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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

### Consent Reports / Information

#### GENERAL SECRETARY'S ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

##### Origin: The General Secretary

**2 Corinthians 3:12** "Since we have such hope, we act with great boldness..." (NRSV)

As we gather for this meeting, we are more than halfway through the celebration of Black History month, and at the beginning of our Lenten journey. Black History Month invites us to hear stories of resilience and hope from people who had no reason for hope. During this season of Lent, we will hear again the stories of the ministry of Jesus, and the tensions with the political and religious systems that contributed to Jesus's death. The stories are familiar and depending on the liturgical year, we read the stories from the perspective of the particular gospel writer. Each season we are invited into a process of finding new insights amidst the familiar. Some of our work may feel very familiar and it may be easy to take it for granted. However, like our Lenten journey, we are invited to hear the stories in new ways. May Spirit open us to new perspectives and insights as we go about our work at this meeting.

We welcome to this meeting Leeann Shimoda and Kimberly Roy from the National Indigenous Council. The Moderator and I are engaging in ongoing conversation and relationship building with the National Indigenous Church (NIC). An outstanding issue is the need to respond to the request of the NIC for participation and voting membership on the General Council Executive. Appreciating that we will need some time to think through the process, given the Basis of Union (7.5.1), the Governance Committee, at my request, has asked the Sub-Executive to approve two corresponding member roles for members to be chosen from the National Indigenous Council.

This meeting will provide significant opportunity for generative and strategic conversation. In your package you have received the report from the Board of Vocation. Norm Seli, chair of the Board of Vocation, and Marlene Britton, Director of the Office of Vocation, will be present to engage us in conversation. It might be helpful to familiarize yourself with Section VI of The Basis of Union (*The Manual*). We will also be meeting with the United Church Foundation chair, Jim Simpson, and vice chair, Craig Bater. Meeting together is a part of the memorandum of understanding that the church has with the Foundation (Appendix 1).

In preparation for the commemoration of the United Church Centennial we have explored the possibility of engaging in a capital campaign. We will be sharing with you the feedback we have received, and a proposal for a way forward.

I have divided this report into three sections around the Common Good. The first section will give you updates on some of the priority work for the year. The second section deals with some

of the ongoing work. The third section deals with emergent work. I have provided you with information related to the impact of having a media and press lead (Appendix 2).

### **Priority Work (Common Good)**

**Remit 1 Vote: Creating an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization:** We are quickly approaching the March 31 deadline date for regional councils and pastoral charges to vote in the remit process, regarding the creation of an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization. Currently, however, the majority of pastoral charges have not submitted their votes. All regional councils have proactive engagement strategies in place, with many offering town halls and other educational processes to respond to people's questions. Several regional councils, as well staff of the Indigenous Ministries and Justice Unit, have teams of volunteers in place who have been calling each pastoral charge in their respective areas to encourage those pastoral charges to submit their votes. Staff in the General Council Office are closely monitoring who has not yet voted, and regularly sharing that information with regional councils. We have written to all pastoral charges concerning the remit process. In addition to the already-existing background information posted on the [General Council 44 website](#), there is a new [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document, [a new video featuring](#) non-Indigenous voices speaking about the remit, as well as a video from the [National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering](#). Additional communications are planned through the E-ssentials newsletter and on social media throughout February and March. People with additional questions about the remit are encouraged to email [remits@united-church.ca](mailto:remits@united-church.ca), or be in touch with their regional council office.

**Strategic Operational Plan** development over this period has focused on the completion of 2023 and the development of the 2024 operational plan. In developing our second-year plan, our goals are to create greater focus in the plan and align the plan with the operational budget. Within the six strategic objective areas, and 26 initiatives, we have focused the plan to 77 activity streams, down from 99, and identified 20 priorities rather than the 40 identified in 2023. Some activities were completed, some moved to operations (after the development phase was accomplished), some tasks were rolled into other activities to make more robust streams, and some will not go ahead. We created a joint program budget for the General Council Office (GCO) and allocated percentages to each of the strategic objective areas, holding Indigenous Pathways at the same level as years previous. All activities in the operational plan requiring direct costs draw from this budget, from infrastructure or governance operating budgets, or from established funds (i.e. property reserves allocated to Faithful Footprints). The plan is now accessible to all staff in the General Council / Regional Council Offices, in a more user-friendly and intuitive presentation, including with budget commitments.

The development goals for 2024, beyond implementing budget alignment, are to increase consistency in reporting, to activate and better align performance management systems, and to increase capacity on strategic thinking and decision making. Tools for human resources alignment, as well as the transparent accountabilities achieved last year, include requiring workplans for staff and conducting yearly appraisals using competencies derived from the plan.

We are looking to train across the organization on strategy, and focusing more and more on whether, and how, our activities are moving forward our strategic objectives. We are also developing a document that calendars cyclical, relational, service or operational work that is not captured by the strategic plan. In addition to the 2023 fourth-quarter report in your materials, we are currently pulling together a more strategically oriented full year 2023 report against the budget.

We are continuing to live into the related structural alignments we facilitated, particularly with the Theological Leadership and Ministry Unit and the Organizational Development and Strategy Unit (ODS). The ODS Unit, which includes Ministries in French, Communications, Growth and Research and Development (data), is now almost fully staffed. Since January 2024, all Growth animators have been working and we are feeling the tremendous increase in capacity due to their expertise and commitment. Working with existing staff, refocused from EDGE and CIM, we are seeing results, particularly in the diaspora and migrant and francophone community goals, where we have been working diligently for the past year. Over 40 possible sites of new communities of faith amongst migrant and diasporic and francophone communities have been identified, some in very initial stages of conversation. These include global Methodist groups with emerging relationships with The United Church of Canada. Of these, four leadership contracts (for emerging church leads) have been developed, with six others in consideration for 2024.

In Communications, significant work improving work flows in the GCO has been accomplished (as per the Communications audit), and we are focused on streamlining internal communications and increasing impact and scope in external communications, particularly using the opportunity of the Centennial for conversation with the public. A new advocacy letter-writing tool has improved our work of “daring justice.” A team lead has been hired to head up the small Research and Development group, increasingly strengthening data-based decision making across the whole of the GCO/RCO.

**Centennial Celebration:** Planning for the centennial is underway in accord with the direction given by the GCE in November, 2023. There are three streams:

- a) **Commemoration:** The Centennial Committee, chaired by the Very Rev. Richard Bott, is helping shape the direction of these events. A save-the-date notice has been shared widely to invite people to attend the June 9, 2024, launch of the centennial year (online or in person) with a worship service at Metropolitan United Church, Toronto, a site close to the inaugural gathering at the former Mutual Street arena. An adaptable form of the service will be announced on social media and available through the website as of mid-April. A Centennial page for the website is being developed. The page will include a portal for ministries to share their centennial plans in a way that serves as both invitation and inspiration. Every month, from June 2024 to June 2025, a key moment will be highlighted on social media to mark and share our history. The goal is to curate twelve moments when the life of the church intersected with or reflected broader social themes which will enable this

to serve as part of the second stream also. The 2025 United Church calendar will include one photo of a moment from our history on each date page. While these may overlap with the historical moments noted above, this will also allow for more distinctly United Church memories. The date for the Centennial service itself has been set for June 8, 2025. This will be the celebration to which we invite international guests. More details on this will be available by the next meeting of the General Council Executive. We have, in consultation with the Finance Advisory Committee, identified \$500,000 to be taken from reserves to cover the expenses of the commemoration (2024-2025).

- b) **External-Focused Communication and Action Plan:** A few possibilities have been discussed with concrete plans still being developed. The goal of this campaign is to twofold: to introduce the distinctiveness of the United Church to those who have only a broad umbrella definition of “church,” and to reconnect with those who claim United Church identity but have lost connection.
- c) **Fundraising/Capital Campaign:** The United Church of Canada Foundation has been researching possibilities, and you have a proposal before you at this meeting.

**Total Compensation Review:** The 44th General Council directed that a study of total compensation be undertaken. The GCE approved a broad mandate for this work and appointed Jane McDonald from the Executive as chair. The task group meets bi-weekly. Members have begun exploring biblical and theological principles of compensation and staff have prepared data sets of actual compensation being paid in both the pastoral relations and the staff (General and regional councils) systems for analysis on a number of intersections including the equity markers available through the Pastoral Relations Equity Research Project. While these are early days in its work, the task group will have 2025 economic adjustment recommendations for the consideration of the Finance Advisory Committee and the GCE by the end of the second quarter.

**Roles of the Offices of Moderator and General Secretary Review:** The task group reviewing the roles of Moderator and General Secretary had a halting start in the fall but is now meeting monthly under the leadership of Catherine Glover from the GCE.

**Evaluation of Structural Change:** In March, 2018, the GCE committed to evaluate the outcomes of the structural changes implemented as of January 1, 2019. I am putting together a *Structural Change Evaluation Steering Group* to oversee the design and evaluation process. The Steering Group will consist of six people who served in related leadership roles during the time of restructuring, plus one Regional Council Executive Minister. Two of the members will be appointed by the General Council Executive through the nominating committee, two by the General Secretary and two by the National Indigenous Council. Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa will be the staff resource. The evaluation will be guided by the objectives for structural change and will rely on data collection. The collection of this data is planned for late spring and early

summer (with respect for the meeting schedules of regional councils). Consultations are being planned with regional council Executive Ministers, the Executive Minister, Indigenous Ministries and Justice, and the National Indigenous Council, as well as staff in the Office of Vocation.

The evaluation process also calls for broad input, and the Steering Group will be discerning how to gather that in ways that identify gaps and areas for improvement, with the goal of setting the course for next steps. It will be important to take into consideration the impact of the pandemic and how, in some ways, it demonstrated the benefits of change and, in others, exacerbated unintended consequences. A detailed plan for the evaluation will be available by the May 2024 GCE meeting. The results of the evaluation will be reported to the 45th General Council (2025).

*Behavioural Covenant:* We had intended to bring the covenant back to you at this meeting, as noted in the November minutes. However, we are continuing to check with elected members and would like to continue those consultations. We will bring a more robust proposal to the May meeting of the Executive.

#### **Ongoing Work (Common Good)**

**HUMAN RESOURCES:** The new human resources information system (HRIS) implementation has been completed and over the next few months it will be fully operationalized. 360 reviews were completed in the spring for General Council executive ministers and in the fall for regional council executive ministers. A 360 review of the General Secretary is underway at this time. Manager and Director training was held last month on our refocused performance management program. It is designed to help us align staff performance with our strategic goals and objectives.

*GC44 Follow-up:* The General Council directed me to ensure the provision of direct support to ministry personnel engaged in the immigration processes. A working group was appointed to fine-tune the details of such a project. This project and continuing work demonstrate quite clearly the church's commitment to being an intercultural, antiracist, equitable church. With the help of ministers who have been through the Canadian immigration processes (some of whose testimonies are included for your information in Appendix 3), the group determined areas where the help would be most needed. We have signed an agreement with Botejulaw who will support ministers in the process. We have also budgeted funds to offer support to ministers in the process.

*Financial Planning:* "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. As has been regularly reported, the Executive approved a structural deficit of \$4 million in the 2023 operating budget, but we've known the actual result will show a surplus due to three factors: the extraordinary gift from the Hope

bequest, excellent performance in the investment market, and slower-than-expected spending on the strategic plan growth initiative.

The Hope bequest, totaling \$8 million, was received by the General Council in early 2023. Half of this amount, \$4 million, was transferred at year end to the Mission and Service Trust held by the Foundation, as approved by the General Council Executive. The remaining \$4 million has been earmarked to support the strategic plan growth initiative. A significant bounce-back in investment markets resulted in an 11.73% one-year return on our overall investment portfolio (excluding GICs and the remaining legacy bond portfolio), further enhancing the operating reserves that support the church's work.

In the broader economic context, declining interest rates impact the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and are good news for United Property Resource Corporation (UPRC) project financing, captive insurance replacement cost inflation, and various other significant considerations. The drop in interest rates has an adverse impact on pension plan funding, but that remains very strong.

For the 2023 operating budget, revenues are tracking well to budget. Mission and Service contributions are expected to slightly exceed the budgeted amount of \$20 million. However, it's important to note that compared to 2022, there is a decrease of over \$1 million in Mission and Service contributions. Looking at the longer time horizon, it remains true that the church is facing a decline in revenue, and operating expenditures are fully exposed to pressures from high inflation. The decline in Mission and Service contributions in 2023 could be attributed to the shortened remittance deadline, though the magnitude is difficult to measure precisely. The shortened remittance deadline aims to accelerate year-end closing and have Mission and Service figures ready sooner for better financial planning. In this aspect, there is evidence showing that congregations are making good progress in remitting year-end Mission and Service contributions earlier.

The 2024 budget, ratified during last November's GCE meeting, marks the introduction of a fresh budget framework aimed at enhancing the alignment between the strategic plan and financial resource planning. As management progresses towards the final stages of operationalizing the 2024 budget and implements procedures to promote better financial stewardship, discussions concerning the financial plan for 2025 and beyond have already commenced. The overarching objective is to attain long-term financial sustainability, ultimately serving to best support the Call and Vision of the church.

With the goal of long-term financial sustainability in mind, the following broader topics will continue to be on our collective minds:

1. What does a financially sustainable "broader church" look like? Can we simply downsize expenditures to align with revenues? Can we afford our current structures with the responsibilities currently assigned?



2. What does a financially sustainable Indigenous church look like and how might it be funded? How would the broader Indigenous church structures participate in cost containment?
3. How can we advance equity, diversity and anti-oppression ambitions and commitments?
4. From a risk management perspective, what is the appropriate balance between “living within our means” and investing in the strategic plan?

**Mission and Service:** 2023 might be our first indication of how Mission and Service will look after the onset of COVID-19. It was also the first year in several where there were no world events that contributed to a generalized lift in giving. We continue to be so very grateful for the generosity of the people of the United Church. Congregations and communities of faith continued to very strongly support the work of the denomination through Mission and Service, exceeding budget expectations, however falling significantly short of the prior year total. We are particularly grateful for all those congregations that sent in their 2023 Mission and Service contributions in time to meet the January 15th deadline. We saw a marked increase in the number of congregations who met the deadline as compared with 2022 (when the deadline first changed). The Advent appeal received the best response of all the 2023 appeals and came in just slightly ahead of the 2022 Advent results. In addition to direct and community of faith giving for Mission and Service, anywhere from two to 26 communities of faith in each Region participated in stewardship education over the past three years. This is important because it supports congregations and communities of faith in embedding stewardship in their faith, and results in increased revenues both locally and for Mission and Service. In total, across the country 213 – slightly more than 10% of congregations – have participated in Call to Be the Church: The Journey. As you might expect, results vary, but the most recent cohort from the UCC East saw increases in PAR donations – both total amount and number of donors – across all congregations, and all congregations increased their Mission and Service givings. It is clear the program increases the capacity of communities of faith in their revenue generation.

**Pension Board:** The Pension Board, after consideration of current funding levels, approved a 4% increase to pensions and set the active member accrual rate in 2024 at 1.85%. The Pension and Benefits Administration Stabilization project delayed the system go-live planned for October 2023. At this point the anticipated go-live is mid-2024.

**General Council Archives:** Erin Greeno, formerly the Ontario regional councils’ archivist, has moved to the General Council Archives in the role of Digital Archivist. Interviews for the Manager position are being held in early February. I should have news of an appointment by the time that the Executive meets.

### ***Programmatic Work***

The most recent version [40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism](#) took place in October and November of 2023, and that was the third year of the popular online program. The 40 Days

offers daily written reflections on anti-racism (with opportunities for exploring learning, faith reflections, and action), weekly live events with diverse and thought-provoking speakers, books with the [United Church Bookstore](#), and study groups. The program is carefully designed to live into some of the goals named in the church's [Anti-Racism Action Plan](#) (a plan which is now incorporated into the overall Strategic Plan). Each year, the program goes through a fulsome evaluation, and this year's program focused on the impact of engaging with anti-racism work in communities of faith. One participant noted that: "the 40 days were a life changing experience for me. I feel I will be more confident living and working in Canada as a racialized person." Others have named how this program is helpful for transformation, the value of offering opportunities for discussion, their own learnings, and actions that they are taking as a result of engaging with the program. Many have named their hope that the 40 Days will continue.

*Rendez-vous 2024: Audacious Hope* from July 3-6, 2024 in St. Catharines, ON – We are pleased to partner with the Presbyterian Church in Canada to host a joint national event for youth, young adults, and their leaders.

*Then Let Us Sing!* The Sampler pilot period is ending and the building of a bilingual digital hymnal platform with over 1,300 hymns in multiple languages and musical styles has begun. This new online hymn resource reflects the diversity of God's people and will be ready for you to use later this year. *Then Let Us Sing!* is also a proud recipient of the Calvin Institute Vital Worship Grant this year, with a focus on faith and identity formation through congregational song.

*Ecumenical and Full Communion Update:* In late November, 2023, we met with our two full communion partners, The United Church of Christ (USA) and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ in the US and Canada) in Cleveland. The two-day hybrid meeting was graciously hosted by United Church of Christ colleagues in their newly renovated office space. Some staff from each communion met in-person for the two days, while other staff joined remotely for portions of the meeting. The heads of communion had met virtually earlier in 2023 and identified four key areas for further conversation and potential collaboration. These included: Korea Peace Accord and Palestine-Israel, Anti-racism and decolonization work, Ministry and lay leadership and Fundraising, stewardship, and property development

Staff with responsibility for ecumenical and full communion relationships in all three denominations were part of this initial meeting and developed a plan to involve key national staff from all three communions in the November meeting. One staff person from each communion organized the smaller staff groups, based on staff expertise in the four key areas. These smaller staff groupings met virtually a few times in the fall to build relationship, identify areas of shared work, possibilities for further collaboration, and existing resources that could be shared. The four staffing groups joined the meeting online over the course of the two days to share their work, invite questions and conversations, and potential direction for future collaboration.

The conversation also identified the need for some more intentional check-in and evaluation around how things are working – e.g. mutual recognition of ministry process – what are we learning from this, what could benefit from testing again? Also noted was the question of bilateral accountabilities – how we will continue to be accountable to each other, particularly as noted in our full communion agreements? The heads of each communion agreed to meet again early in 2024 to make some decisions about next steps for these four areas of shared ministry.

The relationship between the United Church of Christ and the UCCan is quite developed. One of the things we identified was the need for a bilateral relationship development with the Christian Church Disciples, especially in light of the bi-national nature of the Disciples.

The responsibility for maintaining our existing full communion relationships has shifted from Jennifer Janzen-Ball, Executive Minister for Theology and Ministry Leadership, to Japhet Ndhlovu, Executive Minister for Church in Mission, as part of the earlier restructuring of the General Council Office.

### **Emergent Work (Common Good)**

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) – Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP) online course – A 6-week SOGIE-PSRP online course is under development. The course is designed to provide United Church Communities of faith a solid introductory understanding of the Canadian PSRP's Rainbow Refugee Assistance Partnership (RRAP) and an awareness of the international context in which the RRAP-PSR program operates when it comes to offering protection to 2SLGBTQIA+ refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) through resettlement. The estimated launch is September 3, 2024.

*Love, Faith & Bold Action Campaign* - The 2SLGBTQIA+ program is planning to launch a campaign – **Love, Faith & Bold Action in 2024**. This multi-tiered campaign is aimed at garnering increased support from affirming ministries, global and ecumenical spaces, global partners and the Canadian government towards achieving tangible advancements in 2SLGBTQIA+ rights, including support for refugees. The campaign will include advocacy initiatives and strengthening refugee sponsorship and support, collaborations and partnerships on global 2SLGBTQIA+ rights, including addressing religious induced anti-2SLGBTQIA+ momentum.

Plans are underway for the **2024 Climate Motivators**. With Canada Summer Jobs funding we will gather young people from across the church to support the vision of climate justice and youth involvement of the UCC. Each motivator will work on a climate justice project related to a personal passion of theirs in partnership with a sponsoring community of faith. Motivators will choose a project within one of these four UCC climate response areas: Raising our Spirited Voices; Responding to Climate Impact; Getting Our House in Order; and Reconnecting with the Earth. The program and employment will begin July 8th and run until August 30th.

*Conversation with the United Methodist Church:* we have begun a conversation with the United Methodist Church, particularly as it relates to the developing work with diaspora communities. One of the options we are considering is a formal Memorandum of Agreement. We will be engaging in further dialogue with the Council of Bishops.

**Appendix 1****Excerpt from MOU between the United Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada  
Foundation****Governance**

**2.1 Foundation Board:** The board of directors of the Foundation (the “**Foundation Board**”) shall be responsible for the control and management of the assets of the Foundation, including the prudent management of all gifts to the Foundation, and such management shall be consistent with Donor intent, fund restrictions, if any, and in accordance with all applicable laws.

**2.2 Secondment of President of the Foundation:**

a) UCC shall second to the Foundation, on a part-time basis and in accordance with the terms of the secondment agreement attached as Schedule “A” hereto, its Director of Philanthropy, to serve as the President of the Foundation (the “**President**”) during the course of the secondment.

b) The President shall not be a director, member or employee of the Foundation, unless otherwise required by employment standards legislation.

c) The President shall report to the Foundation Board with respect to the Foundation’s activities at each Foundation Board meeting.

d) The UCC has the final determination on hiring, compensation, evaluation and termination of the Director of Philanthropy and ceasing the Director of Philanthropy’s part-time secondment to the Foundation.

**2.3 Joint Governance Committee:** UCC and the Foundation shall establish a joint advisory committee composed of the General Secretary of UCC, the Chair of the Foundation and either the Vice-Chair of the Foundation or Past-Chair of the Foundation (the “**Joint Governance Committee**”). The Joint Governance Committee shall work collaboratively on appropriate annual work plans for all employees of UCC that are seconded to the Foundation on a part-time basis. The Joint Governance Committee will annually assess the achievement of the annual work plan by the Director of Philanthropy and President, with the President conducting annual performance reviews of any other seconded employees. The Joint Governance Committee shall meet at least once annually with the Foundation Board.

**2.4 Joint Grants Committee:** The joint grants committee (the “**Joint Grants Committee**”) shall be composed of two (2) nominees of the Foundation and three (3) nominees of

UCC, and its mandate shall be to oversee grants made by the Foundation in accordance with the policies of UCC and the Foundation. All grants and disbursements of funds from the Foundation shall be made on the advance recommendation of the Joint Grants Committee. The Joint Grants Committee shall develop a written mandate, including statement of philosophy and principles by which it operates, to be reviewed from time to time by the Foundation and UCC.

- 2.5 **Annual Meeting:** The General Secretary of UCC and the President shall organize and facilitate a joint informal meeting of the Foundation Board and the UCC Executive on an annual basis to foster and maintain a productive relationship between UCC and the Foundation and to strategize on shared fundraising matters.

### **3. Services**

- 3.1 **Corporate Services:** To support the Foundation Purposes, UCC shall provide to the Foundation the corporate services set out in Schedule “B” attached hereto, and such other services as may be agreed to in writing by the Parties (the “**Services**”) during the Term (as defined below). UCC covenants and agrees to provide the Services to the Foundation in compliance with all applicable laws and at a level and frequency and to a quality commensurate with the services UCC provides internally in support of its own activities and affairs or as set out in this Agreement. The Foundation covenants and agrees to respect and follow all reasonable policies and procedures of UCC related to the Services. The Foundation may also procure some or all of the Services from a third party from time to time as determined by the President in consultation with the Foundation Board.

- 3.2 **Secondment of Employees:** In addition to the part-time secondment of the Director of Philanthropy of UCC to fulfil the duties of the President, UCC shall second to the Foundation, pursuant to separate secondment agreements, such other employees of UCC from time to time as are reasonably necessary to carry out the Foundation Purposes and fulfill the staff services set out in Schedule “C” attached hereto (the “**Staff**”) during the Term (as defined below). The President will determine the Staff needs of the Foundation from time to time in consultation with the Foundation Board. Any part-time Staff secondments shall be subject to the approval of UCC, in consultation with the President and the Joint Governance Committee. The President and the Staff shall remain employees

of UCC for all purposes, and shall not at any time be, or be considered to be, employees of the Foundation, unless required by applicable employment standards legislation. UCC will retain sole responsibility for the President and the Staff in respect of all employment-related obligations, including compensation and termination of employment.

**Appendix 2**

# Media round-up 2023

## HOW THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA FARED IN MEDIA COVERAGE IN 2023

Lori-Ann Livingston | Press and PR lead | Jan. 2, 2024

### Summary

On the whole, media coverage of The United Church of Canada exceeded my expectations for 2023. My methods were simple – in the absence of formal media monitoring, I set up Google alerts for both The United Church of Canada and Carmen Lansdowne.

I bookmarked all English-language links that mentioned UCCan, whether it was the focus of the story, or simply a mention. I was unable to thoroughly capture video or radio news broadcasts, although some of these links also show up in the list.

Some of these links include Broadview, although the links I bookmarked do not represent a comprehensive list of the stories they have done about UCCan. That would be a report unto itself. I also included blogs or posts to our ecumenical partners' websites as hits.

The total stories for 2023 are numbered at 305.

### Themes

Most of the subject matter of the 305 links fell into a few themes, which I categorized as: Indigenous, climate, growth and decline, justice, governance and leadership, people and bad news. Not everything fell into these themes, so there are a number of standalone and crossover articles.

### INDIGENOUS

Indigenous stories made up a full 26% of the total coverage, with MMIWG2S stories 35% of those; many of these focused on the activism around Camp Morgan and Camp Mercedes. The Tseshahht announcement made up about 29% of coverage, but had a wider range of coverage, including Indigenous media and French media. Indigenous topics included the following:

- MMIWG2S
- Tseshahht announcement
- Reconciliation efforts
- Residential institutions and unmarked graves
- Mohawk Bible

## CLIMATE

Climate stories made up 8% of the overall stories; most of these are positive stories that cover United churches accessing Faithful Footprints funding, sustainable redevelopment, our climate motivators, and our involvement with COP28.

## GROWTH AND DECLINE

Growth and decline stories tell us the story of the church as perceived by mainstream media. Of the overall media coverage, this theme garnered about 14% of media coverage. Growth and decline included:

- Surviving
- Thriving
- Camps
- Closed or closing

By far, the stories (34%) focused on the closed or closing aspect of the church, either highlighting historical buildings now or long closed, or about to close.

A quarter of the stories focused on the “surviving” of the church – congregations managing to keep their doors open. Stories about camps – most about camps closing down during the summer – were about 16%. Stories of the thriving church – introducing new programs, or deep involvement with their wider community – were about 18% of the total; this will reflect the pillars of the strategic plan, and I hope to see an increase in these stories in 2024.

## JUSTICE

Justice stories made up 31.5% of the overall media coverage. These I streamlined into the following:

- LGBTQIA2S
- Million Person March articles referencing UCCan
- Housing
- Refugees and relief
- Palestine and Israel

Stories that focused on LGBTQIA2S topics were a full 51% of the total justice stories. Palestine and Israel garnered 19% in just the last three months of 2023. Refugees and relief stories made up 11.5%, while housing justice made up 8% of the coverage.



## GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Governance and leadership included:

- Moderator and General Secretary
- GCE
- Ecumenical and interfaith

All of the stories about the GCE came from *Broadview*, as you might expect. Of the overall media coverage for the church, governance and leadership made up 11%.

## PEOPLE

People included obituaries, dedications, columns, announcements and memoria. This sort of mention made up about 6% of the overall stories.

## BAD NEWS

Thankfully, there weren't many of these kinds of stories, and they made up 4% of the overall media coverage for the year. The stories were specific to regions, including child luring, a fenced-off church in Regina, and fraud. I don't think I've captured all the stories that some regions may have been dealing with.

# 2023 media coverage round-up

305 links

## INDIGENOUS

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## Appendix 3

### The Immigration Process

Our journey to Canada began with the United Church of Canada accepting me in the Mutual Recognition of Personnel Agreement in 2016. It took a year before the work permit was processed and given a go signal.

Arriving in Canada, it is where we processed some to submit to the then Winnipeg Presbytery and Broadway Disciples United Church in Winnipeg who facilitated the documentation and paperwork which was submitted to CIC

By the time my first term of pastoral charge in BDUC was about to end, I and my wife have to re-submit new set of documents (work offer, LMIA exemptions, medical health examinations, biometrics, etc).

It is not only the incoming personnel, but also the family that will accompany him/her. It has become coming to Canada with the family because of paper and documentation requirements that are needed to be presented as well. It happened to us that my wife has to go back to the Philippines for her to get a Temporary Resident Visa in 2019 for her to be able to go back and stay in Canada.

Based on my/our experience, here are some suggestions that may be of consideration:

1. A team/committee that would assess submitted documents submitted as well as providing the right immigration forms in order that they are asked.
2. This also would entail, and if possible, to have close contacts with CIC to be able to know the status of submitted applications, and be able for applicants to submit additional documents and follow up if needed.
3. The Entry Visas are the most time-consuming process considering the number of applicants; hence they should be given due attention.
4. A immigration lawyer might also be included in the team to give advice for problematic cases.

**Noel Suministrado**

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Hello Marlene, I believe you're doing well.

Thank you for the email.

I totally agree with the way forward 41 new proposals to the 44th General Council.

I had challenges with visa process/work permit. It took 1 good year because the church had no influence, I had to do it alone. I can blame Covid-19 pandemic on the delays, but it was too long to believe. Thank goodness, the community of faith patiently waited for me. Northern Regional council in collaboration with the search committee was of great help in sending documents I needed.

My question is: Is there a way the General Council can sign a memorandum of understanding/agreement with the Canada Visa department to ensure easy and smooth visa acquisition process? I believe the Church need to intervene in Visa process for its ministry Personnel.

The process is tedious, time consuming and financially draining talk of medical fee, Passport, and Visa processing. If the church can liaise with the ministry personnel, this would help a great deal. Can the Church influence on the kind of Visa family members are offered? My husband was offered an open work permit which was great, but my children were given study permit but under my Visa. As in they are minor accompanied me for study purposes. We were pushed at a corner for more than an hour at the airport just because of their student Visa. I was asked to provide letters from the school they will be attending which was not applicable because we were yet to arrive to Canada. It was a frustrating moment. Eventually, we were cleared the last after time was much gone almost to boarding. While I was at the airport, I consulted with the search committee chairperson and the immigration office in Canada by cell phone call.

With student Visa, Children of the ministry personnel supplied from abroad are not allowed to work until they get permanent residence which is a challenge because the rest are allowed to work from age 14.

United church of Canada can have a productive conversation to discuss Visa Logistics

regarding application and financial support with the ministry personnel seeking permanent residence. It would be of great help if the General Council advises pastoral Charge searching ministry personnel supply from abroad to have at least five years of appointed to allow the ministry personnel to settle and adjustment. The Pastoral Charge also incurs huge amount of money in hiring ministry personnel less than five years can be expensive for Pastoral Charge.

I hope I was able to respond to your concerns. If not, kindly do not hesitate to come back to me.

Thank you!

Shalom!

Dorcas

*Demanya Kofi Akoussah*

*Pastoral charge: Église Unie St-Marc, Ottawa*

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### **My immigration experiences and challenges**

I arrived in Ottawa on July 20, 2019, after coming through the Montreal airport with a closed work visa linked to St-Marc. When that work permit expired, the renewal application was rejected with a notice to leave the territory if I could not rectify my situation by a certain deadline because, according to the immigration authorities, certain criteria had not been fulfilled. This created a lot of difficulty for me. Éric was a big help to me, because he took on the responsibility of making contact with the provincial and federal representatives to ask for their support until the situation was resolved.

After that, I continued to work as a temporary worker, and I am currently on my third work permit, which will expire on March 24, 2023.

This situation deprives me of a lot of prerogatives. For example, my application for a permit to celebrate marriages was rejected because I have to be a permanent resident.

Furthermore, I cannot benefit from certain services offered in Ottawa for new immigrants, such as English courses, because I have a work permit, so I am temporary. Even at the bank, it was hard for them to give me credit because of my status; it was only recently that they granted me some initial credit. Due to this situation, retailers do not allow me to purchase their goods. In terms of the financial or salary outlook, I could work to complete my partial work at St-Marc, but as I am not a resident, I cannot or I would be breaking the law, with all the related consequences. Even education and training are out of reach for me. I take courses at AST at a certain risk. Proof of training in Canada is considered an asset for immigration and increases the points in the pool to be invited to apply for permanent residency, but I cannot claim my courses, because it would be an infraction, so my CV only mentions the conference. My age, also, no longer allows me to earn points.

This is a situation that causes me stress day and night. I do not know what to do. I am in the immigration pool waiting to receive an invitation to apply for permanent residence, and so far I have tried to collect 70 points. Immigration has decreased to 94 points to apply, so I have 24 points to go, but I do not know how to earn them, because I have no more resources.

This is my situation. If you need further information, I am at your service.  
Thank you.

Kofi

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**To:** Marlene Britton <[MBritton@united-church.ca](mailto:MBritton@united-church.ca)>

**Subject:** Re: The UCC and Immigration Processes

Hello!~ Ironically... or provincially... I am well but struggling with immigration. My residency application was denied and we're back to square 2. (We still have temporary visas so aren't back to the first step!)

Our story...

To immigrate, one must have a job offer. To have a job offer, most companies want a work visa. To receive a work visa, one must have a job offer. This strange catch 22 means many cannot do the first step - getting a job or getting a visa. Therefore, for me, I had to find a church that was willing to call me and realize it may take a year for me to actually arrive. My call has several people who have worked with immigration in the USA or Canada, and so I was blessed with a congregation that understood the timeline. National could help educate churches on timeline expectations for immigrants.

My church had to write a detailed job offer with specific terms and conditions to satisfy the VISA requirements. If someone on the search committee had not worked once in the USA from Canada in the past, we would not have had the expertise to write this letter. This paperwork and a fee of \$155 per person in the family had to be filed with IRCC. National could have assistance with someone who knows how to write these papers. It took us together about 12 hour to learn how with the current rules.

IRCC online forms themselves are confusing. There are many lawyers who offer to help, but begin offering help at \$200 per half hour they are on the phone \*or\* \$3000-7000 USD per family. Immigration fees themselves tend to run \$3000 to \$5000 USD so a lawyer is a huge expense my own family could not afford. This meant an incredible lot of work for my search committee, myself, and my treasurer. We spent likely 50 hours each on this to get me to Canada. Even then, we did not properly file the paperwork for our daughter to come and had to have our MP personally intervene to rush expedite her paperwork so that she could begin school. All together, this was about 200 hours of work shared among 4 people. A lawyer naturally could do this much faster and wouldn't need to learn from scratch as we did. And likely wouldn't have had our 6 year old facing deportation for a missed form.

One must file for a SIN - something we didn't know - and to be laid through the automated church payment system you must have a SIN \*and\* bank account. Filing for a SIN is free but takes a month or more to arrive. So my church paid me not through the UC system until the SIN could come through. I needed a SIN to open a bank account. So we had to live off savings until the SIN and bank could be arranged. Other immigrants may not have the cash to do this. Interac is not a thing in other countries so we were cash only.



To get housing we needed to show our SIN, and paychecks. We had neither. The church vouched on our behalf so we could open a bank account and begin to get credit to have housing. Had the bank not made an exception, we'd have been living in the church sanctuary because the church hasn't a manse, the area had no rental housing available, and only 2 homes for sale.

To get a driver's license, we needed to prove our driving history. In the USA, only 1 to 3 years of records are kept. So we're considered new drivers because we couldn't prove our record. We were told a lawyer could get this information from our insurance companies but that we weren't privy to it past the 3 years.

To get a health card we were told to drive to an immigration office. This meant an 6 hour drive one way to get to Toronto from Manitoulin. A lawyer or office could have told us that we didn't have to go that far and that Service Ontario can work as an immigration office. This is also how we learned our daughter was here illegally so couldn't get health care.

We didn't know how to enroll her in school because she missed kindergarten, which is intake. So she had no student ID. So couldn't be put in the system to go to school. Or have transportation. The school is very small locally and gave us exceptions until everything could be handled with letters to the education department, and MP, and immigration again. An immigration group in Sudbury rang us to offer their services - but that was 2 hours away and their services were English as a second language. We needed much more specialized help which was available so fumbled through it on our own.

My closed work visa allows us to be here as long as this particular church keeps me employed full time for 3 years. Should the call end, we'd be pretty lost. My spouse's open work visa is dependent on me having a closed one. Neither of us can go to school while on work visas. (That's been a real pain with continuing education funds. I've got a lot unspent because I can't do anything considered or associated with a school and keep my visa.) I don't know if we'd be deported. We'd get 1 to 3 months, I've heard, to get a lawyer to argue for a stay of deportation and a prayer a different visa comes through in that time. I don't know if it is true. So we're trying hard for permanent residence.

PR [permanent residency] is a whole other beast... At my last count, I've filed this request 10 times. It requires knowing a ton of technically terms that change every 6 months. Forms are about 30 pages large and cannot be rolled over. They must be began again each time. It's complicated enough I'm on my own and my spouse and church haven't had the hours on hours to learn it.

PR requires getting original transcripts from schools sent from the school to a Canadian evaluation service. (\$100 each.) These are good for 3 years and then must be renewed.

It requires a 4 to 6 hour test in English or French at a testing site. They are only on the border. So hotel rooms, babysitters, and of course the \$400 fee are needed. These are good for 3 years if you pass all 4 sections.

PR requires passports, birth certificates, letters from previous employers, letters from previous employers detailing work done, and more.

Once everything is filed, then it is a waiting game. We were in queue for 2 years. Eventually, someone \*may\* get an invitation to apply.

Now comes the paperwork from hell. An ITA requires a medical exam from specifically named immigration doctors (\$500 a person); blood work from specifics; and x-ray from specific (\$500 each again.) Again traveling to a major city, hotels.

It also requires fingerprinting from Canada to home country for background checks. A lawyer can do this digitally. Without one, you're at the mercy of the mail and paper processing and mailing back. ITAs give only 60 days to gather all this. So it is an insane rush.

It all needs to be PDFs combined into specific categories. So I had to buy PDF management software. A lawyer would have this or National could loan out licences for a time. One must provide evidence and record of the last 10 years of jobs, friends, family, associations, social media, places lived, countries visited, political activity, etc. We spent a lot of time on the phone on hold trying to get 10 year old tax returns and the social numbers, birth locations, of all extended family. A lawyer could have told us to start gathering this ahead of time.

I ended up filing about 120 pages of paperwork.

After 60 days, it is time to file with a \$3200 fee. We didn't have this. We'd ended up spending all our savings on the medical exams, record requests, and travel for these. I received a grant from national to apply.

I'd tried to get a loan to apply but... As a non permanent resident, I didn't qualify for interest rates under 20% from banks. Our house is under this rate because the church council physically drove to the bank head offices and begged on our behalf and gave writs from the church they'd be sure we never missed a mortgage payment.

These congregations are really amazing. We've never needed to miss a payment and rely on the church. And so appreciate the assistance getting a place to live outside of the narthex.

Our taxes are also messed up because of a lack of a tax accountant who understands our situation. The local man we hired who said he did international taxes was not prepared. So we have been audited twice now, and still don't qualify for any rebates. An international tax accountant for immigrants to hire would be wonderful.

We have not yet began citizenship. PR itself has been denied once due to paperwork issues and not because of anything we did wrong. We were told to get a lawyer to file it for us (again, not something we can afford.) or to return to que and hope none of our language tests, fingerprints, or etc. expire before we are drawn again, file again, and processed again. I am doubtful that is going to happen and anticipate we'll have more fees to renew this paperwork.

If we do get another ITA, I'll need to refill out the 120 pages. Again, the forms don't allow you to save them or be used again.

The latest IRCC update said that people with NOC codes for needed jobs (Doctors, nurses of Skilled Class) shall now be processed over those who are already in Canada (Canadian Experience Class). This is a reversal of 6 months ago when people in Canada were prioritized. Additionally, the waiting time for a visa renewal is 12 to 6 months. So come March, I need to apply for a renewal since we'll have been here

for 2 years. Pay the fees. Hope it comes through before we're working/ living here illegally. A lawyer could have been sure the ITA PR was correct and went through on first try. At least the money was refunded for applying. But it'll be out of pocket for the visa renewal and any expired paperwork renewals.

So it's been incredibly harder than we anticipated. Twice as expensive. And taking years longer than anticipated. The church I'm with is amazing and supportive. Multiple times my spouse and I have considered an immigration lawyer but each time can't justify the insane cost with the cost of the filing, exams, forms, and etc. Especially because lawyers aren't flat fees and likely will get more expensive the moment something is weird in our paperwork... Such as working for a church. However, I fear we'll be denied PR without a lawyer to argue my medical needs aren't an undue burden on Canada.

Although pretty stressful sometimes, we'd do it again. But would advise ourselves to save \$5000 for fees, \$3000 for records and exams, and \$7000 for a lawyer. Then savings for 1 to 3 months to be cash only until SINs and banks and etc. all come through.

More questions are welcome! So, too, connecting me to others immigrating. We could sure use a support group or pastor walking with us. People to study for the language tests. People to share tips specific to our odd calling. ((Church work is it's own specialized niche in IRCC that comes with forms \*just\* for it since it is a job that doesn't require a LIMA. [Economic study. Costs \$ to a church to get so most do not.] That, too, means it's harder to get an ITA.))

Blessings and Merry Christmas and thank you for asking.  
-Whitney Bruno and family

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### Immigration experience in Canada

The challenges of settling down and becoming an immigrant in Canada have been my leading cause of anxiety, financial instability, and lack of opportunities. All of the aforementioned could be eased if the General Council Office is dedicated to appointing someone to meet the demands and do the research needed to help ministry personnel settle.

My leading cause of anxiety develops when I renew my "work permit." The online process could be long and sometimes goes way beyond the expiry date of the previous work permit. The anxiety comes especially when one is never assured of what the outcome of the application will bring. Because we depend on the "work permit to do certain transactions in Canada, like health and banking, it leaves us with a significant burden and, at times, fear going to the bank in person because of the demands of updated information. In one case, immigration demanded that I take my thirteen-year-old daughter to Trinidad to renew her immigration status.

The financial demands do lead to some instability. I have had six renewals and three Express Entry applications thus far. The cost for renewal for my family of four, two student permits, one Visitor Permit, and an open work permit per year is over \$700.00. The application through an Immigration Attorney is

\$2000 US dollars per year. Without help, it places a tremendous financial strain on ministers who could wait in the Express pool, renewal after renewal because of age.

Currently the Ontario E1O needs detailed information from your main Employer and most of the time no one is willing to provide same. It is sent from one desk to another without no assurance that the information will be provided. My experience is that people at the General Council office whom I thought were responsible for assisting with immigration issues have wiped their hands from it. These are information that the local Pastoral Charge cannot provide to make one eligible.

The General Council is well poised to lobby with Immigration Officials to create a more direct/ strategic way to assist ministers. I do not know if such lobbying is taking place. I recommend that a desk be created at the General Council office to deal with immigration issues, both provincial and federal, and that funds be allocated to assist ministers in meeting the demands of the application process.

*Anonymity requested*

**Title: BOARD AND OFFICE OF VOCATION ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT****Origin: The Reverend Norm Seli, chair of the Board of Vocation, and****the Reverend Marlene Britton, Director, Policy and Programs for Ministry Personnel****Date: January 21, 2024****INTRODUCTION**

God has guided the Office of Vocation into completing its fifth year of life! A review of the Office of Vocation will be undertaken by the General Council Office, and even before that is done it can be said that the work of ensuring that the Church is served by faithful, well equipped, effective ministry personnel has been done by this Team.

During the year under review, the Strategic Plan became fully operational, with all aspects of work at the General Council Office seeking to be aligned with this plan. Many of our team were intricately involved in areas of the plan, and involved in initiatives which were proving to be invigorating and innovative.

While this worked very well for many aspects of the work of the Office of Vocation, and for those who were engaged in specific activities, it was clear that this team is an operational one, doing the tasks that needed to be done on an ongoing basis, some of which did not find direct identification with the strategic plan as it existed. This was brought to the attention of those managing the plan, and assurances were given that this would be addressed.

**STAFF**

There were two changes in staff during the year, with one new program assistant and one new program coordinator being hired. The two new people have settled in well, and the staff team is currently working very well together.

In October an in-person training session was held for staff, the reviewers, consultants and investigators, and following that event the staff had the opportunity for a 2 day retreat. This time of reflection and learning was led by Revd. Dr. Jenny Stephens.

**BOARD OF VOCATION**

The Board of Vocation was kept busy during the year, utilizing all four meeting dates, all of which were 2-day, virtual events. There were some shifts in membership as the one vacant spot on the board was filled. At the same time, one person was hired by their Regional Council and had to step away, one person has been unwell and unable to attend and participate, and one person resigned. These shifts happened over the course of the calendar year, and the Board was able to manage these changes and to function well.

Highlights of the year included:

A meeting with the Moderator in November, with a rich discussion about what she was hearing from Ministry Personnel on the ground, and what the possibilities are for deepening spirituality and encouraging bold discipleship among our ministers.

The Board had no difficulty engaging in robust discussion and/or decision making on matters which were of critical import to the lives of ministers, including

- Designated Lay Ministry and the process for the way forward.
- Recording of interviews conducted by Candidacy Boards and other Boards and Committees of the Board of Vocation.
- Continuing Education standards for ministry personnel.
- The Publishing of the Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary).

There were agonizing moments spent reviewing cases where ministers were being recommended to the Discontinued Service Lists. And moments when deep care and concern were offered for the morale of ministry personnel, leading to the penning of a letter by the Chair of the Board to all ministers in the United Church of Canada.

## **INDIGENOUS OFFICE OF VOCATION**

### **The Indigenous Candidacy Pathway and Grandmothers' Circle**

The Grandmothers Circle met only 3 times this year as the transition to a new National Indigenous Council has put some of the work on hold as it relates to their request for support to do policy development work with Indigenous Communities

This office also supports the Indigenous Mission and Support group as it relates to Ministry personnel salaries. In the fall, the Principles for the 2024 Budget and the final budget draft prepared by this office were adopted. In the work of this committee, there were some trends that were identified that affect leadership in the Indigenous Church.

- a. Indigenous specific Lay leadership training requests continue to increase as Indigenous communities shift to a less "Christian Tradition" only view. This is especially true in communities within or near urban centres. This continues to be an on-going trend from 2020 as the Residential School news continues to evolve.
- b. Pay equity among Indigenous Ministers has improved compared to the prior year, however, systemic challenges remain as northern or isolated communities remain without a COLA assessment, and the capacity to determine those values have been challenged as response from Band Councils have not come forth or denied outright.
- c. There remain very different practices and, in some cases, different policies by the Regional Councils that affect the timing and support of this office. The support is based upon the Regional Councils relationships with the Indigenous Communities and their own requests for support.

Recruitment has seen an increase in Ontario mostly, with a couple from Manitoba. On a very positive note, there are 2 recruits under the age of 40.

In response to the Leadership Counts (Ministry Personnel) Survey, there has been an increase of another 9 additional Ministers who have identified as being Indigenous and to be supported by the IOV. It should be noted that there are Indigenous Ministers that are choosing to remain with their Regional/OV supports. In 2023, there are Indigenous Ministers in all but one Region.

As this office is the liaison to Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, there has been 4 meetings between the Keepers of the Circle/Vision Keepers with the ICB to help address systemic challenges and gaps created by the restructuring of the Church. There has been a re-commitment to a better relationship and create a more seamless experience for potential Candidates who feel called to the Indigenous Church.

## CANDIDACY PATHWAY

### Ministry Formation

In addition to the work of the Candidacy Boards and Vocational Ministers in support of those in the candidacy pathway (see reports below), oversight of the candidacy pathway as a whole focussed on three main areas in 2023:

#### **Candidacy Boards: a denominational team**

While the objective of gathering candidacy board members over the first triennium of their mandate was largely for training purposes, the work in 2023 was strategically focussed. Regular gatherings of Candidacy Board Chairs and Vocational Ministers is building a denominational team across the Boards. These gatherings promote best practices in offering leadership to Candidacy Boards and has established a set of priorities for on-going maintenance of the pathway:

Interviews: The BOV policy on recording interviews (in response to proposal put forward by SWO CB) will be implemented at such time as technological issues are overcome that currently present obstacles to complex, simultaneous, multi-room recordings, create potential storage liabilities, and incur labour or software costs. In the meantime, policies for creating and storing written records are being followed.

Also concerning interviews, Candidacy Boards sought guidance on dual roles and perception of bias on the Board and interview teams. They continue to share best practices and pursue in-serving training for assessing their candidates' self-knowledge (EQi), ability to lead United Church equity aspirations, and commitment to life-long ministry leadership development.

The commitment to in-person interviews remains strong, this being a particular challenge for larger geographic Regions on limited budgets.

Vocational Assessments: The pause on exercising the current policy of mandating vocational assessments for all applicants allowed for a thorough review of the purpose, value, cost and use of assessments in the candidacy pathway. This review is on-going and a proposal to the BOV is forthcoming in 2024. An objective is to keep in view the lifelong leadership development of ministers, rather than focussing on candidacy alone.

Relationship with UCC formation faculty: With distinct roles and responsibilities for formation delineated, both schools and Candidacy Boards desire a forum for conversation about areas of concern, communication and collaboration. This development promises fruitful relationships, beginning with a virtual gathering in spring 2024 of United Church formation faculty, Vocational Ministers, and Candidacy Board chairs.

### **Theological Schools: the testamur**

Leading up to, and in light of, the proposal concerning the future of the Designated Lay Ministry program, the question of the testamur came into focus: where is it offered, how is it attained, and how accessible the path toward achieving it is.

Resources have been created for applicants, candidates, schools and Candidacy Boards outlining the various paths toward the testamur, including programs which DO NOT require undergraduate education for admission. These resources include the entrance requirements and the available accommodations/supports in each program leading to the testamur. Work continues across the schools to harmonize the cost and approach to assessing the testamur for those with degrees and diplomas from non-UCC schools.

### **Supervised Ministry Experience: pastoral charge realities**

In response to feedback about the excessive demands on lay supervision teams, revisions were made to their responsibilities for support and evaluation of SME candidates. Assessment of the candidate's on-the-ground practice of ministry is now based on The Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for Ministry with a practically focussed evaluation report. The Educational Supervisor's role continues to focus on skills for theological reflection, reflective practice on learning goals, and Competencies for Formation for Ministry and Lifelong Ministry Leadership.

Educational Supervisors benefited from regular virtual in-service gatherings hosted by Vocational Ministers.

In 2023, two SME moving grants were administered, seven salary grants were initiated and four were continued. The Operational Plan's stated priority for collaborative ministry spawned interest in developing collaborative ministry SME sites for 2024-2025, also to be supported partially by SME grants.



Progress was made on drafting Indigenous candidacy pathway resources, now in the hands of the Indigenous Candidacy Board for further development.

A Discernment Retreat (in collaboration with LeaderShift, Pacific Mountain Region), led by two Vocational Ministers, was held in-person in November 2023 with 12 participants from 5 Regions.

The reports which appear in the appendix give a numerical synopsis of the work of the Vocational Ministers and their Candidacy Boards, as well as a brief commentary summarizing trends which they have noticed over the last year.

## ADMISSION

The number of ministers in the Admission process reached 200 people in 2022. This led to a shortage of accompaniers meaning that ministers expressing interest in admission were told there were dozens of ministers ahead of them waiting to speak with someone about applying for the Admission process. For those who reached the entrance or final interview stage, there was a queue of approximately three months before an interview slot was available.

Most significantly, the Admission Board noted an alarming reality: when it came time to seek an admission appointment, the process was not functioning equitably for racialized ministers. Consequently, we entered 2023 with the Admission process paused. Throughout 2023, the focus of admission work has been on addressing these bottlenecks and inequities.

One specific effort has been the work of the Admission Matching Pilot program. Five ministers willing to participate were easily selected in February 2023, but five Communities of Faith willing to participate were harder to come by. Evaluation of the struggle at the end of May yielded feedback that we needed to do a better job of inspiring and inviting, that search teams wanted the opportunity to interview the ministers, and that finances were a barrier for a few congregations unable to afford a category F minister full time. In response, the Matching Task Group sought a six month extension to their mandate.

During this time, they produced a video, which was circulated to 45 Communities of Faith with full time vacancies; and a shortened version later shared at the General Council recall meeting in October. The task group followed up with an Open House for search team members and pastoral relations liaisons in November for which registrations exceeded our zoom account's capacity of 99 people. We also agreed to a modified matching process presented by one Community of Faith who wanted to be able to interview the ministers; and expect an appointment will be made soon for one minister in the Matching group. Although three Task Group members have not been able to continue long term, those who remain have sought a second extension to continue their efforts into 2024.

Funding was sought to create an admission appointment for one minister who although unsuccessful for eight years in finding an admission appointment has gone ahead and planted a new Community of Faith that is thriving.

In anticipation of ministers who entered the Diaconal/Ordained Supply process in 2022 needing to seek admission in 2024, a process was created and approved by the Board of Vocation that allows them to do so without starting from the beginning of the Admission process. Admission related information on [united-church.ca](http://united-church.ca) has been updated.

While we made great progress on getting the admission process ready to flow smoothly when it reopens for new applications, the reality remains that all of the ministers actively seeking admission appointments are racialized, many of whom have been searching for years. Their responses to our emails about whether they are still searching for an appointment are heart wrenching! Several people responded that they remain without an appointment after applying to “more than 30”, “80-90”, “130”, “300”, and even “500” churches. Despite these large number of applications, many indicated that they have had only between zero and four interviews. Some spoke of interviews canceled at the last minute or being told the search team doesn’t want to interview anyone from outside the country. Those who have had interviews, sometimes even after being asked for references and a sermon video, have often not heard anything more from search teams despite promises to be in touch. One person even asked if maybe he should give up because there must be a surplus of ministers in The United Church of Canada and clearly his help isn’t needed. All of them asked for any help we could offer because they feel called to minister with us.

This suggests that in addition to getting the process ready to run smoothly, two additional types of work must remain a priority.

- We need to help these ministers get their foot in the door. They have so many skills and gifts that The United Church of Canada has identified as needed in our strategic plan. One fifth of them are people who have or are currently working on PhDs. Almost all of them speak at least two languages, with many of their additional languages being those that newcomers to Canada also speak. All of them bring diverse theological backgrounds and life experiences that can enrich our denomination. Many of them have specialized experience in ministry such as youth ministry, church planting, chaplaincy, and ecumenical work.
- We need to continue working with congregations to confront xenophobia and racism; as well as making sure that support for search teams are well informed of the Admission process and the benefits of considering an applicant from another country. While the myth exists in our denomination that we have a shortage of ministers, the reality is that we have more than 50 who are available. They simply need our search teams to

recognize that they are highly qualified, experienced ministers who are keen and feeling to called to serve in The United Church of Canada.

The appendix to this report contains more statistics related to Admission.

## ONGOING VOCATIONAL SUPPORT, FORMATION, AND DEVELOPMENT

### STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

In 2023, the Standards committee met 8 times (last meeting was November 27, 2023).

During 2023, the Standards for Accreditation Committee worked hard to finish meeting its responsibility to set standards for the continuing education and professional development of ministry personnel (The Manual E.2.2.d). Following from learning from 2022 surveys with ministry personnel and Ministry and Personnel (M&P) Committees about the continuing education, the committee created a draft continuing education standard that wove together the [Competencies for Ministry Formation and Lifelong Ministry Leadership](#) and the calls to Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, and Daring Justice. In the spring, the committee designed and implemented a consultation process to receive feedback on the standard from Office of Vocation and regional council pastoral relations staff, chairs of M&P Committees, staff of United Church theological schools who design continuing education programming, and groups of ministry personnel in two regional councils. In September, the committee recommended the continuing education standard to the Board of Vocation for their input and feedback. In November, the Board of Vocation approved a revised continuing education standard. In early 2024, staff will work to animate the standard with ministry personnel, M&P Committees and regional council pastoral relations staff.

Because of changes to the way that racial justice training is being delivered on ChurchX, including a mix of synchronous and asynchronous modules, and training designed for three distinct cohorts of people (Indigenous and Racialized Ministers in North America, White Ministers in North America, Ministers Applying for Admission from Outside North America), the committee consulted with staff about updating the Standard for [Online Racial Justice Training](#). The updated standard was approved by the committee in November.

### CREDENTIALING COMMITTEE

The Credentialing Committee has been tasked with overseeing the process of Designated Lay Ministers seeking testamur towards commissioning or ordination. Some of the other work that the committee is involved in:

- a) the committee continues to provide support to intentional interim ministers;

- b) partnering with Office of Vocation staff to lead a community of practice for active educational supervisors;
  - c) the committee reviewed three applications to the Interim Ministry Sabbatical Fund; and
- The statistics included in the appendix to this report will give a detailed view of the work of the committee.

## ENHANCING EFFECTIVENESS, OVERSIGHT AND DISCIPLINE OF MINISTRY PERSONNEL

This area represents a significant portion of the work of the Office of Vocation, and is managed by staff, elected members who sit on the response and remedial committees, along with consultants, reviewers and investigators. There was one staff change during the year, with a new person being hired in the summer to replace one who departed in the spring of 2023, while membership on the committees remained stable throughout the year.

There was a training event held in person over 5 days for 39 Consultants, Investigators, Reviewers and Staff of the Office of Vocation in October, including the revisions made to the *Sexual Misconduct and Workplace Discrimination, Harassment and Violence Response Policies & Procedures* and *Office of Vocation: Structure & Responsibilities, Appendix A*.

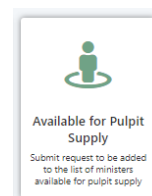
The statistics presented in the Appendix to this report will reveal the magnitude of this work.

## CHURCHHUB

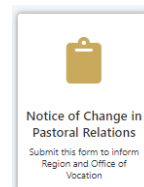
ChurchHub.ca is now entering its 6<sup>th</sup> year since it was launched Jan 1 2019 – fulfilling the intended function of gathering data and storing documents about ministers and communities of faith into one virtual space.

There have been several enhancements/improvements to ChurchHub (and all its related entities – such as Dynamics and Sharepoint) over the past year. Here are a few examples:

1. Most Regional Councils have provided the list of names available for pulpit supply and this information is stored in Dynamics and Communities of Faith can access the pulpit supply list via ChurchHub.
2. Ministers can make the request to be available for Pulpit Supply via their ChurchHub pages. In order to be added to the pulpit supply list they must be “On the Registry” and they are requested to indicate the “name of the pastoral charge with which they have a formal association”. Each year (on June 30<sup>th</sup> – after annual declarations have been submitted), the updated list of pulpit supply ministers is sent to Regional Council staff for information.



3. Ministers are invited to complete this form if they are serving in ministries other than pastoral charges (chaplaincies, community ministries, etc.). This information is entered into their assignment table in Dynamics.
4. In order to improve the accuracy of assignment information, this form providing notice of change in pastoral relations is available to ministers on ChurchHub. The form is forwarded to the relevant Regional Council and the proposed end date is entered into their assignment table in Dynamics.
5. New fields have been added to the database:
  - a field with “anniversary year” number that is easily viewable by all staff and helpful in planning for anniversary letters
  - a field indicating if a minister entered UCC via Admission
  - a field indicating if minister is Indigenous



**General** | Salary Category | Life History | Related

Contact: Delina Kiger

Minister Type: Diocesan Minister

Minister Status: Retired

Minister Date Recommended: 4/03/07

Minister Entry Date: 5/08/11

**5 Anniversary**: 12

Minister License Submission Date: 4/05/22

Registry Status: ---

Minister Comment: Commissioned by Hamilton (2011) -- Settled

Retirement Start Date: 7/01/16

Not in Covenant End Date: ---

Current Assignment: General Council Office

**Entry via Admission**: ---

**Active Functions**

In Search of Call/Appointment	No	Intentional Interim Designation	No	Sacrament License	Yes
Educational Supervisor	No	Intentional Interim Designation Start Date	---	Sacrament License Start Date	5/01/22
Educational Supervisor Start Date	---	Intentional Interim Designation End Date	---	Sacrament License End Date	---
				<b>Indigenous Minister</b>	---

In 2023 ChurchHub use has expanded beyond ministry personnel, communities of faith (Administrators, Treasurers and Search Teams), and General Council volunteers. Users now include 100s of volunteers on many of our Regional Council committees. This new group of ChurchHub users has of course increased requirements for support from staff at Regional and General Council levels.

ChurchHub is in continuous improvement as all users share feedback, identify glitches and request enhancements.

Table 3: ChurchHub Use 2023

Record of Call/Appointment forms created	727
Record of Call/Appointment Approved by Regional Councils	552
Annual Declarations completed by May 30 <sup>th</sup> deadline	2216
Annual Declarations completed after May 30 <sup>th</sup> deadline	250
Ministers requested to be approved for search	542
Ministers on the Available Ministers list as of December	225

Communities of Faith Submitted Positions new in 2023	132
Available Positions list as of December	194
Total number of ministers in Calls	1093
Number of ministers in appointments as of Jan 1 <sup>st</sup> 2024	446
Number of visits to ChurchHub	5557
Number of ChurchHub users	9257

## **CONCLUSION**

The Board of Vocation is grateful to the staff of the Office of Vocation, and to all the elected members across the country who have enabled this work to continue in this way. The Board appreciates that this work is holy, and hard, and commits, along with the Holy Spirit, to being partners in the journey.

**APPENDIX TO THE BOARD OF VOCATION ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT  
January 21, 2024**

**Origin:** Director, and the Staff Team of the Office of Vocation.

**Contents of the report:**

The report follows the arc of the vocational life of ministry personnel.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| i. Ministry formation:                          | Candidacy Boards                         |
| ii. Welcoming other leadership:                 | Admission Board                          |
| iii. Investment in vitality and specialisation: | Standards for Accreditation<br>Committee |
|   | Credentialing Committee                  |
| iv. Enhancing effectiveness:                    | Response Committee                       |
|   | Remedial Committee                       |
|   | Boundaries Training                      |
| v. Discontinued Service Lists and Readmission:  | Board of Vocation                        |

**i. Ministry Formation**

**Indigenous Candidacy Board – Tim Hackborn**

Type of Interview	Number of Interviews	Outcome of Interviews
Promise	3	Confirmed
Suitability	2	deferred
SME		
Ready for Appointment	4	
Ready for Ordination	4	confirmed for ordination
Ready for Commissioning		
Mid SME	1	
Benchmark		
Check-ins	12	5 completed
Progress	1	status confirmed
Switch Programs		
Final	4	4 confirmed
Termination of Candidacy	3	2 confirmed
Total Number of Interviews	24	
Total Number of Candidates as of December 31, 2023	14	
Total Number of Inquirers	9	Confirmed
<b>Trends:</b>		
<p>Some meetings that were not included in the numbers above:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were 11 meetings that ICB had to address the administrative and policy work that included the review of the Indigenous Testamur and working with Janet Gear on the development of the Indigenous Candidacy Pathway resource. Other meetings included: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The planning and attending of the National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering in Edmonton</li> <li>The orientation and onboarding of three new Candidacy Board members in September.</li> </ol> </li> <li>In 2023, The Indigenous Candidacy Board met with Rev. Dr. Ray Aldred of VST to build a relationship with the Indigenous M.Div program to strengthen the overall Spiritual Formation of Indigenous Candidates who want to pursue Formal Education.</li> </ol>		



**Atlantic Candidacy Board –Andrew Richardson**

## BOV report for 2023-Atlantic Candidacy Board

Type of Interview	Number of Interviews	Outcome of Interviews
Promise	5	
Suitability	1	
SME	8	
Ready for Appointment	1	
Ready for Ordination	3	
Ready for Commissioning		
Ready for Recognition	1	
Mid SME		
Benchmark	3	
Check-ins	1	
Progress		
Switch Programs		
Final		
Termination of Candidacy	1	
Total Number of Interviews	24	
Total Number of Candidates as of Dec. 2023	28	
DLM Candidates	5	
Diaconal Candidates	1	
Ordained Ministry Candidates	22	
Inquirers	13	
<b>Trends:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are 17 female candidates, 10 males, and 1 trans candidate</li> <li>I have had contact with 40 people who are applicants or considering applying-this without any effort at recruiting</li> <li>Applicants remain overwhelmingly over 50 with the oldest applicant being 72</li> <li>I have three in process who are in the military and are looking to becoming CAF chaplains</li> <li>Almost all candidates in the ordained stream choose AST with only 1 at Emmanuel. The majority of those at AST are in the distance program.</li> </ul>		

### Quebec & East Ontario Candidacy Board – Caroline Penhale

Type of Interview	Number of Interviews	Outcome of Interviews
Promise	9	Promise – 1 “not yet”
Suitability	9	1 Found not to be suitable
SME	8	All ready
Ready for Appointment	1	Ready
Ready for Ordination	7	7 Found for Readiness
Ready for Commissioning	1	Ready for Commissioning
Mid SME	7	All acceptable
Benchmark	2	Continue on Pathway
Check-ins	0	N/A
Progress	0	N/A
Switch Programs	0	N/A
Final	9	8 Successful; 1 left the Pathway
Termination of Candidacy	2	2 voluntary withdrawals – one with interview; one without
Total Number of Interviews	44	**Some interviews were for Promise and Suitability on the same day
Total Number of Candidacy Profiles as of Dec 31, 2023	40	11 are applicants (6 of whom are Francophone)
Total Number of Candidates at Dec 31, 2023	29	
<b>Trends:</b>		
<p>2023 was a very busy year for the Quebec and East Ontario Candidacy Board! We experienced more transition on the Board, welcoming new members and panel interviewers and saying farewell to one of our Co-Chairs. In terms of its work, the Board participated in EDA training and managed to conduct 44 applicant or candidate interviews! This resulted in the completion of 8 Candidacy Pathways: 6 ordinations and 2 by voluntary withdrawal. We had 11 applicants as of December 31, 2023 and over half of these are Francophone which continues to highlight the growing importance of Ministry in French, mostly in Quebec, but also in other areas in Canada. Also, SMEs were a big focus in 2023: with 8 individuals being found ready for SME and 7 interviewing at the mid-SME point. At times, it is proving difficult to find either an SME site or an Educational Supervisor for an SME, especially if the SME needs to be served in French or if there are accommodations required. I anticipate that this will be an ongoing challenge in 2024.</p>		

**Mountain Candidacy Board – Brenda Fawkes**

Type of Interview	Number of Interviews	Outcome of Interviews
Promise	7	
Suitability	6	
SME	6	
Ready for Appointment		
Ready for Ordination	4	
Ready for Commissioning		
Mid SME		
Benchmark		
Check-ins		
Progress		
Disciplinary	1	
Termination of Candidacy	0	
<b>Total Number of Interviews</b>	24	
<b>Total Number of Candidates as of Dec 31, 2023</b>	37	There were 3 candidates for ordination or commissioning who were also serving as DLMs
<b>Trends:</b>		
<p>Having 14 board members makes a huge difference.</p> <p>The majority of our students attend VST, however, more and more are considering the in-community program at AST.</p> <p>Diversity: 3 in 20s, 9 in 30s, 10 in 40s, 9 in 50s, 6 in 60s. There are 10 of the 37 who would self-identify as LGBTQ2S+</p> <p>The opportunity for in-person discernment event this fall put real faces on the call to ministry.</p>		

**North & Central Ontario Candidacy Board – Kellie McComb**

Type of Interview	Number of Interviews	Outcome of Interviews
Promise	14	1 found not yet ready
Suitability	4	
SME	1	successful
Ready for Appointment	1	
Ready for Ordination	3	Successful, 2 additional not ready for interview so will be interviewed in February.
Ready for Commissioning	1	successful
Mid SME	0	successful
Benchmark	4	successful
Check-ins	3	successful
Termination of Candidacy	1	
Total Number of Interviews	32	
Total Number of Candidates as of December 31, 2023	29	
Applicants	10	
Diaconal Candidates	1	
Ordained Candidates	28	
Inquirers	8	
<b>Trends:</b>		
<p>The number of individuals interested in ministry, continues to grow. We continue to see more and more diversity in those who are applying to the candidacy pathway process and more individuals who already have a theology degree of some type and want to be ordained. More and more people are engaging within 6 months of the initial contact. The board continues to need to be nimble and flexible.</p>		

**Prairie Candidacy Board – Laura Fohse**

<b>Type of Interview</b>	<b>Number of Interviews</b>	<b>Outcome of Interviews</b>
<b>Promise</b>	2	all affirmed
<b>Suitability</b>	2	all affirmed
<b>SME</b>	4	all approved
<b>Ready for Appointment</b>	2	all approved
<b>Ready for Ordination</b>	6	all approved
<b>Ready for Commissioning</b>	2	all approved
<b>Ready for DLM</b>	2	all approved
<b>Mid SME</b>	4	all affirmed
<b>Benchmark</b>	5	all affirmed
<b>Total Number of Interviews</b>	29	
<b>Total Candidates as of December 31, 2023</b>	22	
<b>Trends:</b>		
<p>We currently have 7 applicants who will be interviewed in 2024 for Promise/Suitability. We have two candidates searching for SME sites. We anticipate approving 3 candidates for ordination in 2024. We have a full and diverse board representing all three regions. The Board met in person in Saskatoon in January. We also met in January, March, May, September and November on Zoom.</p>		

**Southwestern Ontario Candidacy Board – Tanya Cameron**

Type of Interview	Number of Interviews	Outcome of Interviews
Promise	6	5 yes; 1 no
Suitability	3	3 yes
SME	3	3 yes
Ready for Appointment	3	3 yes
Ready for Ordination	4	2 yes
Ready for Commissioning / Recognition	2	1 yes Com / 1 yes Rec
Mid SME / Benchmark	3	
Benchmark		
Check-ins	4	
Progress		
Switch Programs	1	Discerned Indigenous CB
Final		
Termination of Candidacy	3	1 Termination, 2 Withdrawals
Total Number of Interviews	32	
Total Number of Candidates as of December 31, 2023	34	
<b>Trends:</b>		
<p>Many are in ministry-based programs requiring SME sites; similar to 2022, the 2023 calendar year had 15 SMEs running at December 31, 2023. This means heavy investment of evaluations, training, Educational Supervisors and ongoing support via Pastoral Relations (meeting with CoF as they discern to become an SME site; appointing charge supervisors when a candidate is appointed etc.). In addition to the 15 candidates in SME appointments, there are 5 candidate in supply appointments not under supervision (diaconal; in 5<sup>th</sup> year of AST integrated program; or are about to complete 3<sup>rd</sup> year in non-integrated MDiv program and will interview for SME Readiness in 2024.)</p> <p>As in past years, some candidates have a very linear process and some are very casual about proceeding through formation. The Candidacy Board began to be more direct with the expectation that formation requires continuous engagement and 2023 brought 4 candidates who requested a pause of up to one year in Candidacy Pathway (2 related to parental leave and 2 to discern if paid accountable ministry is their calling.) The liaison approach that the SW Ontario CB adopted (each board member has up to 4 assigned candidates that they do a phone call/Zoom at least 2x times a year) continues to be a benefit to formation that allows the entire CB to gain clarity about their process and how the CB can support them in continued suitability for ministry.</p>		

During initial discernment calls with the Vocational Minister, there is a trend of individuals discerning the best/optimal education model rather than the specific call to diaconal or ordained. For example, when I offer during that conversation that “what I am hearing you say about your call is more reflective of Diaconal ministry” the individual often acknowledges that, but affirms that the integrated model of education and formation is a better fit for their current life situation.

Within the Candidacy Board, we had 3 members resign from the committee in 2023. One member resigned only after a few months as they discerned their skills were better suited to continuing to serve as an Educational Supervisor, and both of our lay members resigned as they could no longer dedicate the time necessary (they each performed volunteer roles in other areas of their church and private lives). It is true that there is an exceptional time requirement needed to serve competently on a Candidacy Board. The SWON CB meets monthly on the third Thursday (no July/August unless exceptional/urgent meeting) and interviews 6x per year (the Thursday afternoon and Friday mornings of 6 different months). This does not include ad hoc meetings or interviews related to urgent matters such as termination. From speaking with other VMs, it can be difficult for all Board members to be present due to other ministry demands and occasionally requires us to find last-minute alternate interviewers to ensure a full complement available for the candidate.

## Welcoming Other Leadership

### ADMISSION BOARD – Sarah Bruer

An intentional effort was made to clear up spots where we knew ministers were getting stalled in the Admission process as follows:

- The Admission Board conducted 16 final interviews for ministers who completed the Admission process in 2023.
- 17 ministers who are in or seeking appointments participated in one of two Admission Orientation Circles offered in 2023.
- Legal support was sought for four ministers who encountered challenges with immigration.
- Staff checked in with more than 50 ministers who are seeking appointments, almost all of whom confirmed that they are actively searching, struggling, and wanting help.
- 11 ministers not yet in appointments accepted an opportunity through the Admission Board to complete their Intro to Boundaries training.
- 21 ministers seeking appointments registered for a zoom call that will take place in January 2024 about using ChurchHub effectively.
- The Admission Board conducted 13 entrance interviews for admission ministers.
- The Ministry Vocation team approved 11 completed admission applications.
- More than 50 ministers previously approved to apply who hadn't completed their applications were contacted by staff to determine if they still planned to do so, and if so get them moving forward in the process.
- 4 new accompaniers were recruited, trained, and have started offering accompaniment.
- More than 50 ministers in or awaiting accompaniment were contacted to determine continued interest, with those who responded having all been matched with an accompanier.

The following chart depicts where we are at now as a result of these efforts compared to where we were 18 months ago.

Step in the process	# of Ministers (May 2022)	# of Ministers (December 2023)
Waiting for accompanier	27	3
In accompaniment	46	22
Application in process	53	30



Ready for credentialing	3	1
Awaiting interviews	14	1
Seeking appointments	41	53
In appointment	15	16
<b>CURRENT # IN ADMISSIONS PROCESS</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>126</b>
Admitted each year	6 in 2022	15 in 2023

## ii. Investment in Vitality and Specialization

### CREDENTIALING COMMITTEE – Adam Hanley

In 2023, the Credentialing committee met 7 times (last meeting was December 8, 2023).

During the year, the committee has completed the following for the designation of intentional interim ministers:

- 1 minister interviewed and approved for initial designation as an intentional interim minister (after completing interim ministry training);
- 3 ministers interviewed and approved for continuing designation as an intentional interim minister (after completing their first intentional interim appointment);
- transition team reports, exit interviews and self-evaluations reviewed for 7 intentional interim ministers and their gifts were affirmed for continuing designation (for intentional interim ministers who have been serving in intentional interim ministry for a number of years); and
- transition team reports, exit interviews and self-evaluations reviewed for 1 intentional interim minister and the committee is seeking a conversation in early 2024 with the minister about their continuing designation.

The committee has completed the following for the designation of educational supervisors:

- 11 individuals interviewed and approved for designation as an educational supervisor (after completing the ministry of supervision training program).

The committee has completed the following with applicants for readmission:

- 1 individual interviewed for readmission and recommended to the Board of Vocation to be readmitted to the order of ministry

The committee also undertook conversations with ministry personnel called to chaplaincy:

- 1 individual interviewed to provide a letter of denominational support for their call to voluntarily serve as a police chaplain; and

- 1 individual interviewed to provide a letter of denominational support for their continued service as a hospital chaplain and accredited by the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC).

The Office of Vocation currently (including those who were previously designated or approved by Conferences) has:

- 57 designated intentional interim ministers (11 currently serving in intentional interim ministry appointments)
- 456 designated educational supervisors (both lay people and ministry personnel)

### **iii. Enhancing Effectiveness**

#### **Response Committee – Karen Valley, Lisa Giffin**

- Meets monthly, more regularly as needed. During this reporting period, they met 11 times plus 3 Administrative Leave Hearings were held.
  - Two placed on full Administrative Leave
  - One had restrictions put in place
- Membership on the Committee stayed stable throughout the year, with one loaned to the Remedial Committee at the request of the Board of Vocation for a particular case.
- 17 new formal cases:
  - 14 Ordered ministry personnel and 2 Candidates for ministry
  - 13 cases were alleged breaches of ethical standards
  - 2 cases came through the Sexual Misconduct Response Policy & Procedures
  - 2 cases came through the Workplace Discrimination, Harassment & Violence Policy & Procedures
- 9 investigations ordered (6 completed, 3 in progress at end of year) with the reports provided to the Remedial Committee.
- 2 reviews ordered and completed, and reports provided to the Remedial Committee.
- 2 cases deemed not eligible as per criteria of Appendix A.
- 1 case required more information, carried over to 2024.
- 1 case the minister chose DSL-V before any process began.

#### **Themes and Opportunities**

1. Increased information sharing regarding what informal measures have been attempted/considered before it is received by the Response Committee.
2. Case conferences with regional council colleagues during both informal and formal phases of cases were regularized and fruitful.

3. Communities of Practice for Consultants and Investigators/Reviewers will get underway in 2024.

### **Remedial Committee – Karen Valley, Marg Szilassy**

- During this reporting period, they met 29 times in addition to the small group preparation for interviews; regularly meeting twice per month.
- Due to the need to recuse three of the seven members for one case, the Board of Vocation appointed three additional members for the duration of that one case only.
- 8 new cases and 8 cases carried over from 2022
  - 8 cases were for alleged breaches of ethical standards
    - 7 of these successfully completed directed programs, were returned to standing and deemed effective
    - 1 exited ministry through Minutes of Settlement and placed on the DSL-V
    - 1 case was resolved through a Formal Hearing, which placed the minister on the DSL-D
    - 1 case was recommended to the Board of Vocation to establish a Formal Hearing Committee to consider placing the minister on the DSL-D
    - 1 minister was returned to standing with no remedial work necessary
    - 4 cases are in progress into 2024
  - 1 case was for alleged sexual misconduct
    - Unfounded
- 7 Effectiveness Support Committees in 2023
  - 1 new committee established
  - 6 committees continued their work
  - 6 committees completed their work

### **Themes and Opportunities**

1. Ministry Personnel comprising the 16 cases this year:
  - a. 1 – Retired
  - b. 7 – served 20+ years
  - c. 3 – served 10+ years
  - d. 4 – served less than 5 years
2. One remained on partial suspension until the resolution of the case and was returned to standing. Five were suspended pending successful completion of Directed Programs and/or outcome of the Office of Vocation processes. One remained suspended until the DSL-D and Formal Hearing process was completed. One remains suspended pending a Formal Hearing process taking place in 2024. Two suspensions were lifted after the ministers successfully completed their Directed Program.
3. As with past years, the themes arising in the remedial work are

- a. emotional intelligence (self-awareness and relationship management);
- b. boundaries power dynamics;
- c. awareness of polity and procedures;
- d. isolation in ministry practice;
- e. relationships with persons served and
- f. concerns related to social media use.

Newer themes emerging relate to understanding of, and compliance with, oversight responsibilities; those in long-term pastoral relationships, and those who have not utilized their full study leave, vacation and sabbatical opportunities

The Remedial Committee is hoping to seek out additional resources for Directed Programs, particularly learning what other denominations find effective in similar remedial matters, in 2024.

### **Personal and Professional Boundaries for Church Leaders Training – Karen Valley**

- Throughout 2023 there were 16 *Personal and Professional Boundaries* sessions offered by staff of the Office of Vocation. Approximately 556 ministry personnel, candidates, applicants for ministry, Admissions applicants and Licenced Lay Worship Leaders attended these sessions:
  - 3 *Introduction to Boundaries* sessions
  - 4 *Social Media* refresher sessions
  - 4 *Finances and Gifts* refresher sessions
  - 4 *Retiring With Grace* refresher sessions
- A mix of weekday and Saturday sessions were offered; Saturdays were much less popular.
- *Finances and Gifts* refresher sessions were the least popular of the offerings.
- The curriculum transitioned fully to the new CHURCHx platform, with some asynchronous training pieces offered alongside the group sessions.

### **Themes and Opportunities**

1. In addition to the Remedial Committee's experience and the past year's sessions, self-care; dual relationships; where to find policies and resources (human and other), and understanding of a minister's power and influence remain top discussion items in these sessions.
2. Users easily made the switch to the CHURCHx platform, providing opportunity to expand the use of the features it offers.
3. A refresh of the curriculum content was implemented, with a full redesign beginning in late 2024.
4. Utilizing a core group of facilitators to deliver the sessions has proven beneficial than spreading it out amongst a larger team, for consistency.

**iv. Discontinued Service Lists and Readmissions**

The Office of Vocation is responsible for administering and maintaining the following lists:

- a) the Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary);
- b) the Discontinued Service List (Voluntary); and
- c) the Discontinued Lay Ministry Appointment List. (The Manual E.2.9).

Readmission is the process by which people who were previously ministry personnel within The United Church of Canada and are on the Discontinued Service List are restored to good standing and service. A net loss of 3 ministry personnel.

<b>Discontinued Lay Ministry Appointment List.</b> By their request.	<b>Discontinued Service List (Voluntary)</b> By their request.	<b>Discontinued Service List (Voluntary)</b> Serving another denomination.	<b>Discontinued Service List (Voluntary)</b> through Memorandum of Agreement.	<b>Discontinued Service List (Disciplinary)</b>	<b>Re-admission – removed from DSL.</b>
	2		1	1	1



## THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA **FOUNDATION** REPORT TO GCE

*The United Church of Canada Foundation's 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 our world.*

### Living Out Our Purpose

Since its inception in 2002, the Foundation has been helping individuals, families and communities of faith to build lasting resources for the future of United Church ministry. We are grateful to all who have placed their trust in us to steward gifts supporting a strong, vibrant future. The Foundation lives out its purpose in three ways: through **facilitating gifts**, through **granting**, and through **investing funds entrusted to us** in ways that align with our values and create positive impact in our world.

#### 2023 IMPACT SNAPSHOT

# \$11M+

Total gifts to all funds



United Church groups in all 16  
Regional Councils received a  
grant

# 121

Seeds of Hope grants, research  
grants and scholarships  
awarded

# ~\$9M

gifts of securities destined for  
Communities of Faith and  
other charitable organizations

It's a blessing to connect the faithful generosity of United Church people with the incredible work being carried out by communities of faith, ministries and other organizations! In 2023, the Foundation received gifts totalling over \$11M (a banner year!), most of which flowed directly to congregations, strengthening vital ministry. We granted \$1.3M to the General Council Office, most of which was for *Mission and Service*. Another \$2.5M was granted from endowments and long-term funds supporting people and projects across the United Church through our *Seeds of Hope* granting program, our scholarships and academic awards opportunities, and donor-created funds.

Our investment strategy is designed to achieve optimal returns through a "traditional" portfolio that comprises about 95% of our holdings. We work in close collaboration with the United Church of Canada and the Pension Fund, leveraging our shared ethos and collective investment power with our common fund manager, Fiera Capital. We encourage Fiera to give due consideration to Environmental, Social, and Governance factors when selecting and engaging with companies in the portfolio and to strive to improve the positive impact of our investments, whether it's through mitigating climate change or supporting the communities where our portfolio companies operate.

As we approach \$100M assets under management, the Foundation has set an ambitious goal of moving 50% of our portfolio to impact investing by 2027. What that means for us is being able to say and demonstrate that at least 50% of our portfolio generates a positive impact as well as solid financial returns. Currently, we have 5% of the portfolio invested in direct impact investments with **Genus Capital** which yield a social or environmental return alongside a financial return (see appendix). We have asked Fiera Capital to help us identify the positive impact of our investments with them, either socially or environmentally, so that we can evaluate our position and work towards achieving our goal of 50%.



## Foundation Priorities

\*Described as "Rural Communities" in our investments, as there are currently limited investable opportunities in Communities of Faith

## What's Next?

Over the next 18 months, the Foundation is focusing on two important initiatives:

- a campaign to encourage Communities of Faith to create endowments
- a re-energized, intentional legacy/planned giving program.

The unifying theme for this work is the United Church's upcoming 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This is an exciting and unique opportunity for the whole church to unite around reflections on our shared past and look with hope to a faith-filled future. *"Focusing on the future together"*, as the Foundation's tagline goes!

We look forward to our upcoming time together! We will bring additional thoughts on trends that will be important for you to be aware of as well as further information on any of the work mentioned above.

Wishing you God's Blessings,  
**Jim Simpson**, Chair, Board of Directors  
**Craig Bater**, Vice Chair, Board of Directors

Appendix

## Executive Summary

# Pastoral Relations Equity Research Project

### For The United Church of Canada

The ***Pastoral Relationships Equity Research Project***, by co-researchers and United Church ministry personnel Kimiko Karpoff and Marcie Gibson, is an expansive qualitative research study that, although challenged by the COVID pandemic limitations, ultimately offers evidence that clarifies the many difficulties experienced by “Equity-seeking Ministry Personnel” in their pastoral relationships.

## Context

This research study grew out of a similar one undertaken by the Shining Waters Regional Council in 2021 that examined the experiences of equity-seeking ministry personnel at the early stages of their pastoral relationships in the region with the goal to apply those findings to increasing equity during that phase, and throughout their ministry.

The questions and ideas from this study prompted the General Council Office to explore how a national study focused on equity-seeking ministry personnel could also help increase equity in all phases of their pastoral relationships.

The Shining Waters research project and report was led by Marcie Gibson, and she was later commissioned to co-lead the ***Pastoral Relationships Equity Research Project***.

1. This Pastoral Relationships Equity Research Project is one of three different but interrelated research and statistical projects exploring equity for ministry personnel in The United Church of Canada.

One project is: [Leadership Counts](#), which is a voluntary identity survey of United Church ministry personnel, staff of General Council and Regional Council Offices, and General Council committee members to gather demographics. To date, Leadership Counts has noted that more than 40% of ministry personnel and committee members name one or more identities to which the church has made full-participation commitments.

#### EQUITY-SEEKING MINISTRY PERSONNEL

#### WHAT IS EQUITY?

Equity realizes that to ensure fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, we need to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some people and groups. Equity moves closer to justice.

**EQUITY-SEEKING MINISTRY PERSONNEL:** Diaconal, ordained, or designated lay ministers and candidates who are accountable to the Office of Vocation and are members of a Regional Council, including retirees and those on short/long-term disability who also self-identify as belonging to one or more marginalized groups.



The other project is the Total Compensation Review. The 44th General Council directed that a study of total compensation be undertaken. The Executive of General Council (GCE) approved a broad mandate for this work which, includes an analysis of compensation against a set of equity markers available in the Leadership Counts data. The task group is currently in the early days of its work.

2. The results and findings of all three studies will be cross-referenced to enable a comprehensive analysis of demographic and narrative research, as well as provide a more robust strategic planning process on issues of equity in The United Church of Canada.

## Commission

This process was jointly supported by **Adele Halliday, the United Church's Anti-Racism Equity Lead** and **Rev. Marlene Britton, the Director of Policies & Programs for Ministry Personnel, in the United Church's Office of Vocation.**

Halliday and Britton helped the researchers strategize the overall approach to the study, as well as recruit a diverse reference group to provide guidance during the research process. Members of this reference group included:

- Laura MacGregor, Lay member, Researcher, Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council,
- Rev. Franklyn James, Ordained Minister, Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council and Pacific Mountain Regional Council,
- Rev. Sung Ran Kim, Ordained Minister, Shining Waters Regional Council,
- Rev. Karen Orlandi, Diaconal Minister, Horseshoe Falls Regional Council,
- Rev. Liz Mackenzie, Ordained Minister, Shining Waters Regional Council,
- and part-term committee members Rev. Étienne LeSage, Ordained Minister, Horseshoe Falls Regional Council and Rev. Darla Sloan, Ordained Minister, Conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council.

## Study Goals

Using Participatory Quantitative Narrative Research methods, Karpoff and Gibson considered **a) an understanding of patterns of inequity, b) preventative measures that could reduce inequity, and c) recommendations on how to incite and foster equity in The United Church of Canada and wider communities.**

Reaching participants through online surveys, personal interviews, focus groups, and in-person circles with Indigenous participants, the researchers collected both demographic and experiential data that revealed trends—both positive and negative—that can be used to inform policy and procedures, training and education, and actionable items for United Church leadership, fellow ministry personnel, staff, and communities of faith.

## Participants

Participants in the study (Equity-seeking Ministry Personnel) had the following identities:

### Racial and Indigenous Identity

- Racialized (17%)
- Indigenous (7%)
  - Indigenous person original to Canada (e.g. First Nations status and non-status, Inuk (Inuit), or Métis) (7.4%)
  - Métis and First Nations (7.4%)

### Disabilities

- Disabled (33%)

### Gender

- Female (74%)
- Gender-fluid/gender-queer, Two-Spirit, and additional genders (7%)
- Transgender (3%)

### Sexuality

- Gay or lesbian (16%)
- Bisexual (12%)
- Queer (11%)
- Polyamorous, pansexual, or Two-Spirit (6%)
- Asexual or nonsexual (5%)

### Language of Most Comfort

- French (5%)
- Korean (2%)
- Additional languages (2%)

## IDENTITY CATEGORIES

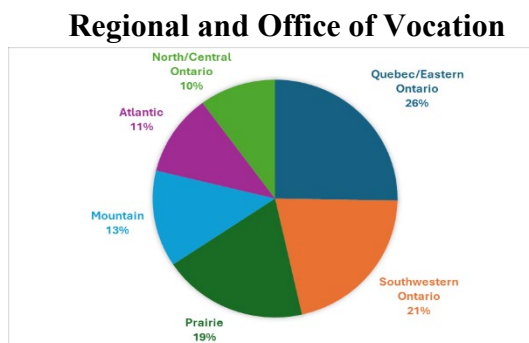
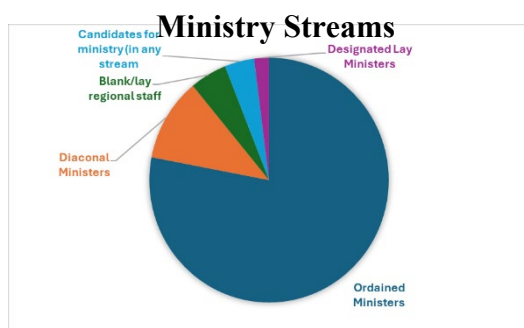
**RACIALIZED:** This is commonly used instead of “racial minority,” “visible minority,” “person of colour,” or “non-White”.

**TRANS/TRANSGENDER:** A person who has a gender identity that is different from the sex the person was assigned at birth.

**CISGENDER:** Individuals whose gender identity is the same as the gender the person was assigned at birth.

**TWO-SPIRIT & LGBTQIA+:** Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual.

**POLYAMOROUS/PANSEXUAL:** Partners agreeing to engage in romantic and/or sexual relationships with other people, with the knowledge and consent of everyone involved.



## Trend Highlights

### Patterns of Inequity

After gathering and analyzing the demographic data and narratives, the researchers present the following categories of discrimination experienced by equity-seeking ministry personnel within The United Church of Canada:

- Ableism,
- Racism,
- Sexism, Heterosexism, Cissexism, Homophobia and Transphobia.

### Ableism

One-third of survey participants live with a disability. Research participants noted that community of faith members often hold prejudice about people with disabilities, and that some congregations are unwilling to consider alternate ways of doing things.

Many respondents revealed that they live with mental health or neurodiversity issues, and that they do not have proper support for in ministries. Those who fell into this category said they experience:

- lack of understanding about mental health management,
- pushback against boundary-setting,
- lack of flexibility or understanding to accommodate neurodiversity, and
- stigma.

### Racism

The study exposed that Indigenous and racialized participants are impacted by racism in many ways including:

- being considered “not a real minister”, (and that White = real)
- experiencing overt and covert racism,
- having their experiences of micro- and macro-aggressions dismissed, and
- inability to find work or precarious work situations.

Participants experienced these forms of racism within their communities of faith, as well as at regional and national levels.

### Sexism

Women make up about fifty percent of ministry personnel in United Church, and yet many women noted that they continue to experience sexism in their role. The consensus was that female equity-seeking ministry personnel are:

- paid less,

- under more scrutiny and criticism,
- policed for their dress and bodies,
- recipients of male sexual harassment,
- not “seen” as the minister,
- often made to feel unworthy or second best,
- also dealing with sexism and trauma in society, and
- often the bearers of the greater load of family caretaking.

### **Heterosexism, Cissexism, Homophobia and Transphobia**

Equity-seeking ministry personnel who are 2SLGBTQIA+ still have experiences of prejudice within The United Church of Canada, even though many communities of faith have been welcoming. Participants who encountered prejudice said they felt that:

- there are things they are not able to do because of their identities,
- others policing their appearance,
- they need to hide aspects of who they are,
- a lack of safety, and
- they have difficulty getting hired by communities of faith.

### **What’s Next**

The full findings of this report will be used by the Executive of General Council, and General Secretary, in collaboration with the Board of Vocation to develop a broader and more comprehensive plan for further supporting equity-seeking ministry personnel. This plan will be informed by the work of the Total Compensation Review, and data from Leadership Counts to deepen equity across the church.

## Consent Proposals

### GS 77 AMENDMENT TO THE JOINT GRANTS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Origin: The United Church of Canada Foundation, Board of Directors**

#### 1. What is the issue?

The Joint Grants Committee terms of reference does not reflect the current need of the committee or the granting programs they support. Specifically, the amendment to the committee's composition to include a permanent member that is Indigenous and appointed by the Indigenous Ministries and Justice unit of The United Church of Canada.

Additionally, some terminology and tasks in the committee's mandate need to be updated to reflect current responsibilities and trends.

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

Ensuring that there is a permanent Indigenous voice on this committee is important as both the Foundation and The United Church of Canada have named reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous Peoples a priority. In order to best provide grants, and to continue the journey of living towards mutuality, respect, equity, and reconciliation, the deliberate inclusion of an Indigenous voice is imperative.

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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 amendments to the Joint Grants Committee Terms of Reference as appended and previously approved by the United Church of Canada Foundation Board of Directors.**

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

The inclusion of Indigenous individuals on the Joint Grants committee is of paramount importance as it brings diverse perspectives and cultural insights to the decision-making process of granting. Indigenous people often possess unique knowledge about their communities, traditional practices, and the specific challenges they face. By including them, a more nuanced understanding of the needs and aspirations of Indigenous communities can be gained, leading to more effective allocation of resources. This inclusion not only fosters equity and social justice but also enhances the overall impact and success of grant-funded projects by ensuring they align with the values, customs, and priorities of the full spectrum of the Church and its people.

Additionally, it is a crucial step towards us to living into the priority and call towards reconciliation and justice.

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

The inclusion of Indigenous members on the Joint Grants Committee is instrumental in upholding a commitment to equity. By incorporating diverse perspectives from Indigenous individuals, the committee gains a richer understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Indigenous communities. This inclusivity fosters a more comprehensive evaluation process that takes into account cultural nuances, historical contexts, and traditional knowledge. Indigenous representation on the committee not only ensures a fair distribution of resources but also contributes to the development of policies and programs that are culturally sensitive and responsive. It promotes an environment where the voices of Indigenous people are heard and active in decision-making processes. In essence, Indigenous inclusion in Joint Grants serves as a powerful mechanism for advancing equity, fostering collaboration, and promoting a more just distribution of resources and opportunities.

Appendix

### **The United Church of Canada Foundation/Fondation de l'Église Unie du Canada Joint Grants Committee Terms of Reference**

**Approved by the Board of Directors and Executive of the General Council \_\_\_\_\_**

*Reviewed by the Joint Grants Committee September 26, 2023*

*Reviewed by the Board of Directors November 30, 2023*

**Approved by the Board of Directors and Executive of the General Council May 2010**

*Reviewed by the Joint Grants Committee November 17, 2022*

*Reviewed by the Board of Directors March 22, 2023*

The Joint Grants Committee is a body of The United Church of Canada Foundation and the Executive of General Council.

#### **Composition**

1. The Committee is composed of two members appointed by the Executive of General Council, two members appointed by the United Church of Canada Foundation, and one member appointed by the Indigenous Ministries and Justice unit of The United Church of Canada (preference given to appointee who is currently sitting on the Healing Fund Working Group).
2. The term of service shall be three years, renewable once at the recommendation of the Committee and subject to the approval of the Board.
3. The committee acts as one body in respect to grants made from the Foundation and grants made from the United Church.

Appendix

**Authority**

1. In respect to grants made from Foundation funds, the Joint Grants committee operates with protocols established by the Foundation and reports decisions to the Foundation Board for that body's ratification.
2. In respect to grants made from the United Church, the Committee has final decision and will report annually to the Executive of the General Council on the awards it makes.

**Mandate**

1. The primary responsibility of the Joint Grants Committee will be to ensure that the wishes of the donor expressed in the terms of the endowment or other long-term fund are fulfilled and that the funds that are allocated are used faithfully in service of God's mission through The United Church of Canada, its member bodies, related organizations and members.
2. The Joint Grants Committee will oversee the use of long-term funds in such a way as to ensure that, consistent with the terms of any given fund, the available monies are expended within a reasonable time for God's mission.
3. The Committee will receive notice of the monies available for granting prior to making any granting decisions. Monies available will be based on the terms of each fund, and the Foundation's and United Church's disbursement policies.
4. From time to time the Committee may recommend to the Foundation's board grant amounts over and above the funding allocation for a year if it is their best judgement that the expenditure will honour the donor's wishes and intent and be effective support for the work the grant will accomplish.
5. The Joint Grants Committee will consider and recommend how best to effectively support the work of the church through grant application programs.
6. The committee will work with staff to ensure that granting programs are widely advertised and that application and approval processes are transparent and clear.
7. Grants will normally be available to congregations, councils of the church, United Church corporations, (including legacy corporations) and ministries that are Regionally accountable or recognized.

8. The Joint Grants Committee may choose, in some circumstances, to provide funding to organizations that are not institutionally recognized (as above) providing: that the terms of the endowment or other long-term fund invite this consideration, that the project will benefit the mission and ministry of The United Church of Canada, and that the project is aligned with United Church values and priorities. Additionally, a letter of endorsement is received from an appropriate officer of the church such as the Secretary of a Regional Council or an Official Board or the Executive Director or comparable position of a United Church institution may be required.

9. The Joint Grants Committee may also award grants to individuals providing: that the terms of the endowment or other long-term funds invite this consideration, that the project will benefit the mission and ministry of The United Church of Canada, and that appropriate documentation and applications are received.

10. The Committee will operate in such a way as to lift up before the whole church the potential of bequests, endowments and restricted funds as a means of supporting God's mission through the United Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada Foundation. The Committee will work with staff to ensure that whenever possible a report on the use of funds is given to family members of those making bequests or establishing endowments or other long-term funds.



## **GS 78 FUNDING FOR THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA CENTENNIAL**

### **1. What is the Issue**

2025 will mark the centennial of The United Church of Canada. The formation of union in 1925 was an historic event as The Methodist Church, Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Congregational Union of Canada and a number of General Council Union churches came together. The 1910 World Mission Conference in Edinburgh provided inspiration for the union movement. Just as June 10, 1925, was an historic event, so too must the 2025 commemoration of union. In November, 2023 you approved the framework of the commemoration of the centennial (*GS 70 Recognizing the United Church of Canada Centennial*).

### **2. Why is it important?**

Planning for the centennial is underway in accord with the direction given by the GCE in November, 2023. There are three streams:

- A. Commemoration: A save-the-date notice has been shared widely to invite people to attend the June 9, 2024, launch of the centennial year (online or in person) with a worship service at Metropolitan United Church, Toronto, a site close to the inaugural gathering at the former Mutual St. arena. An adaptable form of the service will be announced on social media and available through the website as of mid-April. A Centennial page for the website is being developed. The page will include a portal for ministries to share their centennial plans in a way that serves as both invitation and inspiration. Every month, from June 2024 to June 2025, a key moment will be highlighted on social media to mark and share our history. The goal is to curate twelve moments when the life of the church intersected with or reflected broader social themes which will enable this to serve as part of the second stream also. The date for the Centennial service itself has been set for June 8, 2025.
- B. External-focused Communication and Action Plan: The goal of this campaign is to twofold: to introduce the distinctiveness of the UCC to those who have only a broad umbrella definition of “church” and to reconnect with those who claim UCC identity but have lost connection.
- C. Fundraising/Capital Campaign: The United Church of Canada Foundation has been researching possibilities and will be bringing a proposal to the GCE.

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

**The General Secretary recommends that the Executive approve \$500,000 from reserves to fund The United Church of Canada centennial activities, 2024-2025.**

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

It is hoped that the whole church will be impacted by the event and experience of the honouring and commemoration of 100 years of faithful, transformative ministry. It is hoped

that Canadians will be invited to take a look at the United Church again. The members of the church will re-member their history and feel connected to a larger story of God's action in the world.

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

This will provide us with the opportunity to live into the reality of these commitments.

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### **Appendix III**

#### **GS 79 PASTORAL RELATIONS EQUITY RESEARCH PROJECT V2**

**Origin: General Secretary**

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

We believe that God is calling us to respond to, and attend to, patterns of inequity experienced by ministry personnel in their pastoral relationships.

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

The Pastoral Relations Equity Research Project was a qualitative research project that focused on the experiences of equity-seeking ministry personnel in The United Church of Canada. For the research project, "equity-seeking" includes people who are Indigenous, racialized (Black, Asian, mixed-race, and people of colour), Deaf, people who speak English as an additional language, Francophone, disabled, neurodiverse, 2SLGBTQIA+ (Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual), transgender, non-binary and female, based on self-identification.

The research project was officially launched in January 2022, and ran until April 2023. The report that detailed the research findings was completed in August 2023, and the Executive of General Council first (GCE) reflected and discussed this nearly 200-page report at its in-person meeting in November 2023. The GCE then engaged in an additional Learning Session about the report and its findings in January 2024.

This Pastoral Relationships Equity Research Project is one of three different but interrelated research and statistical projects exploring equity for ministry personnel in The United Church of Canada. One project is: [Leadership Counts](#), which is a voluntary identity survey of United Church ministry personnel, staff of General Council and Regional Council Offices, and General Council committee members to gather demographics. To date, Leadership Counts has noted that more than 40% of ministry personnel and committee members name one or more identities to which the church has made full-participation commitments.

The other project is the Total Compensation Review. The 44th General Council directed that a study of total compensation be undertaken. The GCE approved a broad mandate for this work

which, includes an analysis of compensation against a set of equity markers available in the Leadership Counts data. The task group is currently in the early days of its work.

The overall Pastoral Relations Equity Research Project was intended to provide forums for equity-seeking ministry personnel to share their wisdom, experiences, and perspectives. There were three goals that led this research project:

- To identify current patterns of thriving and inequities in pastoral relationships with equity-seeking ministry personnel in The United Church of Canada.
- To identify ways that inequities can be prevented or mitigated through denominational actions such as proactive education, early intervention, pastoral support, and systemic change.
- To incite and foster positive change in The United Church of Canada and beyond.

Initially, this project sought to consider the following primary questions:

- How can our structures enable and support ministry personnel to thrive in pastoral relationships with communities of faith who are predominantly different than they are?
- How can our structures enable and support communities of faith to thrive in pastoral relationships with ministry personnel who are significantly different in some way than most of their members?
- The United Church has developed equity policies and racial justice training, what are the barriers to these being lived out locally, especially in pastoral relationships?
- What are the effects of discrimination, targeted actions, microaggressions, bias, ignorance, and assumptions on the pastoral relationship?
- What are the most effective ways for the regional councils and the General Council to be a catalyst for changing problematic behaviours and attitudes in a community of faith?

The recommendations that follow are based on the results of that research project.

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

**The General Secretary recommends that the General Council Executive:**

- A. Receive the full report of the Pastoral Relations Equity Research Report, and its executive summary; and**
- B. Direct the development and implementation of a plan of action consistent with the Invigorate Leadership objective of the Strategic Operational Plan:**
  - **for addressing the issues raised by the report, and**
  - **working collaboratively with the Board of Vocation, the Office of Vocation, and regional councils to identify any policies that need to be revised, or developed, to create a more equitable and just processes, and**

- **provide a final action plan to the General Council Executive no later than the February, 2025 meeting.**
- 

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

This project named in the Strategic Plan is aligned in the area of Invigorate Leadership, as well as the areas of Embolden Justice, and Indigenous Pathways.

Long-term, the impact of this project is to work towards systemic change and to create more equitable pastoral relationships.

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

Since the entire research project was framed around equity, any aspect of moving it forward would help us to live into our many equity commitments. Specifically, it can help us to further live the church's continued engagements with:

- adopting the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) as the framework for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples
- adopting the [Calls to the Church](#) by the Caretakers of Our Indigenous Circle as the basis for a new relationship
- welcoming [people of all sexual orientations and gender identities](#) into full membership and ministry in the church
- committing to becoming [an intercultural church](#)
- committing to becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church, where there is [full participation of people with disabilities](#)
- working toward [functional bilingualism and ensuring that francophone ministries are an integral part](#) of the church's identity, mission, and vision
- affirming a vision of [empowered youth and young adults](#) partnering with others and continuing to enliven and transform the church in service of the mission of God
- [opposing discrimination](#) of any kind on the basis of identity
- developing an anti-racism policy and committing to becoming an [anti-racist denomination](#)

There were also several previous United Church equity-related research projects conducted between the 1980s and 2020s, and those include include:

- 1984 - Women in Ministry Research Report, by Jane Silman and Mary Graham, commissioned by the Women in Ministry Overview Group, Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, UCC. (84 pages)
- 1999 - Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Persons in Ministry, Consultation Report, by Ken DeLisle, commissioned by the Division of Mission in Canada, Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, UCC. (54 pages)
- 2011 - Report on the Results of the UCC Identity Survey, by Jane Armstrong Research Associates (38 slides) Link to slides [here](#).

- 2017 - UCC Ministry Personnel Demographic Report. (65 slides) Link to slides and brief summary [here](#)
- 2018 - Flourishing in Ministry Report, Wellbeing at Work Research Group, University of Notre Dame and United Church of Canada partnership. Link to summary report [here](#). Or the Full report available [here](#). (109 pages)
- 2019 - Intercultural Ministries Survey, Jane Armstrong Research and Associates. (20 slides). Link to results [here](#).
- 2021 - Pastoral Relations Equity Goal Research Project for Shining Waters Regional Council, Marcie Gibson (64 pages). Link to results [here](#)
- 2022 - Sabbatical Report on Experiences of Ministry Personnel in the Admissions Process, Diane Blanchard (41 pages). Available on request of the researcher.

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

The full report, and its related appendices, are also available as a separate resource to accompany this proposal.

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### **Appendix IV**

## **GS 80 CENTENNIAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN**

**Origin: General Secretary**

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

As the Church approaches its Centennial, we have an opportunity to mark the occasion by making special efforts to prepare for financial sustainability in our second century through a fundraising campaign. In the creation story, we meet one of our first faith stories about generosity in God's wondrous making of the heavens and earth. As it says in James 1:17, "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above." In order for the church as a whole to be financially stable, communities of faith need to be financially stable and well resourced. The campaign we propose focuses on equipping and supporting communities of faith to undertake planned giving programs alongside embedding stewardship into their community life. The result will be gifts for congregations, for Mission and Service, for the Foundation, all in support of ministry in our second century.

The United Church of Canada Foundation's focus on the future makes it the best host for the campaign, however, the General Council Office will need to collaborate very strongly on messaging and leadership. The Executive of the General Council will also need to participate in a variety of ways including, promoting the campaign, making gifts as is commensurate with each one's own ability, and identifying other leaders and communities of faith that may want to participate.

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

The Campaign is important for two reasons: the first, as mentioned above is to create a long-term sustainable source of funding for congregations, communities of faith, Mission and Service and the Foundation; the second is to enhance and help repair disconnect between the different councils of the church.

In order for this campaign to be successful, every council will need to play a role and there must be collaboration and buy-in from congregations. As noted in the campaign feasibility study conducted in late 2023, views across the church are disparate on many issues and there is a feeling of disconnect between councils that needs attention in order for any fundraising to succeed.

A cohesive and collaborative campaign will also build a sense of belonging within the Church that will contribute to stronger local and national identity for the Church.

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

**The General Secretary recommends that the General Council Executive:**

- **Request that a national planned (legacy) giving campaign led by The United Church of Canada Foundation in which the General Council Office and the General Council Executive will participate;**
- **Commit to providing leadership in promoting and supporting the campaign; and**
- **Ensure appropriate resources – as per the strategic plan and budget – are allocated to the campaign.**

For clarity, there is an Activity in the Strategic Plan named as “2025 Anniversary Campaign” and it has an associated budget that the GCE did approve in November 2023.

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

The campaign will improve the relationship between the General Council Office, Regions and communities of faith.

The campaign goal is to raise \$25,000,000 for the work of the church. As the campaign is focused on legacy giving, the funds committed will be received over many years and will be available to support the future ministry of the church locally, regionally, and across Canada.

The campaign will build capacity within congregations to have conversations about giving and to offer meaningful opportunities for community members to create long-term support for their ministry.

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

We will conduct the campaign in French and English. There may be opportunities to receive gifts for programs or funds that specifically address the equity commitments. Further, if the

campaign is approved, we will undertake discussions with the Indigenous Church as to how best to collaborate on this initiative.

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

If this proposal is in response to assigned work – either from General Council or a previous GCE meeting, please list proposal / motion numbers.

N/A