



**The United Church  
of Canada  
General Council**

# **GCE45 GS20 Amendments to section D.4.2.3 for November 2025**

True Document Date: November 14, 2025

## **1. What is the issue? Why is it important?**

GC45 WF26: GCE01 – Review of the Roles of the Moderator and General Secretary for Summer 2025 was carried at the last General Council meeting in August. A task group reviewed the roles of the Moderator and the General Secretary and produced a report with several recommendations.

The General Council received the report and adopted all of its recommendations except for Recommendation 9, which proposed distinguishing between the General Secretary speaking for the Church and the Moderator speaking to the Church. This particular recommendation was referred back to the General Council Executive for further analysis, with a report to be provided to the General Council in 2026.

All other recommendations were accepted, and the Manual Committee was directed to revise the by-laws accordingly.

## **2. How might the General Council Executive respond to the issue?**

The General Secretary recommends the following changes to section D.4.2.3. The original wording is presented first, followed by the proposed changes.

D.4.2.3 Responsibilities

**Original Text**

The General Secretary is the senior staff and administrative officer of the General Council, its executive, and its sub-executive.

The General Secretary is responsible for

- a. assisting the Executive of the General Council in discharging its responsibilities;
- b. preparing for the meetings of the General Council, its executive, and its sub-executive;
- c. preparing and circulating a report of the meetings of the General Council, its executive, and its sub-executive;
- d. arranging for implementation of the decisions by the General Council, its executive, and its sub-executive;
- e. facilitating the work of the committees and commissions of the General Council;
- f. ruling on questions about the polity, procedures, and practice of the United Church;
- g. preparing draft changes to The Manual for the General Council or its executive to consider;
- h. overseeing publication of The Manual;
- i. preparing the annual budget of the General Council for the Executive of the General Council to consider;
- j. having possession of the corporate seal of the United Church and the documents and records of the General Council;
- k. serving as an automatic member of any committee established to direct planning or research;
- l. serving as a general liaison officer for the councils of the United Church; and
- m. performing other duties as assigned by the General Council.

### **Proposed Text**

The General Secretary is the senior staff and administrative officer of the United Church and is responsible for ensuring that the church's Call and Vision are advanced.

The responsibilities include:

### **Vision and Strategy**

- a. Hold the longest horizon of vision for the church;
- b. Lead the implementation of the strategic plan to accomplish the Call and Vision;
- c. Ensure General Council staff and executive ministers/officers are aligned with the strategic direction.

## **Leadership and Management**

- d. Lead the executive staff team of the General Council and regional councils;
- e. Support and oversee collaborative work across the church;
- f. Make operational and procedural decisions to ensure effective and efficient functioning of the General Council Office;
- g. Be responsible for the organization of the General Council Office
- h. Appoint executive ministers/officers and establish human resources policies for General Council and regional council staff;
- i. Oversee preparation of and have accountability for the annual budget;
- j. Hold the corporate seal and maintain official records.

## **Governance and Oversight**

- k. Support, facilitate and oversee collaborative work among and between regional councils and General Council Executive;
- l. Prepare for meetings of the General Council, its Executive, and Sub-Executive;
- m. Prepare agendas, reports, and accurate minutes, preserving the historic memory of the church;
- n. Facilitate the work of General Council committees and commissions;
- o. Implement decisions of the General Council and its Executive;
- p. Make formal rulings and interpret The Manual;
- q. Oversee the drafting and publication of The Manual;
- r. Facilitate the election process for the Moderator and ensure the Moderator is briefed and supported; and
- s. Assist the General Council Executive in carrying out its responsibilities.

## **Spokesperson and Public Voice**

- t. Ensure the prophetic voice of the denomination is in alignment with the Call and Vision and is credible and faithful;
- u. Represent the church with national, global, and ecumenical partners in line with the Call and Vision;

## **Collaborative Ministry with the Moderator**

- v. Advance the Call and Vision set by the General Council of deep spirituality, bold discipleship, and daring justice;

- w. Discern and articulate what is happening in the church;
- x. Advance right relations with the Indigenous Church;
- y. Maintain strong connections with national, global, and ecumenical partners;
- z. Ensure a consistent and thoughtful voice on prophetic or controversial matters; and
- aa. Clarify and communicate the United Church's role as a distinctive Christian expression.

### **3. For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council Executive?**

N/A

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