



# The United Church of Canada General Council

## GCE Adoption Task Group (2003A271)

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October 31, 2003

The Permanent Committee on Program for Mission and Ministry proposes:

That the Executive of the General Council:

Receive the report of the Adoption Task Group concerning United Church run maternity homes, and

Direct the Theology and Inter-Church, Inter-Faith Committee to research and devise a position paper regarding adoption and create a United Church of Canada statement on adoption. Give consideration to other denominational statements on adoption and to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Recognizing the pain and hurt experienced by some due to adoptive practices in this era (1940-1980), direct the General Secretary to:

Develop liturgical resources to be used in acknowledgement of hurt and pain and the hope for healing related to the separation of families through adoption.

Invite faith communities to offer services of healing and reconciliation for pain and loss suffered through adoption practices. As well, encourage faith communities to

offer services that recognize and honour parents who have lost children through adoption.

Encourage faith communities to provide opportunities for mothers, fathers and others affected by adoption practices to tell their stories to members and leaders of faith communities, with adequate counselling support available onsite.

Provide online resources on the United Church website directing individuals to appropriate organizations, groups, and resources that offer counselling and family reconciliation services as well as healing for those who have experienced pain through adoption practices and policies.

Continue the use and monitoring of the My Story inbox as a way for those affected by adoption to tell their stories and receive a response. Devise opportunities to publicize its availability to families separated through adoption as well as adoptees and adoptive parents. Develop a voluntary pastoral care team to respond to individuals as requested.

Continue to work with colleagues from other denominations that operated maternity homes to determine joint actions, where possible.

Conduct further research regarding the implications and efficacy of:

A call for the retroactive opening of adoption records in all provinces and territories in collaboration with partners.

An apology to those adversely affected by historic adoption practices, and the role maternity homes operated by the United Church of Canada played in carrying out these practices

A call for a nationwide public inquiry into historic and present adoption practices.

The General Council Executive, November 2013

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