

GCE45 GS39 for February 2026

True Document Date: February 20, 2026

1. What is the issue?

The General Council Executive have approved a ten-year strategic direction under the banner of **Toward 2035**, as well as three 3-year strategic objectives related to Growth, Justice and Leadership. In order to be accountable to the approved direction and objectives, we need to agree on key metrics to assist in measuring results, related to the direction and the objectives. These strategic public metrics, limited in number, will be complemented by other metrics used by staff to ensure activities are reaching desired outcomes.

The first step is to approve the metric, or system of measurement, followed by clarifying the target (e. g., X% = 30%) through subsequent planning. These targets will be presented for approval at the May GCE meeting.

2. Why is the issue important?

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? - Isaiah 43:18

In a *kairos* moment of polycrisis, including ecclesial crisis of decline, our choice as a denomination is to be immobilized or to step into the promises that God “is about to do a new thing.” (Isaiah 43:18) That choice undergirds **Toward 2035**, the decision to pursue a hope-filled strategy for a bolder future, that is informed by data, compelled by our Call, and engages the whole of the church. Our commitment is to continue the story of Jesus in our place and time, embodying Christ presence in our neighbourhoods and in the world, in ways that strive to address the layered forms of crisis existing beyond the church as well.

As we bring shape to the 2026-2028 plan, intended to advance 3-year objectives, toward the 10-year strategic direction, we need guardrails to ensure we continue on this path. Metrics, at

the highest level, are guard rails, with the numbers inviting us to curiosity and potential adjustment if we are not seeing progress. These metrics will populate a dashboard for the 2026-2028 plan. While these are largely quantitative measures, they will not be the only means of accountability, as there will also be narrative reporting.

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

- Approve the metrics proposed in Appendix one for the strategic direction and objectives;
- Direct the General Secretary to develop targets for these metrics for consideration and approval at the May meeting of GCE.

4. What will be the impact?

Without agreed upon metrics, that are focused on changed outcomes, it will be difficult to agree on whether or not we are making the kind of impact we hope, aligned with the **Toward 2035** strategic direction. We are largely making use of internal research and development resources to track and present the metrics, with some limited assistance through planned external polling.

Key to this work is developing baselines from which to measure impact. We currently trying to identify existing baselines in completed surveys and studies or through our statistics, as well as planning for baselines surveys to be conducted over the next year where the information is lacking. One of the key resources, developed through the last plan is the **Toward 2035** denominational dashboard which using existing church statistics to measure baseline for pastoral charges in five different categories, as well as integrating an assessment of growth potential through external measurements (e.g. Environics and Stats Can) in a sixth category. Either category by category or overall, this can represent a baseline in some key areas.

Metrics for one area may also have pertinence to other area (e.g., measurement of intentional interculturality in renew in Growth may also reflect aspects of mutual transformation in Justice). However, we have tried not to repeat the specific metric if it is covered in one place. At the level of initiatives and quarterly key results there is another

opportunity for metrics, perhaps more complex and qualitative. Our work as a whole may result in a better capacity to identify a key metric and track it. The proposed metrics are not necessarily comprehensive but rather represent what we can track at this time that attempts to get at documentation of the change we seek.

5. How does this proposal help us live into the commitments on equity?

Several of these metrics explicit help track our **Toward 2035** commitments toward the diversity of United Church communities of disciples and the increasingly multi-racial, multi-generational and intercultural nature of the denomination.

6. For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council Executive:

This proposal relates to:

GCE45 GS27 Approval of Toward 2035 Strategic Direction and 2026-2028 Strategic Objectives

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