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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...?”

## **Appendix II**

### **Consent Reports / Information**

#### **General Secretary Accountability Report**

**Origin: General Secretary**

*“Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your children shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your elders shall see visions.” —Joel 2:28*

General Council 45 grounded us well in the theme of Visions and Dreams. As we begin this new triennium, we are not only opening ourselves to the Spirit’s gifts of dreams and visions, we are also working strategically to make dreams become reality.

This is my first report to you as the 45<sup>th</sup> Executive of the General Council. This report is a brief overview of the work before us as we begin the triennium. I will focus on the work coming out of the Council, as well as some other updates.

**Budget:** One of the main items for business at this meeting will be the approval of the budget assumptions and principles. As a management team, we are proposing a triennium budget for the 2006-2028. This budget requires some courageous choices amidst the challenges of income.

The closing motion of the Council states, *“direct the Executive to provide budgetary direction to the General Secretary for implementation of the decisions of General Council 45.”* As you discern the direction, it might be helpful to have a sense of some of the pressure points of the budget, as well as the need to prioritize the work.

- The Council directed me to establish six task groups. These task/working groups are required to report at the Annual Meeting in October 2026. If each of these groups met at least once in person, it would be a total of \$100,000.
- The Living into Right Relationship consultation with the Indigenous communities could be in the range of probably over \$2M over the course of the triennium. In addition, there is an outstanding \$10M of repairs are needed to real property in the Indigenous communities. How to fund these initiatives will be a real challenge.
- In an era where the United States government has cut funding to the global community (USAID), there is concern that we would reduce funding to some partners who are working for justice and human rights in their context.
- One of the ways the church was asked to live into the Apology to the 2S and LGBTQIA community was to offer some funding to Affirm United.

We will need your wisdom in how to prioritize some of the work coming out of Council; the justice work, in particular. The 44<sup>th</sup> Executive had approved the three justice priorities – 2S and LGBTQAI solidarity, Racial Justice (with attention to issues of housing) and Indigenous Justice. We had agreed that all other justice issues would be dealt with through ecumenical partnership. At the same time, since the events of October 7, we have given significant focus to the genocide in Palestine. Certainly, this Council has given us what seems like a mandate to attend to the Palestine-Israel war. What should we prioritize?

Coupled with this, the 44<sup>th</sup> Executive had directed me that the work on Towards 2035 also needs to be a priority.

**Mission & Service:** The 44<sup>th</sup> Executive of the General Council authorized me to negotiate an agreement with the United Church Foundation to move the fundraising for the Mission and Service Fund to the Foundation. I am about to complete the negotiation. I will have a motion to bring to this meeting to actualize the agreement.

As of July 31, Mission and Service giving is up, year over year. We believe this is in part due to the Centennial, as well as an increase in legacy gifts such as bequests, which are vary year to year. As of August 31, from all sources (congregations, UCW, bequests, individuals, the Foundation), we have received \$12.3M, up from \$10.5M at August 31, 2024. Additionally, the success of the campaign to support the retreat for Indigenous ministers from Northern Manitoba and Ontario was so successful that IMJ is considering expanding the retreat to be able to accommodate additional participants.

We have two major campaigns planned this fall for Mission and Service: Thanksgiving and Advent-Christmas. We will share materials and videos with you as they are available.

**Strategic Plan:** In September, you will receive for your input the framework for the strategic operational plan for the triennium, anticipating approval of revised objectives in November. It is a more focused plan built to support the efforts of Towards 2035 and will become a key component for the accountability of the Management team.

**Toward 2035:** The denominational strategic initiative is progressing. This summer, we met with elected leadership from regional councils across the country to introduce them to tools and resources that are being developed. Regional and GCO staff continue to work together to develop the strategic direction. There are several pilots taking place and significant work being done refining baselines from which we will be able to measure progress

**Office move:** We are progressing with the move from 3250 Bloor St. W. to 50 Wynford Dr., North York. We have entered into a rental agreement with the Presbyterian Church of Canada to share their space until 300 Bloor St. is completed. On November 5, 2025, we will hold a service of decommissioning of the office at 3250 Bloor. You are invited to join online or in person. We will have limited access the first week of January as we get the new office set-up.

We look forward to the opportunity to strengthen our relationship with the Presbyterian Church.

**300 Bloor Street:** I will offer a verbal report on the progress of the development.

**Staffing:** At the end of this year, **Alan Hall** will be retiring as the Executive Minister/Officer Shared Ministries. Alan served the church both as an elected member and staff for quite a few years, especially in policy development and support of ministry personnel. One of the areas that Alan managed was Pension and Benefits. I have asked **Harry Li**, Executive Officer Finance to assume the responsibility for Pension and Benefits. This fall allows for some overlap. There are several long-serving staff who have retired or indicated that they will be retiring:

- **Stephen Fetter** (Program Coordinator, Webinars and Electronic Meetings);
- **Susan Jackson** (Information and Statistic Coordinator);
- **Roger Janes** (Community of Faith Stewardship Support);
- **Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Stampa** (Senior Governance Lead). Cheryl-Ann will retire in the spring;
- **Carla Hacker** (Financial Analyst), and
- **Judith Gomes** (PAR Program Administrator).

**Bronwyn Corlett** (Rural and New Ministries Coordinator) has resigned to join the people at Northlea United Church, near Toronto; **Marlene Britton** (Director Policies and Program for Ministry Personnel) is leaving the Office of Vocation to become the Principal of the Centre for Christian Studies. We are grateful for their ministry.

I will be on sabbatical from January till the end of March. Cheryl-Ann will serve as acting General Secretary while I am away.

**Risk Management** – In each of my reports to you, I will lift up some of the risk factors we are managing. It is our hope that you will pay attention to this section of the report.

- a. **300 Bloor Office Move Project:** Construction on 300 Bloor is well on its way. The Anglicans are still in their process to resolve their internal challenges.
- b. **CRA Charitable Compliance Audit:** as shared previously with the 44<sup>th</sup> GCE, we are in the process of being audited by the CRA to test for compliance from the 2014 audit recommendations with respect to the demonstration of oversight and control on our global partnerships and our relationship to KAIROS. The first interview with the CRA auditor regarding the charitable compliance audit was held on June 2, 2025. We are awaiting the results.
- c. **UCC Protect/Captive Insurance Structure:** The captive insurance program helps alleviate premium increase for congregations, but it does not eliminate claim risk. Due to catastrophic multi-million-dollar claims in 2024, the reserve level at the captive insurance company was severely impacted. This adverse claims experience will be

reflected in the premium for the upcoming renewal year, with an estimated increase of approximately 10%. At a consolidated level, a 10% increase translates to around \$1 million across the 1,000 participating pastoral charges.

- d. **Financial:** The broader church continues to face ongoing financial challenges, driven by declining revenues, ageing membership base, and rising costs due to inflation. The proposed 2026-2028 Budget Principles adopt a balance approach of leveraging incomes earned by reserving funds while reducing expenditures to help offset the pressures from projected decline in Mission & Service contributions and impacts of inflation.
- e. **Workforce and succession planning:** The GCO continues under a hiring freeze in which financial sustainability and the priorities of the strategic plan are employed by the General Secretary as key factors in consideration of any replacement in the context of attrition. While we celebrate our colleague's retirement milestones, priorities continue to increase, resulting in fewer staff managing a growing number of competing priorities. The strategic plan provides a framework for setting clear priorities, now more than ever, the Church must prioritize prioritisation.

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

## **Strategic Plan 2023–2025**

### **2025 Operational Plan Report**

**Quarter 2**  
**July, 2025**



# 2025 Operational Plan Report: Quarter 2

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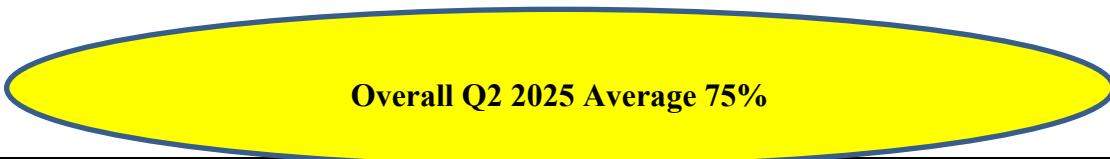
## Legend:

Excellent	Good	Fair	Delayed	Awaiting Activation
Progress on the overall objective or activity is moving along well. Key results per quarter are being met.	Progress on the overall objective or activity continues but not exactly at the rate or in the sequence anticipated.	More significant issues have surfaced related to the overall objective or activity and they are being actively managed towards continued progress.	Something significant has delayed this activity and we are giving attention to discerning the way forward or getting it back on track.	This activity was not planned to begin until a later quarter.
80-100%	60-79%	50-59%	Under 50%	

**Bold** is for priority activities

## Overall Results:

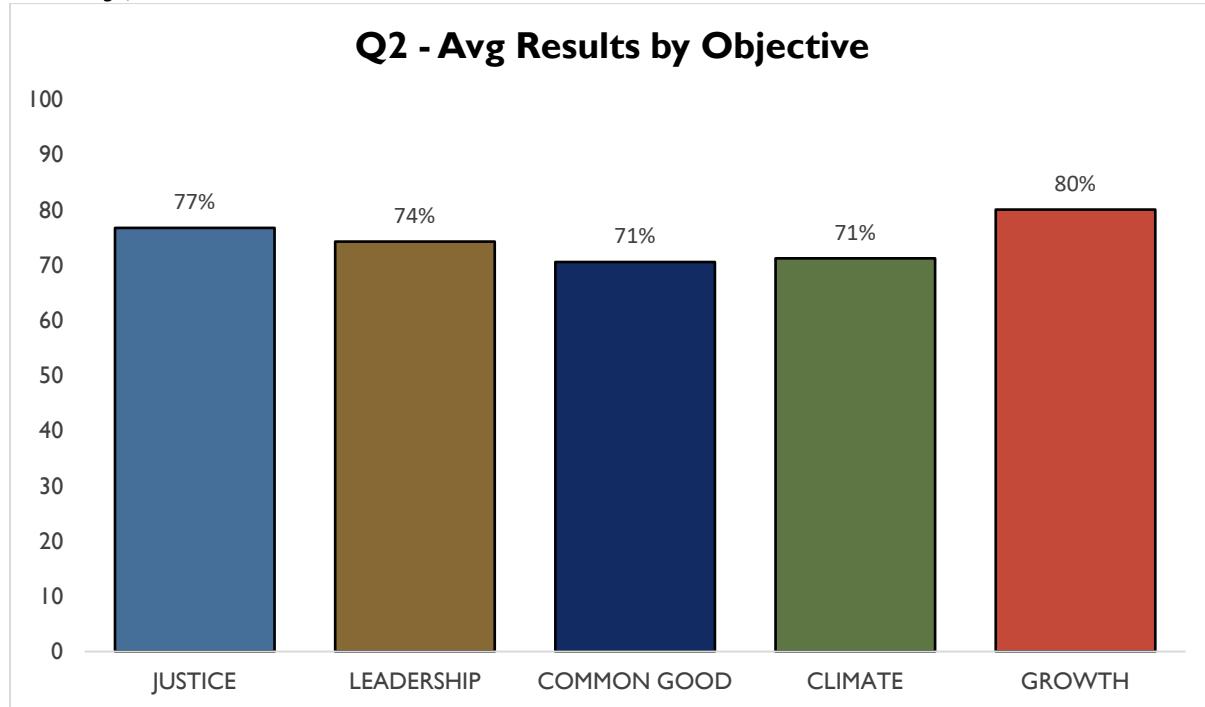
### Chart



Overall Q2 2025 Average 75%

Strategic Objective	Progress on Key Results
<b>Strengthen Invitation</b>	80%
<b>Embolden Justice</b>	77%
<b>Nurture the Common Good</b>	71%
<b>Invigorate Leadership</b>	74%
<b>Deepen Climate Integrity</b>	71%
<b>Journeying Indigenous Pathways</b>	Reporting unavailable at this time

### Graph



### Narrative Summary

In quarter 2 of the third year, initiatives are moving forward solidly, reporting progress against planned key results at 75% overall. One common theme emerging from Q2 includes the way in which smaller initiatives become breeding grounds for larger scale projects. Where there are dilemmas in implementation, it is often because staff continue to be overly optimistic about the time required, especially for complex projects. Even so, some large projects, identified at the beginning of this strategic plan, including those related to the Common Good objective, are reaching conclusion.

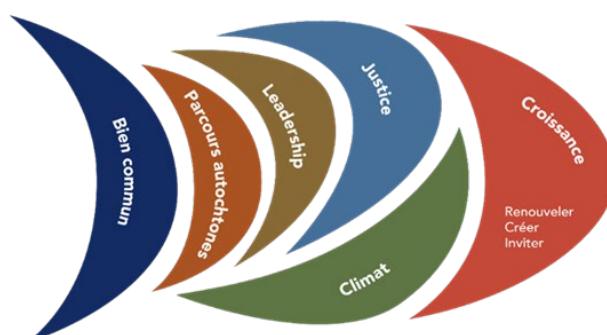
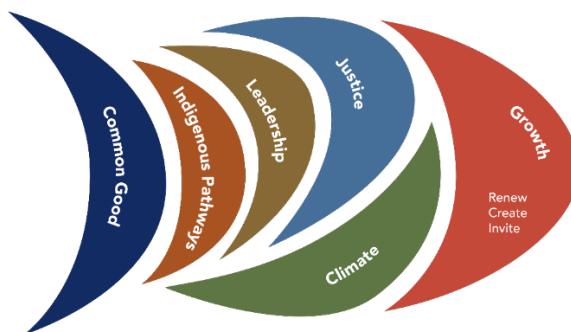
The original strategic objectives for 2026-2028 were framed broadly and do not have specific metrics for that level. Metrics come at the activities level, rolled up to give an overall picture for the objective. With this approach, it is sometimes unclear whether initiatives and activities are moving us clearly toward achieving the overall objective. The question is not whether the initiatives and activities are within the thematic of the objective area but whether they are the best choice, the best "how," to advance the "what." Do they further the outcome anticipated by the objective or advance the strategy foundational to the objective? It is hoped that in 2026-2028 we will be able to strengthen both the focus and the metrics of the strategic objectives in order to sharpen strategy, and employ data to ensure initiatives and activities continue to be aligned as they implemented.

Staff are beginning to anticipate the next strategic planning cycle, tracking in the direction of *Toward 2035*. *Toward 2035* reflects an agreement to develop and implement a whole church strategy, focused on deepening the inspiration and resilience of communities of faith,

sustaining a coast to coast, rural and urban denomination, and a commitment to be increasingly intercultural and multigenerational. This broadening of strategic approach to the whole church in 2026-2028 emerges out of the increased capacity to be data informed developed in the 2023-2025 strategic plan. As we formulate 2026-2028 strategic objectives to align with this whole church strategy, we are committed to greater focus and clarity and developing the baselines needs to support stronger metrics.

## **Strategic Objectives**

The strategic objectives—Justice, Leadership, Common Good, Climate, and Indigenous Pathways—show strong intersections among them, and collectively contribute to the overarching strategic priority on Growth. The following section identifies each objective and offers a narrative and numerical summary of overall progress, as well as giving more detailed information as to how each activity in this objective has fared in this quarter. Please note that the numbers reflect progress not to the ultimate three-year goal, but to the planned key results for this quarter. For a further description of an activity, and/or the relevant key results, please contact [planning@united-church.ca](mailto:planning@united-church.ca)



## **Strengthen Invitation: Humility and Confidence in Sharing Faith 76%**

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

### **Accomplishments**

**Renew:** Between April and June, regionally deployed Growth Animators engaged with 241 ministry personnel and 180 communities of faith. 28 individuals participated in a *Called to be the Church* Stewardship course. 88 Communities of Faith registered to participate in the *100 Tables* Project and were equipped with a planning toolkit and sent funds to support their work. 84 Communities of Faith (CoF) are working with Growth Animators on developing invitation plans. The Theological Banquet was featured on the National Rural Town Halls with Janet Gear acting as guest facilitator. Two rural focused stories were published on the UCCan blog. GCO staff supported the online Rural Ministry Town Hall specifically for CoFs in Shining Waters and Canadian Shield Regional Councils.

**Create:** The number of migrant and diasporic communities being supported increased to 28. The Migrant Church Plant leads network released their Centennial Art Piece. One emerging community has begun worshipping in the building of a now closed United Church congregation with the support of the Regional Council. The Indigenous and Racialized Youth Scholars and summer retreat programs are underway. Substantive work around supporting emerging Francophone communities towards self-governance has been undertaken with Nakonha:ka Regional Council.

**Invite:** The book version of *Immersion* discipleship resource nears completion, and *100 Words of Hope* posts continue to be published on social media. *A Place at the Table* was launched with much excitement and has garnered over 36 million media impressions. *The Finding Faith* survey results have been received and are already informing the key messaging for the *100 Tables* Project. *MonCredo* saw website engagement increased by 81% with 889 Unique site visitors and 1.6K YouTube views (up from 324 view in Q1). Many communities of faith marked the Centennial with events they shared on social media capturing the opportunity for members and communities to deepen and renew their United Church identity. The Centennial Service was held on June 8, Pentecost Sunday at Gower Street United Church in St. John's Newfoundland.

### **Challenges**

Finding sites of new ministry outside of the migrant diasporic context that are ready for financial investment continues to be a challenge. Given the amount of other work being done, there are difficulties developing the groundwork in partnership with Regional Council at any sort of scale. *Toward 2035* could provide an important opportunity to frame this new ministry work moving forward.

## Looking Forward

The preparation work with CoFs participating in 100 Tables will result in exciting public projects launching in the next quarter. Small Foundation grants for Strengthening Invitation work will support new activities in the fall of 2025 in existing communities. Work with the Moderator's *Flourishing* Workshop will allow this material to continue to be offered to the church in the years to come. Analytics show that the increased viewership of *MonCredo* YouTube video content is coming from user searches more than direct links which promises increased engagement to continue.

### Accountable: Rev. Cameron Fraser

Multi-Year Initiative	Activity Name	Progress on Key Results
RENEW: Strengthen the capacities of existing communities of faith Shift: Increased ability to welcome, attract, retain, transform and send people into the world.	<b>Tools and Accompaniment for CoFs</b>	51
	<b>Stewardship for CoFs</b>	75
	Moderator's Initiative: Church Workshops	100
	<b>Renewing Francophone Communities</b>	80
	<b>Supporting Renewal in Rural Ministries</b>	75
CREATE: Gathering learning from our own experience and that of denominations and global partners, create 100 new communities of faith. Shift: Towards vibrant diversity, and intercultural community, transformative in the world.	<b>Regional/Identity Communities</b>	50
	<b>Migrant/Diasporic Communities of Faith</b>	100
	<b>New Francophone Communities</b>	100
INVITE: Galvanize common identity and purpose and communicate effectively to the public about the spiritual home or pathways to home in the church. Shift: Towards greater internal connectedness; stronger external outreach.	Engage with Call and Vision	60
	<b>Outreach: Communication Strategy</b>	100
	Francophone Outreach	70
	<b>Centennial Commemoration</b>	100

## Embolden Justice: Collaborating to Mend Church and World 77%

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

### Accomplishments

**Mutual Support and Shared Initiatives:** Strategic partnerships with ecumenical and interfaith organizations (e.g., World Council of Churches, Canadian Council of Churches, KAIROS) are deepening relationships and enabling unified responses to pressing justice issues. This unity amplifies advocacy efforts and extends the church's reach, particularly in areas such as peace, social justice, and refugee sponsorship.

**Cross-Pollination and Integrated Learning:** Platforms like learning tables at GC45, published blogs, and collaborative webinars have fostered the sharing of best practices and case studies. This has stimulated innovation and enabled different ministry areas to learn from one another, leading to more holistic and effective approaches to justice work.

**Strategic Partnerships Yielding Concrete Impact:** Collaborations with organizations such as Affirm United, Rainbow Refugee Society, and UNHCR have resulted in increased sponsorship and support for marginalized groups, notably 2SLGBTQIA+ refugees. These efforts not only expand the church's justice commitments but also revitalize communities of faith by nurturing bonds, increasing outreach, and fostering spiritual growth.

**Evaluation Data Driving Progress:** Regular evaluations of programs like the 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism and "Wait, Is This Racist?" have provided actionable insights. High participation rates, positive feedback, and evidence of increased confidence and understanding among participants indicate that the church is on track to achieve its strategic goals in this area. Evaluation data is being used to refine program content and delivery, ensuring ongoing relevance and impact.

**Synergy Across Activity Areas:** There is visible interaction between advocacy, education, and outreach initiatives. For example, anti-racism education is being integrated into broader campaigns and communications, while refugee sponsorship work is informed by and contributes to the church's broader justice and inclusion agenda. This interconnectedness maximizes impact and ensures that efforts in one area reinforce progress in others.

## **Challenges**

Implementing the strategy for just relationships and abundant life faces significant challenges that are prompting a need for adaptation and ongoing learning. One major hurdle is maintaining effective collaboration among a diverse range of partners, including ecumenical and interfaith organizations. Differing priorities, organizational capacities, and theological perspectives can create friction, slow decision-making, and dilute unified advocacy efforts. Additionally, translating shared best practices and innovative ideas into contextually relevant actions presents complexity, as not every solution is readily applicable to every setting. Resistance to change or feelings of overwhelm can arise within certain communities, making it difficult to implement new models consistently and effectively.

Another core challenge lies in sustaining the long-term energy and capacity needed for justice work. As outreach expands—such as increased support for marginalized groups like 2SLGBTQIA+ refugees—limited resources and the risk of burnout among volunteers and staff become pronounced concerns. These pressures spotlight the necessity of ongoing support, robust resource allocation, and intentional care for all participants in this piece of work. Collectively, these challenges underscore the importance of adaptive strategies, deep relationship-building, regular reflection, and flexible support systems to ensure that collaboration for justice not only persists but grows stronger and more impactful over time.

## **Looking Forward**

The Justice team is preparing for a transformative year ahead, focusing on deepening partnerships, building organizational capacity, and launching ambitious justice campaigns. Key areas of focus include Indigenous rights and reconciliation, ecological and climate justice, refugee support, amplifying Jubilee 25 campaigns, and racial justice. The team will also be broadening its efforts to address emerging concerns such as first third ministries, food security, and global peacebuilding. Through strategic partnerships, collaborative learning platforms, and targeted advocacy campaigns, the team aims to achieve bold and visible outcomes in the coming year.

Anticipated outcomes include the launch of high-impact 40 days justice campaigns, measurable regional and community of faith-level action, deeper interfaith collaboration, and intensified engagement with political policymakers. The team will also introduce new webinar training resources and support platforms to sustain leadership and community of faith momentum, ensuring faith communities are equipped for systemic change and effective public witness.

## **Accountable: Rev. Dr. Japhet Ndhlovu**

Multi-Year Initiative	Activity Name	Progress on Key Results
INDIGENOUS JUSTICE: Address anti-Indigenous racism and White supremacy and make the church and Canada safer and more equitable for Indigenous peoples. Shift: Towards decolonization and increased justice.	<b>Reparations</b>	70
RACIAL EQUITY: Advance racial equity. Shift: Towards transformed structures and systems and intentional leadership of racialized people.	<b>Anti-racism advocacy</b>	65
	Addressing Antisemitism	0
	<b>Anti-Racism Education/Action</b>	90
	Migrant Justice	70
2S-LGBTQIA+ RIGHTS: Enhance 2S-LGBTQIA+ rights including addressing religious-induced homophobia. Shift: Towards integrating and intersecting with other justice issues.	Refugee Sponsorship	100
	<b>2SLGBTQIA+ Global and Ecumenical Advocacy</b>	95
ECUMENISM: Increase ecumenical collaboration and effectiveness. Shift: Towards stronger impact and reduction in overlap.	Advocacy: Presence and Methodology	80
	Ecumenical Youth Exchange	0
	Stronger Ecumenical Partnership	80
RADICAL ACCOMPANIMENT: Strengthen accompaniment of global partners. Shift: Towards needs development.	Radical Accompaniment: Financial Sharing	95
	Radical Accompaniment: Crisis Response	90
	Radical Accompaniment: People to People	90
	Radical Accompaniment: Witness	85
	Radical Accompaniment: Visits and Meetings	100
	<b>Radical Accompaniment: Roundtables</b>	95
PUBLIC WITNESS: Strengthen presence in the public sphere and effectiveness in advocacy as a denomination. Shift: Towards greater public presence, clearer principles and processes of response.	Moderator's Initiative: Public Events and Book Clubs	100

## Invigorate Leadership: Adapting and Innovating for Bold Discipleship 74%

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

### Accomplishments

The soft launch of *Then Let Us Sing!* saw over 2800 units sold in less than a month, suggesting that the marketing, workshops, and ongoing communication about this new resource have been effective.

The reimagining Theological Education initiative has been invited to submit a full application for the Lilly Large-Scale Collaborative Grant, one of about 40 collaborative ventures invited to do so out of about 150 initial applications. The work the schools and national staff have been doing over the last 3 years to identify collaborative opportunities and seek external funds to support reimagining theological education is starting to bear fruit.

The (Re)Generate pilot program finished in June, with very positive evaluations from participants and an eagerness to share their learnings in the wider church. The participants have said they feel more engaged with the church regionally and nationally and have significant hope for the United Church, as well as an increased sense of satisfaction and improved capacity in their ministry

### Challenges

One challenge is a significant reliance on Canada Summer Jobs for funding related to youth and young adult leadership development programming/plans. For at least the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive summer, we have not received funding for all of the positions we applied for, which has meant scaling back plans. Alternative funding and alternative leadership development models will need to be explored going forward.

Pastoral Relations Equity, including Admissions, continues to face challenges, internal and external. The Canadian government's ongoing changes and further restrictions to visas has had a negative impact on Admission ministers seeking appointments. The work on developing a pilot workshop for pastoral relations equity has slowed down and we are revisiting our initial ideas, so that we can incorporate the *Toward 2035* planning into this area of work, in deeper partnership with regional councils.

## Looking Forward

There will be further development of cooperative ministry models and storytelling, to lift up the stories of those co-operative ministries that already exist, as well as learnings from the co-operative Supervised Ministry Education sites that are funded through the strategic plan.

We are planning the launch of a mentorship program for those in their first five years of ministry, in partnership with an existing mentorship program at the Montreal School of Theology (MST). This is an ecumenical partnership, with the United Church having its own cohort, led by the experienced staff at MST. We will be able to launch this program much more quickly than anticipated, due to this ecumenical collaboration.

### Accountable: Rev. Dr. Jennifer Janzen-Ball

Multi-Year Initiative	Activity Name	Progress on Key Results
WHOLE PEOPLE OF GOD: Reinvigorate our commitment to the ministry of the whole people of God. Shift: To better coordinated support and resources.	Whole People of God Training	50
	<b>First Third Leadership Development</b>	85
	Worship Resources	100
MINISTRY PERSONNEL: Work to align policy and systems for recruiting, training, authorizing and overseeing ministry personnel with the new Vision. Shift: Leadership development from a program to a mentorship-model (investing in ministers in first 5 years, ministers interested in developing leadership skills, Indigenous church, First Third).	Reimagine Theological Education	85
	<b>Cooperative Ministry and Mentorship Pilot</b>	80
	Recruitment	80
	Leadership Counts	50
	Moderator's Initiative: (Re)Generate	80
	<b>Pastoral Relations Equity Animation</b>	50
	Animating Safe/Respectful Workplace Policy	100
ELECTED LEADERS: Support the increased diversity and effectiveness of faithful elected leaders. Shift: Towards greater inclusivity and accountability.	Equity Training-Governance	800
	Equity and Anti-Oppression Training	80
	Onboarding Volunteers	35
STAFF: Strengthen equity, accountability and effectiveness in	Culture Shift in GCO	50

General Council staff system. Shift: Towards learning culture, alignment, and evaluation against work plans.	Equity in Recruitment and Retention	80
	Management Training	70

## Nurture the Common Good: Equity and Sustainability in Resources 71%

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

### Accomplishments

A number of the activities have laid strong groundwork for carrying work forward in a way that will support *Toward 2035*. Three networks, *The Treasurer's webinars*, *Technology Best Practices*, and the *Property Network*, have all made significant strides in equipping and supporting specialized roles and responsibilities within Communities of Faith. These efforts will support growing the resilience of CoFs. Similarly, the *Data Collection and Analysis* activity gives Regions better access to data and enables more data-informed decision making, enabling better support for Communities of Faith.

The progress made in the *Transparency* activity is also leading to the ability to increase connections across the church and between different councils within the church.

As an example of the work, the success of the Mission and Service campaign for the Indigenous Ministers' Retreat exceeded the goal and will likely enable the retreat to accommodate more ministry personnel. Also in this activity is the Centennial Legacy Campaign which has reached the milestone of \$10M committed by individuals, families, and congregations.

### Challenges

We continue to be overly optimistic in terms of the amount of time activities require to be completed. As we move forward, we will need to very carefully consider timelines and put contingency plans in place for where we think we may be particularly vulnerable to limited staff resources.

### Looking Forward

Through the remainder of the year, we will see a number of the activities come to completion. Those that will carry forward will need consideration as to the next iteration of the work and timelines and how they may need to be adjusted to align more fully with *Toward 2035*.

## **Accountable: Sarah Charters**

<b>Multi-year Initiatives</b>	<b>Activity Names</b>	<b>Progress on Key Results</b>
FINANCIAL HEALTH: Remove barriers to congregational financial health. Shift: Towards financial viability and administrative effectiveness.	Support: Treasurers Plus	90
	Technology Best Practices	70
COLLECTIVE DECISIONS: Strengthen decision making and management of property and resources. Shift: Towards decisions that reflect the ministry needs of the whole church.	Optimize Asset Retention	80
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure financial sustainability of the denomination. Shift: Towards stability and increased resiliency	<b>Mission and Service Support</b>	67
SHARED SERVICES: Reduce costs and improve capacity through shared service structures. Shift: Towards administrative efficiencies and effectiveness.	<b>Shared Space</b>	100
	Information Management	25
	Improve PAR	100
	Digital AV/Image Storage	75
ACCOUNTABILITY: Strengthen planning--strategic and operational--and increase accountability. Shift: Towards evidence-based decisions, greater alignment and impact.	Operational Planning	75
	Data Collection and Analysis	70
	Transparency	20
POLICY FRAMEWORKS: Improve policy frameworks and enhance effectiveness in governance. Shift: Towards appropriate roles and greater transparency	<b>Governance Reviews</b>	75

## Deepen Integrity: Living Climate Commitments 71%

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

### Accomplishments

One of the key accomplishments this quarter was preparation of the [Sustainability Report \(2023-2024\)](#). This project was moved mostly in-house with the United Church more actively shaping the final product. Release of the report came at a busy time. Even allowing for that, uptake according to web statistics has been less than hoped for or warranted by the input involved. The team who prepared the report is reflecting upon this and has committed to animating the information in it as one way to advance the climate objective and to ensure that the report has life beyond its release date. It may be that a new way of being accountable for climate needs to be determined.

“New ways” is an important topic to consider as we tally the carbon footprint of General Council 45 travel. Carpooling to airports and a potential carbon offset have been offered to attendees. By year end, there should be sufficient data to assess the carbon impact of General Council 45 against the carbon offset offered and to have an informed conversation about how the General Council meeting helps or hinders the church from meeting the emissions reduction goal set by General Council.

### Challenges

The key challenge remains the high demand for Faithful Footprints compared to the funds available. In the first quarter, steps were taken to implement new eligibility criteria. However, before these were able to be put in place, the applications already in hand equaled/exceeded the funds available for the current year. The pause placed on the program remains in effect until it can be coordinated with regional council strategies connected to *Toward 2035*.

### Looking Forward

During this next quarter, the Climate Motivators will be undertaking their projects. We look forward to their learnings and leadership. By the end of 2025, there will be a plan for implementation of Faithful Footprints as part of putting our house in order. Also, by that time, there will be an opportunity to consider the carbon cost of travel both for General Council 45 and with regard to General Council staff relative to the ambitious reduction target.

**Accountable: Rev. Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa**

Multi-year Initiatives	Activity Names	Progress on Key Results
INTEGRITY: Put our own house in order through reducing church emissions. Shift: Towards broader engagement across the church; towards system change in sectors.	<b>Faithful Footprints</b>	50
	Reducing Carbon Emissions	Awaiting activation
VOICE: Raise our spirited voice. Shift: Towards greater public recognition of both the issues and United church leadership in responding.	<b>Advocacy on Climate</b>	80
	Youth Climate Activists	95
RECONNECT: Reconnect with the Earth Shift: Towards reawakened and strengthened love for all God's creation	Eco-Spirituality	60

## Journeying Indigenous Pathways: Forging Right Relations\*\*

**Objective: Deepen Indigenization and healing in The United Church of Canada towards self-determination and the possibility of reconciliation.**

*No report is available at this time.*

**Accountable:** Springwater Hester-Meawassige

*\*\*Note that Indigenous pathways is using another process other than key results methodology for their reporting.*

Multi-year Initiatives	Activity Names
SELF GOVERNING: Create and develop a fully self-governing Indigenous Church within the United Church. Shift: Towards greater implementation of the Calls to the Church.	<b>Structure: Indigenous Church</b>
	<b>Funding model: Indigenous Church</b>
	Indigenous Testamur
	Theologies/Spiritualities: Indigenous ways
	Indigenous Youth Leadership
	New Indigenous Ministries

## Origins of the Plan

The General Council Office developed an operational plan that would reflect the Call and Vision adopted by the General Council in October 2021 and implement the strategic objectives confirmed by the General Council Executive in November 2021. This required not just the creation of content, but the development of systems and processes of detailed planning, reporting, and evaluation, and clarification of lines of accountability. The operational plan uses objectives and key results (OKRs) as the organizing framework.

In alignment with six strategic objectives, staff developed 26 initiatives. 2024 began with 78 activity streams. Each 2024 activity stream has an activity lead, with progress tracked monthly, and reports issued quarterly related to key results. The cumulative key results for that strategic objective are a measure of overall objective progress.

## Call



## Vision

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

**For more Information:**

[Planning@united-church.ca](mailto:Planning@united-church.ca)

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### Consent Proposals

## NOM 2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT

### Originating Body: The Nominations Committee

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

#### 1. What is the issue?

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

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

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

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

The Nominations Committee recommends the Executive appoint the following members with terms as noted:

##### **Working Group on Ministry Leadership (August 2025 – December 2028)**

- Penny Nelson, (Ordained, Bermuda-Nova Scotia), *Commissioner*
- David Mugadzi (Ordained Minister, Living Skies), *Commissioner*
- Deborah Elliot (Lay, East Central Ontario), *nominated by TICIF*
- Norm Seli (Ordained, Shining Waters), *nominated by the Board of Vocation*
- Albertine Chokoté Naoué (Lay, Nakonha:ka), *nominated from the candidacy boards*
- Deepak Nitesh Yohan (Ordained, First Dawn Eastern Edge), *appointed by GCE*

##### **Board of Vocation (September 2025 – GC46, August 2028)**

- Peter Haddow (Lay, Canadian Shield Regional Council)

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

These appointments enable the responsibilities and commitments of these groups to be carried out. Appointments are offered with a view to the strategic objective of Invigorate Leadership: Adapting and Innovating for Bold Discipleship, which is also the strategic area most critically carried out by these two appointed bodies.

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

In its discernment, the Nominations Committee considers diversity with regards to geography, gender identity and ministry stream, as well as the myriad ways that our lives, cultures and lived experiences make each of us unique. All members of committees and representatives of

The United Church of Canada to ecumenical bodies are expected to uphold the United Church's commitments to equity in the roles to which they are being appointed.

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

The Nominations Committee conducts its work in accordance with the mandate outlined in the Manual, the Terms of Reference set out in *Policy 2.08 The Nominations Committee* and the expectations set out in *Policy 1.08 Committee Membership*

The Nominations Committee of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council met on line September 19 to consider expressions of interest for the commissioner vacancies on the Working Group on Ministry Leadership and to consider the expression of interest received for an outstanding vacancy on the Board of Vocation.

**Working Group on Ministry Leadership** – The creation of this working group was directed by the General Council Executive in March 2025. A special nominations call was issued over the summer for the two vacancies to be filled by GC45 Commissioners. The other recommended members are nominated by various bodies as specified in the terms of reference approved by the General Council Executive.

**GS 141 WORKING GROUP ON MINISTRY LEADERSHIP**

The Working Group would be made up of no more than 6 individuals:

- One member nominated by the Board of Vocation
- One member nominated by the Theology Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee who worked on the 2025 Statement on Ministry
- One member nominated from a Candidacy Board
- One member nominated by the General Council Executive
- Two members recommended by the Nominations committee from the Commissioners of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council

**Board of Vocation** – As noted in proposal *GC45 NOM 02 to GC45 Members*

*Recommended for the Elected and Appointed Bodies of the General Council* outstanding vacancies to the Board of Vocation would be addressed based on priorities set for these positions. The following criteria were identified as priorities for the remaining vacancies:

- ministry stream diversity (lay, diaconal, designated lay minister)
- gender balance (male or non-binary)
- francophone

Individuals who had previously shown interest in the work of the Office of Vocation with suitable expertise and who would advance these priorities, were contacted and invited to express interest.

*The Nominations Committee offers gratitude to all who serve and prays for faith and joy in their appointments*

**The Nominations Committee:** Lynella Reid-James (chair), Alcris Limongi (GCE), Katherine Brittain (GCE), Allan Buckingham, Florence Bukam, Norm Seli, Jessica Taylor. Diane Bosman & Jamie Wilder (staff)

## **WF01: BNS01 Clergy Housing Assistance for Summer 2025**

**Most discussion groups supported the intent of this proposal, and supported the goal of ministers having access to attainable housing.**

**However, many groups noted significant logistical challenges in implementation of the proposal, noting questions about taxation implications, requirements to maintain charitable status, and the requirements of mortgage lenders. Other discussion groups felt they did not have sufficient information on these items to make an informed decision.**

**Groups recognized that there are systemic issues with the Canadian housing market that the United Church is operating within.**

Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes:

That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council, 2025:

- take no action on BNS01 Clergy Housing Assistance, and
- direct the General Secretary to incorporate concerns about housing for ministry personnel into the General Council's leadership priority in the strategic plan, and
- encourage Commissioners and Corresponding Members, and others in the United Church, to write to their elected officials at all levels of government to address Canada's housing affordability crisis

## **WF02: ECO04 Training on Conflict and Change for Summer 2025**

**Discussion groups were overwhelmingly in support of the need for lay and ministry personnel training in conflict resolution and in change management.**

**There are already training and resources available in the United Church, including modules in United Fresh Start, as part of the process of ministry formation, ChurchX, training for conflict resolution facilitators, and in training offered by the Interim Ministry Network. Ministry personnel already have continuing education funds available for conflict resolution and change management courses offered by educational institutions and other bodies.**

Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes

That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council, 2025:

- Take no action on ECO04, and
- encourage the Office of Vocation and Regional Councils to highlight the already existing resources on conflict resolution and change management for lay leaders and ministry personnel.

**WF04: ECO01 Making Sabbaticals Easier for Summer 2025**

A majority of discussion groups were in favour of the proposal moving forward allowing for ministers who have worked for five years to be entitled to sabbatical regardless of pastoral relations within the five-year period and additionally consider the creation of a sabbatical support fund.

Some participants in discussion groups expressed concern about cost and suggested that the clause preventing sabbaticals from occurring within the first 18 months of a new pastoral relationship be changed to the first 36 months, however the majority of discussion groups were comfortable with the 18 months in the proposal.

**Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes:**

**That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council, 2025,**

- Approve proposal ECO01 Making Sabbaticals Easier for Summer 2025, and:
  - direct the General Secretary to amend the sabbatical policy to allow for ministry personnel who have worked for five years to be entitled to sabbatical regardless of any changes in their pastoral relationships during that five-year period, and
  - Restrict the occurrence of a sabbatical within the first 18 months of a new pastoral relationship, and
  - Ensure that no pastoral change shall be financially responsible for more than one sabbatical in a five-year period, and
  - Direct the General Secretary to consider the formation of a sabbatical support fund for pastoral charges to contribute and access to cover expenses while a minister is on sabbatical

## **WF05: ECO05 Change to Churchhub Access For Ministry personnel for Summer 2025**

All groups who discussed ECO05 were in favour of the proposal allowing for ministers to view a congregation's call without formally requesting to be made available for call or appointment by the Office of Vocation.

It is noted that quite a few groups did not discuss ECO05.

**Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes:**

**That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council, 2025,**

- Approve proposal ECO05 Change to Churchhub Access for Ministry Personnel for Summer 2025:
  - Direct the General Secretary to modify ChurchHub to allow for all ministry personnel to search the full "Find a New Ministry" section of ChurchHub prior to formally requesting to be made available for call or appointment by the Office of Vocation
  - Continue to require ministry personnel to be made available for appointment or call, prior to formally applying through ChurchHub.

## **WF07: CW01 Mediation of COL Group Assignment Disputes**

Discussion groups were generally in favour of this proposal.

Discussion groups generally wanted to ensure that any process that is put in place

- has a clear path for resolving questions about cost of living group assignment
- has a mechanism to include regional or local input into determining cost of living categories

These mechanisms and authority already exist at the Regional Council level. The General Council establishes a minimum cost of living assignment for a community of faith; a Regional Council can set a higher level based on contextual knowledge.

**Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes:**

**That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council, 2025:**

- Encourage Regional Councils to exercise their authority to resolve questions about cost of living group assignment, and
- Take no action on CW01 Mediation of COL Group Assignment Disputes

## **WF10: WOW02 Administration of Sacraments For Retired Diaconal Ministers for Summer 2025**

All discussion groups were in favour of this proposal.

On review with theology staff and legal counsel, it appears likely that this proposal would result in a change to the United Church's understanding of ministry (7.4.1.iii of the Basis of Union), which would require a remit.

Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes:

That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council, 2025,

- take no action on WOW02 Administration of Sacraments For Retired Diaconal Ministers for Summer 2025
- strongly encourage regional councils to grant sacraments licenses to retired diaconal ministers

### **WF38: NAK02 Address Declining Membership by Expanding the United Church of Canada's Intercultural Ministry**

Discussion groups had mixed reactions to this proposal. Many discussion groups identified that this work is already being done in many regions and areas of the church, in particular through the Growth Animators.

The United Church of Canada has a long history of engaging in intercultural ministry and officially adopted our commitment to becoming an intercultural church at the 39th General Council in 2006. Other policies have been adopted since then through the work of the General Council and the General Council Executive.

The United Church of Canada defines intercultural as “living together with a respectful awareness of each other’s differences. We do this by examining ourselves, building relationships, and distributing power fairly.”

The Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church (2012) states that:

“We strive to become an intercultural church to deepen our understandings and experiences of God and of one another. Within the United Church, a variety of cultural expressions of faith are affirmed and welcomed. Part of the vision of the intercultural church is to create a space where we can sustain our own cultural identities while also affirming those of one another.”

This vision guides every level of the United Church as they engage in this work.

There are currently regional networks and teams focused on intercultural ministry and equity; and that there is work happening in the growth area in terms of migrant and diaspora communities.

There are also partners who are engaged in the work of theological reflection and spiritual enrichment, such as our full communion partner, the United Church of Christ, USA with a daily devotional.

**Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes that:**

**The, in response to NAK02, 45th General Council, 2025:**

- 1. encourage regional councils to animate engagement of intercultural ministry, equity and growth and support communities of faith in this work.**
- 2. Take no further action on NAK02 Address Declining Membership by Expanding the United Church of Canada's Intercultural Ministry**

## **WF40: HF02 Policy That Meets a Variety of Changes in Communities of Faith**

Most groups did not discuss this proposal, and those groups that did were split.

There was confusion about the requests in the proposal. A couple discussion groups expressed the need for clear handbooks that help communities of faith navigate times of change and transition.

Therefore, in response to HF02 Policy That Meets a Variety of Changes in Communities of Faith the Way Forward Team proposes:

**That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council, 2025,**

- 1. Direct the General Secretary to explore the creation of a handbook and other education and theological resources to support Communities of Faith in times of change and transition, and report back for the next meeting of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council in 2026**
- 2. Take no further action on HF02 Policy That Meets a Variety of Changes in Communities of Faith**

## **WF45: COM09 A Call for Strengthening Camping Ministries as Central to Faith Formation within The United Church of Canada, and to Explore How This Vital Work is Structured and Resourced**

Discussion groups support the value of camping ministry. There were many questions about the different practices across Regional Councils and concerns about the specific actions proposed.

Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes:

**That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Council, 2025, refer COM09 A Call for Strengthening Camping Ministries as Central to Faith Formation within The United Church of Canada, and to Explore How This Vital Work is Structured and Resourced to the General Secretary to be considered as part of the strategic plan's priorities around growth and leadership**

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### Appendix III

## **GS02 COMPASSIONATE ASSISTANCE FUND TRANSFER**

### **Origin: General Secretary**

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

Administration of the Compassionate Assistance Fund would be easier if the assets were transferred from The United Church Foundation back to The United Church of Canada.

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

The idea of the church offering compassionate financial assistance originated in 1929 when Emergency Grants were first approved by the Board of Pensions. The assets of the Compassionate Assistance Fund were transferred to The United Church Foundation in 2013.

In the last few years, grants and loans from the Compassionate Assistance Fund have been requested regularly. There is no longer a schedule of quarterly meetings to decide on applications for assistance, as there was in 2013. It is becoming administratively difficult to be regularly requesting transfers from The United Church Foundation to The United Church of Canada accounts at the General Council Office. Also, it is challenging to return funds when Compassionate Assistance loans are being repaid.

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

##### **The General Secretary recommends**

**That the Executive of the General Council authorize the General Secretary to request the transfer of assets in the Compassionate Assistance Fund, currently held by The United Church Foundation, to The United Church of Canada.**

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

The impact of this decision will be a saving of staff time when Compassionate Assistance Fund grants and loans are shared.

The assets of the Compassionate Assistance Fund will be invested in the General Council Office's Treasury Fund portfolio, which is managed by professional external investment managers, in accordance with the Statement of Investment Policy and Responsible Investment Guidelines approved by the General Council Executive. Investment income generated will be allocated back to the Compassionate Assistance Fund to support the long-term sustainability of the program.

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

The Compassionate Assistance Fund receives applications for assistance from racialized admission ministers as they settle into their first pastoral relationships in Canada. This proposal will help ensure they receive grants and loans in a more timely manner.

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

Transfer of Trusts and Endowments from The United Church of Canada to the United Church Foundation – 2013-01-29-042

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#### **Appendix IV**

### **GS03 GROUP BENEFITS PLANS 2026 PREMIUMS**

#### **Origin: General Secretary**

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

The United Church of Canada offers employees a core suite of group health and dental benefits and life insurance (paid for by employers), restorative care (short-term disability) and employer indemnity plans (paid for by employers), long-term disability insurance (paid for by employees) and a retiree group health and dental plan (paid for by retired members who select the plan upon retirement).

Each year staff review the current plan design, premium rates, claims experience and reserves with advice from the plan's benefit consultants (HUB). In previous years, staff made recommendations to the Executive of General Council (GCE) for any plan design changes and premium rates for the next calendar year. With the creation of the Benefits Committee, which was approved at GCE's March 2025 meeting, the Benefits Committee oversees and analyzes the annual renewal process. The interim Benefits Committee makes the following recommendation to the Executive.

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

To meet our fiduciary duties to the plan members and the participating employers and to ensure that the plan's benefits are relevant premium rates should be reviewed and amended regularly to respond to changes in claims experience, plan membership, salaries and other key assumptions and benefit provisions assessed against industry standards and member expectations.

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

**It is recommended that**

**The Executive of the General Council:**

- **set 2026 active member premiums for:**
  - **core health, dental and life insurance at 8.71% of pensionable earnings (an increase from 8.33%) paid by the employer;**
    - **this includes the employer indemnity (EI) replacement enhancement via an increase in the core life and matching accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) to 150% of Pensionable Earnings**
  - **restorative care at 1.53% of pensionable earnings (an increase from 1.35%) paid by the employer;**
  - **long term disability at 2.82% of pensionable earnings (no increase) paid by the employee.**

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

This is a routine annual request to support the effective management of the benefit plans.

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

Not applicable

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## **Appendix V**

### **GS04 PENSIONER GROUP BENEFITS PLAN 2026 - 2030 PREMIUMS**

**Origin: General Secretary**

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

In September 2020, the General Council Executive approved annual increases of 13.7% to the premiums paid by pensioners who are enrolled in the pensioner plan to move the plans to become self-funding by 2025. This has been accomplished.

The church is now establishing a strategy for the subsequent five-year period from 2026 to 2030 that will allow the plan to remain self-funded.

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

The previous deficit, and those in earlier years, was fueled by drug inflation that was considerably higher than the general cost of living index, increased costs of health and dental service, and an aging membership in the plans, as well as a shrinking employer base. It was covered by draws from the reserves accumulated by the plans in much earlier times. Without intervention, the reserve funds were projected to be depleted before 2024.

The estimates made in 2020 were accurate and the plan attained self-funding in 2025, with the last increase of 13.7% being applied in 2025.

It is important that the pensioner group benefits plan be sustainable not just in the present time but for the future. Staff, working with external benefits consultants and actuaries, have projected future costs to inform the following recommendation.

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

**It is recommended that**

**The Executive of the General Council:**

- **affirm the importance of the continuance of the retiree group health and dental plans for retired employees who elect to join it at retirement;**
- **affirm a commitment to maintain the plan's self-funding through premiums over the next five years (by 2030);**
- **set monthly 2026 premiums for the Retiree plans at \$121.56 (single) and \$243.12 (family), a 5.9% increase, with continued 5.9% increases in each of the subsequent four years.**

## Appendix VI

### GS05 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA FOUNDATION

Origin: General Secretary

#### 1. What is the issue?

The Executive of the 44<sup>th</sup> General Council in response to GS127 Future of Fundraising in the Church, March 2025, directed the General Secretary to:

*"begin negotiations and sign an agreement with the Board of The United Church of Canada Foundation to undertake the responsibility for fundraising for Mission and Service including special appeals for emergencies, etc.*

In authorizing the General Secretary, the Executive, also affirmed that:

*A negotiated agreement with the Foundation would need to ensure:*

- a) *That the connection to the denomination be fostered, not just through Mission and Service but through the entirety of the programs and support the General Council Office offers to Communities of Faith and through Regional Councils.*
- b) *Ensure connection and collaboration between the Church and the Foundation*
- c) *Provide the framework for comprehensive reporting both to and from the Foundation*
- d) *Ensure that strategies are in place to mitigate either organization pursuing goals other than those agreed upon*

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

As part of the negotiation, the mechanism to ensure the connection between the Foundation and the Board as expresseds above, it will require the Executive create two corresponding roles (positions) on the Executive for representatives of the Foundation Board.

The composition of the Executive of the General Council (GCE) is prescribed in the Basis of Unions (see section 7.5.1) and is therefore fixed. However, the Manual allows for individuals to serve as corresponding members of the Executive. The agreement envisions that two senior members of the Foundation will serve in this capacity.

Similarly, the GCE nominates two members to sit on the Foundation's Board, which reflects current practice. In addition to the two members, the General Secretary and the Moderator or designate, also serve on the Foundation. The proposal is that GCE exclusively appoint the General Secretary and one other Senior staff.

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

**The Executive of the General Council could:**

- a) Approve two corresponding member roles on the Executive for the chair or vice-chair of The United Church of Canada Foundation and its President,**
- b) Require an annual report of the work of The United Church of Canada Foundation to the Executive**

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

The impact of successful implementation will ensure clear lines of communication

**5. How does the proposal help us live into the commitment on Equity?**

Like the church, the Foundation has made commitments to become an anti-racist organization. It is also committed to all matters related to diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and anti-oppression. One of the objectives in the Foundation's current strategic plan is to embed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in all the Foundation's work including all operations and governance. Further, a portion of this Objective relates to equity and diversity in fundraising approaches, strategy and tactics.

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

Are there comments, affirmations, suggestions you would like to make with respect to this proposal?

This proposal comes with the support of the Finance Advisory Committee and with the Joint Committee of the Church and Foundation, as well as the Board of the Foundation. See Appendix 1 (November GCE Backgrounder)

## **Appendix VII**

### **GS06 2026-2028 Triennial OPERATING BUDGET PRINCIPLES AND ASSUMPTIONS**

#### **Origin: General Secretary**

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

The Budget Principles and Assumptions provide the essential foundation for preparing the operating budget of the General Council Office of the United Church of Canada. Once approved by the Executive of the General Council, this document establishes the strategic budgetary direction enabling staff to develop a comprehensive operating budget, which details key elements such as staffing levels, grant allocations, spending parameters, and authorized transfers from various reserves.

The budgeting process is conducted in three stages: (1) consultation with key stakeholders and governors, (2) drafting principles and assumptions that align with strategic priorities, and (3) developing the detailed budget outlining spending parameters at both the unit and strategic objective levels. This structured approach enables the General Council Office to ensure that budget planning remains transparent and responsive to both internal and external challenges. Once the detailed budget is developed, it is subject to regular review to confirm that resource allocation upholds the approved principles and supports the strategic priorities of The United Church of Canada. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation are essential components of the budget cycle, facilitating timely adjustments as financial conditions evolve and ensuring that the organization remains accountable to its mission, stakeholders, and governance bodies.

Ultimately, this process reinforces the commitment to fiscal responsibility, strategic alignment, and effective stewardship of the church's resources, even in a context of uncertainty and change.

The church is addressing ongoing financial uncertainty, heightened by the pandemic, while advancing its emerging strategic plan. Historically, the General Council Office has responded to declining Mission and Service revenues through periodic, significant expense reductions and the utilization of reserve funds. Starting in 2024, an integrated budget framework that aligns with strategic priorities was developed and adopted to enhance efficiency and accountability. Despite challenges posed by inflation and reduced revenues, the 2026 budget is designed to facilitate strategic objectives, though it may not fully avert potential future downsizing. The Executive is requested to provide guidance on addressing the structural operating deficit for 2026 and subsequent years, and to establish principles to guide the General Secretary's financial planning.

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

The Budget Principles and Assumptions establish the key parameters that guide staff in developing detailed unit-level operating budgets. This operating budgeting process provides a

structured framework for fiscal accountability and transparent decision-making, serving as a critical step toward the church's long-term financial sustainability.

By aligning expenditures with strategic priorities and promoting efficiency, these principles help ensure stability and resilience in times of uncertainty. They also support proactive planning, enabling the church to respond effectively to financial challenges while safeguarding essential programmes.

Furthermore, the integration of long-term budgeting and the early communication of changes reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship. This approach reinforces the church's ministry, both now and into the future.

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

**The General Secretary recommends that the General Council Executive approve the following principles, assumptions and target for the 2026-2028 triennial budget cycle:**

#### **Budget Target:**

- 1) The operating budget must ensure that average **annual funding shortfalls** before investment income **do not exceed \$2 million** over the triennium, or \$6 million in total. A portion of investment income (disposable investment income) from the operating reserve may be used to support operating budget, provided an **adequate reserve balance** is maintained and following conditions are met:
  - a. The **adequate reserve level** is defined as 50% of the average annual budgeted expenditures from the previous triennium. This differs from the minimum reserve threshold of 30% of the operating budget, as previously approved by the Executive. The average total budgeted expenditure from 2023 to 2025 was \$38.22 million, and 50% of that amount is **\$19.11 million**.
  - b. A minimum of 2% of investment income must be retained in the operating reserve to offset the annual inflation and ensure the adequate reserve level is inflated adjusted.
  - c. **Disposable investment income** shall be calculated as the rolling average of the three-year period preceding the budgeting cycle. For the 2026-2028 budgeting cycle, the applicable rate is based on the July 2025 Treasury Fund Investment Report, which stands at 11.35%. After allocating 2% to the reserve to offset inflation, the remaining **9.35%** may be applied to support the operating budget.

#### **Budget Principles**

- 2) All financial and investment decisions must be evaluated through the lens of affordability and sustainability.
- 3) All financial resource allocation decisions must be evaluated through the lens of alignment with and linkage to strategic plan objectives.
- 4) Budget and programming decisions must be linked to proactive communication planning and delivery.

- 5) Transparent and proactive communication about future spending directions and potential changes is encouraged. When possible, advance notice, ideally two or more years, is provided for any phased adjustments, supporting thoughtful planning and continuity.
- 6) A triennial approach to budgeting is adopted to support long-term financial planning, strategic resource allocation, and sustained stability across programme and operational priorities. The budget is reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with evolving strategic directions and prevailing economic conditions.
- 7) The operating budget covers all expected expenses, while unexpected costs are managed with the operating reserve. This reserve is routinely monitored to make sure it stays above a predetermined minimum level.
- 8) As approved by GC45 WF33: GCE04 Funding Strategic Growth Initiatives, 10% of Mission & Service contributions over the course of the 2025-2028 triennium as follows - 5% in 2026, 7.5% in 2027 and 10% by 2028 - be earmarked for new, renewing and emerging ministries.
- 9) The GCO continues under a hiring freeze in which financial sustainability and the priorities of the strategic plan are employed by the General Secretary as key factors in consideration of any replacement in the context of attrition.

**Revenue Assumptions:**

- 10) Adopt a natural view that Mission and Service contributions will remain at a level similar to the past triennium with a moderate decline, which was \$19.5 million.
- 11) The budgeted Bequest income for 2026-2028 is set at \$1.8 million, which will be directed in its entirety towards the operating budget, continuing the practice established from 2019 to 2025. Any Bequest income exceeding \$1.8 million will be added to the operating reserve to support the church's future endeavors.
- 12) The Denominational Assessment Rate will be revised in accordance with the rate and formula approved by [GC45 in WF24b](#): GCE05 Assessment Funding Rate for 2026–2028. The details are listed below for greater details:
  - a. The assessment rate be increased by 0.5% annually over the next triennial budget cycle, starting from the current rate of 4.5%, as follows:
    - i. 5.0% of adjusted revenues in 2026
    - ii. 5.5% of adjusted revenues in 2027
  - b. The investment related portion of assessment be adjusted as follows:
    - i. 0.25% of invested assets in 2026
    - ii. 0.30% of invested assets in 2027
- 13) Other revenues generated by the General Council Office, such as fees, bank account interest, and bookstore sales, etc. are to be designated to support governance and Mission and Ministry.

**Expense Assumptions/Cost Containment Measures:**

- 14) Inflation is expected to continue moderating and is anticipated to return to Bank of Canada's target inflation rate of 2%; the current inflation rate as of July 2026 stands at 2.6%.

- 15) Annually adjust minimum salaries by the annualized Consumer Price Index (CPI) if 3% or less; when the CPI exceeds 3%, staff gather data on wage predictions, collective agreements in not-for-profit and social service sectors, adjustments being offered by other denominations, to support the Executive of the General Council, considering issues of affordability, to set an adjustment. **The 2026 General Council Staff salary schedule will include a 2.6% COLA, based on July 2025 CPI data. Adjustments for 2027 and 2028 will be made when future CPI figures are released.**
- 16) To ensure strategic alignment and financial sustainability, total salary and Mission & Service Grants shall be reduced by \$2 million beginning in 2026, guided by the strategic plan framework.
- 17) Assessment allotments to regional council offices will be maintained at the same level as the prior year for 2026. The Denominational Assessment Task Review Group, as directed by GC 45 in Calgary, will review and update the allocation for the subsequent years.
- 18) Funding for the Indigenous Church will be maintained at the same level as the prior year, pending further discernment on sustainable funding and the use of the Indigenous Church's financial reserves.
- 19) The programmatic budget will be held at \$2 million, consistent with the 2024 funding level. The management team believes that safeguarding this level of program funding is essential.
- 20) Continue to tighten control over travel and meeting expenditures, using the strategic plan to prioritise planning; total budgeted spending shall not exceed the prior year's amount by more than inflation or 3%, whichever is lower.
- 21) Starting January 2026, the Mission and Service fundraising will be managed by the United Church of Canada Foundation. Despite declining revenues, this partnership aims to improve efficiency through collaboration. The General Council Office will coordinate budgeting with the Foundation to align financial plans and achieve operational savings. Annual fundraising costs shall not exceed 5%, based on the 2025 budget baseline.

#### **Inter-Fund Transfers:**

- 22) Use surplus in the annuity fund to support the operating budget, contingent upon a satisfactory actuarial review and thorough understanding of the fund's financial status and obligations. A funding policy should be established and approved by the Executive of General Council to ensure the long-term sustainability and responsible stewardship of the gift annuity program.
- 23) Consider using the Property Fund to support the build-out of the future home of the General Council Office at 300 Bloor Street West, subject to Executive approval and a thorough analysis of existing financial obligations, such as the projected demands from the captive insurance program, to ensure alignment with the funds' mandate (The capital in the Property Fund originates from Ventures in Mission, a successful fundraising campaign launched in the 1980s. This campaign was guided by three key mandates: (1) redevelopment of communities of faith, (2) development of new communities of faith, and (3) increased mission and ministry support through funding the Old Pension Plan.)

- 24) Suspend the annual \$300,000 transfer from the Operating Reserve to the Healing Fund until the existing funds have been fully utilised, and reallocate the \$300,000 to the operating budget to support the Indigenous Ministry and Justice Unit's operating operations.
- 25) Continue supporting the Indigenous Ministries and Justice Unit's operations through an annual allocation of \$396,000 from the Morrison Fund, in addition to the funding through the current year's Mission and Service revenues.

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

The General Council Office Operating Budget impacts nearly every aspect of its mission, governance and operations. It determines how resources are aligned with strategic priorities, including growth, leadership, Indigenous ministries, climate justice, etc. Budget decisions influence staffing, grant allocations, and program sustainability across regions. They also shape long-term planning through reserve policies and investment strategies, ensuring financial resilience. Annual reviews allow responsiveness to emerging needs, while transparent processes support inclusive governance. By embedding stewardship and equity into financial frameworks, the budget enables the Church to live into its commitments, adapt to change, and sustain vital ministries that serve diverse communities across Canada and beyond.

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

Budget principles and guidelines help advance equity by embedding inclusive values into financial decision-making. By aligning resource allocation with strategic goals that prioritise justice and inclusion, they ensure funding supports programmes serving marginalised communities. Transparent planning and early notice of changes protect vulnerable initiatives, while annual reviews allow responsiveness to emerging equity needs. Inclusive consultation processes ensure diverse voices shape budget priorities, and stewardship of legacy funds is evolving to better support equity-focused work. Together, these practices reflect a commitment to responsible, equitable financial stewardship that sustains the Church's mission and strengthens its ability to adapt and serve all communities.

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

The 2026 - 2028 Budget Principles and Assumptions have been developed after consultations with key stakeholders, including the General Council Executive, Indigenous Ministries, Regional Council Executives, and Finance Advisory Committee.

The proposed principles and assumptions aim to keep the annual operating deficit below \$2 million, which can be funded by investment income generated from the operating reserve. This approach helps preserve the health of the reserves and supports long-term financial sustainability.

It is crucial to recognize the challenging external factors, such as sustained high inflation and declining revenue, which significantly strain the church's finances. Despite these challenges,

the proposed 2026 - 2028 budget is designed to lay a foundation and create opportunities for the strategic plan's success, in the context of a whole church strategy Toward 2035.

The Finance Advisory Committee emphasizes the importance of proactive communication about budget decisions, including stakeholder impacts and considered risks. In assessing risks, particular attention should be paid to potential unintended consequences.

## Appendix VIII

### GS07 POST-PREGNANCY AND PARENTAL LEAVE TOP-UP AND ADOPTION LEAVE POLICY

Origin: **General Secretary**

#### 1. What is the issue?

Currently, the United Church of Canada has a Post-Pregnancy Leave Policy and a Parental Leave Policy for ministry personnel found in the Pastoral Relations: Supporting the Pastoral Relationship Handbook.

First, due to increases to the minimum salaries of ministry personnel, many are now above the maximum amount of yearly insurable earnings for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. This means that many ministry personnel may no longer be receiving a salary top-up to 95% of their salary during a post-pregnancy or parental leave.

Second, the federal government is implementing a new 15-week shared Employment Insurance benefit for individuals who become parents through adoption or surrogacy. The new benefit will support parents who carry out responsibilities related to the placement of the child for adoption or, in case of surrogacy, the arrival of the child into their care. The benefit will make the program more inclusive of the ways families are formed in Canada.

The EI parental benefit provides temporary income support to qualifying parents who take a leave from work to care for their newborn or newly adopted child or children. This benefit is available to birth parents as well as to parents through adoption or surrogacy. Parents can share the benefit and choose between the standard option (up to 40 weeks, if shared) or the extended option (up to 69 weeks, if shared).

The EI maternity benefit provides up to 15 weeks of income support to qualifying workers who are pregnant or who have recently given birth to support their recovery. As such, the maternity benefit is not available to adoptive parents or parents through surrogacy.

The amendments to the *Employment Insurance Act* and the *Canada Labour Code* creating the adoption benefit and job-protected leave received royal assent in June 2024.

Once it is in place, parents through adoption or surrogacy will be able to combine the new benefit with parental benefits, making the total number of weeks of EI income support the same as that of birth parents (who can combine maternity and parental benefits). As a result, both groups will have a maximum total of 55 weeks (when standard parental benefits are shared) or 84 weeks (when extended parental benefits are shared).

This proposal seeks to update church policy with regard to top-up amounts and implement an Adoption Leave Policy ahead of the EI changes coming into force to ensure that benefits are equitable for parents welcoming a child whether through birth, adoption, or surrogacy.

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

To ensure equity between ministry personnel whether welcoming a child through birth, adoption, or surrogacy the leave policies should be aligned.

Currently ministry personnel taking either post-pregnancy or parental leave receive a top-up from their community of faith for a portion of the time that they receive either maternity or parental benefits under a government insurance plan. Normally ministry personnel would receive 55% of their salary from the government insurance plan and 40% of their salary from the top-up. Communities of faith are reimbursed from The United Church of Canada Benefits Centre at the General Council Office for the costs of the top-up payments.

However, for 2025, Employment Insurance maternity and parental benefits are offered up to the maximum yearly insurable earnings amount of \$65,700. 64% of the minimum salaries in the 2025 Minimum Comprehensive Salaries for Ministry Personnel grid are above this maximum set by Service Canada. For many ministry personnel, the top-up amount and government insurance benefits are no longer adding up to 95% of salary.

Updating the language in both the Post-Pregnancy and Parental Leave policies with regard to top-ups would ensure that ministry personnel continue to receive 95% of their salary for a portion of their leave.

Implementing an Adoption Leave Policy would create equity among ministry personnel by ensuring they receive the same benefits as those eligible for Post-Pregnancy and Parental Leave.

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

*The General Council Executive could approve the following three changes:*

### **1. Post-Pregnancy leave**

#### **Current language:**

The top-up payment will consist of the following:

- a) income continuation of 95 percent of their weekly salary, if they are subject to a qualifying period of one week before receiving government insurance plan benefits;
- b) a payment of 40 percent of their weekly salary for a period of 15 weeks; and
- c) an income supplement in the form of an automobile allowance, calculated at 40 percent of the monthly average of the last six months of travel reimbursement paid to the ministry personnel, immediately preceding the commencement of the

post-pregnancy leave. This allowance is paid monthly to the ministry personnel on post-pregnancy leave.

**Proposed language in blue:**

The top-up payment will consist of the following:

- a. income continuation of 95 percent of their weekly salary, if they are subject to a qualifying period of one week before receiving government insurance plan benefits;
- b. a payment equal to the difference between government insurance plan benefits and the ministry personnel's weekly salary, for a total of 95% of the weekly rate for a period of 15 weeks.
- c. an income supplement in the form of an automobile allowance, calculated at 40 percent of the monthly average of the last six months of travel reimbursement paid to the ministry personnel, immediately preceding the commencement of the post-pregnancy leave. This allowance is paid monthly to the ministry personnel on post-pregnancy leave.

**2. Parental leave**

**Current language:**

The top-up payment will consist of the following:

- a) income continuation of 95 percent of the ministry personnel's weekly salary, if the ministry personnel is subject to a qualifying period of one week before receiving government insurance plan benefits;
- b) a payment of 40 percent of their weekly salary for a period of 9 weeks (10 weeks, if no qualifying period is required) from the commencement of the parental leave; and
- c) an income supplement in the form of an automobile allowance, calculated at 40 percent of the monthly average of the last six months of travel reimbursement paid to the ministry personnel immediately preceding the commencement of the parental leave or, where applicable, the ministry personnel's immediately preceding post-pregnancy leave. This allowance is paid monthly to the ministry personnel on parental leave while the ministry personnel is receiving payments under paragraphs a) or b) above.

**Proposed language in blue:**

The top-up payment will consist of the following:

- a) income continuation of 95 percent of their weekly salary, if they are subject to a qualifying period of one week before receiving government insurance plan benefits;

- b) a payment equal to the difference between government insurance plan benefits and the ministry personnel's weekly salary, for a total of 95% of the weekly rate for a period of 9 weeks (10 weeks, if no qualifying period is required) from the commencement of the parental leave.
- c) an income supplement in the form of an automobile allowance, calculated at 40 percent of the monthly average of the last six months of travel reimbursement paid to the ministry personnel immediately preceding the commencement of the parental leave or, where applicable, the ministry personnel's immediately preceding post-pregnancy leave. This allowance is paid monthly to the ministry personnel on parental leave while the ministry personnel is receiving payments under paragraphs a) or b) above.

#### **Adoption Leave Policy:**

##### **Proposed new policy wording:**

Adoption leave benefits are available to ministry personnel in communities of faith operated by the United Church of Canada. The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting its ministry personnel in their work and family life. The church recognizes the unique circumstances related to new parenthood and provides leave for ministry personnel who become parents through adoption or surrogacy.

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of "child" is a person who has not yet reached the age of majority in the province/territory in which the ministry personnel reside.

##### **Policy**

1. Adoption leave benefits are available to parents while caring for a newborn (born through surrogacy) or newly adopted child. Adoption leave benefits are payable either from the date of the child's birth or from the date of the child's placement in the home.
2. The ministry personnel shall inform the community of faith in writing of their request for adoption leave at least four weeks in advance of the date of the commencement of the leave, unless there is a valid reason why such notice cannot be given.
3. The ministry personnel will be granted adoption leave without pay for a single period according to the applicable government insurance plan limits. The period of adoption leave will be subject to the maximums set out by the applicable government insurance plan.
4. The community of faith may require the ministry personnel to provide evidence of the ministry personnel's entitlement to leave.
5. If the child of the ministry personnel is hospitalized within the period of adoption leave defined above and the ministry personnel have either not yet proceeded on adoption leave or have begun adoption leave and then have returned to work, the period of adoption leave specified in the original leave request may be extended. This extension will be equal to that portion of the period of the child's hospitalization during which the ministry personnel was not on adoption leave and will end not later than 104 weeks after

the day on which the child was born or on which the child came into the ministry personnel's care.

6. Adoption leave granted under this policy shall be counted as "service" for purposes of salary and benefits calculations.
7. The ministry personnel may elect to continue pension contributions and group insurance plan membership during the period of the adoption leave. If they elect to continue, the community of faith will pay its share of the benefits contributions during the period of the adoption leave. If the ministry personnel choose to suspend making these contributions, coverage will be suspended until the ministry personnel returns to work and contributions recommence.
8. For ministry personnel whose appointment has a fixed end date, the adoption leave will end on the date the ministry personnel's appointment is completed, if the end date is prior to the conclusion of the period set out by the applicable government insurance plan.
9. If both parents are ministry personnel within The United Church of Canada, both parents may take a period of adoption leave provided that the total period of the leave taken by both parents does not exceed the maximum leave period provided under the applicable government insurance plan.
10. The ministry personnel shall provide a minimum of four weeks' notice in writing to the community of faith before their return to work.
11. This policy does not apply to newly blended families, where the child is the biological or adoptive child of one of the partners of the new union.
12. Ministry personnel residing in a manse retain their right of occupancy of the manse during the adoption leave.

*Procedures: Adoption Leave Top-Up Payments*

Ministry personnel on adoption leave will receive top-up payments, payable by the community of faith monthly, for a portion of the leave period. These top-up payments will be provided regardless of the choices that are made in connection with receiving benefits from a government insurance plan until the coming into force of the new EI benefits. The community of faith will be reimbursed from The United Church of Canada Benefits Centre at the General Council Office for the costs of the top-up payments. Two months after the beginning of the leave, the Benefits Centre will contact the community of faith with the reimbursement forms. For a faster reimbursement process, the community of faith can notify the Benefits Centre about an upcoming leave by reaching out to [benefits@united-church.ca](mailto:benefits@united-church.ca).

Once the government adoption leave benefits are implemented, the top-up payment will consist of the following:

- a) income continuation of 95 percent of the ministry personnel's weekly salary for one week, if the ministry personnel is subject to a qualifying period of one week before receiving government insurance plan benefits;
- b) a payment equal to the difference between government insurance plan benefits and the ministry personnel's weekly salary, for a total of 95% of the weekly rate for a period of 15 weeks; and

- c) an income supplement in the form of an automobile allowance, calculated at 40 percent of the monthly average of the last six months of travel reimbursement paid to the ministry personnel immediately preceding the commencement of the adoption leave. This allowance is paid monthly to the ministry personnel on adoption leave while the ministry personnel is receiving payments under paragraphs a) or b) above.

Until the implementation of the new government adoption leave benefits, the top-up payment will consist of the following:

- a) income continuation of 95 percent of the ministry personnel's weekly salary for 16 weeks which accounts for the one-week EI qualifying period and the 15 weeks adoption leave.
- b) an income supplement in the form of an automobile allowance, calculated at 40 percent of the monthly average of the last six months of travel reimbursement paid to the ministry personnel immediately preceding the commencement of the adoption leave. This allowance is paid monthly to the ministry personnel on adoption leave while the ministry personnel is receiving payments under paragraphs a) or b) above.

The community of faith will continue to provide the ministry personnel with basic telephone service during the period of adoption leave.

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

First, Communities of faith are reimbursed for the top-up amounts, thus this change does not create a financial impact for them. It does create a larger financial draw from the national Restorative Care Plan (RCP) which funds the top ups. The current experience has been of a minimal financial impact.

Second, the new Adoption Leave Policy for ministry personnel would ensure that ministry personnel receive 95% of their salary for 15 weeks of adoption leave. Once it is in place, parents through adoption or surrogacy will be able to combine the new benefit with parental benefits, making the total number of weeks of EI income support and leave entitlement the same as that of birth parents (who can combine maternity and parental benefits). As a result, both groups will have a maximum total of 55 weeks (when standard parental benefits are shared) or 84 weeks (when extended parental benefits are shared).

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

This proposal helps us live into equity commitments because it will ensure that all ministry personnel, regardless of where they are on the minimum salaries schedule are receiving 95% of their salary during a post-pregnancy, adoption or parental leave.

As we live into our apology to members of the 2S and LGBTQIA+ community, this proposal helps us live into our equity commitments by ensuring that ministry personnel in the 2S and LGBTQIA+ community who welcome a child through adoption or surrogacy receive the same leave and top up benefits as ministry personnel who birth a child.

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

Motion from 44th General Council: GC44 2022-42

Motion from the 44th General Council Executive: 2023-09-22-050