

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

MEETING OF THE SUB-EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL DRAFT MINUTES June 5, 2006 (Teleconference Call)

The Sub-Executive of the General Council of The United Church of Canada met from 1:00 p.m. until 2:00 pm on Monday, June 5, 2006, by teleconference call. The Moderator, The Right Reverend Peter Short, presided.

ATTENDANCE

Voting Members

Jim Jackson, Don Koots, Marion Pardy, Barbara Rafuse, Peter Short, Jim Sinclair, Michelle Slater, Kent Ward

Corresponding Members

Janet McDonald, Cynthia Gunn, Michael Burke, Joe Ramsey.

Regrets: Lynn Boothroyd, Anne-Marie Carmoy, David Giuliano, Stephen Mabee, George Takashima, Ian Fraser, Carol Hancock, Bruce Gregersen, Kim Uyede-Kai.

CONSTITUTING THE MEETING

The Moderator constituted the meeting with the following words followed by prayer.

"Au nom de Notre Seigneur, Jésus-Christ, seul chef souverain de l'Église, et par l'autorité qui m'a été conférée par le 38ième Conseil général, je déclare ouvert, par la présente, le sous-exécutif du Conseil général et ses travaux dans l'intérêt du Royaume de Dieu."

"In the Name of Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, and by the authority vested in me by the 38th General Council, I hereby declare this meeting of the Sub-Executive of the General Council to be in session for the work that may properly be brought before it to the glory of God."

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Corresponding Members

Motion: Barbara Rafuse/Kent Ward

2006-06-05-422

That Michael Burke, Cynthia Gunn, Janet McDonald, and Joe Ramsey are made corresponding members for this meeting, that Joan MacGillivray be the administrative staff, and that Terry Beaumont be the recording secretary for this meeting of the Sub-Executive.

Carried

Minutes of the Sub-Executive of the General Council

Motion: Jim Jackson/Don Koots

2006-06-05-423

That the minutes of the Sub-Executive of the General Council for May 23, 2006 be adopted as circulated.

Carried

Don Koots noted the addition of one closed bracket on Proposal GPBP 2 bullet #2. Jim Jackson noted the formatting on staff appreciation motion **2006-05-23-422**

PROPOSAL MEPS 7

Designated Ministry

Joe Ramsey gave an overview on the background for Designated Ministry and guidance to the Sub-Executive on how the report could be reconciled with the remit (Preamble to the Designated Ministry Report - Appendix A). The importance of the chart in Appendix A and its inclusion in the new proposal was noted.

Discussions continued with issues and concerns having been raised on the confusion of the term “designated lay ministers” and its accountability and membership. There was also concern on the forms of discernment. It was also noted that the report needs to be well written keeping the principles of adult education in mind.

Motion: Marion Pardy/Don Koots

2006-06-05-424

That no further action be taken on proposal MEPS 7

and that the Sub-Executive of the General Council direct the General Secretary to write a new proposal outlining the policy for designated lay ministry as outlined in the background report.

Carried

Moderator’s Accountability Report to the Executive of General Council (April 2006)

Motion: Jim Jackson/Michelle Slater

2006-06-05-425

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council receives for information the Moderator’s Accountability Report

Carried

General Secretary’s Accountability Report to the Executive of General Council (April 2006)

Motion: Jim Jackson/Michelle Slater

2006-06-05-426

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council receives for information the General Secretary’s Accountability Report

Carried

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Marion Pardy, Chair of the Nominations Committee gave background and update on the Nominations Committee report.

Motion: Marion Pardy/Don Koots

2006-06-05-427

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council appoint the following people to the committees of The United Church of Canada (with the stated terms):

Carried

Executive of the General Council – Ethnic Ministries Constituencies (August 2009)

- Emmanuel Ofori (OM, Ham)

Audit Committee (August 2009)

- Janet Stockton (L, Tor)

PC-Finance – Chairperson (August 2009)

- Donald Hunter (L, Tor)

Ethnic Ministries Unit Wide Committee – Chairperson (June 2009)

- Emmanuel Ofori (OM, Ham)

Faith Formation for All Ages Committee (June 2009)

- Karen Thorne (OM, N&L) – 2nd Term

Marion Pardy gave an update on the following for information.

Nominations to the 39 General Council 2006

Manual Committee (December 2009)

- John Young (OM, BQ) Renewal – 3rd term, Chairperson
- Gail Christie (OM, M&O) – 3rd term
- Alan MacLean (L, Mar) – 3rd term
- Michael Hare (OM, BC) – 2nd term

Canadian Council of Churches appointment (For information)

Canadian Council of Churches Governing Board (June 2006-2009)

- Wendy Evans (L, Tor)

Staff Appreciation

The General Secretary reported on staff appreciation for the work done over the past triennium that was initiated at the last Sub-Executive meeting.

A letter, from the Moderator and the General Secretary, will be sent to all staff extending the appreciation of the Executive of the General Council. The Senior Leadership Team recommends an additional day of holiday (July 4) to the staff at the General Council Offices and at the Conference Offices.

The Moderator concluded the meeting with congratulations to the Sinclair family on the arrival of baby Elijah Logan. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Moderator, Peter Short

General Secretary, Jim Sinclair

APPENDIX A

Preamble to the Designated Ministry Report

Background

The 37th General Council, August 2000, received a report from the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education entitled *Ministry Together*. This report presented a model for paid, accountable lay ministry for congregations and other ministries, which would be known as “Designated Lay Ministry.” The model envisioned a set of common competency requirements for all positions, with specialized competencies for particular types of ministry. Individuals would qualify to fill these ministry positions based on the completion of an educational program, or satisfactory evidence of prior learning and experience. The *Ministry Together* report also referred to the “eight-hour threshold” between congregational-accountable ministry and presbytery/district-accountable ministry. The report did not elaborate on paid ministry for less than eight hours per week, but included a brief reference: “Among the issues to be clarified for a congregational-accountable ministry position will be criteria about United Church membership, educational expectations, screening procedures, liability, and accountability. If the recommendations of this report are approved, then these guidelines will be developed by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education and ratified by the Executive of the General Council in a timely fashion.”

The report was not adopted as a whole, although several of the resolutions were passed. In summary, the Council agreed to: 1) Establish a category of ministry to be called Designated Lay Ministry which would assume the current categories of Lay Pastoral Minister, and Staff Associate. 2) Establish that all those in positions of Designated Lay Ministry would be members of, and accountable to, the Presbytery. 3) Recognize “Congregational Accountable Ministry” defined in the 2001 Manual as “any paid accountable ministry of less than fourteen (14) hours per week, exercised by a lay person within and for a Pastoral Charge, in the areas of education, outreach, pastoral care, worship, or service, for which the person is accountable to the Pastoral Charge through its Official Board or Church Board or Church Council.”

The Remit

The establishment of a new ex-officio presbytery membership status required a change to the Basis of Union; therefore a remit was required. Remit 5A asked: “Do you agree that: (a) the new collective term for lay persons appointed by a Presbytery to a Presbytery/District recognized ministry should be “Designated Lay Ministers”; and (b) membership in the Presbytery and the Conference be extended to such lay persons. The remit was circulated with 77 Presbyteries responding: 56 Yes, 21 No.

Challenges faced by the Task Group

After a shaky start, a task group was eventually established under the Permanent Committee – Ministry and Employment Policies and Services, which included representation from the Education for Church Leadership Committee and the Committee on Ministry Vocations. The task group was mandated to establish an implementation plan for Designated Lay Ministry. As they engaged this work, they often returned to implementation issues which were problematic. These included: 1) a widening of the “gap” between volunteer lay ministry and paid accountable ministry, and 2) the basis for presbytery membership; 3) congregational ability to fill ministry needs without unreasonable delays.

The Ministry “Gap”

The proposed Designated Lay Ministry model would have the effect of raising the minimum educational and skill requirements for all those in paid lay ministry. All paid lay persons engaged in the work of worship, pastoral care, education and service, would be required to become Designated Lay Ministers. Becoming a DLM would require discernment for one year and educational achievement equal to or surpassing the current requirements for Lay Pastoral Ministry. While “raising the bar” of responsibility and accountability is a commendable objective, it would also have the effect of creating a “personnel gap” – the gap between lay volunteerism, and a lay equivalent of Ordained and Diaconal ministry. Historically, the United Church has demonstrated the need for paid lay ministry positions in congregations and social justice ministries that do not require lengthy preparation, presbytery supervision, or professional salaries. Whenever this type and level of ministry is not recognized “officially,” the gap is filled “unofficially.”

The Basis of Presbytery Membership

The Designated Lay Ministry model, as presented to the 37th General Council, proposed that all paid lay persons engaged in ministries of worship, pastoral care, education and service would, by virtue of their designation and appointment, become members of the presbytery. The Task Group was not clear whether Congregational Accountable Ministry positions should be included, since the CAM position was established by the same Council. Historically, the membership of presbytery has consisted of an equal number of 1) ordered ministers who have been formed and chosen by the wider church community to represent a denominational perspective and 2) lay members who have been chosen by congregations to represent the local church. If Designated Lay Ministry were to include those in Congregational Accountable Ministry, the demographic of the Presbytery would be affected. Conceivably, congregations may appoint several Designated Lay Ministers to various part-time ministry positions, affecting the ratio between ordered and lay members of presbytery, and between “paid” members and elected members.

Ability to Fill Ministry Needs

Congregations often wish to provide compensation to lay persons called to specific and time limited ministries. For example, a member of a congregation who is a student may be available on a part time basis to give leadership in the area of youth ministry during the final year of a university degree. The Task Group was in agreement that the church needs to enable the possibility of such positions while retaining a reasonable level of supervision, oversight and support. The demand of additional education, or a long discernment period, and presbytery obligations prohibits the establishment of such paid lay ministries.

The Proposed Model

The task group chose to address the implementation issues named above by proposing that the church enable congregations and other presbytery accountable ministries to establish staff positions that are directly accountable to the congregation or ministry. These positions would demand a higher level of competency and accountability than the current Congregational Accountable Ministries, but not as rigorous as presbytery accountable lay ministries. Such positions could be responsive to changing needs and priorities, and adaptive to changing contexts.

The following table illustrates the Task Group's proposed modifications to the outcomes of the previous two General Councils:

Decisions of GC37/38			Designated Ministry Report to GC39	
	Congregational Accountable Ministry	Designated Lay Ministry	Designated Ministry	Presbytery Designated Ministry (or Designated Lay Ministry)
Position Created by	Congregation	Presbytery	Congregation, approved by Presbytery	JNAC/JSC
Hours/week	<14 (2001) <8 (2004)	Not specified	Any	Any
Accountability	Pastoral Charge	Presbytery	Congregation, position approved by Presbytery	Presbytery
Membership	Not specified	Presbytery	Congregation	Presbytery
Who Designates	Not specified	Presbytery	Congregation/Pastoral Charge	Presbytery
Duration of Designation	Not specified	While in appointment	While in appointment	While in appointment
Appointment Criteria	Not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Church member Discernment Educational Program / Prior Learning Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Church Member Education and experience appropriate for position and consistent with core competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Church Member Discernment Designated Ministry Training Program
Previous categories encompassed	None	Staff Associates, Lay Pastoral Ministers	Congregational Accountable Ministers, Some Staff Associates	Some Staff Associates, Lay Pastoral Ministers

Implementing the Proposed Recommendations

The model proposed by the Task Group and the PC-MEPS will need to take into account remit 5A as authorized by the 37th General Council (2000) and enacted by the 38th General Council (2003).

When Presbyteries voted on remit 5A, they were responding to the following question contained in the remit document:

Do you agree that:

- a) the new collective term for lay persons appointed by a Presbytery to a Presbytery/District recognized ministry should be "Designated Lay Ministers";
- b) membership in the Presbytery and the Conference be extended to such lay persons; and
- c) the Basis of Union be changed as follows?:

The proposed wording for the revised section of the Basis was then set out for Presbyteries in the remit document, and it included the term Designated Lay Minister. Since remit 5A passed and was subsequently enacted on that basis, the term Designated Lay Minister is the one that must be used for laypersons appointed to a Presbytery Recognized Ministry.

If there is desire to substitute “Presbytery Designated Minister” or another term for Designated Lay Minister, a new remit would be required.

Based on the wording of remit 5A, Congregational Accountable Ministers are not included as Designated Lay Ministers. They fill ministry positions which are accountable to a Congregation rather than a Presbytery, and they are appointed to these positions by Congregations rather than by Presbyteries. The right of ex-officio membership in Presbytery and Conference has not been extended to them under Remit 5A. It is open to the 39th General Council to change their title to “Congregational Designated Minister” or to establish an entirely new category of congregational appointed ministries. There would be no need for a new remit because no changes to the Basis of Union would be necessary.

Under remit 5A, all laypersons currently serving under Presbytery appointment to a Presbytery Recognized Ministry would become Designated Lay Ministers and hold Presbytery membership. That would include Staff Associates as well as Lay Pastoral Ministers and Lay Pastoral Ministers-in-Training. The positions that they currently fill would be Designated Lay Ministry positions.

Under the Task Group’s proposed modifications, the Presbytery would need to adjudicate all lay ministry positions as they become available for appointment to determine whether they should be accountable to a Congregation (Congregational Designated Ministry) or to a Presbytery (Designated Lay Ministry). As each incumbent Designated Lay Minister left a position, the Presbytery would decide either to re-categorize it as a Congregational Designated Ministry or to continue it as a Designated Lay Ministry. If the position were re-categorized as a Congregational Designated Ministry, it would be filled by a person appointed by the Congregation as a Congregational Designated Minister. That would be true even if the position had previously been held by a Designated Lay Minister, or if the person appointed to fill it had previously served as a Designated Lay Minister in a Designated Lay Ministry.

Under the Task Group’s proposed modifications, the title of the layperson serving in a ministry position is determined by the categorization of the position: Congregational Designated Ministry/Minister or Designated Lay Ministry/Minister. The layperson would not hold a designation independent of that position, and would not be eligible for ex-officio Presbytery membership except while serving in a Designated Lay Ministry position.

These modifications represent a shift from the policy adopted by the 37th General Council and must therefore be submitted to the 39th General Council for approval. The new policy direction is still, however, within the parameters of remit 5A, and no new remit would be required.