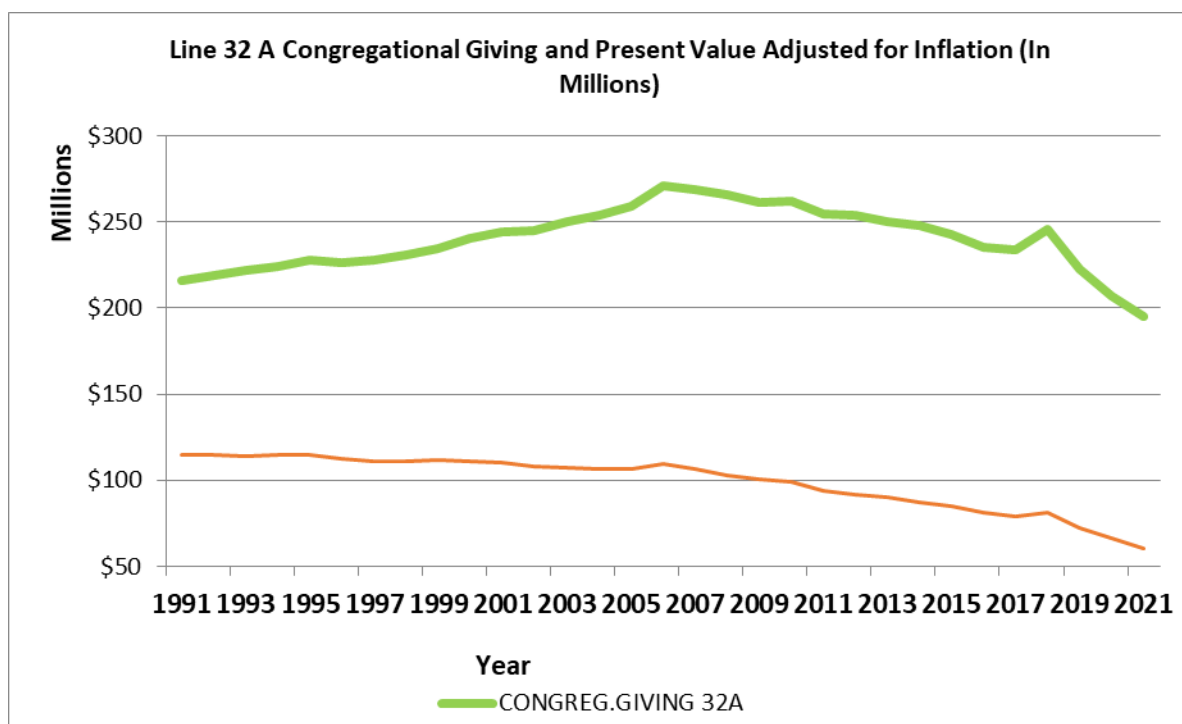
- COLA increase (but at 3.4% would cost \$470,000);
- \$300-500,000 for GC44 decision to top up maternity leaves;
- \$1,000,000 structural deficit from 2022 placeholder budget; and
- M&S giving year over year decrease (\$1 million per year)
- Investment in strategic plan elements (quantum TBA)

We are still in the early days in gauging the lasting impact of the pandemic on the financial sustainability of the church. We know we took a hit in 2020 and 2021 with federal wage subsidies and loan programs providing considerable one-time relief. 2022 is the year most local treasurers are worried about and there has not yet been a full bounce-back in in-person attendance or alternative revenue sources. A few sample numbers:

- Congregational giving fell 7% in 2020 and a further 5.8% in 2021 for overall -12.4% drop
- UCW local fundraising fell 59.7% in 2020 and 16.5% in 2021 for overall -66.4% drop
- Total congregation revenues are down 20% during the pandemic time.
- “normal” decline might be 3-4% per year mirroring membership/attendance patterns







On a more positive note, we have received notice of a very large bequest that may come in this year, with a potential magnitude of \$9+ million, which will create all kinds of options on how to use this money and investment horizon. For many, it could be an argument to defer cost cutting. Finance staff strongly recommend against using such windfalls to fund ongoing structural deficits. Windfall gifts – if retained – could potentially contribute to long term sustainability. No further news on this at time of writing.

We anticipate a need to invest heavily in the strategic plan and have assured regional funding from assessment for a fifth year (2019–2023). M&S Grant funding cuts have been deferred and are held level for 2023 to give the strategic plan a chance to gain traction. Looking ahead though, the need for significant cost reduction seems inevitable, and staffing and grant levels will need to be adjusted to align with the strategic plan and what we can afford. We will reallocate, or possibly reduce, resources in some areas in 2023 and revisit broader cost containment for 2024 as the congregation picture becomes clearer.

We seek to apply a risk management lens to all we do. In addition to financial balances, we have focused considerable attention to risks related to technology investments—both in protecting our investments through proper data security and in our IT-related choices and execution. Two significant projects are underway to complete the modernization of our philanthropy and marketing systems and make them cloud-based. Both are targeted for completion this year. A major systems upgrade to our enterprise accounting system went live in November 2021.

Many of our Human Resources policies have been updated in the past year to align with regulatory requirements and best practices generally. We continue to maintain a confidential online whistleblower program even though it is rarely accessed. Policy adherence is a key element in managing reputation risk. At time of writing, we have just received notice of a class action lawsuit relating to UCC administration of maternity homes 1920-1980 which we expect may be public by the time you read this. It is too early to comment further. Risk management reporting will be a recurring theme as we roll out the strategic plan.

IT security training and external testing programs have been implemented. October is IT Cybersecurity Awareness Month and weekly training refreshers were held.

The strategic planning process is at the costing/feasibility phase with a long list of ideas being distilled into an action plan and series of multi year initiatives to be prioritized based on impact and potential return on investment.

The church has adopted a much more hybrid office occupancy model that will allow many staff to work remotely. A staged re-opening is underway with some meetings now held on site. The hybrid model also has implications for our target new office space in 2026 with the likelihood that the archives operations for all three denominations could now be included.

I am happy to field questions before or when we gather.

Blessings,  
Erik

### **Assessments**

A key element in reaching financial sustainability lies in completing the transition to the new assessment funding model by 2023. In April 2021, the Executive approved a one-year extension so that all pastoral charges will be assessed at target level by 2023, but with a further one-year transition for those facing larger increases. 325 pastoral charges got an increase of \$500 or less which brought them to target. A further 570 pastoral charges were looking at an increase of more than \$500 and absorbed 50% of their increase in 2022 and are looking at a similar increase in 2023 depending on what happens with revenues. By way of example, my own congregation saw its assessment go up by about 1/3 in 2022 and are looking at a similar increase in 2023. You will recall GC43 approved an assessment of investment balances rather than market gains, which can fluctuate dramatically. This concept had been well received in presentations to several regions and in national treasurer webinars. However we will hear some complaints in 2023 when the assessment calculation uses investment AUM (assets under management, or total investments) values that may have declined. (It is still only 25 basis points or ¼ of one percent).

## Strategic Plan

Significant work is underway to support both animation of the mission and vision statement across the church and to transition the General Council Office towards development of its first aligned operational plan (for September 2022–December 2023), using reporting, evaluation, and metrics.

## Mission

**Deep Spirituality** Une spiritualité profonde  
**Bold Discipleship** Une vie de disciple dynamique  
**Daring Justice** Une quête audacieuse de justice

## Vision

**Called by God, as disciples of Jesus, the United Church of Canada seeks to be a bold, connected, evolving church of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, courageous community, and daring justice.**

### Mission and Vision for The United Church of Canada linked to GCO Strategic Plan 2022-2025: Overview



## United Church Property Resource Corporation

The Property Corporation is fully funded from a United Church investment perspective since 2021 (\$10 Million) and is working with property proposals from Halifax to Vancouver Island. UPRC is now reflected on an equity basis on the church financial statement showing a \$1.6 Million loss in 2021 which is a cumulative adjustment arising from the change in accounting

methodology. Operationally it is evolving to having its own payroll system and a benefits plan needed to recruit the talent they need.

Several regional councils have formalized a working relationship with UPRC. There are currently 22 active projects in pre-development/municipal approval process, representing over 2,300 total rental units. UPRC is anticipating four projects with shovels in the ground in spring 2023. The full \$20M from the CHMC Affordable Housing Innovation Fund was drawn by December 31, 2021, as required under the funding agreement, exceeding the targeted number of affordable units required to draw the funding.

UPRC has intentionally been operating “under the radar” for its first two years. However, in May a more public phase began. Part of this was a re-branding the development arm of UPRC to Kindred Works.

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/kindred-works-sets-out-new-approach-to-solving-canada-s-housing-crisis-834924041.html>

UPRC / Kindred Works continues to refine a focus on building affordable rental housing with community space across Canada through a self-supporting model that leverages real estate to invest and re-invest in building long-term communities for the common good. UPRC’s buildings address the climate crisis through environmentally responsible building practices aimed at net-zero carbon emissions. UPRC’s model will prioritize Indigenous and social enterprises and excellent progress has been made on this front.

From a governance perspective, General Council’s ongoing involvement is that of sole shareholder. UPRC will be a key element in UCC strategic planning with initial return on investment now expected in 2024. In addition, developed projects will return the net income to the respective communities of faith quarterly, based on regional property policies, to support local ministry and mission. UPRC’s model aligns with the polity of property in the United Church. Work is underway to establish a “land bank” concept where regional councils and the General Council can transfer properties for future development and at same time provide UPRC with a vehicle to support funding agreements and capital raises.

### **Investments**

Treasury Investments are down over 12% year to date Q3 as are Pension holdings. This reflects world wide circumstances where the only asset classes performing relatively well are energy equities (which the church excludes) and real estate/private equity (which the church doesn’t hold but the pension plan does). We have had quick bounce-backs in recent years from this kind of result, but that was before the war in Ukraine. It is hard to imagine a scenario where investment results for the year are not negative.

The Investment Committee completed its scheduled, periodic formal manager review of Fiera Capital in May with a report from Mercer consultants. An outcome of this review was a decision to exit the Emerging Markets asset class. The Investment Policy Statement has been updated accordingly and approved by the Finance Advisory Committee, and is now available on the website.

## APPENDIX V

**PUTTING OUR HOUSE IN ORDER**

**RAISING OUR SPIRITED VOICES**

**RECONNECTING WITH THE EARTH**

**Faithful Footprints**

# Program Update for Governance Committee

**October 27, 2022**  
2:00pm - 4:00pm (ET)

**The United Church of Canada***Presented by Program Delivery Partner:***Faith & the Common Good**

## Agenda

- Opening Prayer – Erik Mathiesen, UCCan
- Land Acknowledgement – Michelle Singh, FCG
- Introductions – All
- + Faithful Footprints: Goals Review – Michelle Singh/All
- Deepen Integrity: Living Climate Commitments – Erik Mathiesen/Michelle Singh
- Year-to-date Results – Stephen Collette & David Patterson, FCG
- Regional Support Centre Reports
  - Kalen Taylor, Prairies (Purpose Construction)
  - Cari Kilmartin, Western Canada (Newo Energy)
  - Claire Morley, Atlantic Canada (Ecology Action Centre)
- + Communications – Aleyxa Gates Julien, FCG
- Next Steps – Michelle Singh



## Land Acknowledgement

We begin with a land acknowledgement; an important small step in beginning to heal our relationships with each other and with all life on Earth.

We are a collaboration of organizations from coast to coast to coast on the traditional ceded and unceded territories of diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

These nations live in a deep reciprocal relationship with, not only the land and the waterways, but also with the physical and spiritual forces that connect them to their place of creation in an intimate and meaningful way.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to live, work and thrive together.

We are also mindful of broken covenants and the need to work towards reconciliation on many levels.

## Introductions

- Introduce yourself and how you are currently connected to the Faithful Footprints program OR how you would like to be working with the program

## Faithful Footprints – Goals Review

Reduce emissions 80% reduction by 2050 (revised to 80% by 2030)

- Average 20% since program began in 2018

Engage 500 United Church congregations by 2025

- More than 300 engaged to-date

Establish a national grant program for reducing financial barriers to building efficiency work

- Overall program rating 80% very positive
- ▢ 42% found the grant application easy to follow
- 88% of survey respondents would recommend this grant program to other congregations
- ▢ 72% would continue to participate in UCCan programs that support congregations in lowering their environmental footprint

Establish Regional Support Centers nationwide

- ▢ 3 RSCs established
- ▢ Ongoing staff turnover impacting results

## Faithful Footprints – Goals Review

Providing regional input into a United Church National Climate Advisory Circle, to advise on the high-level vision, track project progress, and ensure smooth coordination with and input into various areas of the UCC's climate related work

- Collaborating with Climate Advisory Circle on several initiatives including bi-annual Regional Ministers Climate Justice Roundtable
- Ongoing input to GS08 and *DEEPEN INTEGRITY Living Climate Commitments*

Regular reporting (including national sustainability reports) to track progress, amplify the stories of congregations, uncover barriers and connect the dots with other UCC Creation Care actions

- 2019-2020 Sustainability Report received some exposure
- ▢ 2021-2022 Sustainability Report to be produce in Q1 2023
- Program has outgrown current data management tools
- ▢ Amplification of congregation stories started slowly and now are being promoted by several UCCan communications channels
- ▢ Actively engaged with and collaborating with For the Love of Creation

## Follow Up Survey Responses

| Questions  | Very Positive | Positive | Neutral | Negative | Very Negative |
|--|---------------|----------|---------|----------|---------------|
| How would you rate your experience?  | 80%           | 20%      |         |          |               |
| The grant application was easy to follow   | 42%           | 58%      |         |          |               |
| My grant questions were addressed in a timely manner   | 88%           | 12%      |         |          |               |
| I would recommend this grant program to other congregations  | 88%           | 12%      |         |          |               |
| My congregation would continue to participate in UCCan programs that support us to lower our environmental footprint | 72%           | 28%      |         |          |               |

## Feedback Comments

- "This was a daunting project at first, but once we focused on the pieces, and involved various committees it clearly took on a life of its on. It energized us to stretch our dollars even further. We would love to see a follow-up program allowing more to be done as we try to become even greener."
- "The process was very helpful in our community of faith learning more about climate change, reducing our carbon footprint, and adapting our ways individually and as a group to help save the environment.....even the smallest congregation can participate! It was well worth the time and effort."
- "Thanks for this letter of approval. I wanted to say thanks to you and the UCC for creating the Faithful Footprints initiative. It was such a pleasure to participate in a project that was such a win/win. The first win is the savings that we will achieve as a result of our projects but also the improved lighting around our historic building. The second win is knowing that St. Paul's played a role in reducing our carbon footprint."



## Deepen Integrity: Living Climate Commitments

- Expand Faithful Footprints as a denomination-wide strategy to help meet whole church aspirational goal of 80% decrease in carbon emissions by 2030?
- Intensify national carbon reduction strategies across operations, increasing focus on transport, and partnering with UPRC on contributing to system change in development sector?
- Establish energy consumption measurement as a core reported statistic at all levels of the church?
- Intensify investor action involvement and reporting on carbon intensity of investment portfolio?
- Establish a full time committed climate strategy animator role to coordinate ecumenical and denominational initiatives with a focus on outreach and network buildout?



PUTTING OUR HOUSE IN ORDER

## Deepen Integrity: Living Climate Commitments

- Deepen engagement in ecumenical, interfaith and civil society education and advocacy towards climate justice both in Canada and globally, recognizing the far-reaching impacts of climate change on environmental degradation, natural disasters and weather extremes, food and water insecurity, economic disruption, rising inequality and conflict
- Build solidarity support of environmental anti-racism and for land, water and climate defense, particularly as led by Indigenous communities in Canada and globally
- Experiment in innovative collaborations including with young climate activities for bold climate action, whether local and practical, or global and systemic



RAISING OUR SPIRITED VOICES

## Deepen Integrity: Living Climate Commitments

- Encourage communities of faith to reconnect with the Earth, embracing opportunities to learn from Indigenous wisdom, exploring intersections between ecological justice and social justice, and deepening eco-spirituality and wild liturgy
- Support camps and outdoor education centres to be a resource to living with respect in creation and a model for carbon emissions reduction



## Year-to-date Results – National Participation

|                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| EOI Received            | 27               |
| Spoken To               | 80               |
| APP Sent                | 28               |
| Approved                | 45               |
| Work Completed          | 30               |
| 1 Yr Final              | 72               |
| Withdrawn               | 29               |
| <b>Total in Process</b> | <b>311 (+23)</b> |

Grants map (includes United Church Approved, Building Work Finished and Final Energy Data Submitted)

<https://edgeucc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6e3c2380aa1143258e22762352717641>

## Year-to-date Results – Provincial/Territorial Participation

|                  |            |                       |         |
|------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------|
| Alberta          | 35 (+2)    | Prince Edward Island  | 13      |
| British Columbia | 23 (+3)    | Saskatchewan          | 14 (+1) |
| Newfoundland     | 8 (+2)     | Nova Scotia           | 39 (+4) |
| New Brunswick    | 20 (+2)    | Northwest Territories | 1       |
| Manitoba         | 21         | Yukon                 | 1       |
| Ontario          | 123 (+8)   | Nunavut               | 0       |
| Quebec           | 13 (+1)    |                       |         |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>311</b> |                       |         |



## Year-to-date Results – Regional Participation

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Pacific Mountain Regional Council                  | 24 (+3)    |
| Northern Spirit Regional Council                   | 23 (+2)    |
| Chinook Winds Regional Council                     | 14         |
| Living Skies Regional Council                      | 14 (+1)    |
| Prairie to Pine Regional Council                   | 25(+1)     |
| Canadian Shield Regional Council                   | 4          |
| Conseil Regional Nakonhaka Regional Council        | 12 (+1)    |
| First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council           | 8 (+8)     |
| Antler River Watershed Regional Council            | 17 (+1)    |
| Horseshoe Falls Regional Council                   | 15 (+1)    |
| Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council         | 18         |
| Shining Waters Regional Council                    | 33 (+3)    |
| East Central Ontario Regional Council              | 18 (+1)    |
| Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council         | 14 (+1)    |
| Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council | 33 (+2)    |
| Regional Council 15                                | 39 (+4)    |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | <b>311</b> |

## Year-to-date Results – Financial Statistics

| Applications Currently Approved: 45 |                    |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Amount Requested                    | Total Project Cost |
| \$1,079,590                         | \$18,227,635       |

| Final Energy Data Submitted: 72 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Amount Requested                | Total Project Cost |
| \$1,790,097                     | \$4,173,118        |

| Building Work Finished: 30 |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Amount Released            | Total Project Cost |
| \$733,622                  | \$3,454,731        |

| Total Properties: 147 |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Amount Requested      | Total Project Cost |
| \$3,603,309           | \$25,855,484       |

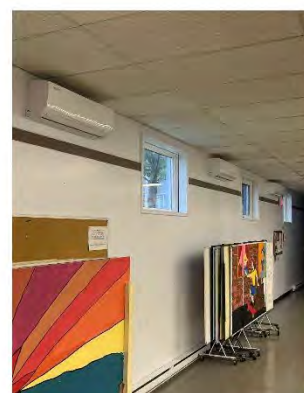
| Halo Project Valuation<br>UCC Contribution<br>(x \$4.77) | Halo Project Valuation<br>Total Project Cost<br>(x \$4.77) |
|--|--|
| \$17,187,784   | \$123,330,658  |

## Case Study



**Shawville United Church (Shawville, QC)**

## Case Study



**Topsail United Church, Conception Bay South, NFLD**

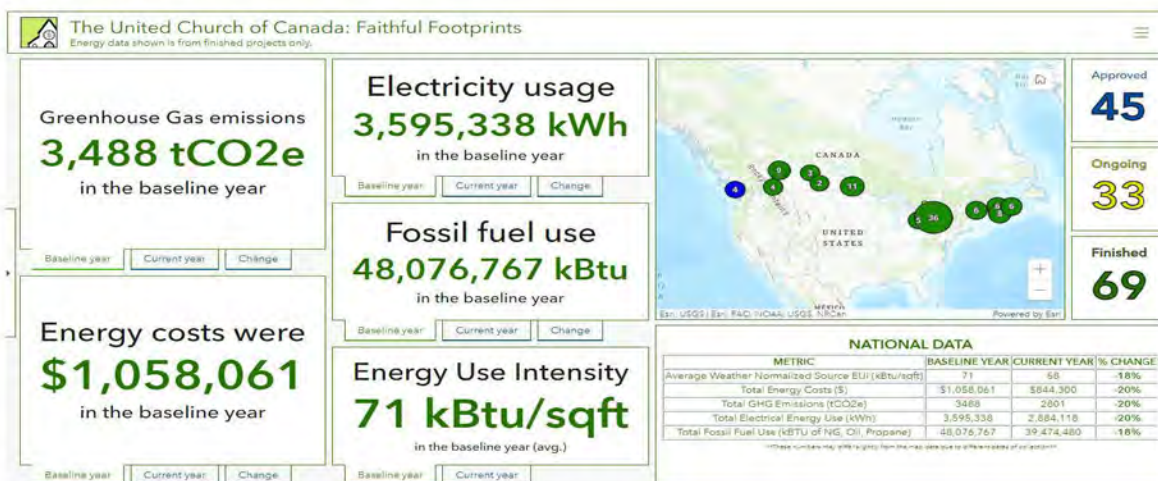


## Case Study



**The Atlantic Christian Training Centre/Tatamagouche Centre, Tatamagouche, NS**

## Energy Data Map



## Year-to-date Results

### General Building Statistics for 69 Finished and 147 Approved Projects

| Metric                   | Projects Completed:<br>69 Churches | All Approved Projects:<br>147 Churches |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Total Square Footage     | 1,063,868 sq. ft.                  | 2,647,717 sq. ft.                      |
| Average Square Footage   | 15,418 sq. ft.                     | 18,012 sq. ft.                         |
| Average Year Built       | 1919 (103 years)                   | 1927 (95 years)                        |
| Oldest Year Built        | 1818 (204 years)                   | 1818 (204 years)                       |
| Total Seating Capacity   | 20,530 seats                       | 42,057 seats                           |
| Average Seating Capacity | 298 seats                          | 286 seats                              |

## Year-to-date Results

### Carbon, Energy & Cost Savings for 69 Finished Projects

| Metric                                      | Baseline Year   | Current Year    | % Change |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Average Weather Normalized Source EUI       | 71 kBtu/ft²     | 58 kBtu/ft²     | -18%     |
| Total Energy Costs                          | \$1,058,061     | \$844,300       | -20%     |
| Total GHG Emissions                         | 3488 tCO2e      | 2801 tCO2e      | -20%     |
| Total Electrical Energy Use                 | 3,595,388 kWh   | 2,884,118 kWh   | -20%     |
| Total Fossil Fuel Use (NG, Oil and Propane) | 48,076,767 kBtu | 39,474,480 kBtu | -18%     |

## Year-to-date Results

### Carbon Equivalency Savings for 69 Finished Projects

Energy consumed by



**687 Metric Tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e Saved**



## Regional Support Centres – Highlights

### Prairies

- Prairie Hub social media campaign provides education and outreach on the Faithful Footprints program and UCCan climate justice and sustainability work (**1,523 direct engagements over the past 6 months**)
- Maintain up-to-date resources on regional grants and incentives available
- Provide direct support and guidance to congregations interested in accessing the grant program (**40+ congregations in the last 6 months**)
- **Delivering a fall 2022 webinar series**, with dates on October 28 at 1pm and November 18 at 1pm. Possibility of adding a third date depending on interest.
- Working with two communications interns from Red River College to deliver the social media campaign
- Video: 2022 promotional video is in production, and scheduled for release in November!
- Updated regional grant information for Faithful Footprints website - featuring an exciting new solar incentive program in Manitoba

Kalen Taylor



## Regional Support Centres – Highlights

### Western Canada

- **61 properties** across Newo's 3 regions involved in FF
- Collaboration with PMRC Justice Minister to create FF webinar (**upcoming presentation** in October 2022)
- Ongoing direct support for congregations (meetings, phone calls, emails, grant research, etc.)
- Researched and shared updated regional grant information
  - New addition of Yukon coming to FF website
- Supporting FF online communications through likes & shares

Cari Kilmartin



## Regional Support Centres – Highlights

### Atlantic Canada

- **80 properties** in various stages of participation (from expression of interest to completion)
- **Faith Communities Confront the Climate Emergency: A Conversation** webinar on June 4 with over 30 participants. Video has been viewed more than **200 times**
- Monthly meetings with Atlantic Eco-Justice group are helpful in reaching out to more Churches in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador
- Chris Benjamin, new Efficiency Coordinator is now responsible for the majority of the Faithful Footprints Program activities for the Atlantic Region
- Prioritizing relationships with provincial energy efficiency authorities that offer alternative funding that can be leveraged by congregations
- Advocacy efforts toward Efficiency Nova Scotia UARB process to approve the Demand Side Management Program to increase funding for programs aimed at Non-Profit organizations was successful and resulted in a **\$173 million investment over three years to help address energy poverty in Nova Scotia**
- October 29th conference *A Climate of Hope: Faith Communities Confront the Climate Emergency* will include various workshops focusing on climate action within faith-based organizations

Claire Morley



## Communications

### Social Media

- ↑ Over [150+ followers](#) across both platforms
  - [92 followers](#) and [55 page likes](#) on Facebook
  - [81 followers](#) on Twitter
- ↑ Reaching approximately [4k](#) people per month on Facebook
- ↑ Averaging approximately [2k](#) engagements (reach, likes, retweets) and [3.1k](#) in profile visits per month on Twitter

### Newsletters

- ↑ [77](#) subscriptions, averaging [41.5%](#) open rate, [8.7%](#) click rate

### Collaboration:

- ↑ UCCan Essentials ([931 total clicks](#), averaging in [top 3 engaged](#) section)
- ↑ [Jesuit Forum](#)
- ↑ [NetZero Churches](#)

### Update:

- ↑ [Regional Support Centre pages](#)
- ↑ [Grant](#) and [Energy](#) Maps

### Blogs

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 6/30/22  | <a href="#">Cooling Older Buildings Cheaply</a>  |
| 7/23/22  | <a href="#">Retrofitting to Serve Community Better – Camp Scugog's Journey to a Four-Season Building</a> |
| 8/9/22   | <a href="#">Extreme Weather Neighbourhood Resilience and Your Energy-Efficient Faith Building</a>        |
| 9/13/22  | <a href="#">Topsail United's Retrofit Project: A Supportive Team is the key to Success</a>               |
| 10/11/22 | <a href="#">How the Power of Perseverance Sustained the Tatamagouche Centre Rebuild Project</a>          |



UCCan Faithful Footprints



@FaithFootprint

## Next steps

- Continue to work with *Deepen Integrity: Living Climate Commitments* team to develop and implement Church-wide, specific and measurable programming
- Financial Sustainability Plan
  - Carbon Accounting
  - Next Steps - Beyond Buildings
- Reports
  - 2021-2022 Sustainability Report (bilingual)
  - Net Zero Guide for New Builds (?)
- Update Grant Application in response to feedback received
- Regional Ministers Climate Justice Roundtables – November 15
- “Functionally” bilingual in 2023 (with support from UCCan staff)
- Governance Meetings – 2023



## **Faithful Footprints Prairie Hub 2022/23**

Purpose Construction  
October 17 2022

### **2022 Project Team**

1. Kalen Taylor – Project Lead
3. Darcy Gosek - Communications
4. Celeste - Communications

### **Sept 2022 Progress Update:**

The Faithful Footprints Prairie Hub is pleased to be continuing our work promoting the United Church of Canada's important climate justice work, and promoting and supporting congregations to participate in the Faithful Footprint grant program to decrease carbon emissions associated with Faith buildings.

As of September 31, our work has included:

1. Onboarding Darcy and Celeste, two Red River College communications students who have joined our team! Darcy and Celeste will be managing the Faithful Footprints print and social media, as well as writing blog posts, directing and editing our 2022 promotional video.
2. Delivering on our 2022 Communications Strategy, which will focus on:
  - a. Promoting UCCan Climate Justice, For The Love of Creation, and other climate change initiatives
  - b. Promoting the Faithful Footprints grant program, and driving traffic to the Faithful Footprints webpage
  - c. Promoting educational resources on energy efficiency and decarbonization in Faith Buildings, sharing success stories and inspiration
  - d. Promoting the support services of the Faithful Footprints Prairie regional hub
  - e. Promoting the upcoming fall webinar series

The communications strategy relies heavily on social media to reach and communicate with United Church audiences, after our experiences in previous years has indicated this is the most effective engagement approach. The communications strategy will focus both on engaging audiences through the Faithful Footprints Prairie Hub Facebook Page, as well as through engagement and cross promotion with the Prairie To Pine and Land Of The Living Skies Facebook pages.

3. Continuing to provide direct support to congregations interested in accessing the Faithful Footprints grant program, maintaining accessibility over email and through



- a dedicated phone line.
4. Delivery of the fall Webinar Series, with webinars scheduled for October 28th at 1pm and November 18th at 1pm. This webinar series is being promoted through our social media, and has also been shared with the Prairie to Pine and Living Skies regions to be promoted in their newsletters and through their social media.
  5. The 2022 Faithful Footprints promotional video has had all footage recorded (special thanks to the Sandy Sauteaux Center for appearing in the video!) and is currently being edited.
  6. Updated the regional grants and incentives page for Manitoba and Saskatchewan.
  7. Maintained an active presence on social media through the Faithful Footprints Prairie Hub page, promoting the Faithful Footprints grant program, providing educational resources, and connecting with and sharing a range of UCCan climate justice initiatives.

Cari Kilmartin  
Newo communications  
& Western Canada RSC coordinator  
cari@newo.energy  
780-216-1867 [newo.energy](http://newo.energy)



Sept. 20, 2022

## **Newo – Faithful Footprints Western Canada Regional Support Centre Report September 2022 update**

### **Faithful Footprints engagement, outreach & communications:**

- 61 properties across Chinook Winds, Pacific Mountain, and Northern Spirit regional councils officially engaged with FF to date (EOI submission to project completion)
- Providing ongoing support to congregations involved in the program
  - Emails, phone calls, zoom meetings to connect with & support church representatives, supplemented by research & accumulation of knowledge relevant to each individual concern
  - *Next steps:* Follow-up with properties that have not recently progressed through grant stages to help move the needle
- Ongoing collaboration with FF & FCG communication co-ordinators for storytelling opportunities
  - e.g. feature in [FCG's blog](#), highlighting Newo, our work with Faithful Footprints, & beyond
- Ongoing support of FF & FCG social media communications through likes & shares on Newo pages
  - Insights not available for liked/shared content (i.e., unable to provide numbers for reach of content if content is not original to Newo)
- Researched & updated regional grant information for FF web page
  - Additions & removals based on incentive availability
  - Extended scope to include Yukon (coming soon to FF website?)
- Ongoing communication & collaboration with FF building grant manager
- Collaborated with PMRC Justice Minister to offer a regionally-relevant FF webinar
  - Event promoted at PMRC town hall, alongside FF program manager
  - Webinar presentation completed Oct. 18, 2022
  - *Next steps:* Together with justice minister, exploring additional opportunities to connect w/ region
  - Will be reaching out to building grant manager and working in collaboration with FF comms team to provide answers to questions posed during presentation, and to consider other topics & suggestions
- Attended & contributed to FF Core Delivery team meetings (bimonthly-), UCCan Roundtables
- Submitted proposal for UCCan/FF partners regarding a far-reaching auditing project for Western Canada, related but not limited to the scope of FF
  - Currently crafting a refined/narrowed proposal to allow for accessible engagement from national church & individual properties alike
- Upcoming year-end report to Newo's community to feature FF information & update

## Faithful Footprints Atlantic HUB Report October 19th, 2022

Submitted by: Claire Morley

**Summary**

The Ecology Action Centre is a member based environmental charity in Nova Scotia taking leadership on critical issues from biodiversity to climate change to environmental justice. Since the Spring of 2019, we have officially been the regional delivery centre for the Faithful Footprints program.

With a lot of staff turnover at the Ecology Action Centre and in particular with the Energy Team, much of the last six months has been focused on relationship building and finding new ways to promote the Faithful Footprints program as we continue to balance online and in-person activities. A new Energy Efficiency Coordinator is taking over the file. Chris Benjamin comes with a wealth of experience in engaging with different communities and organizing tailored events. His background in advocacy will serve as an asset when delivering the Faithful Footprints mission. There has been a large uptake in the program across the region and many new Churches expressing interest.

**Faithful Footprints Atlantic HUB Team**

**Chris Benjamin, Efficiency Coordinator:** Chris will begin working as coordinator and be responsible for the majority of Faithful Footprints Program activities for the Atlantic Region. Chris will manage this project as well as additional projects with partners such as Efficiency Nova Scotia. Chris has a strong background in stakeholder engagement, and journalism.

**Claire Morley, Efficiency Officer:** Claire will be working to help transition information over from one coordinator to the next and support the delivery of Faithful Footprints projects where needed. Claire has been managing the Faithful Footprints work between the end and start dates for Efficiency Coordinators.

**Progress Report: July, 2022 to October, 2022.**

1. Cover UCC congregations in NS, NB, PEI, NL:

a. We continue to promote the program through our own EAC channels as well as through various Church channels. We are active with the Atlantic Eco-Justice group and attend monthly meetings with them. This has been helpful in reaching out to more Churches in New Brunswick as well as Newfoundland and Labrador. EAC is tracking and maintaining contact with multiple churches to



support energy efficiency renovations and supply information on additional funding that can be accessed.

2. Currently, EAC is prioritizing the maintenance of relationships with provincial energy efficiency authorities that offer alternative funding that can be leveraged by congregations.

3. Develop work/outreach/engagement plan for regions which will include measurable deliverables, impact metrics, a regional advisory council and communications/tracking infrastructure:

a. EAC has organized an interfaith conference in partnership with Faithful Footprints and Faith & the Common Good that is set to take place on October 29th and will convene different faith communities to participate in different workshops and facilitate climate-focused conversations.

b. The "Climate of Hope" conference was re-scheduled to October because of concerns around rising rates of Covid and in order to have better outreach to Indigenous communities and youth. In its place, a 2 hour webinar titled *Faith Communities Confront the Climate Emergency: A Conversation* was held on June 4 with over 30 participants. The [online video](#) has been viewed more than 200 times.

4. Work with Efficiency Canada: The previous coordinator acted as the regional champion for Efficiency Canada, and was working on energy efficiency initiatives at the national level. Claire, EAC's energy efficiency officer has maintained a strong relationship with Efficiency Canada and continues to collaborate with them on building code advocacy. We will be working to promote the progress of faith communities and the United Church through the Faithful Footprints program in our events.

5. We are increasingly using our EAC channels to promote the work being done by the Faithful Footprints program.

#### **Next Steps: October 2022 to January 2023**

Over the upcoming months EAC staff will be continuing to provide energy efficiency information support for United Church congregations as well as continuing to hold meetings for the Interfaith Advisory Committee.

A key priority will be to evaluate where EAC's efforts can be improved as incoming staff are onboarded.

#### **Challenges**

1- With barriers presented by the Covid-19 pandemic resulting in the postponement of events, the long-term impacts are represented by a difficulty in tracking and managing communications over longer periods of time.

2- Capacity – EAC has dealt with significant staff turnover in previous months. This is being actively addressed internally and the organization is confident that in coming months the organization's ability to increase capacity will improve significantly.

#### **Conclusion**

The Faithful Footprints Atlantic hub plays an important role in this region. Despite recent challenges the organization feels optimistic about the upcoming quarter.

- 80 properties in various stages of participation (from expression of interest to completion)
- [Faith Communities Confront the Climate Emergency: A Conversation](#) webinar on June 4 with over 30 participants. Video has been viewed more than 200 times.
- Monthly meetings with Atlantic Eco-Justice group are helpful in reaching out to more Churches in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador.

- Chris Benjamin, new Efficiency Coordinator is now responsible for the majority of the Faithful Footprints Program activities for the Atlantic Region
- Prioritizing relationships with provincial energy efficiency authorities that offer alternative funding that can be leveraged by congregations
- Advocacy efforts toward Efficiency Nova Scotia UARB process to approve the Demand Side Management Program to increase funding for programs aimed at Non-Profit organizations was successful and resulted in a \$173 million investment over three years to help address energy poverty in Nova Scotia
- October 29th conference *A Climate of Hope: Faith Communities Confront the Climate Emergency* will include various workshops focusing on climate action within faith-based organizations

## **MODERATOR'S ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

**Origin: Moderator**

### **Introduction**

After discussion with the Chair of the Moderator's Advisory Committee, and Chair of the Business Planning Committee, GCE (Governance), I have decided to structure my semi-annual accountability report into the following three sections:

- Strategic Objectives (relating to the strategic plan and operational plans for the General Council offices)
- Meetings & Travel
- Content Creation / Communication

It has been a whirlwind of a first three months, with flurries of travel, but also time to recharge and make connections with folks.

### **Strategic Objectives**

For the "work of the Moderator" or Moderator's priorities, the Moderator's Advisory Committee and I landed on the following three priorities:

1. To engage in fierce, changemaking conversations across multiple sectors as they relate to the climate emergency, inequality, and reconciliation;
2. To broaden how we consider "engagement" – to not only speak to the church about the church, but to find opportunities to speak on behalf of the church to the world. This can include inviting partnerships from sectors outside of our traditional inter-church, interfaith partners;
3. To mentor a new generation of leadership.

After discussion with Jennifer Henry, Senior Program Development and Strategy Lead, we agreed that any activity related to these three priorities would fall under the following strategic objectives articulated in the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan:

- Embolden Justice
  - Changemaking conversations
  - Broadening engagement
- Invigorate Leadership
  - Mentoring a new generation of leadership

Over the past several weeks, I have been working to create a "work plan" of sorts so that the General Secretary and the Executive Officer, Finance, could assess potential budget implications for 2023.

The outcomes I've set for myself for 2023 for reflection with the Moderator's Advisory Committee (next meeting on November 28, 2022 by Zoom), are as follows:

*Outcomes for 2022-2023*

1. **Moderator Goal:** to reengage with the climate movement in a tangible & meaningful way to inspire reduction GHGs across different sectors
2. **Impact Goal:** activate and mobilize climate action (needs to get better defined)
3. **Church Goal:** broaden and diversify active and engaged church folk
  - **Pillar 1:** Mobilize Church Supporters to take climate action politically
  - **Pillar 2:** Engaged new church supporters by leading conversations about climate action (and making that a church thing) incl. through communications
    - Develop a principles-based approach to our Green House Gas (GHG) budget (when do we zoom, when do we travel, etc.)
  - **Pillar 3:** Engage youth in work on church and climate

I have scheduled meetings with key staff working on climate issues in November, as well as with People in Partnership staff so that we can determine the best way to connect with young people and create cohort(s) of young adults to engage with my work.

**Meetings/Events & Travel**

The first quarter of my work as Moderator has been heavy in terms of meetings and events. Here is a short recap of each of the meetings or events I've attended since my installation August 7:

- **Moderator's Advisory Committee – August 8-10, Burnaby BC (Jubilee United Church)**  
We met as a group for the 3 days following my installation. The Very. Rev. Stan McKay was absent from the first meeting, and the Rev. Ingrid Hartloff Brown could only attend the second day. We established priorities for my work, as well as shared with each other as group some of each of our journey. The members of the MAC include:
  - The Rev. Graham Brownmiller (Chair)
  - M Chorney, (GCE Representative)
  - The Rev. Ingrid Hartloff Brown
  - The Rev. Marie Claude Manga
  - The Rev. Danielle Ayana James
  - The Very Rev. Stan McKay (former Moderator)
  - Staff resource:
    - General Secretary, The Rev. Michael Blair
    - Jennifer Henry (Interim Director Communications)
    - Carol Owegi (Assistant, Office of the Moderator and General Secretary)



*Members of the Moderator's Advisory Committee (MAC) meetings at Jubilee United Church, Burnaby BC  
August 11, 2022*

- *Heiltsuk Women's Wellness Retreat*

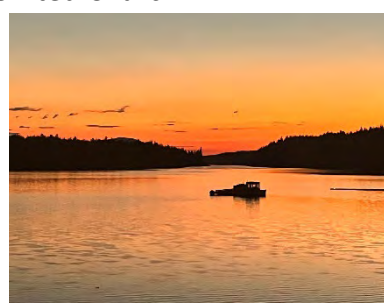
Immediately following my installation and MAC meeting, I flew home for a long weekend to Bella Bella, BC, the primary reserve of the Heiltsuk First Nation in the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Hailzaqv peoples on the central coast of British Columbia. I attended a 3-day wellness retreat at the newly constructed, off-grid, *Kunsoot Wellness Centre*, where we did traditional weaving, language, yoga, and marine tours of our territories. We also practiced and discussed traditional Hailzaqv spiritual practices, the impact of Christianity on our spirituality, and traditional medicines & epistemologies. It was incredibly important to me to go home to the land of my people and ground myself there at the start of my term as moderator. I hope to bring the MAC here for one of our in-person meetings one year. I couldn't arrange travel out of the village the day after the retreat, so I stayed with one of my aunties and the family of my maternal grandfather held a dinner for me at the local United Church.



*Flying into Bella Bella, BC*



*Sunset at Kunsoot Wellness Centre*



*My auntie  
Dora Hopkins  
(Left)*

*Me with the hereditary  
chiefs & elected chief  
Councillor at the dinner (Right)*





- *WCC 11th General Assembly*

I attended the 11th General Assembly of the WCC in Karlsruhe, Germany, including the Indigenous People's Pre-Assembly event, from August 28-September 7 (I came home two days before the end of the Assembly). The theme of the assembly was *"Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity."* As an observer, I didn't have a formal role to play in the assembly, nor did I have corresponding privileges. I was able to "whip votes" of sorts to ensure that the [Public Issues Committee considered a statement put forward by Lori Ransom \(Presbyterian Church of Canada delegate\) and others.](#)

I also connected with ecumenical leadership I'd known over the course of the seven years I served on the executive and central committees of the WCC from 2006-2013. Most importantly, perhaps, I was able to spend significant time with our young adult delegates, Martha Wood and Samantha Miller (Six Nations), both of whom did excellent work representing young perspectives from the Canadian context as non-Indigenous and Indigenous young women. I was also able to observe UCC resource folks at work: The Very [Rev. Stan McKay as a resource to the Indigenous peoples' pre-assembly](#), our beloved [Adele Halliday in her role as Moderator of the WCC Advisory Group on Overcoming Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia](#), and [General Secretary the Rev. Michael Blair as resource to the UCC Delegation, but also as a noted global ecumenical leader in the United/Uniting churches and the Commission on World Mission & Evangelism.](#)



*Theme Plenary Gatherings*



*Martha Wood & Samantha Miller w/ Moderator*



*General Secretary  
Speaking to the  
United/Uniting  
Churches (Left)*

*Adele Halliday speaking to theme  
plenary with ASL translation (Right)*



- *Funeral for The Rev. Dr. Bernice Saulteaux*

While we were in Karlsruhe we received word that venerated Indigenous elder, The Rev. Dr. Bernice Saulteaux succumbed to her battle with cancer. Bernice has played a significant role in the life of the Indigenous church (as did her mother, Dr. Jessie Saulteaux), and also in my personal vocational journey as a trusted elder and advisor.



Her wake and funeral were the weekend after I returned home from the WCC Assembly, and I was able to meet up with other folks from Living Skies Region to attend her wake on Friday, September 9, and funeral on Saturday, September 10. The family of Bernice gifted me with one of her beautiful star blankets, consistent with cultural protocol. The service was a beautiful combination of traditional Nakoda spirituality and church liturgy.

*Bernice Saulteaux's children wrapping me in a "Carry the Kettle" star blanket.*

- *First National Gathering for Unmarked Graves*

In August, while the MAC was meeting, I received an invitation from Kim Murray, the newly appointed Federal Special Interlocutor on Unmarked Graves appointed by Justice Canada. The invitation was to speak as a church respondent to the work of the First (of 8) National Gathering on Unmarked Graves, which took place in Edmonton, AB September 12-14. The other church respondents were The Venerable Alan Perry, General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Canada, and Marian Haggarty-France, Senior Lead Mission Advancement, Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton. I was able to share that the United Church has set aside \$3M for aiding the research and investigation of potential grave sites, and repatriation of remains. My takeaway from the gathering was that although the UCC has had very intimate in all processes related to the comprehensive settlement and the TRC process, at the community level affected communities don't know how to access our archives or national church staff. As a result, both the Indigenous Ministries and Justice (IMJ) and national archives staff will be attending subsequent gatherings. They are also working to have a UCC information table to make contact with the church more accessible to delegates and survivors. I will attend the second gathering in Winnipeg (theme is collective trauma) at the end of November, but not the third event in Vancouver (theme is Indigenous data sovereignty) which conflicts with a Canadian Council of Churches event in Toronto in January. I will continue to be in conversation with IMJ and archives staff to see where my continued participation is helpful/impactful.

- *National Anglican Service to Commemorate HM Queen Elizabeth II*  
Despite recommendations from the Canadian Council of Churches, I was not invited to the National Commemorative Ceremony in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II held in Ottawa on September 19. Jennifer Janzen-Ball, Executive Minister for Theological Leadership, and I attended the National Anglican Service of Commemoration held in Toronto on September 20. It was a lovely service, attended by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Premier Doug Ford, and Toronto Mayor John Tory, among other dignitaries and faith leaders.
- *Toronto – GCE, Planning, Orientation*  
September 15-22 I was in Toronto for a number of meetings, commencing with the orientation and planning meeting with senior staff and the General Council Executive. I was also able to spend some time at 3250 Bloor Street West working with GCO staff, recording my Christmas greeting for the church in French and in English, and connecting with different staff leaders, and Tim Blair from Kindredworks. I closed out the week by attending the 60th Annual Meeting of the national UCW Presidents before flying home on September 22.
- *National meeting, Board of Vocation*  
I had to return to Vancouver September 22 to go to Whistler with my family September 23-25 to preside a wedding (a commitment I'd made before my election). After much discussion with involved staff, the Chair of the MAC, and the General Secretary, it was decided it was impactful for me to travel back to Toronto on Sunday, September 25 so that I could preach at the opening worship of the Board of Vocation gathering that was happening in Toronto the week of September 26. The theme of their gathering was "Emancipation: Won't you sing this song of freedom?" I preached about the difference between the Golden Rule (treat others as you would like to be treated) and the Platinum Rule (treat others as *they would like to be treated*), white fragility, and how much further we have to become a truly anti-racist and intercultural church.
- *WCRC Indigenous People's meeting*  
Since 2018 I have served on a small but mighty "Indigenous People's Core Group" for the World Communion of Reformed Churches. For the past two general assemblies, the WCRC has instructed its staff to engage in Indigenous theology and expressions of Christianity. Our core group developed three global consultations (delayed two years by the pandemic): 1) Indigenous Theological Education in Asia; 2) Land Rights & Title in "Western" countries (North America, Europe & NZ/Australia); and 3) Cosmovisions and constructive theology in Latin America. The first consultation was held in Manila, Philippines, facilitated by Union Theological Seminary in the Philippines from Oct 15-18. I was able to offer a presentation from a Canadian perspective, and there were many other perspectives from Indigenous peoples in the following countries: Philippines,

Thailand, Myanmar, India, West Papua, Indonesia, Taiwan, and Malaysia. There were two curricula that were developed by our groups that the WCRC will be using to create a resource for reformed churches to more easily facilitate introduction of Indigenous theological education into mainstream theological studies across global contexts. The next consultation will be in Indianapolis in June 2023 as a pre-synodal event to the United Church of Christ General Synod.

- *Partner visits to the Philippines*

At the first MAC meeting in August, the General Secretary indicated that our six formal partners in the Philippines would be issuing formal invitations for me to visit the Philippines. Since the WCRC meeting was already taking me to Manila, I asked if we could arrange to multitask on that trip to be mindful of our financial and carbon budgets. Our Church in Mission Team and our partners worked fast to put together a one-week whirlwind tour of our work with our partners in the Philippines, including the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, The National Council of Churches in the Philippines, RECCORD, The Cordillera People's Alliance, EcuVoice, among others.

I still have not fully processed this visit, but this is what I posted on Monday, October 24, from Manila airport on my way home:

“This is not my first trip to the Philippines but it is the first time I had this much time to engage with local partners (as rushed as it was compared to usual Moderator ecumenical visits, I’m told).

Filipin@s are so incredibly generous and kind, and our partners put their lives on the line every day - practicing daring justice. One of the reasons I haven’t posted much on my Mod page or personal is to keep myself and our partners safe. I haven’t heard about human rights abuses like this (outside of Israel/Palestine) since the armed conflicts in Central America in the 80’s.

Even Roman Catholics priests and bishops are now “red tagged” as alleged communists, as are some lawyers and judges. The so called “war on drugs” continues unchecked. Anyone accused of communism or drug use has the potential to be arrested, is often denied due process, and many are assassinated in extrajudicial killings.

We heard from mothers of children killed by police for drug use - 30,000 killed so far (for as little as smoking pot). The criminalization of poverty here is rampant. And the current president apparently used Cambridge Analytica to “rebrand” the Marcos name and to propagate revisionist history that erases the reality of the martial law period - instead referring to it as “a new Philippines” under his parents rule.

Our partners really are beacons of light and hope in this struggle. I'm posting this without referring to anyone in particular to keep folks safe. Some of the partners we have longstanding relationships are already red-tagged or going through criminal litigation processes on bogus charges.

And there are parallel hypocrisies to how we treat the poor and Indigenous in Canada. We have our own work to do. Thank you to Japeht Ndhlovu for being an incredible staff support this trip.

I'm sure I'll continue to reflect and process and post once I'm back in the homelands. For this post I'm choosing photos that show the deep hospitality and welcome our partners offered (often edible)."



*Giving my presentation at the WCRC Consultation in Manila*



*Our "altar" for Indigenous worship in the Philippines, Manila – WCRC Consultation (left)*

*Philip Peacock, WCRC Staff (below)*







*The traditional “jeepney” that took me and Japhet into the mountainous mining regions of the Cordillera outside Baguio City*



*Japhet in the back of the Jeepney (left)*



*Meeting with partners at the Cordillera People’s Alliance in Baguio City, Philippines*



*Meeting partners at the National Council of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines*

On Sunday, October 23, I was the guest preacher for National Indigenous People's Sunday in the UCCP at Cosmopolitan United Church in Manila. You can watch the beautiful service here: <https://fb.watch/gvf88oGWKE/>



### Content Creation / Communications

This is a summary of the content generated and interviews given both inside and outside formal church structures. There may be other media that I haven't seen yet.

- CBC Vancouver (TV) – October 28
- CBC article (online) – July 23
- CBC Interview (Radio) – Saskatchewan – August 21
- Manitoulin Expositor Interview (Print/online)
- Video & Prayer – National Orange Shirt Day (UCC)
- Video – Thursdays in Black (UCC)
- Video – WCC participation (UCC)
- Video – Greetings to Canadian Shield (UCC)
- Video – Greetings to PMR Indigenous Ministries AGM (UCC)
- Video – YouthTrek 20222 (PMR & CW Regions, UCC)
- Video – Christmas message (French & English, UCC)
- Podcast – It's Your Call (recorded Oct 31)
- Podcast – Cheri DiNovo (recorded Oct 31)
- Podcast – Activist Theology
- Broadview messages – Advent & Easter
- Vanderbilt "Interventions" Blog – "[Wired for Solidarity](#)"

Some publicly available versions of this content will be updated regularly on my page on the UCC website here: <https://united-church.ca/right-rev-dr-carmen-lansdowne-44th-moderator>

## **NATIONAL INDIGENOUS COUNCIL (NIC) ANNUAL REPORT**

**October/21 to October/22**

This has been a momentous year for the NIC and indeed for the United Church of Canada despite the constraints imposed by the on going Covid Pandemic. We have had monthly Zoom meetings to address the pressing issues facing the Indigenous Church/Circle (All Indigenous Communities of Faith).

As NIC and NIEC move forward in our report and work, we also look forward to receiving a report from GCE on updates and progress as we work on our working relationship together. The Haudenosaunee speak of the Two-Row Wampum. This covenant speaks of our two peoples traveling down a river, each in their own canoe. With respect, we need to allow one another to simply be who we are. It is time to remember this covenant and work as two bodies side by side – the United Church with all its complexity, the National Indigenous Circle with similar complexity.

The NIC continues on the path to self determination/self governance and major strides have been achieved through the acceptance and approval of our Proposal to General Council (GC) 44 insisting that the equitable position of the NIC to General Council be firmly stated in the Manual. This means a major change in the structure of the United Church of Canada. The General Secretary, Michael Blair, presented an adjunct Proposal – also approved - to facilitate the process so there would be no need for a ‘Remit’.

The NIC along with the help of Murray Pruden, Indigenous Ministries and Justice (IMJ) Executive Minister, arranged several Town Hall gatherings via Zoom to inform and educate the Indigenous Church and Commissioners as well as the whole Church on the meaning and implications of our Proposal. The Indigenous



Church will be itself; determine its own path, and establish its own system/structure of self governance in its own time.

We stressed in dialogue with the wider Church that the Indigenous Church is not separating or breaking away from the Settler Church, but we are moving forward on a Nation-to-Nation basis. We are moving away from 'Indian Missions' to being Partners in Gods' Call to the Earth.

Apart from our Proposal to GC 44 the NIC has been involved with many other issues. We have done some visioning on possible structural formations for Indigenous Self Governance and this process will be further advanced as we move to the next Spiritual Gathering (delayed one year due to Covid) which will take place in Edmonton in July 2023. The postponement of the Spiritual Gathering meant that members of the NIC had to be asked individually if they would stay on another year. All have agreed to stay on.

The NIC exercised its authority and responsibilities in the Ordination of Tony Snow in Calgary on June 25<sup>th</sup> and also participating in the Installation Service of the new Moderator, Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdown, on August 7<sup>th</sup> in Vancouver.

On other matters, NIC has requested that 4 Indigenous people be on the Anti Racism Common Table as well as at least 4 representatives to participate on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Committee.

Through the year we have mourned the passing of several of our people who have played a critical part in the history of the Indigenous Church and indeed the whole Church – Alberta Billy (who initially requested an Apology from The United Church), Rev. Dr. Bernice Saulteaux (who participated in all levels of Church Governance; daughter of the late Dr. Jessie Saulteaux who envisioned the formation of an Indigenous Ministry Training Centre), Frank Evans (Diaconal Minister at Red Sucker Lake, MB.).

One thing we have learned this year is the importance of Communication and we need to be more connected with all committees and working groups involved with Indigenous Ministries. We can only make progress when we work in a coordinated and mutually supportive way.

As we move forward, we need to identify all the moving parts of Indigenous Ministries across the whole Church and bring them together so we can journey into the future as one, acknowledging differences, but working in a unified way.

We look forward to meeting in Vancouver next week – our first face to face meeting in 3 years – along with the National Indigenous Elders Council.

We have many challenges like assuming responsibility for personnel matters, ministry support, education, and placement. We journey with humility, courage, honesty, respect, wisdom, truth, and love.

Respectfully Submitted,

Co-Chairs, - John R. Thompson & Leeann Shimoda

## **DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025**

# **The United Church of Canada Draft Strategic Plan 2023–2025**



General Council Executive — November 2022

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Cover Photo: Maxine Bulloch Photography

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## Executive Summary

**A Call, Vision, and Plan will guide us as we strive to boldly embody the Christian story in this time, filled with certainty of resurrection and hope for new life.**

We believe The United Church of Canada is called to witness in love and justice to the liberating, healing Christ risen in this place and time. Through discerning a strong purpose and offering a clear vision for the church, together with a strategic plan for the General Council Office, we express common hope “for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14), disrupting narratives of decline and despair in our church in the last years. Our overarching goal is to create the conditions for renewal, dedicating focus, energy, and resources to slowing—if not interrupting—a decrease in participation, giving, and impact.

In 2 Corinthians, Paul claims a resurrection hope in a perilous time: “Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness” (2 Cor. 3:12). We too claim such a hope to ground us towards a bold and vibrant future for The United Church of Canada. Recognizing the social trends to secularize and fragment, we know we are swimming upstream in claiming this hope and working towards growth and renewal. And yet, believing that God is not finished with us yet, we continue to live the Good News as a unique witness in our place and time, calling ourselves to Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, and Daring Justice in a church renewed.

Between 2023 and 2025, we will be clear about **where** we are going, **what** we are doing, and **how** we are doing it. The General Council has confirmed a Call and Vision, a North Star, that will guide our path as this unique and particular witness of God’s people. We are inviting the church to find common identity in six words: Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship,

Daring Justice. This is our **Call**, grounded in our statements of faith, right relations commitment, and core values, but articulated anew for this time. Along with our Call is a **Vision** to become “a bold, connected, and evolving church” as disciples of Jesus in this place.

We invite diverse reflections and robust study, visioning, and planning as we share this Call and Vision with one another across the church, but perhaps even more importantly with God’s whole aching world. We are excited to see how regional councils and communities of faith, including congregations, camps, education centres, chaplaincies, community ministries, networks, clusters, and communities of the future (whose shape we do not yet know) will live out this renewed direction for the whole church.

Oriented by the Call and Vision and guided by the consultation process, the General Council Executive approved strategic objectives. They articulate what the General Council Office will do in its role as coordinator, connector, and service provider to move towards the Vision. Covering areas of justice, leadership, common good, climate integrity, growth, with Indigenous pathways, they form the substantive goals towards which the General Secretary will guide the work of staff at the General Council Office. These objectives will shape what we do, and what we leave behind.

These objectives do not form six separate plans but one strategic plan with an overarching priority: **growth**.



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In partnership with regions and the Indigenous Church, the national ministry will dedicate focus, energy, and resources to revitalizing the church towards a vibrant future. We will **renew** by strengthening existing communities of faith towards transformation. We will **create** by encouraging the development and sustainability of 100 new communities of faith, with a particular focus on churches that serve migrant communities. And we will **invite** by investing in sharing our unique witness with neighbours across the country and encouraging participation in our ministries, communities, and campaigns. This passion for growth will be enabled by leadership development, supported by denomination-wide strengths, fostered by justice campaigns and climate initiatives, and realized alongside Indigenous pathways. Our priority plan pulls key activities in each of these strategic objectives into service towards dynamic growth.

Transforming the church is not simply about where we are going or what we are doing but also how we will do it. We will change current ways of working towards new culture, systems, and processes. Key to these changes in the General Council Office is committing to the plan and to being accountable for the objectives, initiatives, and activities. Efforts will be tracked, measured, and adjusted based on research and evaluation. We will strive to align the plan, the budget, and how we deploy and assess human resources. We will be able to adjust the plan, but through common decision-making that takes into account what revising is required across the whole system. Our goal is to have a common orientation towards work that is deep, bold, and daring, and common organizational values—integrity, respect, equity, innovation, service—permeating all we do, from delivering services to offering theological leadership.





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## How This Plan Was Developed

This has been a Spirit-led process to articulate an inspiring purpose, direction, and plan for The United Church of Canada “for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14).

In light of the earlier restructuring of the church, and in response to BC03 - Leading on Purpose and BC05 - A Vision to Ground Us (available at [commons.united-church.ca](https://commons.united-church.ca)), General Council 43 recommended developing a common mission and vision for The United Church of Canada. This work overlapped with the General Council Executive's (GCE's) desire to establish some clear priorities for the national work of the denomination and the General Council Office (GCO). These pieces of work were brought together in a broad consultation process that led to creating the Call and Vision for the whole church and a full strategic plan for the General Council Office for 2023–2025.

An advisory Project Team from across the church was formed in December 2020. The team reviewed relevant denominational reports, reflections, and statements, and confirmed organizational values, beginning with joint reflection by the National Indigenous Council (NIC) and the General Council Executive. A series of right relations commitments were also confirmed and understood to be foundational for developing the plan, such as the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), the [Calls to the Church](#), and [Working Towards Becoming an Anti-Racist Church](#).

In February and March 2021, again engaging the NIC and GCE, six key areas were identified that were seen to offer challenge but also opportunity. Out of these, three possible directions for the General Council Office were developed,

each with a proposed mission and vision statement. [A series of consultations](#) on mission, vision, and possible objectives and initiatives for the GCO followed: Moderator's Town Halls (5), Indigenous Church Circles (4), and virtual focus groups with specific communities across the church and partnerships (23). These virtual gatherings were in addition to a set of focused surveys.

By the end of June 2021, a proposed mission and vision statement was being tested with church leaders, including regional council presidents/chairs, principals of theological schools, and staff leaders. In August, the refined statement was tested with General Council commissioners through a survey, to strong support. The final proposed statement was brought to the General Council Executive on September 25, 2021, which reviewed and revised the statement and recommended it to General Council 43.

Following the unanimous support of the mission and vision statement at the annual meeting, the GCE gave final approval to five strategic objectives for the General Council Office for the General Secretary to develop into an accountable operational plan for 2023–2025. Responding to input from the National Indigenous Council, and in recognition of the destructive legacy of colonization, the word “Mission” was changed to “Call.”

Between December 2021 and October 2022, the General Secretary supported animating the church's new [Call and](#)

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**Vision** across the denomination and oversaw the development of a first operational plan for the General Council Office. This has included integration with GC44 outcomes, and discernment on Indigenous pathways in the five identified Strategic Objective areas and as a unique stream. The first year of this operational plan, with priority and comprehensive aspects, is presented to the General Council Executive in November 2022, alongside 2023 budget principles.



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## Affirmation, Values, Commitments, and Approach

These affirmations, values, and commitments are understood to be foundational to the Call and Vision, and to the strategic plan.

### Affirmations Drawn from Our Tradition

- Basis of Union
- 1940 Statement of Faith
- A New Creed
- A Song of Faith

### Values Developed with the National Indigenous Council and the GCE

- Christian Faith
- Sacred Story
- Compassion
- Integrity
- Respect
- Community
- Equity
- Reconciliation
- Service
- Humility
- Innovation

### Commitments Drawn from Our Statements

- To right relations with Indigenous Peoples: Reflected in the United Church apologies and commitments to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Calls to the Church
- To become a church that is anti-racist, intercultural, affirming, open, accessible and barrier-free, and functionally bilingual
- To live principles of partnership in global and Canadian solidarity\*

\*Such as from "Reviewing Partnership in the Context of Empire" (2009) and "Canadian Partnership" (2012)

### Approach

A vital and vibrant future for the United Church relies on the health of each part—national, regional, and communities of faith, including in and

with the Indigenous Church. In a healthy church, the General Council Office supports the regions, which support communities of faith as the primary

locus of ministry. Approaching how to implement this plan will require paying attention to the roles of each part and to positive and supportive interconnections.

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## Call and Vision

**Becoming Beloved Community.** Our Call was developed through a widely consultative process that strove to reflect the core of what The United Church of Canada seeks to be in this time.

While the six words and three phrases stand alone, they also reflect a process through which a deep and grounded faith compels a life of bold discipleship lived in worship, service, and community, and expressed in the church and world in daring acts of justice.

The Vision aims to reflect what the church aspires to be within a 5- to 10-year span.

Living purposefully into this vision anticipates becoming what some call the Beloved Community, the ever-inbreaking, ever-transforming, ever-reconciling realm of God, realized in our time.



## Vision

**Called by God, as disciples of Jesus, The United Church of Canada seeks to be a bold, connected, evolving church of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, and daring justice.**



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## Strategic Objectives

Strategic objectives to guide progress towards the Vision were approved by the General Council Executive. They are focused on the ministry of the General Council Office. While each objective has a specific theme—justice, leadership, the common good, climate, growth, and Indigenous pathways—there are strong intersections among them. Each objective forms part of the operational plan, and is broken down further into initiatives and activities that will be accountably tracked and evaluated.

### Embolden Justice: Collaborating to Mend Church and World

Make meaningful collective progress on Indigenous justice, racial equity, and Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+ rights both in the church and world, while demonstrably deepening bold effective solidarity on other justice issues, through ecumenical collaboration and denominational networking.

Dedication to social, economic, and ecological justice—in the church, in Canada, and around the world—is an essential ministry of The United Church of Canada that is rooted in our relationship with God. Commitments to Indigenous justice and right relations, to becoming an intercultural and anti-racist church, to becoming accessible and barrier-free, to welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities—all contribute to living out our bold discipleship.

This means we must collectively address historic and ongoing injustices in the church by living out our apologies to Indigenous peoples and confronting the church's racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of systemic discrimination. We must strive to be both justice-seeking and justice-living at every level of the United Church: the General Council Office, regional councils, communities of faith, with members, and with adherents. Focusing on being just and doing justice, and informed by those who are most affected, how might we involve the whole church in

these critically important areas from 2022 through 2025, in partnership where possible, and also as an expression of our identity? How might we, as people of faith, be engaged in advocacy and justice-making beyond the church and in the world?

The non-Indigenous church is called to do this work collaboratively with the Indigenous Church and in partnership with ecumenical and interfaith partners, global partners, and people's movements around the globe. Does "such a time as this" (Esther 4:14) call for an even deeper ecumenical collaboration? Are there other global partnerships and justice initiatives that might best be undertaken together?

While the General Council Office has a particular role in social justice work and nurturing national and global partnerships on behalf of the church, the strength of our justice work is measured by communities of faith consistently leading on justice. We need to continuously pay attention to the

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intersections of spirituality and justice, liturgical rites and human rights, pastoral care and justice-making. We must ensure the tools, support, and invitation to do so are as creative and inclusive as possible, and commit to inviting an

even greater diversity of communities and people to “do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8). We are called to both live out our faithful witness within the church and to live out our faith in the public square.

### In the Next Years

- We will continue to empower the advocacy of the whole people of God, affirming and strengthening commitments from individuals, communities of faith, and regions as expressions of the justice ministries of The United Church of Canada.
- We will work to live up to our responsibilities, dismantle systemic oppressions within the United Church, and also participate robustly in public advocacy in the community.
- We will seek to go deep on three core commitments—Indigenous justice, racial equity, and Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+ rights—while discerning and working with intersections/overlapping issues, particularly climate justice.
- On other core commitments, we will nurture networks and deepen collaborations.
- Working with our global, Canadian, and ecumenical colleagues, we will discern ways to better coordinate advocacy to strengthen our collective voice.





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## Invigorate Leadership: Adapting and Innovating for Bold Discipleship

Renew a vision of leadership based on the call of the denomination—deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice—and align discernment, recruitment, training, and support of ordered and lay leadership, to this vision.

While the pandemic intensified change, the landscape for ministry in the church and the world was already one of rapid development. Within a radically changing context, we must ask: How can we find and nurture the leadership we need—lay and ordered—for this moment and for a future we discern and create from the signs of these times? The church needs leaders who are diverse in identity, who are collaborative, curious, adaptive, innovative, and faithful, embodying bold discipleship and sustaining the bold discipleship of others.

A focus on leadership is one way to address challenges in the denominational and organizational culture that impede the bold change required in this time. Some of these challenges include competitiveness, work being done in isolation from other work ("silos"), high degrees of criticism, lack of trust of decisions, and reliance on every individual voice rather than on collective processes. In this context, there can be a fear among leaders to truly lead, acting decisively and accountably, for the common good. In the national and regional staff systems, there is potential to strengthen accountabilities and enhance teamwork to achieve results, as two more aspects of organizational culture change.

The United Church of Canada asserts that to "embody God's love in the world, the work of the church requires the ministry and discipleship of all believers" (A Song of Faith, 2006). A vibrant future requires new strategies for affirming and equipping lay leadership. This includes congregational and community ministry and bold discipleship in personal and professional lives.

In ordered and lay roles, in Indigenous and non-Indigenous church, The United Church of Canada is gifted with tremendous leaders. And yet, there appear to be unintentional barriers to attracting and sustaining exceptional leaders in the authorization and oversight systems for ministry personnel, as well as in the educational pathways. Questions continue to be raised about whether current training and ongoing learning are suited to the demands of the present and the future. For instance, is there sufficient focus on emotional intelligence (including self-awareness), conflict management, property development, community engagement, and adaptive leadership? Does ministry formation help change the paradigm to the collaborative ministry that is our future? Is lifelong learning expected and supported with adequate materials, money, and staff?

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### **In the Next Years**

- We will strive to shift our culture.
- We will assess the changing needs of communities and the denomination.
- We will work to align policies and systems for training, authorizing, and overseeing paid, accountable ministry with the Vision.
- We will reinvigorate our commitment to the ministry of the whole people of God through coordinated support.
- We will encourage and support more collaborative leadership.
- We will enhance the vitality of communities of faith by recruiting, engaging, equipping, and supporting diverse and innovative leadership, both lay and ordered, staff, and elected members serving on national committees.
- Priorities for staff time, financial, and other resources will be given to leadership development, guided by three commitments: 1. "first third" ministries (children, youth and young adults); 2. our commitments to equity, diversity, inclusion, and becoming an intercultural and anti-racist church; and 3. building relationships of trust and accountability.



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## Nurture the Common Good: Equity and Sustainability in Resources

Significantly increase denominational capacity and will to make decisions on properties and resources focused on the ministry of the whole church, enhancing equity, sustainability, right relations, and administrative efficiency and effectiveness.

A Canadian church calls for a complex balance between regional diversity and national cohesion, as well as recognition of the sovereignty of Indigenous nations, the distinctness of francophone identity and culture, and the multiracial and multilingual nature of our society. A United Church also lives creative tensions between congregational and whole-denominational structures and approaches. Nurturing the Common Good aims for a strengthened focus on the needs of the whole while respecting diversity.

Denominational inequities chip away at our collective integrity. We have everything from well-equipped congregations with large endowment funds to churches without bathrooms that are constantly facing closure. There are painful situations where churches that rely on rental income are charging significant rent to other United churches, including migrant communities with little ability to pay.

For congregations across the church, this is a time of stress and loss. Common concerns include worries about failing to pass on faith and challenges of governance and property for aging communities. The pandemic has also shown that people experience church and worship in many ways, and the digital capacity of the whole church needs to evolve in response. In remote, rural, and Indigenous communities these are more

acute crises as the communities struggle to survive secularism, depopulation, and, in the case of the Indigenous church, the weight of colonialism.

There is also inequity between regions, but the assessment process has been a giant leap forward in sharing across the church. During the pandemic, there were examples of denominational capacity to pull together, with communities of faith experiencing regional and national solidarity through concrete advice, resources, and support. There have been recent significant investments in shared services, particularly among regions. Denominational-wide services will be further explored and implemented to include communities of faith and possibly even other denominations, with a view to greater effectiveness and cost containment, recognizing that there are continued emerging needs such as in information technology (IT). We will also address the much-expressed desire for a stronger national, coordinated strategy to deal with property, focused on a purpose-driven and sustainable whole-church approach, and lending support and guidance to congregations navigating the complexity of climate issues, neighbourhood needs, regional ministry opportunities, and denominational equity, alongside the needs of the specific community of faith.

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### **In the Next Years**

- We will explore innovative strategies to support communities, address inequities, increase sustainability, and mobilize new and existing resources for purposeful growth that reflects our Call and Vision.
- While being mindful of financial constraints, we will recognize the church's abundance, particularly as seen through the lens of its people, investments, and properties.
- We will seek to share services within and beyond the denomination, including to support IT innovation, lighten administration, decrease costs, and increase effectiveness.
- We will work differently, collaborating wherever possible. We will strive for a more equitable, coordinated, and adaptive denomination that is equipped for bold collective discipleship in our present and our future.
- We will develop planning, deepen capacity for evaluation, review policies, and strengthen governance and accountability.





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## Deepen Integrity: Living Climate Commitments

**Amplify and integrate current initiatives in a bold, hopeful denominational climate strategy that accelerates reductions towards the goal of an 80% decrease in emissions by 2030.**

The United Church of Canada has a particular responsibility as a religious institution to dramatically reduce our carbon footprint. To be a credible climate justice leader, the church must not only put its own house in order but also collaborate with Indigenous peoples, global partners, and the ecumenical community in strategies that reflect renewed eco-spirituality, Indigenous self-determination, youth engagement, and sustained advocacy.

We must acknowledge the interconnections between ecocide and genocide and Christianity's collusion in both. Historical interpretations of the Bible have played a role in ecological degradation and in repressing the wisdom and spirituality of Indigenous peoples. The current climate movement has a particular responsibility to be guided by Indigenous peoples around the globe, who have been consistently faithful in caring for and protecting Creation. Can we integrate the call to live with respect in Creation across all our ministries and operations and intensify church-wide participation, communal and individual, in courageous action?

The focus of our efforts to dramatically reduce our carbon footprint must be our buildings, where heat and light continue to be the largest contributors to emissions. Faithful Footprints has been successful in offering congregations opportunities to improve their buildings' energy and carbon performance. The climate emergency requires that this work

be expanded with a more ambitious target for reduced emissions for the church as a whole. As the pandemic winds down, transportation emissions will present another important place to reduce emissions. United Property Resource Corporation's commitment to net zero redevelopment of property should also continue to be affirmed as a contribution to the construction sector and system change. As well as buildings, church green spaces of all kinds offer possibilities for reconnecting with the earth and deepening ecological commitment, such as through protecting biodiversity or producing food. What further opportunities exist for communities of faith to be disciples in their watersheds?

The United Church's history of commitment to climate justice includes advocacy and investor action, as well as organizing towards a collective vision with ecumenical partners and civil society. A renewed faith-in-action campaign—For the Love of Creation—offers new opportunities for United Church communities to collaborate on climate justice, including urging governments to take meaningful action on climate change. In addition to responding to the climate advocacy of existing global partners, there are opportunities to build new relationships, including with young people whose moral leadership has been unparalleled. What opportunities are there to strengthen intergenerational relationships with communities, including youth, who share our commitments to ecological justice?

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### **In the Next Years**

- We will face the climate emergency through deepened commitment to reducing our carbon emissions, consistently integrating this goal across buildings as well as programs, services, and operations.
- We will invite United Church members to encourage this commitment in their own households and support local calls for action in their communities.
- We will strengthen collaborations with Indigenous communities, global partners, and ecumenical bodies.
- We will encourage ongoing learning, particularly as offered by Indigenous communities, that facilitates reconnection to the earth, and explore the intersections between eco-spirituality and social justice.
- We will strive to make a faithful and ambitious contribution to the climate movement as part of the necessary transformation required to protect God's living world.





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## Strengthen Invitation: Humility and Confidence in Sharing Faith

Develop and implement effective and connected regional and national strategies that result in growth within existing ministries, and by seeding and sustaining new expressions of communities of faith.

If personally and communally we experience the good news of God's grace as liberation and healing, as life-giving invitation to Beloved Community, then the instinct to share our story with seekers is more than appropriate. And yet congregations and other ministries across the United Church, with a strong belief in Christ's transformation, report lacking the confidence to share faith and build community with their neighbourhoods. Failure to consistently find words and strategies for that invitation may be compromising our capacity to grow.

While broader North American trends of secularization have affected our denomination and religious affiliation as a whole, opportunities for outreach remain, for example to migrant communities, progressive spiritual but not religious individuals, and younger Christians no longer comfortable in conservative Christian contexts. A vibrant future for the United Church requires developing our collective confidence in deepening invitation and sharing faith to make new disciples of Jesus. As we strengthen our voice in invitation, we might also amplify our voice of influence, more effectively speaking into secular

society the just and inclusive values and commitments deeply needed across Canada and the world.

Being tentative about proclaiming our beliefs is understandable given the evangelism, both globally and in what is now Canada, that was linked to colonization and genocide. While we recognize important exceptions, particularly related to Indigenous leadership, the "good news" was fused with imperial conquest and ethnic superiority, as displayed in the horrors of residential schools. Through our apologies to Indigenous peoples, we have pledged to neither ignore nor evade this complicity in spiritual violence but to take responsibility for it. In global and interfaith relationships, we also reckon with a damaging trajectory of conversion over invitation. It is essential that we show our capacity to live the change reflected by our stated commitments. There is no place for paternalism. An ethical future for the United Church requires true humility in our continued invitation and genuine integrity in our continued influence.

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### **In the Next Years**

- We will seek to strengthen a consistent invitational culture across our church that is both humble and confident.
- We will demonstrate vulnerability and listening.
- We will discern gaps in diverse expressions of church that might be filled in non-traditional ways.
- We will be informed by Indigenous and migrant communities within our church, and with global partners, who are striving to live the gospel free of colonialism.
- We will be particularly attentive to opportunities for mutual transformation through engagement with youth, and Indigenous, migrant, and francophone communities and peoples.
- We will energize our invitational strategies with evidence and expertise.
- We will amplify our unique Christian voice and innovate and broadcast with digital tools.
- We will share faith in word and action that holds to the true test of the good news of Christ—personal, church, and social transformation that is liberating and healing.



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## Journeying Indigenous Pathways: Forging Right Relations

Deepen Indigenous and healing in The United Church of Canada towards self-determination and the possibility of reconciliation.

Indigenous ministries of The United Church of Canada have been evolving, struggling, adapting, and growing since church union. Even before union, ministries like the Grand River Methodist Mission, founded in 1825, were serving communities. In the transition to The United Church of Canada, and throughout the denomination's history, Indigenous communities have not been treated as autonomous nations and Indigenous ministries have not been understood as self-governing. It is time to move towards a different relationship.

Currently, the National Indigenous Circle embraces all Indigenous ministries of The United Church of Canada across the land, both urban and rural. The National Indigenous Council is the Executive of the Circle. A new relational framework within the United Church is needed so the Indigenous Church and the non-Indigenous church can truly move towards being "partners in God's call to all the earth."

The Haudenosaunee speak of the Two-Row Wampum, a covenant of two peoples travelling down a river, each in their own canoe, allowing one another to be who they are. This covenant leads us to imagine two bodies side by side—the United Church with all its complexity, the National Indigenous Circle with similar complexity. Together we will support each other's journey.

This means focusing our efforts on constructing the governance framework of the National Indigenous Circle, necessitating changes to the United Church's structure so it properly reflects the governance of the Indigenous United Church and its relationship to the General Council and General Council Executive. This work to develop governance that supports a truly Indigenous Church addresses the Indigenous framework envisioned in the Calls to the Church and accepted by General Council 43. It also begins to live out the United Church's commitment to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### In the Next Years

- We will build consensus towards a governance way and structure for the Indigenous Church, including as it relates to the broader United Church.
- We will develop a longer-term funding model for Indigenous ministries.
- We will create and implement an Indigenous Testamur.
- We will facilitate recovery and development of Indigenous ways of being and knowing in theologies and spiritual practices.
- We will sustain and grow Indigenous youth leadership.
- In connection to the [Invitation, strategic objective](#), we will create and sustain new Indigenous ministries, particularly in urban settings

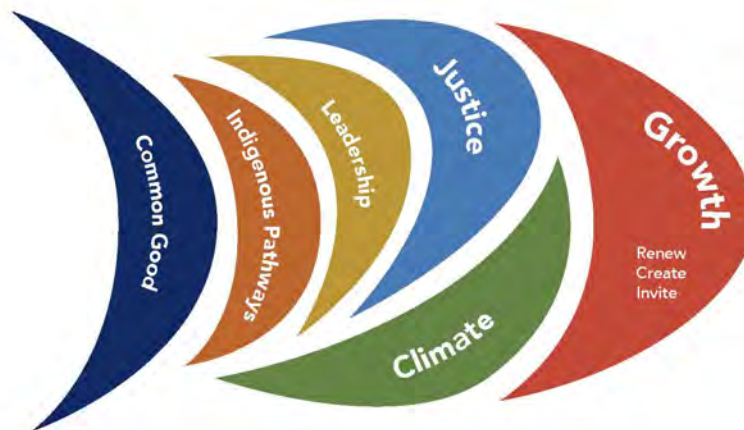
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## Priority Plan

Under the direction of the General Secretary, and working with regional colleagues, the staff of the General Council have developed a detailed plan—initiatives, activities, and key results—to advance each of the strategic objectives. This will be used to shape workplans for staff, including letting go of pieces of existing work. Staff leaders have drawn from this comprehensive plan, weaving key priority activities together in a strategy towards growth to create the priority plan.

### Priority Plan: Lead towards Growth





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## Leading Priority: Growth

The first and leading priority will be achieving the strategic objective related to **growth**: Strengthen Invitation: Humility and Confidence in Sharing Faith. Working in partnership with regions and the Indigenous Church, we will advance three interconnected streams of work to revitalize and activate growth:

**Renew:** We will strengthen the capacities of existing communities of faith to welcome, attract, retain, transform, and send people into the world. This includes assessing current tools, and mapping the coaching and consulting resources—national, regional, and related ministries—including stewardship support. The hope is to work towards a creative, robust, clear, and coordinated set of resources to help communities of faith strengthen invitation and innovation, reducing duplication and filling in key gaps.

**Create:** Mapping demographic information and assessing community needs, we will propose, develop, and create 100 new communities of faith with a view to their long-term sustainability. This involves segmenting into key target communities—such as migrant, intercultural, persons with disabilities, young adults, and francophone—and working directly with the Indigenous Church to invest in growth animators that are or will engage church planters and online ministry creators. Strategies will include experimentation to learn from and unlock current policies that inhibit growth, new partnerships that invite collaborative outreach to communities, seeking leadership among current admission ministers, and negotiating agreements with full communion and global church partners regarding migrant communities.

**Invite:** Drawing deep on the new Call and Vision, we will galvanize common identity and purpose across the church, strengthening the understanding of our discipleship in this time. Clearer about our identity and unique public witness, and mindful of diversity, we will develop multi-pronged and targeted strategies to communicate effectively with different groups of the public about the spiritual home or pathways to home in the church. We will use the 100th anniversary of the United Church in 2025 as an opportunity to celebrate, commemorate, lament, and learn, reaching out beyond those who attend United churches to renew relationships with those who identify with our denomination or share our values.

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## Supporting Priorities

Working with the Indigenous Church and in partnership with regions where appropriate, activities within the remaining strategic objectives will support the overarching commitment to growth.

### Justice

Being clear about our identity and unique public witness requires bold action on social justice commitments.

Priority justice activities:

- **Advocate** in robust, creative, and effective ways to advance Indigenous justice, equity in housing for racialized communities, and Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+ refugee rights.
- **Engage** in cross-sectoral change-making conversations about issues that matter, led by the Moderator.
- **Fulfill** our denominational responsibilities for specific impacts of colonizing mission within and beyond residential institutions.
- **Advance** frameworks and strategies for reparations.
- **Transform** theologies and existing congregations towards racial justice and right relations, and denominational justice-making towards a principle-based approach.

### Leadership

The capacity to create and transform communities of faith requires recruiting, engaging, equipping, and supporting diverse and innovative leadership.

Priority leadership activities:

- **Develop** a coordinated and extensive set of lay leadership programs based on assessment and research.
- **Identify** young leaders in the church and support their continued development, including in a Moderator's mentorship initiative.
- **Enhance** collaborative, innovative, and diverse ministry through experiments in different models and through renewed recruitment and admission processes.
- **Reimagine** theological education through a process that enables schools to collaborate around the ministry needs of the future.

### Common Good

Renewing our attention to growth includes unleashing denominational capacities to support the whole church. Priority activities related to the common good:

- **Implement** a self-insurance program for the denomination.
- **Integrate** granting and donation portals and information management services across the denomination.
- **Steward** church buildings or money released from sales for future ministry and implement pooling of investment resources.
- **Target** a national capital fundraising program for the church's 100th anniversary in 2025.



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### Climate

Our integrity as a denomination contributes to our capacity to flourish. Priority activities related to climate:

- **Expand** Faithful Footprints denomination-wide to improve the energy efficiency and reduce the carbon pollution of church buildings.
- **Champion** attention to urgency of the climate emergency by tangibly strengthening education and advocacy for climate justice across the denomination.

### Indigenous Pathways

Clearing the path towards a self-governing Indigenous Church will enhance the growth and development of the whole United Church community. Priority activities in Indigenous pathways:

- **Build** consensus towards a governance structure for the Indigenous Church.
- **Initiate** new local Indigenous ministries, with a focus on urban communities.



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## Monitoring and Evaluation

The General Council Executive will monitor the strategic plan related to progress on the strategic objectives, with particular attention to the priority plan. The General Secretary will provide high-level reports based on monitoring the detailed operational plan.

The operational plan uses objectives and key results (OKRs). Each activity in the plan will have an activity lead and will be tracked on a monthly basis related to key results. Those results will then be a measure of progress on the strategic objective.

Strong progress or issues of concern will be flagged with the Executive Minister responsible for the related strategic objective area. Quarterly, senior management will examine reports and identify key issues. An annual evaluation will be done to help adjust the operational plan for the next year. Key to this process is the capacity to measure, using baselines and key results, and basing decisions on data. Because of this use of concrete data, projects can be adjusted in a timely manner.

## Resources

Resources—financial, human, and time—will be linked to the strategic plan, including its priority commitment to renewal and growth. The plan anticipates tolerating an operating budget deficit in 2023, including committing an annual incremental investment in the plan not to exceed \$1.5 million. Within 2023, strategic decisions regarding needed reductions in 2024 will be possible given implementation of a focused plan.

While currently the budget for the General Council Office is organized around units, we will shift to link the budget to the activities related to each strategic objective. This will align expenditures to progress on each strategic objective, and enable us to show the impact of budget expenses.

For more information contact [planning@united-church.ca](mailto:planning@united-church.ca).



## **ACTION PLAN FOR GOVERNANCE RENEWAL**

### **Origin: Work Flow Working Group**

Governance is not an end in itself, but exists to enable the church to live out God's call and vision for the church. The church has always had governance, structures and systems that enable effective decision-making to allow for action in pursuit of God's vision for the world. The Executive's governance practices were developed for a different era of the life of the church: where members both were elected by and therefore may have seen themselves as representatives of constituent groups within the church rather than called to govern on behalf of the whole; where the Executive was substantially larger and less able to act nimbly and strategically; and where the governance practices reflected the colonial legacies of the church. This review seeks to help the Executive live into a more strategic and visionary role, act in trustworthy ways with the wider church, and ultimately help the church live up to the call and vision God has given us.

The Executive is assigned specific work by *The Manual* to act on behalf of the General Council between its meetings. While the General Council meets more frequently, a smaller and more focused body is still required, and is best situated to perform a number of governance functions relating to discerning how to live out the call and vision God has given the church, monitoring progress on our goals, encouraging and accompanying the General Secretary, and ensuring that risks are considered and addressed.

Working to address the colonial legacies of the church as it relates to governance was beyond the scope of this working group, but is critically and vitally important as the Executive and the General Council works to renew its role.

### **Biblical and Theological Foundations for Governance**

Moses is chastised by Jethro for centralizing all leadership and decision-making in his own hands, as Jethro says "what you are doing is not good" (Ex. 18:17). Moses and Jethro recognize that leadership cannot be done alone but must be done by entrusting others. Moses responds by appointing capable persons as leaders of groups of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, instructing them in the vision and call God has given them, and then entrusting these leaders in leading the people and sharing the work (Ex. 18:20-22).

In the same way, when God hears the cries of God's people in response to their oppression (Judges 4:2-3), God lifts up Deborah as a prophet and leader of Israel (4:4-5). She leads by calling Barak to serve as commander of her armies (4:6), giving him direction and vision (4:6b-7), and then delegating and supervising execution of the campaign to Barak (4:14-16) to defeat the armies of King Jabin and his commander Sisera who were oppressing the people.

When Paul was supporting and accompanying the church in Ephesus, he called elders together, telling them that nothing was more important than the purpose God had given him: the

ministry of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:24). He directed them to “Watch yourselves and the whole flock, in which the Holy Spirit has placed you as supervisors, to shepherd God’s church, which he obtained with the death of his own Son” (Acts 20:28, CEB). The church has always looked to councils of elders to supervise its work, shepherding the church which God obtained through the death of his Son. So too, the United Church has entrusted councils selected to supervise work and to shepherd the people of God.

Peter writes to diasporic Christians in Asia Minor and in particular addresses their elders:

Therefore, I have a request for the elders among you. (I ask this as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ’s sufferings, and as one who shares in the glory that is about to be revealed.) I urge the elders: <sup>2</sup>Like shepherds, tend the flock of God among you. Watch over it. Don’t shepherd because you must, but do it voluntarily for God. Don’t shepherd greedily, but do it eagerly. <sup>3</sup>Don’t shepherd by ruling over those entrusted to your care, but become examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup>And when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive an unfading crown of glory. <sup>5</sup>In the same way, I urge you who are younger: accept the authority of the elders. And everyone, clothe yourselves with humility toward each other. God stands against the proud, but he gives favor to the humble. <sup>6</sup>Therefore, humble yourselves under God’s power so that he may raise you up in the last day.

*First Peter 5:1-6, Common English Bible*

So too, the Executive should tend the part of the flock entrusted to its care, shepherding eagerly, not by “ruling over those entrusted to [its] care” but humbly accepting its role as examples, shepherding eagerly.

Throughout Scripture examples are given of governance requiring leaders like Deborah, Moses, Peter, and Paul to appoint others to act, to give them direction, and to empower and supervise their action.

### **General Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1:** That the Executive ground its understanding of governance in the principle that the purpose of governance is to enable the church to live out God’s call and vision for the church.

**Recommendation 2:** That the Executive adopt a clear description of its governance role as a strategic and visionary role focused on:

- Establishing vision and direction for the General Council and its office and establishing policies to give that effect;
- Determining the ministry goals for the General Council Office;
- Calling and accompanying the General Secretary and other delegates as they work to achieve those ministry goals; and

- Monitoring risks to the General Council Office achieving those ministry goals.

As the Executive engages in a more strategic and visionary role, it does so in ways that are:

- Supporting the church to live into its equity aspirations, including within the Executive's own practices, including working to decolonize governance;
- Acting on behalf of and in support of the General Council between the meetings of the General Council; and
- In keeping with the conciliar nature of the church.

### **Recommendations on Executive Functioning**

The role of the Executive is to oversee vision, strategy, and direction of the General Council Office, not to engage in work in a hands-on way.

**Recommendation 3:** That the Executive establish a priority for the triennium of monitoring its own capacity for governance.

Priority: the Executive's capacity for governance is deepened to support the ministry of the United Church to respond to God's call and vision for the church.

This will be measured by:

- Establishing a framework for the Executive and its members to engage in regular self-assessments, establishing a baseline and monitoring ongoing improvement annually;
- Ensuring a governance education component is imbedded in every meeting;
- Shaping agendas to maximize the right level of conversations and on the right topic (after a baseline is set, establishing a goal for either improvement or sustained performance); and
- Monitoring how the Executive uses its time to ensure that >50% of time is on forward-looking questions of vision, direction, and strategy.

**Recommendation 4:** That the Executive arrange for objective and external governance coaching to accompany the Executive in this work

**Recommendation 5:** That the Executive clarify the roles of its supporting structures, including:

- a. the role of the Moderator and Moderator's Advisory Committee in governance;
- b. the roles of the Executive and the General Secretary's Supervisory Committee with regards to the supervision of the General Secretary, and monitoring the progress on the ministry plan; and
- c. the role of the Business Planning Committee and its chair in governance.

**Recommendation 6:** That the Executive, both for itself and in collaboration with the General Council, reimagine the process by which work comes to its table, including:

- a. Exploring the use of committees and working groups for technical issues coming to the Executive;
- b. Affirming the use of advisory groups by staff as determined by the General Secretary; and
- c. Revising the proposals process to reflect the conciliar nature of the church and strategic alignment, including ministry implications (costs, risks, benefits, challenges, etc.).

**Recommendation 7:** That the Executive commit to act in honourable and trustworthy ways to build healthy relationships between Executive members and staff leaders to deepen mutual trust. This will be evidenced when staff leaders bring work to the Executive and the Executive responds with openness and curiosity, offering constructive challenge where appropriate, and staff leaders and the Executive engage together in creative tension to advance the work of the General Council.

**Recommendation 8:** That the Executive establish a code of conduct and behavioural covenant for the Executive; determine who will have the authority to hold Executive members accountable; and establish how the Executive will hold each other accountable.

### **Recommendations Relating to Trust, Communications, and Culture**

The Executive grounds its work by listening deeply to the Spirit speaking through the whole church, and in turn acting in honourable and trustworthy ways through transparent and mutual communications. We recognize that we are a church, not a corporation, that our communications must be pastoral and the work of ministry and not a bureaucracy, and that we identify the major impacts the ministry of the church of our decisions and share those openly with the church as a whole.

**Recommendation 9:** That the Executive establish a priority for the triennium to act honourably and in trustworthy ways

Priority: Act in honourable and trustworthy ways to build healthy relationships between the Executive and the Commissioners to the General Council, regional councils, and communities of faith to build mutual trust, measured by:

- Developing a mechanism to listen deeply to the church, including Commissioners to the General Council and regional council leadership;
- Establishing a framework for regular engagement with regional council Executive ministers and regional council presidents;
- Engaging with the information and wisdom acquired through deep listening and consultation in its discernment and deliberations;
- Incorporating the importance of communication, healthy relationship, and trust into the review of structural changes happening in 2023-2024; and
- Developing and implementing a strategic communications and relational plan aligned to the governance role of the Executive, with key commitments/aspirations:



- we are a church not a corporation;
- communications are pastoral and seen as ministry, not bureaucracy;
- impacts of major decisions to the ministry are to be identified.

**Recommendations around Decolonization**

While beyond the scope of this working group, the Executive should continue working on decolonizing governance, recognizing that this is an ongoing process.

**Recommendation 10:** That the Executive reflect and act on how to decolonize its governance.

## **ANTI-RACISM REPORT TO GCE, NOVEMBER 2022**

### **November 2022**

The anti-racism work of the General Council Office is a collaborative and cross-unit effort that continues to be guided by the United Church's [Anti-Racism Action Plan](#). This action plan has now been incorporated into the overall Strategic Plan and the plan's Strategic Objective on "Embolden Justice".

The following are some highlights of the church's recent anti-racism work, grouped under three of the five anti-racism action plan's thematic areas.

#### *Education:*

The [40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism](#) is currently running from October 11-November 25. This is the second year of this online program, and it returned after last year's robust evaluation named its popularity and impact. This multi-faceted program can be engaged at any time of year, by anyone in the church. It offers opportunities for learning, faith reflections, and ideas for action or advocacy. Content was created by a diverse group of writers from across the church. In addition to people across the United Church, the program is engaged by people from a range of denominations and in various countries.

Additional highlights for this year include:

- [A weekly newsletter](#), with a very high subscription and open-rate
- Featured and discounted anti-racism books available from the United Church Bookstore
- Coordinated national study groups
- Weekly live events, with speakers and opportunities for discussion; these events are recorded and made available on the [United Church's YouTube](#).

A weekend retreat for Indigenous and racialized youth in the United Church around the 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism also provided opportunities for learning, leadership development, and furthering the anti-racism action plan's goals around self-determined healing for Indigenous and racialized peoples. There are now [11 short video interviews](#) that were created by the youth who attended, that convey in their own voices how important their time together was, and why there is a specific need for Indigenous and racialized only youth leadership spaces within the United Church.

As part of the different ways of engaging youth in anti-racism work, a brand-new app has been created. This app—which is newly available on the App Store and on Google Play—offers an interactive and anti-racism educational experience for young people. This app is still in the very early stages of pilot testing, and so it has not yet been promoted for wide public use. Once more of the initial round of testing is completed, the app will be widely advertised and promoted for use across the church.

Three United Church anti-racism educational videos were released in the summer. The video series, called “Becoming an Anti-Racist Church”, features four United Church leaders, and the videos explore: [A Church Rooted in Racism; Theology and Faith](#); and [Dismantling White Supremacist Culture](#). One more educational video is still in progress.

Staff at the General Council and regional council offices have also had opportunities for education. All staff were invited to participate in virtual [KAIROS Blanket Exercise](#) in September and October, as one opportunity to learn more about Indigenous peoples' histories and some aspects of anti-Indigenous racism.

Education was also a key component of some staff involvement and leadership at the World Council of Churches 11th Assembly. This education, in a global and ecumenical context, took on the forms of workshops, panel discussions, and [plenary leadership](#).

#### *Governance:*

This summer at General Council 44, [the Equity Support Team](#) members played a prominent role. Broader than anti-racism alone, this group worked together with the Anti-Racism and Equity Lead staff to aid in working towards creating a more equitable General Council. Regular feedback, suggestions, and analyzing the results of a daily equity survey (during the Discussion and Decision Sessions) also informed this aspect of the work. The regular use of the Equity Aspirations was also a helpful element.

One of the goals noted in the anti-racism action plan is to increase racial diversity among national committee members. The Member Engagement staff has been working collaboratively with the Anti-Racism and Equity staff to not only diversify committees, but also to work towards gauging and supporting people's comfort and fuller participation.

The voluntary identity-based data collection through [Leadership Counts](#) will aid in creating a baseline data for the identities of our national committees, as well as ministry personnel, and staff of the General Council and regional councils. Seventy-two percent of the church leaders serving on national committees at the end of this past term completed the voluntary survey to name their identities, 38% of those who participated identified themselves as Indigenous or racialized. Thirty-two of the 35 committees of the General Council, National Indigenous Council, Office of Vocation and Pension Board meet the goal that committee members are not all White.

The transformation of committee practices is also a component. This fall all Office of Vocation committees took time to discuss means to bring equity, diversity and anti-oppression commitments to their meeting practices and decisions. Staff are creating an online education program focused on Equity, Diversity, and Anti-Oppression for all national committee members. This online program has been named for committee chairs, and the overall program will start to roll out in the new year of 2023.

*Theology:*

The goals of the anti-racism action plan that relate to theology are being engaged with faculty from several United Church theological schools. This group is exploring ways in which the church and the schools might collaborate together around this work. The faculty group were excited to be invited into this collaborative conversation and work together, and have asked to meet together (online) regularly over the next year. The next meeting will be an opportunity to share an inventory of courses and resources that faculty use in engaging anti-racism work in their teaching and research. This inventory may help identify areas to strengthen and possibilities for collaboration amongst and between the schools.

As always, and in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Calls to the Church of the Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle, there is collaboration on some of the anti-racism work, and there are also parts of this ministry that are solely led by and for the Indigenous Church.

## PENSION BOARD ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

### Origin: Pension Board

#### Report

Under the current governance structure, the Executive of the General Council is the legal Administrator of the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada and has oversight responsibilities for its operation. To facilitate the conduct of those responsibilities, the Pension Board submits a comprehensive accountability report to the Executive of the General Council at its fall meeting and provides an update at other meetings if substantive events have transpired. The Board trusts that this information will be useful and would be pleased to provide supplemental information at any time.

This report outlines key activities of the Board and its committees since November 2021 and concludes with a list of motions passed since the last report.

#### 2021 Pension Annual Report and some Fast Facts about the plan

[The 2021 Pension Annual Report](#) was published in August 2022. In Appendix B, you'll see "Fast Facts" about the plan, which were excerpted from that report.

#### What do the Fast Facts tell us?

The Plan is quite mature, as we have fewer **active members** (3,242) than **inactive members\*** (6,244). This makes us more dependent on investment earnings than a less mature plan, because we don't have as many younger, active members making contributions. It is notable that, on average, most members receive pension payments for longer than they contribute to the Plan (24.5 years versus 19 years).

*\*An inactive member is someone who is receiving a pension from the plan or has terminated employment but left their earned pension in the Plan.*

Here's the good news:

- The Board and its committees use a prudent and conservative approach, which helps the plan withstand challenges such as equity market volatility, the pandemic and rising inflation.
- In 2021, more new members joined the Plan (243) than retired (200)!
- The Fund continued to perform well overall in 2021, with a market value of \$1.66B at December 31, 2021, a \$71 million increase since December 31, 2020. The market value of the Pension Fund at June 30, 2022 was \$1.4 billion, a \$239 million decrease from the market value as at December 31, 2021.
- Despite volatile markets, the Plan's going concern and solvency funded ratios did not deteriorate in the first half of 2022
- Based on results of the strong financial position of the Plan the Pension Board implemented a benefit improvement effective January 1, 2022. This is the third improvement in three years.



## **Membership and Appointments**

### **Pension Board**

The General Council Executive approved the appointment of Anne Soh, FSA, FCIA, ICD.D as the next chair of the Pension Board on April 30, 2022. Anne served on the Pension Plan Advisory Committee since 2011, assuming the chair from November 2013 to December 2020. Following completion of her third and final term on PPAC in December 2020, Anne was appointed to the Pension Board. [Her professional biography may be found here.](#)

Marcus Robertson, David Gilliland and Doug Greaves, completed their third and final terms at the June 2022 meeting. **Marcus Robertson** was a member of the Pension Plan Advisory Committee from 2009 until he joined the Pension Board in 2013; he served the members of the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada for 13 years. **David Gilliland** joined the Pension Board in 2013 and was the Pension Board representative on the Audit Committee. A former chair of the Investment Committee, **Doug Greaves** moved to the Pension Board. As Doug was first appointed to the Investment Committee in 2005, he served members of the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada for 17 years!

Executive of the General Council approved the nominations of three new pension professional members at its meeting on September 18, 2022:

- [Alison McKay](#) is the CEO of Saskatchewan Healthcare Employees' Pension Plan (SHEPP);
- [Bill Gilliland](#) is a partner at Dentons Canada in Calgary focusing on capital markets, mergers and acquisitions, governance and sustainable finance for clients in the energy infrastructure (power, utilities, pipelines) space; and
- [Tamara Demos](#) recently retired as Managing Director, Private Pension Plans Division, Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions. Until her retirement, Tamara was also Vice Chair of the Canadian Association of Pension Supervisory Authorities (CAPSA).

The Board is pleased to welcome Mitchell Anderson for a second term as a representative of the General Council Executive to the Pension Board and looks forward to the appointment of a second representative.

### **Pension Plan Advisory Committee (PPAC)**

There has been one change to the Pension Plan Advisory Committee's membership since our last report. Upon completion of Marcus Robertson's term on the Pension Board in June 2022, Joanne Wilson became the Pension Board's representative to PPAC.

### **Investment Committee**

Deborah Ng, Douglas Chau and Adam Buzanis were appointed to the Investment Committee with effect from May 1, 2022. Steve Smith was appointed with effect from the November 2021 meeting. Upon completion of Marcus Robertson's term on the Pension Board in June 2022, Katharine Preston became the Pension Board's representative to the Investment Committee.

***Material administration activities and administration services performance:*****Pension and Benefits Administration – PABAS Program**

Implementation of the Pension and Benefits administration system is progressing well. The software purchased from LifeWorks (formerly Morneau Shepell) continues being customized to reflect the Plan's provisions, administrative practices and data-management needs. The transition to Ariel Payroll for pensioner payroll, effective September 2022, went very well with great coordination between Lifeworks, MBS and the project team to resolve all data queries over multiple rounds of testing. The key successes were:

- Data conversion – all except one record successfully transitioned (one pensioner missed due to poor data entry in prior system)
- Improved process – the templates are more efficient than RBC's authorization forms
- For September payroll, the gross amounts matched in both the new Ariel and prior systems
- Best Interests – Lifeworks recommended solutions that best benefit UCC and our members.

The forty-month implementation is overseen by a steering committee comprised of the chair of the PPAC, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Officer Ministry and Employment. It meets monthly and reports quarterly to PPAC and the Board. It is anticipated that the new system will "go live" October 2023.

**Valuation of the plan's funded position as at December 31, 2021**

Actuarial valuations are required by regulation every three years, unless the Plan has solvency concerns. An actuarial valuation is an appraisal of a fund's assets versus liabilities, using investment, economic and demographic assumptions to determine the funded status of a plan. The usual practice for this Plan has been to perform actuarial valuations every two years rather than at the prescribed three-year intervals.

In early 2022, the Pension Plan Advisory Committee (PPAC) worked with Mercer and pension staff to conduct a valuation of the plan at December 31, 2021. Results of the valuation revealed that the plan remained well-funded on both a going-concern and solvency basis at December 31, 2021. PPAC recommended the valuation to the Pension Board for filing with regulatory authorities, which the Pension Board approved at its meeting on June 14, 2022. The plan will not be required to file another valuation for three years, which will provide contribution and benefit stability during this period of economic and geopolitical upheaval.

The following table gives a brief summary of the funded position of the plan at the end of 2019, 2020 and 2021, accounting for the benefit improvement at January 1, 2022, with estimates to the end of Q2 2022.

| Funded Position (in Millions)                                  |                                    |                             |   |                             |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
|  | Dec. 31, 2019<br>(filed valuation) | Dec. 31, 2020<br>(estimate) | Dec. 31, 2021<br>(last filed valuation) | June 30, 2022<br>(estimate) |
| Going Concern surplus (smoothed)                               | \$293                              | \$222                       | \$274                                   | \$386                       |
| Going Concern Funded Ratio                                     | 122%                               | 115%                        | 119%                                    | 130%                        |
| Solvency Funded Ratio<br>(Percentage funded on Solvency basis) | 116%                               | 113%                        | 122%                                    | 122%                        |

### **Benefit Improvement effective January 1, 2022**

In late 2021, analysis indicated that a benefit improvement could be granted and the solvency and going concern ratios would remain at or above the 100% solvency/115% going concern thresholds required by the Funding Policy. The Pension Board, on the recommendation of the Pension Plan Advisory Committee, implemented a benefit improvement effective January 1, 2022. Retired and Inactive Plan Members received a 4% increase to their annual pension benefit, subject to provisions of the Income Tax Act and regulations. Active Plan Members received a .45% increase to the accrual rate from 1.4% to 1.85% for the calendar year 2022, with the proviso that the accrual rate would return to 1.4% in 2023 and subsequent years.

### **Consideration of a Benefit Improvement effective January 1, 2023**

At June 30, 2022, the plan was well-funded on both going concern and solvency bases. Markets have been volatile, losing and gaining ground since June 30. PPAC and the Board will continue to monitor the plan's funded status and any further geo-political turmoil and will consider whether a benefit improvement can be provided at January 1, 2023.

### **Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures**

The Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures (SIPP) is reviewed by the Investment Committee annually. During 2021 the Investment Committee reduced the target allocation to Canadian equity from 12% to 6% and increased the target allocation to global equities from 18% to 24%. The SIPP was updated to reflect this change. The Investment Committee made this change as they viewed global equities as providing more diversified opportunities. However, the Committee also felt strongly that it should keep some exposure to Canadian equity as a Canadian pension plan.

**Investment performance of the Pension Fund**

At June 30, 2022, annualized returns for the Pension Fund were as follows for one to five-year periods as compared to policy, which represents the return on the assets as if they had been passively invested in the policy asset mix.

|             | <u>Fund</u> | <u>Policy</u> |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| One Year    | -7.9%       | -9.2%         |
| Two Years   | 1.0%        | -1.0%         |
| Three Years | 2.1%        | 1.5%          |
| Four Years  | 3.0%        | 2.8%          |
| Five Years  | 3.7%        | 3.6%          |

Year-to-date to June 30th, the Fund return was -12.8%, 0.4% below the policy return. Absolute returns are poor but this is consistent with the current economic environment where high inflation is negatively impacting both bond and equity markets. On a relative basis, the Fund exceeded its policy return from one to five years. The source of this outperformance can be traced to the Fund's real estate and private equity investments which generated five-year returns of 14% and 23% respectively. However, their performance impact is muted as these private market investments currently represent only 15% of assets. What also helped was the 2020 decision to replace the foreign equity investment managers with two new global equity managers that were more balanced from an investment-style perspective.

The market value of the Pension Fund at June 30, 2022 was \$1.4 billion, a \$239 million decrease from the market value as at December 31, 2021. Over the first half of the year, investment losses of \$211 million and pension payments of \$38 million were offset by contributions of \$10 million. At June 30, the Pension Fund was 47% invested in Equity, Private Equity and Real Estate and 53% invested in Fixed Income and Cash. This is within the current bounds of the SIPP but differs from the target allocation by two percent.

The Investment Committee continues to look forward, approving a new US \$15M private equity commitment with an existing manager, replacing our Canadian equity manager, and recommending a new allocation to infrastructure which the Board has approved. The new target infrastructure allocation is small at 3% of assets, with offsetting reduction in the global equity allocation. Infrastructure investments are expected to grow over time as the Investment Committee makes commitments and gains experience in this new asset class.

## **Responsible Investment**

The Investment Committee and staff have primary oversight of the Fund's responsible investment activities in the following areas:

- Proxy voting
- Engagement proposals from the Shareholder Association for Research and Education (SHARE)
- Review of related policies that form part of the governance documentation
- Participation in relevant conferences and meetings
- Engagement with United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment

Notable activities:

- So far in 2022, the plan has participated in 62 engagement initiatives with 27 companies around issues of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, investing in reconciliation, decent work, racial justice and IT and civil rights.
- The Fund's emerging market equity manager, Coronation, has a 1% allocation to gambling stocks. However, Coronation enacted a tobacco exclusion, selling its tobacco position, which represented about 5% of its assets. The United Church has no control over specific investments in pooled funds. The Investment Committee noted that Coronation was not offside the approved responsible investment guidance which does allow up to 10% of assets in a pooled fund to be invested in excluded sectors.
- The pension plan filed a shareholder proposal with Constellation Software urging the company to improve their DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) practices. The proposal requested the preparation of a report on the company's plans to identify, address, mitigate, and dismantle racial disparities within its workforce. Despite the Board of Constellation Software recommending that shareholders vote against the resolution at their AGM on May 5, shareholders voted 62% in favour.
- As a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the pension plan now excludes Russian and Belarusian investments.
- In 2021, the plan signed on to the Canadian Investor Statement on Climate Change sponsored by the Responsible Investment Association with a commitment to having net zero emissions by 2050. In 2022, the Investment Committee added achieving net zero to its objectives. Preliminary steps included measuring the current carbon footprint, which demonstrated reporting inconsistencies that will need to be resolved. Next steps include reviewing disclosures of investment managers and other pension plans to help meet the objective.

## **Cyber Security**

Cyber risks were considered in the building of the Exodus bridging solution and the Elysium target operating model. Working with both internal United Church IT professionals, Linea Solutions and MBS, and specialized legal counsel the requirements were written to state that data must be:

- hosted offsite in a data centre with commercially reasonable security certification
- held in Canada
- encrypted in transit and at rest

For the Exodus solution, Microsoft Azure was selected as Microsoft was an existing vendor who had demonstrated its ability to meet these requirements. Our security provisions continue to evolve with input from UCC IT and external vendors (e.g., Linea Secure) as appropriate, to ensure that our data remains secure and access is limited to authorized users. For Elysium, Lifeworks is subject to the same requirements and these are set out in detail in the Master Service Agreement.

Staff is preparing a comprehensive inventory of security provisions for the plan and the PABAS Steering Committee's consider the need for a Third-Party Risk Management (TPRM) program in the context of the ongoing implementation project with Lifeworks.

***Changes to the pension plan's auditor, actuary, external legal counsel and other service providers:***

**Actuarial Services**

As advised in the last report, as part good governance the Board and staff reviewed the plan's actuarial services provider, Mercer, with a view to benchmarking service offerings and associated costs. In May 2022, management and Mercer signed an updated Letter of Engagement, reflecting fixed fees for many recurring services.

**Change to Pension Plan Auditor**

The Audit Committee initiated a review of audit services in 2022 as periodic review of service providers is considered a best practice in financial governance as is change of firms. PWC had been auditor since 2009. Management conducted a competitive process to invite audit proposals from Ernst & Young, Deloitte, PWC, KPMG plus Grant Thornton, BDO and MNP. The "Big Four" auditors were invited based on national profile and experience, with the other firms having some profile in the nonprofit space. Management requested written proposals including the cost of performing audits for the 4 separate entities (Foundation, Pension Plan, National Accounts and Kairos). In evaluating each proposal, management looked at depth of charity and multi-employer pension expertise of the firm and audit team, potential for thought leadership and cost. RFP responses identified cost savings and additional synergies by going with KPMG. KPMG stood out as the strongest candidate as gauged by management's evaluation process. They were not the lowest bidder, but scored better on other factors including informal reference checks.

**Change to Ariel Payroll for pensioner payroll, from RBC Investment Services**

Effective September 2022, pensioner payroll was transitioned to the Ariel Payroll System, which works hand-in-hand with the Ariel pension administration system to realize cost savings and operational synergies. For more information, please see **Pension and Benefits Administration –**



**PABAS Program** on page 4 of this report. There were no other changes to the plan's service providers.

### **Pension Board Strategy and Long-term Pension Plan Sustainability**

The Pension Board has been working to develop an integrated strategy for the Pension Board and the plan. With the help of Open Circle Strategies, a Saskatoon-based consulting firm, to half-day consultation sessions were held, including members of the Pension Board, representatives from the Executive of the General Council, representatives from the Pension Plan Advisory and the Investment committees and senior staff. Drawing on the insights gained from these sessions, a working group developed an initial draft strategy for the period 2023 to 2027. The strategy will be presented to the Pension Board for approval at its December 2022 meeting.

### **Amendments to the Pension Plan since the previous report**

Since the last report, Amendment 2021-2, Amendment 2022-1 and Amendment 2022-2 were approved by the Pension Board and filed with the provincial and federal regulators.

- Amendment 2021-2 contained changes as a result of either the new administration system's capabilities, housekeeping changes or legislative updates.
- Amendment 2022-1 implements the ad hoc pension increase and temporary accrual rate increase approved by Pension Board at its December 9, 2021 meeting.
- Amendment 2022-2 allows members employed by a withdrawing employer who are on a Disability Leave at the time of withdrawal to continue to accumulate Continuous Service and accrue Credited Service under the plan until the earliest of recovery, termination of Continuous Service from their Employer, death, retirement, cessation of their Disability Leave (ceasing to qualify for STD/LTD benefits under The Church's plan) and attainment of normal retirement age (age 65).

### **Compliance**

All administration practices comply with regulatory requirements and the Pension Plan Text as noted above. All regulatory filings since the last report were made within the mandated filing periods.

### **Other information that the GCE requested**

None at this time.

### **Other information that the Pension Board feels is appropriate**

Since the last report to the Executive of the General Council, the Pension Board, Pension Plan Advisory Committee and Investment Committee each met five times. All the work at the Committee and Working Group levels is reported to the Pension Board for oversight or approval.

**Pension Board Members:**

Anne Soh FSA, FCIA ICD.D (Chair)

The Reverend Mitchell Anderson, BA(Hons), MBA, MDiv(Hons)

Darwin Bozek, FCPA, FCGA

Tamara DeMos FSA, FCIA

William Gilliland BA (Hons), LLB, ICD.D

The Reverend Hae-Bin Jung BA, MDiv, MTS

Kit (Kathleen) Loewen, BSc, BEd, MEd

Alison McKay BA, BAdmin, CPA, ICD.D

Katharine Preston MBA, B.Eng

Joanne Wilson, BSc, MBA

**Staff Support:**

The Reverend Alan Hall, Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment

Erik Mathiesen, Executive Officer, Finance

## Appendix A

At Pension Board meetings subsequent to the last report, staff and Committee work was reviewed and the following items were approved:

| Meeting Date  | Items Approved by the Board  |
|---|--|
| <i>December 9, 2021</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Pension Board authorize staff to engage the services of Open Circle Strategies at a maximum cost of \$10,000, for the purpose of developing a strategy plan for the Pension Board.</li> <li>▪ The Pension Board approve the budget for 2022, as distributed.</li> <li>▪ The Pension Board approve the revised Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures.</li> <li>▪ The Pension Board approve a five-year extension of the RBC custody fee arrangement based on proposed terms.</li> <li>▪ The accrual rate for Active Plan Members be set at 1.85% in 2022 only, with the proviso that the accrual rate should return to 1.4% in 2023 and subsequent years; AND</li> <li>▪ The pensions payable to Retired and Inactive Plan Members be increased by 4% effective January 1, 2022.</li> <li>▪ The Board approve Amendment 2021-2, as recommended by PPAC, subject to its incorporation into the most recent version of the Plan text, as reviewed by staff.</li> </ul> |
| <i>February 7, 2022<br/>Special meeting<br/>re: succession<br/>planning</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That the Board postings be amended and reviewed by the working group and forwarded to Jennifer Clarke to start recruiting.</li> </ul> <p><b>THAT</b> the Pension Board recommend to the Nominations Committee that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kathleen Wylie be re-appointed to the Investment Committee for a third term, from May 2022 to May 2025.</li> <li>▪ David Kaposi be re-appointed to the Investment Committee for a third term, from May 2022 to May 2025.</li> <li>▪ Audrey Forbes be re-appointed to the Pension Plan Advisory Committee for a second term, from April 2022 to April 2025.</li> <li>▪ Jacques Tremblay be re-appointed to the Pension Plan Advisory Committee for a third term, from April 2022 to April 2025.</li> </ul>  |
| <i>March 24, 2022</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board recommend to the Nominations Committee that Adam Buzanis be appointed to the Investment Committee.</li> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board approve the updated compliance</li> </ul>   |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
|               | <p>certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board approve Mercer's five-year fee proposal.</li> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> effective March 1, 2022, the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada will not invest in Russian and Belarusian securities, which are defined based on issuer country, Bloomberg country of risk or currency of settlement. Any Russian or Belarusian securities held in separate accounts at March 1, 2022 will be divested as conditions allow.</li> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Board approve Amendment 2022-1, as recommended by PPAC.</li> </ul>   |
| June 14, 2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board recommend to the Nominations Committee of the Executive of the General Council, that Alison McKay, Bill Gilliland and Tamara Demos be appointed to the Pension Board.</li> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board approve the 2021 Audited Financial Statements of The Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada, subject to PwC receiving outstanding confirmations.</li> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board appoint KPMG for pension audit services for 2022 for the pension plan's 2022 financial statements.</li> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Board approves the engagement of Mercer for a Canadian equity manager search at a cost of \$26,000.</li> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board approve Mercer's Valuation of the Plan as at December 31, 2021 for filing with regulatory authorities by the filing deadline of September 30, 2022.</li> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board authorize an amendment to the Plan text, to take effect March 31, 2022, pursuant to which Members employed by a withdrawing employer who are on a Disability Leave at the time of withdrawal continue to accumulate Continuous Service and accrue Credited Service under the Plan until the earliest of recovery, termination of Continuous Service from their employer, death, retirement, cessation of their Disability Leave (ceasing to qualify for STD/LTD benefits under The Church's plan) and attainment of normal retirement age (age 65). Upon the occurrence of the earliest such event, the Member's benefits under the Plan shall be settled in accordance with Article 9 (Retirement Pensions) or Article 12 (Termination Benefits).</li> <li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board approve a policy pursuant to which, in connection with a Withdrawal Event, Section 14.04 of the Plan be</li> </ul> |

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
|                         | <p>administered such that surplus attributable to the portion of the Fund relating to the withdrawing Employer <b>not</b> be distributed to Members and other persons affected by the Withdrawal Event (including via benefit enhancement) except where Applicable Pension Laws require a disposition of surplus in connection with a Withdrawal Event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Pension Board approve a policy pursuant to which, in connection with a Withdrawal Event, benefits of affected retirees, and members who are entitled to an immediate or deferred pension, be paid from the Plan except where applicable pension legislation compels settlement by way of annuity purchase.</li></ul> |
| <i>October 13, 2022</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>THAT</b> the Board approve new 3% target allocation to infrastructure and similar reduction in target global equity allocation.</li></ul>   |

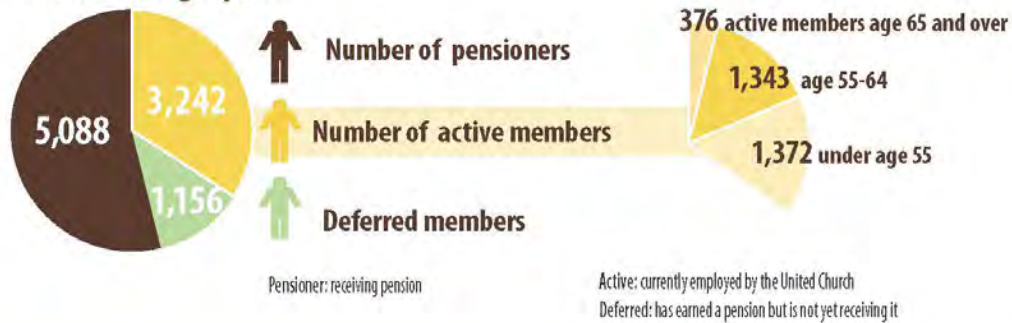
The Pension Board's final meeting of 2022 is scheduled for December 8, 2022.

## Appendix B

# FAST FACTS about your Pension Plan

As at December 31, 2021

## Plan Demographics



Average length of time people contribute to the plan **19 years**

Average length of time people receive a pension **24.5 years**

**76**

Average age of pensioners

**64**

Average age of plan members at retirement

Average age of active members

**54**

## Number of Participating Employers



## Total pension benefits paid per year

2021: \$73,140,000  
2020: \$71,255,000  
2019: \$66,778,000  
2018: \$67,608,000  
2017: \$66,628,000

Includes refunds and death benefits

**243**  
Members  
joined  
in 2021

**200**  
Members  
retired in 2021





## **GENERAL COUNCIL 44 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **Final Report to GCE**

The past four years were a challenge for the GC44 Planning Committee. We started the work with the understanding that General Council 44 was going to be held in Calgary, Alberta in July of 2021. Those plans were under way with the theme chosen and the venue secured, when the COVID pandemic came. We continued to meet and plan how the meeting would unfold, until it became apparent that a face to face meeting in July of 2021 was not possible. Under the circumstances, a special meeting of General Council 43 Commissioners was held to seek approval to postpone General Council 44 until July 2022. This gave the planning team another year to continue working towards having a safe and healthy in-person meeting.

In the later part of 2021, it was apparent that due to the continuing COVID pandemic, holding an in-person meeting as large as General Council was not safe. The GC43 Commissioners, when asked, approved holding GC44 as a virtual meeting. This was the first virtual meeting of General Council - an historic event for the United Church.

GC44 commenced February 13, 2022 with opening worship and concluded on August 7, 2022 with the installation of the new Moderator. All sessions were held virtually: opening session - February 13; learning sessions held March through May; discussion sessions - mid-June; decision making sessions - third week of July; installation of the new Moderator - August 7, 2022. Again, an historic moment as the longest General Council of the United Church.

Offering General Council virtually did not come without its challenges. We had to create times for the sessions that worked for Commissioners across the country - a difference of 5 ½ hours. We were also challenged with finding a platform that would meet all the needs of a virtual meeting that was easy to navigate for Commissioners and guests. The platform chosen was PheedLoop which worked well to meet the needs of a virtual meeting as well as accessibility and translation options. It was understood that there may be issues with internet access in some areas of our country, and possible internet interruptions but we proceeded to make the virtual meeting happen. Training sessions were provided to Commissioners on how to use the platform with options, including recordings, to meet personal agendas of participants.

The theme of GC44 was “Who Do You Say I Am” and this theme was an integral part of our work together. We engaged our Global and Ecumenical Partners in sharing their thoughts on the theme, in most cases via pre-recorded videos. Other key leaders in our church, including past Moderators, were also asked to share their own experiences on the theme: “Who Do You Say I Am.” These testimonies were very rich, giving those who attended GC44 lots of food for thought.

The entire time of the General Council was wrapped in worship. Worship was an integral part of business times. This was again, I believe, a new way of doing General Council. Graham

Brownmiller and his worship team did an excellent job in keeping the worship focused on the theme. There were many voices heard reading the scripture, using many languages, which was able to be done since the scripture Mark 8:27-30 was used throughout the meeting. The Commissioners knew what the scripture was and therefore hearing it in many languages enriched the readings.

The learning sessions provided virtually was not a new concept having been introduced at GC43, Oshawa. Having the discussion time and the decision-making time virtual was a new experience for Commissioners who had previously attended a General Council, but not new to first time Commissioners.

The planning team was committed to living into the equity aspirations of the church. This was evident with the extensive French translation of written and visual materials and live translation and the accessibility features of the technical platform. The presence of an equity support team allowed for opportunities to introduce a few new elements such as a speakers list and daily evaluations of the experience of the Commissioners.

The initial budget for GC44 when it was to be in-person was \$1,1 million. The revised budget for the virtual meeting was estimated at \$669,000 and, as of September 29, 2022, the costs were approx. \$528,000. While there were significant savings, it is important to recognize that elements of an in-person meeting cannot be recreated and are still very important for General Council meetings.

One of the benefits of the virtual meeting that cannot be overlooked is who was able to attend GC44. In order to “attend”, individuals were required to register as a participant. Over 875 participants were registered in several different categories. The category identified the permissions the registrant would have – participation in discussion sessions, speak to a proposal, ability to vote. All registrants had access to the proposals and reports that were presented at the meeting.

The following is a breakdown of registrations by category:

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| • Commissioners                      | 256 |
| • Global and Ecumenical Partners     | 32  |
| • Youth Forum - 42 youth; 16 leaders | 58  |
| • Staff                              | 80  |
| • Invited Guests - various roles     | 70  |
| • Visitors                           | 335 |

The virtual meeting allowed for many more visitors to attend and is an important factor to consider in planning future General Council meetings.

As the chair of the planning committee I would like to say that this virtual meeting was successful, the work of the council was completed as much as time allowed, and the Commissioners had a new experience.

As the GC45 Planning Committee starts to do their planning, we the Planning Committee recommend that the next meeting be a combination of virtual and in person, allowing for more time to learn and discuss the proposals prior to making decisions.

I would like to take this time to thank all the volunteers and staff who committed their time to the planning of GC44.

Faithfully Submitted  
Susan Brodrick  
Chair of GC44 Planning Committee

## REPORT FROM THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

### Origin: General Secretary

The 11th Assembly of the [World Council of Churches](#) (WCC) was held in Karlsruhe, Germany from August 31-September 8, 2022. As the WCC's highest governing body, the [Assembly](#), gathered under the theme "Christ's Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity". The United Church of Canada is a founding member of the World Council of Churches. Occurring every seven or eight years, the Assembly is the most diverse Christian gathering in the world. As well as furthering visible Christian unity, the event addressed critical global concerns related to anti-racism, climate, gender, and global health.

Four official United Church of Canada delegates were selected through the church's nominations process:

- Rev. Dr. Hyuk Cho (Pacific Mountain Regional Council)
- Rev. Dr. Catherine MacLean (Northern Spirit Regional Council)
- Ms. Samantha Miller (Horseshoe Falls Regional Council / Indigenous Church)
- Ms. Martha Wood (Shining Waters Regional Council)

In addition to the United Church, there were delegations from the five other Canadian member churches of the WCC, which includes Anglican, Lutheran, Friends, Presbyterian and Christian Church Disciples. In addition to the Canadian Council of Churches, KAIROS and the Christian Reformed church. Bishop Susan Johnson was nominated to be the North American President, however Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith from the National Baptist (USA) was elected. However, Bp. Johnson will serve on the Central Committee and the Executive. Rev. Dr. Hyuk Cho was elected to the Central Committee representing the UCC. Peter Noteboom, General Secretary of the CCC coordinated the Canadian Delegation.

The United Church delegation also included staff and elected members who provided vital leadership and service to various commissions and ministries of the WCC:

- General Secretary, Michael Blair (lead and advisor for the overall delegation; Moderator-Elect of the WCC Commission on World Mission & Evangelism; resource person on mission)
- Moderator Carmen Lansdowne, who has previously offered leadership within the World Council of Churches' Central Committee and Executive Committees
- Miriam Spies (United Church representative on the WCC Central Committee; member of the Assembly Worship Planning Team)
- Lorna Pawis (North American representative on the WCC's Indigenous Peoples Reference Group; participant in the Indigenous Peoples Pre-Assembly Event)
- The Very Rev. Stan McKay (Resource person and participant in the Indigenous Peoples Pre-Assembly Event)
- Sandra Beardsall (United Church's representative member of the WCC's Faith and Order Commission)

- Gail Allan (resource person to the Just Communities of Women & Men)
- Adele Halliday (Moderator of the WCC Advisory Group on Overcoming Racism and Xenophobia; resource person on anti-racism; Assembly plenary speaker)
- Japhet Ndhlovu (resource person)
- Patti Talbot (a delegated representative at the Assembly, representing the United Church as a “specialized ministry”—organizations related to the WCC engaged in ecumenical mission, relief, development, and advocacy)

Four United Church young adults were youth stewards at the Assembly and joined a dynamic group of 160 young people from all over the world to learn about the ecumenical movement and to offer service at the Assembly. The stewards were:

- Ryan Baxter
- Lilja Best
- Klaus Simon Bondoc
- Conchobhair Russell

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The Assembly was an event; the actions, reports and statements give direction to and set policy and shape program for the WCC for at least the next 8 years. Assembly outcomes and impact will affect the global ecumenical and member churches. As we seek to collaborate ecumenically, especially in the area of daring justice, we will certainly engage with the work of the WCC.

By way of being accountable, three members of the official delegation offer their reflection on the experience for your information. Attached as an appendix is the Message from the Assembly.

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### ***The Voice of Youth***

This summer I had the pleasure of representing the United Church of Canada at the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Karlsruhe, Germany. As well as attending the Ecumenical Youth Gathering (EYG) pre-assembly for 4 days before the assembly officially started. Several hundred youth gathered to learn, worship, pray, and have fun together. This gathering was made up of youth delegates to the assembly, stewards, and participants to the gathering. Each day we explored a theme that was part of the overall theme of the assembly through a panel of speakers, learning about the church, environment, Indigenous peoples, and more. It was a time to learn, especially about issues the mainstream media doesn't talk about, and that you might not hear about on a global level. Delegates had sessions on consensus and learned about their role and what to expect in the business plenary part of the assembly, while

stewards had orientation to their jobs and roles, and participants had workshops and other fun activities.

Early on in the assembly it was noted that the nominations list for the Central Committee of the WCC was not meeting its “target” percentages for some very specific groups of people (Orthodox, Ordained, Lay, Women, Youth, Indigenous Persons, EDAN), the EYG group chat was very active, with youth delegates all wondering how they could get their name on the nominations list. A few youth were able to get their names on the list and become part of Central Committee, but not the target percentage the WCC suggests. So many youth want to be active participants in the life and work of the church on a global level, but are not given the opportunity. We are told by our churches that we don’t have the skills or training, or that the church doesn’t have the funds to send young people, yet they seem to have the funds to support individuals outside of the youth category.

During the assembly a group of youth got together to strategize and write a statement to share in the business plenary. The statement was well written and a strategy was in place, to have the youth each at a microphone to share part of the statement, with the rest of the youth delegation standing behind them for support and as a visual that we are present, and want our voice to be heard. Unfortunately, time was cut short and the youth did not get to fully finish their statement, the statement was submitted to the business committee. This happens regularly in the church, we are told we are wanted, our voice needs to be at the table, and we are to participate, but when we have something to say it is dismissed, or there isn’t enough time and we have to submit a written piece to the business committee. Too often it is said that “youth are the future of the church”, but, as is said at any youth gathering I’ve been at, “youth are not the future of the church, we are the church NOW”. Everything I know about church business and how it works I have learned through experience, through attending Conference/Regional meetings, General Council, and fully participating in the work of the church. This cannot be learned in a book. As a youth and lay person in the church I feel as though I am overlooked at times for not having the skills or training to have myself nominated to participate in work at higher levels in the church.

I often think about the church and its decline as I sit in the choir loft on Sunday mornings and look out into an aging congregation and note that I am usually the youngest person there, with the exception of a few kids and teenagers sometimes. It is discouraging being the youngest active person in my congregation, and I have thought about leaving the church when the ageism towards youth is strong, but then I remind myself that I have a voice and I need to stand up and speak out. Through attending events like the EYG and the WCC Assembly my hope in the church is renewed as I gather with other young people active in their respective churches around the world.

I would like challenge the United Church of Canada to not overlook the role and participation of youth and young people in the church. We have skills, gifts, talents, and a voice to bring to the



table, and are often overlooked for those who have a theological background, are ordained, or work in the church. If the church wants to continue, and have a strong future youth need to be included in all areas and processes. If youth aren't included in the work of the church now there will be no church in the future.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Martha Wood*

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***Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity***

My first word is gratitude. It was an honour to be a delegate to the World Council of Churches 11th Assembly, and a privilege to represent the United Church of Canada. In the ecumenical world in which some churches proudly claim their allegiance to the Seventh Ecumenical Council, this long process of the faith-filled ecumenical life is slow-moving; nevertheless, it has been generations of church-change since my involvement at the 6th Assembly in Vancouver as a leader at the accompanying Theological Students Conference. I have been in and out of WCC life before and since then, but not at Assemblies.

In the few words of this report I am choosing to tell you about Home Groups and an Ecumenical Conversation. Delegates and official participants were assigned to Home Groups centered in Bible study. These in-depth ecumenical encounters were designed for conversation, study, and prayer - across difference. Mine was the International Sign Language and English group. As a group affirming the inclusion and value of all our members as we are, many of whom who do not hear, we wondered together about Jesus healing the blind man. With war in Ukraine and migrants at borders in contemporary Europe, we considered Jesus on the road and the Samaritan woman who cared for him, a stranger, with hospitality and love. With wide divergence in our understandings of the authority of Scripture and the humanity of Jesus, we discussed his insult about dogs and the Canaanite woman teaching him. My Home Group relationships continue; we made an ongoing commitment to pray for one another during elections.

Upcoming WCC work is informed by Ecumenical Conversations. There were 23. I was rapporteur for the Ecumenical Conversation titled "Mission Reimagined: Transforming Disciples, Challenging Empire". We held four sessions with 100 people, at the conclusion of which I wrote the report. Among the speakers were Rev. Tamsyn Kereopa, of Te Arawa and Tuwharetoa descent, and Rev. Mari Valjakka, of the Skolt Sámi community. We discussed Christian discipleship as both personal vocation and community connection. The model is the indivisible Trinity and the modeling of love in relationship; that is the fundamental basis for discipleship. We acknowledged that in both the past and the present, the church has walked hand-in-hand with empire. We release that hand-grip by discerning and disowning movements and worldviews opposed to the way of Christ and the requirements of justice. We own up to our complicity and cry our lament; we learn an attitude of humility - and confidence in the wounded Christ. Disciples of Jesus today are called to listen, to attend to what we hear, and to remember for as long as it takes. We are called to discern when it is time for compassionate

patience, and when it is time for prophetic action. Stating that it takes the imagination of a diverse church to minister in a diverse world, we offered Affirmations and Challenges to the WCC for building intercultural and transforming discipleship.

There is much more that will inspire you in that Ecumenical Conversation report and it is available; my purpose here is to share the tone and some of the content with you. My commitment as a delegate continues with presentations and reports in and beyond the United Church of Canada; in activities with other delegates and participants; and in prayer and communications with delegates across the globe as part of the affirmation of the theme that Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Catherine Faith MacLean (Rev. Dr.)*

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***Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity***

The theme of the 11th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) was, "Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity." It testifies to the gift of God to the world - the Christ who moves among us to reconcile us with each other and is calling us to unity in love. From the first day of the pre-assembly gathering of Indigenous Peoples, I heard the clear voices of those in the margins. From the Sámi Indigenous peoples of the northern part of the Scandinavian Peninsula to the peoples of the Pacific Ocean, all came to testify to the climate crisis, God's love is not limited to the human world but to the whole earth. They urge us to unite in advocacy for climate justice. Further, Indigenous peoples state that "Christian unity has often meant little more than conformity to the colonial way of life, and the dissolution of Indigenous, land-centered identity."

Each day at the General Assembly began with morning prayers and closed with evening prayers. Each prayer service reflected the rich diversity of different cultures and spirituality, representing different faith traditions. Different traditions enriched our Christian faith more fully. We realized that difference is good: it is God's design and gift. Oriental Orthodox Evening Prayer, for example, began with singing and chanting the Lord's prayer and the scripture. It was an expression of the human yearning to seek God's compassion, peace, and healing for all.

In the WCC, the United Church of Canada is one member of the family of United and Uniting Churches. Recently the Uniting Church in Sweden was established on June 4, 2011 by the merger of the Baptist Union of Sweden, the United Methodist Church and the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden. I was very happy to see that the spirit of the uniting movement is alive and our family is growing. We can't stop working together until we realize the prayer of Jesus, "That all may be one."

Just before the General Assembly, the WCC and ACT Alliance published a document, "Called to Transformation: Ecumenical Diakonia." I find the document is meaningful in that faith-based

agencies like ACT Alliance move beyond their traditional boundaries to work with peoples of no faith, humanitarians and environmentalists for the common good; they seek rights-based action. It is encouraging to see ecumenical institutions practise partnership/companionship to share common concerns together for the common good. When we share our concerns together, we move beyond our traditional ecumenical boundaries to meet the needs of the Other. Ecological, social and economic concerns bring people together for a common task; it would be one way to move beyond our colonial past. It was my hope during the General Assembly that the spirit of ecumenism would bind us all together for the common good. The spirit of the WCC General Assembly calls us to act together to reconcile with Indigenous peoples and Mother Earth in right relations.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Hyuk Cho (Rev. Dr)*  
*Director of United Church Formation and Studies - Vancouver School of Theology*

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Here is a link to a [folder with several short videos](#) (all less than 1.5 minutes in length). These are all videos from members of the United Church delegation to the WCC Assembly.

The videos include:

- 4 official delegates
- 1 video from the Moderator
- 1 from the General Secretary
- 2 videos from two of the stewards
- 1 video from Adele on the anti-racism work
- 1 video from Patti offering an overview of what a WCC assembly is
- 1 video from Sandra about Faith and Order
- 1 video from Miriam about worship at the WCC

**Appendix 1****World Council of Churches  
11th Assembly 31 August to 8 September, 2022 -- Karlsruhe, Germany****Report of the Message Committee (revised)****Introductory Note**

Every assembly of the World Council of Churches has released a message to convey the experience of the assembly and the inspirational nature of its work. We offer this message to be read in every congregation of our member churches, and published in all church media. We hope this message may be widely translated and used. It would be good to see it discussed and dissected, pondered over, and prayed over, because it represents the deliberations and prayers of over 4000 people who participated in the assembly, as we seek the unity Christ offers. We entrust this message now to you, asking you to hand it on to all Christians and people of goodwill, that together we might unite in discovering how Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.

**A Call to Act Together**

*"The Love of Christ urges us on." (2 Cor. 5:14, NRSV)*

**"Come, follow me!"**

1. From the time he journeyed on earth, and even in this present moment, Jesus unceasingly addresses these words to every human being. Jesus' life, words, and actions are a constant invitation to movement – from one physical place to another, from one group of people to another, from one mindset to another. Above all, amid the problems of the world, Jesus calls us to come to him and to abide in his love, a love which is offered for all the world (cf. Matt. 11:28).
2. The very last book of the Bible, Revelation, speaks of ancient forces of human suffering at work in the world: war, death, disease, and famine. As the assembly of the World Council of Churches gathered in Karlsruhe in 2022, we were conscious of their manifestations in the world today. In their wake come injustice and discrimination, where those who have power often use it to oppress others rather than to build inclusion, justice, and peace.
3. Individuals, peoples, and countries also face catastrophes arising directly from an irresponsible and broken relationship with creation that has led to ecological injustice and climate crisis. As the climate emergency accelerates, so does the suffering experienced by impoverished and marginalized people.

4. Yet continuing our pilgrimage together as an assembly of the World Council of Churches, our mood has been one of anticipation and hope, and even joy, because through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ's invitation remains open to everyone, in fact to the whole of creation.

5. *"Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity."* This love, in answer to the cries of those who are suffering, compels us to come to him in solidarity and to respond and act for justice. We are summoned to be reconciled in God's love, and to witness to that love revealed in Christ (1 John 4:9-11).

6. Reconciliation is a movement toward God and toward each other. It implies a readiness to listen to God and to one another. It is a conversion of the heart, from selfishness and apathy to inclusion and service, acknowledging our interdependence with creation. We confess that, even as we desire with our whole hearts to serve God and our neighbour, we have found ourselves failing, disagreeing, and sometimes walking in opposite directions. We confess that we need the transformative power of Christ's love to move to a world truly reconciled and united.

7. Christians, and the structures that we have built, have been complicit in the abuse of others, and we must repent and join in this movement of reconciliation. In the face of war, inequality, and sins against creation today, Christ's love calls us all to repentance, reconciliation, and justice.

### **Our journey together**

8. Amid all our diversity, we have relearned in our assembly that there is a pilgrimage of justice, reconciliation, and unity to be undertaken together.

Meeting together in Germany, we learn the cost of war and the possibility of reconciliation; Hearing the word of God together, we recognize our common calling; Listening and talking together, we become closer neighbours; Lamenting together, we open ourselves to each other's pain and suffering; Working together, we consent to common action; Celebrating together, we delight in each other's joys and hopes; Praying together, we discover the richness of our traditions and the pain of our divisions.

### **"Go into the whole world"**

9. From the time of his ascension into heaven, and even in this present moment, Christ unceasingly gives this command to all who follow him.

10. As reconciliation brings us closer to God and each other, it opens the way toward a unity founded in God's love. As Christians we are called to dwell in Christ's love and to be one (John 17). Such unity, which is a gift from God, and which arises from reconciliation and is grounded in his love, enables us to address the world's urgent problems. We will find a strength to act from a unity founded in Christ's love, for it enables us to learn the things that make for peace,

to transform division into reconciliation, and to work for the healing of our living planet. Christ's love will sustain all of us in the task of embracing everyone and overcoming exclusion.

11. We have tasted the experience of such love as we gathered from 352 member churches with our ecumenical partners, friends from other faith communities, and from all regions of the world to seek unity amid our diversity. Together we have listened to voices often marginalized in the world: women, youth, people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples.

12. We long for a wider movement, the reconciliation and unity of all humanity, and indeed of the entire cosmos. This would be a unity in which God establishes justice, an equal place for all, through which creation may be renewed and strengthened. We rely on Christ's love as we act and advocate for climate justice. We join our voices with the Amsterdam assembly (1948) that "war is contrary to the will of God," and the Nairobi assembly (1975) that "racism is a sin against God." We lament that we have to repeat these statements.

13. In our assembly, we have used many words, but from these we have fashioned a new resolve. Now we ask God's assistance to transform our commitments into action. We commit ourselves to working with all people of good will. As we reflect on the fruits of our work in Karlsruhe, we invite all to become pilgrims together. For in Christ, all things will be made new. His love which is open to all, including the last, the least, and the lost, and is offered to all, can move and empower us in a pilgrimage of justice, reconciliation, and unity.



## KAIROS REPORT

Executive of the General Council  
November 18-19, 2022

For Information



October 27, 2022

### **KAIROS Executive Director Report: *Advancing with Courage & Grace***

Greetings and Blessings,

There is a noted crispness in the air as Fall has arrived. We are back from the summer workflow, vacations and intentional downtime and once again in the thick of the work that is the measure of KAIROS and our ecumenical, justice initiatives. KAIROS is in a critical moment of transition and transformation.

### **KAIROS is Restructuring**

For over 20 years, KAIROS has journeyed as a joint venture ecumenical program administered by the United Church of Canada. Ten participating member denominations and religious organizations developed, supported and delivered on a mandate for faithful action for ecological justice, human rights and peace. The commitment of these members and religious organizations to deliberate on issues of common concern, act and advocate and be a prophetic voice in the public sphere remains.

KAIROS is maturing as an organization and positioning itself to assume greater operational and administrative responsibility. As such, KAIROS is restructuring to become a stand-alone organization with its own charitable status. There was a collaborative process of consultation with the Steering Committee and subsequently with all member denominations and religious organizations to discern this direction for KAIROS. The restructure is in infant stages and a working group has been struck to guide the process. The plan is for the restructure to be complete by December 2024.

### **Organizational Review**

KAIROS engaged an external consultant to lead us through an organizational review. The purpose of the review was to analyze the current state of the organization and its operations, determine any issues with values alignment, effectiveness and/or efficiencies and why they are occurring, and highlight KAIROS' promising practices while also recommending change and improvements.

The review assessed KAIROS in the following areas:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ▪ Governance   | ▪ People – Human Resources Management       |
| ▪ Culture and Strategic Leadership                       | ▪ Services – Program and Service Management |
| ▪ Organizational Framework, Processes and Infrastructure | ▪ Access and Equity                         |

This review is a necessary step towards anchoring the organization for the restructure and will also be instrumental to our strategic planning. A final report will be available in late November for review and adoption by the Steering Committee.

### **Deepening the Conversation – Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, Equity, Access & Belonging**

It has been more than a year since the release of the Internal Climate Review report. In the report, staff hoped that KAIROS:

- Would acknowledge systemic racism within the workplace;
- Would examine how the organization can become more equitable;
- Wouldn't put the *burden of leadership* on Indigenous, Black, Asian, Latinx or other non-white race identifying employees;
- Would *"end favoritism towards white colleagues"*;
- Would create *"a safe space where we can discuss equity and anti-racism issues"*;
- Would create *"a process of reconciliation and healing between staff and managers"*;

Executive of the General Council  
November 18-19, 2022

For information

- Would develop a clear set of policies and practices to end discrimination in the workplace;
- Would ensure *“that racialized colleagues feel respected, safe and have access to leadership opportunities”*;
- Would create more robust human resource measures, so that concerns about discrimination and oppression are met with clear action and pathways for resolution.

Eighteen recommendations were outlined for KAIROS to move towards becoming an equitable and inclusive workplace. These recommendations fell into the following three areas of focus:

1. **Hiring and Performance Management:** Implementation of policies, procedures, tools, and programs to help managers enhance their management and leadership acumen; including training and coaching opportunities to enhance the competencies required to lead within the organization.
2. **Anti Racism and Anti Oppression:** Enabling KAIROS to build an accountable and sustainable environment in which anti-racism and anti-oppression are central to what our organization does within our workplace culture and externally in communities we serve
3. **KAIROS' Structure:** Development of a stronger foundation with the right infrastructure, workplace culture, programs, and services in place for the organization to thrive.

We know that this work takes time and requires ongoing commitment and intention. We have initiated fifteen of the eighteen recommendations however, we have not made significant strides and our responsiveness to the Internal Climate Review has stalled due primarily to People and Culture (also known as human resources) challenges and a lack of internal organizational anti-racism and anti-oppression expertise. Advancing equity work at KAIROS is a high priority, but in order for KAIROS to truly commit to the work of equity, representation and culture, we need to sufficiently resource this work. The Equity Working Group has been reconvened to lead this work and is developing an equity framework and strategy. To support this work, the working group has participated in fundamental capacity strengthening designed to provide direct professional development in the area of equity as well as needed personal support to mitigate the mental and emotional labour of this work. They will continue to engage with external consultants and experts and will endeavour to collaborate with UCC's Anti-Racism Common Table as well.

### Return to Office

KAIROS is officially a hybrid workplace. Staff returned to the office in September and we continue the work towards creating a workplace culture that effectively supports staff and inspires an abundant container for our mandate.

This process is rooted in the best practices, policies, processes and principles to welcome staff “back” to KAIROS. We are establishing ourselves in a **new space**, with **new leadership** to design and embrace a **new culture**.



### Holding Steady

The path before KAIROS is one that is still taking shape. We can anticipate that as we transition and transform that there will be some rapids before we hit the still waters. If we can all hold tight and maintain our commitment to doing our part, we will make it and we will be better and stronger for it.

KAIROS has a strong presence and reputation. In some aspects this is positive and in some, we have work to do with wisdom, integrity, strategy and pragmatism.

In this season, we need both courage, to remain steadfast, and grace, to extend and receive goodness, mercy and favour.

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## Consent Proposals

### GS 03 EDITORIAL CHANGES TO *THE MANUAL*

Origin: General Secretary, General Council

#### 1. What is the issue?

It is desirable to make certain editorial changes to *The Manual* for greater clarity and to reflect current terminology, policies and practices.

#### 2. Why is this issue important?

With the General Council now meeting annually rather than triennially, *The Manual* needs to be updated annually to keep current with General Council decisions.

The General Council Executive has responsibility for approving changes to *The Manual* where it is redundant, ambiguous, or unclear.

#### 3. How might the General Council Executive respond to the issue?

The General Secretary recommends

That the General Council Executive approve the following editorial changes to *The Manual*:

a) *change term Local Ministry to Community of Faith*

##### **G.3.3.1 Appointing Trustees**

The congregation is responsible for appointing the trustees at a congregational meeting.

*There are specific notice requirements for a congregational meeting to appoint trustees.  
See ~~Local Ministry Unit~~ Community of Faith B.5.4.2 b. (2021)*

##### **G.3.3.6 Ceasing to Be a Trustee**

The congregation may decide that a person is no longer a trustee even if their term of office has not ended.

a. **How the congregation makes the decision:** The decision is made at a congregational meeting and requires 2/3 of the members present to vote in favour of it.

*There are specific notice requirements for a congregational meeting to consider accepting a trustee's resignation or remove a trustee. See ~~Local Ministry Unit~~ **Community of Faith** B.5.3.3 b, B.5.3.3 c and B.5.4.2 b.*

b) *change to section C.1.2 (iv) (pg. 75) from resident member to member*

The lay members of the regional council are members of the United Church who are not ministry personnel and who are

a) elected by communities of faith on the following basis:

- i) one representative from each community of faith with 100 or fewer members;
- ii) two representatives from each community of faith with 101 to 200 members;
- iii) three representatives from each community of faith with 201 to 300 members;
- iv) four representatives from each community of faith with more than 300 ~~resident~~ members; and

#### **4. For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council Executive:**

N/A

## **GS 04 CHANGES TO THE MANUAL TO REFLECT DECISIONS BY THE 44TH GENERAL COUNCIL 2022**

**Origin: General Secretary, General Council**

### **1. What is the issue?**

The 44th General Council 2022 made the following decisions that require amendments to *The Manual*:

- Way Forward 27: GS03 Amalgamation of Congregations
- Way Forward 29: GS07 Remit Process Revisions
- Way Forward 34: NS02 Community of Faith Meeting Quorum
- Way Forward 16 v. 2: GCE06 Ministry Leadership to Meet the Needs of the Church in the 2020's

### **2. Why is this issue important?**

With the General Council now meeting annually rather than triennially, *The Manual* needs to be updated annually to keep current with General Council decisions.

The General Council Executive has responsibility for approving changes to *The Manual* to implement General Council decisions.

### **3. How might the General Council Executive respond to the issue?**

The General Secretary recommends

That the General Council Executive approve the following changes to *The Manual* to reflect decisions made by General Council 44, 2022:

#### **Way Forward 27: GS03 Amalgamation of Congregations**

##### G.1.4 Amalgamation of Congregations

Congregations considering amalgamation must jointly develop a proposal for amalgamation including a ministry plan for the amalgamated congregation and the resources required. The process for an amalgamation is set out below. The congregation and regional council are each responsible for the steps assigned to them.

(Add beside G.1.4: “FYI - Please consult your Regional Council for resources for ministry plan format.”)

##### G.1.4.1 Decision by Congregations

Each congregation meets separately to make a decision on a proposal to amalgamate, including the proposed amalgamation, the ministry plan and the resources required.

...

##### G.1.4.5 Property

The regional council consults with the congregations on the property needs of the new amalgamated congregation as set out in the ministry plan. A congregation may ask its governing body to represent it in this consultation.

- a. Surplus property of amalgamating congregations: The regional council may decide that some of the congregations’ property will not be needed for the ministry plan of the new amalgamated congregation. Any property that will not be needed is called “surplus property.”

The Model Trust Deed be added as an Appendix to the Manual rather than just having a note at the beginning of section G.3 that a copy of it is available from the General Council Office.

#### **Way Forward 29: GS07 Remit Process Revisions**

##### F.2.2 Process for All Categories of Remits

.....

##### F.2.2.6 Reporting Results of the Remit



The General Secretary must report the voting results to the Executive of the General Council and to the ~~next~~ General Council.

....

#### F.2.3 Additional Process for a Category 1 Remit

.....

##### F.2.3.1 Effective Date of Change

The General Council ~~may~~**must** pass a resolution naming the date that the remit will come into effect if it ~~is enacted~~ **passes**, failing which it comes into effect when it is enacted under section F.2.3.3.

~~The date must be at least 90 days after publication of the Record of Proceedings of that General Council. For this resolution to pass it must be approved by at least 2/3 of the member of the General Council voting on it.~~

##### F.2.3.2 Sending Remit Out Immediately

The remit must be sent to regional councils immediately after the meeting of the General Council. The deadline for regional councils to reply must leave **at least 90 days for study and information sharing enough time for the remit change to be included in the next edition of The Manual.**

##### F.2.3.3 Enacting the Remit

If a remit has been approved by a majority **2/3** of all of the regional councils ~~reply that they have voted in favour of the remit~~, the Executive of the General Council ~~must decide whether or not to enact it may declare that the remit has been approved.~~

If a remit has not been approved, the Executive of the General Council may not enact it.

....

.....

##### F.2.3.4 Updating The Manual

If the remit has been ~~enacted~~ **approved**, the change will be included in the next edition of The Manual.

.....

#### F.2.4 Additional Process for a Category 2 Remit

....

##### F.2.4.4 Deadline

The deadline for regional councils to reply must **leave at least 90 days for study and information sharing**~~be no later than 18 months following the meeting of the General Council.~~

#### F.2.5 Additional Process for a Category 3 Remit

....

##### F.2.5.5 Deadline

The deadline for regional councils and communities of faith that are pastoral charges to reply must leave at least ~~six~~**24** months for study and information sharing.

## Way Forward 34: NS02 Community of Faith Meeting Quorum



[subject to putting them into the same format and adding the same headings used for the similar sections in B.7.7.4.]

#### B.5.5. Minimum Number of Members Present

- a) **Minimum number:** A meeting of the congregation or pastoral charge may take place only if a minimum number of full members is present, as follows:
  - i) for congregations or pastoral charges with 100 or more full members, at least 20 full members must be present;
  - ii) for congregations or pastoral charges with between 30 and 99 full members, at least 10 full members must be present; and
  - iii) for congregations or pastoral charges with fewer than 30 full members, at least 1/3 of the full membership must be present.
- b) **Who must be present:** A meeting of the Community of Faith may take place only if one of the following people is present:
  - i) a member of the order of ministry who has been called or appointed to the pastoral charge; or
  - ii) a designated lay minister who has been recognized by the regional council and appointed to the pastoral charge; or
  - iii) the pastoral charge supervisor; or
  - iv) another person appointed by the regional council to attend the meeting.

### **Way Forward 16 v. 2: GCE06 Ministry Leadership to Meet the Needs of the Church in the 2020's**

#### I.1.11.4 Employment of Congregational Designated Minister

A community of faith may appoint a person as a congregational designated minister if the regional council has designated the ministry position as one that is accountable to the governing body of the community of faith. The following requirements apply:

- a) the person must be a baptized Christian **and, if that person is the primary individual leading worship, the person must be a full member of the United Church;**
- b) the person must agree to comply with the polity of the United Church;
- c) the appointment must be for a specified term, which may be renewed; and
- d) either there must also be a member of the order of ministry or a designated lay minister called or appointed to the community of faith **or the regional council must ensure there is adequate and appropriate support and oversight of the ministry.**

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## GS 05 ADDITION OF INTERCULTURAL AND ANTI-RACIST STATEMENT IN THE DECLARATIONS SECTION OF *THE MANUAL*

Origin: General Secretary

### 1. What is the issue?

The Church is working towards becoming an Anti-Racist Denomination. It has anti-racist and intercultural policies and education programs in place to reach this goal. The Church's commitment to anti-racism should be reflected in *The Manual* to address a gap identified in the Declarations.

### 2. Why is this issue important?

With the General Council now meeting annually rather than triennially, *The Manual* needs to be updated annually to keep current with Church policies, programs and practices.

### 3. How might the General Council Executive respond to the issue?

The General Secretary recommends

That the General Council Executive approve the following addition in the Declarations section of *The Manual* between 'Apology to First Nations Peoples (1986)' and 'From the Calls to the Church (2018)' to read as follows:

#### **Intercultural and Intentionally Anti-Racist**

*In 2006, the 39th General Council committed The United Church of Canada to becoming an intercultural church, inviting Indigenous, francophone, racialized, and diverse minority constituencies to lead the way.*

*In 2020, the General Council committed The United Church of Canada to becoming an anti-racist denomination, building on decades of anti-racist work and the anti-racism policy "That All May Be One" from 2000.*

*The United Church of Canada has a long history of condemning racism:*

*For decades, the United Church has condemned all forms of racism, named racism as sin, and worked to eliminate systemic racial discrimination. People in the United Church have developed [anti-racism](#) policies and education programs, worked towards reconciliation and [Indigenous justice](#), adopted the [Calls to the Church](#), and created [intercultural policies](#) and initiatives. In spite of this steadfast and faithful work by committed people over generations, the reality of racism in the church is ever-present.*

*– [Working Towards Becoming an Anti-Racist Denomination](#)*

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## **GS 06 APPROVAL FOR DISPOSITION OF MAJOR ASSETS BY INCOPRORATED MINISTRIES**

**Origin: General Secretary**

### **1. What is the issue?**

Under the United Church's Incorporated Ministries Policy [https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/incorporated\\_ministries\\_december\\_2019.pdf](https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/incorporated_ministries_december_2019.pdf), all incorporated ministries of the United Church are required to include certain clauses in their letters patent/articles of incorporation and bylaws.

Two of those clauses are:

1. Any sale, transfer, mortgaging, acquisition, or leasing of land by the incorporated ministry must have the prior written consent of the supervising regional council.
2. The assets of the corporation shall be vested in The United Church of Canada in the event that the corporation ceases to function or its corporate existence is terminated.

The rationale for the second clause is that if the incorporated ministry concludes its ministry and/or ceases to exist, the assets must be returned to the United Church for use in some other United Church mission purpose.

### **2. Why is this issue important?**

Recently, some incorporated ministries have sold their property with the approval of the regional council as required under the first clause above.

Before the incorporated ministries actually ceased to function or terminate their corporate existence, they donated the sale proceeds and/or other substantial funds to charitable organizations outside of the United Church. As a result, these incorporated ministries have no assets to return to the United Church when they cease to function, and the United Church will not have the benefit of using these assets for another United Church purpose. While that result seems contrary to the rationale described above, it is not expressly prohibited under the Incorporated Ministries Policy.

The Incorporated Ministries Policy should be amended so that incorporated ministries must obtain the approval of the supervising regional council, not only for the sale of property but also for the transfer of any other "major assets" [money, investments and similar assets], to organizations outside of The United Church of Canada.

It would be up to the supervising regional council to set the threshold value for "major assets" for incorporated ministries under its supervision. This would be consistent with the regional

council setting the threshold value for “major assets” for which congregations are required to obtain regional council approval to transfer to other organizations.

The Incorporated Ministries should also include a requirement that incorporated ministries add this clause to their bylaws, such clause to be revised in the future only with the advance written approval of the supervising regional council and the General Council.

### **3. How might the General Council Executive respond to the issue?**

**The General Secretary recommends**

**That the General Council Executive amend the Incorporated Ministries Policy:**

- (i) to require incorporated ministries to obtain the approval of the supervising regional council for any transfer of “major assets” to any organization outside of The United Church of Canada;**
- (ii) to require incorporated ministries to include paragraph (i) above as a clause in their bylaws that would be unalterable except with the advance written approval of the supervising regional council *and the administrative approval of the General Council;***
- (iii) to leave it to the discretion of the supervising regional council to determine what constitutes “other major assets” for the incorporated ministries that are under its supervision.**

### **4. For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council Executive:**

N/A

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## GS 07 RE-APPOINTMENT OF PARTNER COUNCIL FOR SECOND TERM 2022-2025 V3

Origin: General Secretary

### 1. What is the issue? (describe in broad terms)

We believe God/Jesus/Holy Spirit is calling us into continued concrete relationships with partners. One manifestation of this commitment is The United Church of Canada **Partner Council**. The term of the current Partner Council came to an end in 2022 with General Council 44. Each member has served one term, and is eligible for re-appointment (for a second term).

The United Church of Canada has committed to engage in God's Mission in partnership with others, *"to form communities of right relationships, committed to resisting the forces of empire. to speak of partnership in this way requires that the whole church at all levels be invited into lived experiences of global partnership."*

*from Review of Global Partnership Principles and Practices in the Context of Empire:  
Report to the Executive of General Council, (November 2008)*

### 2. Why is this issue important?

The Partner Council of The United Church of Canada was established in 2011 as part of the United Church's commitment to live into its partnership principles of mutuality and accountability. The Partner Council ensures that the voices of global partners are represented in our governance structures, providing advice and feedback to the church from a global perspective. We are grateful to global partners for their willingness to accompany us in our mission and ministry, and to contribute the gifts of their time, talent and wisdom.

The United Church Partner Council draws together perspectives from each of the regions where the United Church works with global partners (Global Ecumenical, Africa and the Middle East, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean). Individuals from partners in each of those regions provide their voice and experience, and their regional expertise, to the Council.

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### 3. How might the General Council Executive respond to the issue?

The General Secretary recommends

- i. That the General Council Executive re-appoint the following current members of the Partner Council for a second term, 2022-2025:
  - **Ms. Aisha Frances**, Executive Director of **KAIROS-Canada**, representing the Canadian Partnership Program;
  - **Mr. Samer Laham**, Director of Emergency Response Services from the **Middle East Council of Churches**, representing Middle East partnership program

- **Mr. Marcelo Leites**, General Secretary of the **World Christian Student Fellowship**, representing Global Ecumenical partnerships;
  - **Mr. Kangwa Mabuluki**, General Secretary of **The All Africa Theological Education by Extension Association** representing Africa partnership Program;
  - **Mr. Horacio Mesones**, from **Centro Regional Ecuménico de Asesoría y Servicio (Argentina)**, representing the Latin American & Caribbean partnership program;
- ii. **That the General Council Executive appoint the following partner representative to the Partner Council for a first term, 2022-2025**
- **Ms. Annie Namala**, Board Chairperson of the **Human Rights Advocacy and Research Foundation (India)**, representing the Asia partnership program.

#### 4. What will be the impact?

The Partner Council provides opportunities for addressing **Strategic Plan**, including global collaboration in programs/spaces particularly related to the Strategic Objective on Embolden Justice (and its activity streams focused on Indigenous justice, racial equity, Two Spirit or LGBTQ+ rights), as well as other Strategic Objectives and activity areas.

**Staff time and budget** are within Church in Mission Unit 2023 budget and staff work plan.

**Risks** include the possibility of continuing challenges to gathering in-person. The entire 2019-2022 triennium

#### 5. How does this proposal help us live into the commitments on equity? And For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council Executive:

The Global Partnership *Review (2008)* declared that The United Church of Canada's engagement with global partners in God's mission would be shaped by a new "*Statement and Affirmations on Global Partnership*<sup>1</sup>", with ten guiding principles which included the understanding that:

- **Right relations are at the very heart of God's Mission**

*... "right relationships flow from an understanding that relationship is central to the nature of God, and that the Spirit calls us to live relationships that reflect Christ's character of justice and love..."*

- **Global Partnerships are lived expressions of right relationships**

*Global partnerships, the expression that we use to speak of our shared work in God's Mission with churches and organizations around the world, are first and foremost to be lived expressions of the right relationships towards which God calls us. This means that partnerships will give attention to the values that guide them, seeking to deepen understanding and practice to more fully model for the world relationships based on respect,*

<sup>1</sup> From *The Review of Global Partnership Principles and Practices in the Context of Empire: Report to the Executive of General Council*, (The United Church of Canada, November 2008)



*mutuality, trust, reciprocity and transparency. Deep listening and mutual learning are fundamental characteristics of partnership...*

- **God's mission is meant to be undertaken in partnership**

*Because right relationships are at the heart of God's Mission we believe that mission is meant to be undertaken in partnership. In part, we believe that this is so because no one community has the full resources needed for God's Mission. Money is never alone sufficient; wisdom, vision, activity, creativity, friendship are all needed for the fullness of God's purposes. Learning to receive from partners is a particularly challenging skill for the church to learn as it seeks to work in partnership. Most importantly our experience has taught us the importance of partnership in God's Mission as a faithful check on the church seeing the world and God's Mission through perceptions molded by complicity in empire. In other words, partners need each other to see the world and themselves more clearly. The church is called therefore seek partnerships in all aspects of its participation in God's Mission....*

The Partner Council is a key way in which The United Church of Canada lives out these principles. We are grateful for global partners willing to serve in this way.

**APPENDIX I****PARTNER COUNCIL – UPDATE****September, 2019****TERMS OF REFERENCE:***Presented and approved by GCE, September 2019*

The Partners Advisory Council is one way The United Church of Canada lives out key partnership principles. It enables partner voices and input to be heard at all levels of the church, including governance structures, and affirms the importance of global partner accompaniment of the church as we continue to live out God's mission in Canada and globally.

**The Partners Advisory Council shall:**

- Connect to various ministries, regions and structures of the United Church bringing global perspective, wisdom and experience.
- Deepen understanding of United Church context informed by global perspectives. .
- Reflect back to the United Church their perspectives of United Church ministry in Canada and globally.
- Offer advice on how to effectively engage in partner consultation.
- Offer advice on General council programs that may benefit from a global perspective
- Be a lens for checking United Church policies and practices to ensure consistency with partnership principles
- Bring to the United Church's attention critical global or regional issues that might have an impact on our common mission/ministry work
- Serve as a mechanism for feedback regarding specific United Church policy decisions that might have an impact on global partners

**MEMBERSHIP**

Up to 7 persons representing regions of global engagement (Africa, Middle East, Latin America and Caribbean, Asia, Global Ecumenical and Canada) and an invitation to each Council meeting to be extended to regional staff of full communion partners.

**STAFF RESOURCES**

Executive Minister, Church in Mission Unit

**TERM OF OFFICE**

3 years, renewable once

**MEETINGS**

One face to face meeting per year, electronic consultation as needed

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

Reporting to the Executive of General Council

## APPENDIX II

### PROPOSED United Church of Canada Partner Council 2023-2025

#### Partner representatives

**Canada: KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives Aisha Francis (Toronto, Canada)**

KAIROS Canada is a coalition of Canadian churches, church-based agencies, and religious organizations dedicated to promoting human rights, justice, and peace, viable human development, and universal solidarity among the peoples of the Earth. It is a decisive and faithful response to God's call for respect of the Earth and justice for its peoples.

**Aisha Francis** is the Executive Director and brings to her leadership a background in advocating for racial justice issues, and experience in justice, racial equity and access for families impacted by incarceration.

**Middle East: Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) Samer Laham**

The Middle East Council of Churches is a fellowship of 27 churches in 12 countries in the Middle East. The MECC strives to be a true and credible witness to justice and peace in the Middle East, building fellowship between member churches and building relationships of understanding and respect between Christians and peoples of other faith. A key MECC focus is response to humanitarian crisis in the region.

**Samer Laham** is the Director of Emergency Response Services for the MECC.

**Africa: All Africa Theological Education by Extension Association (AATEEA)**

**Kangwa Mabuluki (Zambia)**

Based in Lusaka, Zambia, AETEA is an association of institutions offering distance theological learning for 25 countries in Africa. AETEA acts as a coordinator for programs, encourages member engagement in critical social issues offering seminars and training related to key social justice issues such as ecology and HIV/AIDS, LGBTQ2S rights. AETEA focuses on for training grassroots leaders.

**Kangwa Mabuluki** is the Director of AETEA. He has been involved in ministry and the ecumenical movement for more than 30 years.

**Latin American and the Caribbean: Centro Regional Ecumenico de Asesoría y Servicio (CREAS)**

**Horacio Mesones (Argentina)**

Founded in 2000 and based in Argentina, CREAS, the Regional Ecumenical Advisory and Service Centre, is a regional network of professionals that offers training and consulting relating to planning, communications, financial reporting, governance, and structures to nongovernmental organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Horacio Mesones** is Executive Director of CREAS, and has served on its staff since 2005.

**Global Ecumenical: World Student Christian Federation**

**Marcelo Leites**

The World Student Christian Federation is the oldest international student organization, founded in 1895. As a federation of student movements, the WSCF empowers and connects responsible young

leaders around the world in their path to changing tomorrow. WSCF describes its mission as “empowering” students in critical thinking and constructive transformation of our world by being a space for prayer and celebration, theological reflection, study and analysis of social and cultural processes, and solidarity and action across boundaries of culture, gender, and ethnicity.

**Marcelo Leites** became the Federation’s Secretary General in 2021, serving previously as Regional Executive for Latin America and the Caribbean and Director for WSCF’s Global Program on Ecological Justice.

#### **Asia: Human Rights Advocacy and Research Foundation**

##### **Annie Namala**

The Human Rights Advocacy and Research Foundation (HRF) is a civil society institution in Chennai, India that has worked for the promotion and protection of human rights since 1993. HRF enables socially excluded communities and vulnerable sections of society to exercise their constitutional rights, amplifies their voice, and enhances their participation in decision-making through demystifying laws, policies, budgets, and state mechanisms. It focusses on capacity building of communities, and support to deepen democracy to build inclusive, sustainable, and resilient communities

**Annie Namala** is Board Chairperson of the HRF as well as Convener of one of the largest civil society platforms in India called Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (*Do not break your promises*). Initiated in 2004, WNTA campaigns on governance accountability to end poverty and social exclusion.

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## **GS 08 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR REVIEW TASK GROUP**

**Origin: General Secretary**

### **1. What is the issue?**

The offices of General Secretary and Moderator are two of the highest offices in The United Church of Canada. *The Manual* (2021) indicates in D. 4.1.6, that a review of the office of Moderator should occur every 10 years and places this responsibility within the purview of the General Council Executive. In April of this year, the General Council Executive directed the General Secretary to create terms of reference for a task group to oversee these reviews.

### **2. Why is this issue important?**

Good organizational practice requires a review of these two significant offices, particularly given the changing context of the United Church and the strategic directions it has set.

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### **3. How might the General Council Executive respond to the issue?**

**The General Secretary recommends**

**That the General Council Executive approve the appended terms of reference for the Task Group to Review the Offices of Moderator and General Secretary**

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#### **4. What will be the impact?**

This review is a mandated part of good organization practice. It aligns with the Common Good Strategic Objective within the multi-year initiative of “Improve policy frameworks and enhance effectiveness in governance” (while also impacting on the Invigorate Leadership Strategic Objective of “Strengthen equity, accountability and effectiveness in General Council staff system”)

Depending on the findings of the task group, the impact of their recommendations may be minor or significant.

Costs up to \$25,000 for meetings and consultation and communications as necessary

#### **5. How does this proposal help us live into the commitments on equity?**

The United Church’s equity commitments are a part of the context against which these offices and the church’s needs of these offices will be reviewed.

#### **6. If this proposal is in response to assigned work – please list proposal / motion numbers.**

- Manual (2021) D. 4.1.6
- 43rd General Council Proposal GCE 08 Review of the Offices of Moderator and General Secretary (2022-04-30-205)

### **Appendix**

#### **TASK GROUP TO REVIEW THE OFFICES OF MODERATOR AND GENERAL SECRETARY**

The offices of General Secretary and Moderator are two of the highest offices in The United Church of Canada. *The Manual* (2021) indicates in D. 4.1.6, that a review of the office of Moderator should occur every 10 years and places this responsibility within the purview of the General Council Executive.

#### **Mandate**

The review will examine the church’s needs in relation to the role of the office of Moderator, the responsibilities of the Moderator, and the opportunity a Moderator has to pursue themes and initiatives (*The Manual* D.4.1.6). The last time a review happened in was 1997. The 37th General Council in 2000 made Manual changes to the role of the Moderator and General Secretary. ([Resolution 38 – GC37, 2000](#))

*The Manual* does not require a review of the office of the General Secretary, however given 1) the restructuring of The United Church of Canada in 2018, 2) the current financial reality that faces the church in the coming years, 3) the staff cuts that were necessary over the past few years, and 4) the effects of the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is reasonable that a review of the expectations of the office of the General Secretary, given the needs of the church, should also be conducted at this time.

**Membership**

The chair of the Task Group will be appointed from among the members of the Executive. Five additional members to be recommended through the nominations process and should include at least one member from the Indigenous church, chosen in collaboration with the National Indigenous Council.

**Time-Line & Reporting**

The Task group will provide an interim report to the General Council Executive in September 2023 and a final report no later than November 2024.

The Executive will make a final report to the 45th General Council in 2025.

**Tasks:**

- a. Review the offices of the Moderator and General Secretary considering the *current and expected (future) needs* of The United Church of Canada to determine the roles and structure for the offices and make recommendations to the Executive;
- b. Develop a process for consultation which includes but is not limited to:
  - i. inviting input from across the church,
  - ii. consulting with former Moderators and General Secretaries,
  - iii. consulting with regional councils,
  - iv. consulting with Full Communion and other ecumenical partners,
  - v. collaborating with the working group on the review of the structural changes to the church, and
  - vi. Engaging with other stakeholders including staff; and
- c. make recommendations to the Executive.

**Expectations and Term**

The term of appointment will be May 2023 to December 2024.

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**NOM 02 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT****Originating Body: The Nominations Committee****1. What is the issue?**

We believe that the Holy Spirit calls us to use our God-given gifts. Our gifts differ, but all are needed. The practices of Christian spiritual formation call on us to practice individual and group discernment in selecting and affirming leaders for the church.

**2. Why is this issue important?**

The Executive of the General Council needs to appoint and authorize members to serve on committees which conduct work on its behalf and as delegates to represent The United Church



of Canada.

### **3. How might the General Council Executive respond to the issue?**

The Nominations Committee proposes that the General Council Executive

#### **Appoint the following members with terms as noted:**

##### **The Manual Committee (December 2025)**

- Mary-Beth Moriarity (Ordained Minister, Regional Council 15), *chair*, 4th term
- Fred Braman (Lay Person, Conseil Regional Nakonha:ka), 3rd term
- Catherine Grant (Lay Person, Eastern Ontario Outaouais), 2nd term
- Beth Moore (Lay Person, Shining Waters), 2nd term
- Leigh Sinclair (Ordained Minister, Northern Spirit), 1st term
- Bob Fillier (Ordained Minister, Pacific Mountain), 1st term

##### **Pension Board (December 2025):**

- Hae Bin Jung (Ordained Minister, Shining Waters), 2nd term
- Sharon Aylsworth (Lay Person, Shining Waters)

##### **Financial Advisory Committee (GC45, 2025):**

- Randy Manikel (Lay Person, Pacific Mountain), 2nd term
- Beth Symes (Lay Person, Shining Waters), 2nd term
- Cathy Rushton (Lay Person, Prairie to Pine, 2nd term
- Jayne Brooks (Lay Person, Pacific Mountain)
- Shawn Bausch (Lay Person, Horseshoe Falls)
- Rob Stapleford (Lay Person, Horseshoe Falls)

##### **Treasury Investment Committee, Specialist (December 2025):**

*On the joint recommendation of the Nominations Committee and the Finance Advisory Committee*

- Daisy Xu, *Specialist*

#### **Receive for information the following appointments made by the General Secretary**

##### **Gathering Advisory Board (December 2025):**

- Hoeun Lee (Ordained Minister, Living Skies)
- Ian Wilgus (Lay Person, Shining Waters)
- Matthew Emery (Ordained Minister, Pacific Mountain, United Church of Christ)

#### **4. What will be the impact?**

These appointments are offered with a view to the strategic objective of Invigorate Leadership: Adapting and Innovating for Bold Discipleship. The work that these committees will advance varies, but with these particular appointments, falls largely under the strategic objective of Nurture Common Good: Equity and Sustainability in Resources

#### **5. How does this proposal help us live into the commitments on equity?**

In its discernment, the Nominations Committee considers diversity with regards to geography, gender identity and ministry stream, as well as the myriad ways that our lives, cultures and lived experiences make each of us unique. In addition, the committee upholds the church's commitments to the full participation of people with disabilities; youth and young adults; those who identify as Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+, Indigenous, racialized, or francophone; people active in French ministries; those who speak a primary language other than English or French; and people from marginalized communities not named here.

The 34 appointment recommendations that the Nominations Committee is bringing to the General Council Executive and, separately, to the Board of Vocation encompass leaders from across the United Church's diversity and include six of the seven equity-identity commitments. Fifteen of those members being recommended name one or more of the equity identities.

- Racialized (8)
- Indigenous (1)
- Francophone or active in French Ministries (0)
- Speakers of a primary language other than English or French (4)
- Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+ (3)
- Persons with Disabilities / Disabled (3)
- Youth and Young Adults (2)

#### **6. For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council Executive:**

The Nominations Committee met on November 8-9 in Toronto to discern recommendations for appointment to be brought to the General Council Executive and to the Board of Vocation.

The Nominations Committee offered gratitude to all who were willing to serve and prays for faith and joy in their appointments.

Gratitude is offered to Donna Kennedy who served as honoured elder for the meeting.

The appointments to the Gathering Advisory Board were made by the General Secretary on the recommendation of a discernment group consisting of the Identity and Mission Network Coordinator, the editor of Gathering and the chairperson of the Gathering Advisory Board, following an open call for nominations. They are included in this proposal to coordinate the records of those who are appointed to serve on the committees of the General Council and its Office.

*All information in this proposal is to be held in confidence until approved and until all who expressed interest are notified of these decisions.*

**The Nominations Committee:** Lynella Reid-James (chair), YongSeok Baek, Kathy Brett (GCE), Katherine Brittain, Samuel Dansokho (GCE), Jessica Stevenson, Pat Tooley.

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## Appendix IV

### WORK FLOW TASK GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

#### General Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** That the Executive ground its understanding of governance in the principle that the purpose of governance is to enable the church to live out God's call and vision for the church.

**Recommendation 2:** That the Executive adopt a clear description of its governance role as a strategic and visionary role focused on:

- Establishing vision and direction for the General Council and its office and establishing policies to give that effect;
- Determining the ministry goals for the General Council Office;
- Calling and accompanying the General Secretary and other delegates as they work to achieve those ministry goals; and
- Monitoring risks to the General Council Office achieving those ministry goals.

As the Executive engages in a more strategic and visionary role, it does so in ways that are:

- Supporting the church to live into its equity aspirations, including within the Executive's own practices, including working to decolonize governance;
- Acting on behalf of and in support of the General Council between the meetings of the General Council; and
- In keeping with the conciliar nature of the church.

#### Recommendations on Executive Functioning

The role of the Executive is to oversee vision, strategy, and direction of the General Council Office, not to engage in work in a hands-on way.

**Recommendation 3:** That the Executive establish a priority for the triennium of monitoring its own capacity for governance.

Priority: the Executive's capacity for governance is deepened to support the ministry of the United Church to respond to God's call and vision for the church.

This will be measured by:

- Establishing a framework for the Executive and its members to engage in regular self-assessments, establishing a baseline and monitoring ongoing improvement annually;
- Ensuring a governance education component is imbedded in every meeting;
- Shaping agendas to maximize the right level of conversations and on the right topic (after a baseline is set, establishing a goal for either improvement or sustained performance); and
- Monitoring how the Executive uses its time to ensure that >50% of time is on forward-looking questions of vision, direction, and strategy.

**Recommendation 4:** That the Executive arrange for objective and external governance coaching to accompany the Executive in this work

**Recommendation 5:** That the Executive clarify the roles of its supporting structures, including:

- d. the role of the Moderator and Moderator's Advisory Committee in governance;
- e. the roles of the Executive and the General Secretary's Supervisory Committee with regards to the supervision of the General Secretary, and monitoring the progress on the ministry plan; and
- f. the role of the Business Planning Committee and its chair in governance.

**Recommendation 6:** That the Executive, both for itself and in collaboration with the General Council, reimagine the process by which work comes to its table, including:

- d. Exploring the use of committees and working groups for technical issues coming to the Executive;
- e. Affirming the use of advisory groups by staff as determined by the General Secretary; and
- f. Revising the proposals process to reflect the conciliar nature of the church and strategic alignment, including ministry implications (costs, risks, benefits, challenges, etc.).

**Recommendation 7:** That the Executive commit to act in honourable and trustworthy ways to build healthy relationships between Executive members and staff leaders to deepen mutual trust. This will be evidenced when staff leaders bring work to the Executive and the Executive responds with openness and curiosity, offering constructive challenge where appropriate, and staff leaders and the Executive engage together in creative tension to advance the work of the General Council.

**Recommendation 8:** That the Executive establish a code of conduct and behavioural covenant for the Executive; determine who will have the authority to hold Executive members accountable; and establish how the Executive will hold each other accountable.

### **Recommendations Relating to Trust, Communications, and Culture**

The Executive grounds its work by listening deeply to the Spirit speaking through the whole church, and in turn acting in honourable and trustworthy ways through transparent and mutual communications. We recognize that we are a church, not a corporation, that our communications must be pastoral and the work of ministry and not a bureaucracy, and that we identify the major impacts the ministry of the church of our decisions and share those openly with the church as a whole.

**Recommendation 9:** That the Executive establish a priority for the triennium to act honourably and in trustworthy ways

Priority: Act in honourable and trustworthy ways to build healthy relationships between the Executive and the Commissioners to the General Council, regional councils, and communities of faith to build mutual trust, measured by:

- Developing a mechanism to listen deeply to the church, including Commissioners to the General Council and regional council leadership;
- Establishing a framework for regular engagement with regional council Executive ministers and regional council presidents;
- Engaging with the information and wisdom acquired through deep listening and consultation in its discernment and deliberations;
- Incorporating the importance of communication, healthy relationship, and trust into the review of structural changes happening in 2023-2024; and
- Developing and implementing a strategic communications and relational plan aligned to the governance role of the Executive, with key commitments/aspirations:
  - we are a church not a corporation;
  - communications are pastoral and seen as ministry, not bureaucracy;
  - impacts of major decisions to the ministry are to be identified.

### **Recommendations around Decolonization**

While beyond the scope of this working group, the Executive should continue working on decolonizing governance, recognizing that this is an ongoing process.

**Recommendation 10:** That the Executive reflect and act on how to decolonize its governance.

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## Appendix V



# Pension Board Accountability Report

2021-2022 Report

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## Highlights

- Overall Plan Performance
- Benefit Improvements
- Pension Plan Administration
- Responsible Investment
- Pension Board Strategy

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## Overall Plan Performance

The Board and its committees use a prudent and conservative approach to manage the Plan

As a result, the Plan is generally able to withstand challenges such as market volatility, the lingering effects of the pandemic and rising inflation



## Investment Returns

Fund returns have exceeded policy benchmarks during the one to five year periods ending June 30, 2022

| Ending June 30, 2022 | Fund  | Policy |
|----------------------|-------|--------|
| One Year             | -7.9% | -9.2%  |
| Two Years            | 1.0%  | -1.0%  |
| Three Years          | 2.1%  | 1.5%   |
| Four Years           | 3.0%  | 2.8%   |
| Five Years           | 3.7%  | 3.6%   |

However, for the six months ending June 30, 2022, the Fund return of -12.8% was below policy benchmark by 0.4%

## Funded Position

The Plan's funded continues to remain strong despite recent volatility in the markets

|  | Going Concern Funded Ratio | Solvency Ratio |
|--|----------------------------|----------------|
| December 31, 2019<br>(filed valuation) | 122%                       | 116%           |
| December 31, 2020<br>(estimate)        | 115%                       | 113%           |
| December 31, 2021<br>(filed valuation) | 119%                       | 122%           |
| June 30, 2022                          | 130%                       | 122%           |

Negative asset returns during first half of 2022 were offset by decrease in liabilities due to rising interest rates

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## Benefit Improvements

- Guided by provisions in the Funding Policy
- Benefit improvements considered when
  - Solvency ratio exceeds 100%
  - AND
  - Going concern ratio remaining above 115%
- Pension Plan Advisory Committee (PPAC)
  - monitors the Plan's financial position on a quarterly basis, and
  - recommends, when appropriate, improvements for Pension Board consideration

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## January 1, 2022 Benefit Improvement

- PPAC recommended an increase effective January 1, 2022
  - Retired and Inactive Plan Members
    - Received a 4% increase to their annual pension benefit
  - Active Plan Members
    - Received an increase in their accrual rate from 1.4% to 1.85% for the calendar year 2022
- PPAC is conducting analysis to determine feasibility of improvements at January 1, 2023

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## Pension Plan Administration

- Ongoing administration of the Plan continues on a “business as usual” basis
- Transition to Ariel Payroll for September 2022 pensioner payroll was successful
- Forty-month implementation overseen by a steering committee comprised of the chair of the PPAC, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Officer Ministry and Employment
- Permanent system anticipated to “go live” in October 2023

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## Responsible Investment

- Primary oversight provided by the Investment Committee and staff
  - Engagement with United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment
  - Engagement proposals from the Shareholder Association for Research and Education (SHARE)
  - Proxy voting
  - Participation in relevant conferences and meetings
  - Review of related policies



## United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment

- In 2021, the Plan signed on to the Canadian Investor Statement on Climate Change sponsored by the Responsible Investment Association with a commitment to having net zero emissions by 2050
- In 2022, the Investment Committee added achieving net zero to its objectives
  - Preliminary steps included measuring the current carbon footprint, which demonstrated reporting inconsistencies that will need to be resolved
  - Next steps include reviewing disclosures of investment managers and other pension plans to help meet the objective

## 2022 Engagement with SHARE

- Participated in 62 engagement initiatives with 27 companies to date
- Issues include:
  - reducing greenhouse gas emissions
  - investing in reconciliation
  - decent work
  - racial justice
- As a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Plan now excludes Russian and Belarusian investments

## 2022 Engagement with Coronation

- Coronation is an emerging market equity pooled fund manager
- Since the last report, Coronation enacted a tobacco exclusion, selling its tobacco position, which represented 5% of its assets
- Coronation reduced its position in gambling stocks from 2% last year to 1%
  - Since Responsible Investment guidance allows up to 10% of assets in a pooled fund to be invested in prohibited investments, Coronation is not offside with this holding



## 2022 Engagement with Constellation Software

- The Plan filed a shareholder proposal with Constellation Software
  - Urged Constellation to improve its DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) practices
  - Requested a report on the company's plans to identify, address, mitigate, and dismantle racial disparities within its workforce
  - At its May 2022 AGM, shareholders voted *62% in favor* of this resolution despite the Board of Constellation's recommendations to vote against it



## Pension Board Strategy

- The Board, its task group and staff have been working to develop an initial strategy for the Plan
- The Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada Draft Strategy 2023 to 2027 will be presented at the December Pension Board meeting for approval



## Draft Strategic Objectives

1. Continue to actively prioritize Plan stability and sustainability
2. Enhance risk mitigation
3. Strengthen approaches to active and responsible investment
4. Elevate Plan members' and employers' appreciation for the value of the Plan
5. Enhance and modernize administration to better serve members and employers



# Thank you!



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## Appendix VI

### GS 14 REVISION OF CURRENT GENERAL COUNCIL AND REGIONAL COUNCIL HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES: SALARY AND BENEFITS AND ACTING PAY

Origin: General Secretary, General Council

#### 1. What is the issue?

Human Resources policies [2.1 Salary and Benefits - reviewed October 2013.docx](#) and [2.3 Acting Pay - reviewed March 2014.docx](#) have not been revised in nine and eight years while the recruitment and retention environment has changed, significantly disadvantaging the United Church in attracting and retaining skilled staff in many roles. It is proposed that the two policies be combined and revised to reflect current employment practices and market.

#### 2. Why is this issue important?

Attracting and retaining employees in the staff system of the General Council and regional council offices has become challenging, especially for speciality skills in demand in the larger labour market. Critical projects have been put at risk and essential service delivery (such as information technology, pension, and benefits) have been compromised by loss of staff and inability to recruit replacement staff within the constrictions of our current Salary and Benefits policy. The revised policy aims to improve our ability to retain staff and attract staff to key roles that are vulnerable, while at the same time ensuring equitable compensation within categories and across the staff system.

With the revised policy, the General Council Executive is asked to:

1. eliminate the discretionary provision *only category 10* and up (this is a systemic barrier) and allow discretion within all categories of positions;
2. eliminate the limited 10% increase and give the General Secretary, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit, discretion to set a rate based on market conditions;
3. remove the reference to Order of Ministry Rate which is no longer in effect;
4. define the various types of increments in the life of an employee at the United Church:
  - a. *COLA*: annual economic adjustment;
  - b. *Re-categorization*: revision of a position category using an evaluation tool;
  - c. *Merit*: based on annual performance review;
  - d. *Acting*: a temporary appointment to a new role
  - e. *Recognition*: response to the current landscape of high turnover, resignations, and hard to find specialized skills; and
5. introduce a recognition program to retain and continue to develop exceptional talent in a very competitive market.

#### 3. How might the General Council Executive respond to the issue?

The General Secretary recommends that the General Council Executive:

- approve the attached revised 2.1 Compensation and Benefits Policy.

# Compensation and Benefits

## Purpose

The United Church of Canada seeks to embody the values of justice and fairness for all its employees and has established a compensation program with those values as guiding principles. The church seeks competitiveness in the employment market through compensation and benefit practices that are equitable, transparent, consistent, practical, and in accordance with the legal requirements of the Employment Standards Act, Pay Equity Act, Canada Revenue Agency, and other applicable legislation.

## Policy

The United Church of Canada seeks to attract, retain, motivate, and recognize employees by establishing and maintain a competitive salary, benefits program and administering a recognition program while remaining cognizant of its fiscal responsibility.

The United Church of Canada will provide fair and equitable benefit plans and compensation to all employees by ensuring that total compensation is internally equitable and externally competitive with medium-sized public sector organizations. Salaries will not lag by more than 10 percent with those of non-profit organizations.

Compensation will be established in a manner that is neither discriminatory nor arbitrary. Employees shall be paid a salary commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the position they occupy. Base compensation shall be within the salary range of their pay category in accordance with the established United Church General and Regional Councils salary schedule.

While it is the belief that employees are primarily responsible for their own welfare and the welfare of their dependents, The United Church shall, through benefit packages, endeavor to provide appropriate benefit plans/programs that are designed to assist employees and their dependents.

## Definitions

**Compensation.** For the purposes of this policy, 'compensation' is any form of monetary remuneration made to an individual for services rendered in the employee/employer relationship. Compensation includes, base pay, recognition pay, acting pay, premium allowances and other pay differentials as deemed necessary.

**Benefits.** For the purposes of this policy, 'benefits' are considered to be those plans or programs that are not usually reflected in an individual's pay statement as direct monetary compensation for work performed. Benefits include pension, core health and dental insurance, life insurance, non-statutory paid leave, professional and vocational development funding, and other indirect forms of compensation.

**Job Evaluation.** For the purposes of this policy, ‘job evaluation’ is a process to determine the relative value of positions within an organization utilizing pre-established criteria as a measurement tool so that positions can be compared to one another in compliance with Pay Equity Legislation.

## Guidelines

Every individual forming an employer/employee relationship with The United Church of Canada must be enrolled through the church’s HR/Payroll system in order to receive monetary remuneration and/or benefits. Employees and individuals forming an employer/employee relationship shall not be paid through the Accounts Payable system.

Human Resources must be notified of all employee benefit and compensation related matters including hires, terminations, job transfers and salary changes, acting assignments, salary increments, recategorization, and any other pay changes involving compensation or lack thereof (including non-paid placements, government programs, and volunteerism) via the completion and submission of appropriate Human Resources documents. Benefit and compensation matters must be processed and approved by Human Resources prior to implementation and confirmation with the employee/individual.

Individual salaries and benefits are confidential and fall under the legislated requirements of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Personal Privacy Act (MFIPPA). Employees that fail to comply with this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

The United Church of Canada recognizes that it is important to foster a work environment in which employees support one another, and in which development opportunities are part of sound career and succession planning. Employees will be requested or afforded the opportunity to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of a job other than those contained in their position description on a temporary basis through acting assignments.

## Types of Pay Increases

**Cost of Living (COLA).** Adjustments to the salary scale in response to economic variables are calculated using relevant information, with a formula that has been approved by the Executive of the General Council. Increases resulting from an economic adjustment are applied to salary schedule on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, subject to financial sustainability.

**Merit Pay** - Merit pay is awarded as a step increment based on established annual performance standards within the same category and pay range. Increases that reflect progression within a salary range occur on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the anniversary month of employment in the position.

**Acting Pay** - Acting pay may be awarded as compensation for temporarily assuming job responsibilities for a position in a higher pay category. Acting assignments usually involve reduced scope and responsibilities and thus will normally be paid as an additional 10% based on base compensation for the employee’s regular full time or regular part-time position throughout the acting period. Scope and duration, however, may be taken into consideration by Human Resources in determining an appropriate remuneration.

**Recategorization Pay.** Recategorization pay is an increase of at least 10% relative to the employee's current salary resulting from the recategorization of an employee's position into a higher pay category.

**Recognition** – An incentive, as per the Recognition Program guidelines, may be awarded at the sole discretion of the General Secretary in collaboration with the Ministry and Employment unit, to support retention of talent, combat turnover, and motivate employees to higher level of performance.

## Procedures

1. Each position shall be evaluated and categorized by Human Resources using a consistent and approved gender-neutral Job Evaluation process. Job evaluations shall be reviewed as needed/requested to ensure that compensation reflects the duties and responsibilities assigned to the position.
2. External wage comparisons shall be made as necessary using survey data from external, reputable organizations for jobs of comparable responsibilities in similar industries in the communities where we serve.
3. Salary schedules shall be reviewed annually to remain competitive with estimated wage changes in the external market.
4. Employee performance shall be reviewed annually in conformance with the church's policy and procedures. Salary increases which reflect progression within salary ranges occur on the anniversary date of employment in the position. Progression within the pay grade is contingent on satisfactory job performance. A performance review must be conducted prior to the employee's anniversary date and submitted by the employee's supervisor to Human Resources.
5. A move to a higher category position or an upward re-categorization of an existing position is considered a promotion. The employee's anniversary date changes to the date of employment in the new position.
6. Employees who accept a position in a lower category will have their salary red circled until their salary is in alignment with salary schedule. COLA will be issued as a one-time payment in January.
7. Fluctuations in the marketplace can sometimes result in a group moving ahead in a range at a faster pace than others. Human Resources identifies these fluctuations through the ongoing analysis of salary data for all positions, which may include commissioning a salary survey, and will report these fluctuations to the appropriate body. If a group has fallen significantly behind prevailing rates of pay, such that it appears that recruiting and retaining appropriately qualified staff is being affected, then a range adjustment may be recommended.
8. Recategorization is awarded when the duties of a position have changed to such a degree that the position is reclassified to a higher category based on the outcome of a gender-neutral Job Evaluation conducted by Human Resources. The following process applies:

- a. Supervisor requests that Human Resources conduct a job evaluation by providing a new Job Description.
  - b. Human Resources conducts a job evaluation and recommends any changes to the General Secretary.
9. Acting pay is awarded when an employee holds a regular full-time or regular part-time position for a period of more than 25 consecutive working days. The following applies:
  - a. The employee is asked, formally in writing, to perform duties associated with a position in a higher category.
  - b. Acting assignments occur when the employee in the acting position is duly qualified and performing the majority or full duties of the position.
  - c. Acting Pay is not automatic and must be approved by Human Resources prior to commencement of the position.
  - d. No other additional benefits shall be received or accrued.
10. Recognition/Incentive options that support competing for exceptional talent, combat turnover and motivate all employees to a higher level of performance will be at the discretion and approval of the General Secretary in collaboration with Ministry and Employment unit using UCC's Recognition Program guiding principles.

A Recognition Program will apply the following key guiding principles:

- a. Principled
  - Use process for decision making – based on parameters/added value to UCC's call and vision
- b. Inclusion
  - All types of jobs / all employees / all categories / all genders
- c. Transparency
  - Execution of outcomes/projects/initiatives and be seen to be delivering the same and or/ added value