

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
MEETING OF THE SUB-EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL
MINUTES
Monday, May 23, 2012 – 1:00 p.m.
(Teleconference Call)

The Sub-Executive of the General Council of The United Church of Canada met from 1:00 p.m. EST until 2:11 p.m. on May 23, 2012, by teleconference call. The Very Reverend David Giuliano presided.

Attendance

Voting Members: David Giuliano, Bruce Hutchinson, Amber Ing, Betty Kelly, Nora Sanders, Paul Stott, Barbara White.

Regrets: Heather Burton, Shirley Cleave, Brian Cornelius, Louise Rogers, Mardi Tindal

Welcome

The Past Moderator David Giuliano welcomed the Sub-Executive of the General Council to the meeting and invited the participants to share family news. David Giuliano opened with a prayer.

Constituting the Meeting

"Au nom de Notre Seigneur, Jésus-Christ, seul chef souverain de l'Église, et par l'autorité qui m'a été conférée par le 39^e Conseil général, je déclare ouvert, par la présente, le sous-exécutif du Conseil général et ses travaux pour chercher à bâtir le Royaume de Dieu."

"In the Name of Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, and by the authority vested in me by the 39th 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

Motion: Nora Sanders/Amber Ing **2012-05-23-238**

That Alan Hall, Erik Mathiesen and Tracy Murton be the corresponding members, and that Karen Smart be the recording secretary for this meeting of the Sub-Executive of the General Council.

Carried.

Minutes of the Sub-Executive of the General Council

Motion: Paul Stott/Barb White **2012-05-23-239**

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council approve the minutes of the Sub-Executive of the General Council meeting held on March 5, 2012.

Carried.

Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships

Tracy Murton reminded the Sub-Executive of the General Council that the Effective Leadership and Healthy Relationships Report and Proposal were presented to the Executive of General Council in November 2011. The work was referred back for further consultation and was presented to the Executive of General Council in March 2012. The Executive of General Council asked the document be reworded and then be presented to the Sub-Executive of the General Council for their approval to forward it to the 41st General Council for information.

Tracy shared that there is interest from across the church to be part of the pilot testing. Hopefully, there will be three or four ways to test the pilot project.

The additional Summary Document is a good and helpful summary document.

There was consensus that page 5 of the report, the second sentence would be changed as follows: The tests (or pilots) would likely include one in which the present staff complement would equip volunteer leaders, within the present court responsibilities, to administer simplified policies authorized by the Executive, another in which jurisdiction for policies would be realigned (as delegated by the volunteering presbyteries) and new practices introduced with a full complement of staff to administer, and a third which would be a hybrid of the two.

Tracy thanked Alan Hall for his good work on the re-write.

Paul Stott flagged that there may be a governance concern with point three. The 41st General Council will need to deal with this proposal ~~prior to~~ after dealing with the proposal for a Comprehensive Review. The Executive of General Council will work in parallel on these two projects.

The motion was amended and moved as follows:

Motion: Betty Kelly/Barbara

2012-05-23-240

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council:

1. Direct the Summary of the Report on Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships and the Report on Consultations regarding Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships to the 41st General Council 2012 for information.
2. Propose that the 41st General Council 2012 direct the Executive of the General Council to develop and test simplified pastoral relations as well as oversight and discipline policies that are:
 - a. flexible to contextual and regional differences;
 - b. supported within overall financial capacity;
 - c. reflect, but not be limited to, a model that:
 - i. the pastoral charge and the presbytery be accountable for the discernment and articulation of mission and ministry leadership needs, and the support and nurture of pastoral relationships and ministry personnel;

- ii. the Conference be accountable for the pastoral relations processes related to placement, oversight and discipline of ministry personnel;
 - iii. the courts resource pastoral relations as well as oversight and discipline policies with trained paid accountable staff.
3. Propose that the 41st General Council 2012 authorize the Executive of the General Council to implement pastoral relations as well as oversight and discipline policy changes that do not require a remit and that are consistent with and responsive to the ongoing work of the “Comprehensive Review of How The United Church of Canada Envisions and Lives Out Its Identity.”

Carried.

Interim Report of the Steering Group on Candidacy Pathway

Tracy reminded the Sub-Executive of the General Council that the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment were unable to present this report to the Executive of General in March 2012 because they are still receiving feedback. Since this is a denominational shaping issue, the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment recommends that an Interim Report be presented to the 41st General Council for information.

The motion was amended and moved as follows:

Motion: Bruce Hutchinson/Paul Stott

2012-05-23-241

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council receive the interim report of the Permanent Committee on ~~Steering Group~~ the Ministry of Employment Policies and Services report entitled on Candidacy Pathway and forward it to the 41st General Council 2012 for information.

Carried.

Interim Report of the Working Group on Diaconal Ministry

Tracy shared that this work was not finished in time for the March 2012 Meeting of the Executive of General Council. It will be key to have the Report on the Statement of Ministry received by the General Council before this work is completed.

After a discussion, there were a number of changes made to the report (see the amended report at Appendix A) and to the proposal (see Appendix B). These changes reflect that research has been complete but time is required to analyze this research. The amended motion was moved as follows:

Motion: Paul Stott/Betty Kelly

2012-05-23-242

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council receive the interim report of the Working Group on Diaconal Ministry and forward it to the 41st General Council 2012 for information.

Carried.

Recommendations for Appointment from the Nominations Committee

Bruce Hutchinson reported that there were fourteen good nominees for the ten Commissioners of the 41st General Council, 2012.

Motion: Bruce Hutchinson/Betty Kelly **2012-05-23-243**
That the Sub-Executive of the General Council appoint the following members, with terms as stated.

Executive-appointed Commissioners of the 41st General Council (August 2012 – August 2015)

- Adam Brown - Member at large
- Kellie McComb - Member at Large
- Colin Phillips - Member at Large
- John Kim - Ethnic Ministries representative
- Nicole Beaudry - Francophone member
- Marie Claude Manga - Francophone member
- Arlyce Schiebout - Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee
- Jim White - Aboriginal Ministries Council
- Susan Gabriel - Aboriginal Ministries Council
- Grant Queskekapow - Aboriginal Ministries Council

Alternate Commissioners to the 41st General Council, *should one of the above be unable to attend, or be appointed by their Conference.*

- Brian Cornelius - Permanent Committee on Finance
- Mary Royal - Permanent Committee on Programs
- Shirley Cleave - Permanent Committee on Governance and Agenda
- John Thompson - Aboriginal Ministries Council

Paul Stott registered an abstention. **Carried.**

Motion: Nora Sanders/Bruce Hutchinson **2012-05-23-244**
1. That the Sub-Executive of the General Council appoint the following members, with terms as stated.

Directors of The United Church of Canada Foundation (June 2015).

Submitted on behalf of the Nominating Committee of The United Church of Canada Foundation

- The Rev. Dr. Robert (Bob) Burrows (Vancouver BC)
- Gregory Morton (Fredericton NB)
- Catherine Rushton (Winnipeg MB)
- Barbara Shourounis (Regina SK)

Carried.

Motion: Bruce Hutchinson/Barbara White **2012-05-23-245**
That the Sub-Executive of the General Council propose to the 41st General Council the appointment of the following members:

Executive of the General Council (41st General Council, 2012 – 42nd General Council, 2015)

- Ray Jones, *as named by the Aboriginal Ministries Council*
- Jim White, *as named by the Aboriginal Ministries Council*
- John Thompson, *as named by the Aboriginal Ministries Council*
- Susan Gabriel, *as named by the Aboriginal Ministries Council*
- Martha Pedoniquotte, *as named by the Aboriginal Ministries Council*
- Grafton Anton, *as named by the Aboriginal Ministries Council*

Carried.

Motion: Bruce Hutchinson/Paul Stott

2012-05-23-246

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council receive for information the following appointments made by other courts, or authorized bodies:

Aboriginal Ministries Council (August 2012 – August 2015)

- Ray Jones, *as named by British Columbia Native Ministries, 2nd term*
- Chris Bolton, *as named by British Columbia Native Ministries, 2nd term*
- Lori Lewis, *as named by British Columbia Native Ministries, 2nd term*
- Jim White, *as named by British Columbia Native Ministries, 2nd term*
- John Thompson, *as named by All Native Circle Conference, Keewatin Presbytery, 2nd term*
- Russell Burns, *as named by All Native Circle Conference, All Tribes Presbytery*
- Susan Gabriel, *as named by Ontario and Quebec Aboriginal Congregations, 2nd term*
- Martha Pedoniquotte, *as named by Ontario and Quebec Aboriginal Congregations, 2nd term*
- George Montour, *as named by Ontario and Quebec Aboriginal Congregations*
- Wanda Montour, *as named by Ontario and Quebec Aboriginal Congregations*
- Rosalyn Cole, *as named by the Aboriginal Ministries Council, 2nd term*
- Grafton Anton, *as named by the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, 2nd term*
- Grant Queskekapow, *as named by the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, 2nd term*
- Alvin Dixon, *as named by the Vancouver School of Theology, 2nd term*
- Melvin King, *as named by the Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools Committee*
- Lark Kim, *as named by the Communities in Ministry Unit-Wide Committee, ethnic ministries members*

Carried.

Update on the General Council Office Relocation

Nora Sanders called upon Erik Mathieson to bring an update on the General Council Office Relocation. Erik summarized the work, which has been completed since March 5, 2012, when the Sub-Executive of the General Council approved the Bloor Street United Church proposal “subject to a mutually acceptable lease agreement being negotiated within sixty days.” The deadline was included to ensure a sense of urgency in project planning and to ensure there would be so surprises or material changes in the financial terms on which the decision was based. By mid-April 2012, there was substantive agreement on the economic terms. Since that time, the

lease has been with the lawyers. Bloor Street United Church, must first finalize their separate agreement with the developer. The developer has proceeded with its first community meeting.

Options are being considered regarding the location of the Archives.

Since the new space will not be available prior to late 2017, interim leasing arrangements are being considered. The same space planner is being used for both projects.

Appreciation was offered to Erik for his ongoing work.

Motion: Amber Ing

2012-05-23-247

That the Meeting of Sub-Executive of General Council be adjourned.

The Past Moderator thanked everyone for attending. The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Past Moderator, David Giuliano

General Secretary, Nora Sanders

ADDENDUM A

Title: Interim Report of the Working Group on Diaconal Ministry

Origin: Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services

The Working Group on Diaconal Ministry is mandated by the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services to:

- consult with Diaconal Ministers and the Diakonia of the United Church of Canada (DUCC) to determine the most appropriate mechanism to specifically support and encourage diaconal ministry within the life and work of the church;
- report on the historic and current practice of diaconal ministry in the United Church;
- make recommendations related to the future directions for diaconal ministry within the United Church.

Three members of Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services were nominated: Tracy Fairfield (diaconal), Harry Brown (lay), and Lynda Gow (diaconal) and resourced by Joe Ramsay and Angie Musonza. Its initial meeting by conference call was in June 2011.

A) Initial Research

Review of historical documents

A primary document considered by the working group was the Statement of Vision, which was adopted by DUCC at its April 2009 gathering. The significance of this document in defining the role and identity of Diaconal Ministers warrants its inclusion in full:

God calls us to diaconal ministry.
The gospel of Jesus invites all to this ministry:
to offer compassion and accompaniment,
to work for liberation and justice,
to act as advocates of creative transformation.

Diaconal ministry, as a recognized order, is rooted
within our faith tradition and history,
and it is continued and embodied,
in an ecumenical, world-wide community.

This vocation is a journey,
involving Spirit-filled enrichment and learning,
requiring humble offering of self,
demanding prayerful discernment and courageous risking,
exercising visionary and communal leadership,
promising joy and meaning,
and daring to imagine God's abundance,
in a world of love and respect.

Through education, service, social justice, and pastoral care,
diaconal ministry in The United Church of Canada,
encourages a growing faith,
speaks truth to power,
seeks mutual empowerment,
proclaims prophetic hope,
nurtures life-giving community,
fosters peaceful, right relationship,
within the church and the whole of creation,
wherever the Spirit may lead.

Information was collected on diaconal ministry from various denominations in the United States and Canada. This research assisted with identifying differences and similarities among the various denominations.

The working group also reviewed the historical timeline for diaconal ministry within the United Church. The following is an abbreviated summary of this history:

- Diaconal ministry has its roots within Christian scriptures; Stephen and 6 others were appointed to ensure that the widows were treated equally within the early Jesus community.
- The word *diakonia* means service. Acts of service to which all were called to strengthen the early community included teaching, baptism preparation, visiting the poor, sick, and imprisoned and preaching.
- The diaconate came to an end by the 600's and it was not till the 1800's that it was revived again in Europe.
- Deaconesses first arrived in Canada with the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches in the late 1800's.
- At Church Union in 1925, deaconesses and women workers were sent to mission fields within Canada, overseas through the Women's Missionary Society, and others worked in congregations. Deaconesses responded to the needs of the church and the world.
- By the 1960s, laymen wishing to serve the church in positions similar to deaconesses were named certified churchmen.
- During the "boom" years of our church in the 1950-60's, deaconesses were in great demand among congregations interested in Christian Education, and deaconesses became ex-officio members of presbytery in 1964.
- In the early 1970's, the church merged the Deaconess Order and Certified Churchmen to establish the order of Commissioned Ministers.
- In 1980, Commissioned Ministers became part of a single Order of Ministry along with Ordained Ministers.
- The early 1980's was a time of forming diaconal identity. Deep concern was expressed at losing the roots of diakonia with the word commissioning; this resulted in a renaming. Commissioned Ministers chose the name Diaconal Minister and decided not to seek ordination.
- At the same time, in response to changing times in both church and society, Commissioned Ministers were renamed Diaconal Ministers.

- In the early 1980s, the General Council created a Committee on Diaconal Ministry (CDM) and an association of Diaconal Ministers was formed by the diaconal constituency (DUCC).
- For the past 30 years, upon being commissioned to diaconal ministry, Diaconal Ministers were subject to the process of Transfer and Settlement. In response to the needs of the church, many Diaconal Ministers were settled into positions normally held by Ordained Ministers.
- Presently about 80% of Diaconal Ministers serve in congregations, and 10% in community ministries. Those in congregations are responsible for worship, education and pastoral care with approximately 43% being the only paid accountable minister in the pastoral charge

Interview with members of DUCC (Diakonia United Church of Canada) Coordinating Cluster (Executive):

Linda Ervin (Red Deer, AB)

Roland Legge (Cochrane, Ontario)

Christine Dudley (Kimberly, BC) – not part of the Coordinating Cluster

They were asked what skills and gifts Diaconal Ministers offer to the church. From their perspective the most significant contributions of Diaconal Ministers are:

- social engagement/ service/ social analysis;
- global network;
- personal growth/awareness;
- calling out the gifts of others;
- empowerment/ group process/ consensus;
- collegial support/ intentional integration;
- a feminist/ liberationist voice.

When asked how diaconal ministry might be supported and encouraged within the United Church and key challenges that need to be addressed, the DUCC Executive responded:

- more awareness is needed about diaconal ministry by Conference Personnel Ministers and others in key leadership positions in the United Church of Canada. More up to date resources are required on diaconal ministry.
- a stronger link is needed with the Centre for Christian Studies/Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre and the church structures.
- there is a perception at times that diaconal ministry is an easy way into ministry.
- the exclusion of Diaconal Ministers from some ecumenical chaplaincies – for example only Ordained Ministers are eligible to be considered by the Canadian Military and Correctional Services Canada.
- more recognition of non-congregational and non-church ministries is needed - recognizing non-church ministries and including ministries where ministers are self-employed or work for profit-making companies an awareness of the unique nature of diaconal ministry in areas of facilitating the ministry of the whole people
- Ensure that the policy for administering the sacraments be made consistent throughout the church for Diaconal Ministers.

B) Survey

A survey was developed by the working group and sent to those within the order of ministry, Designated Lay Ministers and lay members inviting response on their experience of Diaconal Ministry within the United Church. The survey was sent via direct email, subscription to the Church Leadership Network, and displayed on the DUCC Facebook page.

Survey Participation

The total response to the survey was 727 participants. The breakdown of respondents is as follows:

- ordained 396
- diaconal 143 – approximately 80% working and 20% retired or no longer employed in the church. (According to statistics from the General Council office of the 280 Diaconal Ministers, 127 are working in the church, 13 within community ministries, 111 retired or working outside the church, and 29 retained.)
- Designated Lay Ministers - 36
- Candidates for ministry - 41
- Lay church members - 108

Survey Questions

The objectives were to discover the kinds of work and variety of settings in which Diaconal Ministers are involved, how their ministry would be described, the level of vocational satisfaction, and any additional comments. The feedback received from the broader constituency provided a view of how diaconal ministry is perceived by church leaders who are not Diaconal Ministers.

C) Observations by the Working Group

Identity

Upon a call to diaconal ministry there may be an attraction to a particular function of ministry but during the time of preparation for diaconal ministry and subsequent work in ministry, "diaconal formation" occurs. Diaconal Ministers may then identify more with a style and vision of ministry rather than with the diaconal functions of ministry: education, service, and pastoral care. This style is more fully expressed within the Diaconal Ministry Vision Statement found above.

This is an issue because the function of many Diaconal Ministers is very similar to Ordained Ministers and Designated Lay Ministers. Many people may wonder why there is not a harmonization of the streams of ministry. Talking about identity and style of ministry by Diaconal Ministers is one way that difference is expressed.

Words used to express a diaconal perspective of ministry are:

- a commitment to justice – an involvement with activities of justice and love in the church setting, in the immediate community and in the wider world; to accompany those and learn with those who are on the fringes;
- valuing diversity;

- being rooted in community and developing community;
- a strong commitment to teaming and mutuality which includes a non-hierarchical style of ministry;
- responding to the needs of the church through the years;
- being pioneers and on the forefront of change, being on ‘the creative edge’;
- being rooted in the innovative and daring work of deaconesses of the past;
- being connected by a vision of Jesus’ ministry of compassion and justice and care;
- being inclusive.

While these characteristics are not exclusive to diaconal ministry, they are characteristics explicitly associated with a diaconal identity and approach to the practice of ministry.

Networking

An association for Diaconal Ministers was formed in 1983 with permission from the General Council office: *Diakonia of the United Church of Canada* (DUCC). Most Diaconal Ministers belong to DUCC, which meets on a bi-yearly basis for education and networking. A strong communication network bonds this group together. There are yearly membership fees. Through this association the United Church diaconal community links with the worldwide organizations of Diaconal Ministers and deaconesses. The General Council Office pays the membership fees in these organizations. A newsletter – *Diaconal News* – is distributed to all Diaconal Ministers is jointly produced by DUCC and the General Council Office.

Advocacy for diaconal ministry

Presently advocacy is carried out in the same way that it is for all ministry personnel and other employees of our church. Historically there were committees for distinctive ministry groups, including a committee on diaconal ministry, within the former Ministry and Personnel Division. In 2003 these committees were concluded with the establishment of the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services.

Primary gifts

Asked to rank the four most important gifts of diaconal ministry, Diaconal Ministers chose:

1. empowerment/group process
2. education
3. calling out the gifts of others
4. pastoral care

All other respondents (not Diaconal Ministers) ranked the four most important gifts as:

1. education
2. pastoral care
3. empowerment/group process
4. service to others

See the graphs at the end of this report.

What are Diaconal Ministers doing?

The top three answers to this question were equal in response (60%) stating that education, pastoral care, and worship were the primary responsibilities of Diaconal Ministers.

How do Diaconal Ministers see themselves?

Of the Diaconal Ministers who responded to the survey, 82% indicated that they are currently filling ministry positions suitable for a Diaconal Minister, and 92% indicated that they are satisfied with the position they currently fill.

Community ministry opportunities

Those who work in community ministry indicated more than a 25 % possibility of future positions for Diaconal Ministers in their organization.

D) Issues and Questions

1. The survey data revealed that Diaconal Ministers understand their gifts of ministry differently than how others see them. This is also consistent with the perception by Diaconal Ministers about how they are perceived by others in the church. Diaconal Ministers report that their ministry is not well understood and there is a lack of awareness of the unique nature of diaconal ministry at many levels of church leadership.
2. It could be said that the three top responses by Diaconal Ministers reflects more a leadership style than function of ministry whereas the top three responses from others were more about function. This is consistent with the statement that Diaconal Ministry as much about style as function. What Diaconal Ministers do is defined by the commission to education, service and pastoral care; equally important, however are the values, perspective, and approach they bring to ministry.
3. The survey indicates a high level of job satisfaction (satisfied or mostly satisfied) by Diaconal Ministers. Yet, comments in the survey and in consultations expressed concern about the way Diaconal Ministers are treated or perceived. The Isolation Study in 2005 indicated a similar pattern with all ministry personnel and classified the dissatisfaction as organizational alienation, perceived persecution and a lack of respect and recognition.

Diaconal Ministers are trained for ministries of education, service and pastoral care. Their formation provides them with a perspective and approach to ministry that is especially suited for ministries of social justice, advocacy and community engagement. However, most Diaconal Ministers live out ~~their~~ ministry serving a pastoral charge as the only paid minister. In other words, they undertake the same positions and tasks as Ordained Ministers. Most diaconal ministers report feeling that this is appropriate and that they are satisfied in their positions. Yet, while the emerging church is creating more opportunities for social justice, advocacy and community leadership, there are only a few Diaconal Ministers serving in these specialized ministries which could be suitable for their specialized training or perspective. For the working group, this observation raised questions about the United Church's recognition that Diaconal Ministers are especially, although not uniquely, prepared to provide leadership to the emerging church.

An issue that arose from the survey and the interview with some members of the DUCC coordinating cluster concerns the right to conduct sacraments. According to United Church polity, Diaconal Ministers are granted this right only upon request at the beginning of each new pastoral charge. Because the majority of Diaconal Ministers are involved in congregational ministry, with many as the only paid accountable minister, many feel that Diaconal Ministers should be granted the right to conduct sacraments upon commissioning to diaconal ministry. A proposal from Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference will direct this question to the 41st General Council 2012.

Next Steps

The working group will continue to analyze the research data that has been collected to more fully understand the lessons and concerns identified in it. The working group will consider the implications of any action taken at the 41st General Council in response to the proposed Statement on Ministry and the proposal to extend sacramental privileges at commissioning. The relationship between diaconal ministry training and the needs of community justice ministries also needs further exploration. A final report with recommendations will be presented to the PC-MEPS by spring of 2013.

ADDENDUM B

Title: Interim Report of the Working Group on Diaconal Ministry

Origin: Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services

Proposal:

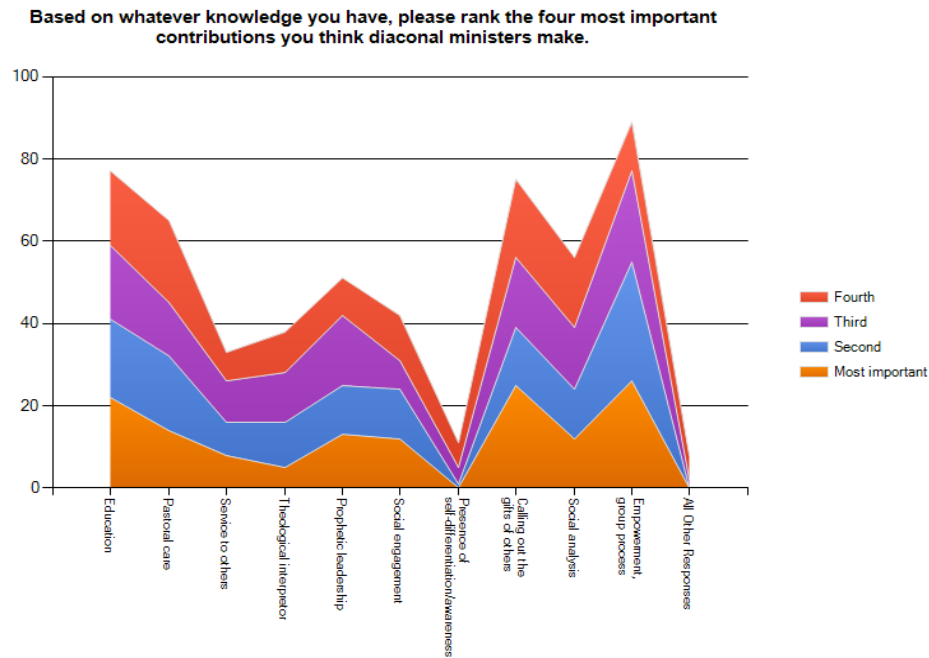
That the Sub-Executive of the General Council receive the interim report of the Working Group on Diaconal Ministry and forward it to the 41st General Council 2012 for information.

Background:

The 40th General Council 2009 approved an amended proposal (MAR3/PAC5) entitled “United Church Recognition of Diaconal Ministry.” The proposal was referred from the General Secretary, General Council to the Permanent Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services for action. A Working Group was established to consult with the constituency, report on the historic and current practice, and make recommendations.

The Working Group on Diaconal Ministry has consulted on various areas relating to Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada. These areas have included the fuller integration of the two ministry streams, more connection with the General Council, updating the resources providing education and promotion about Diaconal Ministry, and identifying ways that the distinctiveness of Diaconal Ministry can be communicated through electronic media. In addition to consulting various constituencies, the Working Group used an online survey to collect responses from the wider Church, including diaconal, ordained, and lay ministry personnel, on their reflections and present thoughts on diaconal ministry. This work is ongoing into the next triennium so that the extensive data that has been collected may be more fully analyzed and any relevant actions of the 41st General Council can be incorporated.

Responses by Diaconal Ministers



Answers by other respondents

