

APPENDIX: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle

We are seeking 4-6 members with lived experience and/or background with the United Church's equity commitments and who are passionate about furthering the church's work on anti-oppression. This diverse circle of people will offer feedback and advice on programs, policies, processes, and resources that will deepen the United Church's commitments to equity and anti-oppression.

Mandate

The Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle will offer feedback and advice focused on uplifting the United Church's [specific commitments to equity](#). This group is not necessarily focused on one specific equity commitment alone; rather, it will engage with how all of the different equity commitments are being collectively lived out in national church life. This work on equity might relate to governance and committees, to education, to programs, policies, and/or processes.

Examples of the work might include engaging with the church's Equity Aspirations; the church's Education, Diversity, and Anti-Oppression (EDA) education for national committees; supporting neurodiversity; as well as other aspects of the church's life. This group's work will also include engage [Toward 2035](#), and supporting congregations in furthering their engagement in anti-racism work.

The work of the Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle is guided by the United Church's commitments to equity:

- welcoming [people of all sexual orientations and gender identities](#) into full membership and ministry in the church, with reference to: [Membership, Ministry, and Human Sexuality](#) (1988); affirming the [ministry of transgender people](#) in the United Church (2009); [transgender policies](#) (2012); [Living Apology to Members of LGBTQ Communities](#) (2015); [Apology to 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities](#) by The United Church of Canada (2025)
- the [anti-racism policy](#), *That All May Be One* (2000) and the [commitment to becoming an anti-racist denomination](#) (2020)
- intercultural policies, with reference to: [A Transformative Vision](#) for The United Church of Canada (2006); Intercultural Ministries: [A Process of Church-Wide Transformation](#), (2009); Intercultural Ministries: [Living into Transformation](#) (2012); the [Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church](#) (2012)
- opposing discrimination of any kind on the basis of identity, with reference to the [Commitment to Inclusion](#) (2009)
- the commitment to [functional bilingualism and francophone ministries](#) (2012)
- becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church, where there is [full participation of people with disabilities](#), with reference to: Open and Accessible: [Ministries with Persons with Disabilities](#) (2012); [Gathering Together](#) report (2013); [Theologies of Disabilities](#) (2015);
- the Indigenous Church, with reference to: the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (2016); the Caretakers [Calls to the Church](#) (2017); [Remit 1](#) (2024).
- [empowering youth and young adults](#), with a focus on people ages 30 and under.

It is important to note that the members of the Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle are not expected to memorize all of these individual policies. Instead, the hope is that all members will be aware, in broad terms, of what the policies name and their relationship to questions of equity. There will also be a time of orientation, and education, related to these policies early in the term for committee members.

The Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle is accountable to the Executive of General Council (GCE).

Membership

The Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle will have an overall membership of 4-6 people (not including staff) who reflect the broad diversity of The United Church of Canada, with particular attention to its equity commitments and the presence of both lay people and ministry personnel from across the geography of the church.

The membership of the Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle will be appointed by the Executive of General Council (GCE) through the church's Nominations Process.

The Anti-Racism and Equity Lead is the staff resource to the Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle.

Skills and Experience

We are seeking people who have experience with any of the church's equity commitments or more broadly around anti-oppression, whether through volunteering, employment, education, and/or lived experience. Members will have good communication, animation, or analytical skills and have strong skills in interpersonal relations, group conflict resolution, and working in the midst of cultural diversity.

All Circle members will be active participants in a United Church community of faith or ministry who are:

- passionately committed to the calling of the United Church and willing to discern God's yearnings for this work
- predisposed to collaboration and teamwork
- able to listen and discern
- dedicated to anti-oppression work, and all of the church's named equity commitments
- comfortable with and able to participate in electronic meetings
- able to commit the time required for this responsibility

The United Church is committed to working toward the full participation of people with disabilities; youth and young adults; people who identify as Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+, Indigenous, racialized, or francophone; people active in French ministries; people with disabilities; people who speak a primary language other than English or French; and people from communities who have been historically excluded who are not named here. This is a part of the United Church's commitments to equity and self-determination, as well as eliminating barriers and working toward the full participation of all people. Individuals with these identities and lived experiences are particularly encouraged to express interest.

Expectations and Term

The Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle hopes to have its first meeting in-person in the late spring of 2026. After that, Circle would generally meet 3-4 times per year, online.

Additional online meetings may be scheduled depending on the needs and work of the whole group. Members are expected to attend meetings regularly. If members are not able to be at meetings, it is expected that they communicate this clearly and catch up on relevant missed work and conversation via the meeting minutes.

The Equity and Anti-Oppression Circle may form task groups from time to time that would focus on specific duties; membership for these task groups might include members this Circle.

The term of this appointment is until the rise of the 46th General Council in the summer of 2028, with the possibility of reappointment for a second term of three-years.