



**The United Church
of Canada
General Council**

GC45 WF11: TICIF01 Vocations of the Whole People of God for Summer 2025

True Document Date: August 11, 2025

Most of the discussion groups affirmed the values and vision of the proposal, especially around inclusivity, collaboration, and recognizing diverse forms of ministry and were supportive of approving the statement.

Multiple groups raised a concern about clarifying what is meant by the ministry of lay people and a need to articulate those roles, for example, licensed lay worship leaders, sacraments elders, designated lay ministers, congregational designated ministers, among others. Paid lay ministry within the church is diverse and complex, and there are many already existing resources, handbooks, and statements on all of these forms of paid lay ministry.

Some groups named a desire for more guidance for how supporting half-time or bi-vocational ministry will be implemented

Some participants raised concerns about who and what is missing from the proposal, named specifically were rural communities of faith, the Indigenous church, and disability theology.

Some groups expressed a need for concrete action and implementation and accountability.

Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes

That, in response to TICIF01 Vocations of the Whole People of God, the 45th General Council, 2025:

- A. approve the statement, "Vocations of the Whole People of God: Ministries for Our Time"**
- B. regarding the ministry of the whole people of God, affirm the priorities of communities of faith to:**

1. **focus attention on nurturing and supporting people's lives of faith as the primary sphere of the church's ministry in the world,**
 2. **bring the faith expressed in secular professions and vocations from the margins to the centre of the community of faith and direct the General Secretary to provide guidance and educational resources for implementation.**
- C. Regarding models of ministry inspired by divine inter-dependence, directs the General Secretary to give priority to:
1. **Working from an image of the desired whole, not from a collection of individual communities of faith ~~the surviving parts~~**
 2. **Calling and equipping people for cooperative models of ministry**
 3. **Identifying the ways in which our current governance models inhibit collaboration to maximize ~~freezing governance at the local level for~~ cooperation, teaming, novelty and creativity**
 4. **Focussing governance at the regional level on resourcing, support and oversight**
 5. **Focussing governance at the denominational level on enabling and safe-guarding policy development, standards and accountability**
 6. **Developing an accessible forum for exchange of experience and resource sharing providing a timeline and a concrete plan for implementation**
- D. Regarding lay and ordered ministry within the church, direct the General Secretary to:
1. **Clarify means of support for all roles in ministry (see appendix of report)**
 2. **Build mentorship into all roles in ministry**
 3. **Clarify lines of accountability for all roles in ministry (see appendix)**
 4. **Ensure means of teaming for all roles in ministry**
 5. **Ensure that the pathway to ordered ministry takes into account flexibility to maintain second profession/occupation.**
 6. **A move to embrace more fully a model of ministry inspired by divine interdependence will require attention to certain principles and practices related to models of ministry.**
 7. **Continue to articulate the various roles and diverse understanding of both paid and voluntary lay ministry (including baptized, non-baptized, adherents, sacraments elders, licensed lay worship leaders, designated lay ministers, congregational designated ministers, among others)**

General Council: [GC45](#)

Originating Body: [Way Forward Committee](#)