



**The United Church  
of Canada  
General Council**

# **GC45 WF36: WOW01 Election of Adherents to Governing Bodies of Communities of Faith for Summer 2025**

True Document Date: August 11, 2025

Three-quarters of groups discussed this proposal. Two did not support this proposal, noting the value of inviting people into full members. The other groups, a large majority of overall groups, supported this proposal.

On review with theology staff in the General Council Office, the Manual prior to the 2013 simplification outlined three possible structures for community of faith governance: a session and stewards and official board model, a church board model, and a church council model. In these models, stewards and therefore official board members could be adherents, and in the church council model adherents could serve on the church council. It appears in the simplification of the Manual over time this flexibility was reduced.

There continues to be deep value in inviting people to profess faith in Jesus Christ and to become full members, and communities of faith should have flexibility to respond contextually to the lives of faith of the people they serve and invite into leadership, under the oversight of their Regional Council.

**Therefore, in response to WOW01, the Way Forward Team proposes:**

**That, in response to WOW01 Election of Adherents to Governing Bodies of Communities of Faith, the 45th General Council, 2025 amend The Manual Bylaw B7.3.1. as follows:**

## **B7.3.1 General**

**The Governing Body has the following members:**

1. **The full members of the congregation elected by the congregation or pastoral charge**  
**Change to read: The full members and adherents**  
**of the congregation elected by the congregation or pastoral charge, with the**  
**majority being full members of the congregation.**
2. **Unchanged**
3. **Unchanged**
4. **Unchanged**
5. **Unchanged**

**EXCEPTION CLAUSE**

**- change**

**Exception: In special circumstances with the regional council's approval.**

**There is one exception to the requirement in paragraphs (a) and (e) above for governing body members to be full members of the congregation: If a congregation wants to name a governing body with less than 50% as full members, they must seek regional council approval.**

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