



**The United Church
of Canada
General Council**

GCE45 GS33 Working Group on Addressing Church Legacies for People of African Descent for December 2025

True Document Date: December 9, 2025

1. What is the issue? Why is the issue important?

We believe that God is calling diverse people from across the United Church together to offer direction and advice on:

- developing an apology from The United Church of Canada to people of African descent for enslavement,
- reflecting on, and acting upon, current legacies of enslavement faced by Black people in Canada, and
- exploring creative ways of engaging with the United Nations Second International Decade for People of African Descent.

This is faithful work that will build on the church's commitments to anti-racism and reparations. This is also work that would be theologically grounded and that could offer options for congregational education, reflection, and action in ways that are consistent with the church's focus on [Toward 2035](#).

2. What is happening now?

There are several church commitments, policies, and statements related to this area of work. In the year 2000, The United Church of Canada adopted the anti-racism policy, [That All May](#)

[Be One](#). Twenty years later, the church made a [commitment to becoming an anti-racist denomination](#). That same year, the church also stated that [Black Lives Matter to the United Church](#).

A joint commitment between The United Church of Canada and full communion partner the United Church of Christ (USA) saw both churches engage with the *first* United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024). The Executive of General Council (GCE), at its meeting in November 2025, approved GCE45 GS12 committing the United Church to engaging with the *second* [United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent](#) (2025-2034). Also in 2025, the 45th General Council approved (GC45 NS01) that work to be done on an [Apology from The United Church of Canada to the African Diaspora for Enslavement](#).

The approved proposal about engaging with the second International Decade for People of African Descent—as well as the approved proposal about an apology to the African Diaspora for enslavement— both ask that an advisory committee, working group, or task group is created to accompany the work.

3. How might the Executive of the General Council respond to this issue?

The Executive of General Council might:

- **Approve the Terms of Reference for a Working Group on Addressing Church Legacies for People of African Descent.**

4. Background information:

There is considerable background information contained within the two proposals from 2025 that led to the call to create this new working group:

- The [Apology from The United Church of Canada to the African Diaspora for Enslavement](#)
- The commitment to engaging with the [United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent](#) (2025-2034).

5. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

This proposal directly relates many of the church's commitment on equity, including:

- Anti-racism policy, [That All May Be One](#) (year: 2000)
- Becoming an intercultural church (years: [2006](#), [2009](#), and [2012](#))
- Statement that [Black Lives Matter](#) to The United Church of Canada (2020)
- Commitment to [becoming an anti-racist denomination](#) (year: 2020)
- [Working Towards Becoming an Anti-Racist Denomination](#)
- Ongoing work of the church on decolonization, apologies, and reparations.

Read the attached Appendix

Document Type: [Proposal](#)

General Council: [GC45](#)

Originating Body: [General Secretary](#)

Status: [Carried](#)