



**The United Church
of Canada
General Council**

GC44 National Indigenous Council Update for October 19, 2024

True Document Date: October 19, 2024

The NIC elected at the National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering in August 2023 met regularly up until April 2024. It is worth noting that this NIC had been elected under a new process decided upon by the previous NIC in May 2023. A new structure for how the NIC would conduct its business also was put in place by the outgoing NIC. Neither the new process for elections nor the new structure had been discussed or tested with the rest of the Indigenous church prior to its implementation. While the new NIC developed an identity statement and spent some time team building in the Fall of 2023, NIC members could not agree on how best to work together under the new structure; tensions arose and deepened over time. These differences culminated in a decision by a majority of members present at a meeting in April 2024 to replace the chair and install new co-chairs. The new co-chairs quickly determined that a healing process for NIC members was required in order to move forward. Unfortunately, one of the new co-chairs resigned in May 2024 and the other in August 2024 even as efforts were under way with staff support to organize a healing process for the NIC. Given difficulties obtaining full agreement among NIC members to participate in a healing circle, and in the absence of any serving elected NIC co-chair, the General Secretary and IMJ leadership determined that the only course of action to move forward was to ask the members of the Indigenous church to elect a new NIC by calling a special National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering (NISG) for this purpose. It is anticipated that the next NIC will serve on an interim basis, for a minimum of one year, with the goal of stabilizing governance of the Indigenous church and determining next steps in the process to achieve a healthy, self-governing Indigenous church. The final size, composition, and term of service of the NIC will be determined at the NISG, now scheduled for November 30-December 1, 2024.

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