



The United Church of Canada General Council

GC41 Gathering Together: Toward a Culture of Mutuality and Full Participation for Persons with Disabilities and their Allies

True Document Date
November 15, 2013

The Permanent Committee, Programs for Mission and Ministry proposes:

That the Executive of the General Council receive the report of the United Church's consultation on disabilities (entitled Gathering Together: Toward a Culture of Mutuality and Full Participation for Persons with Disabilities and Their Allies), and approve the following recommendations:

1. Invite the Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee to write a theology of disability within the United Church, which could include concepts such as healing, cure, sin, and normalcy, and to make it widely available in the church, and
2. Forward the following to the General Secretary, General Council for implementation:

- a. implement processes to further support for students and candidates with disabilities including, but not limited to
 - training and resources for Education & Students Committees;
 - offering accompaniment for students, such as matching students with ministry personnel with disabilities;
 - considering the intersections between the candidacy pathway and any future training initiatives; and
 - developing best practices for workplace accommodation for ministry personnel with disabilities, including processes of what is helpful to do in Conferences.
- b. explore ways of supporting congregations whose ministry personnel develop a disability; such support could include
 - additional training for Conference personnel ministers on congregational support, so that each congregation does not do its own individual research on policies and grants;
 - offering additional support for ministry personnel with disabilities, including ministry personnel on long-term disability leave;
 - reviewing current policies, support structures, and insurance for ministry personnel with disabilities; and
 - considering a centralized fund for congregations seeking to make their congregational space more accessible.
- c. develop a concrete plan to make the current General Council Office an accessible space, not limited to but including
 - fully accessible washrooms;
 - automatic door controls;
 - Braille buttons and other relevant signage; and that this office space is made more accessible in consultation with people living in disabilities in the United Church; and that future office spaces are designed to be fully accessible through consultations with people living with disabilities throughout the design process.
 - develop an accessibility audit that would be used at all national events and gatherings, and that an adapted accessibility audit be created for congregations; and
 - engage a church-wide process for engagement, including but not limited to worship materials, educational resources, and advocacy.

GCE 41 Meeting Minutes, November 16-18, 2013, pp. 98-99

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